



There are many verses to cover this week – let me encourage you to read them a few times before you lead and then be sure to cover them at least once during your community group. Make sure to get to the application questions on page 3.

Reflect over the past week, How would you describe your general state of discipleship? (You might want to lead out with some ways you “surrendered to God leading you” and some ways that you decided you “could handle this one better without God’s leadership.”

Let’s look at how Jesus describes those He interacts with in the following verses.

Luke 9:37-61

*“On the next day, when they had come down from the mountain, a great crowd met him. And behold, a man from the crowd cried out, “Teacher, I beg you to look at my son, for he is my only child. 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. And I begged your disciples to cast it out, but they could not.” Jesus answered, “O faithless and twisted generation, how long am I to be with you and bear with you? Bring your son here.” 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. 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, “Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.” 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. An argument arose among them as to which of them was the greatest. But Jesus, knowing the reasoning of their hearts, took a child and put him by his side 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.” 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.” But Jesus said to him, “Do not stop him, for the one who is not against you is for you.” When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them? But he turned and rebuked them. And they went on to another village.” “As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”” Luke 9:37-61ESV*

What does this say about the people in the passage? -

- v. 37-42 Jesus describes the disciples as **faithless and twisted**. Whoa! that sounds kind of harsh. Why did Jesus describe them this way? The disciples were not able to cast out the demon. Remember

earlier they had been sent out on the “Disciple’s World Tour” to proclaim the kingdom of God and heal. What potentially has changed?

- v. 43-45 **Dim disciples** (Jesus told them and then concealed from them - the HS had not illuminated them yet)

The audience was astonished and marveling. Jesus tells his disciples to listen and hang on to it - Jesus foretells his impending capture, but they didn’t get it. This is another foreshadowing of what is to happen soon to Jesus. At least the third time He has told them and then not let them fully comprehend it (possibly to keep them from trying to preempt God’s plan for salvation)

v.46-48 **Arrogant and prideful** - The “who is the greatest” argument commences. This is not a foreshadowing of Muhammad Ali either. The disciples (like us) are quick to divert attention to themselves. So Jesus takes a child and uses the child as beautiful example of becoming the least.

v. 49-50 **Insecure** (Someone is casting out demons and “he is not one of us.” The disciples were concerned that this individual was not legitimate.) Jesus tells them that if someone is not against you then leave them alone. They are doing good and nothing everything has to come through your influence. They failed to see that Jesus can use anyone that He wants to fulfill His purposes. Ever want to comment on someone doing something good in a way other than the “sanctioned” way. True it needs to be biblically faithful, but God can use whomever, however He chooses.

v. 51-55 **Graceless** (James and John)

Jesus is not received by the Samaritans - the disciples want to call down fire and Jesus rebukes them. Have you been graceless this week to a spouse, neighbor, child, co-worker? Notice the rebuke is for the disciples, not those who did not accept Him.

v. 57-61 **Distracted and busy** - One asks to follow and Jesus says wait just a minute with a disclaimer. Seems weird that Jesus might delay a follower but it fits with His earlier advice to “count the cost.” Jesus invites another but he needs to go bury his father so the “follower” has other things that seem more important than being a disciple. Another says I will follow you

In Jesus, we see the opposite of what He points out in His disciples.

What do these things say about Jesus?

- Jesus is faithful and true - He was able to heal the boy because of this.
- Jesus is the light of the world - illuminates us to our own selfishness and pride
- Jesus is humble and kind - selfless
- Jesus is secure in the Father (will, plan and identity as the Son of God)
- Jesus is full of grace
- Jesus is focused on the mission - set His face toward Jerusalem

Jesus was still on the mission regardless if his disciples got it or not. We don’t limit His work when we are not obedient. His Kingdom is not dependent upon us but on Him. However, the amazing thing is that He invites us in to participate in His mission.

What do we do with this?

- Am I ready to give up living by my own rules and ready to take next steps of faith? Are you operating on if, then deals? That's not faith. The creator defines the rules. Stop trying to putting conditions on God's working in and through your life.
- Am I willing to give up my dim view of God and allow His Word to illuminate me on Who God really is? This means I must spend time discovering Him through His Word.
- Am I willing and ready to give up my self-importance that God needs me and start considering others more important than myself? Least of these. What is an attitude you need to surrender to God today?
- Am I ready to stop striving and give up the approval of other humans and be secure in God's acceptance of me? Is Jesus enough for you or do you still need the accolades of others?
- Am I willing to give up my "offendedness" and outrage for the sake of grace? What does this require you to give up? What is keeping you from extending grace to others today?
- Am I ready to give up being distracted and to focus to glorify God and make disciples?

Encourage your group to pray for one another this week.