

Road to the Resurrection: Jesus Turns His Face

Opening: The Great Commission & Unreached People

- **Key Scripture:** Matthew 28:18-20 – Jesus' post-resurrection command: All authority belongs to Him; go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing and teaching obedience; He is with us always.
- **Local Challenge:** 1 in 3 people in Florida are part of unreached people groups (those with little to no access to the gospel).
- **Connection:** The road to resurrection leads to mission. Jesus' resolve to the cross enables the Great Commission—His victory empowers us to fulfill it.

Illustration: Derek Redmond – 1992 Olympics (400m Semifinal)

- British runner tore his hamstring mid-race but refused to quit.
- His father rushed from the stands to help him finish, arm around him, crossing the line together amid tears.
- **Lesson:** True resolve means pressing on despite pain, with help from a loving father. Jesus, driven by love for us, finished His race to the cross.

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Core Text: Luke 9:51 – Jesus' Resolute Determination

- "When the time drew near for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem." (NIV; "set his face" in many translations)
- **Meaning:** "Set his face" = firm, unwavering intent (like Isaiah 50:7 – "I have set my face like flint").
- Jesus knew rejection, suffering, and death awaited—yet He chose it willingly.
- **Application:** Following Jesus demands the same resolve: not casual interest, but determined commitment despite cost.

Luke 9:57-62 – Three Would-Be Disciples & the Cost of Following

Jesus encounters three people who express interest but reveal excuses. He gently but firmly removes them, showing discipleship requires full resolve.

1. **Comfort (v. 57-58)**
 - Man: "I will follow you wherever you go."
 - Jesus: "Foxes have dens... but the Son of Man has no place to lay his head."
 - Issue: Following Jesus often means discomfort, instability, sacrifice—no guaranteed ease.
2. **Delay / Urgency (v. 59-60)**
 - Jesus calls: "Follow me."
 - Man: "Let me first go and bury my father" (likely meaning wait until family duties end).
 - Jesus: "Let the dead bury their own dead, but you go and proclaim the kingdom of God."
 - Issue: The kingdom is urgent—postponement risks missing the call. No endless delays.
3. **Looking Back / Nostalgia (v. 61-62)**
 - Man: "I will follow... but first let me say goodbye to my family."
 - Jesus: "No one who puts a hand to the plow and looks back is fit for service in the kingdom."
 - Issue: "Nostalgic disciple" wants Jesus but keeps old life accessible. True discipleship requires forward focus—no glancing back with longing.

Central Theme: Resolve

- Jesus shows perfect resolve: He sets His face toward Jerusalem, the cross, resurrection, and victory—for love alone.
- Followers often negotiate terms, but Jesus removes excuses without harsh rejection.
- The kingdom advances through **fully committed people**—no half-measures.
- **Quote:** John Wesley – "Give me one hundred preachers who fear nothing but sin and desire nothing but God, and I care not whether they be clergymen or laymen, such alone will shake the gates of hell and set up the kingdom of heaven upon earth."

Closing Image: Via Dolorosa – The Way of Suffering

- The path Jesus walked to the cross in Jerusalem—nothing forced Him forward except love for humanity.
- **Application Question:** Will you resolve to follow Jesus with the same unwavering love and commitment?

Reflection Questions:

1. Where in your life do you need greater resolve to follow Jesus (comfort, urgency, looking back)?
2. How does Jesus' example on the road to Jerusalem inspire your response to the Great Commission?
3. What excuses might Jesus be calling you to lay down today?

Pray for resolve, for unreached people in Florida and beyond, and for courage to live fully committed to the King and His kingdom.