
Apply

Right now (Come and see):

In this story, Jesus powerfully showed his followers that he came to serve them. When Peter and others were uncomfortable with Jesus serving them (he was their Lord and Teacher after all!) Jesus said they'd have no part in him unless they allowed him to serve them. Here Jesus reveals something counterintuitive about being his follower: following Jesus first and foremost means being served by Jesus. He's the one with all of the power and resources; we're the ones with all of the needs. Let's take a few minutes to bring our needs to Jesus in prayer and invite him to come and minister to us with his presence and power.

This week (Go and do):

Jesus was abundantly clear with his followers: because he served them, they were supposed to serve one another. As a community that's seeking to follow Jesus together, how can we be a community who serves one another like this? Let's take a few minutes to list out some of our needs and resources and share those with one another. What opportunities do you see to serve one another this week?



¹ 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. ⁶ 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.

¹² 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. ¹⁸ I am not referring to all of you; I know those I have chosen. But this is to fulfill this passage of Scripture: 'He who shared my bread has turned against me.' ¹⁹ I am telling you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe that I am who I am. ²⁰ Very truly I tell you, whoever accepts anyone I send accepts me; and whoever accepts me accepts the one who sent me."

³⁴ "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Intro

In our story today, Jesus and his followers are gathered around a table for their last meal together. Jesus knows that he will be betrayed and turned over to authorities this very night and that this would be his last meal with his followers before his death. With that sense of urgency, Jesus demonstrates his love for them by washing their feet and he teaches them a powerful lesson about serving one another.

Discuss

1. What's the connection between Jesus knowing "that the Father had put all things under his power" and his choice to wash his followers' feet? How is Jesus' use of power different from the way you see power being used in the world around you?
2. Imagine you were one of Jesus' followers who was seated around this table. How would you feel about Jesus washing your feet?
3. Jesus' act of lowering himself to wash his disciples' feet violated major cultural status boundaries. This is not something that a person in authority would do for their followers, so it's understandable that Peter is offended. What do you think Jesus meant when he told Peter, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me"?
4. Why is being served by Jesus so essential to following him?
5. Jesus clearly expected his followers to do as he had done. Jesus even went as far as to say that love for one another is how all people would recognize disciples of Jesus. Why do you think Jesus considers our love for one another to be the defining mark of a follower of Jesus?