



NEW TESTAMENT • LESSON 33

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET

Only those who are washed by Jesus have His salvation.



MONDAY

THE STORY: JOHN 12:44-50

Jesus served the Father. Jesus never exalted Himself. All of Jesus' life was spent demonstrating servanthood and being obedient to His Father. Furthermore, Jesus served us. Jesus sacrificed Himself in service to us that we might be freed from sin. Jesus came to save. The world is already condemned because of sin. Jesus came not to judge but to save. Those who reject Jesus as a harsh judge fail to see His wonderful love demonstrated at the cross.

TALK ABOUT IT:

How was Jesus a servant to His Father? (Jesus only said what the Father told Him to say.)

How is Jesus a servant to us? (Jesus came to die on the cross that we might be saved from wrath of God for our sins.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for being a servant that we might come to know the Father and be saved.



TUESDAY

THE STORY: JOHN 13:1-5

Jesus washes the disciples' feet. After supper the disciples got into an argument about who was the greatest (see Luke 22:24). Jesus got up from the meal, and in an outward demonstration of servanthood began to wash the disciples' feet. Luke records the sequence of events. The foot-washing should have been done prior to the meal by one of the servants. If a servant was not present, one of the disciples should have done it. Jesus told them earlier that the greatest should be the servant of all (see Mark 9:35). By washing their feet on the very eve of His arrest Jesus demonstrated true servanthood. Jesus showed that He was indeed the suffering servant prophesied in Isaiah 52:13.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why was washing feet a dramatic expression of Jesus' love for the disciples? (Jesus was about to die for these men. Rather than seek their pity, Jesus demonstrated His humility by doing something only a servant would do; He washed their feet.)

What can we learn from this story? (We see the amazing character of Jesus in serving the disciples through a wonderful demonstration of true servanthood. As we follow Jesus, we are called to servanthood and true greatness.)

Jesus showed humility in His serving. What stands in the way of our serving those around us? (Our pride stands in the way. We want to be served by others.)

PRAY:

Ask God to help you follow Jesus' example and seek after true greatness by positioning yourself as a servant of all.



WEDNESDAY
WHERE IS THE GOSPEL?

THE STORY: JOHN 13:6-11

Jesus' greatest act of service was not washing feet. Paul tells us in Philippians 2:7,8 that our attitude should be the same as that of Jesus who "made Himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form, He humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross."

Jesus, God Himself, performed His greatest act of service for us by giving up His life for us. The events in the upper room were pointing ahead to what would soon happen in the Crucifixion. It was demeaning for Jesus to wash the disciples' feet. He was washing away the outward dirt with water and a towel. How much more demeaning was it for him to wash filthy hearts, taking upon Himself all our vile sin and shedding His own blood as an atoning sacrifice?

TALK ABOUT IT:

How should Jesus' death on the cross help motivate us to follow His example in serving one another? (Jesus' sacrifice on the cross goes far beyond foot-washing as an example of servanthood. The least we can do is serve our brothers and sisters here on earth. The more we realize just how sinful we are and that we are forgiven because of Jesus' sacrifice on the cross, the more willing we will be to serve, love, and forgive others.)

What are the things you least like to do in serving others, and why? (Parents - draw your children out on this question.)

How might studying this passage change your perspective? (Knowing what Jesus did for us can motivate us to think more of others and care for them through our service.)

PRAY:

Ask God to give you a willingness to do things for others – and not only the easy things.



THURSDAY

THE STORY: JOHN 13:12-17

Jesus commissioned the disciples to follow His example. After the Master washed their feet, the disciples would have been ashamed of their arguments about who was the greatest. Just to be sure they understood what He meant by this act, Jesus charged them to do as he had done. He did not intend to institute Christian foot-washing ceremonies but to remind them that the greatest among them would be the servant of all.

TALK ABOUT IT:

Why is the servant the greatest? (The servant is building treasure for himself in heaven for all eternity by following Jesus' example and serving others.)

What are some ways we could demonstrate true greatness in serving one another? (Parents, draw out the children and remind them of the charge to pursue true greatness. Like the disciples, they will soon forget.)

PRAY:

Ask God to help you not think of yourself first but to follow Jesus' example in putting others first.



FRIDAY
ON THE ROAD TO EMMAUS

THE STORY: ISAIAH 52:13

Jesus took on the nature of a servant and became a man. Jesus humbled himself and freely offered His life on the cross. Paul tells us in Philippians 2:9-11, “Therefore God exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” There is only one to whom every knee will bow: Jesus. Isaiah saw that future exaltation of Christ.

TALK ABOUT IT:

What did Jesus do to posture Himself as a servant? (Jesus’ sacrifice and death on the cross was the greatest demonstration of servanthood ever.)

How can we follow Jesus’ example as Paul directs in Philippians 2:5? (Every time we serve others, denying our pleasure or comfort, we are following the example of Christ.)

PRAY:

Thank Jesus for humbling Himself and becoming a servant and dying for us when we were His enemies.