

Q: Who in your life has demonstrated what it means to humbly & joyfully serve you or others? Describe ways they have served?

Q: Jesus knew who was going to betray him (Judas) and deny him (Peter), and abandon him (all the others except John). In spite of this, what lessons do we learn from Jesus on his actions here?

Q: How have you been betrayed (or let down) by a friend or someone close to you? How did you respond? How does Jesus respond?

Q: Looking ahead to 13:34-35, Jesus gives the disciples a “new” commandment to “love one another *as I have loved you...*” How has foot washing helped to explain this to the disciples?

Q: Why is this command so important for Christ-followers to keep?

Q: As Christ has humbly demonstrated his love by serving them in this way, why might serving also be a very effective method of sharing Christ with others who are far from God?

Q: What is one thing you can do this week to serve others unconditionally with the love of Christ?

Prayer:

Lord, teach me to serve as Jesus did. Especially when it's hardest to love, teach me to humble myself. I know I belong to You, I am Your child and I know how all this will end and that I'll be with you someday. Remind me often of that and help me daily to root my security and identity in you. Secure in that knowledge and out of an overflow of your love for me, teach me to humble myself and serve with my words and actions. Thank you and make me more like You each day, I pray in Jesus name, amen.

Harvest **Reaching Beyond**

Evangelical Free Church

*A Disciplemaking Tool of Harvest Evangelical Free Church
(for personal study and/or growth groups)*

Week of April 23, 2017

Snapshots of Jesus: John 13

Week Overview:

How Can I Serve You?

We tend to define greatness in terms of using our gifts, talents, position and abilities to impress and direct others. Great financial advisors manage million dollar accounts. Great entrepreneurs create wildly successful businesses. Great teachers receive state and national awards. Great business executives are hired by huge multi-national corporations and receive astronomical salaries. Great football athletes serve on the best teams in the NFL. Great pastors speak at national conferences, write best-seller books, and grow their local churches to thousands in attendance.

The bigger, the better. The more people we impress, the greater our value. The greater our popularity, the larger our impact. That's the way the world measures greatness.

But with Jesus it is different. Because of his full dependence on God and his intimacy with the Spirit, Jesus healed diseases, stilled storms, overcame demonic opposition, resisted temptation, and spoke of God unlike any other.

You can imagine how he might have used his power to gain incredible acclaim in his day. He could have so influenced the crowds that everyone would be amazed by him and that few would dare challenge or oppose him. He could have stunned the population with acts of powerful healing and decisive judgement. He could have impressed them so that they would never confuse him with a mere prophet, much less regard him as a simple carpenter's son.

But Jesus did the opposite. After cleansing a leper, for example, he charged the healed man to tell no one. (See Mark 1:43.) He constantly underplayed the miraculous acts he performed.

In John 13 Jesus teaches about greatness in a more dramatic way. He takes on the role of a lowly house servant and washes the feet of the disciples. He does what none of them wanted to do for each other. He embraces a role that has no status or dignity.

And he makes this a pattern for those who desire to be his followers! It's the last thing we want to do. But Jesus makes it essential. Why? Why should we serve in a way that doesn't seem to pay off?

How Can I Serve You?

John 13:1-20

¹ Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² During supper, when the devil had 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 back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share 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, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, 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 also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' ¹⁹ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

Q: Who has taken time to invest in you, to demonstrate care for you, willing to serve you?

Our true identity and purpose (vv.1-3)

Q: Describe Jesus' attitude knowing the suffering He knew was soon approaching.

Q: Jesus fully knew His identity, purpose and His future. How can we misplace our identity (job, career, family, activities, etc.), lose our purpose and become disillusioned about the future?

Q: How is our motivation to serve others tied into our identity?

Q: How might serving others help us in our faith journey?

Humble servant leadership

Q: What can be our initial attitude (or the attitude of our kids!) when asked to do lowly, menial tasks?

Q: Foot washing was a duty reserved for servants. It was a menial dirty task. What lessons does the Master, Jesus demonstrate as he humbly washes the feet of the 12?

Q: Why does Peter object to Jesus washing his feet?

Q: Why does Jesus insist he wash Peter's feet?

Q: What spiritual lesson does Jesus show Peter in doing so? (v.8-10)

Q: What might be a modern example of "washing someone's feet?"
