

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

These questions are designed to help you talk about God's word and Pastor Brian's message with friends and family. You of course can use your own questions, but we'd like to give you this tool to encourage Biblical fellowship and discipleship in your circle of relationships. **Enjoy discovering more about Him!**

"4 IMPORTANT QUESTIONS" | LUKE 9:18-9:27 | PASTOR BRIAN BELL

WARM-UP QUESTION:

What is a common way people describe you that is incomplete?

"Who is Jesus and What did He come to do?" (Luke 9: 18-22)

Jesus asks his close followers who do they think He is, and Peter correctly answers He is the Messiah, which means He must suffer, die, and be raised to life according to Jesus. **How do people get confused about Jesus today? How does Jesus clear up those confusions today?**

"What does He call us to do?" (Luke 9: 23)

Jesus says that whoever wants to follow Him must daily deny themselves, pick up their cross, and follow Him. **What is difficult about this command? What makes it possible to obey this command?**

"Why should we do it?" (Luke 9: 24-27)

Jesus explains that obeying Him actually saves the soul and prepares someone for Jesus' 2nd coming and blesses Him. **What is encouraging about these reasons? Are there other benefits to denying yourself and following Jesus?**

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Jesus asks his followers personally who they think He is, showing that is important for each of us to individually decide what do we believe about Jesus. But Jesus goes on to show it's not just about belief but a daily lifestyle of following Him. **Does your lifestyle reflect your belief in Jesus? Ask God to give you His strength to deny yourself and follow Him in specific ways each day this week.**

4 Important Questions

I. Slide1 Announce:

- A. Slide2-7 AP: Missions Prayer. Youth Camps. Women's Summer. CFLC Back to School. Op Unity. VBS.
- B. Slide8 Baby Dedication 3rd.
- C. As per *the Supreme Court Decision* to overturn Roe v Wade, *I'm thankful to God for this historic decision, it a day to celebrate life ...*
- D. **But** we need to be a church that **doesn't gloat** about a win, **but instead** will be prepared to *help many women* who will still face an unplanned pregnancy. **We need to be a church that stands** to help mothers in their *time of crisis* or who *live in the margins*, **and** the preborn in their time of need. **We need to be a church that rejoices** for 1000's of preborn babies to have the most fundamental human right - *the right to live*. **We need to be a church that believes** every life matters & a preborn baby is a *whole-separate-unique-living-human-being*. **We need to be a church that champions** both fostering & adopting. **We need to be a church that doesn't vilify** anyone who has had an abortion, **but** points them to the *forgiveness and rescue* of **Jesus**, that we **all** are in need of. **We need to be a church that continues** our efforts in creating a culture of **life** in the communities we serve.
- E. Prayer:

II. Slide9a Intro: 4 Important Questions

- A. The feeding of the 5000 had **turned** Christ popularity, **and** had increased the *opposition* in Galilee.
1. So Jesus' ministry underwent **a change** at this point. He abandoned the performance of miracles **and** devoted Himself to the 12 apostles.
 2. They took longer journeys up north to **Tyre in Sidon**. **And** now they takeoff for a long walk up north to *Caesarea Philippi*.

- B. Slide9b Our Outline is 4 Questions: *Who is Jesus? What did He Come to Do? What does He call Us to Do? Why should we do it?*

III. Slide10 WHO IS JESUS? (18-20) READ

A. Mt16 & Mrk8 give us Jesus' **location** (beautiful mountainous regions in northern Israel, *Caesarea Philippi*). Luke doesn't give us the **location** he gives us Jesus' **devotion**.

1. Only **Luke** mentions, **and** puts this in the context of Jesus' **prayer** life.
2. There are **7 x's** Luke shows Jesus **praying**. Each at a major crossroad in His life. B4 His baptism. When His fame was growing abroad. Before He chose the 12. Here at Caesarea Philippi. At the Transfiguration. When he gave His disciples instructions on prayer. In Gethsemane.

B. **Who do the crowds say I am?** JnBap, Elijah, Prophet.

1. These each were **positive** views of Jesus, **but inaccurate** views of Him.
2. It was nice of them to place Jesus amongst this **illustrious list** of people that had gone before Him. **But** Jesus was **more than** a preacher of repentance. He was **more than** a miracle working profit. He was **more than** a weeping profit like Jeremiah.
3. **They even got some things right**. Like He was a holy man, He did a lot of good things. **But** this picture is incomplete.
 - a) If someone asks, **who is Elon Musk?** you could say *that he was born in Pretoria, South Africa*, **but** you have to say more than that.
 - b) You would have to add, he is a **wealthy, influential** person. He is the founder/CEO/Chief Engineer at **SpaceX**. CEO/Product Architect of **Tesla**. **He is the wealthiest person in the world, worth \$203 billion**.
4. **Since the enlightenment** they have tried to make **Jesus** a number of things: *A socialist, feminist, nationalist, a moral example, an ethical teacher*. Some will highlight a specific portion of His life **&** then just elevate it, **but** you end up with an **inaccurate incomplete picture of Jesus**.

a) Often times someone is seeking to honor Jesus in 1 of those areas, but He is *not honored* by any of them.

b) When one says, *He is as wonderful as 1 of the prophets*, it's like saying to your spouse, "I think you are a beautiful women, among many beautiful women." :) [free advice, you better duck]

5. Jesus is in a category by Himself. What honors Him is to see Him for who He really is. There aren't many people anymore that deny Jesus existed!

a) Slide11 Bart Ehrman (an agnostic atheist American NT scholar, focusing on textual criticism of the NT). In his book, *Did Jesus Exist Historically* said, "There is no scholar in any college or University in the western world who teaches classics, ancient history, New Testament, early Christianity, any related field who doubts that Jesus existed. The reason for thinking Jesus existed is abundantly attested in early sources. So I'm sorry, I respect your disbelief, but if you want to go where the evidence goes I think that atheists have done themselves a disservice by jumping on the bandwagon of *mysticism*. Because frankly it makes you look foolish to the outside world if that's what you are going to believe, you just look foolish."

C. Slide12a But who do you say I am? We find the right answer in a surprising place, out of the mouth of Peter. He is the Christ of God!

1. Fuller version Mt.16:16, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

D. Slide12b The Christ of God. Christ = not his last name. The Messiah. The anointed one. The one who was promised in the OT. The Long awaited deliverer of Israel, the One who came to save the nations.

1. So far, the Father declared this at His baptism. The demons spoke it at various times. And now a human finally gets it right.

2. Matthew let's us know it wasn't because Peter was having a good day, but that His Father who is in heaven revealed it to him. (Mt.16:17)

a) And this is what we pray for our unbelieving friends, that the Father in heaven would open their eyes and reveal who His Son is, to them.

E. If you're not a christian this is what we call **you** to. We are **not** calling you to be *more religious*. Or *more moral*. Or *be nicer*. People often will say, *I don't need religion, I have a conscience*. Assuming to come to faith they have to *modify their behavior* (though coming to Christ does change your behavior). **But** that's **not** what we are calling people to. **It's calling people to identify who Jesus Christ is, and then living our lives in alignment with who He is ... every single day.**

1. **Slide13** Today, *this morning*, what is your answer, what is your personal conviction who do **you** say Jesus is? [your answer is a matter of life...or death]

IV. **Slide14 WHAT DID HE COME TO DO? (21,22) READ**

A. Here's what they know of **Messiah/the Christ** when He comes ... *Messiah's win!*
So a suffering Messiah *did not make sense*.

1. And we have *the wrong Jesus* if we don't understand these 2 verses, being central to Him being the Messiah.

B. **Tell this to no one** - this side of the cross, *tell everyone!* **But** at this point they didn't completely understand it. They weren't ready. **To say the word Messiah** was a politically charged word in the Roman empire. It would incite a political movement.

1. **First** they needed to understand who Messiah was.
2. **But also** that He *must* [theologians call it a divine *must*] do **4 things**:
He must suffer, be rejected, be killed, be raised. He wasn't coming to overthrow *Rome*, but to *overthrow our sin*, through His death & Res.

C. It might have been easy to predict *his death*, but nobody can predict their *resurrection*, **and** on which day it would happen.

1. So His **death wouldn't be** His last word. *It was Fri but Sun was coming!*

V. **Slide15a WHAT DOES HE CALL US TO DO? (23) READ**

A. **Slide15b Salvation** is *God's gift to us* because Jesus died for us on the cross.
Discipleship is *our gift to Him* as we give-up our own way (deny self), take up our cross daily, **&** follow the Lord in everything.

- B. **Deny himself** - coming to Jesus takes you away from being a *self-exalter* to being a *Christ-exalter*. It's saying, this world has *nothing* for me, & Christ is *everything* to me.
- C. **Take up his cross** - not take up your *personal tendency's* like, your temper, your anger, or your battle with constant worry. Uhh, those *aren't* crosses, those are *sins*.
- D. When you think **cross**, *don't think jewelry*. Jesus has in mind *torture, cruelty, shame, terror* (that's what the Romans used crosses for).
1. When the Roman Empire crucified a criminal or captive, the victim was often forced to *carry his cross part of the way* through the city, to the site.
 - a) **Taking up your cross for Rome** meant that *the Roman Empire was correct* in the sentence of death imposed on you, & *that* Rome was right and you were wrong.
 - b) **Taking up your cross for Jesus** meant that *Jesus was right* and that we as his disciples would even follow Him to our deaths. (exactly what the religious leaders refused to do).¹
 2. **PS:** there were no *known survivors* of a roman crucifixion. Being crucified meant, *it was over*. It was like Jesus was thinking, *what can I say that would explain a total claim on your whole life?* How about *take up your cross*. He wants **all** of us.
- E. And Luke says, **daily**. So not just **die** (martyrdom), **but each day/every day decide to live this way of the cross** (self sacrifice). Practically as a follower of Christ you may face *shame, embarrassment, rejection*.
1. You will have to **put to death** sin/selfishness. You may be called to do hard things for the sake of the gospel.
 2. **Why should you do this?** We are getting there.

VI. Slide 16 **WHY SHOULD WE DO IT? (24-27) READ**

- A. **Slide 17a** Drifting snow and bitter cold threatened the lives of Indian evangelist Sadhu Sundar Singh and his Tibetan companion, as they crossed a **Himalayan**

¹ adapted from: Walvoord, J. F., Zuck, R. B., & Dallas Theological Seminary.

mountain pass. Fighting the "*sleep of death*", they stumbled over a mound in the trail. It was **a man**, half dead. The Tibetan refused to stop but continued on alone. The compassionate **Sadhu**, however, shouldered the burden the best he could. Through his struggling, he began to warm up, as did the unconscious man. **But** before reaching the village they found the Tibetan - *frozen to death*.

1. **Slide17b** The principles that Jesus taught are still true: *If you try to hang on to your life, you'll lose it. But if you give up your life for Jesus sake, you'll save it.*

B. Notice in these 3 vss (24-26) they start with the word **for**.

C. **Slide18a** Jesus gives **3 reasons** why it's **wise** to follow Jesus: [alliteration "P"]

1. **Paradox** - why should I do it? *for my/His sake*. Phil.3:8 ***For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ*** (rubbish/skubala).
 - a) We look to Jesus as *not just* one who is **useful** to get us out of hell.
 - b) We look to Jesus as one who is **beautiful**. This is *not utilitarianism* this is **worship**. We follow **Jesus for His sake**.
 - c) We have decided *this world* has *nothing* for us **and Jesus** is **everything** to us.
2. **Profit** - why should I do it? *else you lose your own soul*. There are things more important than riches. Eternal life is better than riches.
 - a) **Slide18b** You really have nothing to lose you have everything to gain.
 - b) We talk about this as the cost of discipleship, what we have to **give up** to follow Jesus. **But** when you consider what you **gain** you're not losing anything, you're gaining everything.
 - c) **Ask instead**, *what is the cost of non-discipleship?* What are you losing when you **don't** follow **Jesus Christ** (you forfeit your self, your soul!).
3. **Parousia** - why should I do it? *2nd coming/when He comes*. Just as Jesus predicted His *death and resurrection*, **and** they came to pass, **so Slide18c** this prediction. This next event **IS** going to happen!
 - a) **Why follow Jesus?** Because we shall stand before Him. Glory is coming to us.

- b) Did you know the chance of your child becoming a pro athlete is **.02%**, but the chances of standing before a holy God is **100%**. *Prioritize accordingly.*
- c) **Don't be ashamed of Me nor My words** - this is for those who say, I like **Jesus** but there are parts of *the bible* I don't like/don't believe.

(1) You can't like a person but not their words. Later, tell a friend, *I like you, but don't speak. Or, I don't like anything you have to say, but I like you.* We follow **Jesus** by following **His Words**.

D.(27) **Not** speaking of *2nd Coming* here because they die before that. This could refer to **the res**, or to **the ascension**, just **basic kingdom activity**. **But** most see it tied to what comes next, **the transfiguration**.

E. It's not only **right** to follow Jesus, it is **wise** to follow Jesus.

1. **Following Jesus** is the path to **real life**. **Following Jesus** is the path to **real gain**. **Following Jesus** is the path to **real glory**.

F. It's my greatest privilege to remind you again this morning, **Jesus is Coming Again!** And whatever *skubala* we endure in this life, will be **no comparison** to **everything that is coming to us**.

G. **Slide19** If you are not a christian this is who we call you to. It says, *Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord will be saved.*

H. Keywords: disciple, second coming, Jesus, prophet.