

“Know ye What I Have Done to You?”

John 13:1-17 (text v. 12) [A question of humble service]

I’ve preached from this passage of Scripture several times. I referred to it in last Sunday’s message. This morning I want us to consider the question Jesus asked in verse 12—*“Know ye what I have done to you?”*

Our text took place in the “upper room” on the eve of Christ’s crucifixion (v. 1). Jesus and His disciples just finished eating the passover supper. It should have been a humbling experience. But instead, the disciples began to squabble again about who was going to be greatest (Luke 22:24-26).

Jesus previously told them that he who would be greatest will be the servant of all (Mt. 23:11). Evidently they still didn’t get it! Therefore Jesus gives them—and us—an object lesson on humility by washing their feet (vs. 4-5). Try to visualize this happening.

When Jesus finished, He asks—*“Know ye what I have done to you?”* Obviously, He wanted to make sure they got the message. So, He answers His own question in verse 15—*“I have given you an example...”* Notice three things about the example Jesus gives...

➡ *“I have given you an example...”*

I. Of a LOVE that is steadfast (v. 1—*“...he loved them unto the end”*).

➡ Biblical love is NOT FICKLE. Love is longsuffering.

Christ’s disciples were a motley crew of ragtag renegades. But, despite their mistakes...denials...betrayal... doubts...abandonment... He LOVED THEM and kept on loving them. Jesus never stops loving us.

➡ Jesus loved them knowing...

- Who would betray Him (v. 11).
- Who would deny Him.
- And that all would forsake Him (Mt. 26:56).

➡ You want to know who your real friends are who love you? Make a big mistake and see how they treat you. [Personal illustration]

- A. Ignorance can be a blessing in disguise. I would rather not know what people think about me. I don't want their how they feel about me to affect how I feel about them. [ILLUS: "Pastor, do you know what so-and-so said about you?"]
- We like to choose not only the place we want to serve, but also the people we want to serve!
 - But not Jesus. He knew full well that His friends were about to turn their backs on Him. Yet, He loved them anyway! Would you still love someone if you knew they were about to stab you in the back? Would you serve them and wash their feet?
- B. This is an example Christ gave us to follow. Love your enemies. Aren't you glad Jesus loved you in spite how sinful you were? Aren't you glad Jesus loved you when you were His enemy (Rom. 5:8-10—*"But God commented his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us... For if when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son..."*)

➡ ***"I have given you an example..."***

II. Of a LEADER who serves. (vs. 13-16).

- A. He executed the ACTIONS of a Servant.
1. Foot-washing was not a big deal in Bible days. It was a common act of courtesy. What made this a big deal was WHO WAS DOING THE FOOT-WASHING! Normally, the task of foot-washing was the job of the lowliest servant. Jesus said, ***"I am among you as he that serveth."*** (Luke 22:27).
 2. vs. 13-16—The servant is not greater than his master. Therefore, if the master becomes a servant, where does that put the servant? On the same level as the master! By becoming a servant, Jesus did not push us down—He lifted us up! That is great leadership.
 3. No one has earned the right to lead until he has learned the way to serve.

Jesus' plan for choosing leaders in His kingdom was not a popular plan (see Luke 22:25-26). It goes completely contrary to the corporate system of leadership found on Main Street, USA.

The principle is “*Before honour is humility*” (Prov. 15:33; 18:12). There are numerous examples of this truth:

- **David**—From humble shepherd boy to King of Israel.
- **Joseph**—From a dusty pit to an Egyptian palace.
- **Christ**—In His first coming He came as a humble servant without honor. At His second coming He will receive the honor that is due Him and crowned King of Kings!

➡ Some people want the honor without paying the price.

Efforts of self-promotion usually backfire. Proverbs 25:6-7 says, “*Put not forth thyself in the presence of the king, and stand not in the place of great men: For better it is that it be said unto thee, Come up hither; than that thou shouldest be put lower in the presence of the prince whom thine eyes have seen*” (cf. Luke 14:8-10). A wise king will be suspicious of any who assertively promote themselves seeking high offices. Rather they will look to modest and unassuming servants to appoint to leadership positions.

➡ Good leaders are best found towards the back of the pack.

- I remember the first Easter Sunrise service I attended. It was at the Ecorse Baptist Temple. I was a new Christian. The thing that made a great impression on me was watching my new pastor, Dr. Parrish in a kitchen apron, serving up pancakes and sausage to those who attended.
- Again, when I was a member of Galilean Baptist Church while in Bible College, I remember seeing my pastor, Dr. Noe, in his overalls working on a new “bus barn.”
- Some of the most profitable years in my ministry was serving under Pastor Ken Blue—Mixing cement... repairing church buses... hanging sheet rock... installing a suspended ceiling. It helped prepare me to lead others.

B. He exhibited the ATTITUDE of a Servant—Humility. The only way you can wash another's feet is to kneel. Christ took a humble posture to serve.

➡ Christ's act of humility is an illustration of the doctrinal statement in Philippians 2:4-8—

- His **care**—*“Look not every man on this own things, but every man also on the things of others [Christ came not to be ministered unto but to minister to others].”*
- His **pattern**—*“Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: [He gave us an example of ministry for others].”*
- His **choice**—*“Who, being in the form of God, thought in not robbery to be equal with God: But made himself of no reputation [John 13:4—“...laid aside his garments...His garments (robes of glory)]. Jesus did this VOLUNTARILY.”*
- His **condescension**— *“...and took upon him the form of a servant” [John 13:4— “...took a towel, and girded himself...”]. Here is the Creator of the universe stooping to the filthiest and lowest part of human anatomy—24 smelly, nasty, dirty feet!*
- His **humility**— *“...and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself [John 13:5—“...began to wash the disciples' feet...”], and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.”*

➡ Perhaps Peter remembered this incident in the upper room when He wrote, *“For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:”* (1 Pet. 2:21).

➡ *“I have given you an example...”*

III. Of a LIFE that satisfies (vs. 17).

The Declaration of Independence states man is endowed by our Creator with the inalienable right to the pursuit of happiness. The world chases after happiness like an elusive butterfly. Just about the time they think they have it in their grasp it slips away.

- The happiness that comes by obeying God and serving others satisfies like nothing the world can offer. My greatest satisfaction in life come when I know I've helped someone.
- Who was the “happiest” person in the upper room in our text? Not the disciples who were ashamed for arguing and not doing for each other what Jesus did for them. The happiest person in the upper room was Jesus!

SUMMATION: Next time you feel depressed or downhearted, do what Jesus did. Instead of “throwing in the towel,” pick up a towel and basin of water and find some “dirty feet” to wash! Of course, in this age, people wear shoes, not sandals, so we would not literally wash people’s feet. But we could wash somebody’s car... their windows... wash someone’s laundry... or some dirty dishes in the church kitchen, *without being asked*. Find some lowly menial job that would require you to humble yourself to do it. You will experience a satisfaction and happiness Jesus promised.

Why did Jesus wash the disciples feet? **What Jesus DID was determined by what He KNEW.** This is true of all of us—We act according to what we know.

- Jesus knew “*His hour was come*” (v. 1). Instead of thinking of Himself when He knew He was about to die, His thoughts were for others.

NOTE: Death is not ceasing to exist—Death is a *departure* from this earthly sphere to an eternal sphere of existence.

NOTE: If you knew death wa(e) -0.1 en -0.1 (e) -0.1 (y) -0.5 () -0.4 (c)