

the final days

The Lenten Journey DEVOTIONAL | WEEK 2 | MARCH 16

"I am a guest here, charged with serving other guests—even those who present themselves as my enemies. I am allowed to resist them, but as long as I trust in one God who made us all, I cannot act as if they are no kin to me. There is only one House." – Barbara Brown Taylor

RECEIVE

As you read, notice the role of love in this passage. **John 13:1**, "Having loved His own who were in the world, He now showed them the full extent of His love." As you read this passage, consider how the story reveals the full extent of Jesus' love.

REFLECT

1. For some, John 13 is one of the better-known stories in Scripture. If you are familiar with this narrative, what have you heard about it? What, if anything, do you already know about this passage?
2. Jesus is in Jerusalem for the Passover Feast (13:1). This will be the last time He visits Jerusalem, the last time He shares a meal with friends, and the last set of teachings before His death. This section is often called The Farewell Discourse. Why do you think it begins with such a dramatic act of humility?
3. An esteemed rabbi washing the feet of his disciples would have been socially and culturally shocking in the Ancient Near East. Why?

4. Why do you think Peter protests (13:8)? After he rejects Jesus' gesture, he comes full circle asking that Jesus wash his full body (13:9). What is happening with Peter in this moment? How does Jesus respond?
5. Receiving an act of service like foot washing is intimate and vulnerable. How does being served by another person make us vulnerable?
6. Would you rather serve another person or be served? Why? What are the nuances that come about in serving or being served?
7. In 13:15, Jesus tells His disciples that in washing their feet, He has set an example for them. Literal foot washing is practiced by some communities of Christians but what is Jesus ultimately talking about here? What kind of service is He telling us to model?
8. How does this invitation from Jesus tie back to the idea of love that opens the passage in 13:1? What type of love is Jesus modeling here?

RESPOND

Create a short list this week of stories from your own life when you received unexpected service from another person. Was there a friend or stranger who went out of their way to do something for you? Was there a person whose position in an organization was "higher up" yet they took time to serve? Make a list of times when you experienced this personally or, saw it happen to another person. What are the adjectives that describe how you felt at that time. Reflect on your list and consider how you experienced a glimpse of God's love in that moment. What do the acts of service on that list tell you about God's love for us?

Now take a moment and create a new list. Can you make a short (confidential) list of people you feel led to serve? Is there someone in your network or sphere of influence who slips by unseen, unnoticed, or unloved? Can you find a way to honor them, even if you do so anonymously?

BLESSING

God, I come before You, the God of love. You set forth for us an example of service and in that example, You foreshadowed the ultimate act of service on the Cross. Thank You for that gift and for Your love. Help us become people of love. Help us become people who see others and act. Help us remember that no person is greater than another, we are all beloved in Your eyes. Help us remember that it is in dying to self that we learn how to fully live. Amen.

READ FOR NEXT WEEK



Reading Plan | The Final Days

Week 1 | March 9 | John 11

Week 2 | March 16 | John 13

Week 3 | March 23 | John 14

Week 4 | March 30 | John 15

Week 5 | April 6 | John 16

Week 6 | April 13 | John 12