

*** Read Luke 9:18–36.**

*** Reread Luke 9:18–22.**

1. As the passage begins, we once again find Jesus engaged in prayer. Luke describes Jesus as “praying in private” (v. 18), but who is present and observing Jesus in this act of personal prayer? (v. 18)

2. Jesus ends his prayer and asks his disciples a question. What connection might there be between his conversation with the Father and his interaction with the disciples? (Jn. 14:10b)

3. Both commoners and royalty were pondering the question of Jesus’ identity (Lk. 9:7–9).
 - a. Who do the crowds think he might be? (v. 19)

 - b. What possibility do they miss entirely?

4. Immediately after asking the disciples for the crowd’s opinion, Jesus makes his question personal.
 - a. How does Peter answer Jesus? (v. 20)

 - b. What implications does his answer hold for the disciples’ faith? (1 Jn. 5:1a, 4–5, 20)

5. Why do you think Jesus commands the disciples not to tell anyone?

6. The disciples have realized and acknowledged that Jesus is “the Christ of God” (v. 20) - God’s anointed, the Messiah, the Son of Man. The Jews, including the disciples, expected the Messiah to be a political, military king of victory and glory who would deliver them from Roman oppression. Jesus needs to explain to the disciples that he is not that kind of Messiah. What four things does Jesus explain MUST happen to the Son of Man? (v. 22)

*** Read Luke 9:23-27.**

7. Jesus now lays out the implications of following him in light of what he has just revealed. What three things does Jesus say to anyone who wants to be his disciple? (v. 23)

Verse 23 is the very first time Luke uses the word “cross.” The disciples would have been familiar with crosses, but when Jesus tells them to take up their cross daily, they would have been both shocked and confused. It would be like telling a modern person to prepare daily for the electric chair. The disciples would have had no idea that Jesus himself was going to be crucified, and they could never have imagined the cross being so stripped of its horror as to inspire jewelry and home decor.

8. What would it look like for you to intentionally deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Jesus daily?

“In Jesus’ day, a cross wasn’t just a symbol of pain and suffering; it was mainly a symbol of death. What Jesus was telling them is that they needed to put to death their own plans and desires, and then turn their lives over to Him and do His will every day.” –Billy Graham

9. Seeking out our own pleasure and comfort comes easily to us as fallen humans. But choosing that life is to “lose or forfeit [our] very self” (v. 25) and to live devoid of joy.
 - a. What does it look like to “lose our lives” for Christ? (Consider Rom. 12:1-3.)
 - b. If we “lose our lives,” what does Jesus promise will happen? (v. 24)

c. What kind of life does Jesus promise? (Jn. 10:10b)

10. What will Jesus' reaction be to those who are "ashamed of [him] and [his] words...when he comes in his glory" (v. 26)? (v. 26)

The meaning of verse 27 is not immediately clear. The most straightforward interpretation is that Jesus is referring to the glory that will be revealed in his Transfiguration (vv. 28–36). In this case, Peter, James, and John are the ones who will "see the kingdom of God" (v. 27) before they die.

*** Read Luke 9:28–36.**

11. About a week after Peter identifies Jesus as "God's Messiah" (v. 20), Jesus takes Peter, James, and John up the mountain with him. What are they going to do? (v. 28)

12. This is not a normal prayer time. What happens to Jesus as he prays? (v. 29)

13. Jesus' appearance changes dramatically, and two men appear and talk with him. Who are these men? (v. 30)

14. In verse 31, Moses, the law giver, and Elijah, the prophet, speak with Jesus, who came to fulfill the law and the prophets. They are discussing Jesus' "departure" (v. 31). What does "departure" mean? (1 Cor. 15:3–4)

"The word for 'departure' is *exodus*... [T]he reason Luke has chosen this word... is that in his death Jesus will enact an event just like the great **Exodus** from Egypt, only more so. In the first Exodus, Moses led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt and home to the promised land. In the new Exodus, Jesus will lead all God's people out of the slavery of sin and death, and home to their promised inheritance – the new creation in which the whole world will be redeemed."¹

15. “Peter wanted to prolong the stay of the heavenly visitors”.² Instead of maintaining his focus on Jesus, whom he had so recently declared “God’s Messiah” (v. 20), he wants to bask in the glory present and avoid the coming suffering that Jesus revealed (v. 22) and has just been discussing with Moses and Elijah.³

a. How does God interrupt Peter’s ramblings? (vv. 34–35a)

b. What command does God give? (v. 35b)

c. Why is it so important that the disciples heed this command?

16. Surprisingly, the disciples do not tell anyone about this intense experience. Why? (Mt. 17:9)

These passages reveal both Jesus’ true identity and the path of suffering, rejection, death, and resurrection that lies ahead. Jesus’ followers will have to walk the same path. As we obey the Father and listen to Jesus Christ above all else and all others, let us pray for the ability to deny ourselves and take up our crosses daily to follow Jesus through suffering to abundant life in his holy will.

¹ N. T. Wright. *Luke for Everyone* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2004), 114-115.

² Frank E. Gaebelin, Gen. Ed. *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary with the New International Version of the Holy Bible in Twelve Volumes*. Vol. 8 (Matthew, Mark, Luke) (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1984), 927.

³ *Ibid.*