**Whoever Wants to be My Disciple**

Luke 9:18-27

Key Verse 23 “Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me”

**Introduction**

 This passage reminds us of Jesus’ prayer for his disciples in John 17:6-9. “I have revealed you to those whom you gave me out of the world. They were yours; you gave them to me and they have obeyed your word. **7** Now they know that everything you have given me comes from you. **8** For I gave them the words you gave me and they accepted them. They knew with certainty that I came from you, and they believed that you sent me. **9** I pray for them. I am not praying for the world, but for those you have given me, for they are yours.” Thanks to the work of the Holy Spirit in conjunction with Jesus’ prayer, Peter was able to confess that Jesus was God’s Messiah. In turn Jesus was able to share the essence of the Gospel. May the Lord help us to not give up, but to pray for others by faith until they may confess, “Jesus is my King and my Lord!”

**1. Read verses 18-20. What was Jesus doing and who was with him? (18a) What question did Jesus ask them? (18b) How did the disciples answer? (19) Why do you think Jesus asked His disciples the same question? What was Peter’s answer? (20b) What will be your personal answer to Jesus’ question?**

**1-1, Read verses 18-20.**

 *18 Once when Jesus was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”19 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.”20 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.”*

**1-2, What was Jesus doing and who was with him? (18a)**

***Jesus was praying in private***

* It was Jesus’ habit to pray. We have seen Jesus praying during his public ministry. He made the most of his time to pray in spite of his busy schedule.
* He had private prayer time. He had to spend time with his disciples and the crowds. However, he secured his private time with God. As a matter of fact, his private time with God was the source of power to serve his mission.
* Jesus prayed before he asked his disciples very important questions so that they might be helped to answer him.

***His disciples were with him***

* His disciples might learn how to pray by looking at their teacher praying. One of the best ways to teach prayer and encourage people to pray could be to show them how you pray before God.

**1-3, What question did Jesus ask them? (18b)**

***he asked them, “Who do the crowds say I am?”***

* About one and half years had passed since Jesus had started his public ministry. Jesus taught people the words of God and performed many miracles.
* It must have reached to the point when the people may have certain idea about who Jesus is.
* The main purpose of Jesus’ teaching and miracles was to help people to know who he was and have them believe in him. (Jn 20:30-31)
* It is important to check how people recognize Jesus, for their salvation is hinged upon how people view Jesus.
* “Who do the crowds say I am?” This question might help the disciples to think about Jesus’ identity, leading them to the true knowledge of him.

**1-4, How did the disciples answer? (19)**

 ***19 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, that one of the prophets of long ago has come back to life.***

* The crowd recognized Jesus as John the Baptist or Elijah, or one of the prophets who were known as powerful servants of God. They believed Jesus as God’s powerful servant but didn’t recognize him as the promised Messiah yet.
* They didn’t know Jesus fully. Their knowledge of Jesus was not sufficient. Even though they saw the miracles, they did not know him.
* Knowing Jesus and believing him as the Savior is the work of Holy Spirit.
* We ought to be thankful to God who revealed himself to us as the Messiah.

**1-5, Why do you think Jesus asked His disciples the same question?**

 ***“But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?”***

* Jesus asked their personal opinion about him. The disciples were supposed to have their own opinions about him.
* Jesus asks us in the same question. He asks us our personal opinion about him.
* People can hear many opinions about Jesus, but eventually each one should have his or her own opinion about Jesus.

**1-6, What was Peter’s answer? (20b)**

 ***Peter answered, “God’s Messiah.”***

* Peter knew who Jesus was. He had true and correct knowledge of Jesus who would lead him to salvation.
* Jesus is ***“the Christ of God, the Anointed of God, and the promised Messiah."***
* Jesus replied, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah, for this was not revealed to you by flesh and blood, but by my Father in heaven.” (Mt 16:17).
* By God’s divine revelation, Peter was able to know who Jesus was. He was the most blessed man for he had personal faith and knowledge about Jesus.
* Apostle Paul also pointed out in Galatians 1:12, **“**I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it; rather, I received it by revelation from Jesus Christ.”
* There are many blessings but the best blessing is to know Jesus as the Messiah and believe him.
* The faith gives us a privilege to be God’s children and inherit the kingdom of God.

**1-7, What will be your personal answer to Jesus’ question?**

***Personal application***

***(Who do you think Jesus is?)***

**2. Read verses 21-22. What did Jesus warn them not to do and why? (21) What did he say about what would happen to the Son of Man? (22) Why do you think Jesus must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and be raised to life? (Isaiah 53:4-7)**

**2-1, Read verses 21-22.**

 *21 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. 22 And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”*

**2-2, What did Jesus warn them not to do and why? (21)**

***21 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone.***

* It was not right time to tell this truth yet. There is a time for all things. After his resurrection, which completed the proof of his true identity, Peter proclaimed that Jesus is the Lord and Christ (Acts 2:36); but as of this time the evidence was not ready to be summed up, and therefore it must be concealed. (Matthew Henry)

**2-3, What did he say about what would happen to the Son of Man? (22)**

 ***22 And he said, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life.”***

* First of all let’s take notice that Jesus refers to himself as “The Son of Man.”
* This is a messianic title that we can find in Daniel 7:13-14.

 *“This son of man comes on the clouds of heaven, approaches the Ancient of Days, and is led into his presence. He is given authority, glory and sovereign power; all peoples, nations and men of every language worship him. His dominion is everlasting, and his kingdom will never be destroyed.”*

* Jesus declared himself to be this Son of Man. Yet before accomplishing this great final victory, Jesus had to first suffer and die and rise again.
* Jesus’ way of becoming the Christ contrasts to the way worldly rulers seize power. They sacrifice their followers to win victory and attain power and glory.
* But Jesus sacrificed himself. Jesus would suffer, be rejected and be killed. It was to save those who believe in him.
* Our real enemy is not the situation, or the system, or the people around us who always seem to make life difficult. Our real enemies are sin and death.
* In order to liberate us from these enemies, Jesus had to suffer and die. There was no other way. That is why he used the word “must.”
* Jesus was the one and the only one in God’s universe who could accomplish the salvation of mankind.
* He alone is fully human and fully divine. His sacrifice alone is sufficient to solve man’s sin problem and restore us to a right relationship with God.
* Jesus promises that those who die in him will also rise with him as heirs of his kingdom, where there are no tears, sorrows or pains.
* In a word, Jesus accomplished our complete salvation through his suffering, death and resurrection.

**2-4, Why do you think Jesus must suffer, be rejected, be killed, and be raised to life? (Isaiah 53:4-7)**

 *“4 Surely he took up our pain and bore our suffering, yet we considered him punished by God, stricken by him, and afflicted. 5 But he was* ***pierced for our transgressions****, he was* ***crushed for our iniquities****;* ***the punishment that brought us peace was on him****, and by his wounds we are healed. 6 We all, like sheep, have gone astray, each of us has turned to our own way;and the Lord has laid on him the iniquity of us all* ***7*** *He was oppressed and afflicted, yet he did not open his mouth; he was led like a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before its shearers is silent, so he did not open his mouth.”* **(Isaiah 53:4-7)**

* He had to suffer for our sins. – Jesus is the Messiah who saves his people from their sin and death.
* To save his people from their sin it was necessary for him to sacrifice himself to pay the price of their sin. He paid our debts in his own blood.
* His death was not the death of mere man but the death of the Son of God and, had undertaken to be punished in our stead that he might bring us to God.
* Jesus’ death on the cross was the voluntary act of his own will. He would die not because he was weak under men’s political power. He died voluntarily because it was necessary to save sinners.

**3. Read verses 23-25. What are they required to do to be his disciples? (23). What does it mean by denying themselves and taking up their cross? Why daily? Who will lose their life and who will save their life? (24). Why do you think it is more beneficial to lose their very self for Jesus’ sake than gaining the whole world?**

**3-1, Read verses 23-25.**

 Then he said to them all: “Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?

**3-2, What are they required to do to be his disciples? (23).**

 ***“Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.***

 And he has given him authority to judge because he is the Son of Man. 28 “Do not be amazed at this, for a time is coming when all who are in their graves will hear his voice 29 and come out—those who have done what is good will rise to live, and those who have done what is evil will rise to be condemned. 30 By myself I can do nothing; I judge only as I hear, and my judgment is just, for I seek not to please myself but him who sent me. (John 5:27-30)

* Our real problem is not just death, but the fact that after death we face judgment.
* Christ who is the designated Judge saves us from this judgment. He promises that those who die in him will also rise with him as heirs of his kingdom.
* We accept him as king and give our lives to him.

**3-3, What does it mean by denying themselves and taking up their cross? Why daily?**

* Our culture tells us to “pamper yourself,” condoning *self-glory, self-gratification, self indulgence.*
* Now we serve Christ as our king. Instead of listening to the self, we must listen to Christ. Instead of serving the self, we must serve Christ.
* The Bible teaches that the self must be crucified with Christ. We must come to the cross each day, confessing our sins and asking Jesus’ help.

Galatians 6:14 reads,

 ***“May I never boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.”***

* The cross symbolizes the painful difficulty required to accomplish God’s purpose. But it is not always easy or pleasant. Jesus set an example for us.
* The cross here may include the pains and the sacrifices that are necessary to share the gospel and raise disciples.

**3-4, Who will lose their life and who will save their life? (24).**

 ***For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it.***

**3-5, Why do you think it is more beneficial to lose their very self for Jesus’ sake than gaining the whole world?**

* As a bottom line, our bodies and this world, and everything in it, will perish in the course of time.
* Human achievements will fade away, wealth will be consumed, relationships with others will end, and pleasures will be completely forgotten.
* Those who blindly pursue the treasures and pleasures of the world will perish.
* *But those who accept Christ, deny themselves, and take up their crosses, gain everlasting life and eternal blessing in his kingdom. Investing our time and hearts and labor for Christ and his kingdom is the best investment of all.*

**4. Read verses 26-27. What would happen to those who are ashamed of Jesus and His words when Jesus comes? (26) Why do you think Jesus mentioned ‘all glory in him, his father, and the holy angels’? What did Jesus tell about some who were standing with him? (27)**

**4-1. Read verses 26-27.**

 26 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. 27 “Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”

**4-2, What would happen to those who are ashamed of Jesus and His words when Jesus comes? (26)**

 ***Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.***

**4-3, Why do you think Jesus mentioned ‘all glory in him, his father, and the holy angels’?**

* He will have all power and authority, and his majesty will be displayed fully.
* He will appear as “King of kings and Lord of lords.” (Rev 19:16b)
* He will bless those who believed in him and curse those who opposed him.

**4-4, What did Jesus tell about some who were standing with him? (27)**

 ***“Truly I tell you, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God.”***

* Jesus pointed out that even today we can see the kingdom of God. It is not a distant future, but a present time happening or transaction. Praise Jesus!

**Conclusion**

Today we have learned the essence of discipleship from Jesus. At the heart of discipleship is a relationship with Christ. Jesus wants us to confess him as the Christ, receive his salvation, and follow him by denying ourselves and taking up our crosses daily for it is the one and only road map to enter the Kingdom of God after Him.

**One word: Jesus said to them ALL**