
Anointed to Serve: Following Jesus' Lead in Serving John 13:1-5; 12-17

Introduction

In John 13:1-3, Jesus faces:

- *Death* – His hour has come
- *Departure* – from this world and the disciples He loves
- *The Devil* – in the heart of one of His own
- *Destiny* – going to God

Amidst all that, He gives an illustrated lesson from which we can learn to follow His lead in serving.

Leave The Table – v. 4a

- *He rose from the table*
- The dining custom – low tables formed to make three sides of a square. Although all reclined at the table, customarily it was the person who was “most important” who sat in the middle of the center table.
- Luke 22:27 – *For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.*

“We must be willing to leave the place of seating to stand in the place of a servant.” – Dr. D'Ann Johnson

Lay Aside Your Garment – v. 4b

- *He laid aside His garments*
- Garments represented a person's station and rights:
 - Tamar's garment of diverse colors = king's virgin daughter
 - Blind Bartimaeus' robe = public beggar
 - Jesus' purple robe before Pilate = a king's garment
- Phil. 2:5-6 MSG – “Think of yourselves the way Christ Jesus thought of himself. He had equal status with God but didn't think so much of himself that he had to cling to the advantages of that status no matter what.”

“We must be willing to lay aside our position and rights to occupy the place of serving.” – Dr. D'Ann Johnson

Look For A Towel – v. 4c

- He took a towel
- The towel represents the instrument best suited to meet the needs of those being served

“God doesn’t need us to have the perfect tools. He will use anything we make available to Him as an instrument of service.” – Dr. D’Ann Johnson

Let God Use You – v. 5

- Jesus performed the menial task reserved for the lowest servant
- Jesus served the disciples equally, even though one was a traitor

“We must be willing to let God use us whenever, wherever, and with whomever, without partiality.” – Dr. D’Ann Johnson

Learn The Lessons Of Serving – v. 12-17

Do you know (understand) what I have done to you? – Jesus was probably not seeking to institute a literal practice to be observed continually in the church...But He shows great concern that the meaning of true servanthood be well understood.

The Lessons:

- We are not above serving others (v. 14)
- We are not without a model for serving others (v. 15)
- We are blessed when we serve others (v. 17)

Conclusion

In his book, *“From Good to Great in God’s Eyes,”* Chip Ingram writes, *“It doesn’t matter if you’re seven or seventy; your heart should be captivated by a vision of how to serve God and accomplish something great for His kingdom.”*