

Read Luke 9:22-24

1. Jesus referred to Himself as being the 'Son of Man' who would suffer, die and rise again (v23). Why do you think Jesus didn't just say "I" will suffer, die and rise again? Why shroud His death in such mystery?
2. When Jesus was sent off to be crucified, John 19:17 says "*Carrying his own cross, he went out to the place of the Skull.*" Why do you think Jesus took this image of 'carrying a cross' in Luke 9:23 to illustrate what it truly means to be a follower of Jesus? What does it mean to "*take up our cross daily*"?
3. What does it mean to "*deny ourselves*"?
4. In this context what does it mean for a Christian to "*lose their life*"? (v24).
5. Can you think of anything else that Jesus said was evidence of being a true disciple of His? (*see footnote)

Read Luke 23:26

6. Simon of Cyrene was commandeered to carry Jesus' cross for part of the journey. Do you think we as Christians should offer to carry any "burdens" that belong to others? If so, what kind of burdens? If not, why not?

Read Luke 6:27-28 and then Luke 23:32-34

7. On the cross, Jesus prayed for His abusers to be forgiven. He was practising what He had preached by loving His enemy, doing good to those who hated Him, blessing those who cursed Him and praying for those who mistreated Him. How important is it for us to practice these virtues in order for us to be true disciples of Jesus and "live as Jesus did"? (1John 2:6)
8. Jesus prayed for His abusers to be forgiven because they didn't know what they were doing (v34). What do you think He meant by that

Read Luke 23:35-43

9. Why were people so aggressive toward Jesus as He hung on the cross? Why are so many so opposed to Him today?
10. What do the words of the thief in verses 40-42 reveal about what he believed about himself and Jesus?
11. According to v43 where did the thief go when he died and when did he go there?

Read 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

12. Paul said in verse 14 that Jesus would return with those who "*have fallen asleep in him*" (i.e. Christians who have died before His return) but then explained that the dead Christians will join Him when they rise from the dead at His second coming (v16-17). This means that dead Christians will only be with Jesus once He returns. How do we explain that timing in the light of what Jesus said to the thief in Luke 9:43? When we die do you think we are immediately with the Lord or do we have to wait until Jesus returns?