

Agendas

Everyone has an agenda in life. Sometimes it is an over-arching agenda which includes smaller agendas. We might also call them goals. Yet they amount to the same thing--an end purpose. The Lord had a certain agenda in the ninth chapter of Luke. "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem, And sent messengers before his face: and they went, and entered into a village of the Samaritans, to make ready for him. And they did not receive him, because his face was as though he would go to Jerusalem" (Lk. 9:51-53). Let us learn a few lessons from this account.

The over-arching agenda of the Lord was to do the will of the Father in heaven (Lk. 22:42). No one can doubt that all other actions of Jesus were oriented toward this goal, the eventual outcome of which was the salvation of man. Yet, in order to reach this goal, he had to do many things. The Lord of glory was born into this world and grew into adulthood (Lk. 2:7-11, 40, 52); went about preaching and teaching the kingdom of God, confirming his message with miracles (Matt. 4:23); endured mocking and ridicule (Mk. 14:65; 15:17-20). All of this led up to the final goal of shedding his blood for the remission of sin and being raised to take the throne of David (Matt. 26:26-28; 28:5-6; Acts 2:29-33). What does all of this tell us? Well, if you will, there is no short-cut to our goals. For those who have a goal of going to heaven, there is no "express lane" which will allow us to avoid the necessities and challenges of life. We must experience certain things here before we arrive there. We must attend the assemblies of the church (Heb. 10:25); study our Bibles (Acts 17:11); pray to God (Heb. 4:16); help the sick and unfortunate (Matt. 25:31-46); teach others (2 Tim. 2:2); endure hardships (2 Tim. 3:12; Heb. 12:5-13); and so on. Truly, most of life's experiences are a blessing on the way to our final goal.

Moreover, Jesus, in sticking to his agenda, was rejected and resisted by others. It is beyond question that our Lord was the most offensive man who ever lived. On every turn he was faced with opposition as he went about doing God's will. Jesus was tempted by the devil (Matt. 4:1-11); mistreated by the people (Lk. 4:28-29); betrayed by a friend (Matt. 26:47-50); falsely accused by many (Matt. 26:59-60); and hung on the cross by his enemies (Matt. 27:35). Likewise, when faithful children of God hold fast to their agenda of going to heaven, they will be cast out and condemned. When we teach one Savior, the Muslims and Jews will not accept us (Jn. 8:24). When we teach one church, the denominations

will despise us (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:4). When we teach one cause for divorce, the adulterers will ridicule us (Matt. 19:9). When we expose false teachers, they will hate us (2 Tim. 3:1-5). The Lord Jesus Christ faced hindrance and obstruction, therefore it should be no surprise when it happens to us (Matt. 10:24-25).

In keeping his agenda to reach Jerusalem, Jesus was steadfast, and so must we be in our agenda of reaching heaven. "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord" (1 Cor. 15:58).

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