

## LESSONS FROM THE SERVANT KING. John 13:1-17

What would you do if you knew you had a week to live?

What would you say if you had 3 days to live and with whom would you spend that time?

Aware of that fact, we need to take Jesus words seriously.

### A. The full extent of His Love (Vs1)

*... when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.*

*"He now showed them the full extent of His love", NIV*

- Love that endures to the end ("I have loved you with an everlasting love")
- Love that covers over a multitude of sins.

He loved each member of the His team with their secrets and their weaknesses. They all felt safe with Him. Peter spoke for them when he said,

*Jn 6:68 ... "Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life.*

*Jn 6:69 We believe and know that you are the Holy One of God."*

- Love which uplifts our status - consider fishermen on the team of the King of the Universe
- Love that ensures protection for its object

*Jn 17:12 While I was with them, I protected them and kept them safe by that name you gave me. None has been lost except the one doomed to destruction so that Scripture would be fulfilled.*

O that each one of us would know the security of His Love. When Jesus was arrested, all the disciples scattered. What brought them back is this assurance of His love for them.

**B. He knew who he was - Jesus was perfectly secure. (Vs 3,4)**

*3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, 4 rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.*

Image and public opinion is something that many of us struggle with all the time.

- ✚ It is a cause of strife in many of our homes
- ✚ In the office there are tasks that some of us do not want to be seen doing
- ✚ Recently Bishop Nathan gave a ride to his driver, in the family car, and the driver was really uncomfortable

**That human weakness: To impress**

- In which family we are born? { " I am a friend of the cousin to the neighbour of the first family}
- When you are asked for your name you begin with, I am a chartered Accountant.

- For some ministers of the *Gospel*, if you do not mention all their titles, then you are in big trouble.
- Who knows us {"the owner of MTN is my friend"}

Jesus had no fear of being underrated or under-valued.

He had no need of impressing his audience.

There was no gap/inadequacy in Him to make up for.

He knew:

- That He is the *Messiah* - "I who speaks to you am he"
- That He is the coming King - "you will see the Son of Man coming down on the clouds"
- That He is the Life and the Resurrection
- That He is their Rabbi
- That is the beloved Son of the Father

- That he was Eternal - "before Abraham was I am"

Do you know who you are? Are struggling with some insecurity in your life? Are you aware that it will affect your quality of fellowship with others? Ask Jesus to help you with it.

### C. That thing that no one wanted to do

*5 Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. John 13:5*

Washing of feet!

Everybody had been waiting for somebody to do it

- The feet had to be washed
- No one was willing to stoop that low to take a place of a servant

Thomas L McDonald explains it this way:

"At the Last Supper, Jesus would have been the "host" and the apostles the "guests." Washing the feet of weary travelers would have been a job delegated to a gentile slave by the host. Not even a Jewish slave would be expected to wash feet. The host of a meal would certainly not lower himself to performing this vile task himself. The feet of travelers in ancient Palestine would have been shod in sandals, and thus filthy from traveling on dirt roads. However, as St. Paul says in Philippians: "Christ Jesus, who though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant." (Phil. 2:5-7) Jesus himself tells us that the "first shall be last," (Matt. 20:16) and in the washing of the feet he shows his willingness to take on the work of the last and the least".<sup>1</sup>

- This event raises a searching question: "Why wait for someone when you can do it?"

You see, positions and protocol can be a hindrance to getting the trivial and obvious done.

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.patheos.com/blogs/godandthemachine/2015/04/washing-of-the-feet/>

*This is a little story about four people named Everybody, Somebody, Anybody, and Nobody.*

*There was an important job to be done and Everybody was sure that Somebody would do it.*

*Anybody could have done it, but Nobody did it.*

*Somebody got angry about that because it was Everybody's job.*

*Everybody thought that Anybody could do it, but Nobody realized that Everybody wouldn't do it.*

*It ended up that Everybody blamed Somebody when Nobody did what Anybody could have done*

### ***Brain Candy***

*John Wesley's had the following motto:*

*Do all the good you can by all the means you can by all the ways you can in all the places you can and at all the times you can to all the people you can as long as you ever can.*

What are the things you want others to do?

- ✓ Is it cleaning the toilet after it has been soiled?
- ✓ Is it washing nappies?
- ✓ Is it taking out the trash?
- ✓ Is it preparing tea in the office?
- ✓ Is it cleaning the dishes?

**D. What do you do when your Senior serves you? (V6-10)**

*6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" 7 Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." 8 Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." 9 Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except*



*for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.” 11 For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”*

- The response of gratitude. You may choose to appreciate this as a demonstration of love. At the funeral service of the Late Canon Ephraim Musiime, one of the younger priests he mentored recounted when once the late hosted him in their home, and prepared a cup of tea for him and took it to him in his room.

Jesus has stooped low to serve us and calls us to serve. We give because there is nothing we have that we did not receive.

- The response of objection - Peter could not take it. He reasoned that His Lord cannot be the one washing his feet. He struggled to understand it. He almost missed the blessing from failure to surrender.
- Missing the point. It is possible there were some in the room who went through the episode as if nothing significant had happened.

Remember the miracle of the loaves?

*Mk 6:51 Then he climbed into the boat with them, and the wind died down. They were completely amazed, Mk 6:52 for they had not understood about the loaves; their hearts were hardened.*

The purpose of this service is to teach and remind that God calls us to servanthood. That we can change the culture around us by humbling ourselves to serve.

Think about what the impact would be if when you are walking to your office you see someone littering say an empty bottle and instead of rebuking him or her you just pick up the bottle and through it in the neighbouring trash can.

- You can observe and learn a lesson for life

**I will never forget the day I saw Rev. Pons Ozelle wash latrines at youth conference**

## **E. Lessons on Servant hood**

*12 When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? 13 You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant<sup>3</sup> is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.*

Here Jesus affirms His position among them - Teacher and Lord

I. A leader must live up to their position

- In every structure there is a leader but what is important is not the title but the act of leading.

- Sometimes groups are led by someone other than the designated leader - think about dynamics in choirs and councils

II. Greatness is not derived from position or the nature of task that you do - it comes from who you are and how you impact lives.

The person who scored the highest in the healing of Naaman in 2 Kings 5 is the servant girl whose name we do not know - she told Mrs Naaman about a prophet in Israel

- Promotion comes from the Lord
- Humble yourself and he will lift you up

III. The main goal of a disciple is to serve the interests of the master. It is all about Jesus

- Our attitude should always be, "He must increase and I must decrease"
- What He wants done becomes first priority at all costs.

May the Lord teach us to listen to Him in our different working and living contexts. May be He gave you that promotion so that as you interact with junior staff they may know through you that God loves them and values them.

#### IV. Your blessing is tied to your obedience

God will bless you when you actually do what you know God wants you to do.

*Jude 1:24 To him who is able to keep you from falling and to present you before his glorious presence without fault and with great joy—*

*Jude 1:25 to the only God our Savior be glory, majesty, power and authority, through Jesus Christ our Lord, before all ages, now and forevermore! Amen.*