

*Everyday...ekklesia*



**EACH1**

**REACH1**

**BRING1**

*and 2gether we'll*

**TEACH EVERY1**

# Table of Contents

## *Everyday...ekklesia*

03

Overview of  
Everyday...Ekklesia

09

EACH1 - Taking Up Your  
Cross Daily  
*Sermon Notes and Bible  
Study*

15

REACH1 - Loving God and  
Neighbor - The Call to  
Discipleship  
*Sermon Notes and Bible  
Study*

## INTRODUCTION

# Overview

# Everyday...ekklesia

What does it take to make a great church? Is it the building? Is it's location? How about versatility? Maybe a loud Holy-Ghost-filled preacher? Or is it good music? With a make your handclap, feet-stamping Praise, and Worship Team or choir? No, I believe it takes God's people, focused on God's Word and willing to work according to God's Plan. Sadly, many are focused on the wrong things and are going to church looking for answers only to find themselves leaving the same way. Then some still don't know Christ or want to know Christ because of the bad taste that Hypocritical Christians have placed in their mouths. So what needs to happen for Ekklesia to become a great church? We have to do what God's Word tells us to do. **Three Great Scriptures** There are many passages of scripture that best describe what the church is to be and do, three statements by Jesus summarize it all: ***The Great Call (Luke 9:23, the Great Commandment (Matt. 22:37-40) and the Great Commission (Matt. 28:19-20).***

**Then He said to them all, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.  
Luke 9:23 NKJV**

**Jesus said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.' This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' On these two commandments hang all the Law and the Prophets."  
Matthew 22:37-40 NKJV**

**Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.  
Matthew 28:19-20 NKJV**

Luke 9:23 is situated within a pivotal chapter where Jesus' identity and mission are progressively revealed. Before this verse, Peter confesses Jesus as Christ (Luke 9:20), and Jesus predicts His suffering, rejection, death, and resurrection (Luke 9:22). This sets the stage for Jesus to explain the implications of following Him.

In summary, Luke 9:23 encapsulates the essence of Christian discipleship through a call to self-denial, daily commitment to bearing one's cross, and steadfastly following Jesus. This verse challenges believers to a profound transformation and a lifelong dedication to the path of Christ.

**"Our Answer to the Great Call leads to a Great  
Commitment to Obey the Great Commandment and the  
Great Commission will grow a Great Church"**

The Great Commandment was given by Jesus in response to a question. One day, Jesus was asked to identify the most important command. He responded by saying, "Here is the entire Old Testament in a nutshell. I'm going to give you the Cliff Notes summary of God's Word. All the Law and all the Prophets can be condensed into two tasks: Love God with all your heart, and love your neighbor as yourself."

Later, in some of his last words to his disciples, Jesus gave the Great Commission to them and assigned them three more tasks: Go make disciples, baptize them, and teach them to obey everything he had taught. Every church is defined by what it is committed to, so we hear this in our hearts "Our Answer to the Great Call leads to a Great Commitment to obey the Great Commandment and the Great Commission will grow a Great Church" This will be a major part of Ekklesia's focus.

These three passages summarize everything we strive to do at Ekklesia Christian Life, if an activity or program fulfills one of these commands, we do it. If it doesn't, we don't. We are driven by the Great Calling, the Great Commandment and the Great Commission Together; they give us the primary tasks the church is to focus on until Christ returns.

**"Everyday... Ekklesia"** calls us to live out our faith daily, actively engaging in discipleship by reaching out, bringing others to Christ, and teaching them to follow Him. Through these sermons and Bible studies, we learn the significance of Jesus' teachings and how we are able to apply them to transform our lives and the world around us. Let's commit to **"Each1, Reach1, Bring1, and together we'll TeachEvery1,"** making a lasting impact for the Kingdom of God.



## **The Purpose of the Church**

In Luke 9:23, Jesus addresses His disciples and the broader crowd, laying out the fundamental requirement for discipleship. He declares, "If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow Me." This verse encapsulates the essence of Christian discipleship, emphasizing self-denial, the daily bearing of one's personal burdens or sufferings in a manner reflective of Jesus' own journey to the cross, and the steadfast following of Christ's teachings and example.

### ***Purpose #1: Love the Lord with all your heart***

The word that describes this purpose is worship. The church exists to worship God. How do we love God with all our hearts? By worshiping him! It doesn't matter if we're by ourselves, with a small group, or with 100,000 people. When we express our love to God, we're worshiping. The Bible says, "Worship the Lord your God, and serve him only" (Matt. 4:10). Notice that worship comes before service. Worshiping God is the church's first purpose. Sometimes we get so busy working for God; that we don't have time to express our love for him through worship. Throughout Scripture, we're commanded to celebrate God's presence by magnifying the Lord and exalting his name. Psalm 34:3 (NASB) says, "O magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his name together." We shouldn't worship out of duty; we should worship because we want to. We should enjoy expressing our love to God.

### ***Purpose #2: Love your neighbor as yourself***

The word we use to describe this purpose is ministry. The church exists to minister to people. Ministry is demonstrating God's love to others by meeting their needs and healing their hurts in the name of Jesus. Each time you reach out in love to others you are ministering to them. The church is to minister to all kinds of needs: spiritual, emotional, relational, and physical. Jesus said that even a cup of cold water given in his name was considered as ministry and would not go unrewarded. The church is to "... equip the saints for the work of ministry" Eph. 4:12 NRSV). Unfortunately, very little actual ministry takes place in many churches. Instead, much of the time is taken up by meetings. Faithfulness is often defined in terms of attendance rather than service, and members just sit, soak, and sour.

### ***Purpose #3: Go and make disciples***

This purpose we call evangelism. The church exists to communicate God's Word. We are ambassadors for Christ, and our mission is to evangelize the world. The word go in the Great Commission is a present participle in the Greek text. It should read "as you are going." It is every Christian's responsibility to share the Good News wherever we go. We are to tell the whole world of Christ's coming, his death on the cross, his resurrection, and

his promise to return. Someday each of us will give an account to God regarding how seriously we took this responsibility.

The task of evangelism is so important; Christ actually gave us five Great Commissions, one in each of the gospels, and one in the book of Acts. In Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, Luke 24:47-49, John 20:21, and Acts 1:8 Jesus commissions us to go and tell the world the message of salvation.

Evangelism is more than our responsibility; it is our great privilege. We are invited to be a part of bringing people into God's eternal family. I don't know of a more significant cause to give one's life to. If you knew the cure for cancer, I'm sure you would do everything you could to get the news out. It would save millions of lives. But you already know something better: You've been given the Gospel of eternal life to share, which is the greatest news of all.

As long as there is one person in the world who does not know Christ, the church has a mandate to keep growing. Growth is not optional; it is commanded by Jesus. We should not seek church growth for our own benefit, but because God wants people saved.

#### ***Purpose #4: Baptizing them***

In the Greek text of the Great Commission, there are three present participle verbs: going, baptizing, and teaching. Each of these is a part of the command to "make disciples." Going, baptizing, and teaching are the essential elements of the disciple-making process.

At first glance you might wonder why the Great Commission gives the same prominence to the simple act of baptism as it does to the great tasks of evangelism and edification. Jesus did not mention it by accident. Why is baptism so important to warrant inclusion in Christ's Great Commission? I believe it is because it symbolizes one of the purposes of the church: fellowship — identification with the body of Christ.

As Christians we're called to belong, not just to believe. We are not meant to live lone-ranger lives; instead, we are to belong to Christ's family and be members of his body. Baptism is not only a symbol of salvation; it is a symbol of fellowship. It not only symbolizes our new life in Christ, but it also visualizes a person's incorporation into the body of Christ. It says to the world, "This person is now one of us!" When new believers are baptized, we welcome them into the fellowship of the family of God. We are not alone. We have each other for support. I love the way Ephesians 2:19 is phrased in the Living Bible: "You are members of God's very own family... and you belong in God's household with every other Christian." The church exists to provide fellowship for believers.

### **Purpose #5: Teaching them to obey**

The word we commonly use to refer to this purpose is discipleship. The church exists to edify, or educate, God's people. Discipleship is the process of helping people become more like Christ in their thoughts, feelings, and actions. This process begins when a person is born again and continues throughout the rest of his life. Colossians 1:28 (NCV) says, "We continue to preach Christ to each person, using all wisdom to warn and to teach everyone, in order to bring each one into God's presence as a mature person in Christ".

As the church we are called not only to reach people, but also to teach them. After someone has made a decision for Christ, he or she must be discipled. It is the church's responsibility to develop people to spiritual maturity. This is God's will for every believer. Paul writes: ". . . so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ" (Eph. 4:12b- 13).

If you examine the earthly ministry of Jesus, it is apparent that he included all five of these elements in his work (for a summary see John 17). The apostle Paul not only fulfilled these purposes in his ministry, he also explained them in Ephesians 4:1-16. But the clearest example of all five purposes is the first church at Jerusalem described in Acts 2:1-47. They taught each other, they fellowshiped together, they worshiped, they ministered, and they evangelized. Today our purposes are unchanged: The church exists to edify, encourage, exalt, equip, and evangelize. While each church will differ in how these tasks are accomplished, there should be no disagreement about what we are called to do.

**Ekklesia's Purpose Statement** At Ekklesia we use five key words to summarize Christ's five purposes for His Church.

**Exalt:** We celebrate God's presence in worship

**Equip:** We through God's Word prepare God's family for fellowship

**Evangelize:** We communicate God's Word through evangelism

**Extend:** We educate God's people and demonstrate God's love through discipleship and service

**Example:** We become a living representation Christ Jesus

These keywords, representing our five purposes, have been incorporated into our mission statement, which reads as follows:

### **Ekklesia's Purpose Statement**

***Our Purpose of We the Ekklesia – to Exalt the Savior, to Equip the Saints, to Evangelize the Lost, Extend the Love of Christ, and to be an Example of a Christ-led life.***





# Everyday...ekklesia

## EACH1

### Taking Up Your Cross Daily

#### Sermon Notes:

Scripture:\*\* Luke 9:23 (NLT)

***"Then he said to the crowd, 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.'"***

1. Introduction to Discipleship
2. Prophetic Insight on Giving Up Your Way
3. Daily Cross-Bearing: A Prophetic Act
4. Following Jesus: A Prophetic Journey
5. Qualified by Grace
6. Sanctified for Service
7. Glorified in Christ

1. Introduction: - Define "Everyday Ekklesia" as the daily lived experience of the church, where each believer is an active disciple.

- Introduce the series theme: "Each1, Reach1, Bring1, and Together We'll TeachEvery1."

2. Prophetic Insight on Giving Up Your Way - The Call to Self-Denial: - Luke 9:23: "Then he said to the crowd, 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.'"

- Explain the concept of denying oneself.
- Illustrate with examples from Jesus' life and other biblical characters.

3. Daily Cross-Bearing: A Prophetic Act - Taking Up the Cross:- Discuss the significance of taking up one's cross.

- Relate to personal sacrifices and commitment in daily life.

#### 4. Following Jesus: A Prophetic Journey

- Describe what it means to follow Jesus.
- Emphasize the practical steps of living out discipleship in daily routines.

#### 5. Qualified by Grace:

In our journey of discipleship, it's crucial to recognize that we are not self-qualified. Our qualifications come from God's grace alone. Ephesians 2:8-9 reminds us, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast."

- Grace Overcomes Our Inadequacies: Often, we feel unworthy to follow Jesus. But God's grace covers our shortcomings and empowers us to serve Him effectively.
- Called Despite Our Past: No matter our past sins or failures, God's grace qualifies us. Paul, formerly a persecutor of Christians, became a foremost apostle because he was qualified by God's grace.

#### 6. Sanctified for Service:

Sanctification is the process of being made holy, set apart for God's purposes. As disciples, we are called to live lives that reflect Christ's holiness.

- Daily Renewal: Taking up our cross daily implies a continuous process of sanctification. It's a daily surrender to God's will and a commitment to living out His truth.
- Living Sacrifices: Romans 12:1 urges us, "to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship." Our sanctified lives are a testament to God's transformative power.
- Empowered by the Holy Spirit: We cannot achieve sanctification through our own efforts. The Holy Spirit works within us, purifying our hearts and minds, enabling us to live righteously.

#### 7. Glorified in Christ:

Our ultimate hope and motivation in discipleship lie in the promise of glorification. Romans 8:30 assures us, "And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified."

- Future Glory: The struggles and sacrifices of discipleship are momentary compared to the eternal glory that awaits us. 2 Corinthians 4:17 declares, "For our light and momentary troubles are achieving for us an eternal glory that far outweighs them all."
- Reflecting God's Glory Now: Even now, we reflect God's glory through our transformed lives. As we deny ourselves and follow Christ, we become beacons of His light in a dark world.

#### Conclusion:

Accepting the call of discipleship is a profound commitment that requires us to deny ourselves, take up our cross daily, and follow Jesus. It's a journey that begins with recognizing that we are qualified by God's grace, sanctified for His service, and ultimately glorified in Christ.

Let us embrace this call with joy and determination, knowing that we do not walk this path alone. God's grace equips us, His Spirit empowers us, and His promise of eternal glory sustains us. May we, as a church, rise to this high calling and live as true disciples of Christ, shining His light and love to the world.

# EACH1

## Sermon Notes:

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# Everyday... ekklesia

## EACH1

## Taking Up Your Cross Daily

### Bible Study Lesson

Scripture:\*\* Luke 9:23 (NLT)

**"Then he said to the crowd, 'If any of you wants to be my follower, you must give up your own way, take up your cross daily, and follow me.'"**

#### *Bible Study Lesson 1: Understanding Discipleship*

##### I. Introduction

- Brief overview of the context within Luke's Gospel.
  - Luke 9 highlights several pivotal moments in Jesus' ministry, including the sending out of the twelve disciples, Peter's confession of Jesus as the Messiah, and Jesus predicting His death.
  - The verse is a call to discipleship given by Jesus to the crowd.

##### II. Exegesis of Luke 9:23

###### 1. "Then he said to the crowd..."

- Jesus addresses the crowd, not just the disciples, indicating that His call to discipleship is for everyone.
- Reflects the inclusive nature of Jesus' ministry.

###### 2. "If any of you wants to be my follower..."

- The invitation is open to anyone who desires to follow Jesus.
- Emphasizes the voluntary nature of discipleship.

###### 3. "You must give up your own way..."

- The phrase "give up your own way" (or "deny yourself" in other translations) signifies a renunciation of self-centeredness.
- It calls for a surrender of personal ambitions, desires, and control in favor of God's will.
- Denying oneself involves a shift from self-reliance to reliance on God.

###### 4. "Take up your cross daily..."

- "Take up your cross" refers to a willingness to endure suffering, sacrifice, and potentially even martyrdom for the sake of Christ.
- The addition of "daily" highlights the continuous, ongoing nature of this commitment. It's not a one-time act but a daily choice.

###### 5. "And follow me."

- Following Jesus means emulating His life and teachings.
- It involves obedience, imitation, and living in alignment with Christ's example and commands.



### III. Practical Application

#### 1. Daily Self-Denial

- Identify areas in life where personal desires conflict with God's will.
- Practice making choices that reflect a commitment to God's purposes over personal comfort or ambition.
- Example: Prioritizing time for prayer and scripture over entertainment.

#### 2. Embrace Your Cross

- Understand and accept that following Jesus involves hardships.
- Reflect on personal challenges or sacrifices you are facing for your faith. See them as part of your spiritual journey.
- Example: Maintaining integrity in the workplace, even when it's costly.

#### 3. Consistent Following

- Develop habits that foster a closer walk with Jesus, such as regular Bible study, prayer, and fellowship with other believers.
- Seek to embody the characteristics of Jesus in daily interactions—love, compassion, humility, and forgiveness.
- Example: Volunteering to help those in need, showing kindness to difficult people.

### IV. Group Discussion Questions

1. What does "denying yourself" look like in your daily life? Can you share a recent experience where you had to make a choice to put God's will above your own?
2. What are some "crosses" you have had to bear in your journey with Christ? How have these experiences shaped your faith?
3. How can we support each other in our group to better follow Jesus daily? What practical steps can we take together?

### V. Closing

- Summarize the key points: discipleship involves self-denial, bearing our cross, and following Jesus daily.
- Encourage participants to commit to practical steps of self-denial, embracing their cross, and consistent following.
- Close with a prayer, asking for strength and guidance to live out these principles daily.

By understanding and applying Luke 9:23, we grow as true disciples of Jesus, willing to surrender our own ways, embrace the challenges of our faith, and follow Him with steadfast commitment.

# EACH1

## Bible Study Notes:

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# Everyday...ekklesia

## REACH1

### Loving God and Neighbor The Call to Discipleship

#### Sermon Notes:

Scripture Reading: Matthew 22:37-40 (NIV)

**"Jesus replied: 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."**

Jesus' response in Matthew 22:37-40 comes during a confrontation with the Pharisees. When asked about the greatest commandment, Jesus quotes Deuteronomy 6:5 and Leviticus 19:18, effectively summarizing the entire Law and Prophets. By doing so, He highlights the interconnectedness of love for God and love for others.

1. Love the Lord Your God: This commandment calls us to a total, undivided love for God, encompassing our heart, soul, and mind. It signifies a relationship marked by devotion, reverence, and commitment. This love is the driving force behind our obedience and worship.

2. Love Your Neighbor as Yourself: Jesus elevates our interpersonal relationships to the level of divine command. Loving our neighbor is a reflection of our love for God. It challenges us to transcend selfishness, embodying compassion, empathy, and sacrificial love.

#### The Role of Love in Discipleship

*Discipleship, at its core, is the journey of following Jesus and becoming more like Him. This journey is marked by the transformative power of love.*

1. Love as the Fulfillment of the Law: When Jesus says, "All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments," He means that genuine love naturally leads to fulfilling God's commandments. True discipleship is not about legalistic adherence but a heart aligned with God's love.

2. Love as Witness: Our love for God and others is our greatest testimony to the world. Jesus said in John 13:35, "By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." Love is the distinguishing mark of a disciple and a powerful tool in evangelism.

### Practical Life Application

#### 1. Cultivating Love for God:

- Prayer and Worship: Engage in daily prayer and worship to deepen your relationship with God. Let your heart overflow with love and gratitude.
- Scripture Study: Immerse yourself in God's Word to understand His character and will. Let the Scriptures renew your mind and draw you closer to Him.
- Obedience: Show your love through obedience. Align your actions with God's commandments, not out of obligation but out of love.

#### 2. Practicing Love for Neighbors:

- Acts of Kindness: Perform small acts of kindness daily. Whether it's a smile, a helping hand, or an encouraging word, let your love shine in practical ways.
- Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Embrace forgiveness and seek reconciliation in your relationships. Let go of grudges and extend grace, just as God has done for you.
- Service: Serve your community and those in need. Volunteer, donate, and support causes that uplift others, reflecting Christ's love through your actions.

#### 3. Community Engagement:

- Building Relationships: Invest time in building genuine relationships within your community. Listen, understand, and share in their joys and struggles.
- Hospitality: Open your home and heart to others. Hospitality is a powerful expression of love and acceptance.
- Advocacy: Stand up for justice and compassion in your community. Be a voice for the marginalized and oppressed, advocating for God's love and justice.



# REACH1

## Sermon Notes:

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# *Everyday... ekklesia*

## **REACH1**

## Loving God and Neighbor

### Bible Study Lesson

Bible Study Lesson 2: Loving God and Neighbor

- Scripture Reading: Matthew 22:37-40

- Questions:

1. How can we love God with all our heart, soul, and mind in our daily lives?
2. Who is considered our neighbor, and how can we love them effectively?
3. What are some practical ways to demonstrate love for our neighbors?

-Answers:

1. We can love God with our entire being by dedicating our time, talents, and treasures to His service, prioritizing our relationship with Him, and seeking to align our lives with His will.
2. Our neighbor includes anyone we interact with, especially those in need. Effective love involves empathy, compassion, and active assistance.
3. Practical ways include helping those in need, offering a listening ear, sharing resources, and providing encouragement and support.

# REACH1

## Bible Study Notes:

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