

When the Church Isn't Gathered: The Pattern of Discipleship (Part 1)*Luke 9:23-27*

This season in which we haven't been able to gather in worship is likely revealing to you some things about your walk with God. Some of you would probably say that your walk with God has remained strong. You miss being together, but you are still walking with God. Others might feel like your walk has suffered; that you struggle to know how to walk with Jesus when we can't gather. Others are likely somewhere in between. Over the next few weeks we are going to talk about things that we can do to keep growing when the church isn't gathered. This week and next we are going to consider a passage of Scripture in which Jesus explains a pattern of life necessary for those who want to walk as Jesus' disciples.

Opening Question: What have you missed most about not gathering together on Sunday mornings?

Read Luke 9:23-27

1. What does Jesus say is required for one to follow him (v. 23)? What must they do?
2. Practically, what is involved in a follower of Jesus denying themselves in order that they might follow Jesus?
3. What does it mean for a person to "take up his cross daily" (v. 23)?

Steve said:

We have to be very careful how we think about this idea of dying to self. As Dallas Willard points out, Jesus taught death *to* self, but not death *of* self. When you live exclusively for Christ, you become more fully the person you were designed to be. You shed off all the things that mask and distort the image of God within you. You begin to experience the "glorified" person you will be after you are raised immortal. The new heaven and earth will be the most God-centered, Christ-centered, Spirit-centered place imaginable. In that place, nobody will be living for themselves, right? Jesus would have us anticipate that day and live exclusively for Him here and now.

4. And so what is the right way and the wrong way to understand this command to die to self?

5. Jesus also says that we are to follow him. What does this mean for us since we can't literally follow Jesus around?

Steve said:

You and I would be wise to pause and consider honestly, "Do I really 'wish to come after' Jesus? Do I really want to live my life as His disciple, apprenticed to Him, learning from Him how to live like He lived?" You can be a very moral, compassionate person and not be a follower of Jesus. You can be a faithful "church-goer" and not be apprenticed to Jesus. You can study the Bible and theology without a commitment to living as Jesus lived. But if we do want to "come after Jesus" as disciples, we will have to settle some foundational issues in our lives.

6. How would you describe your current desire to follow Jesus as His disciple?
7. In what ways do you want to follow Christ this week (through Scripture, relationships, serving others, etc.)?

Practicing the Rhythms of Rooted



Daily Devotion – Continue to read and reflect on Luke 9:23-27. See also Matthew 19:16-22