

The Gospel of John: Me Too ... Others First

Jake Barker | John 13:1-38

Well hey, Traders Point. It is so good to be with you tonight. If you are new or just getting to know us we are so glad you have joined us. Hey if you have your Bible or a Bible app, I would love for you to join me in John 13. Last week we finished up John 12 so we are going to pivot into John 13 tonight.

Last week we saw Jesus enter the city of Jerusalem on the back of a donkey and the crowd on the street was going crazy. They were waving palm branches. They were welcoming Jesus as the victorious king they thought He was going to be.

Instead Jesus rode on a donkey and He said, "I am not necessarily the king that you want, but I am definitely the king that you need." You see the crowd—they wanted Jesus to fix their immediate circumstance. They wanted Jesus to make life better right now. And Jesus came to give a different kind of life. It was the life that they needed—eternal life. But it was not what they wanted.

So we watched as people in the crowd had to choose, "Am I willing to accept Jesus as He is or am I going to reject Him because He doesn't give me what I want?" That was John 12. John now pivots us from the public life of Jesus, the public ministry of Jesus to a series of private conversations between Jesus and His disciples. That is what we are going to see in chapter 13.

If you do not have a Bible we would love to give you one. You can take the one in the seatback in front of you or you can stop by Connection Central on your way out. But you need to know that we really like to break down books of the Bible here and study them chapter by chapter. Break them down to understand what they mean and then ask the question, "What does that mean for us?"

So today in John 13 we are going to see Jesus do something a little odd, a little peculiar and then we are going to be left the question, "Am I willing to follow Jesus' example? I see what He does. Am I willing to do that in my own life?"

So we are going to just dive right in. We are going to break it down. We are going to spend some time understanding what it means and then ask a few questions of ourselves. So John 13, verses 1 through 4 if you will join me we'll get started.

"Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going back to God, rose from supper."

Alright let's pause right there and I want to make a few observations. First thing, a little on the lighter side, I think this once and for all decides what we should call the third meal of the day. How many of you would call the third meal of the day dinner? Just raise your hand. How many of you would say,

“Supper?” Very good. I grew up about four hours south of here and we said, “Supper,” and the Bible says, “Supper,” so we win. We win on that one. It is forever known as supper.

So here is what is going on. Jesus and His friends, His disciples, are having a supper here in the waning hours of Jesus’ life. These first four verses are setting the scene for what Jesus is about to do. Before we pass by them too fast, we need to make sure we understand the full picture of what is happening. It says here that, “Jesus’ hour has come.” That means that God’s plan for Jesus, that the reason that He showed up, this entire mission that Jesus was on, this was the moment that was to come to fulfillment. The hour had come. God’s plan was ready to be finished. It was right on the doorstep. His hour had come.

Now if you’ll remember back in John 2, Jesus was at a wedding reception. He was there with His disciples and His mom was there. The host had run out of wine, which is a big party foul, and Jesus’ mom comes and says, “Can you fix this? I know you do things. Can you fix this? Can you make some more wine?” And Jesus says, “Mom, you are embarrassing Me in front of my friends.” No He doesn’t say that. He says, “Hey mom, My hour has not yet come. I am not ready to be fully fulfilled. I am not ready to be fully glorified in front of all these people.” But here in John 13 we see that the hour has come.

I love this picture because it shows that Jesus, if you follow His life throughout the gospels, He was never in a hurry. Did you notice that? Jesus didn’t miss His appointments. Jesus didn’t hit the snooze button a couple of times so that He was too late and He missed the thing He was supposed to attend. As you watch Jesus live out His life, He was always perfectly in control. He was where He was supposed to be when He was supposed to be there.

You see God’s plan is not to be rushed. I am a rusher. I admit that. I proclaim that. I am one who is impatient, I am anxious, and I want to take control. Jesus, throughout His entire life, He is walking through His world, He is encountering different people, and now the hour has come. You can kind of feel the weight that is coming down in the narrative here.

Then it says, “Jesus loved His own until the end.” That really perfectly describes how Jesus loved those with whom He spent His life. You see Jesus, He loved this group of disciples patiently when they completely missed the point over, and over, and over again. He was gracious with them when He was calling out their sin. He was generous with them, giving them love they had not earned. His love was steadfast. It did not bail, it did not fail. He saw it to the end, even to the cross.

I love that Jesus’ love for His disciples then very much describes His love for you and me. He is patient with us. He is gracious with us. And He is generous with us and He does not quit. He loves us to the end. He loves us, even to the cross.

So John is painting this picture and he says, “It would be incomplete if you didn’t know that there was a betrayer at the table.” He says, “Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, he is here at the dinner.” Now maybe you don’t know much about the Bible but there is a really good chance that you’ve heard of Judas before. Judas was the most famous turncoat in the history of the world. He followed Jesus. He saw Jesus perform miracles. He heard Jesus preach. He spent days upon months upon multiple years with Jesus. Yet his heart was never transformed and within hours he was going to stab Jesus in the back.

Now the relationship between Jesus and Judas is one I think we need to pay extra attention to in chapter 13. As I was reading and studying, the relationship between those two men completely blew me

away and we are going to watch to see what those implications are. So watch as Jesus and Judas interact. Let's keep going in John 13.

John says, "The dinner is set. They have all gathered together. The hour has come. Judas is about to betray Jesus." Then Jesus, again, He just has this habit of doing the oddest things. Look at verse 4. "He," Jesus, "laid aside His outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around His waist. Then He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around Him."

So what is up with the feet? Let's talk about the feet for a little bit. How many of you would just say, "We all know feet are gross." We can all admit that. It is fact. Feet are gross. Now imagine feet 2,000 years ago. These feet would have seen a lot of wear and tear. During this time there were not a lot of primal modes of transportation so the majority of people were walking wherever they went. They were not walking on pavement. They were walking on dirt roads. This was a time before sophisticated sewage solutions existed. So you can imagine what they stepped in. These feet, they were dried, and they were cracked, and they were bruised.

In 2010 I went on a short term mission trip to Nairobi, Kenya, with a team from Traders Point. One day we ended up outside of the city at a school there. Once we had gotten to know the kids, they wanted to play a game of soccer with us. So I looked around for a patch of green grass to play soccer on and I did not find one. I found a dirt patch with dirt, and rocks, and two soccer goals.

They rolled out the soccer ball and I noticed the kids seemed to be missing a key piece of equipment—shoes. They were not wearing shoes. So at one point in the game... I am a novice and sort of an embarrassment in soccer so don't give this much credit, but there was a moment where the ball was between me and one of the Kenyan kids on the other team. We were both going to kick it.

The problem was that it was right about here [indicating a spot about four feet in front of his foot up in air]. Right there is the danger zone for my hamstring and my hopes and dreams. Right there all of it is going to fall apart. So we both tried to kick the ball in mid-air and both of us missed. We kicked each other's foot, my shoe to his bare foot.

At that moment I was pretty convinced that I had just broken my foot and I was going to go to a Kenyan emergency room and they would just cut it off. I just thought this was probably what was about to happen. The kid turns around and just runs away like nothing had ever happened. The grown man over here near tears and the kid just runs away.

You see after years of running and playing on dirt and rocks, his feet had become tough and almost numb. They were just calloused, which was a lot like the feet of the disciples in this moment. So imagine dried, cracked feet full of who knows what and they all go to dinner.

Now the job of washing the feet was actually the lowest thing anyone could do. It was lower than even what servants would do. So if there was a Jewish family and they had a Jewish servant, they wouldn't even make him wash the feet. They would go find another servant who was a Gentile, one who was outside the faith, and they would bring him in to wash everyone's feet before they had dinner.

So you can imagine the disciples gathered around the table and they all are kind of looking at each other like, "Who is going to do the thing no one wants to do? I'm a disciple of a Rabbi and I am one of the

inner 12 of the Son of God. If it is below the lowest of servants, it's definitely below me." You can imagine their surprise, and probably embarrassment, as Jesus gets up and He ties on a towel and He starts washing their feet. John describes it and he says, "He took His outer garment off and He was left with a towel on."

So not only was He going to do the job of a servant, but He took on the appearance of a servant. One commentator wrote, "Jesus did not lay down His deity in this moment, but He definitely surrendered His dignity." This was a humiliating act of service and the Son of God was doing it. This is the same Son of God Who was at the creation of the world. The same Son of God Who carved out the Pacific Ocean and raised up the Himalayan Mountains. That God is now on His knees and He is washing the feet of the disciples. Just imagine this picture.

What we are going to see in verse 6 is that one of His disciples named Peter, he kind of speaks up. Now before we judge Peter too harshly we need to all embrace one thing. We are Peter. We are Peter. I am, and you are—we all are. If you are reading through the gospels and you see Peter react to a situation, you can pretty much bet that is exactly the way you would have acted. Peter was impetuous, and he was emotional, and he often spoke before he thought.

In verse 6 we are going to watch one of Peter's classic "foot in mouth" situations and we are going to see how Jesus deals with it. Join me in John 13, verse 6, "He," Jesus, "came to Simon Peter, who said to Him, 'Lord, do you wash my feet?' Jesus answered him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.' For He knew who was to betray Him; that was why He said, 'Not all of you are clean.'"

Can we just all appreciate Peter here? Peter is my man. Peter is my dude because this is exactly the way I would have handled this exact situation. Let's just break down this dialog between Peter and Jesus. Jesus is going around and He is washing the feet of the disciples. I imagine it is one of those incredibly awkward and tense situations where everybody is thinking the same thing but no one will say it. Have you ever been in one of those? Everybody is looking at each other like, "I know you're thinking what I'm thinking but we aren't going to say it because she will get mad," like that old awkward tension.

I love Peter because he is willing to say the thing no one else is willing to say. Jesus gets to Peter and Peter says, "Jesus, what are you doing? It seems super weird that You are our Leader and You are washing our feet. I do not understand why You would be doing this."

Jesus, in a very gracious and fatherly way, says, "Peter, I know you don't get it yet but someday you will. Someday My entire life will actually make sense, where right now you are only getting snapshots." Last week we talked about that. Jesus' life only makes sense in His victory over death. Once we fully understand Who Jesus is, then we can piece together His entire life in the gospels.

So Peter says, "That is not good enough for me. Jesus, you will not wash my feet." Now look. I don't know everything. In fact, I don't know most things. But one thing I feel confident in saying is that telling Jesus what He is not allowed to do is a bad idea, just a bad idea. Aren't you glad you came to church for that insight. Telling Jesus what He is and is not allowed to do is something I would highly discourage. You're welcome right?

So Peter says, "Hey Jesus, You will not wash my feet." While it is easy to chuckle at Peter's slip of the tongue here, I'm afraid in my life it sounds awfully familiar. Maybe it is familiar to you too. You have come to Jesus, and Jesus is your King, and He is your Lord. You've made that decision, and maybe you got baptized, and you wore this tee-shirt that said, "All in," and you are like, "I am all in with Jesus." And maybe you even sang a song that said, "Take my life Lord, let it be consecrated Lord to Thee." You are saying, "That is it."

But if someone were to really investigate the agreement that you made, they would find some fine print at the bottom of the page with an asterisk, right? They would see, "Take my life and let it be consecrated Lord to Thee, except for my bank account. Take my life and let it be... except for my marriage. Take my life and let it be... except for my career." We've embraced this fine print and we say, "Look, isn't 99.9 percent of my life good enough Jesus? It is the vast majority of it. You own more of it than I do. Isn't that enough?" We sound a whole lot like Peter saying, "Jesus you aren't going to wash my feet."

You see many of us have invited Jesus into our home and told Him to stay out of certain rooms. You can make up space in the living room. You can be in the basement. You can go to the kitchen. But You stay out of that room. It is mine. I'm still going to own it. That is exactly the attitude that Peter has here when he says, "Jesus, You will not wash my feet."

And in verse 8 Jesus kind of blows Peter back and He says, "Look, if you don't let Me wash you, you are not with Me." Now this gives me the impression that here, in this moment, maybe Jesus is talking about a little bit more than just washing feet. I think He is teaching us something a little bit bigger. You see Jesus is saying, "Unless you let Me serve and sacrifice for you, you don't have a part in Me."

You see there are a lot of us who, if we were being super honest, would have stood where Peter stood and said, "Jesus you are not washing my feet. I don't need it. Because I have my own washcloth, and I have my own water, and I have my own soap, and I'm really scrubbing them with good works. And I'm just going to do enough good to where I can finally earn Your credit." Or, "I am going to scrub my feet and I can do it on my own with church attendance or with just being a good person. So Jesus I don't need You to wash my feet because I can wash them on my own."

Jesus is clearly saying here in verse 8, "If you don't let Me wash your feet, if you don't let Me give you the grace that you need, you don't have a part with Me." Again I love Peter because Peter swings the pendulum. Did you see that? First of all he goes, "Jesus you will not wash my feet." The Jesus says, "Then you can't be with me." Then, in one second he changes, "Okay, then give me the whole shower!"

Peter is the best. I love Peter. In one moment he says, "Don't touch my feet. Jesus this is weird," and then in the next sentence he says, "Then just dump it on Jesus, let's go. Why just a little bit?" And Jesus easily could have said, "Peter, stop it. You are ruining the moment. Just stop it. You are making it weird." Luckily Jesus is far more patient than I am and He graciously says, "Peter, you are clean but you still need Me to wash your feet. You are clean. You don't need to shower, but I still have to clean your feet."

What is Jesus talking about there? You see Jesus is talking about our cleanliness in front of God. He is not just describing the state of the disciples' feet at this particular dinner, in this particular moment, in this particular room, for this particular meal. He is actually painting a much bigger picture. He is talking about our cleanliness in front of God.

1 John 1, verses 8 through 9 says this, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." So here is what is happening. Our sin has brought a mess upon us. I think we know that. We may not say that a lot but we sure can feel it. Because it has made our relationships messy and sin has corrupted our passions, our desires, and our ambitions. Most of all, sin has put a divide between us and God. It is a mess.

Jesus has clearly said, "This is why I showed up. I showed up on a rescue mission to save you from sin, to save you from that mess." And the Bible is incredibly clear that Jesus' sacrifice for us on the cross was enough to cover it all. It was not a shortcoming of sacrifice from Jesus. He covered it all. In fact Hebrews 10 says, "Jesus once and for all wiped out sin. He once and for all defeated death. We are forgiven, we are clean, we are saved. That is not in doubt."

I know I had this struggle growing up. The stress of, "Do I need to re-apply for salvation every time I sin?" I had somehow come to the conclusion that, if I wasn't careful, I would die before I asked for forgiveness from sin and I would be held accountable for that because I had not asked for forgiveness frequently enough or soon enough. It really kind of owned me. I felt a lot of guilt about that. And the Bible is saying, "No, no, no you are clean but I still need to wash your feet."

Jesus is saying, "You are forgiven but there is still a need for daily confession of sin." You see there is this rumor going around that, when it comes to Christianity, when it comes to Jesus, there is this one time decision. You decide once, you get dunked, you get out, and you get your card for Heaven and then it is over. That is kind of the whole process, it is finished. You can kind of ride out the rest of your life and do whatever you want. Jesus is saying, "No, this is more than a one-time decision. You are clean, saved, but there is still a need to wash your feet. There is still a need for daily confession of sin."

So in my life I can have assurance, and I can have comfort, and I can have confidence that I am saved, that I am forgiven, that I am a child of God. But as I daily come to Jesus and confess my sin that is part of my sanctification. That is part of Him transforming me, shaping me into the person I need to be. So Jesus says, "Peter, you don't need to shower. You just need your feet cleaned."

You can think about it like this. I am a creature of habit so I take a shower every morning. I can't even function without one. So I'll always take one in the morning. But that is not the only time I'll wash my hands. I'll wash my hands after using the restroom, or after I eat a meal, or after working outside. So I am a clean person but I still need to wash my hands. So Jesus is saying, "Peter you are clean. You are saved. You're secure, but you still need that daily confession of sin so I can transform you into the person you need to be."

So Peter and Jesus are having this dialog and Jesus makes one thing very, very clear. He says, "Look, most of you are clean, but not all of you." Did you notice that? That point at the very end. Look, I've got 12 of you here. Eleven of you are clean, but there is one who is not. He is talking about Judas again. Judas just kind of serves as this cloud over the entirety of chapter 13. And Jesus is saying, "Look, Judas, even though he followed me, and even though he saw me, and even though he learned from me, he was never a Christian."

The scary thing for me and probably the scary thing for all of us is that Judas looked like one. If anybody had been watching Judas, he just would have assumed, "Of course this guy believes. He is following Him. He is one of the 12. He even had a role, he had a ministry job. He was treasurer. He held all the money.

Draw your own conclusions I guess.” That was kind of what Judas was doing. He served on team Jesus and he was not a Christian.

I think this is kind of a public service announcement for all of us. Following Jesus is more than just going through the motions, and it is more than just a set of behaviors. It is even more than just serving in a ministry position. It is actually having your heart transformed, and Judas’ was not. Judas’ was not.

So Jesus alludes again to His whole crew that one of them was going to betray Him. Peter, our guy, Peter is the dude. Peter looks at John who was sitting next to Jesus at the moment and he says, “John, John, ask Him. Ask Him who it is going to be.” He tries to get John’s attention and to say, “Ask Jesus who it is going to be.” John leans back and says, “Jesus, who is this betrayer? Who in the world would stab you in the back?”

Watch Jesus’ words here in John 13, verses 12 through 17, “When He had washed their feet and put on His outer garments and resumed His place, He said to them, ‘Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.’”

So here Jesus is saying, “I am going to do this thing but I am not going to leave this up for interpretation because I am worried you will misunderstand it. I am going to plainly and bluntly explain to you what I just did.” He says, “Guys, this is an example. This is not just a one-time thing. This is not Me being nice on a particular night. This is an example of a behavior I want you to continue.”

He is saying, “No one is above the master and if I am your Teacher, and I am your Lord, and I wash feet that means you’re not above washing feet.” If the King is not above serving, then no one is. Jesus is saying, “No matter what your rank, no matter how important you think you are, no matter what position you hold, you are never above serving anyone.”

That brings us to a good biblical principle. We are reading the Bible and as we are watching Jesus live out His life, this is a good exercise for us to play out. The exercise goes like this. If He did this, then what does that mean for me? If Jesus did this, then how does that impact my life?

So if Jesus washed feet, does that mean I’m not above any act of service? If Jesus fed the hungry, does that mean I should sacrifice to provide for the needs of others even when they can’t pay me back? And if Jesus touched the sick, does that mean my love is to extend to everyone? If Jesus extended grace to the broken, does that mean I should stop judging others and extend a gracious hand? And if Jesus gave up His life so I could live, does that mean I should pour myself out too?

See Jesus’ example could be summarized like this. When tempted to aim high, get low. When tempted to aim high, get low. You see the majority of messages that you and I have received throughout our entire lives are, “Aim high.” The commercials, or the college counselors, or even our loved ones have said, “You should get as much as you can. You should achieve as much as you can so that someday you can have the status you deserve.”

So it looks like this. Go to the best college, so you can get the best job, so you can make the most money, so you can buy the best stuff, so you can live in the best neighborhood, so your kids can go to the best school, so they can go to the best college, so they can get the best job, so they can make the most money, so they can buy the best stuff, so they can live in the best neighborhood, so your grandkids can live in the right school district, and they can go to the best college, and they can get the best job, and they can make the most money, and they can buy the best stuff, and then your great grandkids can go to the best school, and they can go to the best college, and they can get the best job—it is a cycle that never ends.

I think many of us are looking at each other and saying, “I bought into that and for some reason it has not come through. That is the dream I was sold on. That was the target I was told to aim at. For some reason I have it all and I am still disappointed.” What Jesus is saying to His disciples and He is saying to us is, “You were aiming at the wrong thing the whole time. You bought into that message. You bought into that target. But that is actually not what fulfills at all. In fact, success is not found in status, it is found in service. Success is not about where I land on the org chart. Success is not about who thinks I have it all together. Success is actually about how I serve.”

You see the Author of Life is unlocking the key right here and saying, “You and I bought into the misconception that if I pour myself out too much then I will be empty.” And Jesus says, “No, no, no. If you pour yourself out you will be fuller than you can ever imagine. Success is not found in status. It is found in service.”

So here we are back to our point that I was trying to make a little too early. Jesus and Judas were coming to a head. Peter had asked John who it was and John had asked Jesus and this is how Jesus responds in verse 26. “Jesus answered, ‘It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it.’ So when He had dipped the morsel, He gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him, Jesus said to him, ‘What you are going to do, do quickly.’”

Jesus responds to John’s question. He grabs a piece of bread, dips it, and hands it to Judas. Then Judas was transformed and was taken over. He was no longer calling the shots. The wheels had been set in motion. The betrayal was on its way. And Jesus says, “Go and do it. Just do it quickly. I know what is coming. I release you. Go make it happen. My hour has come.”

Now as I was imagining this whole thing playing out, like the whole dinner from start to finish, this is what really knocked me back. It may seem super obvious but, I’ve got to be honest, it absolutely cut me to the core. This is the truth, if you really play all of this out. Chronologically speaking in this dinner, Jesus washed Judas’s feet. Jesus washed Judas’s feet. That may seem like a “duh” kind of thing to you, but that really knocked me back.

You see earlier it said, “Jesus washed His disciples’ feet.” It did not say, “Jesus washed 11 out of 12.” It did not say, “He really got into it with 11, but He kind of mailed it in when it got to Judas.” It says, “He washed them all.” So hours before Judas was going to stab Him in the back Jesus served him.

I don’t know about you but that convicts me. Because here is what’s true about my service. When I think about when I’ve served in my life, I find it relatively easy and simple to serve the people I already like. Like the people you love, your family or loved ones, maybe your friends, maybe people in your neighborhood. You can serve them.

Or I will actually really easily serve someone if I think I am going to get something back. I will serve them if I think they have some hookups that I could use or if I will really elevate myself in their eyes and I think that it will benefit me in the future. But when it comes to washing someone's feet who maybe I don't like, or maybe someone who has hurt me, or maybe someone who has betrayed me I don't really sign up for that job. Jesus, knowing full well what Judas was about to do... In John 6 it tells us that Jesus knew all along and, even though He knew Judas was going to stab Him in the back, He washed his feet.

He is calling you and me to do the same. There is a really good chance that you did not come here today with a folded up piece of paper, handwritten, that had a list of your enemies. I hope not. I hope that is not true about you. If it is we have counselors down front who will immediately hand you to Homeland Security. We can't have that.

But anyway, you most likely do not identify people as your enemies but there are definitely some people who get on your nerves, and some people who are hard to love, and who are definitely hard to serve. So maybe for you it is the fellow mom at your kid's school and she seems perfect. The hair is perfect and the makeup is perfect. She is like Pinterest with legs on. She is super-creative and you just cannot stand her. She is the worst. As you are watching her you are kind of hoping things are bad at home and you are wishing the worst for her because you've got cereal all over the place and it is just gross. Jesus is saying, "Instead of judging her, I am asking you to serve her. I want you to wash her feet."

Or maybe for you it is the co-worker who is your political opposite. You guys disagree about the president, and gas prices, and marriage laws, and he is loud, and he is vocal. All you want to do is one day in the lunchroom expose him and tear him apart in a debate. All you want to do is show him how fragile his worldview really is. God is saying, "Instead of destroying him, I want you to serve him. I want you to wash his feet."

Or maybe for you it is the loud and obnoxious student in your dorm and he is selfish and he does not consider anyone else. All you want to do is gossip about him and talk about him when he is not around. And Jesus is saying, "I don't want you to gossip. I want you to serve him. I want you to wash his feet."

When Jesus was talking about this being the example, He was including Judas. He said, "I want you to live this out on a regular basis. Not only do you serve the people that you love, you serve your enemy." Now I don't know about you but that is not my natural inclination. I just have to be honest. I don't wake up every day thinking, "How can I serve the person who gets on my nerves the most?"

That is because Jesus is pushing me outside of my comfort zone. And He is pushing me outside of my natural skill set—not to make me uncomfortable for no reason, but when I get outside of my comfort zone, that is when I am dependent on Jesus. And the only way I can wash Judas' feet is to I depend on Jesus Christ. That is the only way it happens. But Jesus says, "This is the example. This is how I want you to live."

Jesus wraps it up in John 13 with some vision casting. He says, "You guys are going to be My representatives out in the world and here is how I want it to go down." In verses 34 through 35 Jesus wraps up, "A New commandment I give to you, that you love one another; just as I have loved you, you also are to love one another. By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

So Jesus is saying, "Look, eventually you are going to be the Christians, you are going to start the church, and I want your lasting reputation to be the way you love one another. When outsiders look in on you, they may not agree with you, they may not believe what you believe, but they will certainly know you love one another. And it is through the example of service that can all be true."

Jesus' love is patient, and it is gracious, and it is all the way to the end. It is all the way to the cross. This is a love that cannot be found in some self-help book or a dating advice column. This is a love that keeps no records of wrongs. This is a revolutionary kind of love. And Jesus says, "That is how I want my people to be in the world. That is how I want people to understand Christians."

Now that word love needs some clarity because when people read this verse some have taken it to such an extreme as to say, "As a church, as a group of Christians, we are supposed to love people. Doesn't that mean we just accept everyone and we never say anything that is controversial? We never confront them with anything the Bible says." Love has kind of been co-opted into a free hugs campaign. Love is being nice.

I've got to tell you that love is different than just being nice. Here is a simple equation: Love = grace + truth. Earlier in John as he was introducing Jesus he said, "Jesus is full of grace and truth, full of both." Now that does not mean that Jesus was 50 percent grace and 50 percent truth and that made up all of Jesus. What John meant was that Jesus was 100 percent grace and 100 percent truth, and that is what made up Jesus. There are not switches where we are either/or, it is always both and. That is an example of love.

Now many of us we have one or the other that we error toward. It is either team "grace" or its team "truth" and we kind of have our preference or the way we are naturally wired. But when we choose we get into dangerous territory because one without the other is not love.

You see team "grace" is very encouraging and is very nice, but it is not very truthful. It is almost like watching someone walk into oncoming traffic and having a very nice tone about it, "Hey, you are great. And I believe you believe you are not in danger, so if that is what you believe then that is okay and I just accept you the way you are. Meanwhile there is a truck coming." The truck wins. That is just a fact. That is the way it works.

"Truth" is the other way. Truth is always screaming about the truck that is on its way but rarely extends a hand to walk people out of its way. Truth has a lot of information. And people with the truth are probably right but they don't have influence because they haven't loved anyone. So love is grace and truth together.

Truth is loving someone enough to point out the mess, then grace is loving them enough to walk them through the mess. They go together. Grace and truth are not incompatible, they are inseparable. They can't exist apart. They go one with another. And Jesus is saying, "That is the way I want my people to be defined." Do you know the best way to show grace and truth? Do you know the best way to show love? It is to serve. So Jesus is saying, "This is the example. This is what I want to be the defining action. The defined behavior of my people is service."

So let's ask the big question. If Jesus did this, then what does that mean for us? If Jesus washed feet, then what does that mean?

Number one is this: Service is the great pride killer.

The best way for us to fully understand John 13 is for us to also understand Luke 22. You see in Luke 22 the disciples are hanging out with Jesus and they get into this argument about who is the greatest. They are cool with being part of the 12, but they are kind of wondering, "In history how am I going to be ranked? Am I going to be like the number seven disciple? Am I going to be the number 11 disciple? Am I going to be Judas, the twelfth? How am I going to be in the grand scheme of things?"

So while the disciples are arguing about who is the best, Jesus grabs a towel, and He grabs a bowl of water, and He takes a knee, and He starts serving. Service is the great pride killer. When I show up to serve someone I am not looking for accolades, I am not looking for glory, I am not looking for the TV cameras to come and capture my behavior. I'm there to lift someone else up. So service is the great pride killer.

The second one is this: Service is the great life giver.

You see Jesus uses this word. He says, "You are *blessed* if you do this. You are *blessed* if you do that." That word blessed means you have joy, it means contentment, it means fulfillment. So Jesus is saying, "We've been aiming at the wrong thing the whole time. We've been aiming at status when service, all along, is the thing that is going to give us life." When you pour yourself out you are not empty. You are not dry. You are not tired. In fact you are filled up.

So here is what I would like to do. I think it would be a missed opportunity if we talked about service and our call to do that without giving you a real opportunity to do so. So here is what you can do. Around here on a weekly basis we have hundreds of volunteer opportunities. There are short-term mission trips, both within our country and internationally. You can go on our website and click the *Connect* tab and there you will find out about all of our service opportunities.

I'd like to highlight one for you tonight. There is an opportunity we have in our city. We have developed a partnership with an organization called City Mosaic and their mission is to have churches in the city of Indianapolis team up together to make a big difference in the city of Indianapolis.

So through City Mosaic we have an opportunity at a school called School 43. It is an IPS school where we can go and we can make a big difference in the lives of students who do not have the same opportunities and, most importantly, the same relationships you and I are afforded on a daily basis. You see, we can go in, and we can encourage, and we can love, and we can play, and we can have fun, and we can laugh with some kids who really need it.

So by signing up for more information about School 43, you'll learn you can go and you can assist a teacher who is greatly under-resourced or you can play with some kids who just need a male role model. You can give up your time and your energy to make a big difference, not necessarily halfway across the world, but in our backyard.

You see we love Indianapolis and we want Jesus to be the King of Indianapolis. We want people to know Him in a very real way. The best way of doing that is through love, which is grace and truth shown in service. So if you are interested in finding out more information there are two things you can do. Through our church app you can hit the *Connect* button and there you can fill out your information and

then we will get you information about what it looks like to serve at School 43. Or you can go on our website this week and you can click on the City Mosaic link and you will find out more about School 43.

Here is what I am saying. They need about 100 volunteers to come in on a regular basis and serve in any way they can. You do not need a master's degree. You do not need a certain number of dollars in your bank account. You do not need any level of expertise other than willingness and a heart of service.

We can make a big difference in a school that is here in our city that needs us. They need about 100 people. I think we should do it. I think in a group like this over three services, look around at everybody, I think we can make a massive difference and change the lives of some kids forever for the sake and the glory of Jesus. So that is my ask, that we can make a big difference in School 43, we can make a big difference in the northwest side of Indianapolis, in the state of Indiana, in the United States of America, in the world. Not because of our own glory, not because we are smart enough, not because we are skilled enough, but because Jesus saved us. It is out of our response to grace. That is why we serve.

Can I pray for you? I'd love to pray that we can be courageous enough to serve in a way we are not really ready for and that we can follow God's will for our lives.

God we love You so much and we are so encouraged by Your Word. This is challenging and this is not easy. Quite honestly, this isn't really the first thing on our minds. But You said this was the example and You said this is how You wanted Your people to be known. So we hear You and we want to respond to Your Word. Father, You are good and You love us to the end. As a response to that we give You our lives. It's in Your incredible name I pray. Amen.