

Session 4

Serve Together

If you've experienced the joy of giving and serving, you know that Jesus' words are true— "It is more blessed to give than to receive" (Acts 20:35 NIV). Jesus' life and words are the model for us. The perfect God-man "became flesh and dwelt among us" (John 1:14 ESV). Jesus "made himself nothing by taking on the very nature of a servant" (Philippians 2:7 NIV). Isn't it amazing to think that the One through whom everything was created (Colossians 1:16), lived a life of complete service to others?!

As broken humans, it is a struggle to follow Jesus' example, living a life of service to others. Even if we realize that a sacrificial life is the best way to live, it can be extremely difficult for us. The world's system, our sinful humanity, and Satan's attacks ensnare many to live selfish, independent lives. However, God created us to live interdependently on one another and to truly live for the benefit of others. May we remember that "even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45 NIV).

Pray

Begin by sharing any answered prayers you have seen in since your last meeting. Do you have any updates on the prayer cards?

Next, take a few moment and pause as a group. Pray silently in your own hearts.

Ask the Lord to open your eyes to see how you are living your life...to have an honest evaluation of how you spend your time and money. Ask the Lord to mold you to look more like Christ in how you use the precious moments and resources He has given you for your time on earth.

Discuss

Who do you know who lives a life of service, who truly believes that they exist for the benefit of others? (A family member? Boss? Neighbor? Teacher? Coach?)

Read

Read this passage aloud:

John 13:1-17 NIV

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

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

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

⁷ Jesus 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!"

¹⁰ Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

¹² When 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. ¹⁴ Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶ Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

Interact

What are some observations you have about this passage of scripture? (Notice key words, people, actions, and ideas. Notice connections and relationships.)

What are some questions you have about the passage's meaning?

What does this passage teach you about God? What does this passage teach you about humans?

What does this passage teach you about the way to live?

What's your application of this passage in your own life?

John 13:1 says that Jesus loved His own "to the end." How did Jesus love His own disciples during His earthly ministry? What stories stand out in your mind?

Verse 3 says Jesus knew "the Father had put all things under his power." This security poured out of Jesus in love, sacrifice, and service. Do you sense you are secure in His love, able to pour out to others because of the security you have in God's love?

Verses 6-11 describes Jesus' interaction with Peter as Peter was uncomfortable with the idea of the master washing his feet. Take a moment and imagine Jesus Christ kneeling at your feet with a basin of water, looking you in the eyes, and washing your feet. How does that make you feel?

In verses 13-17, Jesus brings it home for the disciples. He acknowledges He is their teacher and master but He uses His position in their lives to serve them. He tells them they should do the same. In Verse 15 Jesus says, "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." What are some ways you can follow His example?

At Fellowship, serving has three main forms:

- *Serving during a weekly worship service— There are countless opportunities to serve during your congregations weekly celebration gatherings.*
- *Serving within and serving with your community group— There will be times to serve one another in your community group. Being the Body of Christ to one another within your community is a beautiful thing. Jesus reminds us, “by this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35 NIV). Also, serving together is a wonderful way groups can bless others.*
- *Serving in your community— There are needs in your neighborhood, at local schools, with non-profit organizations, and all around your community. We want to have a released body of believers who make a difference in our community. As believers, we want to have fingerprints everywhere and name nowhere. We want to point others to Jesus in our service to others.*

Please visit **fellowshipnwa.org/serve** to explore how you can serve within your local church and community.

Share

Take the rest of your time together and hear spiritual stories from group members. Pray for them before they share.

Respond

As a group, pray about how you could serve. Ask God to reveal an opportunity in your group, your church, or your community where your group could engage as an act of service.

Notes: