

- ***Read John 13:1-17*** We have before us a very well known account from the life of Jesus while here on the earth. Jesus is gathered with His closest of disciples, His Apostles, just prior to the Feast of the Passover. From this point through **John 18:1**, Jesus, for the last time, spends intimate time with His Apostles. He gives great effort during this time to reinforce many of the things that He has instilled within their minds concerning Himself and the great plan that God is about to have carried out. He begins this time together in the oddest of ways in the mind of His Apostles...The Son of God washes their feet.
- This would not have been something that would have been expected by them for foot washing was not something that was done voluntarily. In fact, this was a job that would have been reserved for the lowliest of the the household. Foot washing was no small or easy task because these people did not walk around with nice close toed shoes on as we do, but instead they walked in sandals. Thus, their feet would become extremely dirty from the dusty roads. For their Teacher to take off His nice clothes (our collared shirt) down to his undergarments (our wifebeater/undershirt) would be no small thing. Peter, the outspoken Apostle, recognizes this and tries to forbid Jesus from doing such a thing. Jesus insists that it must be done as a teaching point, and then He goes on to teach them that they must learn humility. This humbling of our Savior to wash the feet of His Apostles was a small taste of that ultimate act of humility in which He would hang on the cross for the sins of mankind. Our Savior not only demanded humility from His followers, but He perfectly exemplified it in so many ways. He is our perfect Example of the Humble Servant we should strive to be.
- We know that Jesus demands humility, but what exactly does a humble servant look like? We cannot perfectly emulate Jesus because we are not dying on a tree for anyone's sins, so what does a practical humble servant look like? Let me suggest that we have a great example of a humble servant in our Bibles, and it is a very familiar story to us all. Let's all turn our Bibles to **Luke 10:25-37** and consider the story Jesus tells of the Good Samaritan.
- This man, presumably a Jewish man, is coming from Jerusalem and he is attacked by robbers. He is left for dead and a priest and a Levite both pass by him without offering any assistance. Finally, a Samaritan passes by this man, and he feels compassion for him. He goes out of his way to serve the needs of this man, and he does so because of the humble spirit that he has about him. The humble spirit that we ought to strive to possess within our character.. Let's spend the rest of our time looking at 4 things this man did that humble servants are willing to do for others.

I. Serves Because of a Recognized Need

- A. We often focus on the great example that the Good Samaritan gives us, but just how awful of examples are given to us by the priest and the Levite?? (**Luke 10:31,32**) These men should have been the quickest to help a fellow Hebrew in need, yet they simply turn their heads and walk along the other side leaving the man in the same condition as the robbers.
- B. But then there is this Samaritan. He, just like the priest and Levite, notices the man, but unlike the other two, he is will to recognize the great needs of the man. This shows the great humility of the Samaritan.
- C. He very well could have turned his head and ignored the man's needs, but he instead gave heed and sought to fulfill his serious needs. He was willing to give the time to see the man's needs and do what he could to provide help for his troubles.
- D. To be good humble servants, we must keep our eyes open and alert for the needs of those around us. It can be very tempting and very easy to keep our head down and our eyes focused solely on our own needs. I mean, we have troubles and needs too, right?! While this is true, that doesn't give us license to become conceited in our minds and thoughts to the extend that we never recognize the needs of others around us.
- E. Thanks be to God that this wasn't the mindset of our Savior Jesus Christ! We must remember the all important words that Paul recorded for the Philippians in our focus text for this year in **Philippians 2:3-5**. Jesus was willing to recognize our great need, and He humbled himself to meet our needs.

II. Serves The Needs of All People

- A. One of the things that ought to stand out to us concerning this story of Jesus is the racial factor that is present. The Jews and the Samaritans were not exactly the best of buddies. In fact, they were much closer to enemies. They were UNC & Duke fans. They were Republicans & Democrats. They were Montages and Capulets. These people did not get along and had not for hundreds of years....about 700 years to be more accurate.
- B. Then having his own countrymen pass by this man in need even adds to the drama of this story. His own people were not willing to serve his needs, yet this person who he would probably refer to as a dog was willing to stoop and assist him in his time of need.
- C. Far too often, as humans our personal biases hinder our service to others. We allow petty things to stop us from helping those who are around us. It might be the color of someone's skin. It might be their present condition. It might be their background. It might be their socio-economic status.
- D. However, the actions of the Samaritan show us that we ought to be willing to set aside those aside, even rid ourselves of those things entirely, so that we might serve the needs of others through humility. No matter who they are!
- E. Jesus Himself was willing to be our perfect example in this respect, as well. Even though we were sinners and considered enemies of His, He still humbly served our deeper needs. **(Romans 5:8-11)**

III. Serves Sacrificially

- A. Someone might speak up and say that we might be too hard on the priest and the Levite. "We don't know what their current circumstances were. They might have been on the way to an important meeting, or they might not have had ability to help the needs of this man. We ought to at least consider that for at least a second and not cast automatic judgement on these people," they might say.
- B. However, on the other hand...the same could be said of the Samaritan. We don't know where he was coming from or where he was going, but I believe we can all agree that he put whatever he was doing on hold in order to humbly serve the needs of this man who had fallen upon difficult circumstances.
- C. The Good Samaritan was willing to give of himself in order to help this man. He was willing to sacrificially give of himself so that he could meet the needs of this man. He was willing to give monetarily to help this man, and even made plans to give more if need be on his way back through. But maybe even more than that...he gave us his time and energy. Few things hold more value to us than time and energy. Sometimes we're so quick to just throw money at the needs of others, but in reality what they really need
- D. Few things hold more value to us than time and energy. Sometimes, we are so quick to just throw money at the needs of others because that's the convenient thing to do and really we make no sacrifice in just giving some money. Sometimes that is the sacrifice, but other times that's just the convenient thing to do. Humble servants are willing to give up those things that are valuable to them in order to assist those who are in need.
- E. Again, Jesus is our ultimate example of sacrificial servitude. Back to our 2016 focus text of **Phil. 2:5-8**, we see Jesus giving up so much on our behalf. He sacrificed it all for us so that our greatest needs might be met.

IV. Serves Without Need of Recognition

- A. Let's take a look at what prompted this whole discussion about the Good Samaritan. Jesus is asked by a lawyer concerning what must he must do in order to have eternal life. Jesus answers and says that he was do what is written in the law. The man then tries to make himself look good by asking who is his neighbor that he should serve. **(Luke 10:29)** This is when Jesus tells this parable and then concludes it by saying that this man, and all men, ought to go and do the same.
- B. This man was looking to gain recognition from Jesus as being something good and great. The rich young ruler seems to have had the same mindset. "All these things I have kept from my youth," he says to Jesus. **(Luke 18:18-23)** But Jesus isn't impressed. He says that there was still more that needed to be done. I take away from this that we need to simply work for the Lord, serve others when we have opportunity, and give the glory to our God and not seek it for ourselves.
- C. There is nothing in our text that indicates to us at all that the Samaritan was looking to gain recognition for what he had done. He doesn't seem to be trying to earn anything for his service towards this man. He simply wanted to show his love and compassion for this man, and do what he could and what was right for this man's sake. He humbly served without saying "look at me!"
- D. Serving the needs of others is a great thing, but we must be sure that our motivations for doing so are pure and righteous. Sadly, far too many today are not willing to serve the needs of others without calling the media and telling them to be at this such and such a place so that they might have themselves put in the paper or on social media. For some athletes, actors, or other famous people have a habit of doing this very thing. Yet, true respect ought to be given to those who keep their head down and serve because it is simply the right thing to do.
- E. As Jesus was teaching on the mountain, He implores His disciples to let their light shine not so that they might be glorified and praised, but so that the Father might glorified through their good works. **(Matthew 5:16)** Jesus came so that through His service, God might be praised, honored, and obeyed.

To many, these are difficult concepts to follow because we are living in a society that is all about what can be done for me, myself, and I. But let me encourage you by letting you know that you have brothers and sisters in this very congregation that let their lights shine in this very way. As the preacher of this congregation, I am privy to many things that happen behind the scenes as a sort of facilitator within the congregation. I have seen time and time again where families within this congregation, one particular that comes to mind because I have helped them more than once, help serve the needs of their brothers or sisters within this group. They do it not for the glory. They do it not for the publicity. I know this because they have asked me not to say who the aid is coming from. But they do it out of love, humility, and appreciation for all that has been done for them by their God and others. May this be the type of mindset that we have. May God help us to humbly serve others in this place and outside of it, so that our lights will shine and so that God will be glorified in our efforts as humbly servants.