



Introduction:

John 13 records one of the greatest acts of humility in all of human history (vs. 1-6). God incarnate, Jesus Christ, stooped down to wash His followers' feet. At that time in God's Word, when Jesus should have been rightfully served, He chose to serve. This is the ultimate portrayal of servant-leadership. Christ was showing them how they would need to serve others above themselves (Philippians 2:6-8). Our human nature, our flesh, is all about self. It desires to be served. But when we serve out of sincerity, it demonstrates the power of the new, spiritual nature overcoming our prideful and selfish ways. It demonstrates the change that God, through Christ, has accomplished in us. Do you want to be like Christ? Then you must lead a life of service which will require sacrifice. In fact, God Word teaches that serving is the key to a joyful life (vs. 17). It is vital to living a life of impact that has true meaning.

The Focus:

- **Every believer must serve others with sincerity. How? By understanding that...**
 - **Christ's love led Him to serve.**
 - **Christ served the "unworthy."**

When Christ left the splendor of heaven, He was fully committed to the Father's plan to restore and reconcile all things back to how He originally created them. Christ came to demonstrate and be the very embodiment of God's love (John 3:16). John 1:10-11 declares how humanity, specifically Israel, responded to and received Jesus. It says, *"He was in the world, and the world was made by him (Jesus), and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not."* Regardless, the Bible tells us that Jesus *"...having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end"* (vs. 1). Wow! What a love He had. Christ was not always accepted, in fact, He was often rejected, but still, He never stopped giving His love to others. Pastor Dan made a comment that should be considered again. He said, "You can serve and not love, but you cannot love and not serve." A person who has a heart full of love will display a life of service for the benefit of others. Love doesn't think about itself all the time. It thinks of others and serves others (Philippians 2:4). Will you ask God to give you a deeper and growing love for people?

Studying the life of Christ, you will see that His service came from a heart of love, and that love wasn't prejudiced or biased (2 Corinthians 5:14-15). Christ's love extended even to the ones that society deemed "unworthy." Christ sought to break down barriers, not build them. An example of someone that we would consider "unworthy" is none other than Judas Iscariot – the betrayer. What's most amazing about this story is that Jesus washes all of the disciples' feet, even Judas' feet (vs. 5). Knowing beforehand of Judas' intentions, Christ still washed his feet (vs. 21, 26-27). Judas would profit by handing Christ over to the religious authorities. What a lesson! Christ served Judas knowing that he would come against Him, siding with people that vehemently opposed Him. Christ loved not only Judas, but the other eleven who would, within 24 hours, abandon Him in fear and hide for self-preservation (John 20:19). The difference

between Christ's attitude and ours is that Christ was always focused on God's plan and mission; He sought to do the will of His Father. Understanding our fleshly nature, we must come to the realization that people (even our brothers and sisters in Christ) will hurt you and disappoint you at one time or another. But if we have the mind of Christ and live out the mind of Christ, we will serve as unto Jesus and not unto people (Ephesians 6:7).

Response to the Sermon:

Think about all the different groups in which you are connected. List them. Now that you have the groups identified. Write out all the names of those in the different groups that you can. Once you have them listed, pray over each group and name. Ask God to use you to minister to them, to help you understand and listen to them and then to take God's Word and use it to help speak into their specific needs. Like a good doctor, you must listen. Then, from what they tell you, you can more effectively help them. Endeavor to pray and do something to serve others like Jesus did. Lean on God to work through you. What God wants most is for His followers to be willing to be used – jars of clay that are empty of our own agendas and ideas, and ready to receive the outpouring of God's Spirit to fill us daily to minister to others as He leads.

Bible Study Thoughts & Questions:

In Philippians 2, Paul focuses believers' attention to the very thoughts and actions that Christ displayed in His life on the earth.

1. In verse 3, what is Paul trying to communicate to us regarding our interactions with others? Why is this important?
2. In verse 4, what is Paul challenging us to do as we go about our daily routines?
3. If we fail to apply verses 3-4, what will be the results of our thoughts and actions (vs. 5)? How might this affect others if you have made claims of being a follower of Jesus?
4. If we are actively living out the mind of Christ, what is God's response to our obedience (vs. 13)?

Application Questions:

Jesus washed the feet of sinful men, including the ones who would betray Him, deny their relationship with Him, and flee from being persecuted because of their association with Him. Do you want to be like Christ? Would you be willing to serve others regardless if you knew they would go against you? When persecution comes because of the gospel, what is your response?

1. Jesus laid aside His garments in order to take the towel and wash the disciples' feet (vs. 4). What is God asking you to lay aside in order for you to reach others?

2. What does Christ declare is a promise to those that serve others (vs. 17)? How does this apply to your life?

3. It says of Jesus, "...*he loved them unto the end*" (vs. 1). If we are to be like Christ, what does this mean for us in regard to our relationship with others?

Prayer:

- Pray for eyes to see others like Christ does (Philippians 2:4).
- Pray to remember Christ's humility, as you seek to serve others with humility (Philippians 2:3).
- Pray that your intent and motive in service would be as if you were serving Christ and not trying to appease people.