

Questions, Quotes and Notes

April 16, 2023

Luke 9:23-27: How to Follow a Crucified Messiah

Pre-Sermon:

1. Read Luke 9:23-27.
2. What is Jesus talking about?

Sermon:

1. What two things are we going to see in this passage?
2. What is Jesus doing in this passage that we haven't seen much of in Luke yet?
3. In what way is this passage a transition?
4. What was the disciples' plan for the Messiah? How was it different than God's?
5. Why do you have to make a decision to follow Jesus?
6. How do you think most people would respond to the following offer: "Let me give you a life where you don't have to deny yourself, you don't have to submit to anyone, you don't have to fear ever being rejected or shamed, you get everything you want materially?" What's the problem with that?
7. What is similar about three commands in verse 23 and what is different?
8. What does it mean to deny self?
9. What does it mean to take up your cross? Why do you think this particular phrase was used to describe what was required for following Jesus?
10. What does this call to discipleship have to do with faith?

Notes:

We are going to talk about discipleship and what I want you to see is:

1. **What is required to follow Jesus is a completely new way of looking at the world, at yourself and your life right now.**
2. **And why you should look at the world that way right now.**

Cross References:

1. Matthew 16:23
2. Luke 14:24-33
3. "I have now concentrated all my prayers into one, and that one prayer is this, that I may die to self, and live wholly to Him." Charles H. Spurgeon

4. "A few months ago, I began asking the Lord every morning to give me chances that day to die to myself, and for the Spirit to help me recognize those opportunities. He has never failed to answer this prayer. Not once. Every time I've asked him to show me opportunities to die to myself, he's come through. Annoyingly so. On occasion, I've thought it might be best to stop praying this prayer, as I grew tired of the spiritual discomfort. What has been most illuminating about praying this way is how mundane some of the daily choices are. The opportunities to take up one's cross seem almost pitifully small. Surely there are bigger and more impressive examples of cross-bearing and self-denial than the mere willingness to be inconvenienced, or the decision to set aside something I want to do for the sake of what someone else requires in the moment, or the choice to forgo something I desire and think I deserve so as to serve someone else. The chances to deny oneself and pick up one's cross every day seem so tiny, which must be one reason I've so often overlooked them. In times past, I would make a series of small selfish decisions every day, and because I saw them as small, I minimized their selfish roots. I would react to interruption and inconvenience with ambivalence at best or frustration and resentment at worst, or I would demand my way so as to fulfill "small" wants and "insignificant" desires, assuming in these cases that some grandiose gesture of self-denial wouldn't matter because the selfishness in my "needs" was so minimal (if I even recognized the selfishness). And yet it's the small decisions of daily life that make us what we are. The Spirit uses those seemingly insignificant daily decisions to transform us more into the image of Christ. Likewise, it's the small decisions, the daily acts of selfishness that, combined over a lifetime, turn us into little beasts." Trevin Wax

After Sermon:

1. What was the message basically about?
2. What did you learn today?
3. How is the way Jesus looks at the world and life right now so different than how almost everyone thinks about the world and life right now?
4. Why is the Christian way of thinking so incompatible with other approaches to life?
5. Why are denying self and taking up your cross so essential if you are going to follow Jesus?
6. Why would anyone want to live this way? Is this only a burden? In what way is this way of living a joy?
7. Is there any way this message encouraged or challenged you?