

**VERY DAY WITH JESUS** (September 14 – 20)

Savor a segment of the gospel each day so that you may...

“...grow in the grace and knowledge of our LORD and Savior Jesus Christ.” “II Peter 3:18)

Each day’s questions are numbered and their answers are after the prayer of the day.

**September 14 Luke 9:23-27** “Let him deny himself.” Oswald Chambers stated:

“Individuality is the hard outer layer surrounding the inner spiritual life. Individuality shoves others aside, separating and isolating people.

And even more so it shoves aside God, separating and isolating us from him. (scs)

“The characteristics of individuality are independence and self-will. We hinder our spiritual growth more than any other way by continually asserting our individuality.

“God wants to bring you into union with Himself, but unless you are willing to give up your right to yourself, He cannot. (Jesus said,) “... let him deny himself...” – deny his independence to himself. Then real life - the spiritual life - is allowed the opportunity to grow.”(My Utmost for His Highest, Dec. 11)

To understand what Jesus is asking of us, when he says, “Let him deny himself” note the Bible uses the same Greek verb to speak of Peter’s denial of Jesus. What did Peter say:

“I don’t know what you mean.”

“I don’t know the man.”

“Woman, I don’t know him.”

What Peter said about Jesus is what we are to say about our ‘self’. But if we don’t deny self, whom do we deny – whom did Peter deny?

**Prayer:** Lord, crush our hard outer layer of self that shoves you aside, that separates and isolates us from you. By your grace and Spirit’s working, and in response to your denying of yourself, falling to the ground and dying for us, grant that we too deny self, independence and self-will, fall to the ground and die to self, that we might bear much fruit for you.

**September 15 Luke 9:28-36** At the transfiguration Jesus’ robe of humility, for a moment, was drawn aside. In his radiance as the Son of God, he spoke with great heroes of the Old Testament, Elijah and Moses. The conversation of the day was about Jesus’ coming ‘exodus’ (see ESV note), that is, his coming death, burial, resurrection and ascension. Peter in this momentous moment was at a loss, as we humans often are, as to what to say, so something inane popped out of his mouth. (Don’t you hate it when we do that? There is this stupendous event, and what do we do? We respond to it by say something dumb.) How does this event in Jesus life illustrate how Jesus followed his own call, “Let him deny himself, take up his cross”?<sup>1</sup>

**Prayer:** On a mountain, you were changed, Lord, but for us and our salvation, you robed yourself again in great humility, and went from that glory to the cross. Grant that we likewise are not afraid to be humble in your service, confident that in due time you will raise us up to glory by your grace. Amen.

<sup>1</sup>Jesus knew he was not here to serve self or for his own glory. He denied himself the prerogatives of deity, popularity, and creature comforts we take for granted (Home, family, rest). He literally took up his cross, which in reality is ours, and bore it and was borne by it, to save us.

**September 16 Luke 9:37-45** The people were astonished at the majesty of God when they saw Jesus demonstrated that he had the power to rebuke an unclean spirit and heal the boy it possessed. Yet a greater wonder was to be seen, that this same Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man, would willingly hand himself over to sinful men to be crucified by them. By his sacrifice of himself he would rebuke satan and would heal all who believed in him. Sadly, for too many people today, the blessings of Christ's work and salvation are concealed from them so they don't perceive the healing that is ours in Christ. How might we help them to 'see'?<sup>1</sup>

**Prayer:** Lord, open our eyes to see, not just the marvels you performed, but more importantly the greater wonder of your grace that saved us. Amen

<sup>1</sup>Patiently doing for them as Jesus has done for us. Pray for them, be patient at their 'slowness to believe,' repeat the same lessons over and over again. And when they still don't get it, continue to love them as Christ has loved us.

**September 17 Luke 9:46-48** The disciples had just heard that Jesus, their teacher, master, the Christ, the Son of the living God, the holy One of God would be handed into the hands of man; and what were they thinking about? Their own status! How small of them! But how small are we? We don't like to think of ourselves in those terms do we? Yet we are small when we think we are 'bigger than Jesus. We are small when we think, "Service was ok for him. It's great that he sacrificed himself. It's touching to see him touch and care for the outcasts. But that's not for me, brother!" But Jesus said, "he who is least. . . is the one who is great." Alistair Begg put it well when he said, "The church is not about status, but service." Are we listening?

**Prayer:** Lord, my Master and my God, in view of your having become least for us and our salvation, let me be least for you. Amen

**September 18 Luke 9:49-50** John's statement about a man "who does not follow with us" and trying to stop him from casting out demons in Jesus' name, is in response to Jesus having just said, "Whoever receives this child in my name receives me, etc."(v. 48). What John is asking is, "Is it possible and/or fitting that one who is not from the inner circle of disciples should be doing such?" Jesus' response is to let that man, who is a believer in him, but outside the group, alone. The ones to worry about are not fellow believers who are for Jesus, but those who are against him (Luke 11:23). What he is telling the disciples and us here?<sup>1</sup>

**Prayer:** Lord Jesus, we thank you that you have called us to be your people. Help us to appreciate that there are other members of your body out in the world. We thank you for them. Help all of us to remain faithful to you, to the truth and to doing your work. Amen

<sup>1</sup>He is instructing us not to hinder, but to allow fellow members of his Body, the Holy Christian Church, to do his work in his name.

### **September 19 Luke 9:51-56**

Jesus "set his face," that is, resolutely, with determination, to go to Jerusalem. (See Isa. 50:7). A great task, *the* Great Task, was before him and he was determined to see it through to the end. A wondrous thing; no? But look at the response of some – they didn't welcome him because of an age-old hostility between them and the Jews. No wonder James and John wanted fire to rain down on these ingrates! "Lord, let us give them what they deserve." But note what Jesus did with such 'zeal' for him. He rebuked the 'fire' brothers. But why did he do that, after all weren't James and John wanting Jesus to be honored and get the respect he deserved? <sup>1</sup>

**Prayer:** Lord of compassion and grace, seeing how you have dealt with me more than once with compassion, grace, forgiveness, understandings, patience and grace, let me in response, show the same to those whom *I* think deserve a bit of fire. Let me show the same concern for their souls, as you have shown for mine. Amen.

<sup>1</sup> Read John 3:16 -20. Jesus knew that what the people needed was grace, undeserved love, and the Word of the Gospel spoken to them so they would repent, turn to him and believe. Otherwise, if they did not repent, they needed pity for more than just a temporary fire would await them.

**September 20 Luke 9:57-62** Note the marks of a disciple that Jesus describes here. A disciple has no overwhelming concern for a place to lay one's head, no overwhelming concern for the matters of this life, and no overwhelming attachment to others. That is what marked Jesus, and that is what marks his disciples. This is not to say shelter, burials and family are not important, but - *that they are not to be more important than our relationship with Jesus – they are not to overwhelm that.*

**Prayer:** Teacher, let me never think I am above you. Let whatever marked you, mark me. Let the cost that you so willingly paid to save me, move me to 'pay' gladly and freely whatever price it costs to serve you. Amen.