



Discussion Guide Stories Worth Sharing – Part 7 LEADER GUIDE

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Hey leaders! Throughout our summer series, "Stories Worth Sharing", we're excited to help our church see the character of Jesus and that we all have impactful stories to share. Just like we'll hear the Gospel in these stories, people can hear the Gospel through OUR stories!

Thank you for shepherding a group of people to Love God, Love Others, and Live Sent!

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?
Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or discipleship@rockbridge.cc

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"God loves each of us as if there were only one of us."

[Augustine]

LEADER RESOURCES || Leader Note We do our best to equip, empower, and encourage you to shepherd your group well. Access a resource by clicking on the underlined title and share them with your group!

- **Passage Summary**
 - Jesus, aware that His hour has come to return to the Father, demonstrates His love for His disciples. During the Last Supper, He washes the disciples' feet, setting an example of humility and service. Peter initially resists, but Jesus explains the significance of the act, giving a new commandment to His disciples: to love one another as He has loved them. This love will be the hallmark of His followers!
- **John Ch. 13 Commentary & Washing the Disciples' Feet**
 - Use this commentary and short video for background and encouragement. These would be good resources to share before you gather.
- **If You Have Love For One Another**
 - This would be an encouraging resource to share with your group after you gather.

ENGAGE & CONNECT || Leader Note The goal for the icebreaker is to prepare your group for the conversation ahead by connecting with one another's hearts and building joy together.

Share about a time recently when someone displayed a simple act of love towards you.

BEGIN WITH PRAYER || Leader Note Begin your time together by thanking God for his presence and praying His word back to Him. Ask a few people to pray, beginning in a posture of humility and dependence!

Spend a moment praying this passage, beginning your time together in humility and gratitude!

*"Let me experience your faithful love in the morning, for I trust in you.
Reveal to me the way I should go because I appeal to you."*

[Psalm 143:8]

BIG IDEA || Leader Note Read this aloud so your group knows what the theme of today's discussion is.

The single most defining expression of the body of Christ must be our love.

PASSAGE || Leader Note Have 2-3 people read portions of the passage aloud slowly.

- John 13:1-35

DISCUSSION || Leader Note Your role is to FACILITATE the conversation, so keep your group moving and encourage multiple people to share, looking for opportunities to point out the grace and glory of God! Here are two REMINDERS: 1) Every question does NOT have to be answered ... there is freedom to go where the Spirit leads! 2) The answers do NOT have to be read aloud ... they are simply there for guidance!

1. What does Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet teach us about serving others? *Jesus' act teaches us that love is characterized by humility and service. Despite being their teacher and Lord, Jesus took on the role of a servant, showing that no task is beneath a leader. It also symbolizes the importance of selflessness, demonstrating that greatness in God's kingdom is achieved through serving others.*
2. How does Peter's reaction to Jesus washing his feet reflect our human attitude toward being served? *Peter's initial refusal to let Jesus wash his feet reflects our discomfort or pride in receiving service. Many of us feel unworthy or uneasy when others serve them, especially when the service comes from someone they respect or view as superior. Peter's reaction highlights the struggle with accepting grace and the humility required to receive service from others.*
3. In the sermon we heard, "No one is above serving. No one is below being served." Which of these is hard for you? How is God inviting you to grow in this area? *This is a good opportunity to go first!*
4. Why did Jesus emphasize the importance of following his example in v. 14-15? *Jesus emphasized the importance of following his example to instill the value of mutual service among his disciples. By washing their feet and instructing them to do the same for others, Jesus set a standard of humility, love, and service that he expected his followers to emulate. This teaching underscores that discipleship involves not just learning from Jesus but also living out his example in everyday interactions.*
5. How is Jesus' command to "love one another as I have loved you" challenging you most in your daily life right now? Let's be honest and vulnerable with one another!
6. How does Jesus' response to Judas' betrayal exemplify his teachings on forgiveness and love for enemies? *Jesus' response to Judas' betrayal exemplifies his teachings on forgiveness and love for enemies by demonstrating grace and restraint. Jesus did not publicly condemn or retaliate against Judas; instead, he allowed Judas to leave and fulfill his plans. This response reflects Jesus' commitment to loving even those who wrong him and forgiving them, embodying the principle of loving enemies and showing mercy even in the face of betrayal.*
7. In what ways does the act of foot washing serve as a model for community and relationship building within the church? *The act of foot washing serves as a model for community and relationship building within the church by promoting humility, mutual service, and equality. It breaks down social barriers, encourages vulnerability, and fosters a spirit of love and care among believers. By serving one another in practical ways, church members can build stronger, more compassionate relationships, creating a supportive and unified community.*
8. What impact does Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet have on your understanding of sacrificial love in relationships? *Jesus' act of washing the disciples' feet deepens our understanding of*

sacrificial love in relationships by demonstrating that true love involves humility, service, and selflessness. It challenges us to put others' needs above our own, to serve without seeking recognition, and to show love through tangible actions. This example encourages us to cultivate sacrificial love in our relationships, reflecting Jesus' transformative love in our interactions.

9. How does this passage inspire you to live out our faith in practical, everyday ways? *This passage inspires us to live out our faith by emphasizing the importance of humble service, selfless love, and active discipleship. It encourages us to look for opportunities to serve others, show kindness, and demonstrate Christ's love in our daily lives. By following Jesus' example, we can make a meaningful impact in our communities and embody the values of the kingdom of God in practical, relatable ways.*
10. In the sermon we heard, "If we are going to follow Christ, our actions must look more and more like his." What specific way is God stirring in your heart to love more and more like Jesus?

STEP OF OBEDIENCE || Leader Note *This is an opportunity for people to put into practice what the Spirit is inviting them to do and live in obedience to God for the sake of love! You can encourage your group to be accountable to one another and use these to follow up with one another throughout the week.*

If we want to become more like Jesus each and every day, we need to remember this: Love always esteems. That means that love ALWAYS regards others as honorable and valuable ... as made in the image of God! Based on the Spirit's prompting, what is a step of obedience that you can take today? **How will you strive to esteem the people around you on a daily basis?**

Give your group a few moments to reflect on their answers to the questions above. Then have your group answer the question aloud. Feel free to separate into smaller groups of 3-4 for this question.

PRAYER FOCUS || Leader Note *We want to commit to praying for OTHERS as a unified church who is dependent upon God for everything. Be intentional about saving at least 5 minutes for prayer at the end of your gathering each week to pray together. You can pray for one another as well as the prompt below!*

Loving Like Jesus

- We come before you God with hearts full of gratitude and humility. We acknowledge that love is the essence of your divine nature and the cornerstone of our faith. May our actions, words, and thoughts reflect your boundless love, serving as a testament to our faith in You.
- King Jesus, fill us with compassion and grace, so that we may be vessels of your love to those around us. Help us to live out the greatest commandment: to love you with all our heart, soul, mind, and strength AND to love our neighbors as ourselves.

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE *We include a monthly spiritual practice that can be shared with your group after you gather. Our hope is for this to enhance what we're learning and discussing together, so share about your experience with the practice at the beginning of your gatherings or throughout the week!*

Each of us has a story to tell how Jesus came into our lives, saved us from sin, and called us to Himself. When we share our stories with people around us, they can see our common humanity and that the saving work of Jesus Christ is available to all who believe and trust in Him!

WHO ARE YOU PRAYING FOR GOD TO GIVE YOU AN OPPORTUNITY TO SHARE YOUR STORY WITH?

- **Sharing Your Story** or rockbridge.cc/sharing-your-story