

## Are You a Disciple? | Week 1 - Disciples Deny Themselves

### Big Idea

Disciples of Jesus are identified by their counter cultural willingness to deny themselves.

### Scripture

Luke 9:18-27, Matthew 6:16-18, and John 6:35

### Overview

During our new 4-week series, we will challenge one another to ask ourselves, “Am I a disciple? Are the qualities that Jesus says mark a disciple evident in my life?” Our prayer is that you’ll be both inspired and equipped to live as a disciple of Jesus in 2024.

### Opening Question

What was a highlight from your 2023 holiday season?

### Bible Discussion

1. Read Luke 9:18-27. Jesus mentions the cost of discipleship in verses 23-24. What three things does he highlight in verse 23? What do you think Jesus means by taking up your cross daily, and how does that relate to following him?
2. Matthew explains the idea of fasting in Matthew 6:16-18. Is this a new concept for you? If so, what thoughts does it bring to mind? If you’ve fasted before, feel free to share your experience.
3. Read John 6:35. What does Jesus promise here? How might this verse influence how we approach our daily lives and seek fulfillment?

### Life Application

4. Author Richard Foster describes denying ourselves as “Self-denial is simply a way of coming to understand that we do not have to have our own way. Our happiness is not dependent upon getting what we want.” What do you think of this quote? Have you experienced this in your own life?
5. Consider what you will fast from as we enter into our 21 Days of Prayer and Fasting this week. You could fast meals from sun-up to sun-down or one day a week for the next three weeks. You can choose to fast from social media or Netflix. You get to decide what it looks like for you. As you deny yourself and create extra space for God to speak, take note of what you’re hearing and of what you experience over these next 21 days. You can find additional resources at [communitychristian.org/21days](https://communitychristian.org/21days).
6. Here at COMMUNITY, we describe following Jesus as the living out the *three connections*. (YOU + God, YOU + the Church, and YOU + the world.) This year we are introducing the YOU+ Devotional that will help you reflect on each of the connections. Once you go through the devotional, you can meet with someone (a trusted friend, leader or staff member) and have a YOU+ Discipleship Conversation to set your goals for the year. If you had a YOU+ Discipleship Conversation in 2023, we are inviting you to revisit your plan, and go through the devotional. If you are new, this is the perfect time to get started! Learn more at [you.communitychristian.org](https://you.communitychristian.org)