**1. Motivate**

When have you seen someone go out of their way to serve others?

* hospital volunteers
* person who initiates a program to help children learn to read
* a grandma who loves to cook up a great feast for family holiday meal
* people who volunteer to search for someone lost in the wilderness
* medical people during the pandemic
* forest fire workers

A video introduction is available. View it at <https://watch.liberty.edu/media/t/1_n2fn17o7>
If you have no wi-fi where you teach, best to download to your computer from <https://tinyurl.com/4sd38zm9>

* volunteer fire companies in small towns
* grade school volunteer classroom helpers

**2. Transition**

A faithful hardworking volunteer makes a statement by his or her actions.

* We reflect Christ when we serve others with humility.

**3. Bible Study**

3.1 Jesus Models Humble Service

Listen for a contrast of position and action.

John 13:3-5 (NIV) 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.

What background did Jesus know about Himself?

* He had all power from the Father
* He had come from God
* He was returning to God

Consider the significance of those statements in understanding who Jesus is.

* God the Son had a specific role in the creation
* He was/is fully God and fully human, He entered into time and physical space as a human
* He would leave as a physical human and return in spirit form with Divine characteristics … omnipresence, omnipotence, omniscience

What cultural courtesy appears to have been ignored in Jesus’ gathering with the disciples?

* someone (the lowest ranking servant in the household) would greet guests with the refreshing service of washing their feet
* footwear was sandals
* even if you bathed daily, walking the streets resulted in dirty, sweaty, stinky feet

How did Jesus model humble service?

* he removed his outer garment
* wrapped in a towel
* proceeded to take upon Himself, the lowly task of washing each person’s feet

What is the relevance of the three things Jesus knew about Himself, in the context of what He did?

* He was fully aware of His deity
* He knew He had every freedom to exercise His power
* yet He accepted the lowly task of a servant
* of all people, He had every right to order someone else to do this … even an angel!
* yet He was willing to set all of that aside – He did what needed doing and was willing to do it, no matter what the task
* He wanted His followers both then, today to have the same attitude and willingness

⇨Humility is demonstrated through service but begins with attitude

⇨ Recall some of the conversations the disciples had recently had in Jesus presence …

wanted to have positions immediately beside Jesus’ throne when He began to reign

argued about who was really the greatest disciple

in the midst of His teaching about the coming death and resurrection, they are quibbling about who is more important

When and why is it difficult for you to serve others like Jesus did?

* when it is unappreciated
* when it is really a dirty job (note the popularity of the TV show, Dirty Jobs)
* when it is something that requires loss of dignity
* when it pays little or nothing
* when really busy, really tired, really stressed
* when the recipient doesn’t really deserve it, in my opinion

What are some traits of humility that God would want us to possess and practice?

* willing to help others
* willing to do menial tasks when needed
* give freely of our resources to the work of the Kingdom of God
* be honest with yourself about your limitations, and your skills/spiritual gifts
* don’t try to be someone you are not, and don’t try to deny abilities God has given

Consider Romans 12:3 (NIV) *For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the measure of faith God has given you.*

3.2 Jesus Makes Us Clean

Listen for Peter’s response.

John 13:6-10 (NIV) 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, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

Why do you think Peter expressed shock?

* he realized how inappropriate it was – we would say, “what’s wrong with this picture?”
* he (Peter) was the underling, the fisherman turned disciple
* Jesus was the wise teacher, the leader, the esteemed rabbi … the Messiah
* it was supposed to be a lowly servant who did this smelly job

When and why do you find it difficult to allow others to serve or help you in time of need?

* you don’t want to be “in debt” to that person
* it is sometimes a matter of pride, you have to admit that you *need* help
* you don’t want to inconvenience that other person
* you feel you don’t deserve the help
* sometimes you feel it would be easier to take care of things yourself … the other person might not be able to do it to the expectations you set for your own self

Note how Peter was struggling, uncomfortable with the lesson. Jesus was trying to teach all the disciples through this sequence of events …

* the previous “who’s the greatest?” conversations
* revelations of the coming crucifixion and resurrection
* the humble, servant task of foot washing

In what ways does God work in our lives that make *us* uncomfortable, forces us to learn trust and obedience?

* normal ups and downs of life … sickness, accidents, injury
* loss of a loved one which cause us to as “why?”
* put us in situations that stretch us
* allow us to go through events that force us to trust Him, depend on Him
* call us into ministries that require His enabling
* confrontations with situations where we are forced to go to God
* may be similar to physical workouts where we say, “no pain, no gain”

3.3 Jesus Calls Us to Humble Service

Listen for teaching about servanthood.

John 13:14-16 (NIV) 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 I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

Note the two titles Jesus affirmed … Lord and Teacher. What is the significance of each?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Lord | Teacher |
| * Jesus is in charge
* He is sovereign – He does as He pleases to do
* we surrender to His control and direction in our lives
 | * He is omniscient, all knowing, all wise
* He imparts His wisdom to us
* We seek to learn what he has to teach us
 |



Ho do these thoughts fit in with the diagram
from Campus Crusade we often use?

* Jesus has the wisdom to direct us
* We don’t
* He can be trusted to accomplish good
things in our lives

So, what is Jesus’ point after claiming these positions of authority?

* It is God’s purpose that *all* believers should be willing to take the role of a servant
* God intends for us to live the role of servant leadership
* greatness is demonstrated by willingness to serve
* greatness is not necessarily proved by wielding authority over others and bossing them around

What would be equivalent to washing other people’s feet for a Christ-follower today?

* willing to help others, quick to see a need and work to fulfill it
* not looking for fame or fortune as we serve others
* reaching out to people in need
* giving of our resources with no requirement or anticipation of reciprocity
* acting in selfless love to help where needed

In what kinds of service can we be involved in our circle of acquaintances?

* helping out a neighbor who is going through a time of sickness
* volunteering for maintenance or office tasks around the church
* helping out with children’s ministries, hauling neighborhood children to kids meetings
* opening your home for a neighborhood Bible study
* doing errands for someone who is indisposed

Use the last page as a handout so your learners can take home the application points of this week’s lesson.

* yard work for an elderly person

Application

Observe.

* Pay attention to those who have the responsibility of serving you.
* Create a list of the ways Jesus has sent others to serve you and thank Him for those people and ways.
* Take the initiative to express your gratitude to those who serve you.

Serve.

* Ask God to put one person on your heart whom you can serve this week.

Share.

* Ask God to put one person on your heart who has not experienced the cleansing of Jesus.
* Share with that person how Jesus has forgiven you.

Double Puzzle

Then you use the numbers to put the letters in the message. Your pastor needs this for next week’s sermon! If you get stuck, go to <https://tinyurl.com/4sd38zm9> Check out other cool family activities there also.



Art by Bill Zimmereman <https://makebeliefscomix.com>

First you unscramble the words in the list on the left. They’re from your Bible Study passage – John 13:3 – 10, 14 – 16 (NIV)