

ON THE ROAD TO JERUSALEM

I. [Luke 18:31-34](#)

A. Today we let the Scriptures start us on a journey with Jesus towards Jerusalem. Why is He headed there? He is headed there to die. But not just to die for any reason, to die for His Father and likewise for us. Justice and love compel Him to go. But He's not going there just to die. There He will also rise from the dead. In just two weeks we will celebrate His victorious resurrection, the exclamation of His atonement, the event promised to all of us who believe.

B. Luke will be our main tour guide the next few weeks, though we will borrow from others. His narrative comes not only from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit but from the collection of accounts He used to write his gospel. Luke was not a Jew, he was a Greek, in a way, he is one of us. All the gospel accounts give us something incredibly vital, so much so that we don't put one before another. The easels of each gospel are set up all around Jesus and they each paint with bold brush strokes this divine portrait of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Let's make our way to Jerusalem.

C. [Luke 18:31-34](#) (ESV) The third time Jesus predicts His death: *"And taking the twelve, He said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets (**Genesis thru Malachi**) will be accomplished. For He will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. And after flogging Him, they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise." But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said."* (Not a series of unfortunate events; Jesus is on a mission, foreordained before the world was made.)

D. One account says Jesus set His *face like flint* for Jerusalem. They first pass through the ancient city of Jericho. This was the city that Israel conquered after entering the Promised Land. This had been Canaan's mighty citadel. It was here where the Israelite spies were hidden by Rahab the prostitute who placed her faith in Yahweh the God of Israel. Once a day for six days Israel marched around the city and then on the seventh day they marched around her seven times, blew their trumpets, gave a collective shout and her walls came tumbling down. Maybe the walls of your heart will also fall so that the King of glory might come in.

E. As they approach Jericho, Jesus and the disciples encounter a blind beggar. Mark tells us his name is Bartimaeus. He cries out to Jesus for mercy but the crowd tries to shut him up. Jesus asks him what he wants. He tells Jesus he wants to recover His sight. And Jesus says, *"Recover your sight (Gk Anablepo! See!); your faith has made you well."* (Gk *sozo, well, whole, saved!*) Immediately Bartimaeus could see and all who saw it gave praise to God. Bartimaeus worshipped and followed Jesus. Don't let Jesus pass you by without crying out for mercy. Let Him open your eyes! Worship and follow Him!

F. As they continue through Jericho, the growing thorn cuts branches off the city's palm trees for the celebration to unfold in Jerusalem. Meanwhile they come upon a little man up in a sycamore tree. His name is Zacchaeus. Because he was short, he climbed the tree in order to get a glimpse of Jesus passing by. He was a chief tax collector which means he was both rich and despised. But Jesus stops, looks up at the man, and said, *"Zacchaeus you come down for I'm going to your house today!"* (That would make a great song!) Luke says that Zacchaeus came down and received Jesus joyfully. At the same time people grumbled, stunned that Jesus would stoop to give this man even the time of day. And then here's what happens next: *"And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.'" Lazarus had found True Treasure. How about you? Has Jesus sought you out? Has He yanked you out of your tree? Have you received Him joyfully? Has He brought Zacchaeus-like repentance to your heart? Oh how I pray He does!*

G. John picks up our narrative. Jesus and the growing entourage eventually make their way to Bethany. Bethany was just a mile or two outside Jerusalem, on the eastern slope of the Mount of Olives. Jesus' close friends Mary, Martha, and Lazarus all live there and they're siblings. This is the place where Jesus had raised Lazarus from the dead. It's only six days before Passover but the True Passover Lamb had arrived at the gate. Martha prepares a dinner to honor Jesus. While Martha serves, Mary breaks open a bottle of expensive perfume and anoints Jesus' feet and wipes His feet with her hair. The thief Judas Iscariot protests. Jesus then says: *"Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have Me."*

H. In all three accounts, those whom Jesus sought faced opposition. They tried to silence Bartimaeus when he cried out for mercy. Zacchaeus faced the murmurs of the self-righteous--*'how dare Jesus eat with such a rotten sinner!'* Mary endured the betrayer's sneers as she anointed the Lamb of God who was about to die for her sins and ours. So is anyone trying to keep you back from receiving Jesus? A dig here, an insult there, whispers and insinuations behind your back? Are you afraid to catch some flack? Pressure from family or friends? Scared to stand alone? But isn't all this pocket change compared to the price Jesus paid for you?

I. Tomorrow Jesus will ride into Jerusalem on a donkey to waving palm branches and shouts of *'Hosanna!'* We will celebrate His triumphal entry one week from today even as we long to celebrate His triumphal entry into each of your hearts.

J. Let me encourage you to mine the Scriptures in the coming weeks. Dig in and go deep. Read them carefully and read them prayerfully. Let a sense of expectancy rise up in your heart. Let the Lord know you're ready for Him to do something large and lasting inside of you. I'll be praying that way as well...

* Close with Prayer...

Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff

Luke 18:31-34 (ESV)

31 And taking the twelve, He said to them, "See, we are going up to Jerusalem, and everything that is written about the Son of Man by the prophets will be accomplished. 32 For He will be delivered over to the Gentiles and will be mocked and shamefully treated and spit upon. 33 And after flogging Him, they will kill Him, and on the third day He will rise." 34 But they understood none of these things. This saying was hidden from them, and they did not grasp what was said.

Film Clips & Other Links

The Gospel - Matt Chandler

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BVpLCnpuUYA>

Jesus Heals Bartimaeus - The Jesus Film Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=00PM3bdCME>

"I Want to See" - (Mark 10:46-52) Sermon by Alistair Begg

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kPltOaxDqJg&ebc=ANyPxKrIQ6YcTv6pct3YvUoP0dlIujZeCKJqy869YYWEMGvdUrhO1rr-wii_D68sfUUcqlzdtiaHoxeqwxHGdvptTxXO9YdAeA

Jesus and Zacchaeus - The Jesus Film Project

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R59GTcEnR2U>

The Conversion of Zacchaeus - Billy Graham (Halifax, Canada 1979)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5eYBBbv_cmE

Jesus Anointed at Bethany (The Gospel of John)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IDY5d3fOfK8>

Bonus Stuff

Luke 18:35-42 (ESV)

35 As He drew near to Jericho, a blind man was sitting by the roadside begging. 36 And hearing a crowd going by, he inquired what this meant. 37 They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth is passing by." 38 And he cried out, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!" 39 And those who were in front rebuked him, telling him to be silent. But he cried out all the more, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" 40 And Jesus stopped and commanded him to be brought to Him. And when he came near, He asked him, 41 "What do you want me to do for you?" He said, "Lord, let me recover my sight." 42 And Jesus said to him, "Recover your sight; your faith has made you well." 43 And immediately he recovered his sight and followed Him, glorifying God. And all the people, when they saw it, gave praise to God.

Luke 19:1-10 (ESV)

19 He entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 And behold, there was a man named Zacchaeus. He was a chief tax collector and was rich. 3 And he was seeking to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was small in stature. 4 So he ran on ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Him, for He was about to pass that way. 5 And when Jesus came to the place, He looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, hurry and come down, for I must stay at your house today." 6 So he hurried and came down and received Him joyfully. 7 And when they saw it, they all grumbled, "He has gone in to be the guest of a man who is a sinner." 8 And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, "Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold." 9 And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house, since he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost."

John 12:1-11 (ESV)

1 Six days before the Passover, Jesus therefore came to Bethany, where Lazarus was, whom Jesus had raised from the dead. **2** So they gave a dinner for Him there. Martha served, and Lazarus was one of those reclining with him at table. **3** Mary therefore took a pound of expensive ointment made from pure nard, and anointed the feet of Jesus and wiped His feet with her hair. The house was filled with the fragrance of the perfume. **4** But Judas Iscariot, one of His disciples (he who was about to betray Him), said, **5** "Why was this ointment not sold for three hundred denarii and given to the poor?" **6** He said this, not because he cared about the poor, but because he was a thief, and having charge of the moneybag he used to help himself to what was put into it. **7** Jesus said, "Leave her alone, so that she may keep it for the day of My burial. **8** For the poor you always have with you, but you do not always have Me." **9** When the large crowd of the Jews learned that Jesus was there, they came, not only on account of Him but also to see Lazarus, whom He had raised from the dead. **10** So the chief priests made plans to put Lazarus to death as well, **11** because on account of him many of the Jews were going away and believing in Jesus.

Quote by A.B. Simpson

"[The Gospel] tells rebellious men that God is reconciled, that justice is satisfied, that sin has been atoned for, that the judgment of the guilty may be revoked, the condemnation of the sinner cancelled, the curse of the Law blotted out, the gates of hell closed, the portals of heaven opened wide, the power of sin subdued, the guilty conscience healed, the broken heart comforted, the sorrow and misery of the Fall undone."

Quote by R. C. Ryle

"Sin forsaken is one of the best evidences of sin forgiven."

Repentance

In Vansbro, Sweden, police were startled when a thief returned a wallet he had stolen with the whole amount that was in the wallet along with the interest the money would have earned. He also enclosed a letter of apology. He had stolen the money 40 years earlier. It is never too late for restitution and repentance.

- From *Preaching Daily*, Crosswalk.com

Charles Hodge on Repentance

The sure test of the quality of any supposed change of heart will be found in its permanent effects. 'By their fruits you shall know them' is as applicable to the right method of judging ourselves as of judging others. Whatever, therefore, may have been our inward experience, whatever joy or sorrow we may have felt, unless we bring forth fruits meet for repentance, our experience will profit us nothing. Repentance is incomplete unless it leads to confession and restitution in cases of injury; unless it causes us to forsake not merely outward sins, which others notice, but those which lie concealed in the heart; unless it makes us choose the service of God and live not for ourselves but for Him. There is no duty which is either more obvious in itself, or more frequently asserted in the Word of God, than that of repentance.

Oswald Chambers on Repentance

It is not repentance that saves me; repentance is the sign that I realize what God has done in Christ Jesus. The danger is to put the emphasis on the effect instead of on the cause. Is it my obedience that puts me right with God? Never! I am put right with God because prior to all else, Christ died. When I turn to God and by belief accept what God reveals, instantly the stupendous atonement of Jesus Christ rushes me into a right relationship with God. By the miracle of God's grace I stand justified, not because of anything I have done, but because of what Jesus has done. The salvation of God does not stand on human logic; it stands on the sacrificial death of Jesus. Sinful men and women can be changed into new creatures by the marvelous work of God in Christ Jesus, which is prior to all experience.

- Oswald Chambers quoted in *So Great Salvation*, Charles Ryrie, Victor Books, 1989, p. 91ff.

Charles H. Spurgeon on Repentance

True repentance has a distinct and constant reference to the Lord, Jesus Christ. If you repent of sin without looking to Christ, away with your repentance! If you are so lamenting your sin as to forget the Savior, you have need to begin all this work over again. Whenever we repent of sin we must have one eye upon sin and another upon the Cross. Or, better still, let us have both eyes upon Christ, seeing our sin punished in Him and by no means let us look at sin except as we look at Jesus. A man may hate sin just as a murderer hates the gallows – but this does not prove repentance. If I hate sin because of the punishment, I have not repented of sin – I merely regret that God is just. But if I can see sin as an offense against Jesus Christ and loathe myself because I have wounded Him, then I have a true brokenness of heart. If I see the Savior and believe that those thorns upon His head were plaited by my sinful words; If I believe that those wounds in His heart were pierced by my heart sins; If I believe that those wounds in His feet were made by my wandering steps and that the wounds in His hands were made by my sinful deeds – then I repent of sin after a right fashion. Only under the Cross can you repent. Repentance elsewhere is remorse which clings to

the sin and only dreads the punishment. Let us then seek, under God, to have a hatred of sin caused by a sight of Christ's love.

What do I do with this Message?

1) First of all, the Message does the doing. It is either impacting you or it isn't... *"He who has ears to hear, let him hear."* Have you been given those kind of ears?

2) The dead don't raise themselves. The blind don't make themselves see, the deaf don't make themselves hear, cripples don't make themselves walk. The light that illuminates your darkness is not your light, it doesn't come from you. When you were born, you experienced birth but you didn't will your birth to happen and when you are born again, you experience it, you don't will it to happen. If you're born with a terminal disease you don't make yourself well, the cure isn't within you--it comes from outside of you, if it comes at all. If you hunger and thirst for righteousness' sake, you did not create the hunger and the thirst for it. And so, the righteousness we seek after must be His, not our own.

- Excerpt from Steve's sermon titled, *"To Jerusalem with Eyes Wide Open"* February 24, 2013.