

PREPARE HIM ROOM

"ROOM FOR JESUS' FORGIVENESS"

JOHN 13:1-17

This Week's Core Competency

Humility – I choose to esteem others above myself. Philippians 2:3-4 *Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others.*

The humility of Jesus is evident in both his birth and his death, in his incarnation and his atoning sacrifice. The virtue is defined by the first. The apostle Paul tells the Philippians, "Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others" (2:3-4). The two contrasts he uses marked by "but" say it all. Humility insists that we "consider others better than [ourselves]." What's more, it insists that we pay attention to "the interests of others" and not just our own.

Paul goes on to justify the virtue by appealing to the example of Jesus' incarnation. "Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus," he says. "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but"—there's that use of contrast again—"made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being

Little becomes Jesus' followers more than humility.

– D. A. Carson

found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death—even death on a cross!" (vv. 5-8). The theology is profound; the practical implications no less so. One commentator writes: "Paul is describing Christ's incarnation and exaltation as an example of the humility and obedience which he wants the Philippians to display in their relations with one another (2:3, 7-8, 12). For the Philippians, the imitation of Christ could not have involved a literal mimicry of his incarnation and certainly could not be equated with some mystical identification with his death on the cross. Paul's focus instead is on the imitation of Christ's 'attitude' (v. 5). In Thessalonica this meant faithfully suffering for the gospel as Christ had suffered (1 Thess. 1:6; 2:14-15). In Corinth it meant not exercising rights within the church when to do so would cause another's stumbling and destruction (1 Cor. 11:1). In Philippi it meant being loving, united, humble, and willing to put the interests of others ahead of one's own (Phil 2:2-4)" (Frank Thielman, *The NIV Application Commentary: Philippians*, 124-25).

The link between the virtue of humility and Jesus' death and obedient service is clearly seen in the footwashing incident, which occurred on the eve of his crucifixion and is only recorded in John's Gospel. A quick reading of 13:1-17 shows, in the words of one commentator, "that the episode of the footwashing is turned in two directions. On the one hand, it is symbolic of spiritual cleansing (cf. especially vv. 8-10); on the other, it serves as a standard of humble service and

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therefore is a call to all of Jesus' disciples to 'wash one another's feet' (vv. 12-17) . . . As with the crucifixion, so with the footwashing: each is simultaneously an act of God by which human beings are freed or cleansed—whether in reality (the cross) or in symbol (the footwashing)—and an example that Jesus' followers are to emulate" (D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC, 458).

A particularly pointed and touching example of humility is found in the story of Dr. Robertson McQuilkin, for many years the president of Columbia Bible College and Seminary in South Carolina. One writer tells his story this way: "To serve as Jesus served requires humility. It requires sacrifice. It means taking up the 'lesser role' for the benefit of someone else. In about 1980 Dr. McQuilkin began to see signs of memory loss in his wife, Muriel. For the next decade he watched as his wife's career of conference speaking, radio shows, and television began to erode and disappear. In the mid-1980s she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, and her deterioration continued to advance rapidly.

"This situation naturally posed a crisis for Dr. McQuilkin. As president of a thriving college and graduate school, how could he meet the needs of both his wife and his job? Many Christian friends encouraged him to give Muriel over to professional care (i.e., a nursing home), but he could not bear the thought. As her condition worsened, he made a decision that was 'a matter of integrity' (his words). He resigned from Columbia to care for his wife full time. 'It was a choice between two loves,' he writes. Columbia wisely and compassionately supported his decision and began seeking his replacement" (Gary M. Burge, *The NIV Application Commentary: John*, 382-83).

day 1 ENCOUNTER – read God's word to put yourself in touch with him.

John 13:1-17

1It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.

2The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. 3Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; 4so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

6He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7Jesus 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!"

10Jesus 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." 11For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12When he 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. 13"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am.

14Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

17Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

EXAMINE – what the passage says before you decide what it means.

- * Highlight v. 1b beginning with "he now showed . . ."
- * Box "so" indicating *result* in v. 4.
- * Circle "wash, -ed, -ing," "bath," and "clean" in vv. 5-15.
- * To catch the emphasis, bracket the pronouns "you" and "my" in vv. 6, 8.
- * Circle "no" in v. 8.
- * Circle "no part" in v. 8.

- * Box "but" indicating *contrast* in v. 9.
- * Circle "clean" in v. 10.
- * Highlight v. 15.
- * Underline "servant" and "messenger" in v. 16.
- * Double underline "master" and "one who sent him" in v. 16.
- * Bracket the conditional clause, "if you do them" in v. 17.

day 2

EXPLORE – the answer to these questions to better understand what the passage means.

Consult the explanation of the message and the notes to follow if you need help.

1. Verse 1 says, "He *now* showed them the full extent of his love." Read verse 1 and explain the significance of Jesus' timing.
2. Explain the relationship of verse 3 to verse 4.
3. Why do you suppose Peter objected to having Jesus wash his feet?
4. Put what verse 8b means in your own words.
5. Based on his reply in verse 9, did Peter "get" what Jesus said in verse 8? Explain.
6. Explain the analogy of *bathing* and *footwashing* Jesus used in verse 10.
7. What do you think makes what Jesus did (cf., vv. 5, 12) so remarkable?
8. Jesus said, ". . . do as I have done for you." Does he mean disciples should *literally* wash each other's feet? Explain.
9. Read verse 16 and answer the question, "So what?"
10. **Discussion:** Talk about which comes first-humility or footwashing.

day 3

EXAMINE – an explanation of its message to clarify your understanding of the passage.

This passage belongs to an extended portion of John's Gospel, which includes chapters 13-16 and is commonly called the Upper Room Discourse. The account of what Jesus says and does on the night he eats the passion-week Passover with his disciples found in 13:1-17 is especially significant because "the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father" (13:1). On that night, the night of his betrayal, as the food was being served, he gets up from his place at the table, dons the garb of a servant, and shocks the disciples by washing their feet. After he finishes, he puts on his clothes, returns to his place at the table, and explains to his dumbfounded band the significance of what he has done.

The passage can be divided into two parts based on the two-fold significance of what Jesus did. On the one hand, our Lord ties footwashing to spiritual cleansing in verses 8-10; on the other, he ties it to humble service in verses 12-17. And so, "the episode is turned in two directions," so to speak (D. A. Carson, *The Gospel According to John*, PNTC, 458).

Verses 1-7 set the stage for what Jesus did and what he said about it. On Thursday evening before his arrest, trial, and crucifixion on Friday, he gathers with his disciples to keep the Passover. Knowing that he would die hours later, Jesus shows them "the full extent of his love." On the meaning of this phrase, the *NET Bible* explains: "The full extent of Jesus' love for his disciples is not merely seen in his humble service to them in washing their feet (the most common interpretation of the passage). The full extent of his love for them is demonstrated in his sacrificial death for them on the cross. The footwashing episode which follows then becomes a prophetic act, or acting out beforehand, of his upcoming death on their behalf. The message for the disciples was that they were to love one another not just in humble, self-effacing service, but were to be willing to die for one another. At least one of them got this message eventually, though none understood it at the time (see 1 John 3:16)" (3sm on Jn 13:1). By the time they recline to eat, Satan has already decided that Judas should betray the Lord. Later John tells us that shortly after the footwashing, during the meal, "Satan entered into him" (v. 27). No doubt the

disciples wonder what their Master is up to as they watch him change into a towel and pour water into a basin. Perhaps their jaws drop as he begins to do the unthinkable—to wash their feet. Peter's remark clearly indicates they are mystified. Here's why. "At the very least, all our ancient sources show that footwashing was a degrading and lowly task. When done by a wife (for her husband), a child (for his/her parents), or a pupil (for his teacher), it was always an act of extreme devotion. But since it was an act with social implications, in no way do we find those with a 'higher' status washing the feet of those beneath them. When Jesus 'takes off his outer clothing' and wraps a towel around himself (13:4), he is adopting the posture of a slave" (Burge, 369).

In verses 8-10 Jesus tells the disciples that he must cleanse them from sin in order for them to have a relationship marked by fellowship with him—words applicable to all disciples. When Jesus uses the term "part" he is talking about eternal life and union with him (cf. 14:3; 17:24). One commentator concludes: "If so, then footwashing is symbolic of something more than a gesture of fellowship. It is only the death of Jesus (and its acceptance by the believer) that brings eternal life" (370). In other words, we must first be cleansed all over by what Paul calls, "the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit" (Tit 3:5) in order to become his disciples. Once we are clean, we must still be cleansed here and there from the sins we commit daily. Or as Jesus put it to Peter, "A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean" (v. 10). Who better to comment on this than the author of the Fourth Gospel? In his first epistle John writes, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1:9).

In verses 12-17 Jesus explains what he has done for them. He tells 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" (vv. 13-14). In a nutshell, he gives them an example to follow and at the same time, he debunks any

excuses they might entertain for not following it. He says, "I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him" (v. 16). Arguing from the *greater* to the *lesser* he makes it clear: if our master, the one who sends us, would wash our feet, what excuse could we, who are his servants and messengers, have for not washing one another's feet? None whatsoever! After all, "The student is not above his teacher, nor a servant above his master" (Mt 10:24). In the words of one

commentator: "no emissary has the right to think he is exempt from tasks cheerfully undertaken by the one who sent him, and no slave has the right to judge any menial task beneath him after his master has already performed it" (Carson, 468). And while there is a long tradition in the church that has taken Jesus' footwashing command *literally*, it is better taken *figuratively* as a general command to humility and service (see Carson, 468).

The Message of the Passage

Be cleansed from everyday sins through confession and follow your Lord's example by serving one another.

day **4** **EMBRACE** – how God spoke to you through his word.

Our desire is to not be merely hearers of the word, but doers of the word as James teaches in James 1:22. Reflect on 3 "living questions" to apply what you have learned this week.

• **Journal your answers to the following *living* questions:**

–How is God making himself known to you?

–How does God want to change you?

–How is God calling you to change your world?

notes **N** STUDY – the commentaries to answer the questions.

- v. 1 **full extent** Lit., "to the end" (ESV). "The words 'to the end' might be taken adverbially to mean 'to the uttermost', 'utterly', and hence the NIV's paraphrase. But if 'end' (*telos*) is taken temporally, the clause means that Jesus loved them to the very end of his life" (Carson, 461).
- v. 2 **evening meal** "The occasion described here, therefore, must be the so-called 'Last Supper' even though the Synoptics do not speak of a 'supper,' and John does not speak of an upper room (cf. Mark 14:15; Luke 22:12; Matthew does not use the designation)" (Gerald L. Bochert, *John 12-21*, NAC, 78). Although the subject of much debate, the Last Supper must have been a Passover meal. The Synoptic Gospels suggest as much (Lk 22:7-14; cf. Mt 26:17-20, Mk: 14:12-17). However, John's Gospel indicates that Passover was celebrated on the following day (18:28). One scholar offers a likely solution to the discrepancy. "It is thought that the Galileans used a different method of reckoning the Passover than the Judeans. The Galileans and the Pharisees used the sunrise-to-sunrise reckoning whereas the Judeans and Sadducees used the sunset-to-sunset reckoning. Thus, according to the Synoptics, the Last Supper was a Passover meal. Since the day was to be reckoned from sunrise, the Galileans, and with them Jesus and His disciples, had the Paschal lamb slaughtered in the late afternoon of Thursday, Nisan 14, and later that evening they ate the Passover with the unleavened bread. On the other hand, the Judean Jews who reckoned from sunset to sunset would slay the lamb on Friday afternoon which marked the end of Nisan 14 and would eat the Passover lamb with the unleavened bread that night which had become Nisan 15. Thus, Jesus had eaten the Passover meal when His enemies, who had not as yet had the Passover, arrested Him" (Harold W. Hoehner, *Chronological Aspects of the Life of Christ*, 87; cf., Burge, 364-67; Carson, 455-58).
- v. 2 **prompted** Lit., "the devil already having put into the heart that Judas should betray him." "But whose heart is this? Our assumption that it belongs to Judas (NIV) is not altogether clear. The phrase 'put in his heart' also means 'made up his mind,' and according to some Greek manuscripts, Judas is not yet the object of the devil's work. The sense is most likely: 'When the devil had decided that Judas should betray Jesus. . . .' It is not till 13:27 that Satan enters Judas. Either way, Judas becomes one who has refused to believe (12:46); since he is surrounded by the darkness, he is ready to become a pawn of Jesus' adversary, Satan" (Burge, 368).
- v. 4 **towel** Jesus adopted "the dress of a menial slave, dress that was looked down upon in both Jewish and Gentile circles (SB 2. 557; Suetonius, *Caligula*, 26)" (Carson, 463).
- v. 5 **wash** "Doubtless the disciples would have been happy to wash his feet; they could not conceive of washing one another's feet, since this was a task normally reserved for the lowliest of menial servants. Peers did not wash one another's feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. Some Jews insisted that Jewish slaves should not be required to wash the feet of others; this job should be reserved for Gentile slaves, or for women and children and pupils (*Mekhilta* β1 on Ex. 21:2)" (Carson 462).
- v. 6 **you** "The emphatic use of pronouns in Peter's surprised question, 'Lord, You [su] are washing my [mou] feet?' and his equally emphatic negative reply, 'NEVER to all eternity shall you wash my feet!' (my trans.), reveal both the impetuosity of his disposition and the high regard he had for Jesus" (Merrill C. Tenney, "The Gospel of John" in *The Expositors Bible Commentary*, 9:136).
- v. 8 **no part** "The notion of 'having a part (*meros*) in' something is regularly used with respect to inheritance (e.g. Lk. 15:12), and, in Jewish thought, can refer to participation in eschatological blessings (cf. Mt. 24:51; Rev. 20:6). The word is not infrequently tied to belonging to Jesus Christ or to the people of God, however conceived (e.g. Lk, 12:46; Rev. 22:19)" (Carson, 464).
- v. 10 **bath** "Bathing facilities were not available in the small homes of the people. In order to bathe, people had to go to a public bath. When a person had been invited to a meal, he would go to a public bath and bathe. He would then put on clean clothing, anoint himself with fresh oil, and proceed to the home where the meal was to be served. In traveling from the bath to the home, the guest's feet would become soiled from the dust of the path. If he chose to return to the bath to wash off the dust from walking, he would find that his feet were dirty again when he arrived at the home. He could not wash off the dust by returning to the bath, nor could he recline at a banquet and extend soiled feet for all to see. Thus a host would provide a basin of water so that one who had been to a bath and cleansed his whole body could sponge the dust off his feet. Having been to a bath and then having sponged off his feet, he could enter the banquet hall clean and confident. Using this familiar custom, Christ taught that the one who previously had been washed all over was in a relationship to Himself. But in order to enjoy the fellowship that comes from the relationship, it was necessary to receive cleansing from Christ the Servant" (J. Dwight Pentecost, *The Words and Works of Jesus Christ*, 429).
- v. 15 **example** Gk. *hypodeigma*—the word suggests both 'example' and 'pattern'; cf. Heb 4:11; 8:5; 9:25; Jas 5:10; 2Pe. 2:6). "Now that Jesus, their Lord and Teacher, has washed his disciples' feet—an unthinkable act!—there is every reason why they also should wash one another's feet, and no conceivable reason for refusing to do so" (Carson, 468).
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Family Talk

Encouragement from one parent's heart to another

Note: The *Family Scrolls* for this week do not align with the adult *Scrolls* Bible study.

Last Christmas, we bought my 15-year-old son a horribly ugly Christmas present. My husband found an old beat up, 1983 Jeep truck on Craigslist for sale. It was really cheap. In fact, I think the owner probably would have paid us to take it off his property. I made my husband cover the eyesore with a tarp to bring it into the neighborhood. I felt sorry for our neighbors who would be enduring this project for the next 6 months. On Christmas morning when we led our son out to see his "new" truck, he was immediately enamored by it. It was the most beautiful thing he had ever seen. He took pictures with it to post on Instagram and Twitter. He called everyone he could think of to tell them about his new treasure. I seriously didn't get it. It looked like a pile of junk to me. As I reflect on the shepherds experience in the field that night long ago in Bethlehem, I have to smile at the thought of the ordinary being something so amazing and life-changing. One look at Jesus and their lives were forever altered. They couldn't wait to go tell others about the newborn King. My prayer for our families this Christmas is that we would be so captivated by the Savior that we couldn't help but tell others about Him.

What Does The Bible Say

Weekly Verse: Read Luke 2:1-20

1. How did the shepherds hear of Jesus' birth?
2. What did they do when he angels left?
3. What did they do after they saw Jesus?

What Do You Think

The birth of Jesus is great news! He is God's promised Savior of the world! What are some ways you can share the good news with others this Christmas season?

What R U Going To Do

Sit down with your family and choose one neighbor or relative to invite to church either on a Sunday or one of our Christmas Eve services. Think of a creative way to invite them - with a plate of cookies, through Christmas caroling, a homemade invitation, etc.

MEMORY TIME

Core Comp

Giving Away my Faith - I tell others about Jesus to help with God's work.

Memory Verse

Mark 16:15 - *He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."*

KIDPIX COUPON

I memorized CC ____ and Verse _____. Family completed **Say** _____ **Think** _____ **Do** _____

Child's name _____ Grade ____ Parent's signature _____

Earn 1 token by completing the PantegoKids Bible study and another token by reciting the memory verse.
Questions: Kids@pantego.org

30 CORE COMPETENCIES

10 CORE BELIEFS

Trinity 2 Corinthians 13:14

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Salvation By Grace Ephesians 2:8-9

I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Authority of the Bible 2 Timothy 3:16-17

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

Personal God Psalm 121:1-2

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

Identity in Christ John 1:12

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

Church Ephesians 4:15-16

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

Humanity John 3:16

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

Compassion Psalm 82:3-4

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

Eternity John 14:1-4

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

Stewardship 1 Timothy 6:17-19

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

10 CORE PRACTICES

Worship Psalm 95:1-7

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

Prayer Psalm 66:16-20

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

Bible Study Hebrews 4:12

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

Single-mindedness Matthew 6:33

I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

Spiritual Gifts Romans 12:4-6

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

Biblical Community Acts 2:44-47

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

Giving Away My Time Colossians 3:17

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Money

2 Corinthians 8:7

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Faith Ephesians

6:19-20

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

Giving Away My Life Romans 12:1

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

10 CORE VIRTUES

Joy John 15:11

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

Peace Philippians 4:6-7

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, myself, and others.

Faithfulness Proverbs 3:3-4

I have established a good name with God and with others based on my long-term loyalty to those relationships.

Self-Control Titus 2:11-13

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

Humility Philippians 2:3, 4

I choose to esteem others above myself.

Love 1 John 4:10-12

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

Patience Proverbs 14:29

I take a long time to overheat and endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

Kindness/Goodness 1 Thess. 5:15

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

Gentleness Philippians 4:5

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

Hope Hebrews 6:19-20

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ.

About the Authors

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Wendy Hollabaugh (B.S.W. University of Texas at Arlington) is the Children's Minister at Pantego Bible Church. Wendy has over ten years of experience in Children's Ministry. She has a passion for leading families to connect with God and each other. She enjoys creating compelling environments where kids fall in love with God and His Truth. Wendy and her husband, Greg, are also involved in their own personal youth ministry as they are training their three teenagers, Hannah, Aaron and Noah.



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The mission of THE SCROLLS is to help you develop the beliefs, practices, and virtues of a follower of Jesus Christ called The 30 Core Competencies through your own active reading of the Bible. Send any questions or comments you may have about this lesson to Tom Bulick. His e-mail address is tbulick@pantego.org.