

Series: Behold the Lamb

FOR I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE JOHN 13

Text: John 13:15

John 13:15

¹⁵ *For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you.*

Introduction:

In this text we can see clearly the heart of our Savior. In this passage the Lord is teaching His disciples a very valuable lesson on being a servant and He teaches this lesson by example. He proves that He didn't come to be served but rather to serve.

Mark 10:45

⁴⁵ *For even the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*

In showing Himself to be a servant of men, Jesus left us an example of the kind of heart we are to have for others.

Let's consider the lesson our Savior taught through this example.

1. THE WORK OF THE SERVANT (VS. 1-5)

John 13:1-5

¹ Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. ² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him; ³ Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God; ⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. ⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

John 13:18-20

¹⁸ I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. ¹⁹ Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. ²⁰ Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

A. The Love of the Servant (vs. 1)

John 13:1

¹ *Now before the feast of the passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end.*

This verse tells us that Jesus knows He is nearing the end of His earthly ministry. He knows that He is about to go to the cross and suffer for sin. He knows the end is near. Yet, through it all, His heart is still overcome with love for His Disciples.

Note not only the Love of the Servant but also:

B. The Life of the Servant (vs. 3)

John 13:3

³ *Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he was come from God, and went to God;*

This verse speaks of the life of Jesus. When He came into this world, He came as One sent from God to live a sinless life and become sin for fallen men.

2 Corinthians 5:21

²¹ *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no*

sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.

The Lord had one purpose when He came to this world and that purpose was to die for sin.

Luke 19:10

¹⁰ For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.

Note not only the Love of the Servant and the Life of the Servant but also:

C. The Labor of the Servant (vs. 2, 4-5)

John 13:2

² And supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him;

John 13:4-5

⁴ He riseth from supper, and laid aside his garments; and took a towel, and girded himself. ⁵ After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded.

We see the Master doing the work of a slave. In those days, it was customary for a slave to wash the feet of visitors. To not provide this kindness would be

considered uncivilized and inhospitable. Apparently, there were no servants available to do this job for the Lord and His Disciples, so the Lord Himself gets up from the table, removes His outer garment, pours Himself a basin of water and begins to wash the feet of the Disciples.

I can imagine the amazement that must have filled their minds and faces as their Lord washed their dirty feet one by one. Yet, as incredible as this scene is, Jesus was doing something here that was unknown to all but one of the Disciples. He was washing the feet of the very man who would, later that same evening, betray Him to His enemies.

Note not only “The Work of the Servant” but also:

2. THE WORD OF THE SERVANT (VS.6-11)

John 13:6-11

⁶ Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? ⁷ Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. ⁸ Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. ⁹ Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. ¹⁰ Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. ¹¹ For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

Note:

A. A Word for Simon (vs. 6-9)

- Peter was Shocked (vs. 6-7)

When the Lord makes His way around to Simon Peter, Peter is shocked! He simply cannot believe that the Lord would want to serve Him.

I like Peter stand amazed when I consider all that the Lord has done, is doing and will do in my life. That He would love me so is beyond my comprehension. After all, there is no merit in any one of us to commend us to

God. If we got what we deserved, we would all be in Hell today, but thank God He doesn't give us that which we deserve, He gives that which we do not! Salvation and all the benefits of it are the products of God's grace.

- Peter Was Stubborn

John 13:8

⁸ Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

When Peter hears that the Lord is really planning to do this, he tells the Lord, in effect, "you will never, no, never wash my feet!"

This is the equivalent of irreverence.

Remember the first condition of discipleship is obedience.

Peter is refusing to submit to the Lord and he does so through a display of false humility.

The Lord reminds him of a great truth. Unless a man is willing to submit to the commandments of the Lord, he can have no fellowship with the Lord.

John 14:15

¹⁵ *If ye love me, keep my commandments.*

John 14:21

²¹ *He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him.*

Obedience is the proof of love.

- Peter's Submission (vs. 9)

John 13:9

⁹ Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also *my hands and my head.*

When Peter hears this gentle rebuke, he throws himself before the Lord and says, "If washing my feet will bring me closer to you, then don't stop there, but wash all of me!"

This where the Lord desires for us to be as well – a place of surrender to Him.

Note not only "The Work of the Servant" and the "Word of the Servant" but also:

3. THE WISDOM OF THE SERVANT (VS. 12-17)

John 13:12-17

¹² So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? ¹³ Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. ¹⁶

Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. ¹⁷ If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

A. The Lord Gives an Example (vs. 12-15)

The Lord set the standard by which every one of His servant is to live their lives. In this action of the Lord, we can see Him showing His followers that we are all expected to serve one another.

Illustration:

His Disciples had been guilty of arguing about who would be first in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Luke 22:24

²⁴ *And there was also a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest.*

They were all concerned over who would be the greatest in Heaven, but the Lord reminded them that true greatness is a mystery. Men never earn the respect of others by forced obedience, but they earn the respect of others by first being a servant.

Mark 10:42-44

⁴² *But Jesus called them to him, and saith unto them, Ye know that they which are accounted to rule over the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and their great ones exercise authority upon them. ⁴³ But so shall it not be among you: but whosoever will be great among you, shall be your minister: ⁴⁴ And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all.*

The Lord says that the path to greatness is through humility. This is one of the great mysteries of the faith! There are several others. The way to life is through death. The way to get is to give. The way to greatness is by becoming a servant to others.

- The Lord Gives an Exhortation (vs. 16)

John 13:16

¹⁶ *Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him.*

The lesson here is simple. If the Lord was willing to be a servant, then all of His followers ought to be willing to serve as well.

- The Lord Gives an Expectation (vs. 17)

John 13:17

¹⁷ If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

The Lord says that if we know these things, we will be "happy" if we do them! Happy means "Blessed." When we take the example of the Lord and put it into action, we can be assured of the Lord's blessing on our lives.

Close:

The Lord left us a wonderful example to follow. His was a life lived in the service of others.

If you were to sum up your life, could you honestly say that others come before you in your thinking and your serving?

Can you honestly say that you are following the Lord's example to the best of your ability?