

How Loved Are You? | John 13:1-11 Sermon Discussion Participant's Guide

Purpose of Discussion: To write down and pray about one truth about God's love that particularly helps you know and feel that you truly are loved by God.

Sermon Refresher: This week, guest speaker Jared C. Wilson asked the questions: how loved are you? Does God really love us? How can we be sure? He used the account from John 13:1-11 where Jesus washes the feet of his disciples to give us a deeper sense of how loved we are. We are loved from the beginning, loved right now, and loved forever.

Icebreaker: Since we are talking about love ... In *The 5 Love Languages*, author Gary Chapman says that we all tend to give and receive love in certain ways – what he calls the 5 love languages. The love languages are: quality time, acts of service, gifts, words of affirmation, physical touch. Which one or two of these ways make you feel the most loved?

Discussion:

Read John 13:1-11 (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

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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.

1. Jared mentioned that washing someone’s feet was seen as one of the most menial, dishonourable tasks in the ancient world. Even Jewish servants couldn’t be required to do it, only Gentile servants. Typically, it was an act only done by servants, only in very rare and unique cases by peers, and never by superiors. What do you think the disciples were thinking and feeling as Jesus started to wash their feet?
2. Why was washing their feet a demonstration of Jesus’ love for them?
3. Read v. 7 again. Jesus is saying that after the cross, they “will understand” what washing their feet meant at a deeper level. According to the sermon, what were the disciples and us meant to learn about Jesus’ death from this symbolic act?
4. Jared said that most of us know that God loves us, but we all have times where we wonder whether God really likes us. What is a time in your life when it was hard to believe that God liked you?
5. Based on v. 1 saying “having loved his own” (and Ephesians 1:4-5, Romans 8:29-30), Jared said that “before time began, God was loving you before there was a you to love.” What difference does it make that God loved you even before creation, even before you could do anything for him, even though he knew we would fail him?
6. Jared also talked about how Jesus loves us right now. He said: “God’s not waiting for a better version of you to appear. God loves the real you, not the pretend you that you want everybody to think you are.” How does this truth encourage you?
7. What is one truth from the sermon that stuck out to you – that helps you believe that God really loves you? Take a minute to think about it and write it down somewhere. Now take turns sharing what you wrote and why.

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Sharing and Prayer: Share something going on in your life where you need prayer. Have everyone pray for the person on their left. Pray that in the midst of whatever is going on in each person's life, that they would remember and believe God's love for them.