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Community Group Material:

Bible Reading: Luke 9:18-27

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Jesus' Identity

18 While [Jesus] was praying in private and his disciples were with him, he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" 19 They answered, "John the Baptist; others, Elijah; still others, that one of the ancient prophets has come back." 20 "But you," he asked them, "who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "God's Messiah."

His Death and Resurrection Predicted

21 But he strictly warned and instructed them to tell this to no one, 22 saying, "It is necessary that the Son of Man suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, be killed, and be raised the third day."

Take Up Your Cross

23 Then [Jesus] said to them all, "If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life because of me will save it. 25 For what does it benefit someone if he gains the whole world, and yet loses or forfeits himself? 26 For whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and that of the Father and the holy angels. 27 Truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:18-27)

Note: We can see the same story in Matthew 16:13–16 & Mark 8:27–29.

SUMMARY:

In Luke 9:18–27, Jesus brings His disciples to Caesarea Philippi, a place filled with pagan worship, and asks, "Who do you say I am?" Amid rumors that He is John the Baptist, Elijah, or a prophet, Peter

confesses that Jesus is “God’s Messiah”—the promised Christ foretold in the Old Testament. This marks a turning point as the disciples begin to grasp that Jesus is more than a teacher, or prophet; He is the ‘Son of the living God’ sent to bring redemption. Jesus then reveals that He must suffer, be rejected, killed, and rise again—defying expectations of a political & military conqueror. He calls His followers not just to believe, but to deny themselves, take up their cross daily, and follow Him. True discipleship means surrender, obedience, and trusting the risen Savior who gave His life for us. Jesus still calls us to this discipleship today.

Discussion Questions

“Who do you say I am?”

1. Peter answers, “God’s Messiah” (or “the Christ of God”). What would that confession have meant to a 1st-century Jewish listener who was expecting a Messiah?
2. Many people around us might say good things about Jesus (great teacher, moral example), but do not confess Him as Messiah & Lord. What’s the difference between those views & Peter’s confession?
3. If Jesus asked you personally, “But what about you? Who do you say I am?”, how would you answer in your own words right now? How has your answer changed over the years?

Jesus predicts His suffering

1. In Lk. 9:22, Jesus says the Son of Man “must suffer many things,” be rejected, killed, & raised on the 3rd day. Why is the word “must” important here? What does it tell us about the necessity of Jesus’ cross?
2. How does Jesus’ clear prediction of His death & resurrection strengthen your confidence in God’s plan of salvation?

Deny yourself, take up your cross daily

1. Jesus says that whoever wants to be His disciple must “deny themselves, take up their cross daily, & follow” Him. What does each of those 3 phrases mean in practical terms for a believer today?
2. Jesus adds the word “daily” to 9:23. How does that challenge a one-time decision mentality versus an ongoing lifestyle of discipleship? Can you share an example where this “daily” aspect became real to you?

Losing life to find it

1. Lk. 9:25 asks what good is it to gain the whole world & yet lose/forfeit one’s very self. What are some ways Christians are tempted to “gain the world” (success, comfort, approval, etc.) at the expense of their spiritual life?

Not ashamed of Jesus

1. In Lk. 9:26, Jesus warns about being ashamed of Him & His words. What does it look like in our culture to be “ashamed of Jesus”—practically, not just in theory?
2. Jesus speaks of coming “in His glory & in the glory of the Father & of the holy angels.” How does this future hope help you face present shame, rejection, or cost for following Him?

