



[Thanks for checking out our sermon-based Study Guides! If you've never used our Study Guides before, you'll find some basic instructions on the last page]

SERMON TITLE – “From Status to Service”

Week 1 - March 6, 2022 – Pastor Adam Rowe

Welcome to our new Lent Series – “Change-Maker: The Dawn of Something New.” This year leading up to Easter, we're all about creating a difference—in the world, in our habits, and in our hearts. Tracing the iconic scenes of Holy Week, full of surprises and contradictions, we glimpse the heart and mind of Jesus Christ, changemaker.

The first message jumps right into the heart of the story (Don't worry, the series will work its way back soon). If you are familiar to the Easter story, you'll remember the powerful moment when Jesus washes his disciples' feet.

Let's slowly read John 13:1-17 and keep it open so we can refer easily back to the text (Leader, read the Passage first, then the Context, then the Questions. If you have not opened the time of study in prayer, this would be an appropriate moment).

CONTEXT

John tells us this happens just before the Passover Festival, which to John and practicing Jews, it is considered the greatest of Jewish festivals. Passover represents the redemption of Israel from slavery in Egypt and the deliverance to freedom and salvation brought up by Yahweh. (Later this week, you can read Exodus 12 and 13 for the full story).

As you read the book of John, you realize that Jesus has always taken advantage of the Passover Festivals to show both His deity and signs of the Kingdom that His proclaiming. Examples include:

- Jesus being described as the Passover lamb in John 1:29, 36.
- Jesus spoke, at Passover, of the **Temple** being destroyed and rebuilt—meaning his own body in 2:19–21.
- Jesus fed the crowds at Passover-time, and spoke of them feeding on his body and blood in John chapter 6.
- Now this Last Supper scene as Jesus' final Passover.



GROUP DISCUSSIONS QUESTIONS

Q- Looking at verse 1, notice that John doesn't say, "Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to die ..." But instead reads, "Jesus knew that the hour had come to leave this world and go to the Father." The change that resurrection brings is all over this scene.

The Gospel-writer John, having personally lived the story of Jesus conquering death and being raised to life, is not describing a humble Jesus that is going to be defeated. Instead he is describing a humble Jesus that is about to be victorious and change everything. Re-read this passage silently and describe how does this change the mood and meaning of the scene for you?

(Leader Note: Consider among the shifts is that instead of reading this with a tragic tone, it's expectant of the awful death that Jesus is going to endure and the extraordinary triumph of Jesus over the grave.)

Q - Imagine for a moment that Jesus chose to model foot-washing and said "I'm going to teach you the importance of humility and servanthood. I'm going to wash one person's feet (John's because his are the cleanest :) and then you will each wash another person's."

- What do you think would have been lost had Jesus not chose to wash ALL the disciples' feet and how does the story change had he done that?
- What change in thinking and behavior did Jesus' act of humility inspire in his disciples?

(Leader Note: In washing each of the disciples' feet, Jesus made it personal. And consistent with Jesus' teaching of the least being the greatest, the disciples were likely more inspired to serve the other in humility and love.)

Q - Understandably, Peter objects to his rabbi and Lord washing his feet. In fact, there are other previous moments where Peter tries to push-back on Jesus. Most famously is Mark 8:32 when Peter attempts to rebuke Jesus, and the Lord calls him "Satan" and commands him to get behind him. Here again, Peter misunderstanding the way of Jesus tries to stop him. Initially we might think that it's out of a heart of protection. In reflection, we might consider that Peter isn't really protecting Jesus but rather attempting to protect *his limited understanding of who he wants* Jesus to be. This Jesus is always powerful, always in control, always heroic, always righteous, always able to deliver. This Jesus does not wash feet, and certainly would not die at the hands of earthly powers ... or would he?



- Much to unpack there but what do you hear Jesus saying to Peter in his explanation in verse 8-10?
- How does this explanation invite both Peter and us as readers to, change our limited understandings of Jesus to an even greater understanding of who Jesus is and what his ministry is about?

*(Leader Help: Jesus must wash us if we are to belong to him. However, since Jesus has already, **then our identity and salvation belongs in Him.** What is left is our daily washing of the parts of our lives that is in need of the ongoing redemption of life – our souls may have been washed but now we regularly wash those parts of our lives, our personalities and bodies our practices and behaviors, our thoughts and actions that get dusty and dirty.)*

Q - It is essential that we see Jesus' humble act of washing his disciples' feet as an act of love, not just a leadership principle (though we must appreciate that as well).

- What do you see in the connection in the second half of vs 1, "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end." and the end of the chapter in verses 13-17?

(Leader Note: Not only is this an act of humility but it is rooted in love. Jesus is making a change that one's status is not determined merely by their position of life, but in the way of Jesus, it is through acts of love and humility. This is why Jesus blesses the doer of such things at the end of the passage.)

Q - So let's consider how we put into practice following Jesus' example and washing feet either literally or metaphorically. What are the ways we can show the love and humility of Jesus to those around us this Lent and how will it change your life and the lives of whose feet you wash?

Conclusion:

This Lent, we want to identify the changes Jesus brings in these accounts of Scripture, and how these changes can profoundly impact our lives and the world around us. Today we see the change from social status to serving in humility and love and how Jesus models this for all his disciples.

Let's pray.



HOW TO USE THESE STUDY GUIDES

- Consider sending out the Scripture passage to your group members ahead of time.
- Begin each meeting with a short time of checking in with one another.
- You may want to begin the discussion by reading the Scripture passage together out loud, or by summarizing the passage if everyone has read it ahead of time.
- Don't feel like you need to discuss every question included in the Study Guide. Pick one or two to start with, and see how the conversation flows.
- If your group meets over Zoom:
 - You may need to do more overt facilitating over Zoom than you would in person. Feel free to call on people to invite them to share.
 - Try to be sensitive to attention spans over Zoom—keep the meetings shorter than they would be in person.
- Be sure to set aside time for sharing prayer requests and praying together.

Group Leader Support: Please reach out to your Campus Pastor or your Coach if you have any questions about leading your group or concerns about your group dynamic. If you have questions about or feedback on the Study Guides, please reach out to Pastor Tim or Pastor Rachel from the Group Life team.