



The traditional purpose of Lent is the preparation of the believer through prayer, penance, repentance of sins, almsgiving, atonement and self-denial. The period of 40 days represents the 40 days Jesus spent in the wilderness being tempted of Satan, while emptying himself to prepare for His earthly ministry. As we move through these 40 days, we consider what we might set aside in keeping with the example of Jesus. As we make these discoveries, let us not just give them up for Lent, but give them up for Christ.

## **Journey to Jerusalem Luke 9:51-63**

### **Week 6. Giving up expectations**

**Having had a spiritual awakening as the result of these Steps, we tried to carry this message to others, and to practice these principles in all our affairs.**

As we have moved through the season of Lent, our focus has been to identify those things in our lives which stand in the way of our usefulness to God and His Kingdom. Now it's time to change our focus and set our sights on Jerusalem and what awaits us.

So far all of Jesus' work and teaching and miracles have been in the area of Galilee. But in Luke 9: 51, that all changes as Jesus' journey takes a new direction. There are four quick stories as Jesus begins this journey. The first demonstrates how Jesus' disciples still haven't quite grasped the nature of the Kingdom of God.

#### **1. Read v. 51-55 Samaritan opposition**

Here we find rejection, John and James default to their expectation of what this Kingdom should be, only to be rebuked.

What was their expectation?

What was Jesus trying to reveal about the Kingdom by his rebuke?

Have you ever wanted to call down fire from heaven on someone? In anger, maybe out of hurt or rejection. But such is not the way of Jesus. When I have done the right thing with those kinds of feelings, prayed through them and sought God's will in them, God ends up showing me that the issue is actually mine. Oh, true the other people might be in the wrong, but God turns it around, and says, "Let's talk about you. Why is this so important to you? Why is your reaction so strong? Why do you think you know what is best? The times when I have followed and obeyed and loved instead of dreamt about retribution, the result has been forgiveness; freedom for me, a deepening of relationship, and another advance for the Kingdom of God.

In v. 56 we read **“and they went to another village”**

### **Read v. 57-62 The Cost**

The true cost of following Jesus can be found in three incidents as they were walking along the road.

The first of these we find in **v.57-58**, the volunteer. The next in **v. 59-60** Jesus himself says 'follow me. In the third we find another volunteer **v.61-62**.

What is Jesus saying to us?

So, what does it mean to follow Jesus? Not that we'll sit back and be recipients of some meaninglessly pleasurable experience, where God will richly bless and pamper and lead us to a life of luxury, but rather that we'll be invited into a cause so grand, a mission so critical, where not only do earthly lives hang in the balance, but all of eternity.

Following Jesus is much more like heading out on a hard but rewarding journey, a mission with huge stakes.

What is Jesus calling you to do?