

The Last Week Of Jesus' Life - Jesus Shows What It Means To Serve - John 13

Sunday PM 07/07/19

Introduction:

How many ministers do the Lilac Road Church of Christ have? Where does the church get its ministers? Do we think of the preacher, elders, and deacons as being the ministers of the church? Do we think of ministers as those we hire to do a task? There was a sign in Troy, TN which read "Ministers: Every Member of This Congregation." I liked that for it gets to the heart of the matter.

I) Understanding Ministers and Servants

A) Minster

1. mesharet, which is applied to the attaches of a royal court (*2 Chron 22:8; cf. Ps 104:4*); to the priests and Levites (*Isa 61:6; Ezek 44:11; Joel 1:9,13; Ezra 8:17; Neh 10:36*).
2. Old Testament - Levitical Priesthood were selected by God to perform a service. God also selected the Prophets and Priest, *Psalm 84.10*
3. New Testament - to be a servant, attendant, domestic, to wait upon, to supply what is needed. City magistrates, *Romans 13.4*.

B) Servant

1. Doulos - a slave, bondman, man of servile condition, *2 Cor. 4.5*; passages that speak of slave master relationship uses this word, *Ephesians 6.5, 6*.

2. Diskonor - one who executes the commands of another. Waiter of tables, *Acts 6*
3. diakoneo (dee-ak-on-eh'-o); from NT:1249; to be an attendant, i.e. wait upon (mentally or as a host, friend, or [figuratively] teacher); techn. to act as a Christian deacon: *1 Tim. 3.8*
4. Who puts down as their goal in life to be a really good servant? We would probably think of that like saying I want to work all my life at a fast food chain.
 - a. Remember that servants get dirty, and work hard.
 - b. We generally appreciate those that wait on us very well. Lady at Cracker Barrel is exceptional in that she does all the big and little things. She remembers the order, does not get them mixed up, brings coffee, etc.
 - c. In the world of men appearing as a servant is not the way to gain power. Kings did not take out the garbage, or wash the carriage, or hang the clothes on the line. They had servants to do those tasks. It was beneath them.

II) Background to *John 13.3-17*

- A) **Old Testament pictured the Messiah as a King sitting on the throne of David, Lord and Master, Military Leader, Victorious over His enemies, ruling with a rod of iron, *Isaiah 9.6***
 1. The Jews equated power with prestige and having others to bow down and serve you.

2. The one-time Jesus lived up to their expectations was His entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday.

B) In the New Testament they still looked for a Military Leader, and victorious King.

1. Pilate asked "are you king of the Jews" because this was unlike any king he had ever seen.
2. Questions such as: Who is going to be the greatest in the kingdom of Heaven? Who will be at the right hand of God? Were raised, see *Matthew 20.20-28; Luke 22.24-30*
3. The disciples traveled with Jesus for three years but were still not thinking like servants.

III) Jesus washes the disciples feet, *John 13.3-7*

A) The custom of the Jews

1. Abraham made this gesture in *Genesis 18.4*.
 - a. Practical need for those traveling to wash the dirt off their feet
 - b. As seen as an act of humility and hospitality.
2. Usually either a servant or the master of the house would offer to wash the guest feet.

B) On this occasion

1. They had walked to Jerusalem to observe the Passover
2. Their feet were dirty and needed to be washed.
3. In this case neither the master of the house or a house servant was present.

4. The disciples were all just looking around at each other; perhaps waiting for some one to wash their feet.

C) Jesus starts to wash their feet

1. Imagine having a professor in a class come in and start doing this.
2. Peter protests, *vv. 6-7*; he could not see Jesus doing such a thing. He knew Jesus to be the Son of God, *Matthew 16.16-18*
3. Peter had to allow Jesus to do His will, not Peter's will, *v. 8*
4. Jesus came as a servant, *Phil. 2.7; Matthew 20.27*
5. In the Old Testament the Messiah is described as a Servant, *Isaiah 42.1; 49.5-7*
6. This would seem to be a contradiction; a ruler that would be a servant.

IV) Do we understand, *vv. 12-17*

A) He was the Master, *vv. 13-15*

1. If the Master can wash their feet they can do likewise and so can we.
2. Jesus not only talked about service He provided the example of being a servant.

B) Lessons to learn

1. Selfishness often gets in the way to being a servant. The first act of a good servant is to

- concentrate on the job and forget about themselves.
2. People think of the church as an institution that serves them instead of the church being made up of servants.
 - a. The bible speaks of faith without works as being dead in *James 2.20*. Do we have enough faith to serve?
 - b. Christianity is an "active religion" one that requires action on the part of the believer, *2 Timothy 2.1ff* is filled with active descriptions.
 - c. How many of us excuse ourselves instead of seeing what we can and should be doing?
 - d. Do we sometimes just say "I don't want to" and think nothing about it.
 3. To be a servant one must think like a servant, *Romans 12.1-2*.
 - a. What needs to be done?
 - b. What can I do?
 - c. How can I improve my ability to serve others?
 4. Thinking right always precedes doing right.
 5. What does God want you to be when you grow up? Answer: a servant
 6. Our service makes a difference. No job is too small or too menial.

Conclusion:

Imagine what it would be like if every member of the Lord's body did the very best, they could do. What if there were too many workers? Instead of having to round up the flock and keeping the saved, saved, the efforts of the congregation would be at converting the lost? What if members said, I want more to do, can we have more classes? Can we have more Gospel Meetings, can we have more... the church would grow more than we could imagine. Are we following the example of Christ?