

Journey to the Cross

(4/6/25)

Please turn to *Luke 9*:

Before His first coming, Jesus sat at the right hand of God the Father ruling and reigning everything alongside Him. His love for mankind inspired Him to temporarily reduce Himself and take on the body of one of His creations to be Jesus of Nazareth.

When He came here He said and did lots of stuff: preached the Gospel of the Kingdom, healed the sick, raised the dead, cast out demons, sparred with the priests, turned over some tables, and more.

Everything was tied together and all of it was part of a journey He was on. In other words, these weren't just isolated and separate events He just decided to do, but all led to a far greater purpose: He was going to the Cross.

Luke 9 is part of that journey representing several navigation points along the way.

[Luk 9:1-6 ESV] 1 And he called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over all demons and to cure diseases, 2 and he sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal. 3 And he said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, no staff, nor bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not have two tunics. 4 And whatever house you enter, stay there, and from there depart. 5 And wherever they do not receive you, when you leave that town shake off the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." 6 And they departed and went through the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

He gives the 12 power/authority over demons and sickness and please understand:

- This is Kingdom power & authority which can only be given by the King; He's identifying Himself as such.
- Second, the promise of Joel 2 is that GOD is the One Who pours out His Spirit, enabling His believers to perform miracles...so Jesus is telling them He's God.
- Third, the 12 disciples are spreading the good news of the Kingdom and calling on people to believe in Jesus: it's conquest and fulfillment of Daniel 2 prophecy.

[Luk 9:7-9 ESV] 7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard about all that was happening, and he was perplexed, because it was said by some that John had been raised from the dead, 8 by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen. 9 Herod said, "John I beheaded, but who is this about whom I hear such things?" And he sought to see him.

Jesus just identified Himself as King of the Jews and now enter

Herod: the King of the Jews. Jesus' Kingship was given to Him by Father God whereas Herod's was given by Rome. Despite being Jewish, Herod doesn't know Who Jesus is. Elijah? John? Look at the end of verse 9: *"he (Herod) sought to see him (Jesus)."* He may have wanted to lay eyes on Christ, but he was blind to Who Jesus was.

[Luk 9:10-17 ESV] 10 On their return the apostles told him all that they had done. And he took them and withdrew apart to a town called Bethsaida. 11 When the crowds learned it, they followed him, and he welcomed them and spoke to them of the kingdom of God and cured those who had need of healing. 12 Now the day began to wear away, and the twelve came and said to him, "Send the crowd away to go into the surrounding villages and countryside to find lodging and get provisions, for we are here in a desolate place." 13 But he said to them, "You give them something to eat." They said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish--unless we are to go and buy food for all these people." 14 For there were about five thousand men. And he said to his disciples, "Have them sit down in groups of about fifty each." 15 And they did so, and had them all sit down. 16 And taking the five loaves and the two fish, he looked up to heaven and said a blessing over them. Then he broke the loaves and gave them to the disciples to set before the crowd. 17 And they all ate and were satisfied. And what was left over was picked up, twelve baskets of broken pieces.

His Jewish audience knew this miracle well—a similar one was performed by Elisha, the protégé of Elijah, centuries before. Remember that although Elisha was given a "double portion" of Elijah's power, his miracle only fed 100 men. Jesus fed 5000 men PLUS women and children, meaning there would have been 10 or 15 thousand people fed that day.

The miracle pointed toward God's Kingdom: that it had come. **In His Kingdom no one starves and no one goes without**, because Father God is generous and He gives abundantly.

What the miracle pointed toward even more was the Person of Jesus—a big theme here in Luke 9!—for Who could perform such a miracle? Who would have the ability to turn 5 loaves and 2 fish into enough food for thousands? Even the great Elisha didn't come close to this!

[Luk 9:18-20 ESV] 18 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."

We're right back to the question this chapter addresses over and over: ***Who is Jesus of Nazareth and why do most of the people including the king, priests, and common people keep getting it wrong?***

Jesus IS the long-awaited Messiah! Why do only His 12 disciples know this?

[Luk 9:21-22 ESV] 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."

Let verse 21 be a “wait, what?!” moment. I thought the idea was for EVERYONE to know that Jesus was the Messiah! The King bringing His Kingdom! God in the flesh walking among them! ***Yet Jesus “strictly” charged them to tell NO ONE His true identity.***

Why not? He answers this question in verse 22: 1) He must suffer many things, 2) be rejected by the priesthood, 3) be killed, and 4) rise from the dead.

Let's pause and see the brilliant unfolding plan of God!

- He HID His true identity from most on purpose.
- Suppose He hadn't...it would have been quite Second Comingish and not First Comingish.
- When He returns His journey will be the Throne.
- When He came here the first time, His journey was death on the Cross and Resurrection.

Spiritual blindness takes place over the spirits of mankind.

The last 2 weeks we've talked about how revelation that impacts our spirit is the greatest, deepest, and most life changing. Our spirit has its own eyes and ears so that it can see and hear. When our spirits don't see they are blind and when they don't hear they are deaf. God has the ability to place blinders or take them away.

He placed spiritual blindness over the majority so they wouldn't try to make this into a Second Coming event. He didn't come here to sit on the throne, but to take up His Cross. In fulfillment of OT prophecy, the priesthood and even some of the people needed to reject Him and kill Him. Turn Him over to the Gentiles, the Romans, who invented crucifixion. He needed to hang on that Cross and bleed out, and it needed to be done at a specific day and time: just when the Passover Lamb was having its blood shed in the Temple.

ET SIDE NOTE: in Romans, Paul said that a "partial blindness" is over Israel, placed there so they DON'T recognize Jesus as their Messiah. It's there because it's not time for the Second Coming yet. Jesus doesn't mount up on His white horse until all of Israel SEES—in their spirits—that He's not just their Messiah but the God of their fathers Who delivered them from Egypt.

For today, ***Jesus needed to reduce Himself from being a spirit on the throne*** in Heaven to inhabit a mortal human body of flesh and blood that could bleed, die, then come back FROM the dead.

- He never would have died if He hadn't been nailed to the Cross.
- He wouldn't have been nailed to the Cross if the people hadn't rejected Him.
- They wouldn't have rejected Him if He'd allowed them see Who He really was.
- Only the 12 know Who He is—and He tells them to keep it to themselves.

[Luk 9:23-27 ESV] 23 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."

We're all still in our first coming, starting with the disciples. A servant isn't greater than his master. If Jesus didn't come here to pursue the throne, we can't either. If Jesus came here His first time to pick up His Cross, then we do too. We'll be Kings and Priests sitting on thrones AFTER the Second Coming.

[Luk 9:28-36 ESV] 28 Now about eight days after these sayings he took with him Peter and John and James and went up on the mountain to pray. 29 And as he was praying, the appearance of his face was altered, and his clothing became dazzling white. 30 And behold, two men were talking with him, Moses and Elijah, 31 who appeared in glory and spoke of his departure, which he was about to accomplish at Jerusalem. 32 Now Peter and those who were with him were heavy with sleep, but when they became fully awake they saw his glory and the two men who stood with him. 33 And as the men were parting

from him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good that we are here. Let us make three tents, one for you and one for Moses and one for Elijah"--not knowing what he said. 34 As he was saying these things, a cloud came and overshadowed them, and they were afraid as they entered the cloud. 35 And a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "This is my Son, my Chosen One; listen to him!" 36 And when the voice had spoken, Jesus was found alone. And they kept silent and told no one in those days anything of what they had seen.

Some of my favorite verses in the Gospels! Jesus has already VERBALLY revealed to the 12 Who He is. **Now He picks 3 of them, hikes to the summit of Mt. Hermon, and transforms into His God-form!**

Verse 32: I can't figure out how the boys were "heavy with sleep." The way I reckon it they were really tired from the hike and when they arrived at the top, they collapsed and started to nod off. Just as their eyelids began to droop they saw Jesus shining like the sun and then talking with Moses and Elijah, who...just appeared. I bet they woke up then!

Note what Jesus was discussing with Moses and Elijah: His "departure." That means His death. They were talking about His journey to the Cross.

Peter says "lets make 3 tents" because it was the Feast of Tabernacles and tabernacle is an old and fancy word for "tent." Here's what would happen during said Feast: for 10 days, the Jews would move out of their homes and pitch their tents as close to the Temple as they could. They believed that God lived within the Temple and, by pitching their tents there, they get as close to Him as they can. Luke records Peter didn't know what he was suggesting and here's my take: the boys knew Jesus was the Messiah, but they didn't realize He was God come to earth. They wouldn't realize that until after the resurrection when He appears to Him and THAT is the first recorded time they acknowledge Him as God.

Thus when Pete says "lets pitch some tents!" and included JESUS in his count, **He doesn't know fully Who Jesus is.** If he did, he would have suggested pitching the tents AROUND JESUS.

So that's when Father God steps in. Just as in many times in the OT, He appears hidden by a cloud and speaks out loud: declaring Jesus to be His Son! And notice: the 3 disciples who witnessed all this keep it to themselves and don't even tell the OTHER disciples.

[Luk 9:37-42 ESV] 37 On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. 38 And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, "Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. 39 And behold, a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly cries out. It convulses him so that he foams at the mouth, and shatters him, and will hardly leave him. 40 And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not." 41

Jesus answered, "O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here." 42 While he was coming, the demon threw him to the ground and convulsed him. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit and healed the boy, and gave him back to his father.

At the foot of the same mountain, a crowd is waiting for Him to cast the demon out

of a boy that the other disciples—the ones who didn't see His God-form—could not cast out. Keep something in mind: this mountain was and IS (to this day) highly revered among Satanic cults. Long story short, it's where angels rebelled, demons were "born," and there was a cave leading into the depths of the earth at its foot called "the Gates of Hell."

Jesus displayed His authority and power over Satan in two ways here: 1) transforming into His God-form and 2) casting the demon out nobody else could. The only Person Who can overpower Satan is God.

[Luk 9:43-45 ESV] 43 And all were astonished at the majesty of God. But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples, 44 "Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men." 45 But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.

- Jesus had just transformed into His God form.
- Jesus has just cast a stubborn demon from the boy.
- Yet He gives them a reality check: He's STILL not here to ascend to the throne, but to be lifted up on the Cross.
- Verse 45: they didn't understand because God CONCEALED it from them. So He could go to the Cross and die for our sins...and give us eternal life.

[Luk 9:46-48 ESV] 46 An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. 47 But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side 48 and said to them, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, and whoever receives me receives him who sent me. For he who is least among you all is the one who is great."

Yes this is about humility but it goes deeper and speaks to what I've been telling you: **Jesus humbled Himself to take on a body and come here to pick up His cross us going to the throne.** The arguing disciples have their eyes on thrones and Jesus is saying "the way to the throne is the Cross."

[Luk 9:49-50 ESV] 49 John answered, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in your name, and we tried to stop him, because he does not follow with us." 50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you."

The other man casting out demons is demonstrating FAITH

that the Kingdom had come and was overcoming the devil. Irony: disciples unable to cast demon out of boy and now they're trying to stop someone else from casting out demons?

[Luk 9:51 ESV] 51 When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face [steadfastly, like flint] to go to Jerusalem.

Consider the following and ask yourself *if you wouldn't be tempted toward a throne* vs. death by crucifixion:

- Jesus KNEW He was God, King, and Messiah.
- He had the SUPERNATURAL POWER to overcome death, starvation, the weather, and anything else He wants to.
- He had the AUTHORITY to be King and rule over all.
- Crowds of people followed and adored Him, desiring Him to be King.
- He could transfigure to His God form—immortal and invulnerable—at will.
- Heavy hitters like Moses and Elijah worshipped Him and sought His counsel.
- He slammed his foot on the devil's head several times in just a few days.
- God the Father spoke audibly and declared Him His Son and therefore Heir of all.

Yet Jesus remained on His path to the Cross. Unlike Adam and Eve, He didn't give into temptation and ruin everything. He set His face steadfastly, like flint, to Jerusalem where pain, rejection, betrayal, and death awaited Him.

He truly is a God DESERVING of praise, thanks, and full on worship!

Until He returns, you and I are still in our “first coming” stage too. Humble and carrying the cross. One day the trumpet will sound and He will call us up into the sky! We will experience our own resurrection from the dead and, just like Jesus, the new bodies we'll get will never again be subjected to death!

GOOD NEWS is the veil HAS been lifted from us, which is why the NC is vastly superior to the old. We know Who Jesus is: the divine Son of God, Messiah, Savior, and Lord of all creation!

We know He needed to take up His Cross, die, and come back from the dead!

**We know commanded us to follow Him, and follow Him we will!
We pick up our crosses now, and take part in the resurrection later!**