



CONNECT - HOW DOES THIS TOPIC RELATE TO US?

Choose 1 or 2 questions to get your discussion started.

1. Describe a situation where you helped someone but ended up being blessed more in return.
2. When you encounter someone standing on the side of the road holding a cardboard sign and asking for money, what is your usual reaction? Why?
3. Think about the last time you felt served by someone. What did that person do and how did you feel?
4. What is your greatest obstacle to serving (e.g. other priorities, time, focus, taking the first step)?

ENGAGE - WHAT DOES THE BIBLE TEACH US?

Read the following two passages considering the idea of serving.

"The greatest among you will be your servant. For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted." - Matthew 23:11-12

1. What types of people would most people refer to as "great"? Name names.
2. How do most people pursue greatness?
3. How is greatness revealed in servitude?
4. Jesus spoke these words to the crowds and his disciples, but the effect would be the same today if he were to speak to a group of "regular" people. What do you hear Jesus saying to us?

When [Jesus] had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." - John 13:12-17

1. Jesus's act of service was the duty of a household servant. In fact, the word Jesus uses for "servant" is actually the Greek word for "slave." What did Jesus communicate in breaking this societal norm?
2. After this event, there was not a recorded epidemic of foot washing. What did the disciples learn from Jesus's example?
3. What might be a modern-day equivalent to foot washing?
4. Who do you consider as "lesser" than yourself? How could you serve them?

APPLY - HOW CAN THIS CHANGE OUR LIVES?

1. Whose feet do you need to “wash”?
2. Whose feet would be difficult to “wash”?
3. How can you serve someone without treating them like a project?
4. What are two things you could do to serve someone this week? Commit to doing these two things and report back to the group next week.

ACTION STEP

This week, during your review of the day, track how you did at serving.

PRAYER

Invite someone to pray this prayer aloud for the group:

Jesus, in the Gospel of John, you taught your disciples and now us that we did not choose you, but you have chosen us and appointed us so that we might go and bear fruit – fruit that will last – so that whatever we ask in your name, the Father will give to us. As we seek to bear the fruit that will last, we ask for courage, for wisdom, and for hearts that break for the things matter most to you. Help us to love one another the way you love us. Amen.

GOING DEEPER - FOR ADDITIONAL STUDY

You, my brothers and sisters, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge the flesh; rather, serve one another humbly in love. For the entire law is fulfilled in keeping this one command: “Love your neighbor as yourself.”- Galatians 5:13-14

- What is the freedom that Paul is describing for followers of Jesus?
- Paul contrasts two ways that freedom could be used - “indulge the flesh” versus “serve one another humbly in love.” How does humble service counter indulgence of the flesh?
- How do you tend to exercise your freedom?

For even 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

- How do you feel when you are served by someone?
- How has Jesus served you?

The King will reply, “Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.” - Matthew 25:40

- In your view, who are the “least of these?” How could serving them be an act of service to Jesus?

Recommended Resources A. Read *The Art of Neighboring* by Jay Pathak and Dave Runyon. B. Read *No Greater Love* by Mother Teresa.