

ANCHORS 5¹

Real Community: Servanthood

When we think of real community, we often think of interaction with fellow Christians on a normal, day-to-day level. However, real community also invites the presence of God into every interaction we have with one another. When God is present, we realize the truly magnetic nature of living in real community with one another. Tonight we are taking a look at the passage of the Last Supper. During their meal together, Jesus does something odd: he gets up and uses his own outer robe to wash the disciples' feet. The roads in Jerusalem were covered in dirt and people wore sandals everywhere they went, so naturally, their feet would get dirty and need to be washed before entering a home. For the disciples during that time, this was customary. Historically, the lowliest of servants would be assigned for this task, but Jesus takes the job. By washing their feet, Jesus demonstrates the love he has for them, and instills in them the mindset/attitude of servanthood. In real community, we are called to no less as followers of Jesus.

John 13:1-17, 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 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. 12 When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be **ble**sssed if you do them.

Pre-Article Questions:

1. If you were able to attend our large group worship service this week/past week, how did God speak to you through the worship or the message?
2. What is the nicest thing someone has done for you? Why do you think they did it? How did it impact your relationship with them and others?

Mark 10:42-45, NIV

42 Jesus called them together and said, "You know that those who are regarded as rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their high officials exercise authority over them. 43 Not so with you. Instead, whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, 44 and whoever wants to be first must be slave of all. 45 For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."

Matthew 6:1-4, NIV

"Be careful not to practice your righteousness in front of others to be seen by them. If you do, you will have no reward from your Father in heaven. 2 "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. 3 But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, 4 so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you.

Study Questions:

1. How does the background on the culture of foot washing impact the way you view this passage of scripture?
2. What may have gone through the disciples mind when Jesus changed his garments, humbled himself, and began to wash their feet?
3. How would you describe Jesus' interaction with Peter in this passage? Can you relate with Peter's response? Why or why not?
4. What is the command Jesus gives the disciples after washing their feet? How do you see this command related to the command He gives them in Mark chapter 10 and on the sermon on the mount in Matthew Chapter 6?
5. Why are these commands so countercultural? How does this set Christianity apart from other world religions? What does this say about our God?
6. Are there any cross-references or other scriptures coming to mind when you think about Jesus' words here on love, serving, and sacrifice? How do these cross references speak to you?
7. In our culture, what would be the equivalent of washing one another's feet today (sacrificial acts of service) and how have you experienced this firsthand this semester? How did it draw you closer to God and community?
8. Overall, how are these passages speaking to you today? What are you encouraged and challenged by?
9. How can our Life Group become more servant-hearted towards each other and others within our campus community in order to reflect who Jesus really is?

Prayer Partner Assignment:

Meet with your prayer partner this week to do a random act of kindness for another person on our campus or another member of Chi Alpha. Talk about some ideas, then, take the action together. Afterwards, discuss how it made that person feel and how it stretched you but also freed your heart a bit, was a bonding experience for everyone involved, and pointed to Christ' character, ways, or teachings.

Closing

Put some worship on as a Life Group. Take some time to rewrite one of your favorite verses tonight on a piece of paper. Spend 10 minutes in personal prayer and reflection over the verse, and jot down how God speaks to you, ideas that come to mind on how to practically live out this verse this month. Keep this sheet of paper with you or post it somewhere you can see it this upcoming week. Do not share what you write down with others.