

“Portrait of a Servant”

John 13:1-17

East Berlin Community Church

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Introduction

- Conversation around the table at the Last Supper
 - Luke 22:24-- *“Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest.”*
- Our desire to be “the greatest” in someone’s eyes
- Jesus’ teaching about “greatness” in the kingdom.
 - Luke 22:25-27-- *“He said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called ‘benefactors.’ But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves.”*

“Portrait of a Servant”

A. The CONTEXT: Foot washing in first Century culture

- John 13:2-5-- *“And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.”*
1. Usually done by a servant of the host or self-washing
 2. None of the disciples assumed the role of the servant and washed feet
 3. Jesus washes the disciples’ feet to demonstrate that He came to serve.
 - Matthew 20:28-- *“the Son of man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life a ransom for many!”*

B. Three CHARACTERISTICS of a Servant from “foot washing”

1. Servitude flows from LOVE

- John 13:1-- *“Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.”*

2. Servitude requires HUMILITY

a. The road to greatness begins with humble service.

- 1Peter 5:5-6-- *“Yes, all of you be submissive to one another, and be clothed with humility, for ‘God resists the proud, But gives grace to the humble.’ Therefore humble yourselves under the mighty hand of God, that He may exalt you in due time”*

b. Humility is not self-deprecation, but rather the product of a good self-image.

- John 13:3-- *“Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God.”*

3. Servitude involves FORGIVING OTHERS

a. **Pride keeps us from admitting our need and accepting help from others.**

- John 13:6-8-- *"Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.'"*

b. **We need to be washed in order to be partners with Christ.**

- John 13:8-9-- *"Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!'"*

1) A "bath" is regeneration. Only needed ONCE!

- John 13:10-11-- *"He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.'"*
- Titus 3:5-- *"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit."*

2) "Foot washing" is daily cleansing

- 1 John 1:9-- , *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."*

c. **We in turn are to "wash one another's feet."**

- John 13:12-16-- *"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.'"*

C. Three CONNECTIONS for us today.

1. **Forgiven people forgive.**

- Matthew 18:21--*"Then Peter came to Him and said, 'Lord, how often shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? Up to seven times?'"*
- Matthew 18:22-- *"I do not say to you, up to seven times, but up to seventy times seven."*

2. **Humble people ask for and grant forgiveness.**

3. **Humble service leads to true happiness.**

- John 13:17-- *"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."*
- Ephesians 4:32-- *"be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."*