

Adult Teaching Resources

June 30, 2019



Easter Season (April 21-June 2)

Resurrection Realities

Acts 16:16-34 – “Doubled Deliverance”

Pentecost Sunday (June 9)

Genesis 11:1-9 – “What Did You Say?”

Season After Pentecost (June 16-November 24)

Trinity Sunday

Romans 5:1-5 – “Imaginary Numbers”

On the Road with Jesus

Luke 8:26-39 – “A Bad Day for Pigs”

Luke 9:51-62 – “A Hard Row to Hoe”

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Find links and videos related to this lesson.

A Hard Row to Hoe

Luke 9:51-62

FIT Teaching Guide

by David Woody

This adult teaching outline is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

Bible Background

“Jesus said to him, “No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.” Luke 8:33

We have probably all thought about how and when we would die. We fantasize about peacefully dying in our sleep when everything on her bucket list is complete. We probably also thought about possibly not making it to the end of next week.

As much as we would like to know the details of our death, we won't. But Jesus did.

In today's passage, we follow Jesus as he faces the inevitable. Along the way he encounters some would-be followers.

Opening

After everyone arrives, ask each person to find a partner with whom they are comfortable.

Ask each person to share their story of how and when they decided to follow Jesus.

When they were in that decision making process, what were the advantages, or “pros,” of following Jesus? What were the disadvantages, or “cons,” of following Jesus? How did you learn of the advantages? How did you learn of the disadvantages? Why did you ultimately decide to follow Jesus?

Ask each person to share with their partner. Then open the floor to the larger group and have volunteers share some of their answers with the larger class.

Reading the Bible

Where did Jesus set his face to go? (Jerusalem)

Why did the village of Samaritans not receive him? (Because his face was set towards Jerusalem)

What did James and John suggest? (To command fire to come down from heaven and consume them)

How did Jesus respond to their suggestion? (He turned and rebuked to them then went to another village)

Reading the Bible *continued*

What did someone say to him along the road? (I will follow you wherever you go)

How did Jesus respond to that? (foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nest; but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head)

What did Jesus say to another? (Follow me)

How did that person respond? (Lord, first let me go and bury my father)

What did Jesus say back? (Let the dead bury their own dead; but as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God)

What did another follower say to Jesus? (I will follow you, Lord; but let me first say farewell to those at my home)

How did Jesus respond to him? (No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God)

Making Connections

When have you set your face towards something monumental and life-changing? What happened?

Have you ever been unwelcome in a geographical, social, or communal setting? Share the story. How did you react?

When have you been with someone who was wrong and witnessed the entire episode? How did it make you feel? What did you do for that person? What do you wish you would have done?

Our Lesson Writer describes the first person Jesus met along the way, “he was confronted by a fan so ardent that he claimed: “I will follow wherever you go” (v. 57). We cannot be sure what was in the man’s heart, but when Jesus looked at him, he seems to have seen a groupie rather than a disciple.” What is the difference between a groupie and a disciple? How does each in your opinion, approached the serious nature of the Gospel?

What is the cost of discipleship? Who do you know who has modeled that cost for you?

How many times has Jesus said to you, follow me? How many times did you drop everything and follow? How many times did you hesitate with an excuse?

What can you think of that is more important and more pressing than following Jesus? Why do you think we let excuses dictate our discipleship?

So What?

Ask everyone to find their partner from the beginning of the lesson. Share these words from our Lesson Writer, “Jesus is still looking for people like that, for people who will give kingdom living priority in their behavior and their relationships and their goals. Lord knows, such living is not always easy, and that’s the point of this text: to remind us in no uncertain terms that the Lord knows it is not easy.”

How can we live with Kingdom priority in our family life?

How can we live with Kingdom priority in our work life?

How can we live with Kingdom priority in our social life?

How can we live with Kingdom priority in our church life?

What does it look like to put Jesus first and truly, totally follow?

Ask each person to share with their partner their ideas and thoughts. Then, open the conversation to the larger group and ask for volunteers to share their ideas. Discuss how we can live with Kingdom priority with our total life, knowing that Jesus gave the ultimate sacrifice for us.

The Challenge

This week, take one of the Kingdom priority examples, and incorporated into your life, so that others might see Christ living in you.

Prayer

Loving God, thank you for your life. Thank you for your death. Thank you for your resurrection. Thank you for calling us to follow you. Help us to get rid of our excuses and faithfully follow you everyday. Amen.

Digging Deeper

by Tony Cartledge

Digging Deeper is designed to support THE BIBLE LESSON by Tony Cartledge, printed in *Nurturing Faith Journal*. Watch for the “shovel” icon in the THE BIBLE LESSON, and then reference that item in this Digging Deeper resource. You can subscribe to either the digital or print edition of *Nurturing Faith Journal* to access the lessons. Please also ensure that each person in your class has a copy of *Nurturing Faith Journal* so they can prepare before the lesson.

The journey to Jerusalem—Luke devotes a large block of text to Jesus final journey to Jerusalem, which begins at 9:51 and continues until Jesus’ arrival at 19:29. Much of the material is Luke’s alone, not found in the other gospels. It is important to consider the context of the larger section, not just what comes immediately before and after any individual stories: everything in the section is shaped by the knowledge that Jesus is going to his death – and doing so on purpose.

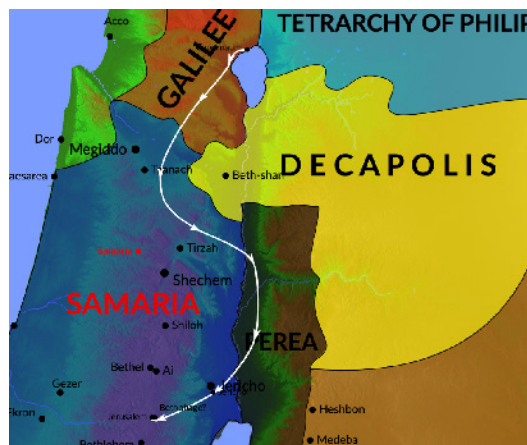
The narrative itself does not hold together well. As the late Fred Craddock noted in his commentary for Interpretation:

At 9:51–53 Jesus passes through Samaria; at 10:38–42 (if John 12:1–3 is geographically correct) he seems to be in Bethany, near Jerusalem; he is in Galilee at 13:31, between Galilee and Samaria at 17:11, in Jericho at 18:35–19:10, and near Jerusalem at 19:11. No map of the area permits these markers as evidence of a journey to Jerusalem, especially if Jesus has “set his face to go to Jerusalem” (9:51). Today students of Luke generally conclude that the journey is not geographical but is an editorial structure created by Luke.

(Fred B. Craddock, *Luke*, Interpretation: A Bible Commentary for Teaching and Preaching. Accordance electronic ed. [Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1990], 140.)

Luke also showed a preference for travel narratives in the book of Acts, and apparently used them as organizing principles, even if the material does not follow chronologically.

Samaritan territory—The area known as “Samaria” was largely the core of the old northern kingdom of Israel, and roughly corresponds to the northern part of today’s butterfly wing-shaped West Bank. Israelis heading north from Jerusalem either drive west toward the coast and then north through Israel, or go east toward Jericho and turn north on a highway that is part of the West Bank, but occupied and controlled by the Israeli government. The map at left, from Accordance Bible Software, approximates Jesus’ final journey to Jerusalem, first into Samaritan territory, but then into Perea to journey south before taking the Jericho Road into Jerusalem.



Digging Deeper *continued*

Shaking dust—Jesus was not flustered by the Samaritans’ rejection, as James and John were. Rather, his response echoed the advice given earlier to the disciples. When Jesus sent them out on mission, he instructed them to accept hospitality when it was offered. When their efforts at ministry were rejected, they were to “shake the dust from their feet” and move on (9:1-6).

Burial customs—In first century Palestine, the dead were typically buried before sundown on the day of death. Lazarus, for example, was buried the same day he died (John 11:1-17). After death, a person’s eyes were closed, then the body was washed and wrapped in long strips of cloth. Afterward, male family members and friends would carry the body to the tomb, joined by other mourners.

For more, see Byron R. McCane, “Burial Practices in First Century Palestine,” at Bible Odyssey, a web resource of the Society of Biblical Literature (<https://www.bibleodyssey.org/en/people/related-articles/burial-practices-in-first-century-palestine>).

The Hardest Question

by Tony Cartledge

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Who were the Samaritans?

The Samaritans consisted largely of Israelites who were not carried into exile after the defeat of the Israel by the Assyrians in 722 BCE and the destruction of Judea and Jerusalem in 587 BCE. Readers sometimes assume that all of the Israelites went into exile, but it was mainly the wealthiest and most influential citizens who were forced from the land, while poorer Israelites were left behind to tend the fields and cattle so the land would remain productive (2 Kings 24:14, 25:12).

As some residents of the Northern Kingdom were dispersed under the Assyrians, conquered people from other countries were introduced to the area (2 Kings 17:24-41). Some locals who maintained their Hebrew identity and loyalty to the Pentateuch intermarried with foreigners, adding pagan worship practices and making them suspect in the eyes of Hebrews who had not intermarried.

When the Judean exiles began returning to Jerusalem after Cyrus and the Persians conquered the Babylonians, they considered themselves to be the only “pure” Hebrews, burned of all dross – and having married only other Hebrews – through the years of exile. They assumed that the poor people who had been left behind would have intermarried with other local peoples. Many of those peoples occupied what had become the Persian province of Samaria, and ultimately came to be known as Samaritans.

Over time, enmity between the two peoples grew.

The Samaritans who continued to worship Yahweh accepted only the Pentateuch as scripture. Since Deuteronomy contains a command from Moses to build an altar on Mount Gerizim (Deut. 11:29) and spoke of Mount Gerizim as a place of blessing (Deut. 27:12) – but did not mention Jerusalem – Samaritans continued to worship on Mount Gerizim and developed their own version of the Pentateuch.

In the fourth century, a man named Manasseh, the high priest’s brother, married the daughter of the Samaritan leader Sanballat. As a result, he was expelled from Jerusalem, and in response, he built a temple for the Samaritans on Mount Gerizim. The Jewish military leader John Hyrcanus destroyed that temple in 128 BCE, leading to further enmity.

Over time, as Hebrew religion morphed into Judaism, hostility grew to the point that Jews and Samaritans no longer wanted to associate with each other at all. This is why it was considered so unusual that Jesus would venture into Samaritan territory to meet with the “woman at the well” (John 4:9). It also helps to explain why his attempt to find lodging in a Samaritan village was rebuffed (Luke 9:51-62).