

FORWARD IN JESUS; FORWARD IN HOPE

**Grace Communion International
Minister: Eric Vautour**

Date: June 30, 2019

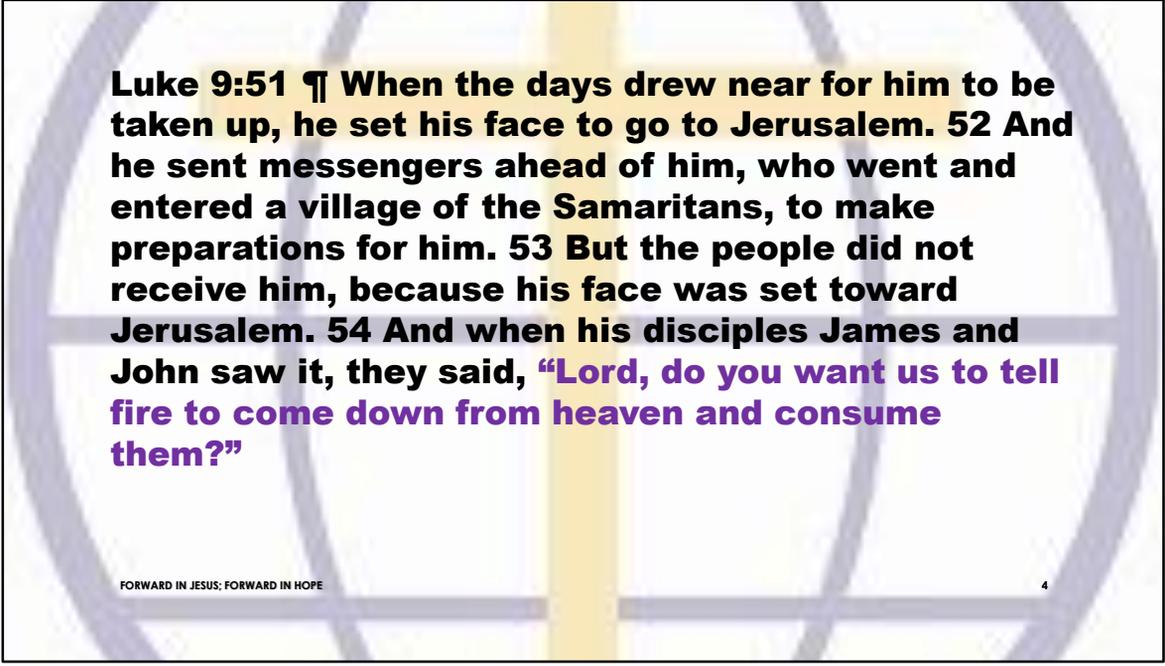


**SCRIPTURE
READING:**

**1 Kings
19:15-16; 19-
21
Luke 9:51-62**

**“15 And the LORD said to him, “Go, return on your way to the wilderness of Damascus. And when you arrive, you shall anoint Hazael to be king over Syria. 16 And Jehu the son of Nimshi you shall anoint to be king over Israel, and Elisha the son of Shaphat of Abel-meholah you shall anoint to be prophet in your place.”
(1Ki 19:15-16 ESV)**

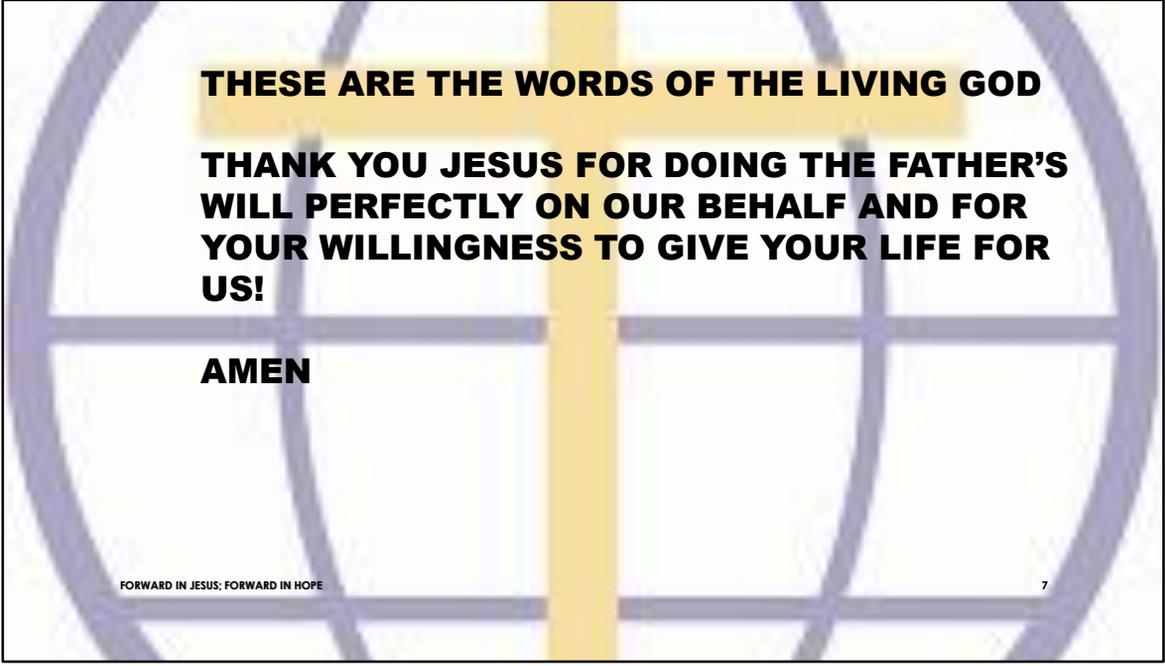
“19 ¶ So he departed from there and found Elisha the son of Shaphat, who was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen in front of him, and he was with the twelfth. Elijah passed by him and cast his cloak upon him. 20 And he left the oxen and ran after Elijah and said, “Let me kiss my father and my mother, and then I will follow you.” And he said to him, “Go back again, for what have I done to you?” 21 And he returned from following him and took the yoke of oxen and sacrificed them and boiled their flesh with the yokes of the oxen and gave it to the people, and they ate. Then he arose and went after Elijah and assisted him.” (1Ki 19:19-21 ESV)



Luke 9:51 ¶ When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. 52 And he sent messengers ahead of him, who went and entered a village of the Samaritans, to make preparations for him. 53 But the people did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. 54 And when his disciples James and John saw it, they said, “Lord, do you want us to tell fire to come down from heaven and consume them?”

- **55 BUT HE TURNED AND REBUKED THEM. 56 AND THEY WENT ON TO ANOTHER VILLAGE. 57 ¶ AS THEY WERE GOING ALONG THE ROAD, SOMEONE SAID TO HIM, “I WILL FOLLOW YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.” 58 AND JESUS SAID TO HIM, “FOXES HAVE HOLES, AND BIRDS OF THE AIR HAVE NESTS, BUT THE SON OF MAN HAS NOWHERE TO LAY HIS HEAD.” 59 TO ANOTHER HE SAID, “FOLLOW ME.” BUT HE SAID, “LORD, LET ME FIRST GO AND BURY MY FATHER.”**

60 And Jesus said to him, “Leave the dead to bury their own dead. But as for you, go and proclaim the kingdom of God.” 61 Yet another said, “I will follow you, Lord, but let me first say farewell to those at my home.” 62 Jesus said to him, “No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God.”” (Lu 9:51-62 ESV)



THESE ARE THE WORDS OF THE LIVING GOD

**THANK YOU JESUS FOR DOING THE FATHER'S
WILL PERFECTLY ON OUR BEHALF AND FOR
YOUR WILLINGNESS TO GIVE YOUR LIFE FOR
US!**

AMEN

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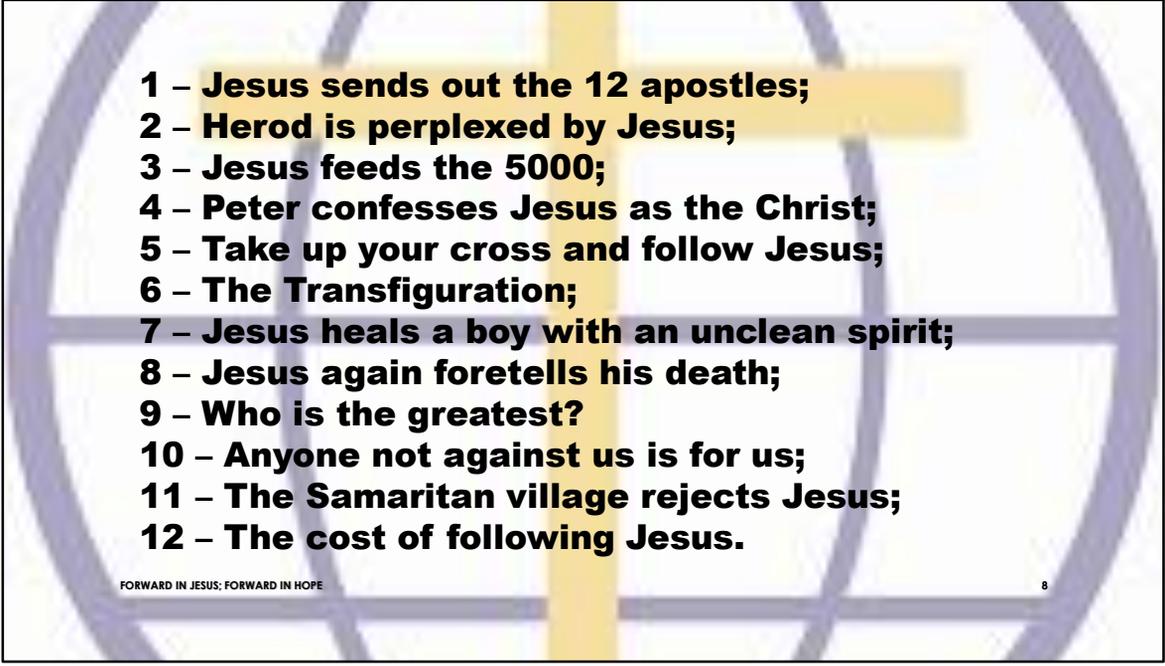
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During today's sermon, we are going to think about Jesus determination to go to Jerusalem to face the humiliation and the shame of the cross for all of us.

We are also going to look at what Jesus taught his disciples as he set his face to go to Jerusalem.

What are some of the events found in this chapter as Jesus sets his face to go to Jerusalem?

In chapter 9, the ESV Bible has the following headings: (next slide)

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- 1 – Jesus sends out the 12 apostles;**
 - 2 – Herod is perplexed by Jesus;**
 - 3 – Jesus feeds the 5000;**
 - 4 – Peter confesses Jesus as the Christ;**
 - 5 – Take up your cross and follow Jesus;**
 - 6 – The Transfiguration;**
 - 7 – Jesus heals a boy with an unclean spirit;**
 - 8 – Jesus again foretells his death;**
 - 9 – Who is the greatest?**
 - 10 – Anyone not against us is for us;**
 - 11 – The Samaritan village rejects Jesus;**
 - 12 – The cost of following Jesus.**

The disciples did not understand when Jesus plainly told them that he was going to be delivered into the hands of men.

They were witnesses of everything Jesus was doing so wonderfully and so miraculously that they could not conceive that he would be killed. Maybe this understood a little but were afraid to know more? (Next slide)

“43 ¶ And all were astonished at the majesty of God. But while they were all marveling at everything he was doing, Jesus said to his disciples, 44 “Let these words sink into your ears: The Son of Man is about to be delivered into the hands of men.” 45 But they did not understand this saying, and it was concealed from them, so that they might not perceive it. And they were afraid to ask him about this saying.” (Lu 9:43-45 ESV)

Not understanding, they did not think or understand what they would be facing in the next few days. They did not understand Jesus’ mission and why he came to the earth from heaven.

Consequently, they had self-centered discussions about which of them was the greatest. Jesus taught them about who was the greatest in the kingdom of God. He told them that whoever received Jesus also received the one who sent him – God the Father.

As Jesus determinedly set his face to go to Jerusalem (vs 51), he sent some messengers who entered a Samaritan village. People in the Samaritan village refused to receive Jesus. Consequently, two of his disciples, James and his brother John wanted revenge.

They had been given enormous power, preaching the gospel and healing everywhere (vs. 6). This time, they wanted to use the power received to call fire to come from heaven and consume the ungodly Samaritans.

Jesus severely rebuked them.

This should be quite a lesson for us as to how to treat others who do not yet know who Jesus is. How should we treat people who do not yet believe? Should we turn against them?

(Next slide)

(From GCI - <https://equipper.gci.org/2019/05/sermon-for-june-30-2019>)

“Too often we are tempted to call down fire on anyone who is unwelcoming to what we think is progress. We want to call down fire on those who don’t believe like we do, who aren’t as good a follower as we believe we are. We start to believe all followers need to be traveling in the same direction as we do, in the way we follow Jesus. But Jesus is not looking to “burn” anyone on the way to his goal. His aim is to save everyone at the end of his journey.”

FORWARD IN JESUS; FORWARD IN HOPE

10

It is very important to consider how we react to people who are still outside the faith.

When Jesus spoke to his disciples in his sermon on the Mount, he said to them that they were the salt of the earth and the light of the world. He said, **“In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven”** (Matthew 5:16 ESV).

We are to see others the way Jesus saw them when he was hanging on the cross and he prayed to God the Father, **“... Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.” And they cast lots to divide his garments.** (Lu 23:34 ESV).

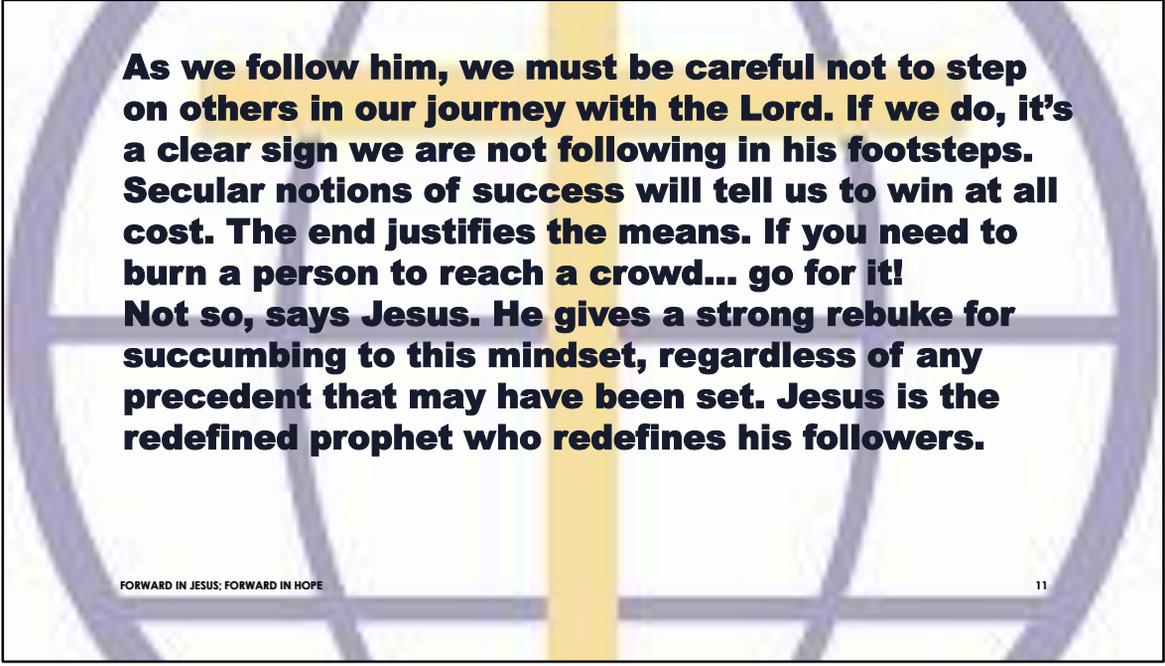
As human beings, we have a tendency to want to get rid of people who do not think or act like we do. This is not the way of God. We have been called to live in the world and not be of the world. Jesus did not come to condemn but to save. This is the attitude we are to have as well towards those not yet in the faith united to Christ.

This is a challenge for all of us. We live in a divided world where people are pitted against one another. As God’s people, we are not to become embroiled in the various whirlwind of conflicts whether in politics or other. For example, God teaches us about

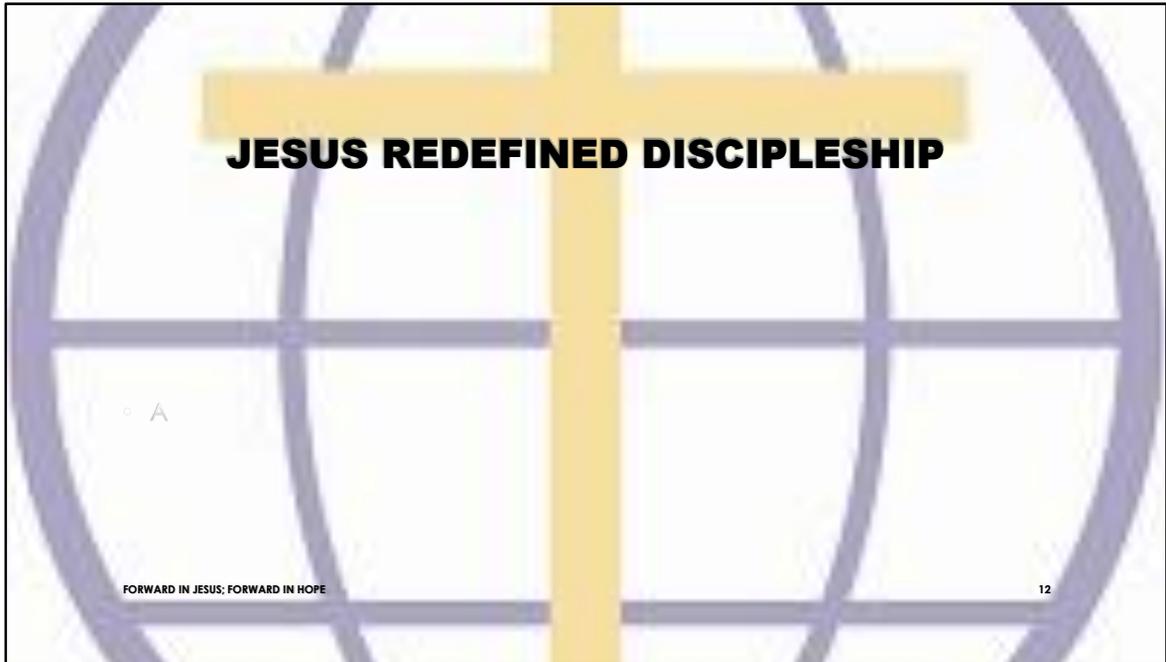
the attitude we are to have towards those in authority in Romans 13, 1 Peter 2 and 1 Tim 2:1-3. **“1 ¶ First of all, then, I urge that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and thanksgivings be made for all people, 2 for kings and all who are in high positions, that we may lead a peaceful and quiet life, godly and dignified in every way. 3 This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior,” (1Ti 2:1-3 ESV)**

We are not the ones who are going to restore the kingdom of God in its fullness. Jesus will, at his return.

From what we read in the gospel of John and in his epistles, John had complete change of mind about people outside the faith. He had a complete change of heart. He no longer wished to destroy people who did not agree with him. His desire became to point people to Jesus, the true source of life.



As we follow him, we must be careful not to step on others in our journey with the Lord. If we do, it's a clear sign we are not following in his footsteps. Secular notions of success will tell us to win at all cost. The end justifies the means. If you need to burn a person to reach a crowd... go for it! Not so, says Jesus. He gives a strong rebuke for succumbing to this mindset, regardless of any precedent that may have been set. Jesus is the redefined prophet who redefines his followers.



You may have wondered why we read that passage in 1 Kings about the story of Elijah and Elisha.

As Elisha was working the field, he asked Elijah before following him to go give his farewell to his father. Elijah told him to go. It was okay. He went to kiss his parents. He then burned the his oxen and their yoke. He gave the flesh of the oxen to the people to eat which indicated a complete change of life. His priorities would not be farming but rather attending to his calling to be a prophet of the Lord.

Jesus raises the bar which is consistent with all his teaching in the Gospels. As we read this, this is not a guilt trip because the Bible is very clear that we are not saved by our works but by grace. We are told in Ephesians that God has prepared good works for us to do.

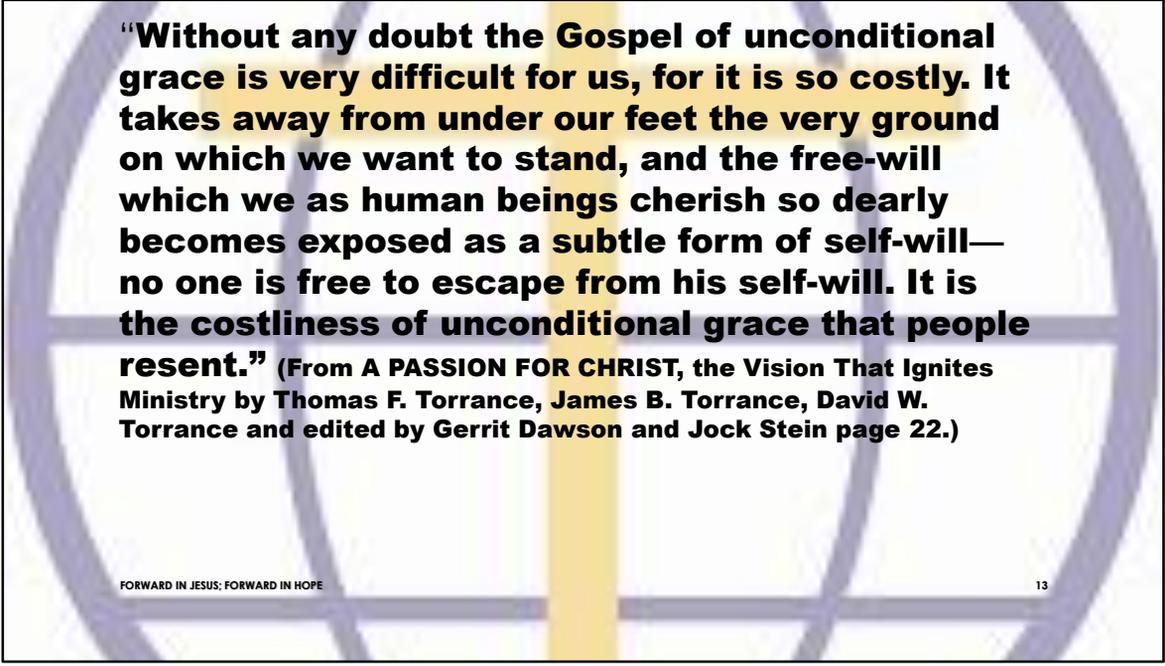
Jesus gave his all for us. He took our sinful lives upon himself and suffered the penalty of sin which is death upon himself in order to give us in exchange his life through faith in him.

God the Father also went all out by giving his own Son. He so loved the world that he

gave his only son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. God the Father sent his son to the earth not to condemn the world but to save the world through him.

As God's people, we are to surrender our will in faith to Jesus. He is the head of the church. He is to have priority in our lives. It goes along with the teaching of Jesus when he said, **"For whoever would save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for my sake and the gospel's will save it." (Mr 8:35 ESV).**

One of the hardest thing to give up as human beings is our self will. (Next slide)



“Without any doubt the Gospel of unconditional grace is very difficult for us, for it is so costly. It takes away from under our feet the very ground on which we want to stand, and the free-will which we as human beings cherish so dearly becomes exposed as a subtle form of self-will—no one is free to escape from his self-will. It is the costliness of unconditional grace that people resent.” (From A PASSION FOR CHRIST, the Vision That Ignites Ministry by Thomas F. Torrance, James B. Torrance, David W. Torrance and edited by Gerrit Dawson and Jock Stein page 22.)

FORWARD IN JESUS; FORWARD IN HOPE

13

As we read in Luke 9:51, **"When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem".**

Jesus is the only one who is fit for the kingdom of God. He is the one who qualifies us. **“He (God) is the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our Wisdom and our Righteousness and Sanctification and Redemption.” (1Co 1:30 ESV).**

Through faith in him, we have the assurance of eternal life. The Bible tells us that because we are part of his body, we have the mind of Christ. Certainly, the spirit of Christ, the Holy Spirit, will guide us to have the same attitude as Jesus towards the world, to those outside the faith.

Just like God, our desire is that everyone will repent and come to repentance, as we read in the epistle of Peter. Our desire is to others to come to know and embrace the good news which can only be found in Jesus.

We are to keep our eyes on Jesus.

We are not to look back.

We are not to neglect such a great salvation. We are not to return willingly and rebelliously to our old way of life. The apostle Peter compares such an action to a dog returning to his own vomit.

God tells us that we are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling, that we are to take our salvation seriously realizing that it is Jesus who is the author and perfecter of our faith.

Our relationship to Jesus has to be primary in our life. God wants us to look forward in hope. God is to be first in our life. The Kingdom of God is to be priority in our life.

“But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.” (Mt 6:33 ESV)

“Anyone who puts his hand to the plow has to keep looking forward to guide the plow, for if he looks back the plow will quickly veer off course”. (“Taken from the ESV® Study Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright ©2008 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved.”)

Why such an instruction as given in Luke 9:57-61? Because everything else is passing away. Jesus is the answer for the world today and forever. There is no other place to be but in Jesus!

Let us praise and thank him. Let us pray.