

5/18/25

Jesus, The Servant Of Love
Jn. 13:1-20

Jesus has ended His public ministry to the Jews revealing that despite the many signs, works He did and the words He proclaimed they did not believe, therefore they came to the place where they could not believe. Jn. 12:39

* This was the very proclamation in the prologue, "He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him", indicating the nation and his family. Jn. 1:11

The Lord Jesus now concentrates on His private ministry to His own disciples. Jn. 13-21

The figurative language of light and darkness dominate the first twelve chapter, appearing some thirty-two times.

The subject of love dominates the last nine chapters, appearing some forty-eight times and around twelve in the first twelve.

Chapter thirteen to seventeen are a unit in itself containing the discourse of Jesus to His disciples and the High priestly prayer of Jesus.

1. Chapter thirteen and fourteen go together occurring during the supper in the upper room.

2. Chapter fifteen and sixteen go together occurring after they left the upper room. Jn. 14:31c-d

3. Chapter seventeen is the Holy of Holies, the priestly prayer of Jesus, "The Lord's Prayer".

For our study we want to look at Jesus as He washed the disciples feet, which reveals three truths to us about how we are to serve.

- I. The believer is to serve at all times: The proclamation. vs. 1-5
- II. The believer is to serve all people: The exhortation. vs. 6-11
- III. The believer is to serve always like Jesus: The application. vs. 12-20

I. The believer is to serve at all times: The proclamation. vs. 1-5

- A. The believer is to serve even in times of crisis. vs. 1
 - 1. Jesus was serving even though he was about to die, "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." vs. 1a-b
 - a. The Feast of Passover commemorated the Exodus of Israel from Egypt by sparing those under the blood of the lamb on their doorpost and lintel of their house.
 - b. The Feast of Passover was prophetic of the Messiah Jesus, Who would be the

“Lamb of God” to take away the sins of the world at the Passover. Jn. 1:29

- c. The Feast of Passover was understood by Jesus to indicate the end of His earthly ministry, the time of His death on the cross and ascension to His Father, “**His hour** had come”, yet He did not withhold service from His own.

* The phrase “His hour” is key to the mission of Jesus in the gospel of John. Jn. 2:4; 7:6, 8, 30; 8:20; 12:33

- 2. Jesus served His own to the utmost limit of love, “having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.” vs. 1c
 - a. The phrase “His own” in this context refers to His disciples and apostles.
 - 1) The twelve in the upper room, who were in the world, but had come out of the world by repenting of their sins.
 - 2) The betrayer of Jesus is sitting at the table with Him, Judas.
 - 3) The phrase in a different context refers to His nation of Israel and family members. Jn. 1:11
 - b. The degree of His love for His disciples is stated, “He loved them to the end.”
 - 1) The word love “agapao”, God’s divine love, distinct from human love.
 - 2) The word end “telos”, means to the limit a thing ceases to be, holding

back nothing, but doing and giving all.

- 3) We have a phrase that communicates this, “I love you to death”, meaning there is nothing I would not do for you.

B. The believer is to serve even knowing things about people. vs. 2

- 1. Jesus knew that he was eating with the one who would betray Him, “And supper being ended.” vs. 2a
 - a. The supper was in progress, it ended when Judas leaves! vs. 30-31a
 - b. The supper was not the last Supper, but the Passover meal for Judas left prior to the institution of the Lord’s table, as the synoptics reveal. Matt. 26:17-20; Mk. 14:12-16; Lk. 22:7-12
 - c. John does not record the Lord’s table as he doesn’t record Gathsemane.
- 2. Jesus knew Satan had already put in Judas Ischariot’s heart to betray Jesus, yet Judas was fully responsible for his decision to betray Jesus, “the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Ischariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him.” vs. 2b-d
 - a. The devil “diabolos” means the false accuser and slanderer put it into the heart of Jesus, this diabolic plan.

- b. Satan is called a murderer, the father of lies the god of this world. Jn. 8:44; 2Cor. 4:4

C. The believer is to serve even knowing their time is short. vs. 3

1. Jesus knew He had everything at His disposal, yet He served, “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands” vs. 3a
 - a. The phrase “all things into His hands” refers having all power and authority to accomplish the redemption of sinners by His death on the cross and in full control.
 - * Jesus used all His power and things bestowed to Him by the Father, not to save Himself or do His own will, but save others in His service, doing the will of the Father!
 - b. At times when God establishes a person in a position of power, the ease and comfort causes them to think they deserve it and use it for themselves and get themselves in trouble like David.
 - c. At other times when God provides many things, they become an obstacle for their service and used to benefit oneself only.
2. Jesus knew it wasn’t long till He returned to His Father, yet He continued to serve without complaining, “and that He had come from God and was going to God.” vs. 3b

- a. The fact that Jesus came from God declared He was God, implying His deity. Jn. 1:1, 14; Phil. 2:5-11
- b. The apostles would see Jesus ascend up in the clouds back to heaven. Acts 1:9-10
- c. At times individuals work hard and serve diligently at first in ministry, then after a while they serve murmuring and complaining or stop serving completely.
- d. At other times people have difficulties at home and quit serving, instead of fixing what is wrong, while running the race.

D. The believer is to serve even if it doesn’t appear glamorous in the eyes of the world. vs. 4-5

1. Jesus arose from the supper table and took on the position of a slave, “rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.” vs. 4
 - a. The understanding of Jesus about the topic of the disciples is the backdrop, as to who was the greatest among them, Jesus made Himself the example.
 - * The twelve had often discussed their greatness and Jesus had revealed the secret of greatness was in serving others. Matt. 20:21; Lk. 22:24; Mk. 10:35-45
 - b. He got up from the supper table, laid aside His garments, His outer robe.

- c. He took a towel “lention” a linen clothe and girded Himself, ready to serve the twelve apostles.
- 2. Jesus took on the form of the lowest of slaves, “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.” vs. 5
 - a. The lowest slave would pour water in a basin, wash all the feet of the guest who were invited to a home to remove the dirt and filth from the road on their sandals.
 - b. The visible act, as Jesus began to wash the disciple’s feet included Judas, then wipe them with the towel was an important lesson for the twelve.
 - * “The Lord God has opened mine ear, and I was not rebellious, neither turned away back.” Is. 50:5
 - c. The disciples should have washed the feet of each other, but they were not servants, they wanted to be served.
- 3. I am amazed at how often people think themselves above certain things in their service to the Lord.
 - a. The things of high visibility, recognition or flashiness are always sought after, singing, plays, teaching and overseeing.
 - b. The things not so visible or convenient are not so sought after, like the ushers

ministry, prayer, children’ ministry or volunteering for work.

Illustration

What would happen if a part of your body refused to do what they were created for? Wouldn’t that hinder your ability to perform to full potential?

* For that reason Paul uses the metaphor of the body to illustrate the importance of every member doing his and her part. 1Cor. 12

Application

1. If everyone in the church they attend was involved doing what they have been called to do, the work of the Lord would increase that much more.

* The way you find out what you are called to do is to make yourself available as you are growing in knowledge and praying for God to direct you, but you don’t sit and do nothing!

2. If you serve only when things are convenient and comfortable, you probably won’t serve much of the time because there is always one thing or another to take us from serving.

3. If everyone in Calvary Chapel of Pasadena were just like you in terms of your serving in the church, what kind of church would it be?

The believer is to serve at all times!

II. The believer is serve all people: The exhortation. vs. 6-11

A. The believer is to serve even those who object.
vs. 6

1. Jesus approached Peter, “Then He came to Simon Peter.” vs. 6a
 * This does not mean Peter was the first to get his feet washed.
2. Peter was shocked that Jesus would wash his feet and maybe embarrassed about their conversation of who was the greatest in the Kingdom “And Peter said to Him, “Lord, are You washing my feet?” vs. 6b-d
 - a. Peter was impulsive and rash, as many who feel uncomfortable when people serve them.
 - b. Peter could have been objecting out of pride, but if he wasn’t many people do.

B. The believer is to serve even those who do not understand. vs. 7

1. Jesus pointed out Peter lack of understanding of what He was doing, “Jesus answered and said to him, “What I am doing you do not understand now.” vs. 7a-b
 - a. Peter viewed this type of service for someone beneath his own position not one above Him.
 - 1) The word “understand” means absolute and complete knowledge.
 - 2) Some people will not understand why you do the things you do and might think you are crazy or foolish.

b. Peter could not receive the service by grace, gracefully.

- * Some people think you are doing it for ulterior motives, to pass yourself off as spiritual or to gain something.
2. Jesus told Peter he would understand in the near future, “but you will know after this.” vs. 7c
 - a. Peter had a wrong understanding of the Kingdom of God.
 - 1) The word “know” means knowledge gained slowly by experience, at the present Peter was clueless, but he would connect the dots after the resurrection.
 - 2) The emphasis is on the two pronouns, “I” and “you”.
 - * What a difference being filled with the Spirit, understanding as we allow Him to teach us by His Spirit.
 - b. Peter was not yet filled with the Spirit, he would at Pentecost and understand.
 - * What a tragedy that one can be born-again, have God’s Spirit and be carnal so as to not be able to understand what God is doing in his or her life!

C. The believer is to serve even those who misunderstand. vs. 8-10

1. Peter misunderstood, thinking himself beneath the service of Jesus. “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.” vs. 8

- a. The declaration seemed reasonable since Jesus was God and Messiah and he was a sinful man.
 - b. The declaration of Jesus revealed what He did was absolutely necessary, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me”.
2. Peter again misunderstands what Jesus said and declared, “Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and head!” vs. 9
- a. Peter now understood that if he did not allow Jesus to wash his feet, he could have nothing to do with Him.
 - b. Peter as always acted impulsively.
3. Peter is told by Jesus he misunderstood Him and Jesus explains to Peter the interpretation in a kind of mini Parable. vs. 10
- a. The topic is salvation, “Jesus said to him, “He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean.” vs. 10a-c
 - 1) The word clean “katharso” means purged or purified and saved.
 - 2) The one who is bathed “louo” are save and completely clean “katharso” means purged or purified, justified by faith in Him.

- 3) The saved person only needs to confess their sins to stay in fellowship with Jesus by the word wash “nipto”.
 - 4) This was the common knowledge of the day, a person having bathed completely, then went to a supper only needed to wash “nipto” their feet due to the dirt and filth on the road.
- b. The application and punch-line follow, “and you are clean, but not all of you”. vs. 10d-e
- 1) All eleven were cleansed and bathed “louo”, by faith in Him as the Lamb of God who would take away the sins of the world. Jn. 15:3; Eph. 5:26
 - 2) All eleven only needed the washing “nipto” of their feet, to stay in fellowship with God on a daily basis in this world. 1Jn. 1:9; 2:1
 - 3) The one who was not clean was Judas Iscariot, who had not confessed his sins, allowing the devil to put in his heart to betray Jesus, being completely out of fellowship with Jesus.
 - a) This was a choice by his own will, God did not predestinate Judas to betray Jesus and do the evil!
 - b) Otherwise God would be unjust in forcing Judas to commit the evil and then judge him for the evil!

c) He is called a devil. the Son of Perdition and that he went to his own place. Jn. 6:70; 17:12; Acts 1:23

D. The believer is to serve even those who would be traitors. vs. 11

1. The commentary of John confirms the meaning of the mini parable, “For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, “You are not all clean.” vs. 11
 - a. Jesus gave Judas many chances to repent.
 - b. Loving him to the uttermost. vs. 1
 - c. By washing his feet. vs. 5
2. The repetition by Jesus about Judas is important, “You are not all clean”.
 - a. It was not to condemn Judas, but to offer him repentance at the very last minute.
 - b. The last time was when Jesus at the Garden of Gethsemane when Judas led the officers and soldiers to arrest Jesus, “But Jesus said to him, “Judas, are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?” Lk. 22:48

Illustration

The way you know you are not a servant is easy, when someone treats you like a servant and you don't like it, then you know that you aren't one.

* Jesus declared when you do it to the least of these you have done it unto Me!

Application

1. Through the years I have been asked by Pastors and people the makeup of our congregation, thinking that I must have a predominant Spanish speaking crowd, but I really don't even give it a thought nor care, I simply serve those who come to learn the word.

* The church is Jew and Gentile one. Eph. 2:14-15

2. Jesus told Peter when he restored him, “Do you love Me” three times, using different for love, Jesus told him, “Feed My lambs, tend My sheep, Feed My sheep”. Jn. 21:1-17

3. Churches can get caught up in their status and cater to a certain social level or financial status, losing the perspective of ministry and service.

* “But Jesus called them to Himself and said to them, “You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.” Mk. 10:42-45

3. The people that are served in the church are so diverse in personalities, cultural background and economic level that misunderstandings and wrong perceptions will take place, so we need to remember that we serve the Lord, and we need to stay right with Him daily by washing our feet.

* “My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous. And He Himself is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only but also for the whole world.” 1Jn. 2:1-2

The believer is to serve all people!

III. The believer is to serve always like Jesus: The application. vs. 12-20

A. The believer is to instruct those who serve with a wrong attitude. vs. 12

1. Jesus resumed his place at the table, “So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again,” vs. 12a-c
 - a. He had risen from the supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel or linen cloth and girded Himself.” vs. 4
 - b. This a beautiful picture of his coming divesting or emptying Himself of His glory and His ascension back to glory.
 - c) He sat down “anapito” , he reclined
2. Jesus posed a question to the apostles, “He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you?” vs. 12d
 - a. His question was a reproof of their disputing about who was the greatest. Lk. 22:24; Mk. 9:33-34

- b. His question also revealed their lack of understanding about the Kingdom, thinking it was a place to be served and that Jesus was going to set up the Kingdom.
- c. All twelve thought more highly of themselves than they ought.
- d. The ten were indignant at James and John for asking Jesus for the right hand and the left in His glory, for excluding the ten, in reality the two beat the ten to it, they all wanted to be served. Mk. 10:35-45

B. The believer is to follow the example of Jesus. vs. 13-15

1. If I acknowledge Jesus as my teacher and Lord, I do well according to the words of Jesus, “You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.” vs. 13
 - a. The phrase “you call Me” is emphatic of the disciples.
 - b. Jesus qualified both as true.
2. If He as Lord and teacher washed the feet of the disciples, the teaching was from the greater to the lesser, to their shame to serve each other, “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.” vs. 14

* Loving one another as Jesus loved us, the distinguishing mark of his disciples and church! vs. 34-35

- a. This is not a command for the doctrine of foot washing, but serving others.
 - b. In the mini parable it is Jesus who saves by forgiving our sins and cleanses us from ongoing sin for fellowship.
 - c. So the application is not teaching that we are to forgive sins for the salvation of others or ongoing sins for fellowship, but rather to serve on another. Yes we are to forgive each other when we ask forgiveness, but this is not the context!
 - d. The word “ought” means must or obligation, not an option. Matt. 20:28
 - e. Jesus is to increase in our lives and we are to decrease. Jn. 3:30
3. If I understand the Kingdom then I will follow Jesus as the example, “For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.” vs. 15
- a. The example is serving out of love.
 - b. The Pastor is not the example, though he should be an example of a servant, not Christians, though all should be servants!
 - d. The only legitimate comparison is Christ!

C. The believer is to walk in humility. vs. 16

1. The first basic principle of a servant, “Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master.” vs. 16a
 - a. To think so would be pride.
 - b. The phrase, “Most assuredly” is “amen” two times giving emphasis, when placed at the beginning of the sentence indicates something very important and of absolute truth.
 - b. Jesus said unless they became like a little child they could not be great.
 2. The second basic principle of a servant, “nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.” vs. 16b
 - a. The one sent is a representative or ambassador.
 - b. Jesus constantly said that the Father was greater than He. Jn. 14:28
 - c. The greater is in view of His willful submission for man’s redemption and limitations He placed on Himself by the Incarnation, for they are both God.
- D. The believer is to be blessed of God. vs. 17
1. The blessings of God do not come by knowing the word alone, “If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”
 2. The blessings of God come by being a doer of what we know, “blessed are you if you do them.”

* The tense is present active subjunctive, if you keep doing them.

3. The blessedness is not necessarily material or financial, but peace, love, wisdom etc.
 - a. The man who knows to do good and does it not, it is sin. Ja. 4:17
 - b. The man who is a hearer of the word and not a hearer deceives himself. Ja. 1:22
 - c. The man who is a hearer and not a doer is like a man who builds his house on the sand instead of the rock, when the floods and storms come, his house will fall and great will the fall be. Matt. 7:24-27
 - d. The man who is a doer has many blessings. Matt. 5:3-12; Ps. 1:1; 2:12; 31:1; 32:2; 33:12

E. The believer is to affirm that we are chosen. vs. 18-19

1. There will be many like Judas that will be among the people of God, but are not the people of God, "I do not speak concerning all of you. I know whom I have chosen; but that the Scripture may be fulfilled, He who eats bread with Me has lifted up his heel against Me." vs. 18
 - a. The pronoun "I" and "I know" are emphatic, Jesus was not speaking of the eleven, but the one, Judas, though Jesus had chosen the twelve. Jn. 6:70

1) The word chosen "eklegomai", means to pick out for oneself, aorist middle indicative.

* This is According to His foreknowledge. 1Pet. 1:2

2) Lenski the Greek Scholar says, "But this does not mean that Judas was false when Jesus chose him. Like the others he was a true believer at the time, his defection began later, just when, no one knows." (Lenski: 931)

- b. The four gospels record the announcement of the betrayal. Matt. 26:2-25; Mk. 14:18, 19; Lk. 22:21-23

* To show the bottom of one's foot was a mark of contempt and treachery, the heel speaks of treachery and used for the kicking or tripping the heel of a wrestler. (Bible Speaks Today: 200)
- c. The betrayal was prophesied and had to be fulfilled, "Even my own familiar friend in whom I trusted, Who ate my bread, Has lifted up his heel against me." Ps. 41:9
- d. Ahithophel betrayed David by siding with Absalom. Ps. 55:12-14; 2Sam. 15:12-16:23
- f. Ahithophel's council to Absalom was rejected and he went home, got his house in order and hung himself.

* A beautiful type of Judas Ischariot who is called a devil. Jn. 6:70

2. The Messiah and Son of God who knew all things was telling them before hand in order that they believe He was who He said He was, when it took place, “Now I tell you before it comes, that when it does come to pass, you may believe that I am He.” vs. 19

F. The believer is to bring salvation to others. vs. 20

1. The important truth and absolute authority of the words of Jesus are prefaced by, “Most Assuredly, I say to you.”
 - a. The phrase Most assuredly “amen amen” again at the start of the sentence indicates very important truths and the need to pay close attention to it.
 - b. The highest authority stands behind the proclaimed truths, Jesus the Son of God, “I say to you”.
2. The context is in view of the eleven in contrast to Judas, but applicable to “whomever” throughout the church age.
 - a. In receiving them they receive Jesus, “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send receives Me.” vs. 20a-c
 - b. In receiving Jesus they receive the Father, “and he who receives Me receives Him who sent Me.” vs. 20d

Illustration

Jonathan one day stripped himself for David and pledged his service though he was the next to reign.

Application

1. We are to serve in such a way that our light shine and God gets the glory when He uses us. Matt. 5:16
 2. Our example is to be after the example of Jesus willing to empty ourselves of ourselves. Phil. 2:3-11
 3. The service of Judas is as repulsive today as it was in the days of Jesus, which is self-seeking and hypocritical, for the greatest treachery is the sin against love, Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver and by repeatedly kissed Jesus. Matt. 26:15; Lk. 22:48
 4. God will exalt the humble in due time. 1Pet. 5:5-6
- * Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time.”

The believer is to serve always like Jesus!

Conclusion

We have looked at Jesus as He washed the feet of the disciples that has revealed three truths to us about how we are to serve.

- I. The believer is to serve at all times: The proclamation!
- II. The believer is to serve all people: The exhortation!
- III. The believer is to serve always like Jesus: The application!

** Serve and keep your feet washed!*