

Sermon: A Life That Serves

Text: John 13:1-20

Discussion Questions:

When you have someone over for dinner, what do you do to prepare for your guests? What special things do you do during the meal to make your guests feel welcome and comfortable in your home?

When someone chooses to serve you in some way, or offers to bless you in some way, what does that say to you about their love for you?

In what ways have you served the people that you love? Why did you choose to serve them?

Have you ever served someone you didn't know? If so, why did you serve a stranger?

As Christians, why are we called to be servants in the world? (See **Matthew 5:13-16 & 22:36-40**)

Examination:

- Read **Philippians 2:1-11**
 - How does being united with Christ bring you encouragement?
 - How does knowing the love of Christ bring you comfort?
 - What does it mean for us to have “common sharing in the Spirit”? How similar is this to “being like-minded” and “being one in spirit and of one mind”?
 - How important is it to have tenderness and compassion? What does it mean to be “tender”—and what might this look like in our daily lives?
 - How easy is it to act out of selfish ambition or vain conceit (v. 3)? What are some clues that you might be doing this?
 - Jesus commands us to love one another as we love ourselves. Here, Paul is commanding us to “value others above” ourselves. In a literal sense—this means that we consider others to be “worth” more than we are (ie: their opinions are worth more; their feelings are worth more; their opportunities for advancement are worth more; etc.). Talk about how living this way might completely transform your life. What role does humility play in this?
 - How does verse 4 shed more light on what you just discussed in verse 3?
 - In verse 2, Paul talks about being “like-minded” with other believers. Here in verse 5, Paul drills down a little deeper by talking about a “mindset”. What could happen if we have the same mindset as Jesus Christ—and we share this very same mindset with the other believers that we relate to? How encouraging would this be for you? How attractive would this be to unbelievers? What is it that keeps us from doing this?
 - Verses 6-11 describe Christ Jesus’ mindset that we are to copy or emulate. In verse 6, we see that Jesus was “in very nature God,” but didn’t consider equality with God (the Father) something to be used to his own advantage. What do you think this means? Do other translations (other than the NIV) shed light on what this means?
 - Verse 7 has to be one of the most powerful verses regarding the incarnation of Jesus in the entire Bible. Jesus wasn’t born the way any of the rest of us

are. He MADE Himself a human. He put on skin. He took on the nature—or form—of a servant. Why did Jesus do this? Why would Jesus choose to take on the nature of a servant?

- Verse 8 points to the ultimate reason that Jesus put on skin. What was that purpose?
- What was the result of this humility and obedience (vv. 9-11)?
- Read **John 13:1-17**
 - What meal is Jesus about to eat with His disciples (v. 1)? What is the significance of the Passover meal? (if you're not sure, go back and read **Exodus 12**)
 - What does John tell us about the love that Jesus had for His disciples? What does it mean to love someone to the end? Has someone shown you this kind of love in your life? Have you ever shown someone else this kind of love? In what ways could you “love someone to the end” as you live your life?
 - What did Jesus know as He prepared to eat the Passover Meal with His disciples (vv. 2-3 & 11)?
 - Does what Jesus did (serve the disciples), have a greater impact because of what Jesus knew beforehand?
 - If you knew that you had less than 24 hours left to live, would you choose to serve others just as Jesus did? What might be more prominent in your mind?
 - What does Jesus do to serve and love His disciples during this meal (vv. 4-5)?
 - Who usually washed feet in the first century? Did Jesus have to wash feet? What does this tell you about the nature and attitude of Jesus?
 - Why didn't any of the disciples think to offer to wash feet? What were some of the other disciples doing during this meal? (see **Luke 22:24**)
 - did Peter react the way he did? How did Jesus respond to Peter?
 - What does it mean to have “a part with Jesus” (v. 8)?
 - How does seeing Jesus serve and love His disciples help you to understand how you are called to serve and love people in your life?
 - What does Jesus tell his disciples to do based on what He has done for them (vv. 13-17)?
 - Name something that is equivalent to washing feet in the first century that most people would not be willing to do today. What needs to change in your life in order for you to serve and love people the way that Jesus did?

Application:

In this story from the life of Jesus, we see that the one who was given all authority, humbled Himself to serve His friends, His enemy, and even one who thought Jesus was too good to serve Him. This is a powerful reminder that we are called to do the same in our lives. Instead of looking to be served, look for opportunities this week to live like Jesus lived and serve the people around you.