

NAVIGATE: Part 7
Navigating A Life Of Humble Service
John 13:1-20

Me: During COVID, I received a call from a woman whose husband had just passed away. He had been a truck driver, and together, they had traveled up and down the East Coast with multiple dogs, living out of the truck's cab. She didn't drive, so now she was stranded—an elderly woman alone in Dalton, GA, with nowhere to go.

I reached out to one of our small groups, and they immediately stepped in, surrounding her with love and support. We arranged for her to stay in a local hotel and had the big rig towed to a nearby parking lot. Thankfully, she had a daughter in Texas who, once contacted, agreed to drive and pick her up within a couple of days.

But there was another problem. The trucking company wanted their truck back the very next day. If the truck wasn't emptied, she would be hit with a hefty fine—one she simply couldn't afford. Desperate, she asked if we could help clean it out. Without hesitation, I said, "Yes."

When I opened the truck's door, I was met with a stench so overwhelming it nearly knocked me back. The combination of rotting food, cramped quarters, and multiple dogs had created an unbearable odor. I knew I needed reinforcements, so I headed to the store to gather cleaning supplies. As I walked down the aisles, a thought crept into my mind: Why am I doing this?

I was a pastor. This was filthy, backbreaking work. Shouldn't I be doing something more... pastoral?

But there I was, on my hands and knees, scraping dog poop off the floor of a truck, wrestling with my own pride. And in that moment, I realized something profound—serving others isn't always clean or easy. Sometimes, love looks like rolling up your sleeves and stepping into someone else's mess.

I thought of all Jesus did for me. And so, I kept scrubbing.

We: As Christ-followers, trying to navigate life, we will find ourselves in similar positions. We are trying to do God's will and be involved in His plan and we find ourselves not sure if we are going in the right direction. As we keep moving, we will encounter situations of service. We ask ourselves, should I serve, or should I keep moving? When navigating life, we should always choose service because WHEN I SERVE OTHERS I'M SERVING GOD.

God: We see this in the text of John 13:1-20 as Jesus displays humble service. The one considered the Passover lamb washes the feet of his own. The Gospel has always been God's plan. The cross is a mandatory part of God's plan of salvation but Jesus less than 24 hours from death on that cross teaches a giant lesson about humble service.

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. John 13:1

- **Jesus Had An Eternal Perspective.**

Jesus knew who He was, where He came from, what He had, and where he was going, That perspective navigated from to this point in which he was in complete control.

- **Jesus Had An Eternal Purpose.**

He knew what his destination was. He was born to die for our sins. He came and navigated His way to the cross to bring us back into relationship with a sinless God. To give us joy, peace and purpose. To give us supernatural hope that our best days are in front of us. His disciples, even after three years, didn't get it.

His followers, at that time, missed some key elements on how to navigate what Jesus modeled and taught. His disciples, those closest to him, had the wrong perspective and the wrong purpose. They were still focused and navigated by the earthly and not the eternal. Jesus had already told them -

For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many." Mark 10:45

Now, in John 13 He is going to show them. As a Christ-follower trying to navigate life I need to understand that it is going to be a life of humble service. Only God in His plan for your life can take your actions of service and create a beautiful message. How?

WHEN I SERVE OTHERS, I'M SERVING GOD

Trans: As we embrace the Cross in our understanding, we will better understand ourselves as servants and navigate toward serving others. John 13 shows us an EXAMPLE, EXPLANATION and an EXPECTATION of humble service we are to display as we navigate life.

1. JESUS' EXAMPLE OF SERVICE – John 13:2-5

v. 4-5 *So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, 5 and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.*

- Stop Being A Consumer
- Start Being A Producer

WHEN I SERVE OTHERS, I'M SERVING GOD

2. JESUS' EXPLANATION OF SERVICE – John 13:6-11

6 *When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" 7 Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." 8 "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me." 9 Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!" 10 Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of*

you.” 11 For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

- No One Is Cleansed Without Being Washed (Salvation)
- No One Is Exempt (Judas)

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3. JESUS’ EXPECTATION OF SERVICE (John 13:12-20)

12 After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, “Do you understand what I was doing? 13 You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and you are right, because that’s what I am. 14 And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other’s feet. 15 I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. 16 I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. 17 Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them. 18 I am not saying these things to all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But this fulfills the Scripture that says, ‘The one who eats my food has turned against me. 19 I tell you this beforehand, so that when it happens you will believe that I am the Messiah. 20 I tell you the truth, anyone who welcomes my messenger is welcoming me, and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming the Father who sent me.

- **Jesus Brings Clarity Who & What**
 - o Listening
 - o Buggies at grocery
 - o Opening doors

- **No One Is Too Good To Serve**
 - o Peter

- **No One Is Below Being Serve**
 - o Judas

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Trans: As we embrace the Cross in our understanding, we will better understand ourselves as servants and navigate toward serving others. John 13 shows us an EXAMPLE, EXPLANATION and an EXPECTATION of humble service we are to display as we navigate life.

Conclusion: One of the most ask questions I get is what God's will for my life is? People will state that they love God if He would just make His plan clear for me I would do it. I hope that you gained clarity from this teaching. You may not know the exact waypoint to where you are going on earth but while you are navigating all of us are to humbly serve other because –

WHEN I SERVE OTHERS, I'M SERVING GOD

I'm not sure what the detailed earthly plan is for every person, but I can give you a glimpse of your eternity. When

we read Matthew 25:34-40 Jesus gives us a glimpse of our final judgement.

³⁴ “Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the creation of the world. ³⁵ For I was hungry, and you fed me. I was thirsty, and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger, and you invited me into your home. ³⁶ I was naked, and you gave me clothing. I was sick, and you cared for me. I was in prison, and you visited me.’

³⁷ “Then these righteous ones will reply, ‘Lord, when did we ever see you hungry and feed you? Or thirsty and give you something to drink? ³⁸ Or a stranger and show you hospitality? Or naked and give you clothing? ³⁹ When did we ever see you sick or in prison and visit you?’

⁴⁰ “And the King will say, ‘I tell you the truth, when you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters,^[a] you were doing it to me!’ Matthew 25:34-40

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