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| John 13:1-17 | Jesus Questions –  Do you understand what I have done for you? | Pinelands – 9am – 02/03/2025 |

*Recap on the Jesus Questions - “What are you looking for?”*

*- “Who do you say I am?”*

**Foot Washing.**

I am not sure if you have experienced a foot washing service

**I have…** and it is a powerful event *(for me at least)*

**For me…** **Two things happened…**

1) I found it easy to wash feet…

* I think because it is serving others

that comes quite easy to me

2) I found it much more difficult to have my feet washed

* I was surprised by the intimacy of the event
* The vulnerability I felt
* Almost a sense of discomfort.

Because of my foot washing experience…

Our Gospel story has taken on a really alive meaning.

**Jesus takes a towel…** ties it around his waste…

**Gets a bowl…** bends down and washes his disciple’s feet

**Peter protests…** **BUT** Jesus must do this…

**Then he says…**

***“Do you understand what I have just done for you?”***

Jesus does answer his question himself…

**BUT…** ***do we heed the challenge and live that way?***

It is worth our time to engage with this question again.

**FIRSTLY…**

**Will you notice** that when Jesus washed his disciples feet…

**He demonstrated a downward Journey.**

*- A journey God* ***wants us all*** *to go on.*

Remember how society was structured back then

*(not too different from ours today)*

It was arranged **like a PYRAMID…**

**At the top…** - the powerful, the well educated,

- the well off, the well connected.

- They were in charge, called the shots

**At the bottom…-** the powerless, the uneducated,

- the slaves, the alienated.

- It was there job to serve those at the top.

That was how it worked… Never the other way around.

One of the ways this ***SERVICE*** happened…

Was the washing of feet - after a journey, coming home

It was the most menial and lowest of Jobs…

The lowest of the servants did it.

**NOW…** Picture the disciples when they got together…

for the Passover supper with Jesus

Who was going to do this job… wash the feet?

They certainly were ***not prepared to do it.***

When Jesus gets up, puts the towel on, bends to wash their feet…

This is unthinkable, unheard of, even unacceptable.

He was identifying with the bottom of the pyramid

***Journeyed downward…***

*Acting as a Servant* **and** *Serving as a Servant*

Not surprising Peter responds the way he does…

**We can almost hear him saying…**

*“This is not the way things work!*

*Our master should not be washing feet!*

*I will not let Jesus wash my feet!”*

**Jesus says…** ***“If you do not let me wash your feet…***

***You can have no part of Me.”***

We might not **ACT** like Peter**… BUT…** we think the same

**In our pyramid society…**

It is much easier to spend time with those near the top

***THAN…*** with those at the bottom.

It is far more comfortable, less threatening, much safer.

**People at the bottom are…**

Suffering people, broken people,

Excluded people… Often scary to be with.

We battle to expose ourselves to those kind of people…

We feel vulnerable, afraid, unsettled

**Yet God continues to call us on *a journey downward.***

See the challenge in Jesus’ question…

***“Do you understand what I have just done for you?”***

**SECONDLY…**

In Jesus’ actions of the washing of the feet…

He was giving us ***A PATTERN TO FOLLOW…***

Remember Jesus’ words after he had finished washing…

***“I have given you an example… go and do likewise.”***

If we want to experience the life God gives…

*We must follow Jesus’ example and wash one another’s feet*

**Service** in this way often gets expressed in the…

*Mundane, Menial and the Messy.*

It is the… Helping to clean up after dinner.

Setting up the hall for Home Grown

Helping with the shopping

Lifting to the doctors appointment / to Church

You Know… the list goes on and on and on.

Loving service… The example of Christ…

***The PATTERN we are to follow***.

*Jesus is really challenging us to become servant minded people…*

**To be a servant in *MIND* and *HEART…***

***Jesus is modeling a new way of BEING…***

A new attitude to life…

***A new way*** of loving and serving…

Our friends, neighbours and enemies…

**I don’t think** we have even begun to grasp…

the implications of this kind of serving lifestyle.

**THIRDLY…**

**Will you also notice** **how** **Jesus invites us** into an…

***UPSIDE-DOWN AUTHORITY***

When he washed his disciples feet…

**He did not give up His authority…**

Peter still calls Jesus… *Lord and Master*

Jesus does **not deny it.**

***In Today’s Society…***

Leaders and those in authority… *(it is implied)*

Should be strong, be in charge,

Call the shots, be in control

Almost aloof and distant…

Dare not be too familiar… inaccessible.

**BUT** Jesus gives us a very different picture…

About **HOW** authority is to be exercised.

**NOT *–*** *in high power, Domination and Position…*

**BUT**  *in a towel and a basin.*

**It is about being the leader** **BUT…**

**Serving with the servant.**

A friend of mine, who is not a Christian, is a good example…

He had just started a job as a production manager…

*On his first day at work…*

He spent the whole morning greeting and introducing

Himself to every worker on the factory floor.

*(with his first name)*

He speaks often about how that impacted on the…

Lives of the factory workers and the

*relationship they now share.*

**He is still the boss… BUT** he is approachable, accessible.

***How do we exercise our authority…***

**AS…** Grandparents, Parents, Employers, Friends,

Teachers, Managers, Executives, etc

***Do we…***

Throw our weight around **OR**

Lead with a spirit of humility?

Come across as superior **OR**

As someone seeking to serve?

**ALL OF US…** have some form of leadership responsibility…

How we lead and serve in those places…

Indicate more than anything else…

Our ***REAL*** answer to Jesus’ question…

***“Do you understand what I have done for you?”***

**Richard Foster** got it right when he wrote…

***“Service that is duty-motivated breaths death. Service that***

***flows out of our inward person is life, and joy and peace.***

***The risen Christ beckons us to the ministry of the towel.”***

**Are you prepared to… Make the Journey downward?**

**Are you prepared to… Follow the pattern of Christ?**

***AND…***

**Are you prepared to… Exercise upside-down authority?**

Knowing is one thing… Doing is another…

***BUT…*** **They must always go together.**

***And is this not a way of Making Christ Known?***

**John 13:1-17 *Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet***

It was now the day before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. He had always loved those in the world who were his own, and he loved them to the very end.

Jesus and his disciples were at supper. The Devil had already put into the heart of Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, the thought of betraying Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him complete power; he knew that he had come from God and was going to God. So he rose from the table, took off his outer garment, and tied a towel around his waist. Then he poured some water into a washbasin and began to wash the disciples' feet and dry them with the towel around his waist. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Are you going to wash my feet, Lord?”

Jesus answered him, “You do not understand now what I am doing, but you will understand later.”

Peter declared, “Never at any time will you wash my feet!”

“If I do not wash your feet,” Jesus answered, “you will no longer be my disciple.”

Simon Peter answered, “Lord, do not wash only my feet, then! Wash my hands and head, too!”

Jesus said, “Those who have taken a bath are completely clean and do not have to wash themselves, except for their feet. All of you are clean—all except one.” (Jesus already knew who was going to betray him; that is why he said, “All of you, except one, are clean.”)

After Jesus had washed their feet, he put his outer garment back on and returned to his place at the table. “Do you understand what I have just done to you?” he asked. “You call me Teacher and Lord, and it is right that you do so, because that is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have just washed your feet. You, then, should wash one another's feet. I have set an example for you, so that you will do just what I have done for you. I am telling you the truth: no slaves are greater than their master, and no messengers are greater than the one who sent them. Now that you know this truth, how happy you will be if you put it into practice!