

Sermon Discussion Guide- Week of March 1, 2020

The Jerusalem Road: Setting Your Face

Pastor Johnson 8am, 10:30 Fest., Pastor Temple 9:15, 10:30 Fam. Life

Getting Started- Life Updates, Prayer Requests & Opening Question (15 min)

- Anything to share about personal events since you last met or about applying last week's message on "What Happened on the Mountain"?
- Are there any joys or concerns that you would like to share with the group for the closing prayer time or for group members to hold in prayer during the week? (please note them below for later)

- What difficult human journeys in literature or in film have been an inspiration to you?

Review the Sermon (15 min)

Please read aloud the sermon scripture, Luke 9:51-56. Know that it is ok to skip some questions below in order to manage the time for discussions in each section.

⁵¹ As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. ⁵² And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; ⁵³ but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.

⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them?" ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ Then he and his disciples went to another village.

- If you had to give a one-minute summary of the sermon message this week, what would you say?
- Twice prior to this week's passage above, Jesus had predicted his death (Luke 9:21-22 and Luke 9:44-45). Last week's scripture of the mount of transfiguration presented a conversation with Elijah and Moses about his departure in Jerusalem. How do these passages add meaning to this week's passage, verse 51, Jesus resolutely set out (or set his face toward) Jerusalem?
- "Jerusalem" is of the root word "shalom," a word for peace, safety, rest, wholeness. In Luke 13:34-35, Jesus wept over Jerusalem because of the people's rejection of the saving words of prophets in the past and at the time (John the Baptist and Jesus) and violence towards them. How or why do you think Jerusalem is presented to be at the center of God's redeeming work for the world?
- Earlier in the chapter, Jesus sent out the disciples to other places to heal, cast out demons and proclaim the kingdom of God (Luke 9:1-2). In verse 52-53 here, they are sent out again and are rejected this time by people in Samaria because "he was heading for Jerusalem." Why would the Samaritans reject them because of where they were headed?

- Why were the disciples so angry and confident in their desired response of vengeance with God's power and judgement (verse 54)?
- How did Jesus demonstrate both His resoluteness and the nature of His kingdom way in His response in verses 55-56?

Other Related Readings (10 min)

- Would a volunteer please read out loud, Isaiah 50:1-7. The Lord presents here both presence of Israel's sin and how the Lord's servant deals with it. What are the consequences of their sin (verse 1)? How do verses 2-3 add description to their problematic response to their sin?
- Where do you see the life of Christ reflected in these words of the servant (verses 4-7)?
- Do you think the spiritual significance of the consequences or guilt of our sins is underestimated by the culture of the world today? How about within the cultures of churches in the U.S. today?
- Do you believe the characterization below of a watered down modern version of the gospel is common today in churches in the U.S.?
 - "A God without wrath brought men without sin into a kingdom without judgement through the ministrations of a Christ without a cross." H. Richard Niebuhr, *The Kingdom of God in America* (1988)
 - If so, where do you see it present? What is the consequence of holding such a view?

Personalizing and Applying The Message (10 min)

- As you reflect upon the sermon and the additional readings above, what are points of encouragement or challenge for you personally?
- Do some of the following opportunities to "make space" for God in our lives appeal to you? Which ones?
 - Christ Church Passport books for mid-week related reflections and prayer points
 - Tuesday Nights Together (TNT) 5:30-7pm, Fellowship meal and Pastor's study "The Character of a Methodist"
 - Lenten prayer/open Chapel at Christ Church Mon-Thurs 7:30-7:30pm, Fri 7:30am-2pm, Sun 7:30am – 4pm
- How does Christ's response to rejection in verses 55-56 above inform how we would respond to those with faith views that differ from our own? Are there any relationships in particular you are thinking about that you would care to share with the group?
- How does the resoluteness of Jesus in his persistent endurance in his mission from God inspire you?

Witness & Closing Prayer (5-10 min)

- What might God be sending us out to do with courage and perseverance this week?
- Do you anticipate any opportunities to confront evil, to be a healing presence or to share the gospel of Christ? How so?
- The group leader or another volunteer who took notes on the prayer requests shared earlier in the meeting, may now lead the group in closing prayer