

MORAVIAN WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION

Devotional Notes

July 2013

Theme: Following in Christ's Footprints

I don't mind travelling, and I've done quite a bit in my lifetime, but I do always enjoy reaching my destination, whether that is for work or pleasure. Sometimes, however, if we go on a tour of some kind, we don't reach our destination until we are back home again. Sometimes our journey can be difficult, even if the distance is not great. There may be hold ups or break downs, we may have forgotten something and have to go back and start again. For a longer journey our tickets may be incorrect, or we may not have the right documentation and never even get off at all. So it's always a relief when all goes smoothly and we arrive around the expected time at the right place and can start the work we are to do, or enjoy ourselves on the holiday we have booked and looked forward to.

Over this past MWA year our journey following in Christ's footprints has taken us from Galilee up to the northern most point of Judea, down the eastern side of the Jordan River and then back across into southern Judea, and now we reach the final destination of Jerusalem. Some of the journey has been difficult - the followers of Jesus have had to learn some very hard lessons about commitment and rejection, about how to build up a close relationship with God. Other parts of the journey have been more pleasurable - experiencing forgiveness and acceptance, returning from a successful mission or relaxing together with friends for a meal. What the followers of Jesus experienced in their destination city of Jerusalem, however, took them from the depths of despair at the crucifixion to the ecstatic heights of joy at the resurrection.

Does reaching our destination imply that the journey is over? I'm sure we are all aware that our journey with Jesus is never over, so let's remind ourselves of the final scene in Jerusalem with Jesus. **Read Acts 1:1-11.**

The final commission Jesus gives us is to be witnesses for him wherever we are: where we live, around this country, in our visits to Europe, or places even further afield. This is a tall order, isn't it, Acts tells us that there were about 120 believers in Jerusalem at that time - a very small group in a remote outpost of the Roman Empire, but they didn't run out of enthusiasm after he had gone. At the end of his Gospel, Luke tells us they returned to Jerusalem filled with great joy, giving thanks to God. In Acts the same author recounts that this group met to pray together, started to make provisions for future ministry with the choosing of a successor to Judas, and also waited patiently as directed by Jesus for the gift he was to give them. Just think what this small group of believers achieved through the power of the Holy Spirit. Before the end of the book of Acts even, they had travelled round the eastern part of the Roman Empire witnessing to the Gospel, and Paul had even reached the heart of the Empire itself, carrying out this commission of Jesus even from a prison cell. This same power of the Holy Spirit is ours too, if we wish to tap into it, so that we can continue to follow in Christ's footprints by carrying out the commission he has given us to witness for him.

Hilary Smith

Perhaps members might like to share both good and bad experiences of journeys they have undertaken, as well as considering where we are on our journey with Jesus, and how we can carry out more effectively the commission of Jesus to witness for him near and far. What spurs us on? What holds us back? What makes us successful? Why might we be unsuccessful?