SMITH FOR CHRIST PUBLISHING · BEREAN DASHBOARD STUDY

Luke 9

The Christ of God and the Road to the Cross — O·I·A, integrated with the Deep Dive

OBSERVATION · INTERPRETATION · APPLICATION · 2026-11-10 · NASB 1995

"Seeking God diligently — examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so." — Acts 17:11

CHAPTER THEME

Everyone in Luke 9 is asking who Jesus is, and Peter gets the answer right: the Christ of God. Then Jesus shows what that means — a Messiah who must suffer, a glory that shines before the cross, and followers who carry their own cross every day without looking back.

00 The Text

LUKE 9 (NASB95), MARKED

HOW THIS STUDY IS MARKED — God — His character & actions · Command / instruction · Key repeated word · Sin / warning · Promise / blessing · Time / place / contrast

1 And He called the twelve together, and gave them power and authority over all the demons and to heal diseases.

2 And He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to perform healing.

3 And He said to them, "Take nothing for your journey, neither a staff, nor a bag, nor bread, nor money; and do not even have two tunics apiece.

4 "Whatever house you enter, stay there until you leave that city.

5 "And as for those who do not receive you, as you go out from that city, shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them."

6 Departing, they began going throughout the villages, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere.

7 Now Herod the tetrarch heard of all that was happening; and he was greatly perplexed, because it was said by some that John had risen from the dead,

8 and by some that Elijah had appeared, and by others that one of the prophets of old had risen again.

9 Herod said, "I myself had John beheaded; but who is this man about whom I hear such things?" And he kept trying to see Him.

10 When the apostles returned, they gave an account to Him of all that they had done. Taking them with Him, He withdrew by Himself to a city called Bethsaida.

11 But the crowds were aware of this and followed Him; and welcoming them, He began speaking to them about the kingdom of God and curing those who had need of healing.

12 Now the day was ending, and the twelve came and said to Him, "Send the crowd away, that they may go into the surrounding villages and countryside and find lodging and get something to eat; for here we are in a desolate place."

13 But He said to them, "You give them something to eat!" And they said, "We have no more than five loaves and two fish, unless perhaps we 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 to eat in groups of about fifty each."

15 They did so, and had them all sit down.

16 Then He took the five loaves and the two fish, and △ looking up to heaven, He blessed them, and broke them, and kept giving them to the disciples to set before the people.

17 And ☆ they all ate and were satisfied; and the broken pieces which they had left over were picked up, twelve baskets full.

18 And it happened that while He was praying alone, the disciples were with Him, and He questioned them, saying, "Who do the people say that I am?"

19 They answered and said, "John the Baptist, and others say Elijah; but others, that one of the prophets of old has risen again."

20 And He said to them, "◷ But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said, "△ The Christ of God."

21 But He warned them and instructed them not to tell this to anyone,

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 ☆ be raised up on the third day."

23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, ▤ he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me.

24 "For whoever wishes to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake, he is the one who will save it.

25 "For what is a man profited ⚠ if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself?

26 "For ⚠ whoever is ashamed of Me and My words, the ↻ Son of Man will be ashamed of him when He comes in His glory, and the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

27 "But I say to you truthfully, there are some of those standing here who will not taste death until they see the ↻ kingdom of God."

28 Some eight days after these sayings, He took along Peter and John and James, and went up on the mountain to pray.

29 And while He was praying, the appearance of His face became different, and △ His clothing became white and gleaming.

30 And behold, two men were talking with Him; and they were Moses and Elijah,

31 who, appearing in glory, were speaking of ◷ His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem.

32 Now Peter and his companions had been overcome with sleep; but when they were fully awake, they saw His glory and the two men standing with Him.

33 And as these were leaving Him, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be here; let us make three tabernacles: one for You, and one for Moses, and one for Elijah"—⚠ not realizing what he was saying.

34 While he was saying this, a cloud formed and began to overshadow them; and they were afraid as they entered the cloud.

35 Then 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 reported to no one in those days any of the things which they had seen.

37 On the next day, when they came down from the mountain, a large crowd met Him.

38 And a man from the crowd shouted, saying, "Teacher, I beg You to look at my son, for he is my only boy,

39 and a spirit seizes him, and he suddenly screams, and it throws him into a convulsion with foaming at the mouth; and only with difficulty does it leave him, mauling him as it leaves.

40 "I begged Your disciples to cast it out, and ⚠ they could not."

41 And Jesus answered and said, "⚠ You unbelieving and perverted generation, how long shall I be with you and put up with you? Bring your son here."

42 While he was still approaching, the demon slammed him to the ground and threw him into a convulsion. But Jesus rebuked the unclean spirit, and healed the boy and gave him back to his father.

43 And △ they were all amazed at the greatness of God. But while everyone was marveling at all that He was doing, He said to His disciples,

44 "Let these words sink into your ears; for the ⇄ Son of Man is going to be delivered into the hands of men."

45 But they did not understand this statement, and it was concealed from them so that they would not perceive it; and they were afraid to ask Him about this statement.

46 An argument started among them as to ⚠ which of them might be the greatest.

47 But Jesus, knowing what they were thinking in their heart, took a child and stood 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 ☆ the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great."

49 John answered and said, "Master, we saw someone casting out demons in Your name; and we tried to prevent him because he does not ⇄ follow along with us."

50 But Jesus said to him, "Do not hinder him; for he who is not against you is for you."

51 When the days were approaching for His ascension, ◷ He was determined to go to Jerusalem;

52 and He sent messengers on ahead of Him, and they went and entered a village of the Samaritans to make arrangements for Him.

53 But they did not receive Him, because He was traveling toward Jerusalem.

54 When His disciples James and John saw this, they said, "Lord, do You want us to ⚠ command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?"

55 But He turned and rebuked them, [and said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of;

56 for △ the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them."] And they went on to another village.

57 As they were going along the road, someone said to Him, "I will ⇄ follow You wherever You go."

58 And Jesus said to him, "The foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but ◷ the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head."

59 And He said to another, "⇄ Follow Me." But he said, "Lord, permit me first to go and bury my father."

60 But He said to him, "Allow the dead to bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God."

61 Another also said, "I will ⇄ follow You, Lord; but first permit me to say good-bye to those at home."

62 But Jesus said to him, "⚠ No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God."

Marked in the text

- **v1** "gave them power and authority over all the demons" — God — His character & actions
- **v3** "Take nothing for your journey" — Command / instruction
- **v5** "shake the dust off your feet as a testimony against them" — Sin / warning
- **v9** "I myself had John beheaded" — Sin / warning
- **v9** "who is this man about whom I hear such things?" — Time / place / contrast
- **v13** "You give them something to eat!" — Command / instruction
- **v16** "looking up to heaven, He blessed them" — God — His character & actions
- **v17** "they all ate and were satisfied" — Promise / blessing
- **v20** "But who do you say that I am?" — Time / place / contrast
- **v20** "The Christ of God" — God — His character & actions
- **v22** "The Son of Man must suffer many things" — God — His character & actions
- **v22** "be raised up on the third day" — Promise / blessing
- **v23** "he must deny himself, and take up his cross daily and follow Me" — Command / instruction
- **v25** "if he gains the whole world, and loses or forfeits himself" — Sin / warning
- **v26** "whoever is ashamed of Me and My words" — Sin / warning
- **v29** "His clothing became white and gleaming" — God — His character & actions

- **v31** “His departure which He was about to accomplish at Jerusalem” — Time / place / contrast
- **v33** “not realizing what he was saying” — Sin / warning
- **v35** “This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!” — God — His character & actions
- **v36** “Jesus was found alone” — Time / place / contrast
- **v40** “they could not” — Sin / warning
- **v41** “You unbelieving and perverted generation” — Sin / warning
- **v43** “they were all amazed at the greatness of God” — God — His character & actions
- **v44** “Let these words sink into your ears” — Command / instruction
- **v46** “which of them might be the greatest” — Sin / warning
- **v48** “the one who is least among all of you, this is the one who is great” — Promise / blessing
- **v50** “Do not hinder him” — Command / instruction
- **v51** “He was determined to go to Jerusalem” — Time / place / contrast
- **v54** “command fire to come down from heaven and consume them” — Sin / warning
- **v56** “the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them” — God — His character & actions
- **v58** “the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head” — Time / place / contrast
- **v60** “go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom of God” — Command / instruction
- **v62** “No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God” — Sin / warning
- **v2** “kingdom of God” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v23** “follow” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v11** “followed” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v22** “Son of Man” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)
- **v22** “Son of man” — Key repeated word (every occurrence)

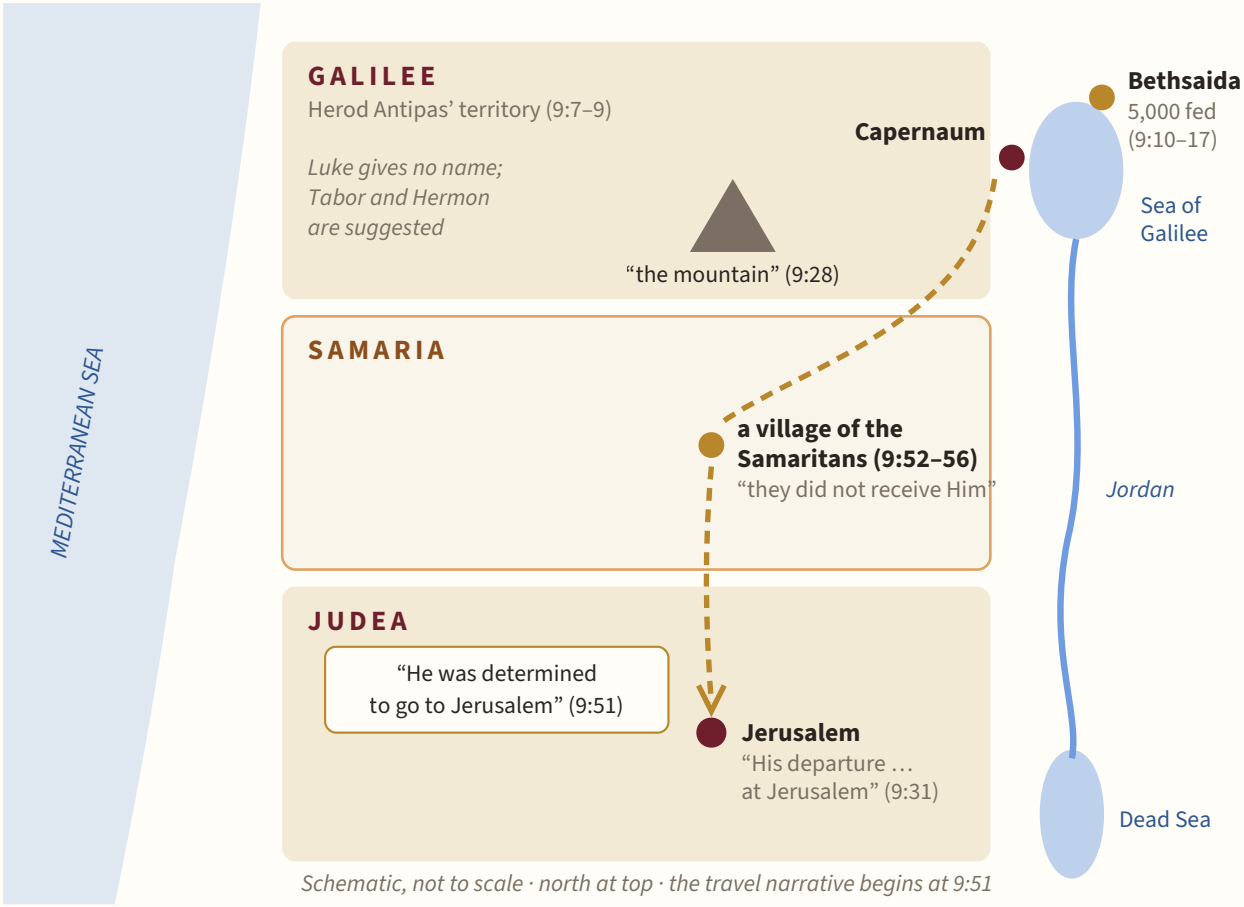
01 Observation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT SAY?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 9:20

"And He said to them, "But who do you say that I am?" And Peter answered and said, "The Christ of God.""

FIGURE · FROM GALILEE TOWARD JERUSALEM



Luke 9 begins in Herod's Galilee and ends on the road south: the feeding near Bethsaida, an unnamed mountain, a Samaritan village that would not receive Him, and Jerusalem, where His departure waits.

Setting. Jesus is still in Galilee, the territory of Herod Antipas (vv7–9). He sends the Twelve through the villages (vv1–6), withdraws with them toward Bethsaida, and feeds the crowd in a desolate place (vv10–17). He prays alone and asks who He is (vv18–27), goes up "the mountain" with Peter, John and James (vv28–36), comes down to a large crowd the next day (vv37–50), and then sets out for Jerusalem through a Samaritan village (vv51–62).

Structure:

- vv1–9 — **the Twelve sent, Herod perplexed:** power and authority over demons and diseases (v1); take nothing for your journey (vv3–5); they go through the villages preaching and healing (v6); Herod hears the rumors — John, Elijah, a prophet — "who is this man?" (vv7–9).
- vv10–17 — **five thousand fed:** the apostles report; Bethsaida; He welcomes the crowds (vv10–11); "Send the crowd away" — "You give them something to eat!" (vv12–13); groups of fifty; He took, blessed, broke, kept giving (vv14–16); all satisfied; twelve baskets (v17).
- vv18–27 — **confession and cross:** He prays alone; "Who do the people say that I am?" (vv18–19); "But who do you say that I am?" — "The Christ of God" (v20); the Son of Man must suffer, be killed, be raised (vv21–22); deny himself, take up his cross daily, follow Me (v23); save / lose; the whole world; ashamed (vv24–26); some will see the kingdom (v27).
- vv28–36 — **the transfiguration:** about eight days later, the mountain, prayer (v28); His face different, His clothing gleaming (v29); Moses and Elijah speak of His departure at Jerusalem (vv30–31); sleep, then glory (v32); Peter's three tabernacles (v33); the cloud (v34); "This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!" (v35); Jesus found alone; silence (v36).
- vv37–50 — **the valley:** a father's only boy, a spirit, the disciples could not (vv37–40); "You unbelieving and perverted generation" — healed and given back (vv41–42); amazed at the greatness of God (v43); "Let these words sink into your ears" — they did not understand (vv44–45); who is greatest? a child (vv46–48); "Do not hinder him" (vv49–50).
- vv51–62 — **the face set:** determined to go to Jerusalem (v51); a Samaritan village does not receive Him (vv52–53); fire from heaven? He rebuked them (vv54–56); three would-be followers — foxes and birds; bury my father; say good-bye; the plow (vv57–62).

Repeated words, with counts:

- "follow / followed" ×6 — vv11, 23, 49, 57, 59, 61.
- "heal / healing / healed / cure / curing" ×6 — vv1, 2, 6, 11 (×2), 42.
- "receive / receives / received" ×6 — vv5, 48 (×4), 53.
- "John" ×6 — vv7, 9, 19 (the Baptist); vv28, 49, 54 (the apostle).
- "kingdom of God" ×5 — vv2, 11, 27, 60, 62.
- "Son of Man" ×5 — vv22, 26, 44, 56, 58.
- "Elijah" ×4 — vv8, 19, 30, 33; "glory" ×4 — vv26 (×2), 31, 32.
- "village(s)" ×4 — vv6, 12, 52, 56; "Peter" ×4 — vv20, 28, 32, 33.
- "pray / praying" ×3 — vv18, 28, 29; "Jerusalem" ×3 — vv31, 51, 53.
- "save" ×3 — vv24 (×2), 56; "lose / loses" ×3 — vv24 (×2), 25; "life / lives" ×3 — vv24 (×2), 56.
- "twelve" ×3 — vv1, 12, 17; "eat" ×3 — vv12, 13, 14.
- "first" ×2 — vv59, 61; "Master" ×2 — vv33, 49; "ashamed" ×2 — v26.

Contrasts: Power and authority ⟷ nothing for the journey (vv1–3). Herod's curiosity ⟷ Peter's confession (vv9, 20). Five loaves ⟷ five thousand men; twelve worried apostles ⟷ twelve full baskets (vv13–17). The Christ of God ⟷ the Son of Man who must suffer (vv20–22). Save your life ⟷ lose it; the whole world ⟷ yourself (vv24–25). Glory on the mountain ⟷ a convulsing boy in the valley (vv29, 37–42). Greatest ⟷ least (vv46–48). Fire from heaven ⟷ to save men's lives (vv54–56). "I will follow You" ⟷ "but first" (vv57–61).

Shape of the chapter: an arc from Galilee toward Jerusalem. Verses 1–17 show the kingdom's power at work; verses 18–36 reveal who the King is and where He is going; verses 37–62 show how slow His followers are to understand — and set Him on the road.

Chapter theme (my words): Jesus is the Christ of God, the Father's Chosen One, whose glory shines before the cross and whose road runs through it. Everyone who wants to follow Him must say no to himself every day, listen to Him, and keep his hand on the plow.

02 Interpretation

WHAT DOES THE TEXT MEAN?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 9:35

"Then a voice came out of the cloud, saying, "△ This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!""

FIGURE · ON THE MOUNTAIN

ON THE MOUNTAIN · LUKE 9:28–36 · WHO WAS THERE, AND WHAT THEY TALKED ABOUT

MOSES	JESUS	ELIJAH
the Law met God on Sinai; his face shone (Exod 34:29) led Israel's exodus died; the LORD buried him (Deut 34)	praying (v29) His face changed; clothing white and gleaming glory from within speaking of His "departure" (v31)	the Prophets met God on Horeb (1 Kings 19) called down fire (2 Kings 1) taken up to heaven alive (2 Kings 2)

THE SUBJECT: "His departure" — Greek *exodos* — "about to accomplish at Jerusalem" (v31)
Peter wants to stay and build three tents (v33); the cloud comes, and only Jesus remains (v36).

"This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!" (v35)
Moses had said of the coming Prophet: "you shall listen to him" (Deut 18:15)

Read across: the Law and the Prophets stand beside Jesus and talk about His exodus at Jerusalem, and then the Father points to Jesus alone.

What did the shaken-off dust mean (v5)? Sproul links it to a Jewish custom: returning from pagan lands, a Jew shook off the dust so as not to carry defilement home. Here it is "a testimony against them" — a solemn warning, not a tantrum. "You cannot hear the gospel and be neutral to it" (Sproul).

Why does Herod's guilt matter? Luke never narrates John's death; he lets Herod confess it: "I myself had John beheaded" (v9). Sproul: "Guilt is objective and has nothing to do with your feelings whatsoever," and "The only cure for guilt is forgiveness." Herod wanted to see Jesus, but "not as a sincere seeker" (Guzik) — and when he finally did, he wanted a show (23:8).

Did the feeding really happen, and why does it matter? Sproul rejects the explanations that make it myth, fraud or a lesson about sharing: "I have no interest in adoring, worshiping, praising, or working for a myth." If it happened,

Jesus is the Creator who cares for His people. Guzik and Henry stress the disciples' part: the bread passed through their hands, and "Those that have but a little, let them do what they can with that little" (Henry).

What does "the Christ of God" mean, and why keep it quiet? Peter is right (v20), but the Twelve had to learn what kind of Messiah He was — "Before they could preach that Jesus was the Messiah, they had to learn what that meant" (Guzik). So Jesus immediately adds "must suffer" (v22). Sproul: knowing who He is is not the same as trusting Him; the demons know.

What is the daily cross? Not a hard circumstance I endure, but a death I choose: "Carrying a cross always led to death on a cross" (Guzik). Only Luke says "daily." Sproul: "You cannot follow Christ and yourself." Henry: "We must accustom ourselves to all instances of self-denial and patience."

Who would "see the kingdom of God" before death (v27)? Luke goes straight on to "Some eight days after these sayings" (v28), and Sproul preaches verse 27 with the transfiguration. I read the mountain as a preview: three of those "standing here" saw the King in His glory before they died — a foretaste of the kingdom He will set up when He comes in glory (v26; Dan 7:13–14).

What was the "departure"? *Exodos* (v31). Moses led the first exodus; Jesus would "accomplish" a greater one at Jerusalem — His death, resurrection and ascension (v51). Guzik (with Trapp) hears the echo of Israel leaving Egypt. Sproul: Moses' face reflected glory; Jesus' glory was His own.

Why could the disciples not cast out the demon? Jesus names unbelief (v41). Guzik adds Matthew 17:21, prayer and fasting (a verse some manuscripts lack), and sees mercy in the failure: "Their failure taught them." Sproul thinks Jesus' sharpest frustration was with His own commissioned men. Spurgeon sees the demon's last throw as the enemy's fury just before deliverance.

"He who is not against you is for you" (v50) — and Luke 11:23? In 11:23 Jesus says, "He who is not with Me is against Me." The two fit: about Christ Himself there is no neutral ground; about other workers who serve in His name, do not be narrow. Sproul: John showed "a spirit contrary to authentic discipleship." Henry: "We need not lose any of our friends, while we have so few, and so many enemies."

Are verses 55b–56a Scripture? The NASB brackets "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them," because many early manuscripts lack it; the KJV includes it. Either way, verse 55 says He "rebuked them," and the bracketed words match what Jesus says of Himself in 19:10.

Was the man's father already dead (v59)? Spurgeon: "We do not even know that his father was dead." Guzik (quoting Morrison): he "was torn between the right and right." Elijah let Elisha go home first (1 Kings 19:20); Jesus does not — the King's business comes first.

Word study (Greek):

- **power — *dynamis* (G1411) / authority — *exousia* (G1849):** ability and delegated right, both given (v1).
- **beheaded — *apokephalizō* (G607):** four NT uses, all of John the Baptist.
- **blessed — *eulogeō* (G2127):** took, blessed, broke, gave (v16; cf. 24:30).
- **baskets — *kophinos* (G2894):** twelve full (v17).
- **must — *dei* (G1163):** the divine necessity of the cross (v22; 24:26).
- **deny — *arneomai* (G720):** to disown — oneself (v23), or, as Peter later, the Lord (22:57).
- **life — *psychē* (G5590):** the self saved by losing it (v24).

- **departure — *exodos* (G1841):** three NT uses — Luke 9:31; Heb 11:22; 2 Pet 1:15.
- **Chosen One — *eklegomai* (G1586):** "My Son, My Chosen One" (v35; 6:13; 23:35; Isa 42:1).
- **only — *monogenēs* (G3439):** "my only boy" (v38; 7:12; 8:42).
- **greater — *meizōn* (G3187):** the disciples' argument (v46; 22:24).
- **ascension — *analēmpsis* (G354):** only here in the NT (v51).
- **set (His face) — *stērizō* (G4741):** fixed, made firm (v51; Isa 50:7).

Key insights to carry (from the Deep Dive):

1. **Authority is borrowed** — the Twelve had no power of their own (Sproul).
2. **Herod's question is the chapter's question** — "who is this man?" (v9).
3. **He feeds through His disciples** — "You give them something to eat!" (v13).
4. **"Must" means the cross was planned** — *dei* (v22).
5. **The cross is daily** — only Luke says so (v23).
6. **His death is an exodus** — *exodos* (v31).
7. **His glory is His own** — not reflected like Moses' (Sproul).
8. **Listen to Him** — and Jesus was found alone (vv35–36).
9. **Failure can teach** (Guzik).
10. **A set face, not a hard heart** — determined, and merciful (vv51–56).

Cross-references: Exod 34:29–35; Deut 18:15; 34:5–6; 1 Kings 19:19–21; 2 Kings 1:10–12; 2:11; Isa 42:1; 50:7; 53:3; Dan 7:13–14; Matt 16:13–28; 17:1–21; Mark 8:27–9:41; Luke 2:49; 4:43; 7:12–15; 11:23; 19:10; 22:24–27; 23:8, 35; 24:26; John 1:14; 6:35; Acts 1:2, 9–11; Gal 2:20; Heb 11:22; 2 Pet 1:15–18.

03 Application

HOW DOES IT CHANGE ME?

KEY VERSE · LUKE 9:62

"But Jesus said to him, "⚠ No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, ◷ is fit for the kingdom of God.""

FIGURE · THREE MEN ON THE ROAD

THREE MEN ON THE ROAD · LUKE 9:57–62 · WHAT EACH ONE HELD BACK

THE EAGER ONE vv57–58	THE CALLED ONE vv59–60	THE HALF-TURNED vv61–62
he offers: "I will follow You wherever You go"	Jesus: "Follow Me." he: "permit me first … my father"	he offers: "I will follow You … but first …"
Jesus: "nowhere to lay His head"	Jesus: "go and proclaim everywhere the kingdom"	Jesus: "hand to the plow and looking back"
the cost: comfort	**the cost: first place**	**the cost: looking back**

Two of the three say "first" (vv59, 61). Elijah let Elisha go back to kiss his parents (1 Kings 19:20); *Jesus, "determined to go to Jerusalem" (v51), asks for more than Elijah did.*

Each would-be disciple keeps something back — comfort, first place, a look behind — and Jesus' answer names the cost before the man starts.

Example to follow — the Twelve with nothing in their bags. Jesus sent them out with power and authority and almost nothing else (vv1–3). I want to be ready before I go — the right words, enough money, enough time clean. He sends men who are depending on Him. This week I will say yes to the man He puts in front of me, even if I feel I have nothing to bring.

Sin to confess — Herod's curiosity without repentance. Herod wanted to see Jesus but never dealt with John's blood on his hands (v9). I can be interested in Jesus — studies, sermons, videos — and keep a guilt I won't name. Sproul is right: the only cure for guilt is forgiveness. I name it to Him today, and I take His forgiveness as a fact, whether I feel it yet or not (1 John 1:9).

Command to obey — "You give them something to eat!" and "take up his cross daily." He still hands His bread through our hands (vv13, 16). And He still asks for a daily "no" to myself (v23) — to my pride when I'm corrected, my comfort when a brother calls at 11 p.m., my need to look good in group. Not once; daily.

Truth to face — I would rather build a tent than listen. Peter wanted to stay on the mountain (v33). I like the high moments — the retreat, the breakthrough, the good meeting — and I want to camp there. The Father's word is not "build Him a shelter" but "listen to Him!" (v35). Then they walked down into the valley where a father was crying. That is where listening leads.

Promise to trust — He came to save men's lives. James and John wanted fire on the village that refused Him (v54). Jesus rebuked them and went on to another village. The men who reject Him — and the man I used to be — are the men He came to save (v56; 19:10). I can stop calling down fire and start walking to the next village.

Questions for the table (from the Deep Dive):

1. Herod wanted to see Jesus but never repented of what he did to John. Is there a guilt I am curious about Jesus over, but not yet confessing to Him? (9:7–9; 1 John 1:9) *The only cure for guilt is forgiveness (Sproul).*
2. Jesus told the disciples, "You give them something to eat!" when they had almost nothing. What need in front of me am I trying to send away instead of bringing my little to Him? (9:12–17) *He challenged both their faith and their compassion (Guzik).*
3. If Jesus asked me today, "But who do you say that I am?" what would my honest answer be — and does my week show it? (9:18–20; James 2:19) *Knowing who He is is not enough; the demons know (Sproul).*
4. What does "take up his cross daily" look like on an ordinary Tuesday for me — at work, at home, in my recovery? (9:23–25; Gal 2:20) *Deny himself and take up his cross are the same idea (Guzik).*
5. Peter wanted to build tents and stay on the mountain. Where am I trying to hold on to a spiritual high instead of listening to Jesus and walking down into the valley with Him? (9:33–37) *This is My Son, My Chosen One; listen to Him!*
6. Which of the three men on the road sounds most like me — the eager one, the "first let me" one, or the one looking back? What would it take to put my hand to the plow? (9:57–62) *Once you sign up, you are in for the duration (Sproul).*

Worship. The Christ of God fed five thousand from a boy's supper and shone on the mountain with a glory that was His own. The Law and the Prophets bowed to talk with Him about His exodus, and the Father said, "listen to Him." Then He came down, healed an only son, took a child in His arms, and set His face like flint toward the cross — for me.

Prayer. Lord Jesus, You are the Christ of God, the Father's Chosen One. Forgive me for wanting to see You without wanting to be changed. Take my five loaves and use them. Teach me to deny myself and take up my cross today — not tomorrow, not after I take care of something first. When I want to stay on the mountain, make me listen to You; when I want fire, give me Your mercy. Keep my hand on the plow and my eyes on You. Amen.

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