



SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION FOR WEEK OF SEPTEMBER 19-25

SERIES TITLE: LET'S GO

MESSAGE TITLE: LET'S DO THIS

INTRODUCTION:

This week we continue our series called, "Let's Go!". For many of us, the start of the school year is the start of a new year. It is a time to reset, refocus, and re-engage into life as we know it. For some this will be getting your kids (and yourselves) back into the rhythm of school and homework and getting up early and extracurricular activities. For others, it might be something completely different. For the church, it is also a time to reset and remind our people what our mission and vision is at Church at Viera. Our vision is to 'Equip thousands to become influencers for Christ so we can impact tens of thousands in Central Brevard to join Jesus on a life-changing journey.' Our Mission is to "Share grace with everyone and see Christ change lives." We accomplish our vision and mission at CAV through our Discipleship Pathway. Our Discipleship Pathway consists of the following 4 areas of ministry we want you to engage in; Come to Church, Join the Crew, Get in a Group, and Make an Impact. We believe we will make the biggest impact in our community when you, the church are engaged in these 4 areas. Over the next 4 weeks we will focus on each one of these pieces of the pathway. So, are you ready to impact your community for Christ!? Then let's go!!

Before Your Small Group Meeting:

- Watch Pastor Marks's Message
- Read John 13:1-15; Matthew 25:23

DISCUSSION

1. What challenged you the most from Pastor Mark's message this weekend? Why?
2. In what ways does the Lord continually "wash our feet" to keep us clean?
3. In what ways can we wash the feet of others?
4. Read Matthew 25:23. Jesus mentions that our loyalty to the small things will lead us to caring for much greater things. What would you consider are the 'small things' he is referring to that you are/should be doing? What are the greater things?

5. Spend some time sharing about your involvement in the CREW at CAV and if you are not serving think about ways you can engage in the CREW at CAV.

RESPOND IN PRAYER

Spend time in prayer thanking God for the generosity He has shown you through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Ask Him to make clear the opportunities that are available to you to serve, not just a CAV but throughout the community.

FOR FURTHER STUDY

Commentary on John 13:1-15

13:1. We have talked often about key words in John's Gospel. The thirteenth chapter opens with three of them appearing in the first verse. The time had come, and Jesus would soon leave this world. The word kosmos appears 185 times in the New Testament; 8 times in Matthew; 3 times in Mark, 3 in Luke; but 78 in the Gospel of John. And if we add John's epistles and Revelation, 105 of the 185 New Testament uses come from John's pen. The other two key words are time and love. We take our title from the latter part of this verse where full extent translates the Greek word eistelos that means "to the limit."

Some interpreters have noted a change in John's vocabulary beginning with this chapter. The life and light words that dominated the first half of the Gospel appear in some form a total of 82 times in chapters 1 through 12. But in chapters 13 to 17, life words occur only six times and light words not at all. The key word for the next five chapters will be agape (love).

13:2. Judas typifies a society in rebellion against God, but the Lord's treatment also demonstrates God's grace and compassion with that society. Though the disciples never grasped Judas' true nature until after the betrayal in the garden, Jesus knew it from the beginning. Yet he gave Judas every opportunity to turn from his wicked ways, repent, and follow his Lord.

John pulled no punches in his description of the betrayer and his evil master. In a few more verses (v. 27) we read that "Satan entered into him." But even at the beginning of the meal the concept of betrayal had already been thrown (ballo) into Judas's mind. There is some grammatical argument over the text, but the plain intent indicates a willing perpetrator whose assassination plot originated with supernatural sources.

13:3-5. Verse 3 reminds us that Jesus was the omnipotent God. Rather than zapping Judas immediately, he allowed the full scenario to play out as the errant disciple made choice after choice leading to his ultimate suicide.

Some interpreters take these words symbolically, making the water equal to the Word, the towel demonstrating righteousness, and so forth. That hardly seems necessary in light of the culture of the first century. Luke 22 tells us about this event of physical humbling in light of the arrogant attitude still maintained by the disciples after the night of the crucifixion. An old proverb says, "Actions speak louder than words," and the Lord's willingness to wash the feet of his disciples, even Judas's, reflects servant leadership at its best.

People who are familiar with first-century culture will immediately recognize how socially inappropriate this behavior was. Never in Jewish, Greek, or Roman society would a superior wash the feet of inferiors. As Carson

observes, “The reluctance of Jesus’ disciples to volunteer for such a task is, to say the least, culturally understandable; their shock at his volunteering is not merely the result of being shame-faced, it is their response to finding their sense of the fitness of things shattered. But here Jesus reverses normal roles. His act of humility is as unnecessary as it is stunning, and is simultaneously a display of love (v. 1), a symbol of saving cleansing (vv. 6–9), and a model of Christian conduct (vv. 12–17)” (Carson, pp. 462–63).

In the brilliant kenosis passage of Philippians 2, we read about the condescension of Christ “who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness” (Phil. 2:6–7). The Philippians passage speaks about the human nature of the Savior, but here we see it in action.

13:6–7. Little discussions with Peter fill the synoptic Gospels, and John enjoys recording them as well. Shocked by the cultural reversal as he literally looked down at his Lord, Peter said in effect, “What’s going on here?” And Jesus replied, “You have no idea, but some day you will.” Presumably Jesus began the foot-washing with Peter, so he was the first to be shocked. Tasker picks up on the meaning of the moment: “Peter resists the attempt of Jesus to wash his feet, precisely because he failed to associate what his Master was doing with His death, but regarded it merely as an act which any slave might perform before a banquet. In making this protest Peter was in fact displaying the pride of unredeemed men and women, who are so confident of their ability to save themselves that they instinctively resist the suggestion that they need divine cleansing” (Tasker, p. 155).

13:8–9. Peter was too humble to have his feet washed but not too humble to command the Lord. As soon as Jesus emphasized that this symbolic act united the disciple with the Lord in some significant way, Peter took the full plunge. Let us not miss the practical theology of these verses. There is no place in the body of Christ for those who have not been cleansed by the Lord. Washing in this symbolic context cannot refer to baptism, but the atoning cleansing of sin.

13:10–11. Here we have a beautiful picture of forgiveness and one of the most important theological texts of the New Testament. How often does a person need to be saved? Once? Every time he or she sins? Just before death to make sure? These verses tell us that a person who has been completely cleansed once will only require regular washings after that.

The first verb (*louo*) appears in the perfect tense, indicating completed action, obviously union with the Lord through salvation. The second (*nipto*), rendered wash, means precisely the kind of rinsing Jesus demonstrated on this occasion. A full bathing depicts initial regeneration; the repeated washings symbolize forgiveness of ongoing sinful behavior.

This is not the only interpretation of the text. “Roman Catholics sometimes have interpreted verse 10 to mean that after infant baptism only penance is needed. A preferable interpretation emphasizes that after salvation all one needs is confession of sins, the continual application of Jesus’ death to cleanse one’s daily sins” (Blum, p. 320). Here are a few sample “one-liners” on this key text:

“He who is bathed needs, so to speak, only to remove the stains contracted in the walk of life; just as the guest, after the bath, needs only to have the dust washed from his feet when he reaches the house of his host” (Westcott, pp. 191–92).

“Individuals who have been cleansed by Christ’s atoning work will doubtless need to have subsequent sins washed away, but the fundamental cleansing can never be repeated” (Carson, p. 465).

“Those who are Christ’s are totally justified men and women, but they do need constant cleansing from their repeated defilement by sin in order that the fellowship they have with the Father and with the Son might not be broken” (Boice, IV, p. 32).

13:12–14. The washing not only demonstrated humility and servanthood to the disciples but also laid an experiential foundation for the teaching of verse 10. When the foot-washing ended, Jesus taught an important lesson about the relationship of believers—you also should wash one another’s feet.

As Mother Teresa has shown us, perhaps more than anyone else in the twentieth century, if our teacher and Lord does not hesitate to wash our feet, how can we fail to wash one another’s feet? Certainly there can be no harm in the literal practice of foot-washing, but the symbolism of first-century behavior seems more appropriately replicated in the way we serve people in a variety of ways.

Incidentally, the only other reference to foot-washing appears in 1 Timothy 5:10, so we have scant evidence that the New Testament church actually practiced this as a regular ordinance.

Jesus emphasized the words Teacher and Lord in contrast with the way they had behaved toward him. The Lord reminded them that he washed their feet as their leader. Morris says, “Jesus proceeds to endorse this way of speaking. He commends the disciples, for these expressions point to his true position. But precisely because of this there are implications. His repetition of ‘the Lord and the teacher’ (a reversed order may be significant) emphasizes his dignity. This exalted Person has washed their feet. They ought, therefore, to wash one another’s feet” (Morris, p. 620).

13:15. Throughout the New Testament we learn the importance of example, never more so than when Jesus refers to himself. But here we are not focused on some great spiritual reality or doctrinal truth; the passage deals with how we treat other people. As Francis Schaeffer often observed, love is the ultimate mark of the Christian. Since Jesus loved his disciples and loves us in the same way, we need to do for others what he has done for us.¹

¹ Gangel, K. O. (2000). [John](#) (Vol. 4, p. 251). Nashville, TN: Broadman & Holman Publishers.