

THE LONGWAY ROUND

1. Face Like Flint

Start off with feedback from Sunday's message. What did those that were there - or those that have caught up online - take away from it? What encouraged them, what informed them and what challenged them?

Read Luke 9.51-62

51 *As the time approached for him to be taken up to heaven, Jesus resolutely set out for Jerusalem. 52* *And he sent messengers on ahead, who went into a Samaritan village to get things ready for him; 53* *but the people there did not welcome him, because he was heading for Jerusalem.*

- Luke structures his book as mostly a long road trip – Jesus is taking his followers on a journey of discovery, a brand new Exodus. In what ways is this Journey to Jerusalem like the original Exodus? In what ways is it different, and why? What do you think would have happened to the Samaritan village in the first Exodus?
- v51. '*Jesus resolutely set out*'. The cross was the whole reason for Jesus coming in the first place. Do we sometimes forget or underplay the central importance of the cross? Do we concentrate more on teaching, lifestyle and good works? What difference would it make to have a more cross-centred faith?
- Earlier in the chapter, Jesus taught that he must suffer, as well as die (v21-27). Why was suffering necessary? Surely Jesus just needed to die for our sins. What does this tell us about God's love and the problem of pain in our world?
- Jesus sets a high bar for those following him – almost unreasonably so (v57-62). Do you think that we fall short as followers of Jesus in terms of taking up our own crosses, denying ourselves and putting Jesus first? What does following Jesus on this journey mean for you? How does it challenge you? What does it demand of you?
- Big Idea: '*Jesus set himself to suffer and die so that we could be truly free.*'

Pray together in twos and threes for a fresh understanding of death of Jesus for your sins. Pray for a new sensitivity to the love of Christ, and a greater appreciation for what he's done for you. Ask Jesus to take you on a journey of discovery with him. Pray for a daily sense that you are walking with him, getting to know him in all areas of life, and becoming more like him.