



# Study Guide

**Luke 9:46-56**

***“The Way Up is Down”***

Pastor Patrick Bowler

4-14-2024

## **Consult the Scriptures:**

**Philippians 3:2-11 (cf., Acts 9:15-16)**

**2 Corinthians 11:16-30**

**Luke 9:46-56**

*(Other Scripture referenced: Rom. 5:2-5, 8:18, 8:28;  
James 1:2-4, 5:13; Php. 1:6; Lk. 22:24)*

## **Consult the Scholars:**

**Zack Eswine—**

*“Our goal of greatness isn’t the problem. How we define the word great is.” (Zack Eswine, Sensing Jesus [Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2013], p. 37)*

**James Edwards—**

*“In all three passion predictions, Jesus speaks of the necessity of his rejection, suffering, and death; and following all three the disciples voice their ambitions for status and prestige. Jesus speaks of surrendering his life; the disciples speak of fulfilling theirs. He counts the cost of discipleship; they count its assets.” (James R. Edwards, PNTC: The Gospel According to Mark [Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 2002], p. 285)*

## Discuss:

1. Pastor Patrick introduced the following formula as relates to our spiritual growth and/or formation:

$$L = f (P, T, R)$$

*Key: Leadership development (L), i.e., spiritual formation, equals (=) the function of (f) God's processes (P), time (T), and the individual's response patterns (R). Discuss how this formula plays out in our Christian lives.*

2. Read Php. 3:2-11 and 2 Cor. 11:16-30 and discuss. Use Paul's life as an example of the above formula of spiritual formation? What are some of the processes God used in Paul's life (*P*)? How did Paul respond to those process (*R*)? What was the result?
3. What did you think of the exercise on Sunday (i.e., the moment Pastor Patrick had us pull out our phones)? Did you find that helpful? If you are comfortable, what examples from your own life could you share about the ways in which God has shaped you over time (*T*)?
4. Read Luke 9:46-56 and discuss. What similarities do you see between these three accounts?
5. Read the above quotes from Eswine and Edwards and discuss. How do these quotes relate to the text? How do they relate to our own lives? What is the difference between God's view of "greatness" and the world's (or our own)?
6. Like the disciples, what lessons have you had to learn over and over again (or maybe you're still learning them)?
7. Where have you experienced growth in this last season of your life? What growth is still ahead of you?
8. Pastor Patrick talked about having a "sovereign mindset."<sup>1</sup> What did he mean?
9. What challenged you most about this week's sermon? What new insights did you take away? What questions do you still have?

---

<sup>1</sup> Clinton, J. Robert. *The Making of a Leader* (Colorado Springs, CO: NavPress. 2012), p. 186.