



## Following Jesus – January/February 2024

Give up yourself, and you will find your real self. Lose your life and you will save it. Submit to death, death of your ambitions and favorite wishes every day and death of your whole body in the end submit with ever fiber of your being, and you will find eternal life. Keep back nothing. Nothing that you have not given away will be really yours. Nothing in you that has not died will ever be raised from the dead. Look for yourself, and you will find in the long run only hatred, loneliness, despair, rage, ruin, and decay. But look for Christ and you will find Him, and with Him everything else thrown in.”

— C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

**Read Luke 9:1-27, 57-62**

1. What does it mean to follow and be a disciple Jesus?
2. In Luke 9:23-25, Jesus warns that following Him is costly, what do you believe he meant?
3. Has following Jesus been costly to you? How so?

4. Pastor Riddle mentioned in verse 24 that the original word used for "life" or "soul" is the same word we have for "psyche" which is defined as in the Greek dictionary as meaning: "The seat of the feelings, desires, affections, aversions (our heart, soul etc.)" ....or "The essence of who we are which differs from the body and is not dissolved by death (distinguished from other parts of the body)."

How can we gain the whole world and lose the essence of who we are?

5. Elisabeth Elliott tells a parable in her book, **These Strange Ashes**, which is cited below.

What grabs you about this fictitious biblical story?

*One day Jesus said to his disciples: "I'd like you to carry a stone for me." He didn't give any explanation. So the disciples looked around for a stone to carry, and Peter, being the practical sort, sought out the smallest stone he could possibly find. After all, Jesus didn't give any regulation for weight and size! So he put it in his pocket. Jesus then said, "Follow Me." He led them on a journey. About noontime, Jesus had everyone sit down. He waved his hands and all the stones turned to bread. He said, "Now it's time for lunch." In a few seconds, Peter's lunch was over. When lunch was done Jesus told them to stand up. He said again, "I'd like you to carry a stone for me." This time Peter said, "Aha! Now I get it!" So he looked around and saw a small boulder. He hoisted it on his back and it was painful, it made him stagger. But he said, "I can't wait for supper." Jesus then said: "Follow Me." He led them on a journey, with Peter barely being able to keep up. Around supper time Jesus led them to the side of a river. He said, "Now everyone throw your stones into the water." They did. Then he said, "Follow Me," and began to walk. Peter and the others looked at him dumbfounded. Jesus sighed and said, "Don't you remember what I asked you to do? Who were you carrying the stone for?"*