

DAILY SCRIPTURE READINGS & MEDITATIONS YEAR A

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Source: <https://www.dailyscripture.net/>

WEDNESDAY 3 OCTOBER 2023 – 26th Sunday of Ordinary Time

Scripture: **Luke 9:51-56**

51 When the days drew near for him to be received 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 ready for him; 53 but the people would 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 bid fire come down from heaven and consume them?" 55 But he turned and rebuked them. 56 And they went on to another village.

Jesus' face was set toward Jerusalem

Meditation: Are you surprised to see two of Jesus' disciples praying for the destruction of a Samaritan village? The Jews and Samaritans had been divided for centuries. Jewish pilgrims who passed through Samaritan territory were often treated badly and even assaulted. Jesus did the unthinkable for a Jew. He not only decided to travel through Samaritan territory at personal risk, but he also asked for hospitality in one of their villages!

Jesus faced rejection and abuse in order to reconcile us with God and one another

Jesus' offer of friendship was rebuffed. Is there any wonder that the disciples were indignant and felt justified in wanting to see retribution done to this village? Wouldn't you respond the same way? Jesus, however, rebukes his disciples for their lack of toleration. Jesus had "*set his face toward Jerusalem*" to die on a cross that Jew, Samaritan and Gentile might be reconciled with God and be united as one people in Christ.

Jesus seeks our highest good - friend and enemy alike

Tolerance is a much needed virtue today. But aren't we often tolerant for the wrong thing or for the wrong motive? Christian love seeks the highest good of both one's neighbor and one's enemy. When Abraham Lincoln was criticized for his courtesy and tolerance towards his enemies during the American Civil War, he responded: "Do I not destroy my enemies when I make them my friends?" How do you treat those who cross you and cause you trouble? Do you seek their good rather than their harm?

"Lord Jesus, you are gracious, merciful, and kind. Set me free from my prejudice and intolerance towards those I find disagreeable, and widen my heart to love and to do good even to those who wish me harm or evil."

DAILY QUOTE FROM THE EARLY CHURCH FATHERS

Jesus gave power and authority to his apostles

by Cyril of Alexandria (376-444 AD)

"It would be false to affirm that our Savior did not know what was about to happen, because he knows all things. He knew, of course, that the Samaritans would not receive his messengers. There can be no doubt of this. Why then did he command them to go before him? It was his custom to benefit diligently the holy apostles in every possible way, and because of this, it was his practice sometimes to test them... What was the purpose of this occurrence? He was going up to Jerusalem, as the time of his passion was already drawing near. He was about to endure the scorn of the Jews. He was about to be destroyed by the scribes and Pharisees and to suffer those things that they inflicted upon him when they went to accomplish all of violence and wicked boldness. He did not want them to be offended when they saw him suffering. He also wanted them to be patient and not to complain greatly, although people would treat them rudely. He, so to speak, made the Samaritans' hatred a preparatory exercise in the matter. They had not received the messengers... For their benefit, he rebuked the disciples and gently restrained the sharpness of their wrath, not permitting them to grumble violently against those who sinned. He rather persuaded them to be patient and to cherish a mind that is unmovable by anything like this."(excerpt from COMMENTARY ON LUKE, HOMILY 56)