

November 14

Luke 22; Matthew 26; Mark 14; John 13-14

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In the middle of Passion Week leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus Christ. Today in your reading you observed the disciples disputing, Peter making bold statements about his faithfulness and rejecting Jesus' servant act. And the betrayal of Jesus by Judas begins.

Lots of spiritual activity going on that we are being made aware of.

I want to focus on John 13 for today. "I have to admit that I find it hard to serve others. I can do it on my schedule, within my plan, but to serve spontaneously? I don't do it." Besides, I have ideas of what serving looks like. I also don't make time to serve or at least have margin in my life so I can serve. Serving needs to fit according to me. I for sure am not spontaneous in serving, but more structured in when, how and why I serve others.

It's hard to serve others that don't appreciate the service. That is why I am in the storage closet of our custodial staff, surrounded by all kinds of supplies, equipment and tools to help serve and clean this church. Whether it is in the bathrooms, hallways, classrooms, etc.

What comes to your mind about serving? What does serving look like?

Who do you think of when you think of someone who serves?

What did they do to qualify them as servants?

John 13 shows us how to serve. Today we will see into the mind of Christ on how he served others in a unique and spontaneous way.

Let me explain the timeline of Jesus' ministry in this passage-this was the Last Supper in the beginning of John 13. What had happened in the previous chapter? Triumphal Entry – were people were willing to serve. This event is mentioned in the other gospels, but in John, this passage focuses on Christ's love for His disciples (p 197, John: The Gospel of Belief)

I love this unfolding of events in John 13. This is one of my favorite passages. I was impressed and challenged by this passage as it gave me insight into the thinking of Jesus and also of the motivation of His actions. We have a chance to understand the cognitive thinking of the Son of God, the awareness of His deity, and his life in heaven before coming to earth. These verses also give us an awareness of his human side of choosing to serve – that his first action after reflecting on his true deity was to strip down to servant clothes and wash the manure and dirt off his disciples.

It is important to understand not just the previous actions in chapter 12, but to also understand the topics taught by Jesus in the chapters 14 – 17, leading up to crucifixion. New commandment, love one another, I am the Way, Truth and Life, I am the Vine, information about the Holy Spirit, I have overcome the world, High Priestly Prayer

However, Jesus starts off these last days of His earthly ministry by demonstrating what it means to serve. Being a servant is foundational for each and every concept and thought that He states between now and His death.

Transitional Statement: Jesus started off the days between the Triumphal entry and the crucifixion with becoming a menial servant at the Last Supper.

Jesus was a real man by serving, I often think of a Navy Seal as one who is a macho man. I have the book "Lone Survivor" from my son; during high school he wanted at one point to become a Seal. The author, Marcus Luttrell, describes what the first months of training was like to become a Seal. With his class they started with 180 and ended up with 30 graduating. Here is a sentence stating "we had done 450 pushups by 0615.

John 13:4-5 "He laid aside his outer garments and took a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him."

In the N.T. times there were various kinds of servants. However, the most menial, lowest servant was responsible to wash the feet of the guests. Notice how Jesus 'stripped down' to serve. He took on the form of a servant because we see in 13:12 that Jesus "put on his clothes and returned to his place." Most likely this was a secret gathering in a private home, which explains why there were no servants available.

Obviously, Jesus saw and knew that none of the disciples were going to wash each other's feet – so Jesus saw an opportunity to teach a powerful lesson. Remember, this lesson on serving was before Jesus talked about the vital and critical topics on the Holy Spirit, Love, Prayer, etc. in chapters 14-17

Jesus demonstrated humility and servant hood and the disciples were speechless, except for Peter.

What makes this act of serving so unique and intriguing?

Jesus was washing the feet of His disciples not vice versa.

Disciples were willing to fight for the throne, but not for a towel!

We know what Jesus had thought about God, heaven, eternity and his place in heaven just before he washed their feet

The disciples had refused to do such a menial task – waiting for somebody else to do so.

If your life has chaos and lots of uncertainty – know that Jesus will be there for you. You need to allow him to serve you and minister to you. Also, you need to look for opportunities to serve. Ask God to show you ways that you can serve others – with humility to demonstrate the love of God.