



First Baptist Church At The Villages

INSPIRING FAITHFULNESS • COMMITMENT TO MISSION • LUKE 9:51-56 •

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Main Point

Jesus demonstrated the commitment to His mission that He demands from all of His followers.

Introduction

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

What is the most difficult decision you have ever made? Why was it so hard?

What is the best outcome you have experienced from a tough decision? The worst?

What has been the most challenging part about the decision you made to follow Christ?

To follow Christ in obedience may require hard choices. Sometimes, the choice is between what's good and what's best. Following Christ means we choose sacrifice over selfishness. We choose the cross over comfort. We choose God's mission over maintaining the status quo. The stakes could not be higher.

Understanding

Unpack the biblical text to discover what the Scripture says or means about a particular topic.

| Ask a volunteer to read Luke 9:51.

What was the significance of Jesus' determining to go to, or "setting His face" toward, Jerusalem?

How did Jesus' end goal impact His journey?

What is the "end goal" for believers? How should that impact our journey?

Throughout Jesus' earthly ministry, He ministered to all types of people in all types of situations. He was open to interruptions in His days, not in the sense that He was distracted by them, but that He worked with

them and in them. Here, however, we come to the place in Jesus' earthly life when everything else had to take a backseat to the one priority of the cross. He set His face upon it, choosing to turn His focus to Jerusalem where He would complete the work God had sent Him to accomplish—the salvation of all people through His death on the cross.

| Ask a volunteer to read Luke 9:52-53.

What happened in the Samaritan village?

Why did they reject Jesus? What does this tell you about how people will respond to your commitment to Christ's mission in this world?

Townpeople in Samaria did not welcome Jesus because they knew He was determined to go to Jerusalem. Because of their heritage, the Samaritans had long been despised by the Jews and, not surprisingly, the Samaritans responded with similar hostility.

As a parent or a friend, you often respond to difficulty of your own differently than you do difficulty faced by your children or loved ones. What we take on in our own lives we often hope others can avoid. But Jesus didn't come to save us from temporary trials; He came to save us from eternal destruction.

Read Luke 9:57-62. What do Jesus' actions (vv. 52-53) and words (vv. 57-62) tell you about what difficulty you should expect as a follower of Jesus?

| Ask a volunteer to read Luke 9:54-56.

What do the disciples' words in verse 54 tell you about the mission they were most committed to?

What do your words and actions reveal about the mission you are most committed to?

Why did Jesus rebuke His disciples, and what did He do in response to the rejection He experienced by these Samaritans?

At this point, these disciples were more focused on protecting Jesus, themselves, their reputations, and bringing judgment on opposition than they were on Jesus' ultimate mission. With words of rebuke, Jesus corrected His disciples and then continued on His way to Jerusalem, fully committed and undeterred by the rejection He experienced.

Application

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

What would change in your life this week if you were fully committed to the mission of God in every moment and circumstance?

How did your priorities change when you became a follower of Jesus? What has helped you overcome the pull to go back to aspects of the life you had before Christ?

What can our group do to hold each other accountable to giving God's mission top priority?

Pray

Thank God for His grace and for calling you to be a part of what He is doing in the world today. Ask Him to help you not be distracted by circumstances or temptations, but to stay committed to His mission.

Commentary

| Luke 9:51-56

9:51. Here the center of Luke's Gospel begins—Jesus' exodus from this world. The road to Jerusalem and Calvary dominates everything Luke wants to say and teach. Jesus, having shown his openness to all people who would commit themselves to his work, now turned to Jerusalem to complete his work through the predicted betrayal, death, and resurrection. Luke notes that his ultimate destiny is to be taken to heaven (see Acts 1:2,11,22; 2:1), but Christ's road to heaven led through Golgotha, Calvary, and the open tomb.

9:52-53. Crowds did not gather for Jesus everywhere. Racial prejudice met him in Samaria. They refused hospitality to anyone who was headed for Jerusalem. Josephus even tells us of an incident later in the first century when Samaritans massacred Jewish pilgrims, causing such unrest that the Romans removed Herod Antipas from office.

Just as people of Nazareth expressed prejudice against the hometown boy when Jesus opened his ministry (4:16-30), so the Samaritans expressed opposition as Jesus closed his public ministry and turned to Jerusalem. The disciples must learn from the Master that commitment to the mission brings rejection from some people.

9:54. Prejudice and revenge grabbed the disciples. "We will do unto them as they did unto us. Let us show how much power we have. Jesus, remember Elijah called fire down from heaven on the army units of the king of Samaria (2 Kgs. 1). We just saw you with Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. Show us you have as much power as he had."

9:55-56. The Son of Man had not yet come in judgment. It was not time for such radical action. The disciples had not yet learned how to concentrate on the mission of preaching the kingdom and healing the sick. They had not learned to depend on God to empower their mission. They had not learned to love all people as Jesus

did. So Jesus rebuked the judgmental disciples (cf. 18:15), just as he had rebuked demons and cast them out (4:35,41; 9:42), just as he had rebuked fevers and caused them to leave the sick (4:39), just as he had rebuked natural forces and brought the wind to a standstill (8:24). With the same language he had admonished the disciples not to tell anyone that he was the Christ (9:21). (For other Lukan uses of the Gr. word *epitimao*, “rebuke,” see 17:3; 18:15,39; and the thieves on the cross in 23:40.)

Jesus had told the disciples before they went on mission that some villages would reject them. He told them to kick the dust off their feet and go on. He followed his own instructions, moving on to the next village on the way to Jerusalem and Calvary.