

Luke

Carefully Investigating the Gospel ... Together

SSBC Luke Bible Study #33

Take this Bible Study home and use it to guide your exploration of the scripture passage that next Sunday's sermon will be focused on.

Passage: Luke 9:51-62

Sermon Date: May 7, 2006

Introduction:

Have you ever bumped into someone who was unswervingly focused on a mission or goal of some sort? I just got a call from a friend who has great passion for a product that she believes in and sells in order to make some extra money to keep her family's budget balanced. She was so genuine about sharing its benefits, so honest about it, and so energetic!

Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart,
as working for the Lord ... (Col 3:23)

Based on her resolute spirit during our short phone conversation, I'm sure many people are blessed by the products and services she so lovingly makes available.

In this week's passage, we see Jesus turn resolutely toward his prophetic destiny in Jerusalem and beyond. He will be on this journey for the remainder of his ministry, focusing especially on training his closest friends and followers. Nothing deters him from his mission.

By the way, what are you resolute about these days? Join us now in resolutely exploring this passage and applying it to your life. Ask God to help you in this.

This bible study was developed by South Shore Baptist Church in conjunction with our weekly sermon series. To hear a sermon on the same scripture passage covered in this bible study, come to one of our Sunday worship services (8:30am or 11:00am) on the date listed on page 1. Or after that date you can hear it by logging on to www.southshorebaptist.com/sermons/

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Bible Study:

1. Read this week's bible passage and use the chart below to make observations and jot down questions.

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>⁵¹ As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.</p> <p>⁵² And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him;</p> <p>⁵³ but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem. ⁵⁴ When the disciples James and John saw this, they asked, "Lord, do you want us to call fire down from heaven to destroy them ^a?" ⁵⁵ But Jesus turned and rebuked them, ⁵⁶ and ^b they went to another village.</p> <p>⁵⁷ As they were walking along the road, a man said to him, "I will follow you wherever you go."</p> <p>⁵⁸ Jesus replied, "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."</p> <p>⁵⁹ He said to another man, "Follow me." But the man replied, "Lord, first let me go and bury my father."</p> <p>⁶⁰ Jesus said to him, "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."</p> <p>a Some manuscripts <i>them, even as Elijah did</i></p> <p>b Some manuscripts <i>them. And he said, "You do not know what kind of spirit you are of, for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And</i></p>	

Scripture	Your Observations & Questions
<p>⁶¹ Still another said, "I will follow you, Lord; but first let me go back and say good-by to my family."</p> <p>⁶² Jesus replied, "No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom of God."</p>	

Historical Context: It is often helpful to explore the people, places, or events that are mentioned. Then understanding those historical references will help you see the meaning of this passage more clearly.

- 1.a. Try it: Do some exploring to find out who the Samaritans were, how they got along with the Jews and why, and how Jesus treated them. (www.studylight.org/enc/isb is helpful)

Key Words/Ideas: In the Bible, repetition usually indicates emphasis. Find the key words, phrases, or ideas that are repeated or otherwise emphasized, and then consider what point is being made by these.

- 1.b. Try it:
What keyword(s) or ideas do you see repeated?

<p>Keyword Challenges: (use NIV)</p> <p><i>Can you find a 3-letter keyword that appears six times in the passage?</i></p> <p><i>Can you find three 4-word phrases that each appear twice?</i></p>
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2. Next, use this chart to **interpret some key observations**.

a. Select a few of your observations & questions from pages 2-3 that you find most interesting or important. Rewrite these below, and interpret and apply them using the columns to the right.

b. For each observation, begin to interpret by asking yourself these kinds of questions:

- What does it mean?
- Why is this important?
- What does this tell me about the Father? Jesus? The Holy Spirit?
- Are there other scriptures that could help me understand this?

Observation What does it say?	Interpretation What does it mean?

3. Now consider how you can **apply** the Word to your life. Look for:

- **S**ins to avoid
- **P**romises to believe
- **E**xamples to follow (remember "SPECK")
- **C**ommands to obey
- **K**nowledge to share

Don't just write things to write them – listen carefully to God's Word and what he seems to be teaching you, and look for relevant things that you're truly stirred to do. Then as you do them, God will help you learn, grow, and help others grow.

Application How do I apply what it means?

Dig Deeper:

4. Why is Jesus setting out so resolutely toward Jerusalem?
(Review Isa 62:1, 6, 11-12, Zech 9:9, Mal 3:1-4; Peek ahead at Luke 18:31-32)

5. There are costs associated with living a life dedicated to following and serving Christ. What specific costs or tradeoffs are surfaced in the interactions Jesus had with the following people?

a. What costs are described in 9:54-56?

b. What costs are described in 9:57-58?

c. What costs are described in 9:59-60?

d. What costs are described in 9:61-62?

e. In other places in the Bible we are told to love our families (see 1 Tim 5:8 for example). Why is Jesus so harsh with these men who are asking to first go back to their families before following him? What do you think Jesus sees that causes his firm response? (Consider also Matthew 16:22-27; Luke 14:25-33)

6. What are some of the clauses in your “de facto contract” with God about how you will follow him?

a. I will follow you, but ...

b. First let me go and ...

c. I will follow you if ...

7. When one who is plowing looks backward, the results are not just crooked rows of crops, but also danger and inefficient harvests. (Perhaps you’ve experienced something similar if you’ve tried to look behind you for more than just a second while riding a bicycle.)

a. Explore the following verses: Genesis 19:17, 26, 1 Kings 19:19-21, Phil 3:13-14, Mark 13:13-16, Luke 9:61-62. What level of dedication to one’s mission is God looking for?

b. What mission has God given you? (recall Mk 16:15, Mt 28:18-20) Perhaps God has also put a specific calling or ministry on your heart?

c. How resolutely have you set out to accomplish this mission? What are you “looking back” at or being distracted by? What would it look like if you were to be more resolute about your mission?

8. Put yourself in Jesus' path, as if you were traveling in Samaria back on the very day when the events of Luke 9:51-62 occurred. You are, naturally, on your way to some very important family or business matter. Jesus and his followers approach you on the dusty road. Jesus smiles at you, with such a tender and loving smile like you have never seen before. And he stops you in your tracks with just two words:

“Follow me.”

What would you say? Which way would you turn? What would you do? Well, Jesus is saying this to you right now, because his invitation to follow him is universal – relevant to every one at every time. Try this: Write down the current date and time below. Then write down your response to Jesus' invitation to follow him, whatever that looks like, whatever next step it implies in your life at this particular moment.

Date: Time:

My response to Jesus:

As you close this time of study and reflection, ask God to help you to be resolute about living out this response.

*... let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us.
Let us fix our eyes on Jesus, the author and perfecter of our
faith, who for the joy set before him endured the cross, scorning
its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.
Consider him who endured such opposition from sinful men,
so that you will not grow weary and lose heart. (Heb 12:1-3)*