

Jesus and You: Set Like a Flint

When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. Luke 9.51

*I gave my back to those who strike,
and my cheeks to those who pull out the beard;
I hid not my face
from disgrace and spitting.
But the Lord GOD helps me;
therefore I have not been disgraced;
therefore I have set my face like a flint,
and I know that I shall not be put to shame.
Isa 50.6-7*

To what was Jesus hurrying? What was his appointment?

Lesson one: We do not react in anger or judgment to people who do not receive the message gladly. Luke 9.52-56

Lesson two: We tell prospective disciples about the costs of discipleship.
Luke 9.57-62

Lesson three: Know that a disciple is empowered, not by man but by the Holy Spirit. Luke 10.17-20

Discovering God on Parable Lane (1)

To what was Jesus hurrying? What was his appointment?

Turning his back on Nazareth, Capernaum, and Galilee, he turns his face toward Judea and Jerusalem, not toward a cross or tomb but to his ascension back to his Father's Heaven. He turns his face toward the fulfillment of prophecy (Isa 50). "I give myself over – I shall not be put to shame." It is Luke's theme of departure and not demise that frame Jesus' mission on this ball of water and soil. Before we go to our first parable, let us look at three lessons that bring us to that story.

Lesson one: We do not react in anger or judgment to people who do not receive the message gladly. The Samaritans that had received Jesus two years previous now reject his coming because he was "going to Jerusalem. Two disciples ask if they can call fire down from heaven to destroy the rejectors. No! Violence is never the way of Christ; it is the way of the world. We teach, reason, pray, and move to the next potential disciple. We never stop praying for the lost!

Lesson two: We tell prospective disciples about the costs of discipleship. Discipleship calls us away from the world. It might give us less physical comfort and the "extras" of the world, fewer family members and friends. It is a life-long journey that leads to eternal life.

Lesson three: Understand that the disciple is empowered, not by man but by the Holy Spirit. We have the power over the scorpions and serpents not because of man's ordination or purpose but because the Holy Spirit dwells within.

As Jesus travels from Galilee to Jerusalem, he is questioned by friend and foe about human relationships with God and fellow humans. He answers the questions with parables and illustrations taken from ordinary life — stories with unexpected conclusions and deep heavenly teaching.

Come, let us walk Parable Lane. In this section of Luke (chapters 9-19), we find fourteen parables not found in Matthew, Mark, or John. Stories preserved by the Holy Spirit with ink on paper for the Greek believers and preserved for us. Jesus has left his home, his face set like flint, he holds his hand out to the new disciple and says, "leave your home and follow me." Set your face, heart, and purpose with mine.