

Tri-State Community Church

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*Gathering a family who loves and serves God through
Jesus Christ and leads others in kind.*

*A Bible Study in Mark
Jesus Became a Servant to Make You a Servant*

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John 13:1-18

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John 13:1-18¹
Jesus Became a Servant to Make You a Servant

Our story takes place just before an annual Jewish festivity known as the Feast of Passover. *It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.* ² *The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, 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 (vs. 1-3 NIV).*

Knowing that *the time had come for Him to leave this world*, Jesus assumes the role of a servant. *Jesus, rose from supper, He laid aside His outer garments, and taking 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 (vs. 4-5).*

In ancient Palestine most people wore sandals therefore traveling on dusty roads for only a short distance would leave your feet quite soiled. Because of this many households had a servant who would be required to wash the feet of visiting guests. In the event that no servant was available, the host would not tend to this because it was a duty that was reserved for only the least in the household—a lowly servant.

Knowing this, and out of reverence for Jesus, Peter objects as Jesus is about to wash his feet. Peter says, *“Lord, do you wash my feet” (vs. 6)?* Peter could not allow Jesus to do this lowly act. Jesus responds *“What I am doing you do not understand, but afterward you will understand” (vs. 7).*

Unconvinced, Peter said to Jesus *“You will never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him: “If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.”*

What Peter and the disciples did not yet understand is that on the following day Jesus would wash them in a new and permanent way—He would wash them of their sins with His death on the cross. Thus Jesus could say to Peter, *“If I do not wash you, you will not be clean and if you are unclean you have no part with me.”* This leads us to the truth that:

If Jesus does not wash you, you have no share with Him.

We are washed of our sins when we put our faith and trust in Jesus. Without faith in Jesus we remain unclean because our sins have not been transferred to Christ but remain on us. Has Jesus washed you of your sins? Have you trusted in Christ to take away your sins and to remove your guilt before God?

There is one in our story who was with Jesus constantly during His earthly ministry yet remained unclean. Jesus introduces him in verse 10: *“The one who has bathed does not*

¹ Unless indicated otherwise, all Scripture quotations are taken from the English Standard Version.

need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.” For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, “Not all of you are clean” (vs. 10-11).

Jesus knew there was one in His midst who had not placed his trust in Him but had continued to value the things of this world over His Creator. Judas Iscariot would sell Jesus out for only thirty pieces of silver (Matthew 26:15).

When [Jesus] had washed their feet and put on His outer garments and resumed His place, He said to them, “Do you understand what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you” (vs. 12-15).

What had Jesus done to them? Jesus, who is God in the flesh, had humbled Himself and assumed the role of a servant. With towel and wash basin in hand, Jesus served the needs of those He loved. Jesus is teaching them that just as He had loved them they are also to love one another (John 13:34). *Greater love has no one than this, that someone lays down his life for his friends (John 15:13).* Jesus laid His precious life down for His friends, dying on the cross in humility and shame.

Jesus became a servant to make us servants

Jesus said, *“For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.”* Jesus states His purpose in all of this: *“By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another” (John 13:35).* Humble service for one another is of the greatest expression of love. Jesus served us by leaving heaven, taking on human form, living and dwelling with His people, suffering shame and humiliation and dying in our place so that we could have eternal life. What more could He do to show and prove His love for us?

There was a famous missionary who retired from the field in order to serve as a prestigious teacher. While he was beginning to serve in his relatively new position his wife of many years became ill. Though he was able to have nurses and care personal by her side, the missionary become professor decided to resign in order to care for her himself. In his oral resignation before the faculty, he said that leaving the school to care for his wife was not a penance but an honor. He thanked God for the privilege of caring for the woman who had stood by him all those years. He stayed by her side until her death.

The service that Jesus is exemplifying is that kind of service. We are to joyously come alongside one another, selflessly serving our neighbors, family, and loved ones in the name of Christ. Jesus became a servant to make us servants.

In what ways can you serve those around you? Pray for God to show you. See you next time. © 2009->Pastor Rick Anderson

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