

ENGAGE

Like Jesus

GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 4
WEEK OF OCTOBER 7TH

GROWTH GROUP FALL 2018

WEEK 4 – OCTOBER 7, 2018 - JOHN 13:1-17, AND MATTHEW 25:31-46

GETTING TO KNOW ONE ANOTHER

1) Share about a memorable mission project or service project that you have been a part of.

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR JOHN 13:1-17

John 13 reveals a part of the Passover meal that is not mentioned in any of the other gospels. We get to see the servant like nature of Jesus in a very intimate setting. Jesus knew what was coming and in the midst of that he chose to wash the disciples feet. He had all the power and the glory, yet he used a powerful object lesson to help the disciples remember the importance of service. He wanted them to understand what humility looked like.

In the days of Jesus it was the disciples who were to serve the rabbi, not the other way around. And on top of that, it was the job of servants, or slaves, to wash feet. Yet, in his actions Jesus draws the disciples even closer. He wanted them to understand that the closer they got to humanity and the suffering of humanity, the closer they would actually get to God.

Jesus did what no one was prepared for. In washing their feet he was setting an example for them. He told them that they had participated in what he had done and now they were to do the same for others. Jesus has much to teach us about humility and service. When we are tempted to think more highly of ourselves than we should, it is good to remember Jesus taking up a towel and washing his disciples feet.

Jesus helps Peter to see that what is really needed is just the washing of his feet. When people entered a home for a party they didn't take another bath, they simply had their feet washed. That was all that was needed to enter the home. Jesus is showing Peter that he needs nothing more. By washing his feet, Jesus is showing Peter that he is part of the family that God is creating.



EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read John 13:1-17

¹ It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³ Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵ After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸ "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." ⁹ "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" ¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. ¹² When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³ "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

- 2) Do you think Jesus would have done and said the same things with a larger crowd? Why or why not? What did Jesus mean when he said, "Unless, I wash you, you have no part with me."
- 3) Why do you think Simon Peter responded the way he did? How would you have responded to what Jesus was doing?
- 4) Who is someone that you know whose life is marked by the kind of service that Jesus is talking about?

SETTING THE CONTEXT FOR MATTHEW 25:31-46

Micah 6:8 tells us that we should seek to do justly, love mercy and walk humbly with God. When we look at the world or our community and do not see these things happening, we are rightly troubled. Part of being created in the image of God, or at least a Judeo-Christian understanding, is that we have a desire for justice. We have a hope that things will be made right.

In Matthew 25 we hear about the last judgment involving sheep and goats. Artists of previous centuries have provided plenty of images about this scene from Matthew 25.

This passage is likely talking about those who choose not to follow Jesus as Messiah, and how their judgment will be based on how they have treated people who are a part of Jesus' family. Followers of Jesus often found themselves in difficult and harsh circumstances. They knew what it was like to feel like the "least of these." However, this text also serves as a powerful reminder of how Christians are to care for their neighbors. We are all called to care for the "least of these."

EXPLORING THE TEXT

Read Matthew 25:31-46

³¹ "When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, he will sit on his glorious throne. ³² All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate the people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats. ³³ He will put the sheep on his right and the goats on his left. ³⁴ "Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ³⁶ I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.' ³⁷ "Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ When did we see you a stranger and invite you in, or needing clothes and clothe you? ³⁹ When did we see you sick or in prison and go to visit you?' ⁴⁰ "The King will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' ⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me nothing to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not invite me in, I needed clothes and you did not clothe me, I was sick and in prison and you did not look after me.' ⁴⁴ "They also will answer, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or needing clothes or sick or in prison, and did not help you?' ⁴⁵ "He will reply, 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did not do for one of the least of these, you did not do for me.' ⁴⁶ "Then they will go away to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life."

- 5) There is a pretty strong word of judgment offered in Matthew 25. Are you comfortable with what Jesus says? Does it make you feel uncomfortable? Why?
- 6) Jesus talks about being hungry, thirsty, a stranger in need of clothes, sick or imprisoned. Have you ever been in one of those situations and someone helped you? Or think of another time when you needed help and someone served you. Share that experience.
- 7) There are so many ways that we can serve and love others in our community and world. How do you prioritize all of those needs? How do you make a decision about who to serve or where to serve?

BRINGING IT HOME

- 8) Is there a tangible way your growth group could help serve around LJPC or the community in the upcoming weeks?