

## Questions For Reflection and Discussion

- How would you describe Jesus to someone who had never heard of him?
- How do you think “the crowds” (the general public) would describe Jesus?
- How does our definition of Jesus change how we see God? How does it change how we see ourselves?
- As we start the season of Lent, what does it mean when Jesus says, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me.” (v.23)
- What things are harder or easier to give up? What is the difference between the two groups?
- What questions do you have about this text?

## Prayer List/Notes



## **WHO DO YOU SAY THAT I AM?**

Scripture Focus This Week: Luke  
9:18-27

### Daily Reading Plan

- Mon: **Mark 10:17-22**—Why do you call me good?
- Tues: **John 2:1-12**—Woman, what does that have to do with me?
- Wed: **Matt 12:46-50**—Who is my mother? Who are my brothers?
- Thr: **Mark 2:18-22**—The wedding guests can't fast while the groom is with them, can they?
- Fri: **Luke 12:13-21**—Man, who appointed me as judge or referee between you and your brother?
- Sat: **Matt 17:14-20**—You faithless generation, how long will I be with you? How long will I put up with you?

### Prayer

*God of mystery and revelation, you are known to us in Jesus, and yet, we still have so many questions. Let the gaps in our knowledge lead us closer to you, Let our increased understanding conform our hearts with your heart. And, let our hearts overflow with your love so that others can come to know you as well. Amen*



**Scan the code for a  
guided meditation on  
this week's Scripture**

Lenten Practice:  
**FASTING**

The practice of abstaining from food for religious purification or discernment can be found in both the Old and New Testaments. Daniel and his friends fasted as a way of maintaining their faith as they were living among the Babylonians (Daniel 1:8-17), and we see the early church using fasting as a regular part of their worship life (Acts 13:2-3, 14:23).

**Fasting is NOT a diet.** In a fast, you take away something from your life so that you can make room for something else better. The act of stopping (or breaking) the fast is as important as starting and keeping it. Without an ending your intention can easily shift away from the presence of God in your life and toward a pride over keeping the fast. During Lent, it is traditional to not fast on Sundays because it is a “mini-Easter.”

When fasting **first choose what you will fast from.** Since food is essential for life, it is often the focus of a fast. This does not have to be the case. Technology, TV, cable news, social media, and shopping can also be subjects of your fast. In identifying something to fast from, first look at things you do or consume often, so that you will notice when it is missing.

**Second, decide what you are fasting for.** In the space left by removing something, it is helpful to decide where you will direct the energy or time that you would have devoted to that thing. This can be additional times of prayer,

Scripture reading, or it can be a particular focus on discerning an answer to a particular question, or a focused prayer for a particular person.

If you accidentally forget and break your fast, you don't need to beat yourself up over it. **Mistakes can be an opportunity** to give thanks for God's grace. Sometimes the repeated asking for forgiveness and focusing on God's grace can be more helpful than the fast.

Some examples of fasting include:

- John Wesley fasted twice a week on Wednesday and Friday abstaining from food from after dinner the night before until 3:00PM on that day.
- Roman Catholics, especially during Lent, abstain from eating meat on Fridays as a way of reflecting on Jesus' death on the cross.

For more information on fasting  
and additional articles and  
resources go to:  
**[centrevilleumc.org/Lent](http://centrevilleumc.org/Lent)**