

GROWTH + GROUPS

NAVIGATE LIFE TOGETHER

Maranatha Chapel Sermon Based Study Guide
SB 02.05-2023

DIRTY FEET -John 13:1-17

Receiving the Message and Relating to the Study

What insights, principles, or observations stood out to you from this week’s message? Discuss with your group.

Pastor Daniel tells us “Today, we’re going to talk about what it means to live with a servant heart. Even in hearing that, perhaps you felt something recoil inside you. In this world, those at the bottom exist to serve those privileged few at the top. The goal in this life is to climb the ladder and get to the place where you have a team of people to do stuff for you. That’s how this world’s system works. But in God’s kingdom, everything is backwards. In God’s kingdom, up is down and down is up. In God’s kingdom, if you want to gain your life you must lose it. In God’s kingdom the last are first and the first are often last. And in God’s kingdom, the servant is the greatest of all. The Bible never tells us we shouldn’t strive for greatness. If anything, it encourages it. What the Bible does for us is it redefines what true greatness looks like. There is perhaps no story in the Bible that better illustrates the upside-down nature of God’s kingdom than the one before us.” Let’s get into our lesson...

As your group time begins, use this section to introduce the topic of discussion.

1. What struck you most from this week’s sermon?
2. What is the dirtiest job you have ever done? Are you willing to do it again? Why or why not?
3. Describe a time when someone served you in a profound way, doing something for you that you absolutely did not want to do. How did that make you feel?

Digging Deeper in God’s Word: Life Lessons

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 13:1-6.

1. How does Jesus’ washing of His disciples’ feet serve as an act of love “to the end” (v. 1)?
2. Why do you think John chose to emphasize the presence of Judas in this foot-washing scene?

Jesus knew where He came from, where He was going, and who He was, so He could be confident. Jesus lived with a single-minded passion for God’s glory and an unwavering focus on His mission. This allowed Him to continue to put other people ahead of Himself even with the threat of the cross looming over Him, and even if those He was serving played a role in His death.

3. Compare and contrast the description of Jesus in verse 3 with His actions in verses 4 and 5. Is this the sort of behavior we expect from people of tremendous power and authority?
4. What might have been going through the disciples’ minds as their Lord removed his outer clothing and began to wash their feet? What might such an act have done to the dynamic of the room during a shared meal?

“PROMISES” in 2023

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 13:6-11.

1. How would you describe Peter’s response to Jesus’ actions? How do you think you would have responded? Why?
2. Why was Peter offended by the idea of Jesus washing his feet (v. 6, 8)? What does this say about his heart?

In verse 8, Peter used a double negative to refuse Jesus’ act of service. In Greek, a double negative indicates a strong and passionate refusal. The thought of Jesus bowing so low to serve him angered Peter. He was offended not only because he didn’t think that Jesus should be doing such a vile task but because Peter himself was full of pride. Peter’s pride was keeping him from seeing his desperate need for divine cleansing.

3. Why are profound acts of humility frequently admired as much as they are despised?
4. What might it say about the condition of our hearts when we refuse to let people serve us?
5. What does Jesus’ statement in verse 8 foreshadow, and how?
6. What does Jesus mean by “If I don’t wash you, you have no share with me”?

Jesus did not just want Peter to entrust his dirty feet to Him. Jesus wanted Peter to entrust his dirty life to Him. Likewise, we need Jesus to cleanse us from our sins. We need trust that God served us before we can ever hope to serve Him. The cross was the greatest act of humble service ever committed. God took on flesh and dwelt among us and gave up His life to take the punishment that we deserve for our sins. This act of service changes everything for those who trust Christ.

7. What is significant about Peter’s request that Jesus wash his hands and head as well?

Though Peter initially responds with indignation, faith in and love for Jesus leads him to submit to Jesus’ humble act. Jesus’ statement to Peter in verse 8 (“If I do not wash you, you have no share with me”) broke Peter’s pride. In this moment, Peter realized that he desperately needed Jesus to cleanse him.

8. What do you think Jesus is trying to communicate to Peter by saying, “the one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet” (v. 10)?

Jesus communicated to Peter that His one act was enough and is worthy of Peter’s trust. Jesus is enough for us as well. The cross is sufficient to wash our sins completely away. When we trust Jesus with our lives, we are made eternally righteous before a holy God.

HAVE A VOLUNTEER READ JOHN 13:12-17.

1. How might we demonstrate to the people around us that Jesus has washed away our sins (vv. 14-17)?
2. What are some practical ways we can “take the lesser role” and serve those around us?

“PROMISES” in 2023

Applying God’s Word

What did you learn from this study and how does this personally speak to you? Discuss with your group.

According to Pastor Daniel, kings aren’t supposed to wash dishes or take out the garbage or do laundry. But Jesus isn’t like every other king. He is a humble king. He is a servant king. When you are secure in your own identity, you are suddenly free to serve those around you because you don’t need others to prop you up. When you know that your status isn’t defined by how many people you have beneath you, it frees you to serve others. A few years ago, one of our children’s ministry classrooms was run by the CEO of a pharmaceutical company and a medical doctor! They were free to serve others because they were secure in their identity.

Help your group identify how the truths from the Scripture passage apply directly to their lives.

1. In what areas of your life is it hardest for you to accept the service of others? How might you respond differently now that you have considered how Christ served His disciples?
2. Jesus washed all of His disciples’ feet, including Judas who would betray Him (v. 11). How can you “take the lesser role” and serve those who oppose you this week?
3. What can our group do to serve people in our community who are opposed to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

PRAYER – Close in prayer, praising God for serving us through His Son’s death on the cross for our sins. Ask God to help us follow Jesus’ example and serve others whether or not we think they deserve it. Pray that God would make us a community of believers who constantly ask what else we can do to serve each other and to serve the lost. Pray that God would make us willing to take the lesser role in order to point one another and the lost world around us to our desperate need for Jesus.

“And I pray that you being rooted and established in love may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge”{Ephesians 3:17-19}