

INTRO

- Can you share one thing that you believe is important about yourself?

About The Series

Jesus asked over 300 questions across the four Gospels. Why? Because his questions were designed to go deeper, probing our hearts, desires, assumptions, and lives. In our current series, **Questions Worth Answering**, we'll sit with some of those questions because the questions Jesus asked *then* are still worth answering *now*.

READ

Luke 9:23-26

REFLECT & RESPOND

Jesus tells his disciples that following him means carrying a cross daily, but that not doing so might cost us our very selves, even if we end up "gaining the whole world." His question forces us to reflect on what does it mean to be ourselves and what is at stake in our response to his call to follow.

I – Deny yourself

Contrary to popular advice these days, Jesus doesn't say that we need to express and realize our innermost desires and ambitions in order to be ourselves. To follow him means dying to ourselves. It's not asceticism, but a life lived for his sake and for one another. This is how we truly find ourselves.

Q: How do you think this is lived out in practice?

II – Carry your cross

No one can carry your cross for you because each one of us has to answer the call individually. And answering the call might mean being rejected by others. To follow Christ means living in the presence of God, and not for the sake of people's opinions about us.

Q: How can a Christian community be a place where we are strengthened to follow our individual callings?

III – Remember eternity

Life is not authentic when we live distracted from what really matters. We were made for an eternal life with God and this matters more than anything. To remember judgment is to remember that we were given this eternal life and that we shouldn't waste it away with distractions.

Q: How can a life lived in light of eternity be more joyful and free than a life of distractions?

IV – Life is only found in Christ

Truly authentic living is only possible in Christ. In him we are truly individuals, living the life we were made for, mindful of eternity and of the eternal life we already possess through him.

Q: What does striving for authenticity look like without Christ?

In light of all this, how would you answer this question now:

What does it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose himself?

Put it Into Practice

- Reflect which areas of life you haven't submitted yet to Christ. How can you deny yourself in that area and live out your calling more fully?
- Can you tell whether your life is filled with distractions? Or is it enriched by the enjoyment of eternal things and the eternal life we have in Christ?

PRAY

Ask Jesus to fill your life with his life, and through the Spirit to give you the wisdom and power to follow his call where he is leading you today.