

venge—"fire from heaven"—a cycle of bitterness and revenge our world knows too well. To their shock and surprise, Jesus rebukes them. The words from His sermon on the mount come to mind. Jesus' journey goes right through the lives of those we naturally disdain. In a teaching that powerfully connects to this rebuke—Luke 10: 25ff (consider reading that parable too)—we find out that on the road to 'Jerusalem', enemies are our neighbours, *and* that the second commandment that sums up all the Law and the Prophets is that we must love our neighbours as ourselves (Matt. 22:39).

PRAY: Pray for peace between people in conflict. Peace in Afghanistan, Iraq, Korea, Jerusalem, and any other place that comes to mind. Think of any in your life that raise feelings of disdain in your heart. Ask Jesus to fill you with love so that you can seek reconciliation.

THURSDAY JANUARY 6

Read: Luke 9: 57, Acts 9: 1-19

Like the man on the road with Jesus, most of us would commit to following Jesus wherever he goes, If.... ! IF that journey leads to: happiness, prosperity, inner fulfillment, physical health, and many other things that we think will make our lives satisfying, we will follow! But reflect on how Jesus responds; "no place to lay his head", "love me above family", "no turning back". Now, consider His journey to Jerusalem, a journey marked by surrender and suffering. God appointed Paul to that kind of journey: "I will show him how much he must suffer for my name." What has God marked for you this 2011? Of course, we don't know. The more important question is this, "Will you follow?" By God's grace we say, "Here I am."

PRAY: Sing/pray: "Here I am Lord, it is I Lord. I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord. If you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart."

FRIDAY JANUARY 7

Read: Luke 9: 58-59, Matthew 6: 25-34

Most all of us worry? What do you worry about? A relationship. Finances. Getting a job. Your health. Your children. Name your worries; bring them to God and consider sharing them with someone you trust.

PRAY: Father, take this worry (name it). I know that you will provide everything I *need* (not want). Strengthen me to seek your Kingdom in *this* (name it) aspect of my life. In Jesus name, Amen.

SATURDAY JANUARY 8

Read: Tomorrow's sermon text, Luke 10: 1-24.

Consider coming to early morning prayer in the sanctuary at 6:00AM.

WEEKLY DEVOTIONS GUIDE

JANUARY 2-8, 2011

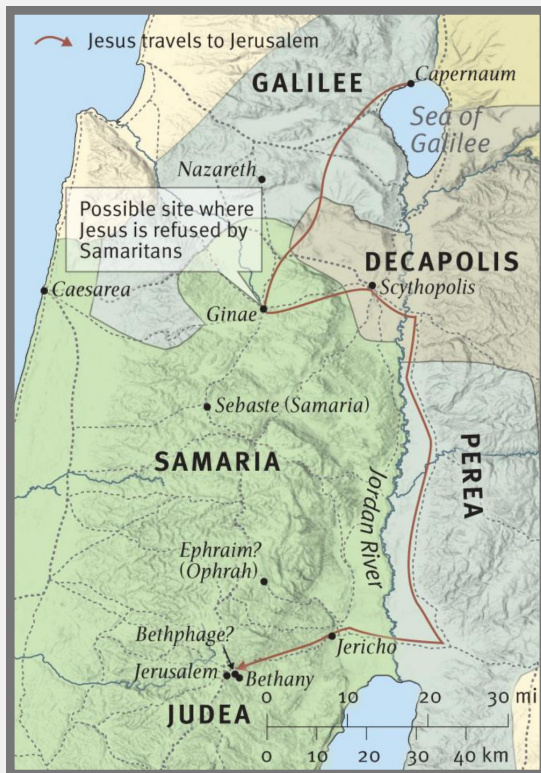
BY: PASTOR ANDREW BEUNK

NEW WEST CRC

SERIES: A 'TANGIBLE DISPLAY' PEOPLE: JOURNEYING WITH JESUS IN LUKE

SERMON NOTES: "FOLLOW ME: THE WAY OF DISCIPLESHIP" LUKE 9:51-62

KEY THEME OR TAKE-AWAY:



A brief intro from Pastor

Mike: Luke 9:51-19:44 is a section peculiar to Luke. Unlike Mark and Matthew, Luke adds this long section of Jesus' journey from Galilee to Jerusalem. It is an important part of his theological message. In Luke Jesus moves *to* Jerusalem and in Acts Jesus moves *from* Jerusalem toward the ends of the earth. Jerusalem stands at the centre of the story as the place where Jesus dies, rises again, commissions his disciples, and pours out his Spirit. The section in Luke is not necessarily chronological but theological in nature. At least two themes are important.

First, Jesus is training his disciples—the theme is discipleship, preparation for their calling. Second, the theme of 'the way' is important for Luke. This is one of the first images of the church in Acts. 'The Way' refers to Christ's followers following in the way of Jesus which ultimately leads to the cross. So we could describe the theme of this section as "discipleship on the way."

MONDAY JANUARY 3

Read: Luke 9: 51, Hebrews 12: 1-2, Philippians 3: 7-11

The page on the calendar has turned, a new year has begun! A time to pause, reflect, give thanks for the past, and look forward to the future—a future unknown to us but known to God. In this new year, I hope to journey with you through this weekly devotions guide; at least through to June when our sermon series ends, but perhaps longer—as the Spirit leads!

The new year is a time of new beginning. As a congregation this new beginning takes us to Luke 9:51, a place in Luke's Gospel where a significant theological metaphor begins—a journey to Jerusalem. Jesus journeys there and the only way we can journey to the new 'Jerusalem' is with Him.

Notice how Luke connects the "time approaching for Jesus to be taken up to heaven" with the act of going on a journey. The reality of his final destination or purpose, makes the journey possible. With our goal, our

destination, our 'home' in view, the journey is possible. More than that, with Paul we find that this journey towards "resurrection from the dead" with Christ is worth infinitely more than anything else in life. (re)Commit to "fixing your eyes on Jesus, the Author and Perfecter of your faith." Remember, in Christ our 'home' is secure.

PRAY: Offer a prayer of (re)commitment. Surrender your life to a deeper journey with Jesus in 2011. Thank Him for our 'home' in the New Jerusalem.

TUESDAY JANUARY 4

Read: Luke 9: 51, Isaiah 50: 4-9

Many commentators have noticed a strong connection between Luke 9:51 and Isaiah 50:7. The Servant in Isaiah "sets his face like flint"; the Servant in Luke "sets his face resolutely". It is a posture of determined commitment that results from knowing "the LORD God helps me." How is Jesus calling you to take up a posture of 'determined commitment' in 2011? Is he calling you to a more intentional prayer life, greater moral purity, a tangible Kingdom vision in your workplace, in your business, in your school? Perhaps 2011 will bring unexpected hardship—illness, loss, financial hardship. Perhaps the Lord will open up a new opportunity, a new challenge, a call to greater obedience and purity in your life or that of your family.

Read the verses from Isaiah carefully. All those verses easily connect to the life of Jesus and the things He experienced. As we, by faith, find our life in His, we may know that these verses will prove true in our life as well. God will "open my ear"; He will "awaken me"; He will "help me"; He will protect me from my "adversary"; He will take away my disgrace and shame and guilt. Set your face "*resolutely*" to journey with Jesus.

PRAY: Sing/Pray "Were the whole realm of nature mine, That were a present far too small; Love so amazing, so divine, Demands my soul, my life, my all." (cf. *When I Survey the Wondrous Cross*). Meditate on these words. Bask in Christ's *amazing love*. Give Christ your *all*.

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 5

Read: Luke 9: 52-55, Matthew 5: 43-48

There was a long history to the disdain that Jews and Samaritans felt towards each other in Jesus' day. To the Jews, Samaritans were traitors and half-breeds. Luke has this Jerusalem journey begin with Jesus sending his disciples out ahead of him into Samaria; like sending a modern day skull-cap-wearing Jew into the heart of Gaza or the West Bank! Needless to say, the disciples were not warmly received. Having returned to Jesus, no doubt abused and humiliated by the Samaritans, they call for re-