

Empire Church of the Brethren

## *Sunday Service Sermons*

**12 March 2023**

Going to Jerusalem

If you knew that you were going to be tortured and killed if you went to the city would you go?  
“As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem”. *Luke 9:51*

I think the key word here is, resolutely.

The main elements of this word is firmness and determination.

We use it as determined in the face of consequences.

I think it means here that knowing what was coming Jesus went on to Jerusalem.

Why? To fulfill his mission.

Have you ever considered the conversation that sent Jesus to earth?

Hey, Son, how about going down and telling them about me and my love for them?

And then allow them to insult, torture and kill you.

And if you accomplish that I will raise you from the dead and sit you by my right hand.

But, I am already here!

Yes, but they need to be saved from themselves ever since Satan helped them be like us knowing good and evil.

If that is what you want me to do I will do it and accomplish your will for them.

Jesus had never experience physical pain so how could he have known what it would be like to come and save us?

He found out!

And he accomplished his task.

With a strong resolve.

Have you thought about going to the Holy Land and walking where Jesus walked?

It must be an awesome experience.

Every year thousand do.

For many it is the fulfillment of a lifetime desire.

A journey to Jerusalem can be a rewarding travel experience.

Today we begin a spiritual journey to Jerusalem, walking with Jesus through those critical hours surrounding his crucifixion and resurrection.

We will carefully observe the individuals on the journey, we might be able to see ourselves.

In chapters 9-20 of the *gospel of Luke*, Luke mentions Jesus' movement toward Jerusalem several times.

Luke uses this repetition to signal a decisive turn in the ministry of Jesus.

Jesus' journey to Jerusalem is what gives meaning to the Easter story and accomplishment.

The act of courage.

Jerusalem; the hot spot.

Jerusalem was the center of Jewish life and religion.

As such, it was the center of growing animosity to this itinerant Nazarene.

Jesus' decision to “set out for Jerusalem” was a deliberate choice to enter the storm.

Jesus demonstrated true courage.

On an earlier occasion when Jesus announced his intention to go to Bethany to the home of Lazarus, the disciples warned him, “Rabbi, the Jews are now seeking to stone you, and are you going there again?”

Jesus replied, “If any one walks in the day, he does not stumble.”

He knew what he was facing.

Jesus' journey to Jerusalem was not the irresponsible action of a blind fanatic.

He knew the risks but met them with courage.

Christian commitment does not shrink from involvement in the hot spot.

Our example.

Jesus is the continuing example and inspiration for us to face life and its difficulties with courage.

"Let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith. For the joy set before him he endured the cross, scorning its shame, and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God." *Heb. 12: 1-2.*

Commitment to God's will.

Doing the Father's will.

The journey to Jerusalem was part of Jesus' desire to do the Father's will.

At age twelve he expressed this desire: "Did you not know that I must be in my Father's house?" he said to his parents when they finally found him.

His prayer in the garden summarized his entire life: "Not my will, but thine, be done."

D. L. Moody once heard a preacher declare the world had yet to see what God could do with a person completely dedicated to his will.

Moody determined to be such a person, and the world has felt the impact.

What could be done through us if we had a similar commitment to do God's will in our lives?

A willing offering.

Some view the will of God as a decision forced on us.

But God did not coerce Jesus to die on the cross.

The content of his message and the nature of his person made it inevitable.

Sin and holiness conflict; holy people have a hard time in this world.

Jesus knew this but still remained willing to give himself.

He said, "I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man takes it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it gain". *John 10:17-18.*

Christ became our sin offering.

He voluntarily offered himself for our sins to free us from sin and death.

The writer of Hebrews exclaimed, "Christ said, Here I am, I have come to do your will. . . . And by that will, we have been made holy through the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all". *Heb. 10:9-10.*

Lose life to find life.

Take up the cross.

The offering of Christ brought life.

To possess that life, we must offer our lives.

In a few weeks, we will celebrate the event that culminated Christ's journey to Jerusalem.

Do not forget that the crucifixion preceded the resurrection.

The discovery of life comes in the loss of life.

We must do God's will and give our lives.

Jesus said, "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me". *Matt. 16:24*

There can be no life without that courageous decision.

Lent; a journey to Jerusalem.

We are now in the midst of Lent, the forty days preceding Easter.

These are days of spiritual preparation, renewal, and dedication.

Lent corresponds to Christ's journey to Jerusalem.

On his way to Jerusalem, Christ tried to lead the disciples into God's will and enable them to give themselves.

The Master Teacher taught crucial lessons about values and motives.

Will you join together on a journey to know God's will and to do it?

Will you make the commitment to follow him wherever he leads, even into the hottest spot?

Set your face toward Jerusalem, remembering the words of him who has gone before you,  
“Whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find  
it.” *Matt. 16:25.*

What will you give your life for?

Make it eternity a worthwhile investment for sure!