

Positioned for a Purpose – Experiencing Jesus Small Group Questions for Week #2

This week we're going to continue to explore the question, "Who am I?"

- ❖ Take a few minutes to list some words that describe you. (These words can be superficial - "I am tall", situational - "I am a plumber", or they could be less visible - "I am a procrastinator".) You may choose to share a few of these in your group or simply refer back to this list as you work through the following questions.

Read Luke 9:18-27

This passage starts with Jesus asking his disciples to consider His identity. He primes the pump by asking them, "Who do the crowds say I am?" and then, "Who do YOU say I am?"

- ❖ How do the disciples answer His questions? What would it have meant for the disciples to arrive at this conclusion?

In verses 23-26, the focus shifts away from who Jesus is, to the identity of his disciples. Then Jesus said to them all: "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me."

A paraphrase of this verse could be, "If anyone wants to be my follower, he must follow me."

- ❖ What does it mean to "follow" someone? Do you identify yourself as a "follower of Jesus" at this point in your life? If you don't, is there someone/something else you follow? If you do, how much does following Jesus factor into the decisions you make in your life?
- ❖ List some of actions Jesus said a follower of His would take.
- ❖ Is Jesus asking His followers to do something He isn't willing to do? Where do we see Jesus taking some of these actions? (Consider other episodes in His life.)
- ❖ The phrase "deny oneself" is often misunderstood as lose your uniqueness, personality, abilities, passions or preferences. In telling His followers they must deny themselves Jesus is telling them to do what He did. How do we see Jesus both expressing Himself and also denying Himself? How might you apply this to a situation you face?

In verse 25 Jesus asks, “What good is it for a man to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit his very self?”

- ❖ Gaining the whole world looks different for different people. For some, it’s acquiring wealth; for others it may be gaining approval, achieving success or experiencing the ultimate pleasure. Is there anything that competes with Obedience to God as the driving passion of your life?

Verse 26 follows, “If anyone is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of him when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.”

- ❖ Are there times when people identify themselves as followers of Jesus but are ashamed of Him and His words? Has this ever happened to you? Why is this such a big deal to Jesus?

In the space below, four Foundational Identity Truths are listed. Does one of these Truths stand out to you at this particular season of our life? How do you think truly understanding this truth could impact your life?

- 1) I am created by God.
- 2) I am a sinner in need of a Savior.
- 3) I am a child of God.
- 4) I am a follower of Jesus.