

How Did Jesus Serve?

John 13:1-5

Good morning, Everyone! If you don't know yet, and I'm sure you all know now, because all of us I'm sure have our eyes and ears open to any developments regarding the coronavirus, medical experts are saying that the disease has entered a new phase. They call it community spread. What it means is that the coronavirus has become like the common cold or the flu wherein you can catch it without any warning. You can catch it without knowing the source. There now at least four cases of that in the West Coast. And as medical experts say, it's just a matter of time. And that's why we really need to be vigilant. Be hygienic always. Don't be too sweet with other people. You know, no beso-beso in the meantime. Maybe just fist bumps or elbow bumps or hip bumps. As the saying goes, "An ounce of prevention is more than a pound of cure."

Now, let's go to our message for today. Have you ever been greeted with the words, "How do you do?" I remember learning this when I was in high school. So, when someone greets you "How do you do?" what is your response? The proper response is "How do you do?" Sounds strange, right? But rarely you hear that anymore. Because it is strange, I guess. So, I read an author who wrote that when he was young boy, and when he visited his playmates at their homes, the parents would say with a smile, "How do you do?" And he didn't know what to say. He just smiled back. But the parents would continue to just look at him still smiling as if waiting for him to say something. And so, he answered with "Do what?" And when he answered back with "Do what?" the smile would disappear and replaced by a frown. And he couldn't figure that out until later when he learned about it in high school.

And that's where I got the title of our new series which starts today. "How did Jesus do?" And your response is, altogether, "Do what?" I will not frown and instead tell you that this series will tackle questions like "How did Jesus serve? How did Jesus speak? How did Jesus pray? How did Jesus share the Good News? How did Jesus love?"

Please turn with me to John 13:1-17.

So, we see here that Jesus gathered with His disciples in an upper room to celebrate one final meal together before He would die on the cross. It's important to know that it was their custom that the host would provide a servant at the door of any dinner party to wash the feet of the guests. You see, in those days people walked with sandals down dusty roads. Therefore, it was standard practice that a servant would greet guests at the door to wash their feet. Much like we would have someone greet visitors and offer to take their coat and hang it up.

Imagine that you can see everything in the room, but no one in the room can see you. You stand, unnoticed, and watch the events of the Last Supper. Here come the twelve with Jesus, climbing the stairs. The first disciple walks in the door, looks for the foot-washing servant and notices he's not there. Does he wash his own feet? Does he take off his garment and become a servant and wash everyone else's feet? Look at his eyes. He is saying, "Not me. I'm a disciple of the great teacher Jesus. I'm not a lowly servant." So, he hurries to the table to get a good spot. The second disciple comes in. Realizing that the first guy refused to be a servant, he comes to the same conclusion. He too goes in and looks for a good spot at the table. Each disciple does the same thing. They all file in. They all go right past the water basin and recline at the table, making themselves comfortable as they reclined on the table, perhaps, covering their stinky feet with their robes.

Finally, Jesus and His twelve followers are all at the table. Jesus looks at the water. He looks at the filthy feet of the disciples. You can see it in His eyes.

Unbelievable! Three years of sermon after sermon, illustration after illustration, confrontation after confrontation, and not one of them is willing to serve his brothers. And even more heartbreaking, not one of them was humble enough to serve even Jesus.

After giving every chance for one of them to take the role of a servant, Jesus gets up from the table. No one knows where He is going or what He is about to do. Jesus quietly walks to the water basin and begins to remove His outer garment. He carefully picks up a towel and tucks it in His belt, exactly the way a common servant would. Then He pours the water into the basin and kneels down at the feet of one of His followers.

This must have shocked his disciples. This must be the first time they witnessed a host washed his guests' feet. I suppose everybody was quiet, you could hear a pin drop. What they were witnessing was something unheard of.

So, let me give you a picture of how Jesus served.

1. Jesus served his disciples with love.

“Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

(John 13:1b).

We need to remember that the disciples at that moment were not an easy bunch to love:

- They were arguing about which of them was the greatest (Luke 22:24).
- One of them would betray Him.
- One of them would deny Him.
- Ten of them would desert Him.

Jesus had the right motivation for serving the disciples: love. How about us? What is our motivation for serving others? Why do we serve others? Sometimes we can have the wrong motivation.

What are the wrong motivations for service?

- The need to soothe feelings of guilt
- The desire to earn God's favor
- The need to be praised by others

You see, love for others starts with a love for God. When we discover that God loves us with an everlasting love and that we matter deeply to Him, we want to obey Him. And one of the most important commands He has given us is, "Love one another."

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another." (John 13:34-35).

"This is love: not that we loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as an atoning sacrifice for our sins. Dear friends, since God so loved us, we also ought to love one another" (1 John 4:10-11).

Now, how can you and I be like Jesus? **Have the right motivation: Serve others because of love.**

How did Jesus serve? He served with love. He also **2. Jesus served by focusing on the needs of others.**

I'm sure I don't need to tell you that people are in the business of "looking out for number one." That was true in Jesus' day and it's definitely true today.

From the moment of birth, people urge others to meet their needs. The infant cries until Mom comes to feed or change her. The toddler misbehaves until Dad stops playing with little sister and gives full attention to him. At older ages, siblings often demand privileges in at least equal proportion to, and preferably in greater amounts than, their brothers and sisters. Adults often seek the highest paying jobs, the most comfortable homes, the most prestigious cars, and the most extravagant vacations possible, and are willing to go to considerable trouble to

achieve these ends. What begins as a survival instinct quickly becomes an expression of fallen human nature.

We are obsessed with having our own needs met. But Jesus was different. During the Last Supper Jesus knew that He would die in just a few short hours. When it would have been normal for Him to be consumed with His own concerns, He was focused on the needs of His disciples.

a. The Contrast: Jesus & Judas

- Judas sought personal advancement at the expense of others (John 12:4-6; Matthew 26:14-16).
- Jesus became a servant for the benefit of others (Philippians 2:3-8). Please turn to Phil 2.

Jesus, who existed “in the form of God,” took “the form of a servant.” The form of God was not exchanged for the form of a servant; it was revealed in the form of a servant.

b. The Parallel: Dirty Feet & Dirty Hearts

- He saw the disciples’ dirty feet, so He “got up from the meal” (John 13:4). Jesus saw our dirty hearts, so He left heaven and came to earth. He left his position of privilege to come down to our level, 1q even lower than our level.
- He “took off his outer clothing.” **“Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped”** (Philippians 2:6).
- He “wrapped a towel around his waist.” **“But made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant”** (Philippians 2:7).
- He “poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet” (John 13:5) – **“And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!”** (Philippians 2:8).

After Jesus finished washing all of the disciples’ feet, He put away the towel, put on His robe, and returned to recline at the table. Then He took a piece of bread and

broke it and said, “This is my body which is for you.” Next, He took a cup and said, “This is my blood. I pour it out for you.” One more act of service would follow—the ultimate act of service: the giving of His life. As Jesus poured water into a basin to wash the disciples’ dirty feet, He would pour out His blood on the cross to wash our dirty hearts.

Why did Jesus do all these? He says,

“The Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many” (Mark 10:45).

I’m sure that when the disciples remembered Jesus’ statement that He had come to serve, the two scenes that were replayed over and over in their minds were Jesus washing their feet and Jesus hanging on the cross.

How can you and I be like Jesus? Have the right attitude: Serve others with humility.

“Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others” (Philippians 2:4).

Serving with humility means stooping down so as to benefit others. That’s the example that Jesus gave us. He stooped down as he washed each of his disciples’ feet. Again he stooped down figuratively when he hang on the cross and died on the cross to benefit us. His death provided cleansing for our dirty hearts that are mired in sin. We received his forgiveness when he hung his head low after breathing his last breath,

Are we ready to stoop down, too, so that others may benefit from our act of grace?

Max Lucado, in his book “Just Like Jesus”, tells the story of a couple who struggled during their marriage. Lucado says (quote), “Recently I shared a meal with some friends. A husband and wife wanted to tell me about a storm they were weathering. Through a series of events, she learned of an act of infidelity that had

occurred more than a decade ago. He had made the mistake of thinking it'd be better not to tell her, so he didn't. But she found out. And as you can imagine, she was deeply hurt.

“Through the advice of a counselor, the couple dropped everything and went away for several days. A decision had to be made. Would they flee, fight, or forgive? So they prayed. They talked. They walked. They reflected. In this case the wife was clearly in the right. She could have left. Women have done so for lesser reasons. Or she could have stayed and made his life a living hell. Other women have done that.

“But she chose a different response. On the tenth night of their trip, my friend found a card on his pillow. On the card was a printed verse:

“I'd rather do nothing with you than something without you.’ Beneath the verse she had written these words:

“I forgive you. I love you. Let's move on.

“The card might as well have been a basin. And the pen might as well have been a pitcher of water, for out of it poured pure mercy, and with it she washed her husband's feet.” (end of quote)

That is an example of serving with humility.

How did Jesus serve? Jesus served with love. Jesus served with humility.

And thirdly,

3. Jesus served knowing that true greatness comes from serving others.

VIDEO: “Be like Mike” (Gatorade commercial).

What does it mean to be like Mike? To be the best basketball player in the world, famous, rich, idolized.

What does it mean to be like Jesus? To serve others. Being like Jesus isn't as attractive to the world as being like Mike. But most people don't realize that true

greatness doesn't come from being a great basketball player; true greatness comes from serving others.

“...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant” (Mark 10:43).

“Who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves” (Luke 22:27).

Folks, we need to choose to lose the celebrity syndrome and the entitlement mindset in our world today. Let me show you an example of someone who is doing just that

Many of you know **Tim Tebow**. Do you know he is a Filipino? He comes from the Tebowli tribe. Actually, he was born at the Makati Medical Center in the Philippines in 1987 because his parents were missionaries in the Philippines. The family moved to Florida when he was 3. So, he's got dual citizenship. Because of this, he will play for Team Philippines in next month's World Baseball Classic qualifiers. After leaving football, he joined the New York Mets in the minor league.

Tebow is a celebrity. Since college when he won the Heisman Trophy of amateur football his every move has been tracked by the media. The latest highlight in his life was his getting married recently to the former Miss Universe from South Africa.

Despite his celebrity status, Tebow, being a Christian knows whom he serves. He serves Jesus faithfully and he serves others with love and in humility.

For example, he has established a foundation named after him which opened its **10th Timmy's Playroom** in Daytona Beach. As you can Timmy's Playroom is colorful with a football theme. From turf floors to lockers and even Scripture from the Bible, it's all meant to bring faith, hope and love to pediatric patients and their families.

He also created a special prom for special needs kids called “Night to Shine.” And in 2015, he opened the Tebow CURE Hospital in Davao City, Philippines. The hospital addresses children with the most critical orthopedic needs who otherwise would not be able to afford treatment.

Tebow knew that true greatness comes from serving and not being served. Tebow is making a difference in other people’s lives because he is serving.

How can you and I be like Jesus? Have the right knowledge: Serve others to achieve true greatness.

If service was not beneath Jesus, it certainly isn’t beneath us.

To conclude, let me summarize,

Be like Jesus by serving others.

- Have the right motivation: Serve others because of love.
- Have the right attitude: Serve others with humility.
- Have the right knowledge: Serve others to achieve true greatness.