



WEEKLY STUDY

WEEK ELEVEN

This week's passage from Luke (Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday's readings) took place when Jesus was alone with the disciples. In the focused time away from the crowds, Jesus asked some crucial questions. Think of your time of study and prayer this week as time away with Jesus. Let him look you in the eyes and consider what your life as a follower of Jesus says about the One you follow.

Peace of Christ,
Pastor Mark Youngman

If you are studying with your Providence Small Group or Discipleship Group, you can share from daily readings as well as the additional questions at the bottom of this guide. If you would like to get connected visit prov.church/smallgroups.

Find a time each day to read the passage of scripture and follow the daily prayer prompt.

DAILY STUDY

MONDAY: LUKE 9.18-20 (ESV)

Now it happened that as he was praying alone, the disciples were with him. And he asked them, "Who do the crowds say that I am?"¹⁹ And they answered, "John the Baptist. But others say, Elijah, and others, that one of the prophets of old has risen."²⁰ Then he said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered, "The Christ of God."

- It is interesting that Jesus was *alone* but *with* his disciples. We can sometimes feel that we are alone while in a large crowd. But here Jesus was needing space away from the crowds to be alone/with. After escaping the throngs of people, Jesus was able to ask his disciples to consider who Jesus really was to them. *Who do others say that I am? Who do you say that I am?* The strangers in the crowds surely had a variety of thoughts as to who this miracle-worker truly was, but the disciples were with him in every aspect of life. They had reason to believe that Jesus was and is the Christ, the Messiah, the One God sent to be the Savior of the world. **When was the last time you experienced being alone with Jesus?**
- *Jesus, I long to spend time in your presence. I don't need all of the fanfare and attention, I just want to be reminded that you are the Christ. Amen.*

TUESDAY: LUKE 9.20-22 (ESV)

“But who do you say that I am?” And Peter answered, “The Christ of God.”

²¹ And he strictly charged and commanded them to tell this to no one, ²² saying, “The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be killed, and on the third day be raised.

- When you have a sense of the future that is laid out ahead of you, you hold your words and actions carefully. Jesus knew that it was not yet time for the whole world to hear his identity claim as the Son of God. Most of the world wouldn't know until after his death and resurrection. **Who are you wanting to share Jesus with today? How will you discern the right time and place to share that he is the Messiah? What factors will you consider?**
- *Lord God, I trust in your Spirit to guide me in proclaiming Jesus to all I meet. Give me the words and the wisdom to share in alignment with you. Amen.*

WEDNESDAY: LUKE 9.23-27 (ESV)

And he said to all, “If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses or forfeits himself? ²⁶ For whoever is 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. ²⁷ But I tell you truly, there are some standing here who will not taste death until they see the kingdom of God.”

- This third question from Jesus to his disciples is where the rubber meets the road. It's one thing to pay attention to what others say about Jesus, it's another thing to consider what you say about Jesus. And now the disciples are told to take up a cross and follow Jesus—to lose their lives for his sake. *What does it benefit you to gain everything the world has to offer but no longer be yourself?* To be truly yourself, you have to see yourself in relationship to Jesus. The way to new life in Jesus is through his life, death and resurrection. **What does it mean for you to take up your cross daily and follow Jesus?**
- *Jesus, you are the Christ, and I want to follow you daily. I confess that I am easily distracted by the short-term gains of this world. Set my heart instead of the kingdom of God. Amen.*

THURSDAY: 1 TIMOTHY 2.5-7 (NIV)

For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, ⁶ who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed to at the proper time. ⁷ And for this purpose I was appointed a herald and an apostle—I am telling the truth, I am not lying—and a true and faithful teacher of the Gentiles.

- This is how Paul talked about Jesus the Christ. Not only did he know who Jesus was, he saw it as his core purpose in life to tell others about him. He is explaining that God's saving work through Jesus is for all people. Having once been a man who sought to exclude (and kill) those who seemed to be outside of God's story, he now knows that Jesus is for all people. He is compelled to serve as a herald and a teacher of this truth. **What does the gospel of Jesus Christ compel you to do?**

- *God, I long for the boldness of Paul to know my purpose in your Kingdom and to point others to Christ. Amen.*

FRIDAY: LUKE 14.27-30 (ESV)

Whoever does not bear his own cross and come after me cannot be my disciple.²⁸ For which of you, desiring to build a tower, does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has enough to complete it?²⁹ Otherwise, when he has laid a foundation and is not able to finish, all who see it begin to mock him,³⁰ saying, ‘This man began to build and was not able to finish.’

- Later in the gospel of Luke we find Jesus urging his disciples to consider the cost. He knew that as events were ramping up, they would come face to face with the cost of discipleship. He wanted them to consider it then because things were about to get more difficult. They would be tempted to walk away from the foundation that had been built in their lives with him. The metaphor he used was of a watchtower. A watchtower requires a wide and strong base. Jesus wanted his disciples to be prepared to finish the race well. **We all have different approaches to projects and mission. Are you a one-project-at-a-time type person, or do you juggle multiple projects to completion?**
- *Jesus, I don't like to be mocked by others, but even more so, I want to be faithful to you. Let the foundation of my faith in you lead to a life of complete devotion and cross-bearing discipleship. Amen.*

SATURDAY: 1 CORINTHIANS 12.27 (NIV)

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it.

- When we say that Jesus is the Christ, the Messiah, God's own Son who has come to bring salvation to the whole world, we are also saying that, as his body on earth, we are responsible for embodying his salvation. Jesus is the Christ, and we are his body! **Name the ways you feel connected to the body of Christ.**
- *Holy God, Jesus is the head of your church and I am humbled to re-present Christ to the world as part of this great movement! Thank you for seeking me out and drawing me in! Amen.*

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

The three questions that were posed to the disciples are also posed to us. Share your response to each one. Why does it matter?

1. Who do others say Jesus is? What does the world say about Jesus?
2. Who do you say Jesus is?
3. What will it profit you if you gain the whole world but lose your soul?