

Devotionals Jan 8 – Feb 7, 2022: The Gospel of Luke (3): Jesus' Journey to Jerusalem

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As we continue our study of Luke's gospel account, you will notice a shift in Jesus' ministry. Prior to this, he had been teaching and performing miracles in the region of Galilee. But now, as his time on this earth is coming to an end, he begins a journey to Jerusalem that would eventually culminate in his death, resurrection, and ascension. Luke 9:51 marks this transition when we read, "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem." Jesus begins this journey with intentionality and determination, resolved to obey his heavenly Father and fulfill the mission that he was sent to carry out—to redeem his people from their sin. Along the way he continues to instruct the people about his kingdom, covering topics such as prayer, the cost of discipleship, trust, worry, and showing love and compassion to others. Knowing that his death was swiftly approaching, he wanted them to remember these important lessons after he was gone. Keep this context in mind as you study the teaching of Jesus this month.

Jesus' steadfast resolve would be tested in many ways throughout his journey to Jerusalem. Because he was God, Jesus had full knowledge of exactly what he was going to experience once he arrived in Jerusalem. Because he was a man, he had to fully endure all the pain and suffering of his life and death on the cross. His disciples tested his resolve as well because they did not yet understand why he had to die. In addition, although the people liked to see his miracles and healings, Jesus experienced increasing rejection because of his message and mission. His own people repeatedly tried to kill him and eventually succeeded. How difficult this must have been for him! This rejection was all part of the suffering that Jesus had to experience in his state of humiliation on this earth. God's people sometimes must suffer for his sake because it is unavoidable. Jesus had the power to avoid all suffering, but instead he willingly submitted to it for the sake of his people. His steadfast resolve in the face of great suffering demonstrates the great love our Savior has for us.

Jesus' steadfast resolve remained unwavering during the course of all these tests. In the face of the humiliation and pain that he endured on this earth, he maintained an unshakable confidence in his heavenly Father. The fact that he "stedfastly set his face" does not mean that he was simply grudgingly resigned to make this journey to the cross because there was no other way. Rather, it shows a confident commitment to doing the Father's will because he had complete trust in him. As we read in Isaiah's prophecy of the Messiah's suffering, "For the Lord GOD will help me; therefore shall I not be confounded: therefore I have set my face like a flint, and I know that I shall not be ashamed" (50:7). He knew that his path would be difficult and even unbearable at times, but he also knew that God would sustain him.

As Christians, we are called to imitate this steadfast resolve of Jesus. We are called to stand for the truth with determination even when the world mocks and persecutes us for it. We are called to steadfast, daily faithfulness in whatever path God has given us to walk on this earth—even if it is not the one we would have chosen for ourselves. The Christian life is one of humility, modeled after Jesus' humble existence on this earth. Yet it is also a life filled with hope. Although we can never be perfectly steadfast on this earth because of our sin, through our union with Christ we can have an assured confidence in God's will. By faith, we can trust that God's way for our life, even though it may be difficult, is the best way. Satan will do all that he can to break our resolve and draw us away from God. But by faith, we can also trust that God will sustain us throughout the trials of this life just as he sustained Jesus during his life of suffering on this earth.

First Peter 5:8–11 is one of my favorite passages and serves as a fitting conclusion to a consideration of steadfastness in the face of suffering. Peter wrote these words to comfort and

encourage Christians who were facing intense persecution and trials. May they be a comfort and encouragement to you as well as you seek to live with steadfast resolve on your journey to heaven. “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour: whom resist stedfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you. To him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.”

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Date	Read	Study Question	Sing or Pray
January 8	Luke 9:51–56; Isaiah 50	How does reading Isaiah’s prophecy deepen your understanding of Jesus’ submission to God’s will?	Psalter #84
January 9	Luke 9:57–62	What do each of the three men whom Jesus encounters prioritize above following him? What are you tempted to prioritize above following Jesus?	Psalter #85
January 10	Luke 10:1–24	What great privilege did the disciples have (vv. 23–24)? What great privilege do you as an elect child of God have (vv.21–22)?	Psalter #91
January 11	Luke 10:25–37	Who is your neighbor? How can you show the love of God to them?	Psalter #92
January 12	Luke 10:38–42	What do you consider to be your daily necessities? Is communing with God through his word on your list? At the top?	Psalter #94
January 13	Luke 11:1–13	What do you learn about prayer from Jesus’ teaching in these verses? How can you apply this to your own prayer life?	Psalter #96
January 14	Luke 11:14–36	Where does Jesus point the people when they ask for a sign that he is really the Messiah? Is this where you also seek assurance if you have doubts?	Psalter #103
January 15	Luke 11:37–54	What sins of the scribes and Pharisees does Jesus point out with his woes in these verses? Do you recognize any of these sins in your own life?	Psalter #106
January 16	Luke 12:1–21	What does it mean to be “rich toward God” (v. 21)? How can you live this out?	Psalter #108
January 17	Luke 12:22–30	Do you struggle with excessive worry or anxiety? What is the antidote to worry according to Jesus’ teaching here?	Psalter #113
January 18	Luke 12:31–59	Does the awareness that Jesus is coming again soon influence your daily life? How?	Psalter #117
January 19	Luke 13:1–17	What does the parable of the barren fig tree teach about God’s patience? How is this a comfort to you?	Psalter #120
January 20	Luke 13:18–35	What does Jesus mean when he says that the gate into the kingdom of heaven is narrow?	Psalter #122
January 21	Luke 14:1–24	What does Jesus teach about humility through both the parable of the marriage supper and his own life on this earth?	Psalter #124
January 22	Luke 14:25–35	What is the cost of true discipleship according to Jesus’ teaching here? Are you willing to follow Christ at all costs?	Psalter #128

January 23	Luke 15:1–10	What do the parables of the lost sheep and lost coin teach you about Jesus' compassion for sinners?	Psalter #129
January 24	Luke 15:11–32	Why does a child of God never need to be afraid to return to him in repentance after falling into sin?	Psalter #134
January 25	Luke 16:1–12	What lessons can you learn about preparing for your eternal future from the way that men like the unjust steward prepare for their earthly futures?	Psalter #136
January 26	Luke 16:13–18	How did the Pharisees have "divided" hearts when it came to serving God? Do you have a divided heart?	Psalter #139
January 27	Luke 16:19–31	What does the parable of the rich man and Lazarus show about the difference between heavenly and earthly glory?	Psalter #141
January 28	Luke 17:1–10	Why is it your duty to serve God? Do you earn anything by doing so?	Psalter #145
January 29	Luke 17:11–19	Do you regularly praise and thank God for what he has done for you, or take it for granted? How can you be more grateful?	Psalter #146
January 30	Luke 17:20–37	What does Jesus' description of his second coming here teach you about how you should prepare for it?	Psalter #147
January 31	Luke 18:1–8	How does this parable encourage you to pray for relief from your suffering? What will be the ultimate answer to your prayers?	Psalter #149
February 1	Luke 18:9–14	Where did the Pharisee look for righteousness? Where did the publican look for righteousness? How about you?	Psalter #152
February 2	Luke 18:15–17; Matthew 18:1–6	How can you "receive the kingdom of God as a little child" (v. 17)?	Psalter #155
February 3	Luke 18:18–30	Why do you think wealth can be such a hindrance to the Christian life? Can you find any other passages that speak to this?	Psalter #156
February 4	Luke 18:31–34; 24:26–27, 44–47	Why did Jesus tell his disciples these details about his suffering and death even though he knew they would not understand at this time?	Psalter #157
February 5	Luke 18:35–43	What differences do you notice between the rich young ruler (vv. 18–30) who went away sorrowful and the blind man here who was saved?	Psalter #158
February 6	Luke 19:1–10	What was Jesus showing about himself and his ministry by choosing to stay at the house of someone like Zacchaeus?	Psalter #160
February 7	Luke 19:11–27	What does this parable teach you about how to faithfully steward the gifts that God has given you?	Psalter #161

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