

Day 5. Jesus in all his glory

Luke 9:28-36

You will now be quite familiar with the chapter but read it once again to put this passage in context. Then read these verses and try to picture what happened. The glory of this occasion, though, is beyond any human imagination. Make a note of any details that you have not noticed before.

1. No wonder the disciples couldn't take it all in and Peter didn't know what he was saying. What new dimension would this have given to the disciples as they began to understand Jesus?
2. Why else do you think the transfiguration is important?

Allow yourself to meditate on the truth that this Jesus, seen here in all his splendour as the chosen Son of God, did in fact come to this earth to die.

To help you, you might like to divide a page into two columns. On one side write down all that you have discovered from this incident about Jesus. On the other side make a note of the importance of each of these observations. Then turn what you have noted into praise and prayer.

Weekend

The disciples were still at nursery school — as we all are! What lessons did they learn through the incidents recorded in 9:46-56? Have you learnt them too? And what about the other lessons learnt this week as you have studied what must now be a very familiar chapter?

It would be good to look back over the notes you have made this week. What have you discovered about the two themes that were mentioned at the start — the *identity of Jesus* and the *demands of discipleship*?

Thank God for what he has taught you and pray that like the disciples you will be teachable, so that you will be able to answer the question 'Who is this Jesus?'

Try this week to memorize verses that crystallize the two themes:

- the identity of Jesus — v.35
- the demands of discipleship - vv.23-24

PRAY for the Pastors and Elders that the focus of our Church will always be fixed upon Jesus. Pray also for our Group Leaders and Coaches that they will encourage people in their discipleship. Pray that each member of the Church will be on the adventurous journey of faith that Jesus calls us to.



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Meeting With God Bible Reading Notes

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Week Three: Luke 9 (A meditation)

Introduction

Like breathing in deeply the summer-evening scent of honeysuckle...like gently stroking a fur coat... like pausing after the main course of a special meal, to enjoy the taste and flavour of good food...so we need slowly to savour and enjoy God's Word to us. In our activist age, we have tended to look upon meditation as something rather strange and mystical, so a little introduction to meditative Bible study is probably needed.

In meditating on God's Word at least three factors are essential:

1. We need to allow ourselves TIME, which is why we are taking a week to look at one chapter in Luke's Gospel.
2. We need to bring every part of ourselves to the Bible: our emotions, our mind (meditation is not an un-intellectual exercise!) and our spirit. As we ponder a small portion of the Bible we can allow it to go round in our thoughts, focusing on whatever God brings to our attention.
3. But before we even start we need to ask God to speak to us.

Sometimes it is hard to concentrate — a half-hour meditation is not an excuse to empty our mind for thirty minutes, nor to devise a Christmas shopping list! Some people find it helpful to think out loud or to write down their thoughts. Memorizing verses also helps concentration.

What we discover about God and the way that he relates to his world should guide us as we pray. Make sure that you turn your thoughts into prayer and action, where appropriate.

To get started, read through the whole chapter. As you do so, look out for any emphases that Luke made. It may help to write these down.

Remember that Luke was writing the Gospel so that Theophilus would be more certain of what he believed (Luke 1:1-4). As a result he constantly drew attention to who Jesus was and the persistent way in which Jesus trained his disciples to follow in his footsteps.

It is these two themes — the **identity of Jesus** and the **demands of discipleship** which will be explored in this week's studies. But on your own you will no doubt pick up other themes.

Day 1. The Disciples' marching orders

Luke 9:1-6

After reading the chapter, read vv. 1-6 several times. Allow your mind to absorb what Jesus was saying to them. Jesus was not laying down a blueprint for every evangelistic mission. After all, itinerant evangelists today usually take a change of clothes with them!

1. In what ways would the disciples be sure that they had been sent by Jesus on this particular mission? How far can you share in their confidence?
2. How do you know that you have been sent out by Jesus into your own situation? Are you cluttered with personal possessions?
3. What have you learnt today about the demands of discipleship? Could you explain it to someone else? It might help to write down your summary.

PRAY over what you have thought about today. Pray especially that you will have a power and confidence similar to that of the disciples as you witness to your friends about Jesus Christ.

Day 2. Who is Jesus?

Luke 9:7-9, 18-22, 44-45, 51

The verses are scattered about Luke 9, so start off by reading the chapter and then concentrate on these particular references to Jesus. Read them through several times, slowly.

1. What can you discover about who Jesus thought he was and how he viewed his task on earth? It might help to write down your thoughts.
2. Why does it matter to you that Jesus had to come to earth to die? Could you explain to someone else why his task was so important?

You may want to spend more time looking at Jesus' view of his own mission. To start with, look at Luke 4:18-21; 18:31-34; 20:9-19; 22:7-23.

You may have noticed that Herod's motive in wanting to understand Jesus was very different from the motives of the disciples. Herod's desire to meet Jesus was eventually satisfied at his trial (Luke 23:6-12). The disciples were beginning to have some idea about the identity of their teacher but they still had a long way to go.

3. What have you learnt about the identity of Jesus today?

PRAY over what you have thought about, praising God that Jesus came to earth. You could take the words of a well-known song like "You led me to the Cross" and use that to express what you want to say.

Day 3. More about Jesus

Luke 9:10-17, 37-43

Read through the whole chapter and then, as previously, focus on the two incidents

recorded in these verses. Read them several times, slowly. As you do so, you could imagine that you were one of the disciples with Jesus.

1. What would you have learnt about him from these two occasions? Some suggestions are at the end of this study if you need them. Write down your own observations.
2. Spend time considering each of these different aspects of Jesus' life and ministry. Ask yourself how far you have seen evidence of his activity in your own life or in the life of your group. How much is this the Jesus you are getting to know?

Jesus has power over evil; he can provide for physical needs; he wants to heal; he lovingly cares for individuals; he is patient with the disciples.

PRAY for anyone you know who is sick or in need of healing.

Day 4. The cost of Discipleship

Luke 9:23-27, 57-62

Read the chapter through, reminding yourself of what you discovered about discipleship, so far.

"The cross symbolizes your willingness to die if needs be, or to give up all else for the surpassing glory of following it. Jesus calls you to pick it up and heave it over your back in the same way that he carried his own cross — not in your lapel or round your neck but over your shoulders. It may look rough and heavy as you stare at it on the ground, but you will be surprised to find how light it feels as you bear it. And it will mark you in the eyes of demons, men and angels as one who despises humiliation and who deliberately chooses the company of the One from whom the world hides its face." (John White, The Cost of Commitment)

Examine the verses above in the light of this quotation. Can you pick out the significant features of discipleship pictured here? Write down your observations.

1. How far have you 'heaved the cross over your own back', identifying yourself as a follower of Jesus, the one who is more important to you than any other person or thing? Take some time to consider this question. As you do so, you could put under the microscope each of your own ambitions and attitudes to possessions. Write them down as you identify them.
2. What is the price to be paid for **not** taking up your cross daily? Jesus is not saying that disciples should take their personal responsibilities lightly. But he is saying that any follower needs to weigh up the cost before he embarks on the path of discipleship of Jesus Christ.
3. Could you explain to a friend what you have learnt about discipleship today? You should be able to share your faith clearly to others.

PRAY for those in your group and yourself in the way Paul requests in Ephesians 6:19-20.