



The Gospel According to Luke

Wk. 48 “Discipleship Lessons from the Road”

By Pastor Jody May

Luke 9:51-62 ESV

A Samaritan Village Rejects Jesus

⁵¹ When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. ⁵² And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. ⁵³ But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” ⁵⁵ But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ And they went on to another village.

The Cost of Following Jesus

⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head.” ⁵⁹ To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” ⁶⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” ⁶¹ Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” ⁶² Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

Introduction:

One of my earliest lessons in discipleship didn’t come from the church it came from a guy I met at my first full-time job out of College, Carl Haines.

- Taught me how to do my job.
- Taught me how not to get in trouble on the job.
- Taught me how to work hard outside the job to get ahead.
- Taught me how to interact with older people.
- Taught me some things I didn’t want in life as well.



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All through the process of discipleship. Where Carl was, I was. We spent more time with each other than most people spend with their spouses. Discipleship is more than a class, seminar, it is going through life, following someone, and the world becomes your classroom.

That’s how Jesus liked to teach, **He taught the guys on the roads**, and it really is the best model for learning. Dads and moms the best thing you can do is take your kids with you everywhere because **your pre-ordained life is the classroom that God has set aside for you to teach them about God’s Kingdom**. Jesus, as He is making His way towards Jerusalem, makes the best use of His time and along the way teaches His disciples about the **Role of Patience in the kingdom, when to display it and when to put it away**. **Patience and Urgency are both needed in the life of the Disciple**, but you have to know when to put them into play.

Lessons from the Road #1 showing a need for patience.

1. Tolerate those you could hate. (Toleration without Retaliation)

⁵² And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. ⁵³ But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem.

Samaritans, this is the first time we have met them in Luke, but Jesus has had encounters with them already. In Jn. 4 He met the woman at the well and the whole Samaritan town was caught up in listening to Jesus. He knows them, understands that He should be welcomed, probably figures they have heard of His good treatment towards them, and instead Jesus got the cold shoulder.

If you were there though, this shouldn’t surprise you. The Samaritans and the Jews know each other pretty well and the 411 is that they don’t like each other. They are distant cousins; they were once Jews of the Northern Kingdom but after the Assyrians Captured the nation of Israel, they became mixed with all the other nationalities of the land. The Samaritans kept the Pentateuch but rejected the rest of the OT and even set up their own temple at Mt. Gerizin. So, anyone seen



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as going towards Jerusalem, especially to get to the temple, were not treated kindly, especially Jews. Jews looked down on the Samaritans because they viewed them as mutts, less than them. Jesus was rejected not because He was the Messiah but because He was a Jew.

⁵⁴ And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?” ⁵⁵ But he turned and rebuked them. ⁵⁶ And they went on to another village.

No, the disciples didn’t acquire new super powers, but they recognize they were in a region that the ancient prophet of Elijah worked in, **James and John had just seen him**, so they thought let’s start our ministry with the glorified Lord with an act of Vengeance; let’s get the party started by setting the tone of no religious tolerance whatsoever!

But this lesson on the road is just starting, Jesus takes the time to teach the boys now is not the time for aggression but patient **TOLERANCE** for it was not time yet for the judgement of God, **Jesus chooses, and still does to this day, the path of Tolerance without Retaliation.** It was important at this time to be gracious to the Samaritans for they still had a future. So, **that the Samaritans may make the connection between Him and God one day, to look past the fact He was a Jew, Jesus choses to live out God’s attribute of Tolerance.**

Psalm 145:8-9

⁸ The Lord is gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love. ⁹ The Lord is good to all, and his **mercy is over all** that he has made.

This is why He came, to show the world God’s Mercy in His life:

John 3:17 ESV

For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be **saved** through him.

I was reminded of a story I read recently of Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli in 1529 met at Marburg castle in Germany. In the time of the Reformation when the two sides had a chance to pull their people together, but Luther would not



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budge on his beliefs of the Eucharist which was still dangerously close to what the Catholic believed about it. He could not tolerate Zwingli’s differences and even told him you were of a different spirit, meaning not a Christian, **this coming from the man that was literally “Saved by Faith” in Christ Alone, not a belief in communion alone.** Luther died defending his position until the end and then when looking at death admitted to his confidant that he believed he was too staunch on his point.

Toleration without retaliation has never been a strong point for the church – the crusades, the inquisition, the 16th and 17th century is filled with the church not just defending itself but attacking those that thought different. Jesus’ belief of an enemy was much different:

Romans 12:20 ESV

To the contrary, “if your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink; for by so doing you will heap burning coals on his head.”

Who in your life right now are you ready to write off and walk away from? Who needs a second chance, who could stand to be gifted with a little patience? **Who might benefit from some TOLERANCE from you** so that you don’t damage the message of the Gospel in their lives that may come later?

BECAUSE in Acts 8:25 we are told that Peter and John went back to the Samaritan villages preaching the Gospel. The difference is that Jesus by this point had been high and lifted up before them through His acts at Calvary. **Jesus had allowed intolerant Jews to put Him to death so that He may redeem a people with new attitudes of patient resolve.** So, I ask you again, who in your life may you be cutting off because of your perceived differences, could it be that we simply need to pray more that they see Jesus?

The first lesson from the Road today was one on **Religious Tolerance without Retaliation**, the second lesson is composed of three different examples all on the **topic of Self-Denial.**



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Importance of Self-denial. – 2. Leave Security Behind

⁵⁷ As they were going along the road, someone said to him, “I will follow you wherever you go.” ⁵⁸ And Jesus said to him, “Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has **nowhere to lay his head.**”

Jesus, being the master teacher, uses the advantages of being on the road to teach a quick lesson. There were those that were willing to follow Jesus, to make the claim, “we are with you Jesus, to the end”. Most likely they are expecting some type of revolution; His words are too controversial, the hate of the current leaders in Jerusalem is too strong. If He is walking into that type of environment it must mean He was ready to make some changes. How right they were, they didn’t just get how.

Jesus looks at this person, with what seems like a stoic offer, but remember, Jesus knows the hearts of people and He chooses to answer in a way that makes us think He is answering an unspoken assumption. Jesus answers the offer of allegiance with this truth, “**There is no sense of security with me.**” No permanent home, even the animals have more of a home than I do, and He’s talking about the non-herd animals, the free roamers (birds and foxes), they have more of a place in this world than Jesus does.

The call of the Kingdom back then and now is to understand that you aren’t taking up your cross for Jesus because He’s going to make you secure in a safe home, in a safe community, in a changing culture, in a hostile land. **The call of the Kingdom is come and follow and it may most likely be dangerous.** Paul saw the dangers firsthand and ties it to a prophecy from the OT.

Romans 8:36-39 ESV

³⁶ As it is written,

“For your sake we are being killed all the day long;
we are regarded as sheep to be slaughtered.”

From Psalm 44 written
as people who follow
the covenant but still



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³⁷ No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us.³⁸ For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers,³⁹ nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, **will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.**

Unlike the fox and birds that can hide we follow Jesus like sheep, blindly following Him, because being with the shepherd is the safest place to be! When we walk with Him it is impossible to separate us from His love.

Perhaps you have wanted that sense of security in our life today, rest and peace. Surrender your will this morning family, give up, leave comfort behind already and find the peace of being loved by Jesus, even if it's hard, it is still the safest place to be.

If you don't follow Jesus willingly in this life the next point won't even apply to you so if you are leaning towards trusting Him this morning, then get ready for this next lesson from the Road on self-denial:

Importance of Self-denial. – 3. Sense the Urgency

⁵⁹ To another he said, “Follow me.” But he said, “Lord, let me first go and bury my father.” ⁶⁰ And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.”

Just in case you think this is harsh, let me tell you just how harsh this is. For this to happen to us would seem uncaring, but back then Jesus is asking this person to risk condemnation. In that day the most honorable thing you could do is to take care of your family's dead especially your own father's corpse. You would have to hurry and get the body prepared and hire mourners to get them buried within the day. Then for a child the mourning process would last up to a year. This type of behavior would only be acceptable in a time of war. AND that is exactly how Jesus sees this moment in time.



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Jesus looks at His business, going to Jerusalem, confronting Temple Leadership, fulfilling all that had to be done in those last days as SO IMPORTANT, **Luke said that it was nearing time for Him to be taken up** (vs. 51); that the dead should be left behind, there was no time for it! **Jesus is painting a picture of the sense of Urgency one needs to have when dealing with the business of God’s Kingdom – Proclaiming it.**

So many times, in our lives we are so caught up in the everyday goings; work, family, play time and we get so engrained in habits and structure that **when the opportunities of the Kingdom come a calling, we most likely stay in the ruts of life.** Very rarely have I found that when there is great need in the Kingdom, a time when God’s Glory can shine the brightest, does it happen when I’ve nothing to do. **God places divine opportunities in our lives, 1st to show the world what obedience looks like in His people and 2nd to learn it is really a pleasurable thing to give up your plans, even important ones, when the urgent things of God happen.** Life in this world will always tell you it’s not a good time to follow God, but the Gospel says that’s exactly why you should give up those things, even good habits can be damning if they take away your ability to serve the Lord. **Your greatest moments of joy is finding your destiny in God’s calling but that means a willingness to give up your plans when He gives the call!** Sense the Urgency of Living for God and take that step family!

Now if you get this far then there is one more lesson from the Road today, I want you to look at today.

Importance of Self-denial. – 4. Don’t Look Back

⁶¹ Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” ⁶² Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”

This last lesson from the road works well if you understand the times and places in which Jesus was traveling. Leaving the area of Lake Galilee, you would be traveling through farmland. If you have ever planted a big garden, then you most



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likely would have figured out that spacing is key. Keeping your lines straight for optimal growing so that nothing is wasted reaching the goal of a maximum yield. Using this metaphor Jesus is stating that once you start down the road of discipleship, under Him in His Kingdom, **there is only one way to look....**

FORWARD.

This person, all he wanted to do was say goodbye to his family, his past, before leaving with Jesus but see, to be with Jesus, ready to take on His life, His goals, His purpose you already have to be done with your goodbyes in your heart, besides there is so much more waiting for you. **Your IDENTITY is not in your past because God is redeeming that person into becoming something new!**

As disciples of Jesus we have to be done with our pasts, our old haunts, our glory days of High School, our old relationships, old habits that lead us away from God.

Reminiscing about the past too much shows you what your heart truly desires.

Lot's wife did it, turned back and became a useless **pillar of salt**. **Our past is like that, it sucks you dry and makes in you a thirst that can never be quenched.** We have got to keep our eyes on the prize, keep them on Jesus because He is the fount that quenches all our thirst. Paul gets it, listen to his encouraging words.

Philippians 3:13-16 ESV

¹³ Brothers, I do not consider that I have made it my own. But one thing I do: **forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead,** ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the **upward call** of God in Christ Jesus. ¹⁵ Let those of us who are mature think this way, and if in anything you think otherwise, God will reveal that also to you. ¹⁶ Only let us hold true to what we have **attained.**

My Family hold firm to these lessons today, and keep your sight on the prize.

- **Tolerance without Retaliation** prepares hard hearts for future Gospel Reconciliation.
- **Leave Security Behind** for true Security is found in Christ Alone.
- **Sense this Urgency** in the Kingdom and Discover your calling.
- AND Remember, **don't look back**, keep looking towards the goal of becoming more like Christ.



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PRAY

COMMUNION

BENEDICTION

Go in the name of the Father that tolerated our disbelief, offering up His Son, so that we may know our way back home.

Go in the name of the Son that showed us how important the Kingdom business is through his sacrifice and resurrection.

Go in the name and the power of the HS that empowers us to be tolerant of the non-understanding and helps hold our focus on the prize of Eternal Life.