

# Simply Jesus

## The Life and Ministry of God's Son

### Lesson 13

#### Introduction

Luke and John's gospels devote more time to the final twelve months of Jesus' ministry than to the other two and a half years combined. His face is set—His eye is on the end—when He would return to the Father. Luke notes the determination that sets the tone for the remainder of the journey: "Now it came to pass, when the time had come for Him to be received up, that He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem (9:51).

When noting this same point in time, Mark underscored the fact that everything had changed. "Now they were on the road, going up to Jerusalem, and Jesus was going before them; and they were amazed. And as they followed they were afraid. Then He took the twelve aside and began to tell them the things that would happen to Him: *Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the chief priests and to the scribes; and they will condemn Him to death and deliver Him to the Gentiles; and they will mock Him, and scourge Him, and spit on Him, and kill Him. And the third day He will rise again*" (10:32–34). The disciples were amazed and afraid! The sense of urgency was very present. As He had done so often before, Jesus took them aside to reveal His heart. Very soon He would be rejected and betrayed; but the disciples would receive the promise of the Holy Spirit, who would always remain with them.

#### Did you know

It is worth noting and remembering that what awaited Jesus was not easy for Him. He was deity in the flesh, but He was also a man; and what He would soon be facing was as painful and horrifying as it could be. Seven hundred years earlier, the prophet Isaiah wrote this about the Savior's suffering to accomplish our salvation: "The Lord God has opened My ear; and I was not rebellious, nor did I turn away. I gave My back to those who struck Me, and My cheeks to those who plucked out the beard; I did not hide My face from shame and spitting. For the Lord GOD will help Me; therefore I will not be disgraced; therefore I have set My face like a flint, and I know that I will not be ashamed" (Isaiah 50:5–7).

Open your Bible and lesson each day by beginning with a word of prayer.

## Up Close ~

The chart below represents a reader's guide to the contents of this week's lesson. The topical teachings and/or events covered are followed by the primary scriptural text as well as the supportive parallel passages. You will be able to receive and grasp a well-rounded picture of the story narrative in the Gospel harmony by reading every passage. However, using the bolded text as your point of reference (your anchor text) will allow you to determine the facts, lessons, and personal applications necessary to formulate your own conclusions.

Teaching / Event	Scripture Text	Parallel Passages
Jesus Turns Towards Jerusalem	<b>Luke 9:51</b>	
Passes through Samaria	<b>Luke 9:52–56</b>	
Cost of Discipleship	<b>Luke 9:57–62</b>	
Jesus Teaches at the Temple	John 7:14–36	
Promise of the Holy Spirit	<b>John 7:37–39</b>	
Authorities Reject Jesus	John 7:45–52	

## First Impressions: Group Discussion

**Reflect** for a moment on the passages you have just read.

**Respond** by recording your first impressions from your initial reading of the text. Be prepared to share one of your impressions with your discussion group.

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## Heartbeat: John 7:37b–38 NKJV (Memory verse)

(Write it out once in the space below. **Practice it each time** you open your lesson.)

*. . . If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink. He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.*

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## Part One: \_\_\_\_\_

Luke 9:51–62

Jesus Turns toward Jerusalem

The conflict between the Jews and Samaritans dated all the way back to the time when Israel was a divided nation. Due to their idol worship and unfaithfulness, God sent the Assyrians to take them into captivity. They were moved into Gentile lands where they didn't speak the language and didn't know anything about the culture. The Assyrians also took Gentile captives and moved them into Samaria (today known as the West Bank). When asked about their God, the transplanted Jews shared what they remembered, which ultimately became incorporated into the Samaritan way of life.

Following the Babylonian captivity when the Jews were finally allowed to return home, the Samaritans offered to help to rebuild the temple for worship. But the Jews rejected them as half-breeds (Ezra 4) and they were sent away. The Samaritans responded by writing their own scripture and rewriting the Pentateuch. They also build a new place to worship on Mount Gerizim.

The animosity between the Jews and Samaritans had grown to such a point over hundreds of years that if a Jew was traveling from north toward the south, he would detour heading east to cross the Jordan River and then back toward the direction of Jerusalem. At all costs, he would try his best to avoid meeting a Samaritan.

It was into this setting that some of the disciples were being sent to make hotel arrangements in a Samaritan village. For reasons noted above, they were told no housing was available, which incensed James and John, already known by the sub-title "Sons of Thunder." This nickname tells us a little something about their temperament and disposition.

1. When James and John step forward "in the name of the Lord," they are turned away. What, then, is their suggestion to Jesus? Luke 9:54
  
2. How does Jesus respond to them? vv. 55–56

There is a story in 2 Kings 1, where the prophet Elijah faced one of Ahaziah's men who were sent out to arrest Elijah, who said, "Lord, they're bothering me." And the Lord consumed with fire all fifty men who had come. A second group met a similar fate, so perhaps it is to this precedent which James and John referred. Can you imagine the presumption of thinking that God's children could use similar prejudices to accomplish the same end? Jesus may have inwardly

smiled at the absurdity of it, but outwardly He appropriately rebuked His two disciples for their suggestion.

**Selah . . .** (Pause and think about it.)

Prejudice is nothing new, it has existed for thousands of years; but one of the things Jesus came to do is to set people free from the built in prejudices of their hearts and to fill us instead with His love, grace and mercy. Look again at the words of Jesus to Nicodemus in John 3:17 and note what they say below.

- James 1:20 says *the wrath of man does not produce the righteousness of God*. If then, you are about to do something for the Lord out of anger, what does this verse tell you about the probable end result?
  
- Compare this type of heart attitude with that of Galatians 5:22–23. What will be the difference in the fruit produced?

As the group continued to walk along, a scribe, a student of the Law, came to Jesus to verbally profess his commitment. Pay attention here (Luke 9:57–62): the ensuing conversation will reveal into which of three categories we will each find ourselves.

- a. “Lord, I will follow You wherever You go.” What is the Lord’s response? vv. 57–58

Jesus had places to stay: Peter’s house in Capernaum was a recent stop, as was the Bethany home of Mary, Martha, and Lazarus. It was not a point about having a physical habitation. Jesus was speaking of this earth not being His home, and then also not being home for those who follow Him. From the moment Christ takes up residence in the human heart, that individual is looking and longing for their heavenly home—their true place of peaceful rest.

- Following *in step* with Jesus means being *out of step* with the modern world. If we plan to walk with Him, it means denying self, living with some discomfort, dealing with difficult people and of course suffering as He did. What do the words in Romans 12:1–2 say about it?

- b. “Then He [Jesus] said to another, ‘Follow Me.’ But he said, ‘Lord, let me first go and bury my father.’ How does Jesus respond to this individual? vv. 59–60

This particular man was someone who had followed Jesus among the crowd for a while. Jesus now invited him to come aside and commit to investing in the kingdom of God. His response indicated he had greater priorities at home more important than going on with Jesus.

- Are you perhaps someone who has skirted a commitment by remaining a part of the crowd? Have you not wanted to get too close to Jesus for fear of what will be asked of you? There are certainly no shortages of excuses: “I have a family” . . . “When my kids finish school” . . . “When I get that promotion” . . . “When I am older and have more time” . . . then I’ll serve God. Will you? The problem is that you will never have more time than you do today; and you’ll never be without responsibilities. The question is: *do you want to serve Jesus?* If so, then don’t put Jesus off by placing everyone and everything else ahead of Him. Pray about when and where you might serve. Every life you touch should be considered as ministry (whether home, family, workplace, school, etc.). Every place you go presents an opportunity to share the Gospel. If your heart is willing and your eyes are wide open, He’ll take care of the rest! Please share your thoughts.

c. “And another also said, ‘Lord, I will follow You, but let me first go and bid them farewell who are at my house.’” What was Jesus’ response? What did He mean? vv. 61–62

- If you’re looking back, you’re not moving forward with eyes on Jesus! **FAITH** means: **Forsaking All, I Take Him**. He must be the first and the last prayerful thought of every day. If He is, then you’ll succeed at what He calls you to do. Whatever you used to possess isn’t as meaningful to you anymore. Whoever you used to be before you met Christ—you are not that person anymore. You’re a new creature in Christ. What does the Apostle Paul say about this in Philippians 3:12–16? Put these verses in your own words.

d. Personal: You’ve looked at three different calls to discipleship. With which one do you most closely identify? Why? Is there an adjustment you need to make to follow Jesus?

*Only one life, t'will soon be past;  
Only what's done for Christ will last.*

## Part Two: \_\_\_\_\_

### John 7:14–53          Jesus at the Temple: Promise of the Holy Spirit

The Feast of Tabernacles was at hand. Jesus' family was already there, but Jesus delayed His departure so as to arrive secretly. The Jews were anxiously looking for Him at the celebration and there was much complaining concerning Him among the people. When Jesus arrived, it was at the temple to teach.

The religious leaders in the crowd assumed their plot to kill Jesus was a secret. When confronted, they denied it but Jesus knew what was in their hearts. Failing to apprehend Him themselves, they ordered the temple guard to arrest Him. But they had listened long enough to Jesus' words to be moved, and they could not bring themselves to do it.

It was customary during the Feast of Tabernacles for the priests to walk around the temple with water pitchers in hand, dipping them into the pool of Siloam. For seven days they would pour the water onto the temple steps to signify that God had given His people water out of the rock in the wilderness. On the eighth and last day, the people commemorated Israel's arrival in the Promised Land. On that day they poured out no water because the goodness God had blessed them with in the Promised Land was all they would ever need.

It was on the last day of the Feast when everyone was ready to return home that Jesus stood and cried out, saying: "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (v. 37). Jesus put Himself at the center of what the hearers needed—Living Water—the Holy Spirit. Everyone was invited to come and partake. John understood as he wrote in retrospect that God intended all along to send the Holy Spirit to indwell His followers. But who is the Holy Spirit? And what was He sent to do? It's important that Christians have a good working knowledge of the Spirit in their lives. So today, let's take a closer look at what God's Word says about Him. While not an exhaustive study on the topic, it should encourage you to better know the One who indwells you.

1. Who is the Holy Spirit? Look up the references and note your findings.
  - a. 1 John 5:6
  - b. Luke 11:13
  - c. Acts 5:3–4
  - d. 1 Corinthians 2:10–12

e. Psalm 139:7

f. Job 33:4

2. What is the Holy Spirit's role? As you research and record your answers, take just a moment to reflect on each one and let it sink down deeply into your heart.

a. John 3:6–7

b. Romans 8:14–17

c. Romans 8:26–27

d. Romans 8:2, 6

e. John 14:16–17

f. John 16:8, 13–14

g. 2 Thessalonians 2:13

h. Acts 1:8

i. Galatians 5:16, 25

j. 1 Corinthians 12:4–11

The Holy Spirit is a promised gift to all who believe in Christ—the down payment for our spiritual inheritance. He seals us and gives us the Spirit as a guarantee the moment we each come to saving faith. His presence in the believer’s life is the evidence that we are born again. He has come to bring abundant life to all who receive Him. Will you thank God for this precious indwelling Gift today?

**Behold & Be Transformed**

What did you *see* as you beheld God’s Son?

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How does beholding (looking upon) Him, motivate you to change your thoughts, habit, attitude, speech or actions?

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**Pause . . .** What is the most significant lesson you have learned this week?

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**Ponder . . .** How will you put it into practice?

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**P**ray . . . Write out your prayer and be specific.

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