

Community Church of Santa Rosa Beach  
Title: "Serve Someone" (BLS5)  
Text(s): **John 13:6-17** (see also Jn.13-14, Mk.14:12-31; Lk.22:7-34; Mt.26:17-35; 1 Cor.11:23-32)

Rev. Dr. H. L. "Scooter" Ward, Jr.  
*B.L.E.S.S. Series*  
Sunday, October 8, 2023

## **"SERVE SOMEONE"** *B.L.E.S.S. SERIES*

### **INTRODUCTION – **CROSSING INTO THE BLUE (11.12.2002)****

Tell the Story...First day of basic training and the Drill instructor yelling at us at o'dark thirty to line up and head out to the quad – to fulfill the tradition of "crossing into the blue" (entering the Air Force).

The U.S. Air Force Core Values and Honor Code

1. Integrity First
2. Service Before Self
3. Excellence in All We Do

USAF HONOR CODE:

We will not lie, steal, or cheat, nor tolerate anyone among us who does.

It was a calling to be a part of something bigger than any one person. Embracing these values was at the heart of being an member of the Greatest Air Force in the World. Keep this idea in mind.

**LET'S PRAY AND ASK GOD'S SPIRIT TO OPEN OUR HEARTS AND MINDS TO HIS WORD AS WE LOOK AT WHAT IT MEANS TO BLESS OTHERS BY SERVING THEM...**

2022-2023 Prayer items – biggest prayer for the church was the spiritual status or condition of family and friends. This sermon series was created to address YOUR concerns and needs. We hope for this to EQUIP YOU and SERVE as a Spiritual Turning Point in so many of your lives.

Equip the Saints for the Work of Ministry – using BLESS Strategy to do it—get us on PURPOSE as individuals and as a church.

Today, we continue our sermon series entitled "B.L.E.S.S.," which signifies an acronym with steps to equip us all to share the story of God's love with our family members and friends. B.L.E.S.S. is an acronym that stands for (**CONCURRENT WITH OVERLAP**):

- Begin with Prayer
- Listen to Someone
- Eat with Someone
- Serve Someone
- Share Your Story

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In addition to this, our whole congregation is studying a book of the same name in our adult ed. class on Sundays at 8:30am in the fellowship hall. There, we discuss and unpack these ideas in greater detail. We invite you to join us.

## THE GOSPELS – EYEWITNESS TESTIMONY

Just as an eyewitness to an accident/crime scene gives his/her statement, we have several eyewitness testimonies to the historical events surrounding the life of Christ.

All the Gospels record details concerning the event of what has been referred to as the Last Supper (although I prefer to call it the “Last Passover, First Communion”). **This intimate moment with the disciples where Jesus washes their feet is only recorded in John’s account.** The other Gospels set the scene for us prior to and after with some details about events that transpired and statements made throughout the evening, but only John 13:1-17 records the foot washing scene in dramatic detail....

<sup>1</sup>It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus **knew** that the hour had come for him to **leave** this world and **go** to the Father. **Having loved** his own who were in the world, **he loved** them to the end.

**SURRENDER TO JESUS FIRST** – *Let Jesus minister to you, before you serve others—draw from Him so you have something to offer others.*

<sup>6</sup>He **came** to Simon Peter, who **said** to him, “Lord, are you going to **wash** my feet?”

<sup>7</sup>Jesus **replied**, “**You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.**”

<sup>8</sup>“No,” **said** Peter, “**you shall never wash my feet.**”

Jesus **answered**, “**Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.**”

<sup>9</sup>“Then, Lord,” Simon Peter **replied**, “**not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!**”

**In her commentary on the Gospel of John, distinguished Professor of New Testament and Preaching at the Wake Forest University School of Divinity, the late Dr. Gail R. O’Day<sup>1</sup> writes:**

“To have Jesus wash one’s feet is to receive from Jesus an act of hospitality that decisively alters one’s relationship to Jesus and through Jesus, to God.”<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> For more information on the life and legacy of the late Dr. Gail R. O’Day visit [gailoday.wfu.edu/obituary](http://gailoday.wfu.edu/obituary).

<sup>2</sup> Gail R. O’Day, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections*. New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in 12 Volumes, ed.. Leander E. Keck et al, vol. IX (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 723.

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“The foot washing reveals Jesus’ unfettered love for the disciples, and it is this love that holds the promise of new life for the disciples. The call for the disciples is to allow themselves to be ministered to in this way, to accept Jesus’ gesture of love fully.”<sup>3</sup>

The VALUE of relationship to Jesus through grace hospitality—not in the act or elements of it. Power is from JESUS not in the water or washing in and of itself. Cleansing by believing in Jesus’ Words.... “FAITH”

The institution of the Lord's Supper is also known as Communion or Eucharist. Communion signifies that through Christ and His work on the cross, we have communion with God and with other believers in Christ. Eucharist, meaning thanksgiving or literally “good grace,” reminds us that through our observance of the Lord’s Supper we should be thankful to God for the work of Christ on our behalf. It is by His grace that we are saved. **Jesus met all the requirements of the Law and offered Himself as a sacrifice for us.**

**E**VALUATE YOUR MOTIVE – *God looks at the heart (1 Sam.16:7).*

**Be Filled** with the Spirit and the Word (Eph.5:18-21; Col.3:16-17) **ENTHUSIASM**  
– *IN THEOS (IN GOD)*

**SPIRIT-MOTIVATED—NOT SELF-MOTIVATED**

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who **have had** a bath **need** only to **wash** their feet; their whole body is **clean**. And you **are clean**, though not every one of you.” <sup>11</sup> For he **knew** who was going to **betray** him, and that was why he **said** not everyone was **clean**.

<sup>2</sup> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already **prompted** Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to **betray** Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus **knew** that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he **had come** from God and **was returning** to God;<sup>4</sup> so he **got up** from the meal, **took off** his outer clothing, and **wrapped** a towel around his waist.<sup>5</sup> After that, he **poured** water into a basin and **began to wash** his disciples’ feet, **drying** them with the towel that **was wrapped** around him.

**Dr. Gail R. O’Day writes:**

“To be unclean is not to be unwashed, for Judas belongs to the circle of those whose feet Jesus washed. Rather, to be unclean is to turn away from union and intimacy with Jesus.”<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Gail R. O’Day, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections*. New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in 12 Volumes, ed.. Leander E. Keck et al, vol. IX (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 727.

<sup>4</sup> Gail R. O’Day, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections*. New Interpreter’s Bible: A Commentary in 12 Volumes, ed.. Leander E. Keck et al, vol. IX (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 724.

## **REPRESENT JESUS WELL** – *“Living Bibles”*

<sup>12</sup> When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. <sup>13</sup> “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. <sup>15</sup> I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

“This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down his life for us. And we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers and sisters” (1 John 3:16, NIV).

## **VALUE RELATIONSHIP OVER TASK** – *We need each another – to be God’s hands and feet.*

**WE > ME → [YOU (PLURAL) = “US”]**

<sup>16</sup> Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> Now that you know these things, you will be **blessed** if you do them” (John 13:6-17, NIV).

## **ENTRUST GOD WITH THE OUTCOME**

“<sup>37</sup> Then he said to his disciples, ‘The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; <sup>38</sup> therefore pray earnestly to the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest’” (Matthew 9:37-38, ESV).

The CALL to SERVICE is a CALL to participate WITH Jesus.

It may be RECEIVED or REJECTED—we must OBEY the command and leave the OUTCOME in God’s hands.

Experience HIS Love

Embody that Love in service to OTHERS.

GIVE as He gives; LOVE as He Loves.

**Matthew 5:14-16, ESV** You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. Nor do people light a lamp and put it under a basket, but on a stand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.

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**Are You Jesus?** ~ *Thought Provoking Story for Reflection & Action – Author Unknown, but I heard a similar story shared by the late Coach Bobby Bowden.*

A few years ago a group of salesmen went to a regional sales convention in Chicago. They had assured their wives that they would be home in plenty of time for Friday night's dinner. In their rush, with tickets and briefcases, one of these salesmen accidentally kicked over a table which held a display of apples. Apples flew everywhere. Without stopping or looking back, they all managed to reach the plane in time for their nearly missed boarding. *All But One!*

He paused, took a deep breath, got in touch with his feelings, and experienced a twinge of compassion for the girl whose apple stand had been overturned. He told his buddies to go on without him, waved good-bye, told one of them to call his wife when they arrived at their home destination and explain he was taking a later flight. Then he returned to the terminal where the apples were all over the terminal floor. *He was glad he did.*

The 16 year old girl was totally blind! She was softly crying, tears running down her cheeks in frustration, and at the same time helplessly groping for her spilled produce as the crowd swirled about her, no one stopping and no one to care for her plight.

The salesman knelt on the floor with her, gathered up the apples, put them back on the table and helped organize her display. As he did this, he noticed that many of them had become battered and bruised; these he set aside in another basket. When he had finished, he pulled out his wallet and said to the girl, "*Here, please take this \$40 for the damage we did. Are you okay?*" She nodded through her tears. He continued on with, "*I hope we didn't spoil your day too badly.*" As the salesman started to walk away, the bewildered blind girl called out to him, "*Mister...*"

He paused and turned to look back into those blind eyes. She continued... "*Are you Jesus?*" He stopped in mid-stride, and he wondered. Then slowly he made his way to catch the later flight with that question burning and bouncing about in his soul:

**"Are you Jesus?" Do people mistake YOU for Jesus? Do people mistake US for Jesus?**  
*That's our destiny, is it not?*

***LET US PRAY***