

Whoever - The Down Way Up

Ice Breaker: What did you want to be when you grew up and why? Or What do you want to do when you retire?

Profound Emptiness in the Narrative of Success

1. What is the world's narrative of success?

2. To what are people looking to save them from the difficulties of this world?

3. Who are the people in the public that appear to have it all (success, wealth, power, influence, beauty) but are empty? (Ecclesiastes 2:10-11)

Ecclesiastes 2:10-11 (NIV) *10 I denied myself nothing my eyes desired; I refused my heart no pleasure. My heart took delight in all my labor, and this was the reward for all my toil. 11 Yet when I surveyed all that my hands had done and what I had toiled to achieve, everything was meaningless, a chasing after the wind; nothing was*

gained under the sun.

The Down Way Up

Main Idea: Lasting identity is found in the **down way up**.

From Pastor Dave's Sermon: Jesus was rejected by people, suffered at their hands, was killed and rose again to new life. (Luke 9:22) *He is not asking of you something he was not willing to endure himself!* Jesus comes along and suggests the way to upgrade is to downgrade. **It's the down way up.**

Luke 9:21-25 (NIV) *21 Jesus strictly warned them not to tell this to anyone. 22 And he said, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, and he must be killed and on the third day be raised to life." 23 Then he said to them all: "Whoever wants to be my disciple must deny themselves and take up their cross daily and follow me. 24 For whoever wants to save their life will lose it, but whoever loses their life for me will save it. 25 What good is it for someone to gain the whole world, and yet lose or forfeit their very self?*

4. How does what Jesus did demonstrate the "down way up" principle? (Luke 9:22)

5. What does Jesus teach his Disciples about "the down way up" principle? (Luke 9:23-24) What do you think "take up their cross daily" means?

6. What is the consequence for not following the “down way up” principle when it applies to salvation? (Luke 9:24-25) How does this contradict the philosophies of the world and the “prosperity gospel”?

7. How do the following passages also teach to live the “down way up” principle?

a. **Psalm 34:12-13 (NIV)** *12 Whoever of you loves life and desires to see many good days, 13 keep your tongue from evil and your lips from telling lies.*

b. **Proverbs 11:25 (NIV)** *25 A generous person will prosper; whoever refreshes others will be refreshed.*

c. **Mark 9:35 (NIV)** *35 Sitting down, Jesus called the Twelve and said, “Anyone who wants to be first must be the very last, and the servant of all.”*

d. Galatians 2:20-21 (NIV) *20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me. 21 I do not set aside the grace of God, for if righteousness could be gained through the law, Christ died for nothing!"*

The J.O.Y. Principle

8. How can living the J.O.Y principle (**J**esus first, then **O**thers, then **Y**ourself) keep us from hedonism (self-indulgence)? (Luke 10:27-28)

Luke 10:27-28 (NIV) *27 He answered, " 'Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind'; and, 'Love your neighbor as yourself.'" 28 "You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."*

9. How can the J.O.Y principle help us in our marriages, dating, and our other relationships?

10. Pastor Dave gave three examples of the way Christians live differently than the world by living the "down way up": How we use our time, our money and our sexuality. How can the J.O.Y. principle be used in each of these areas?

“He must become greater; I must become less.” (John 3:30)

11. How does John the Baptist exemplify the “down way up” principle? (John 3:25-30)

John 3:25-30 (NIV) *25 An argument developed between some of John’s disciples and a certain Jew over the matter of ceremonial washing. 26 They came to John and said to him, “Rabbi, that man who was with you on the other side of the Jordan—the one you testified about—look, he is baptizing, and everyone is going to him.” 27 To this John replied, “A person can receive only what is given them from heaven. 28 You yourselves can testify that I said, ‘I am not the Messiah but am sent ahead of him.’ 29 The bride belongs to the bridegroom. The friend who attends the bridegroom waits and listens for him, and is full of joy when he hears the bridegroom’s voice. That joy is mine, and it is now complete. 30 He must become greater; I must become less.”*

12. What are ways you live the “down way up” (John 3:30)? How can living this way help others see God?

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