

Luke 9:21-36



Theme Sentence

Jesus (and his followers) must lose life now, to save life in his eternal kingdom.

Context

See **Saviour, Judge and King** p54-55 (*More about ... the Themes and Structure*).

Our passage is set between **two crucial markers** in Luke's gospel. Peter's certain declaration of who Jesus is in **9:23** is the culmination of the first section of the gospel where Jesus has been revealing who he is by what he does. The second marker is **9:51** where Jesus 'set his face to go to Jerusalem' ... Luke's story will now be concerned with Jesus' journey to the cross.

Those two themes are the two themes of 9:23-36 ... following Jesus will inevitably mean walking **the way of the cross** (for that is where he's going); but the Jesus we follow is the one who is **the glorious Son** (eg, of Psalm 2).

These two themes must not be separated. When talking of the cross, Jesus talks of 'glory' (26); and on the mountain of glory, he's talking about 'his departure' (31)! And these two themes are together in 9:51 too. The ascension is near, so Jesus heads for the cross (!!): this surprising conjunction is worth careful thought (... for example, it holds Luke's two volumes [Luke-Acts] together).

A Christian world-view

Saviour, Judge and King p57-59, 61 is terrific on this passage!

Jesus gives to his disciples (and to us) a view on reality: this world and the next.

First, we need to understand him. Yes, he is the Christ ... but he will suffer and be killed in this world, in contrast to Jewish expectations that he would be a military leader to rescue them from Roman occupation. But raised from the dead, he will be given rule in an everlasting kingdom in the next world (as predicted of the 'Son of Man' in Daniel 7). Three disciples are given the briefest glimpse now that he really is this divine Son of God, God's chosen one.

What then does it mean to follow him? Disciples must live in a way that matches the kind of Christ he is. In this world, we must lose personal reputation, status or rule as we live for Jesus by not being ashamed of him and his words. And we do this because we recognise the far greater value of the next world ... and being part of that is worth sacrificing all kinds of things now.

Application

- **lose life now.** Following Jesus means publicly acknowledging him (despite the potential personal cost): is that how I define discipleship?
- **save life then.** The Jesus who meekly bowed his head to die as my Saviour is the gloriously dazzling Son whom all the world must serve. Do I believe that this vision of the future reality is true reality ... really?!

Group Study Outline

Luke 9:21-36

Theme Sentence

Jesus (and his followers) must lose life now, to save life in his eternal kingdom.

Launching Question

Someone at work asks you: 'what does it mean for you to follow Jesus, in your daily life?' What would you say ...?

READ Luke 9:21-36

Questions

Now that he has been recognised as the Christ (20), Jesus goes on to teach his disciples what this implies (correcting many contemporary unbiblical hopes).

In 22, what does Jesus say will happen to him?

Why would Jesus' disciples would have been surprised by this?

Jesus often referred to himself as 'Son of Man', a title from Daniel 7:9-14.

What is given to 'the Son of Man' in Daniel 7:13-14?

From Daniel 7:9-10, when will he be given this?

So what is Jesus speaking about in Luke 9:26?

In 9:23-26 Jesus tells his disciples how they should live and why.

When must we 'lose' our lives if we are to save them?

And when will our lives be saved?

How does this fit in with what Jesus himself is doing (eg from 22)?

According to these verses, how should Jesus' disciples live?

What do Jesus' references to himself (note the emphasis on 'me'/'my') teach us about what is involved in 'losing' our lives?

What does this mean in practice for us?

In 28-36, the voice from the cloud is God speaking (cf Exodus 19:9).

What is God saying to the three disciples (... and to us)?

Why is it important that God should confirm who Jesus is (particularly in the light of what Jesus said in 9:22-27)?

How would the three disciples now understand 9:22-27 after 9:28-36?

Thinking it through

How does this passage help us to understand who Jesus is?

How does this passage help us to understand what he came to do? and why?

How does this passage help us to understand how Jesus' disciples should live?

And why should Jesus' disciples live like that?

What are we being told here about the future to sustain in normal life today?

How actually will that sustain us?

Using no jargon (!), what does it mean to follow Jesus? (*cf Launching Question*)

How does this passage challenge you, as you seek to follow Jesus?

How does this passage encourage you, as you seek to follow Jesus?

What is the main thing that you have learnt from this passage?

What are you going to do about that?