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# Walking Dusty...

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I recently saw pictures of abandoned buildings in Detroit. It looked like a warzone. There are children and elderly (even entire families) lost in the culture of rundown neighborhoods, vacant churches, dilapidated schools, and failed businesses. They are stuck, and my heart hurts for the cycle of poverty, fatherlessness, and crime that many of these children will grow up knowing...and will repeat.

Luke 19:41-44 says "When the city (Jerusalem) came into view, he (Jesus) wept over it. 'If you had only recognized this day, and everything that was good for you! But now it's too late. In the days ahead your enemies are going to bring up their heavy artillery and surround you, pressing in from every side. They'll smash you and your babies on the pavement. Not one stone will be left intact. All this because you didn't recognize and welcome God's personal visit.'" (The Message) Jesus didn't just weep over the city and its doom, His distress was also due to the people's rejection of a relationship with His Father.

Jerusalem was a large, bustling city, but in Mark 11:11 we learn that Jesus left there and went into Bethany, a small village about two miles away. He took with Him the Twelve. During His last week before death, Jesus traveled between Jerusalem and Bethany several times. Picture the difference between Detroit (in its heyday) and Blissfield. Jerusalem held the Temple, where all the religious ceremonies took place. Bethany was the home of Lazarus and his sisters, Martha and Mary, the same woman that poured expensive oil on Jesus' feet.

I believe His travel between both cities shows Jesus living out the greatest commandment to love both God and man. His mission was to continue preaching and pointing people to His Father, which He did in Jerusalem. But at the same time His heart was to build faith in His followers, and He did that in Bethany. A friend of mine who's a missionary in Uganda recently wrote, "It is my desire as a servant of Christ Jesus, that He would use my life and all He has given to me to help draw others to Himself as well as help those who are already in a relationship with Christ learn how to become more like Jesus each day." As a Christ-follower, I pray we follow His example and that becomes our heart, too.

## **Questions to Consider:**

The Greatest Commandment is "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. And love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:37, 39) Everything Jesus did was to glorify His Father and to show us how to love others. He perfectly balanced both commitments. Am I able to follow Jesus' example?

From Scott's message: Do we appear as though we should bear fruit? Or are we actually bearing fruit? How often does Jesus speak something to us, but we stay neutral; we don't respond. Would we hear from Him more if we had responded?

**Additional verses:** *Zachariah 9:9, Mark 3:5, Mark 11, Luke 2:41-51; 19:41-44, 1 Corinthians 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16*