

Friday Communion Service

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Date: 31 October 2014

Preacher: David MacPherson

[0 : 00] Jesus set His face to Jerusalem.

There's a quiet drama in the words employed by Luke to identify the beginning of a journey, a one-way journey to Calvary.

Jesus set His face to Jerusalem. And the words speak of an unshakable determination to tread the path laid out for Jesus by His Father.

Jerusalem was His destination, and to Jerusalem He would go. Jesus set His face to Jerusalem.

This evening I want us to fix our attention on just one verse, verse 51 of Luke chapter 9.

The verse, and we'll read it in a moment or read it again in a moment, is significant as it introduces us to what we might call the final countdown. We might not have thought that, given that it seems to come quite early in Luke's gospel, but there's a real sense in which at this stage in Luke's account we have the beginning of the final countdown, of a final journey to Jerusalem.

[1 : 25] A lot would go on in the course of that journey, and it wouldn't be a journey that would be a straight line between A and B. There would be a lot of coming and going, but effectively at this point in the gospel, Luke begins to present to us this final countdown, the final leg of the Lord's journey to the cross.

The passion lies before Jesus, and He journeys steadily towards Him. Notice what we read there in verse 51. As the time approached for Him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.

The words that Luke uses and that other translations employ, and I would have much preferred the NIV would have done likewise, are the words that Luke actually uses.

Jesus set His face to Jerusalem. Resolutely set out for Jerusalem. It captures the meaning very adequately, but what Luke says, and what I would prefer we kept, and certainly those are the words that we'll be thinking about and our thoughts will revolve around, are these.

Jesus set His face to Jerusalem. Now, what we're going to do as we think about this one verse, and what follows in this short section has its own interest, but we are going to leave that aside.

[2 : 51] I don't know, perhaps for another occasion. This evening, just this one verse. And the way we're going to look at the verse is divided up in three in the order that it is before us. So we'll think a little about how the verse begins.

As the time approached. Literally there, what Luke says, as the days approached. As the time approached, or as the days approached. What can we draw out from these first words in this verse?

But then we'll move on to what follows as the time approached for Him to be taken up to heaven.

For Him to be taken up to heaven. And what can we draw out from...

From...