

Turning His Face Toward Jerusalem  
Luke 19:37-40

- I. In Luke 13:22, there is this wonderful phrase.
  - a. “Jesus went through the towns and villages, teaching as he went, always pressing on toward Jerusalem.”
    - i. Pressing on.
    - ii. I think of Philippians 3:12 – “Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me.”
  - b. I have this image of someone walking into the wind.
  - c. The phrase “pressing on toward Jerusalem” has also been translated “turned his face toward Jerusalem.”
    - i. Something about Jesus changes in Luke 13. {The Travel Narrative}
    - ii. In chapter 17 (verse 11) it says, “Now on his way to Jerusalem.”
    - iii. In chapter 18 (verse 35) it says, “As Jesus approached Jericho.” He’s still on his way to Jerusalem.
    - iv. In chapter 19 (verse 11) it says, “While they were listening to this, he went on to tell them a parable, because he was near Jerusalem and the people thought that the kingdom of God was going to appear at once.”
  - d. During this week, Holy Week, we are taking a journey with Jesus as he heads toward Jerusalem to be crucified and resurrected.
    - i. This is the point in the gospel of Luke when Jesus’ passion draws near and He dedicates himself fully to the path that leads to the completion of His ministry.
    - ii. This is the “no turning back” moment for Jesus – and he presses on toward Jerusalem.
- II. What does it mean that Jesus “turned his face toward Jerusalem?”
  - a. It showed Jesus’ obedience.
  - b. It showed Jesus’ resolve.
  - c. It showed Jesus’ love.
- III. It showed Jesus’ obedience.
  - a. Jesus came as fulfillment of God’s plan.
    - i. God had laid a plan since the “foundations of the world.”
    - ii. That his Son should become the lamb of sacrifice for all of humankind.
  - b. Jesus was a willing participant in that plan.
    - i. “Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness.” Philippians 2:6-7.
    - ii. Jesus made himself nothing.
    - iii. Jesus took on the very nature of a servant.
  - c. Jesus understood the Father’s plan for redeeming Creation.
    - i. He understood it.
    - ii. He submitted himself to it.
    - iii. He demonstrated His obedience.
- IV. It showed Jesus’ resolve.
  - a. A phrase like “turning His face toward Jerusalem” says something about Jesus’ determination to see His mission through to the end.
    - i. When he was just a young boy he was found in the Temple after his parents were looking for him for days.

1. Needless to say, they were very worried.
  2. His response? “Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?” (Luke 2:49).
  3. Or as the King James puts it – didn't you know I had to be about my father's business?
    - ii. At his baptism when John hesitated to baptize Jesus, He said “Let it be so now; it is proper for us to do this to fulfill all righteousness.” – Matthew 3:15.
    - iii. Jesus was determined to do his father's business.
- b. We see this determination and resolve at various times through Jesus' ministry.
- i. Perhaps most dramatically in the Garden of Gethsemane.
  - ii. “Father, if it is Your will, take this cup away from Me; nevertheless not My will, but Yours, be done.” – Luke 22:42.
- c. Even at the end (on the cross) we see Jesus resolve to see this through to the end.
- i. Later, knowing that everything had now been finished, and so that Scripture would be fulfilled, Jesus said, "I am thirsty." – John 19:28.
  - ii. What does one little drink matter?
  - iii. Not a whole lot – unless you're determined to stick to your mission until your last breath.
- d. For Jesus, turning His face toward Jerusalem permanently and finally set His course.
- i. There was no turning back.
  - ii. There were no shortcuts.
  - iii. And Jesus was determined to it through to the end.
- V. It showed Jesus' love.
- a. Jesus said, “Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.” – John 15:13.
- i. It's not that we were deserving of love – we weren't.
  - ii. It's that Jesus' love for us was deeper than our brokenness.
  - iii. Jesus' love for us preceded our knowledge of him.
- b. John 17:20-24 says this: “My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one— I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. “Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world.
- c. In Gethsemane, Jesus was praying for his disciples and then he prays for “those who will believe in me through their message ...”
- i. In Gethsemane Jesus looks down through human history and prays for you.
  - ii. His love for you is that deep – so deep that it reaches across time and space to claim you.
- VI. Which brings us to Palm Sunday.
- a. When he came near the place where the road goes down the Mount of Olives, the whole crowd of disciples began joyfully to praise God in loud voices for all the miracles they had seen: "Blessed is the king who comes in the name of the Lord!" "Peace in heaven and glory in the highest!" Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, "Teacher, rebuke your disciples!" "I tell you," he replied, "if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out." – Luke 19:37-40.
- b. This is the big event – the Triumphal Entry Into Jerusalem!
- i. Six chapters earlier, Jesus “turns his face toward Jerusalem.”

- ii. Now that journey is complete – he’s reached his destination.
    - iii. But I wonder if Jesus sensed any triumph in it?
  - c. He had yet to complete his work.
    - i. Continued obedience would be required of him.
    - ii. Knowing what was ahead, His resolve couldn’t fail him now.
  - d. How deep was his love?
    - i. Was it deep enough to hear the praises of the crowd on Sunday?
    - ii. Knowing that this same crowd would ask for his death by Thursday?
  - e. In turning His face toward Jerusalem ...
    - i. Jesus was turning himself toward His own death.
    - ii. He was turning himself toward our sin.
    - iii. But, he was also turning himself toward new life.
  - f. John 3:16-17 – “For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through him.”
  - g. John 10:10 – “I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full.”
- VII. As we walk through this week together ...
  - a. We will see that Jesus turns his face toward His own death and in doing so provides the perfect, unblemished sacrifice for sin.
  - b. We will see that Jesus turns his face toward *our* sin and ensures our forgiveness – so that we are unblemished.
  - c. We will see Jesus turn himself toward new life and cleared the way for our eternal freedom.
  - d. And if the son has set you free, you are free indeed.
  - e. All as a result of one thing – “Jesus turned his face toward Jerusalem.”