

4.17.25 / Maundy Thursday: Humiliation or Love / John 13

Addie: John 13:1-5

Comments about contrast: Celebratory to Solemn

“he now loved them to the end.” - “he now showed them the full extent of His love”

What comes to mind when you think about Jesus communicating the “full extent of His love”?

- Grand gestures? Mt. Sinai, Shepherds

Instead Jesus does something unexpected... (lowers himself – takes off outer clothing) and prepares to wash his disciples feet. (*get a volunteer and begin to wash their feet*)

Here’s what’s going through my mind as I wash Will’s feet...

Others focused

- I’m keenly aware of the lowly and uncomfortable position. I am serving someone else.
- I’m not watching out for my own best interests; I’m in the midst of uplifting someone else. Someone else is on my mind.

Others aware

- I begin to ponder the life circumstances (and then decisions/choices)...
- I wonder... (good)
- I wonder... (bad/difficult) (*finish 1st foot*)

All of this causes me to imagine what Jesus was thinking as he washed the disciples feet. Imagine in this moment that Jesus was washing **your** feet. **What would He be thinking?**

1. **Others focus:** Imagine His focus on you (your trivial need compared to the extravagant task before Him). He has me in mind. He’s tending to my need in the midst of his own monumental journey ahead. Not to mention the needs and the brokenness of the entire world. Somehow all of that is swimming around in the back of His head yet He’s simultaneously focused on me and my feet.

2. **Others aware:** As I picture Jesus washing my feet and being aware of me... my thoughts and actions. I'm suddenly overwhelmed/comforted with the feeling of being understood. He knows everything I'm going through. He knows every good thing that I'm trying to accomplish... But then... I'm scared/or sad or frozen when I consider that He knows everything wrong I've ever done / thought / said or will.

He knows me. He's God. And He's washing my feet. Can you even imagine?! (finish 2nd foot)

Addie: John 13:6-11

When Jesus bends down to wash Peter's feet, Peter protests. Peter knows that Jesus is God incarnate; Jesus is love and what He's doing right now is not love – it's humiliation. Peter will not let His Lord be humiliated.

Mt 16:23b "You are seeing things merely from a human point of view, not from God's." Kind of can't blame him...

Peter has learned a lot about love from Jesus but he hasn't learned **this** yet. Love is service. Love is humiliating sometimes. It takes a little convincing but Jesus convinces Peter that this is an appropriate expression of love and Peter - before he understands at all – dives in with wild faith and declares, **than wash all of me! (crazy...)**

Jesus thinking: That doesn't make any sense. That's not what I'm going to do, but I like where your heart is.

Addie: John 13:12-15 (Will returns to his seat)

"set you an example so that you would do as I have done"

Love can be humbling

For three years the disciples have watched this miracle working, thought reconfiguring gentle, thoughtful, patient, honest teacher.

They've seen him carry himself with confidence but not a confidence that seeks to gain or leverage power and influence... it's a confidence that already has power and influence and doesn't seem to grasp a hold of it. He just lives it. **His power and confidence wrapped in love now exemplifies a new but clear humility.** He who is greater (without doubt) than anyone they've ever experienced has lowered himself and asked them to do as He has done.

How can a savior/redeemer save people from a low and humble position? No successful ruler or king or emperor or judge had ever done such a thing. It is incomprehensible... but he's clear.

From a lowly humble position, He's going to save His people. And... He's instructing His disciples to do as He has done!

- Remember James and John request to sit at right and left?
- **The disciples were expecting to be rulers... not foot washers!**

Later in the meal Jesus says, (John 13:34 – A new command...) **Love serves** – it's humble. It embraces a lowly position for the purpose of lifting **others** up.

How have you been lowering yourself to love someone else?

As we read the Gospel accounts it is difficult to piece together the exact flow of the conversation that evening around the table. But we know this, at some point in the meal, Jesus served the bread and the cup. He did it in such a way as to **institute a new practice** that the disciples couldn't have understood at the time but they came to understand it later. In many ways he was continuing to act out or illustrate this "full extent of His love"—this new commandment.

Jesus took the bread and He broke it...

Body broken – Love costs

(Pass out the bread and wait to take together)

- Can you imagine what Jesus went through...?! Love costs.
- Romans 5:8 – Can you believe that? *Illus: Sorry than forgive*
- Physical pain, emotional pain...

- Imagine how the disciples felt days or weeks later when they broke some bread...

Pray: Jesus, this is your body broken for me. *(all take the bread)*

Later in the meal Jesus took the cup and....

Love forgives

(Pass out the cup and wait to take together)

- *Illus: Trinity Life Ministry – I've been forgiven far more than I imagine!*
- *Do you realize how much you've been forgiven? Do you realize the size of the debt that has been paid for you?*
- Forgiveness includes death
- Receive Forgiveness – acknowledge Jesus's sacrificial death for you
- Extend Forgiveness – acknowledge Jesus's sacrificial death for

Jesus poured out His blood for the forgiveness of sins.

Pray: Jesus, thank you for your blood shed for the forgiveness of sins.

(all take the cup)

Romans 5:8

1 John 1:9 - *If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.*

Psalms 103:12 - *as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.*

"Love as I have loved you."

Jesus showed his disciples (and us) that night and in the coming days how...

- Love serves
- Love costs
- Love forgives

Receive this gift and extend it to others.