

GOD'S STORY - MY STORY

SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION GUIDE

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SERMON SERIES: Jesus Said

From ancient times, the followers of Jesus celebrated his words above all others for they paved the way for them to live their lives passionately. In the modern world, the practice of meditation on Jesus' words is increasingly falling out of practice, even among Christians. In this series, we explore how a return to the words of Jesus provides a means for the recovery of a passion for God that promises a better way of living.

TODAY'S SERMON: *Costly Discipleship*

Following Jesus is not easy. Jesus teaches that the Way costs everything we have and are.

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THE SERMON TEXT: Luke 9:23-27

²³ Jesus said to all, "If any wish to come after me, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. ²⁴ For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will save it. ²⁵ For what does it profit them if they gain the whole world but lose or forfeit themselves? ²⁶ Those who are ashamed of me and of my words, of them the Son of Man will be ashamed when he comes in his glory and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels. ²⁷ Indeed, truly I tell you, there are some standing here who will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God."

GOD' STORY

- 1.** According to Luke 9:23, there is one stipulation for anyone who wishes to follow Jesus. What is that stipulation?
- 2.** Jesus describes a paradox that occurs when a person decides to follow him. What is that paradox?
- 3.** Luke 9:25 addresses the difference between living by the values of the world as opposed to living by the values of Christian discipleship. What is the difference between these two sets of values according to what Jesus said here?
- 4.** In Luke 9:26 Jesus makes a comment about how we are to live out our discipleship in public. What does he encourage us to do?
- 5.** Jesus makes a puzzling promise in Luke 9:27. Why is his promise difficult to conceive? What do you think Jesus meant by this?

MY STORY

1. Considering Jesus' comment in Luke 9:23, what do you find most challenging in your attempts at following Jesus?
2. What does it mean to die to self and rise to Christ in your personal journey of faith?
3. Think about your priorities in life. What are the things that you value most? Are these values more reflective of worldly values or Christian discipleship values as Jesus describes them in Luke 9:25?
4. How comfortable are you speaking about your faith in Jesus and your discipleship in public? What holds you back from sharing your faith more?
5. In what ways do you believe the kingdom of God is here now, as spoken of by Jesus in Luke 9:27?

Directions for Class

1. Open with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to open ears and hearts to the Word of God presented in the scripture of the day. Pray that the Holy Spirit speak through the discussion to enlighten the group with the message of the day.
2. Inform those gathered that all are welcome to reflect and comment on the scripture and that all voices will be respected, that all will be given an opportunity to speak where the Holy Spirit moves them. Though there may be participants present with more experience and knowledge of scripture, the Holy Spirit is the teacher of the class. All participants are students of the Word.
3. Appoint someone to read the scripture slowly and prayerfully so that all may hear and understand the reading.
4. Following the reading allow for a moment of silence, that all may absorb the reading.
5. Open the floor for discussion, starting with the God's Story questions.
6. Once the God's story questions have been explored, move to the My Story questions.
7. It is not necessary to discuss all questions. It is likely that you will run out of time before addressing all questions equally. Let the Spirit guide your selection of the questions addressed and the duration of your discussion.
8. Conclude with a prayer of thanksgiving for the enlightenment gained in discussion.