in **LUKE 9:23**  Jesus issues the ultimate follow me request. He holds nothing back, He never really did.

We all know people who have no filter right? Who tell you exactly what they think...
It may be hard to hear but like...you'll know exactly what they think, believe and how they feel.

**Luke 9:23-26** is a great example of Jesus doing this. **You want to follow me...this is what it looks like.**

He’s not dressing it up to make it sound easy, he’s being truthful. THIS IS WHAT YOU NEED. 
He’s not trying to trick you.....because of this He says some pretty crazy things...at least in our mind.

So crazy that Jesus can’t be but one of three things....A liar, A lunatic, or LORD. 

The question we must answer is this.....to you...which one is He. 
If he's a liar or lunatic I need to run the opposite direction. 
If he is Lord....I better follow Him with all I have.

But we believe Jesus is Lord...
We believe Jesus is the only one that is completely honest all the time. No tricks, no lies, all truth. 
What he says may hurt, may not be the most popular 
but what He teaches and asks of you is the thing you need the most. 
And then as we follow Him and He consumes us...and as I live all He is saturates in all I do every day.

As I Follow Him....I make Him known...We know this word Follow right?
We follow many things...some good, some bad. some that have little significance, some that can have major impact:
(cars in traffic, people on twitter, a crowd at school, celebrities, athletes, musical artist, certain beliefs, relationships)
From the routine to that which has a major impact.....WE FOLLOW ALL THE TIME

The question we’re driving to is this....who are you ultimately following.
LIKE, who has the loudest voice in your head....the biggest influence in your life...that which sets the pattern/standard?
Because the truth is...we are going to follow different things, trends, careers, but ultimately...what is the loudest voice?

Jesus takes that word follow and puts some flesh on it...explains it in more detail and with authority and in love/honesty.

**Deny yourself & take up your cross and follow me.** Jesus is saying...I've got to be the voice, the influence. I BECOME YOUR LIFE. Lose your life in mine - verse 24 - that’s hard truth right there.

The danger is the innocent things we follow can easily become the main thing and influence in our life.
It becomes the loudest voice you hear. It becomes our world...our everything...our life. 
But Jesus says this in **VERSE 25 – what does that profit you?** What’s the small voice going to ultimately give you? It won’t give you Christ.....what only He can give you... Follow the trail of the lesser things...what's the result? Hey...even church, a Godly person can be the loudest voice...replacing Christ...just as wrong as anything else

How crucial in this?  That we follow Christ and Him alone?  **Verse 26 (to be ashamed is to not follow, no voice)**
To not follow Him is to say your voice is not significant...You can’t believe He is Lord and then not follow
So the immediate application is to follow Him...honestly, simply, hide your life in the cross.

So how do we guard against allowing the small to become the big?  How do I ensure I follow Christ each day..
Because our hearts tend to allow the small to become something big.  Because we often fail at this...
We must guard against it....how?  Luke 9:23...but what does that look like?  It starts when your feet his the ground.
renewing our minds daily and focusing our eyes on the prize...on Christ.
we set our hearts and affection and desires on Him.  Everything else flows from this place.

And at the end of the day it’s you will decide.....
Is Jesus Lord?  And will I follow Him with all I have? 
IN the midst of all the other voices and things I follow.....will His voice be the loudest in my life?
If so all that He is to me will saturate all I’m involved in each day.
POSSIBLE GROUP QUESTIONS: (for tonight/throughout the week)

- How real is the struggle of other voices for you?
- Liar – Lunatic – LORD?
- Is your pursuit of this relationship with Christ strong?
- What is it these other pursuits ultimately give you?

IMMEDIATE APPLICATION: (How to follow Christ.) next week

- Read and Apply the Word.
- Be here. At Church.
- Pursue holiness at all costs.
- Keep perspective – keep the main thing the main thing.
- Be renewed daily – we fail, we often get sidetracked.
  So we must daily set our hearts/affection on Christ.

BIG QUESTION:

Who are you following? What is the loudest voice?
What is it that is pouring from your life each day?