

Series: The Gospel of Luke

Sermon: The Christian Embrace

Passage: Luke 9:18-26 (ESV)

Illustration:

Need: Following Jesus demands a correct confession of who He is and the willing embrace of way He has walked.

I. Presuppositions about belief, faith, and salvation

- Salvation is the act of God's grace made possible by the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.
- A sinner can receive God's salvation as a free gift only by faith in Jesus Christ.
- Salvation is in no way dependent upon human works.
- Faith is not just the mental assent to facts about Jesus or words repeated in a prayer stance.
- Faith is an accurate understanding, belief and confession of who Jesus is, why He was crucified and that He is risen, that includes obedience and submission to Him, embracing His way of suffering to glory.

II. Deny Yourself (9:23)

- Definition - to refuse to pay attention to, disregard, renounce, strong denial.
- We renounce any confidence in our own righteousness or ability to attain God's standard of holiness.
- We renounce earthly expectations and our right to chart our own path or follow our own agenda.
- We say "NO" to what we want and "YES" to what He wants.

III. Take Up Your Cross Daily (9:23)

- Literally, "pick up the cross assigned to you and take it to the place where you will be killed on it."
- This is submitting to the possibility of death, homelessness, imprisonment, family & social rejection, physical & emotional pain & stress, etc. should following Jesus lead you there.
- Matt. 7:13-14 - many choose the wide & easy road to destruction, few choose the narrow & hard way that leads to eternal life.
- **2 Tim. 4:6-8; 2 Cor. 4:17; 1 Peter 5:10-11**

IV. Follow Me (9:23-26)

- This verb is in the present tense indicating that it is a continuous action. "Follow me right now."
- Defense #1 - If you try to save your life you will lose it. But if you will renounce your life you will save it.
- Defense #2 - Total earthly wealth apart from me results in total loss eternally. Loss of earthly wealth in this life to embrace Me results in eternal glory.
- Defense #3 - Shame on behalf of Jesus that leads to glory is far better than being the object of His future shame.

V. Warnings for the church:

- An accurate confession of Jesus is empty without embracing His way as your own.
- Embracing Jesus is not just doing more "Christian" things.