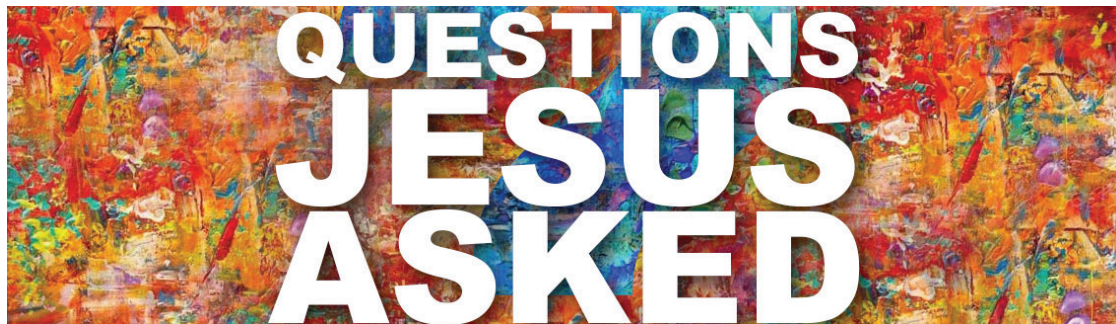


GROWTH GROUPS
WEEK 6
WEEK OF APRIL 5



Growth Group Lent 2020

Do you understand what I have done for you?

Week 6 – April 5, 2020 - John 13:1-17

Growth groups are one of the best and easiest ways to find community at a church. In this time of Corona19 and “social distancing” please don’t meet in person, but do continue to check in with each other. If your growth group would like to meet online or if you are aware of needs that the church can help fill, please let us know at connect@ljpres.org. Thank you for loving and caring for each other.

Setting the Context

John 13-17 moves us out of the public ministry of Jesus and into the intimacy of the Upper Room. The crowds are gone and now it is just Jesus and the disciples. He will spend the next five chapters of John teaching and instructing them about the mission they are going to soon be called upon to carry out.

The gospel of John does not give an account of the Last Supper. Instead, we read about Jesus washing the disciples’ feet. This follows right after Jesus has arrived in Jerusalem with shouts of “Hosanna!” and “Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!” There was great hope that he would be the one to rescue the people from their bondage to the Roman Empire. There was great anticipation amongst the crowd, as well as the disciples.

Shockingly, Jesus interrupts the meal, by taking off his outer clothing and wrapping a towel around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and washed his disciples feet and then dried them. This would have been inconceivable. This was not the task of a rabbi or teacher. If anyone was going to wash feet, it was going to be the disciples washing Jesus’ feet.

Yet, Peter doesn’t get it. This isn’t what the king does. Peter first says don’t wash my feet, and then he says go ahead and wash all of me. Peter is totally confused by all of this. But Jesus is teaching a couple of important lessons. First, he is teaching the disciples about service. Secondly, he is teaching them about sin and the need for God’s mercy and forgiveness to wash over them.

Jesus had come from heaven and he was going to return to heaven, but before he did that he had to “show” the disciples some things. It is important to notice that when Jesus ends the foot washing, he returns to be in the midst of the disciples. He is showing them that he will always be in their midst. Even when he returns to heaven, he will leave them, and us, the Holy Spirit (see John 14:35-31 and John 15:26-16:15).

The disciples did not understand what Jesus had done for them, but as was often the case, they would eventually figure it out. Jesus showed them what it looked like to serve others, and then called them to do the same. We all need to know the love of Jesus, but we are also all called to “share and show” others what the love of Jesus looks like.



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.

Questions

If you are answering these questions alone, we would urge you to try journaling. Rather than just pondering the answers, try writing them out along with a prayer to the Lord.

- 1) It will be a very different Holy Week for all of us. What sort of plans do you have to get ready for Easter? Have you been doing anything differently these past six weeks in preparation to celebrate Easter?
- 2) What does it mean that Jesus showed his disciples the full extent of his love, and loved them to the end? What does that say to us living today?
- 3) Have you ever been a part of a foot washing service? If so, what was that experience like? If you have not been a part of a foot washing service, what do you think that experience would be like?
- 4) Re-read verses 3-5. What did Jesus know about himself? What was Jesus teaching his disciples by washing their feet? How is this act an expression of love?
- 5) What does this text and example of Jesus teach us about the forgiveness of our sins?
- 6) Does this story about Jesus washing feet, and the humility that Jesus models, remind you of any other passages of Scripture about Jesus?
- 7) In verse 15 Jesus says, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." Share about someone in your life who has served as a Christian example for you.
- 8) How did Jesus explain the meaning of what he had done? How did Jesus want them to express their love for him and for one another? How can we show Jesus' love to others during this time when we are sheltering place?