

**Sermon Study Guide Based on  
Pastor Glen Weber's Message of November 8, 2009  
"I Must Go to Jerusalem"**

**[Today's message reminds us that part of this life is experiencing life's challenges – whatever they may be.]**

**[Topics: Life's Challenges; Compelled by the Spirit; Sharing the Gospel]**

**Excerpt:** How comfortable are we? Pastor Glen thinks that he gets comfortable too often. As life moves along, it's so easy to get nice and convenient in our patterns and find it hard to break out of those patterns to do something that might be a little difficult.

Two weeks ago while pastor Glen was visiting Glen McCutchan in the hospital, he told a story that impacted pastor Glen. A missionary friend was taking a group (including Glen) to Haiti. Three days before departure a major riot broke out.

The missionary called Glen and said that the State Department was advising Americans not to travel there and telling Glen they probably should not go with him. But, the missionary said, "I'm going anyway!" So the missionary went and survived to tell about it.

Now, how often do we face a situation that it's way easier to say, "I think I'll stay home? I don't want to go forward. That looks a little difficult. That looks a little challenging." Too many of us have become very soft. Camps all over America are closing down because now all of our kids have to have a room with a shower.

And all the adults now need nice comfortable beds, and sleeping on camp beds has become a thing of the past. Some of us think camping is staying at Motel 6 instead of the Marriott. Look at all the motor homes running up and down the highways. People go camping in a \$250,000 motor home. It's got everything in it, even some things our home doesn't have.

We want everything nice and easy. But you know, life isn't always easy. In the early church, many people ended up martyred. And what about us? What if we came to a day when things became more difficult? And somebody comes after us for believing in Jesus Christ, because in many places in the world, that's the case.

Are we willing to go where it's a little more difficult? Are we willing to step forward when it doesn't even look all that good for us? Are we able to face those difficulties? Or maybe if you are one of those who have had that dreaded doctor's appointment, where the doctor says to you, "You have cancer."

When pastor Glen was talking with Candace last week, she said what a shock it was to her system when she was told by her doctor that the pain she was suffering wasn't the after effects of her car accident, but cancer and that she had 3 months to live!

That kind of news is quite a shock to the system. How does one step into the future, when it doesn't look very pretty? Many of our members are battling various types of health issues and financial issues either because you've lost your job or your retirement funds have shrunk thanks to the recession.

Today's message is titled, "I must go to Jerusalem," because several Scriptures tie in with today's subject that pastor Glen had been recently reading. **Luke 9:51** says, "**As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.**"

Now Jesus knows that it was time for him to go back to the Father. But he also knows that to get from here to there, he's got to go through the equivalent of us hearing bad news such as we've got cancer, multiple sclerosis, diabetes, etc. Jesus knows he's got to go through all of that for us, before being taken up to heaven. He knows it's going to be a difficult time that he's got to face.

And it also says in this verse that, "**Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem.**" It wasn't an accident that Jesus wound up in Jerusalem that week. Jesus was determined to do the work that the Father had sent him to do, even though it's going to be very difficult.

Now if God told you today, that tomorrow he wants you go and witness to someone and that when you do, they will kill you. Would you or I do it? That would be kind of hard, wouldn't it? Few of us have been given a commission that's going to cost us our life. But Jesus was determined to go to Jerusalem even though he knew what would happen.

Now let's look at **Acts 20**, where we see that the apostle Paul has taken up this big offering for the people of Jerusalem who are experiencing famine and difficult times. Paul says **22) "And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there."**

Paul wasn't sure what was going to happen to him when he entered Jerusalem. It's kind of like you getting that cancer or multiple sclerosis diagnosis and thinking that you know the end result, but you don't know how you are going to get there.

**23) "I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me."** Paul said that he knew going to Jerusalem would be ugly. But, nevertheless, Paul said he was compelled to go.

You've all heard the humorous story of a gunman who comes into church and tells the entire congregation that he going to shoot every here who believes in Jesus. After he said that a whole bunch of people got up and left. Then the gunman turns to the pastor and says, "OK, now you can preach to the ones who really want to be here."

**24) "However, I consider my life worth nothing to me, if only I may finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me – the task of testifying to the gospel of God's grace."**

Now God has asked the church to do certain things. He's asked us to make an impact in our world. He's asked us to go be the hands and feet of the incarnated Jesus in our

world today. But how many of us get so busy that we don't have time to do that or so comfortable that it's awkward. Pastor Glen said that he's preaching to the mirror, because there are times when he knows he should go talk to someone and he doesn't. He's slowly learning to talk himself into taking action. We've spent too many years thinking it was someone else's job to do that.

Now in Acts 21:4 we find that Paul has gone down to the seaport of Tyre in nation now known as Lebanon. **4) "Finding the disciples there, we stayed with them seven days. Through the Spirit they urged Paul not to go on to Jerusalem."**

The Holy Spirit is speaking to the membership and they are hearing about the difficulties Paul is going to go through. And so the members are saying, "Don't go! Don't go! There are bad things that are going to happen."

**5) "But when our time was up, we left and continued on our way. All the disciples and their wives and children accompanied us out of the city, and there on the beach we knelt to pray. 6) After saying good-bye to each other, we went aboard the ship, and they returned home."**

And so Paul sails on down the coast and he goes up to Jerusalem. And the next thing you know he's in prison. He's going through hardships and getting beat up. And soon he's on his way to Rome as a prisoner, where he will remain as a prisoner for the next couple of years.

It was not a pretty road. And the Holy Spirit told him to watch out because hardships were coming. But Paul said he had to listen to what God wanted him to do, even though he would encounter difficult times.

And God is calling on us to also be brave Christians. Now it's not about us bucking up. This sermon is not a locker room coach's talk, because it only helps for a few minutes. Something within us has to say, "Hello! You need to talk to that person." That something within us is the Holy Spirit.

It was the Holy Spirit that made Jesus resolutely set to go to Jerusalem. It was the Spirit stirring within him to do God's will. Even though the disciples said, "Don't go, they will arrest you." Jesus said, "I must go."

And it was that same Spirit stirring within Paul that compelled him to go to Jerusalem – to do the right thing. And it's that same Spirit that will stir within you and me. It takes us seeking God and saying, "God, what do you have for me? Lord, help me be tuned into the Holy Spirit when I'm around my kids and grandkids and when I'm around people in the community. And when you speak to me, help me be compelled to move. Help me to be resolute to respond."

Now pastor Glen wants us to be a fly on the wall in the throne room of God one hour before **Luke 1:38**, where Gabriel comes to Mary and says, Mary, God is going to conceive the Son of God the Son of man in you." And she says, "**May it be so to me as you have said.**"

Now they have been planning since the foundation of the world that Jesus would come in the flesh and that ultimately he would down to Jerusalem to die. And just before Mary is conceived by the Holy Spirit, the Son of God says, "OK, Father, now is the time. I am resolutely set to go to Jerusalem. Let's do it."

You see, Jesus went to Jerusalem via Bethlehem and Nazareth and a cross and a tomb! Yes, the Son of God was resolutely ready to go, according to the plan. Jesus became incarnate, vicarious flesh for us. So when we come to those moments that are difficult for us, Jesus is there for us.

Last week pastor Glen and his wife Connie went to the training class for the mentoring of teenagers. That was the easy part. Now he has to fill out all the paper work to get cleared and the next step is get a teen assigned to him. That's the scary part. But isn't that the gospel – taking Jesus and going out there. Isn't that what it's all about? Pastor Glen needs the Holy Spirit to be resolute in himself.

The reason for this message is that those Scriptures of **Luke 9:51** and **Acts 20:22** spoke to pastor Glen. They asked him – how resolute was he? Are you responding to the Holy Spirit?

Now the book of Hebrews talks a lot about the life of Jesus and what it means to us. **Hebrews 5:7-9, "During the days of Jesus' life on earth, he offered up prayers and petitions with loud cries and tears to the one who could save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverent submission."**

Now one could preach a whole sermon just on that verse, there's so much in it. First of all, Jesus prayed and sent petitions to God. He was pouring out his heart to God, because even though he was God in the flesh, he was flesh and he needed contact with his Father. He needed the help of the Holy Spirit and the Father so that he could do what he needed to do and so that he could live perfectly everyday even though he had our sinful nature.

Now he also prayed and petitioned to God to save him from death. And he was saved from death. Now our definition of being "saved from death," means don't die. What Jesus is really saying is, "God get me through this thing. Get me through this death process."

Remember in the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus ultimately prayed – not my will but your will be done. In the triune God there is always submission to one another. They are always offering up their life for the others. And that's what God wants us to do. Jesus submits to the Father.

**8) "Although he was a son, he learned obedience from what he suffered"** – our suffering has nothing to do whether we are a son or daughter of God. One has nothing to do with the other, because suffering is the reality of us living in the flesh. It's what Jesus has done for us to make us sons and daughters of God.

Jesus learned certain things out of that process of suffering in the flesh, as we all do. Now much of what we learn is NOT for this life. The things that Glen and Candace are learning now are not for this life, except as they help us and help their kids. God is

going to resurrect them with a glorified body for all eternity and they will serve God forever.

**9) "and, once made perfect (matured), he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him."** Was Jesus not perfect before? Of course, he was. But he matured even in that perfection. In the process of becoming human and suffering, it added to his perfection. As Jesus matured, "**he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.**" Yes, Jesus is our source for salvation. He is the one who came through and it possible for us.

That's why Jesus was resolved to go to Jerusalem. That's why Paul could be compelled to go to Jerusalem. That's why people who are dying in China and Miramar can be compelled to go to martyrdom for Jesus Christ.

That's why people in Muslim countries, who are literally being brought to torture, and are told to disown their Jesus, refuse to do so, because he is the source of salvation in them. Jesus, through the Holy Spirit is empowering them, lifting them up, giving them that courage, compelling them to go on to Jerusalem.

**10) "and was designated by God to be high priest in the order of Melchizedek."** Jesus became our high priest who is our representative between God and mankind and mankind and God. Jesus is the one who connects us to the Father so that our salvation can be complete and full and mature.

We have to invite the Holy Spirit to bring into us that compulsion, that resolve, that listening to him in order to go forward even when it seems out of character or even when it seems it's going to hurt. Are we resolutely willing to connect with non-believers around us? It's much easier to hear this than it is to go out and do it. Pastor Glen admitted that it's really hard for him to do that, as well.

We need to be like Paul who said that he felt the compulsion to preach the gospel. He said, "I have to do it!" Jesus told us we are supposed to do this as well – not out of guilt but because the Holy Spirit wants us to. We need to pray to God so that we won't chicken out when the Holy Spirit stirs us. We need to take baby steps, a little at a time.

Remember, Jesus and Paul were compelled to go to Jerusalem. They weren't driven. They were just stirred in a way that they needed to respond. Our prayers should be – God stir me. God stir us as a congregation. Don't let us be so comfortable that it's easier to be just nice people. Lord, draw us out of that and help us be filled with that compulsion to connect with others and to relate to the people around us. Lord, show us the way to take little steps.

At the end of our lives, we should be able to say, "I resolved to go to Jerusalem. I resolved to go do what God asked me to do. I resolved to respond to the Holy Spirit, even though I knew what was coming might not be comfortable. But I did what God asked me to do, because I allowed the Holy Spirit to stir within me."

The same Spirit lives and empowers us today as who empowered Jesus and Paul. It's the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead who works in us today. He's there. It's just a matter of us responding.

**General Group Question:** Have you ever experienced a difficult time that really challenged you? Briefly explain? Was God involved in this situation? If so, how?

**Additional questions for the entire group or in groups of two or three of the same gender (15-20 minutes). If appropriate, please pray for each other's needs afterwards.**

1. In Luke 9:51, why could Jesus "Resolutely set out for Jerusalem"?
2. What compelled Paul to go to Jerusalem even though he was warned by the Holy Spirit that he would face hardships there?
3. What or who motivates us to do difficult or uncomfortable things?
4. Did the Father save Jesus from death? If so, how? (Hebrews 5)
5. Do we learn things when going through suffering? If so, what kinds of things?
6. Who is the source of our eternal salvation? How is this possible?
7. At the conclusion of this message, what kind of prayers were we encouraged to pray? Why?