

The Cost and Glory of Following Jesus

1. Jesus Sends Out the Twelve (Luke 9:1–6)

Jesus gave the twelve disciples a remarkable gift: power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases. Then He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick.

He instructed them to travel light—no staff, no bag, no bread, no money, not even an extra tunic (a change of clothes). Wherever they entered a house, they were to stay there until they left the town. If a place rejected them, they were to shake the dust off their feet as a testimony against it.

Personal Application: God calls us to rely on Him fully when we step out in service. Often, we feel like we need more resources before we act, but obedience comes first. Where is God calling you to step out in faith, even if you feel unprepared?

They went out preaching the gospel everywhere—and the power of their message and miracles spread so quickly that even Herod heard about it and was deeply perplexed.

2. Herod's Curiosity About Jesus (Luke 9:7–9)

Herod was confused by the reports. Some said Jesus was John the Baptist raised from the dead; others thought Elijah had appeared, or one of the ancient prophets. Herod said, *"I beheaded John. So who is this I hear such things about?"* He wanted to see Jesus—but his heart was not ready for real repentance.

Personal Application: Curiosity about Jesus is not the same as surrendering to Him. Many people today are intrigued by Jesus but are not willing to bow to Him as King. Where is your heart: curious or surrendered?

3. Jesus Feeds the Five Thousand (Luke 9:10–17)

After their journey, Jesus and the apostles tried to retreat to a quiet place near Bethsaida. But the crowds followed, desperate to hear more. Rather than being irritated, Jesus welcomed them, taught them about the kingdom, and healed those who needed it.

As the day wore on, the disciples urged Jesus to send the crowd away to find food. But Jesus replied, *"You give them something to eat."* They had only five loaves and two fish—nowhere near enough for thousands.

Jesus took the loaves and fish, blessed them, broke them, and gave them to the disciples to distribute. Everyone ate and was filled—and twelve baskets of leftovers were collected!

Personal Application: When you give Jesus the little you have, He multiplies it beyond what you can imagine. Are you holding back because you think you don't have enough to offer? Surrender it anyway—watch what He will do.

4. Peter's Confession and Jesus' First Prophecy of His Death (Luke 9:18–22)

While Jesus was praying privately with His disciples, He asked, "Who do the crowds say that I am?" They gave the common answers—John the Baptist, Elijah, or an ancient prophet. Then Jesus asked the ultimate question:

"But who do you say that I am?"

Peter boldly answered, *"The Christ of God."*

But Jesus warned them not to tell anyone yet—because they didn't fully understand what the Messiah had come to do. He wasn't coming yet as a conquering king. First, He would suffer, be rejected, die, and rise again.

Personal Application: Knowing who Jesus is—truly knowing Him—changes everything. It demands more than admiration; it calls for surrender. Who do *you* say Jesus is?

5. The Call to True Discipleship (Luke 9:23–27)

Jesus then laid out what it really means to follow Him:

- *"If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me."*
- *"Whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will save it."*
- *"What profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and is himself destroyed or lost?"*

Following Jesus means dying to self—laying aside selfish ambitions, dreams, and comforts, and choosing daily obedience.

Personal Application: The call to follow Christ is a call to die to "me first." Where in your life does self still reign? Deny it. Take up the cross daily. Follow Him wholeheartedly.

Jesus promised: some of them would not die until they saw the kingdom of God revealed

6. The Transfiguration (Luke 9:28–36)

About eight days later, Jesus took Peter, James, and John up a mountain to pray. As He prayed, He was transfigured—His face shone, and His clothes became dazzling white like flashes of lightning.

Moses and Elijah appeared in glory, speaking with Jesus about His upcoming departure—His death in Jerusalem.

Peter, overwhelmed, suggested building three tents for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah. But a cloud came and overshadowed them, and a voice spoke:

"This is My beloved Son. Hear Him!"

Personal Application: Jesus is greater than Moses (the Law) and Elijah (the Prophets). He is the fulfillment of all Scripture. Are you listening to His voice above all others today?

7. Jesus Heals a Demon-Possessed Boy (Luke 9:37–43)

Coming down the mountain, Jesus was met by a desperate father whose only son was tormented by a demon. The disciples had tried to cast it out but failed.

Jesus rebuked the demon, healed the boy, and restored him to his father.

Personal Application: Faithlessness limits what God can do through us. Are you trusting Him fully when faced with impossible problems? Bring your brokenness to Jesus—He is more than able.

8. Jesus Again Predicts His Death (Luke 9:44–45)

Jesus again warned His disciples: *"The Son of Man is about to be betrayed into the hands of men."* But they didn't understand—and were afraid to ask.

Personal Application: Sometimes we resist hearing hard truths. Are you willing to let Jesus show you the whole truth, even when it's uncomfortable?

9. True Greatness and the Spirit of Service (Luke 9:46–50)

The disciples, still misunderstanding the kingdom, argued over who would be the greatest. Jesus, knowing their hearts, took a child and said:

"Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me... for he who is least among you will be great."

True greatness in God's kingdom is found in humility and service, not position or recognition.

Personal Application: Are you seeking to be noticed, or are you content to serve quietly for Christ's sake?

When John told Jesus they tried to stop someone casting out demons in His name because he wasn't "one of us," Jesus corrected him:

"He who is not against us is on our side."

10. The Cost of Following Jesus (Luke 9:51–62)

As Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem—knowing the cross awaited—He encountered different responses:

- A man said, "I will follow You wherever You go," but Jesus warned: following Him meant homelessness and hardship.
- Jesus called another, who replied, "Lord, let me first bury my father." Jesus responded, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and preach the kingdom of God."
- Another said, "Lord, I will follow You, but let me first say farewell to those at home." Jesus said, "No one, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Personal Application: Following Jesus requires a wholehearted commitment. It's not Jesus *plus* my plans, or Jesus *later*. It's Jesus first, Jesus now, Jesus only.

Final Reflection: The Journey to the Cross and the Crown

Luke 9 reveals both the cost and the glory of following Jesus. He doesn't sugarcoat the path—it involves self-denial, sacrifice, suffering, and perseverance. But the reward is breathtaking: sharing in His glory, His kingdom, and His life.

Will you take up your cross daily and follow Him?

Will you lose your life for His sake—and in doing so, find it?

Will you be unashamed of Him in a world that mocks Him?

The kingdom belongs to those who hear Him, trust Him, serve humbly, and refuse to look back.