



WEEK 17

2ND SEMESTER · DISCIPLESHIP & SERVICE

Following Jesus Every Day

Knowing Christ, denying self, taking up the cross daily

SPIRITUAL THEME

Following Jesus

PERSONAL THEME

**Walking with Jesus in everyday
life**

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Spiritual Theme: Following Jesus

Personal Theme: Walking with Jesus in everyday life

Main Bible Passage: Luke 9:18-27

Parallel Passages: Mark 3:14; John 15:4-5

Lesson Aim: The students should understand that following Jesus begins with knowing who He truly is, and continues in daily surrender, obedience, relationship, and service.

1. Introduction: The Most Important Question

In this lesson, we begin the third trimester with the center of the Christian life: Jesus Himself. Bible school is not first about getting more knowledge, learning how to preach, or preparing for ministry. These things are important, but they are not the foundation. The foundation is this: we must know Jesus, walk with Jesus, obey Jesus, and become more like Jesus.

Many people want Jesus to help them. They want Him to heal, bless, protect, provide, and answer prayer. Jesus is full of mercy, and He truly cares for our needs. But in Luke 9, Jesus brings His disciples to a deeper question. He does not first ask, "What do you need from me?" He asks, "Who do you say that I am?"

A person cannot follow Jesus rightly if he does not know who Jesus truly is.

If Jesus is only a helper, then we will come to Him only when we have problems. If Jesus is only a teacher, then we may listen to some of His words and ignore others. If Jesus is only a prophet, then we may respect Him but still keep control of our lives. But if Jesus is the Christ of God, the promised Savior and King, then He must be trusted, worshiped, followed, and obeyed.

2. Reading The Whole Passage Together: Luke 9:18-27

"As he was praying alone, the disciples were with him, and he asked them, 'Who do the multitudes say that I am?' They answered, 'John the Baptizer,' but others say, 'Elijah,' and others, that one of the old prophets has risen again. He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Peter answered, 'The Christ of God.' But he warned them and commanded them to tell this to no one, saying, 'The Son of Man must suffer many things, and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and the third day be raised up.' He said to all, 'If anyone desires to come after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me. For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever will lose his life for my sake, the same will save it. For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits his own self? For whoever will be ashamed of me and of my words, of him will the Son of Man be ashamed when he comes in his glory, and the glory of the Father, and of the holy angels. But I

tell you the truth: There are some of those who stand here who will in no way taste of death until they see God's Kingdom." (Luke 9:18-27)

3. The First Movement: Who Is Jesus?

Luke tells us that Jesus was praying. This is important. Very often in Luke's Gospel, important moments happen around prayer. Jesus does not live independently from the Father. He lives in fellowship with the Father. Before He asks the disciples the great question, He is praying.

Then Jesus asks, "Who do the multitudes say that I am?" The crowds have many answers. Some say John the Baptist. Others say Elijah. Others say one of the old prophets. These answers show that the people see something special in Jesus. They know He is not an ordinary man. They see power, authority, holiness, and prophetic ministry. But their answers are still not enough.

Then Jesus turns from the crowd to the disciples: "But who do you say that I am?" This is now personal. It is possible to know what other people say about Jesus and still not know Him for yourself. It is possible to repeat church language and still not personally confess Christ from the heart.

Peter answers, "The Christ of God." This means Jesus is the promised Messiah, the Anointed One, the One sent by God to save His people and bring God's kingdom.

Discipleship begins with the right confession: Jesus is not one voice among many. He is the Christ of God.

This is very important for Bible students. They must not build their life on tradition, family religion, church activity, or ministry dreams. They must build their life on Christ Himself.

4. The Second Movement: What Kind Of Christ Is He?

After Peter confesses that Jesus is the Christ, Jesus immediately speaks about suffering. This is surprising. Many people expected the Messiah to come with political power, national victory, and visible glory. They expected the Messiah to defeat enemies and restore Israel. But Jesus teaches His disciples that He is the suffering Messiah.

He says that the Son of Man must suffer many things, be rejected by the leaders, be killed, and be raised on the third day. The word "must" is important. Jesus is not saying that His death is an accident. He is not a victim of human plans only. He is walking in the saving plan of God.

Jesus does not save us by avoiding the cross. He saves us by going to the cross.

This teaches us something deep. The glory of Christ cannot be separated from His suffering. His kingdom does not come through pride, violence, or selfish power. It comes through obedience to the Father, sacrificial love, death, and resurrection.

For students preparing for ministry, this is a serious lesson. If our Lord walked the road of humility and suffering, we must not build a ministry on pride, status, or the desire to be seen. The servant of Jesus must learn the way of Jesus.

5. The Third Movement: The Call To Follow

After Jesus speaks about His own suffering, He calls everyone to follow Him. He says, "If anyone desires to come after me..." This call is open to all people. It is not only for pastors. It is not only for evangelists. It is not only for Bible school students. Every Christian is called to be a disciple.

Jesus then gives three parts of discipleship: deny yourself, take up your cross, and follow Him.

To deny yourself does not mean that you hate yourself or pretend you have no value. Human beings are made in the image of God. But to deny yourself means that self is no longer on the throne. My will is no longer highest. My feelings are no longer my master. My plans are no longer the final authority. Jesus becomes Lord over my whole life.

To take up the cross was a very strong picture. In the Roman world, the cross was not a decoration. It was an instrument of shame, suffering, and death. When Jesus says this, He is calling His disciples to die to the old life: sin, pride, selfish ambition, fear of people, love of money, sexual impurity, and the desire to control everything.

Dietrich Bonhoeffer famously wrote: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die." This is a hard sentence, but it helps us understand Luke 9. Jesus does not call us to add a little religion to our old life. He calls us to die to the old life and live under His Lordship.

Following Jesus is not Jesus helping me build my own kingdom. Following Jesus is me surrendering to His kingdom.

Sketchnote: Following Jesus Every Day

6. The Great Exchange: Losing Life And Finding Life

Jesus continues: "Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever will lose his life for my sake, the same will save it." This sounds strange at first. But Jesus is teaching the deepest truth about life.

If I try to save my life by keeping control, I will lose the true purpose of life. If I live only for comfort, money, respect, pleasure, or my own plans, my life becomes smaller and emptier. I may look successful, but before God I am poor.

Jesus then asks, "What does it profit a man if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits his own self?" This is one of the most serious questions in the Bible. A man may gain land, money, education, marriage, children, position, ministry influence, and public respect. But if he loses his soul, he has lost everything.

This must be taught slowly and clearly. The students should feel the weight of this question. In Uganda, as in many places, people may feel strong pressure to become successful, respected, and financially secure. These things are not evil in themselves. But if they become higher than Jesus, they become idols.

A life kept for self will finally be lost. A life surrendered to Jesus will finally be saved.

7. Walking With Jesus In Everyday Life

The personal theme for this week is walking with Jesus in everyday life. This is very important because discipleship is often tested in ordinary places. It is tested at home, in relationships, in private thoughts, in money matters, in how we speak, in how we respond when we are corrected, and in how we behave when nobody is watching.

Following Jesus is not only a Sunday matter. It is not only a Bible school matter. It is not only a pulpit matter. A person may preach strongly and still fail to follow Jesus privately. A person may sing loudly and still refuse obedience at home. A person may know doctrine and still be proud, harsh, or dishonest.

So we must ask practical questions:

- Do I follow Jesus with my words, especially when I am angry?
- Do I follow Jesus with my body, especially in sexual purity?
- Do I follow Jesus with my money, especially when I am tempted to be dishonest?
- Do I follow Jesus in family pressure, cultural expectations, and fear of people?
- Do I follow Jesus when ministry is hard and nobody thanks me?

These questions are not meant to bring condemnation. They are meant to bring truth. Jesus calls us into the light so that He can forgive us, cleanse us, and teach us to walk with Him.

8. Parallel Passage 1: Mark 3:14

"He appointed twelve, that they might be with him, and that he might send them out to preach." (Mark 3:14)

This verse gives us a very important order. Jesus appointed the twelve first "that they might be with him," and then "that he might send them out to preach." Being with Jesus comes before being sent by Jesus.

The first calling of a disciple is not activity for Jesus, but nearness to Jesus.

This is a necessary warning for Bible school students. It is possible to love ministry more than Jesus. It is possible to love preaching more than prayer. It is possible to love leadership more than obedience. It is possible to love being used by God more than being changed by God.

True ministry must flow from life with Jesus. The preacher must first be a follower. The teacher must first be a learner. The leader must first be a servant. The one who speaks the Word must also live under the Word.

9. Parallel Passage 2: John 15:4-5

"Remain in me, and I in you. As the branch can't bear fruit by itself unless it remains in the vine, so neither can you, unless you remain in me. I am the vine. You are the branches. He who remains in me and I in him bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing." (John 15:4-5)

Jesus uses the picture of a vine and branches. A branch does not produce fruit by trying harder alone. It bears fruit by remaining connected to the vine. In the same way, a disciple bears fruit by remaining in Christ.

This protects us from two dangers. The first danger is laziness, where a person says, "God will do everything, so I do not need to obey." That is wrong. The disciple must obey. The second danger is self-effort, where a person says, "I can serve God by my own strength." That is also wrong. Jesus says, "Apart from me you can do nothing."

Christian fruit comes from a life that remains in Christ. Without Him, even religious activity becomes empty.

10. Theological Summary

The lesson can be summarized in four clear truths. First, Jesus is the Christ of God. We do not follow Him because He is useful to our plans. We follow Him because He is Lord. Second, Jesus is the suffering and risen Savior. He saves us through His death and resurrection. Third, Jesus calls every believer to deny self, take up the cross, and follow Him. Fourth, the disciple finds true life not by keeping control, but by surrendering to Christ.

This is not a message of hopeless suffering. It is a message of life. Jesus does not call us to death because He wants to destroy us. He calls us to die to the false life so that we may receive true life in Him.

11. Main Application For The Students

The most important application is this: each student must personally answer Jesus' question. Not only, "What does my church say?" Not only, "What does my family say?" Not only, "What does my pastor say?" But: "Who do I say Jesus is?"

If Jesus is truly the Christ of God, then my whole life belongs to Him. My body belongs to Him. My future belongs to Him. My relationships belong to Him. My money belongs to Him. My ministry belongs to Him. My suffering belongs to Him. My plans belong to Him.

The true disciple says: Jesus, You are not only part of my life. You are Lord over my whole life.

12. Discussion Questions

1. Why does Jesus ask, "Who do you say that I am?" before He calls the disciples to take up the cross?
2. What is the difference between respecting Jesus and following Jesus?
3. What does it mean to deny yourself in daily life?
4. What are some things people in our culture may love more than Jesus?
5. Why must a Bible school student learn to be with Jesus before doing ministry for Jesus?

13. Group Exercise

Divide the class into small groups. Give each group one area of everyday life: family, money, relationships, private purity, leadership, or ministry. Each group should discuss how a disciple follows Jesus in that area.

Each group should answer: What temptations are common in this area? What would obedience to Jesus look like? What part of Luke 9:18-27 speaks most clearly to this area?

After discussion, each group gives a short report to the class.

14. Memory Statement

A disciple is someone who knows Jesus as the Christ, surrenders self-rule, takes up the cross, remains close to Him, and follows Him every day.

15. Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus, You are the Christ of God. You are our Savior, our King, and our Lord. Forgive us where we have wanted Your help but not Your rule. Forgive us where we have loved comfort, respect, money, or control more than You. Teach us to deny ourselves, take up our cross, and follow You every day. Help us to remain in You, walk with You, and serve from a heart that belongs fully to You. Make us true disciples, for the glory of the Father, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.