

Learn From Me - Serving

John 13:1-17 (NKJV)

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

As Jesus is about to head to the cross, He teaches this valuable lesson on serving. He knows that for these men to carry on His message after he departs, they've got to know how to serve others.

Jesus is the leader, the big dog, the man in charge.....everyone looks to Him for answers. Here they find themselves with an important role that no one is there to fill and Jesus steps up.

It's good to note that servanthood is not about position or skill level. It's about attitude.

So many times we turn down the opportunity to serve someone because we don't feel like it.....we've had a bad day, we are facing something stressful, or it's not our job.

Let's learn from Jesus today:

John 13:1-2 (NKJV)

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.

2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him,

Jesus is facing the cross. He knows the time has come. And what's on His mind? Love....

I would imagine if most of us in this room were facing death, we'd want to spend it with the people we love most.

For Jesus it wasn't about Him being comforted by their love, but that He could again show them His love....He was motivated by love. It's why He came in the first place.... And it's also why He must go back to the Father.

He loved His own who were in the world.....Note that these were His own....they belonged to Jesus. These are those who He came to save, of whom He is Lord, master, ruler.....and they are IN the world.

He knows that they still need saving from this world. But that can't happen unless He first dies for the sin of the world, rises from the grave and returns to the Father and sends His Spirit!

It says He loved them to the end.....He loved them completely. There isn't a point where He stops loving them.....just like there isn't a point where He stops loving you!

And because Jesus loves.....He serves. Some believe Jesus was expressing gratitude as He washed the disciples feet, but it looks more like grace to me...

He even washed the feet of Judas who was ready to betray Jesus and turn Him in to the authorities. Would Jesus have a right to have an attitude? A right to give Judas a little side eye? Sure....but still, He was motivated to serve out of love....a love that was undeserved, unending, unconditional, unselfish....

Matthew 20:27-28 (NKJV)

And whoever desires to be first among you, let him be your slave— 28 just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.”

This is one of the last messages that Jesus reinforces....serve. That's what leaders do!

John 13:3 (NKJV)

Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,

This is good.....remember the hour has come.....Jesus knows as He faces the cross that the Father had given all things into His hands.....He knew He would be victorious over death and the grave. But does it change Him? Does it make Him act different?

Jesus knew who He was and He was secure enough to get down on the floor and wash His disciples' feet. He didn't need to prove anything here. We don't see Him appointing one of the 12 to wash feet....He loves.....He serves.

John Maxwell said *"The insecure are into titles, the secure are into towels"*

John 13:4-5 (NKJV)

rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.

It was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests. In that day they wore sandals and lived in a dusty, dry region. You couldn't just take off your sandals, you feet might be dirtier than the sandals!

At this meal there was no servant present. And Jesus sees a teaching opportunity!

He didn't wait for someone else to volunteer. In fact they were too busy discussing an important matter that we see over in Luke:

Luke 22:24 (NKJV)

Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.

Now look again at the situation. There is no servant to wash their feet. And they are arguing about which of them is greatest.

Jesus gets up, takes off His robes, grabs a towel, puts it around His waist, (I wonder if anyone notices....) pours water into bucket and began to wash their feet....

He shows them the answer to their question, who is the greatest? It's the one who serves!

John 13:6-7 (NKJV)

Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"

7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."

Peter is stuck on what's socially acceptable. What was acceptable was for the LOWEST servant to wash feet. Not just any servant but the one at the bottom.

How many of you have worked somewhere that the person hired last has to do all the crap jobs? This would be the foot washer! Praise God you don't have to do THAT!

So this is the job of the lowliest servant, peers didn't even wash each other's feet let alone the master doing it!

Peter says "Lord, are You washing my feet?" It's not that Peter didn't know, he wasn't blind!

John 13:8-9 (NKJV)

Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"

Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."

9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"

Peter's pride just about keeps Him from receiving what Jesus is giving out. It's not that Peter is willing to take the towel just yet.....but his master isn't going to be washing his feet!

How many of you have trouble sitting back and relaxing while someone else serves you? If someone is offering, you might need to swallow your pride and let them.

I was once told by a lady that was trying to give me something that I knew she couldn't afford to give. I told her no thanks. She told me that I didn't have the right to steal her blessing of giving. She was right. I took it and said thank you.

Acts 20:35b (NKJV)

And remember the words of the Lord Jesus, that He said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

Don't let your pride steal that blessing from someone who's trying to serve you!

Once Peter realizes that Jesus was washing His feet because of the love He had for them, because of the desire to show that love.

Peter says "lay it on me".....it's so Peter.....Peter is a little extra if you haven't noticed. He gets a little excited about things and usually wants to take it just a little too far!

But this one had good intentions. "Jesus, if you are going to love on me.....I'd like all I can have"

John 13:10-15 (NKJV)

Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."

12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.

Remember when I said this wasn't an act of appreciation but one of grace? Grace is favor that you don't deserve.

These disciples didn't need a full cleansing, they already had that. They were "His own". But this washing was an example of the grace He shows us after we have been cleansed by His blood, the sacrifice He made for us on the cross, but then we get "a little dirty", He offers a foot washing.

1 John 1:9 (NKJV)

If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

People who have taken a bath and are clean may need to wash their feet after a short walk on dusty roads even though another bath is unnecessary.

He says there is grace for you. And you must have grace for others.

Matthew 10:8 (NKJV)

Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out demons. Freely you have received, freely give.

Freely give grace because you have a God who offers grace upon grace.....even to those who are unclean (Judas)....

John 13:16-17 (NKJV)

16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Are you motivated by love to server others?

Are you secure in who you are to serve in even the lowliest tasks?

Are you one who initiates servant-leadership?

Can you receive from others?

If Jesus is giving out, do you want all that He has for you?

Are you willing to give what He has given you?

Jesus said, "I did not come to be served, but to serve and to give my life as a ransom for many."
We like the titles I am a child of God. I am a child of the king. I'm a king's kid. But what we are to be in the core of our being is a servant. Yell it out, I am called to be a servant.