

MORE THAN A SIMPLE GESTURE (vv. 12-17)

Washing the disciples feet was far more than a grand gesture. Washing our feet is not only something Jesus does for us, it is something he calls us to do for one another.

VERSES 12:17: 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. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

1. Notice how carefully Jesus describes his relationship to the disciples and the disciples relationship to him.
 - a. How does Jesus describe himself in these verses?
 - b. How should we see ourselves in light of who Jesus is?
2. Why is it unthinkable that we would refuse to follow Jesus' example?
3. Why do we often refuse to follow Jesus' example?
4. What is at stake when we refuse to follow Jesus' example?
5. What are some practical steps we can take to love those around us the way that Jesus has loved us?

Copyright © 2017 by Paul Kemp and Christ Church in Cedar Park. All rights reserved. Feel free to make copies for use in personal and group Bible study as long as the general character of the work is not compromised in the process.

Unless otherwise indicated, Scripture quotations are from the Holy Bible, New International Version®. NIV®. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984, 2011 by Biblica, Inc.™ Used by permission of Zondervan. All rights reserved worldwide.



SUNDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2017

360 DISCUSSION GUIDE



Very few of us will be able to anticipate our final hour. But what if we could? How would you spend the final moments of your life.

Most of us would agree, this would be a poor time for mindless entertainment—not the time to sink in the couch and binge on Netflix.

Nor would we want to spend these last few moments in our normal head space—preoccupied with the stresses and anxieties of our crazy lives that often keep us from being fully present in the moment.

My guess is that we would want to gather a few close friends, bask in the warmth of their friendship, perhaps, share a meal, and find some way we could show them just how much they mean to us.

This is very close to the picture that John gives us of Jesus' final moments with his disciples. He tells us:

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 (John 13:1).

While none of us were present in the upper room, John wants us to know that Jesus' expression of love for his disciples, was also an expression of his love for us. He invites us into the upper room to witness a selfless act, and to see far more in that act than we dared believe possible.

JESUS LOVES HIS DISCIPLES TO THE END (vv. 1-5)

VERSES 1-5: 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.

² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ 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.

1. Throughout his gospel, John tells us that Jesus' hour had not yet come (2:4; 7:30; 8:20). Now he tells us "the hour had come." How would you describe "the hour" John is referring to in light of the entire gospel?
2. John emphasizes both the events that were overtaking Jesus, and the quiet confidence Jesus brings to these final moments because of the confidence he has in the Father's plan.
 - a. What happens when we let our circumstance eclipse our confidence in God's plan?
 - b. What are some truths we need to keep in mind when it feels like our world is spinning out of control?
3. Washing feet was one of the most necessary and most demeaning tasks a person in the ancient world could perform. In the higher reaches of Jewish society, this duty would never be given to a Jewish slave. It was reserved for the lowest of the lowly—a Gentile slave of no rank or standing. While it was common for disciples to perform menial tasks for their "rabbi," (up to, but seldom including the washing their feet), the reverse was completely unheard of. Evidently the towel and the basin were in full view.
 - a. What do you think kept one of the disciples from picking up the towel and washing his companion's feet?
 - b. What do you think kept each of the disciples from washing their own feet?
 - c. What do you think kept the disciples from washing Jesus' feet?

PETER TAKES JESUS TO TASK (vv. 6-11)

VERSES 6-11: He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

¹⁰ 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." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

1. Why do you think Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet?
2. Why must we allow Jesus to serve us, in order to have any part in Jesus?
3. What are some ways Jesus has served us, and continues to serve us?
4. What are some ways, we like Peter, refuse to receive what Jesus has for us?