

Dear Life Group Leaders,

This week's passage is bittersweet. The "hour" that Jesus had repeatedly said had not yet come was finally upon him. The passage is full of meaning and symbolism. It foreshadows Jesus's death and yet speaks of humility, selflessness and His love for us, His disciples. In Jesus' times, washing feet before meals was necessary due to the dry and dusty climate. It was considered the lowliest of tasks, usually reserved for servants. As we go through today's passage let's listen out to what the Holy Spirit is revealing to us of Jesus' love for us and His servant heart.

God bless,

Noline

(This week's Life Group Guide was prepared by Noline Matemera of Everyday Kingston)

LIFE GROUP GUIDE

John 13:1-17

This week's BIG IDEA: True followers of Jesus are people of humble, compassionate service.

Please read John 13:1-2

1. At various points in our journey through John's Gospel, it's been stated that "His hour had not yet come." Can you recall the different contexts when Jesus stated that His hour had not yet come?
[Leaders note: John 2:4, John 7:30, John 8:20.]
2. Remembering that Jesus was fully human, how do you think He was feeling in this moment?
[Leaders note: The obvious emotions are dread; fear; trepidation. Please also steer the group to pick up on love. Jesus felt love for His disciples (e.g. last sentence in v1). In all the difficulty of the moment, Jesus had an abiding love for His followers. His heart has always been for us.]
3. How does that make you feel?
[Leaders note: This question is not for discussion but for individual quiet reflection. Allow a minute or two for everyone to pause and think about the question.]

Please read John 13:3-11

4. v4, we are told Jesus took off his outer robe, wrapped a towel around his waist and washed the disciples' feet. What is the significance of Jesus washing the disciples' feet in just his inner robe?
[Leaders note: His actions profoundly demonstrate His deep humility and service. To wrap a towel around his waist was to take the posture of a slave.]
5. What are some of our "outer robes" that get in the way of true service and humility?
[Leaders note: Open the discussion to personal (pride; selfishness; personal busyness/commitments (idols?)) as well as corporate reasons (I don't know where to serve; I don't have anything to offer the Church or my community; all the jobs are taken)]
6. Consider Simon Peter's exchange with Jesus in v6-9. In what ways are we like Simon Peter?
[Leaders note: This is an open question. We can misunderstand situations and miss important things that God is saying and doing in our lives.]

Please read John 13:11-17

7. v13, Jesus openly affirms His Lordship. What do we learn from the contrast between Jesus' Lordship and His washing of the disciples' feet?
[Leaders note: Speaks of Jesus humility and servant heart. He is King and yet was willing to do the lowliest of tasks for His disciples.]
8. v14, in our day and age, how can we "wash one another's feet..."?
[Leaders note: Discuss the different ways we can serve one another as His disciples and more widely.]
9. How should Jesus' actions at The Last Supper influence our attitude towards humble and compassionate service in our Church and community?
10. Finish by reflecting on how we can serve. Think about places and people in our Church and in local community. It may be volunteering with Kids Ministry or simply committing to spend more time with a particular person in need of service. If appropriate, invite people to share what action the Holy Spirit has prompted to create accountability and commitment.