

3. What Love Requires of Us

John 13:14-17 NLT - 14 And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. 15 I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. 16 I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. 17 Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

Jesus was our example, and He wants His followers to do as He has done. In fact, He said there is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends. Consider what you must lay down, give up or set aside to love others the way Jesus loves them. It probably includes time, energy, convenience, money, pride, and more. These are difficult choices to make, but God will bless you for doing that.

Now is there a person God is bringing to mind that you can share His love with? What are you willing to do to be His hands and feet for them today?

WRAP-UP

Jesus gave his disciples the commandment to love each other as He loved them. And to demonstrate that love He disrobed and humbled himself to the lowly task of a servant and washed their feet. It wasn't only for those who deserved it, but even to His betrayer He stooped down, loved, and served. If we are His disciples then we are also to join Him in loving our brother and sisters sacrificially, unconditionally, without regard for what we get in return. When we kneel to wash our brothers' feet we are joined by Jesus, for that is how He loves us all.

MEMORY VERSE

So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other." - John 13:34 NLT

PRAYER (20 MIN)

Ask your group to pray for you regarding one area where you can apply this study in your life.

Challenge- Keep your eyes open for opportunities to love others, even the unlovable ones.

“A Love that Keeps Spreading” **Spread the Love #5**

INTRODUCTION

If you want to know what love really looks like, just look at what Jesus did on the night He was betrayed. Knowing that His time was short, He humbled himself and took on the role of a servant to His disciples. He washed their feet. Why would He do such a thing? Why would the Lord and creator of the universe take up such a menial task? It was because of the love he had for them, and as an example of the love He commands of us- selfless, sacrificial Agape love. When that level of love is on display to the world, it sets a new standard for what it means to spread God's love.

Ice Breaker

What is the chore in your house that nobody wants to do?

Key Passage

34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35 Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples."

- John 13:34-35 NLT

STUDY QUESTIONS

1. Loving Like Jesus

John 13:1-5 NLT - 1 Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. 2 It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. 4 So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, 5 and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

The passage above gives us some context for what Jesus did.

What are some of the pertinent details given to us in verse 1 about the context in which Jesus washed the disciples' feet? What makes each of these details important?

Verse 2 specifically names Judas as among those whose feet Jesus washed. If we glance ahead to v 26, we see that Jesus knew Judas would betray him.

If Jesus only loved and served those who were loyal to Him, Judas wouldn't be included in the foot washing. If Jesus only washed the feet of those who earned it by their works, none of them would be included. Those He served included a betrayer, one who would deny him, one who doubted Him, and all who would abandon Him in a critical moment. What was it that motivated Jesus to serve these men?

John 13:34 NLT - 34 So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other.

Jesus loves differently from the way the world loves. We love those who are lovable, who deserve to be love, or who we agree with and relate to. But Jesus commanded His disciples to love each other just as He loved them. And that doesn't guarantee you will be loved in return.

If we love our brothers and sisters selflessly and unconditionally, their response may disappoint us. What are some of the ways people might respond to your unconditional love that would hurt or disappoint you? (For starters just look at how the disciples acted right after Jesus washed their feet)

Of course, if we are loving and serving to get something in return, we may feel shortchanged by their responses. But if we are overflowing with love from an unconditional and endless source, our reaction will be very different. Loving like Jesus isn't something we can generate; it is only something we can allow to flow through us.

Take a few minutes to reflect on the ways God has demonstrated unconditional love to you. Nothing you've done, or ever will do, can cause God to love you any less than totally, completely, and unconditionally, because God is love. Now let that truth seep down

into your heart so that it can overflow in unconditional love for others.

2. Who would do that?

Philippians 2:5-8 NLT - 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

If you were looking for ways to convince the world that Jesus was the Messiah, the savior, the Almighty God, then you probably wouldn't point to the fact that he got down on the floor to wash His disciples' feet. Who washes someone's feet? Answer: a servant does. Yet this is what Jesus did and we are asked to reflect the same attitude (Phil 2:5)

The world has programed us to value power, status, and pride, but Jesus demonstrated gentleness, service, and humility. One of the few times we see this today is when a parent sacrifices for their children. From the abundance of unconditional love for their child a parent will change a dirty diaper, go without sleep to comfort a sick baby, or sacrifice their own needs to supply the needs of their little one. But would we do this for anyone else?

What are the practical, tangible ways we can extend God's love to others with the attitude of Christ? What are some examples of when you have seen this happen?

1 John 4:21 NLT - 21 And he has given us this command: Those who love God must also love their Christian brothers and sisters.

Jesus was addressing His disciples when He said, "love one another." How we have been loved by Jesus will influence how we love one another and will influence how we love others who aren't yet in the family of God. Jesus sets our temp and that is the thermostat for the world. If you are fully loved by God, you are reflecting God's love, but if you are far from God, your love will grow cold.

If loving one another proves we are Jesus' disciples, what does that imply about those who lack love for one another? Can you love God and hate your brother?