

Series: The Gospel of John

Day 13: For high service, bow down

Prayer

Let's pray together,

O Lord, in the last messages we heard a lot about Your purpose. Open our eyes today, that we will understand how You want to use us as servants in that purpose. Fill us with overflowing love, so that we will serve out of love and by doing so, all the glory comes to You.

Amen

Introduction

As we walk through the Gospel of John, we find ourselves at chapter 13.

Oversight of the whole book...

- In chapters 1-12 we saw Jesus' public ministry.
- Chapters 13-17 focus on the preparation of the disciples for Jesus' crucifixion
- and chapters 18-21 concludes with the events at the cross

In the first 12 chapters we looked at Jesus' public ministry. Today we are starting where Jesus is preparing them for the task ahead and for His crucifixion. From chapter 18 we will look at the events at the cross. Today, in John 13, we will hear: For High service, bow down.

Chapter 13: For High service, bow down

We will use verse 20 as our key verse:

*20 Truly, truly, I say to you,
whoever receives the one
I send
receives me,
and whoever receives me
receives the one
who sent me.” (John 13:20)*

We find the word send two times in this verse. Firstly, the Father sent Jesus (past tense) and then Jesus sends the disciples again (present tense).

In John 20 we find the same message:

21 Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I am sending you.” (John 20:21)

So, sending on one side, but you must also notice the big emphasis on “receiving”. To understand our core verse well, we need to understand what it means to receive Jesus.

The same Greek word appears here in John 3. It says:

33 Whoever receives his testimony sets his seal to this, that God is true.

or in chapter 5

43 I have come in my Father's name, and you do not receive me...

In John 1 it says:

12 But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God,

So those who receive him, in faith, become children of God. So the father sends Jesus, Jesus sends the disciples with his message and those who accept that message of Jesus, in faith, becomes children of God.

The same word is used in Romans 3:

Christ Jesus, 25 whom God put forward as a propitiation by his blood, to be received by faith.

It is very clear in these passages that if Jesus “sends” here, he sends the disciples with the message of His atoning work.

The great command in Matthew 28 expresses the same.

“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations... (Matthew 28:19)

A big command, a high command, an important command.

John has now shown us that we have a high calling and now he tells us the conditions for that calling. Who should we be and how should we do it. He says in verse 15:

*15 For I have given you an example,
that you also should do
just as I have done to you.*

Follow my example... What was this example? It says in verse 14:

14 If I

...

have washed your feet,

you also ought to wash one another's feet.

This chapter began where Jesus washed the disciples' feet. Washing feet was the lowest work, the slave's work. It's a very practical thing, everyone was wearing sandals at that time and their feet were dirty by the time they got home. The table was low, they were lying down to eat. The dirty feet were not hidden under the table, and therefore their feet were washed before coming to the table. And here Jesus says, if I have washed your feet you must also wash one another's. That's the attitude I want you to work with.

In the culture in rural Zimbabwe, where there are no running water in taps, when you want to eat, a young lady (low in status) will hold a basin and pour water over the hands of the elder, so that you can wash your hands. But at Shindi village, they live John chapter 13. Against tradition, I have seen men pouring water for ladies and the pastor to his flock.

Jesus says to them:

*13 You call me Teacher and Lord,
and you are right, for so I am.*

*14 If I then,
your Lord and Teacher,
have washed your feet,
you also ought to wash one another's feet.*

He emphasizes here how high He is, how important He is. The last three chapters built up each time to show the glory of Jesus, to show how high He is. And this chapter begins in verse one:

Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father... 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, (John 13:1)

He shows how high He is, how important He is and if He is so high and important, He says we should do the same. Philippians 2: 6 describes it this way:

6 who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. (Phil 2:6-7)

We have now seen what the requirements are for going to carry out the assignment.

*16 Truly, truly, I say to you,
a servant is not greater than his master,
nor is a messenger greater
than the one who sent him.*

*17 If you know these things,
blessed are you if you do them.*

We must be humble, we should not think we are important. As a pastor or elder, we should not think we are more important than others, to be able do this work. But conversely, we should not think we need to be so important. We as simple foot-washers, can go and preach the Gospel and if we know that, we will be blessed.

We read in Acts 20:

35 In all things I have shown you that by working hard in this way we must help the weak and remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he himself said, ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’” (Acts 20:35)

Listen how John 15 puts it:

9As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love. 11These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full. (John 15:10-11)

The reason behind the father sending, is love and if we then keep that commandment we will be filled with joy!

That ties in with how this chapter ends:

*34A new commandment I give to you,
that you love one another:
just as I have loved you,
you also are to love one another.
35By this all people will know that you are my disciples,
if you have love for one another.” (John 13:34-35)*

So, the father loves and therefor He sent. Just as the Father loves, Jesus also loves and so He sends.

John 15 expands further to describe the love of Jesus:

*12 “This is my commandment,
that you love one another
as I have loved you.
13Greater love has no one than this,
that someone lay down his life for his friends.
14You are my friends
if you do what I command you. (John 15:12-14)*

So, just as the Father and the Son loves, we must love and that is the source and way to go and make disciples.

Let us conclude

We saw the following in this chapter:

It started to show that Jesus **loves to the extreme (to the cross)** and **is great and high**
It ended that **the Son gets glorified ...and Gives great command to also love in the same way.**

It is framed with His love, His glorification and how high He is.

Then we covered the key message:

Firstly, he said He **knew everything is in His hands**, but yet Jesus washed the disciple's feet.
He humbled himself.

Then he said **follow my example and you will be blessed.**

Because who receives someone **I sent**, receives me and become **children of God.**

and **God is then glorified** when we obey **His command to love.**

But as we went through the chapter we skipped a few verses. We only read the positive verses. To do justice to the chapter, we also have to spend a moment on the negative verses:

Verse 2: Judas is also at the table and the Enemy already convinced him what he should do...

Jesus loves to the extreme but the devil is there he wants to make sure the biggest act of love does not take place through Judas. But Jesus knew it. Jesus knows in advance what the devil wanted to do and He still washes the feet of His enemy – Judas

Verse:10-11 Jesus said to His disciples: You are clean but not everyone, not Judas

And then between these two passages verses 10 and 11. When Peter said, but Lord you cannot wash my feet, Jesus responded: You are clean but not everyone because he knew what Judas was going to do.

In verses 12-17 Jesus said to His disciples to follow His example then they will be blessed.

Again this is followed by verses about Judas.

Verse 18-19: Not talking about everyone. Judas... Scripture fulfilled... that you may believe

Jesus said: You will all be blessed but Judas you are not going to be blessed, but the scripture is going to be fulfilled. What was prophesied is going to happen. And then, when you see that fulfillment, you will know that I know all things in advance and **you are going to believe**. Then you, my disciples, can go and convey this message to others.

And again Judas

Verse 21-30 **Judas is declared a traitor and he leaves the room**

Verses 21-30 is a much longer section on Judas. He is charged as a traitor, the devil enters him and he leaves the room, he is not going to be the one who is going to be humble and carry the message out and as soon as he walks out Jesus says: Now, I will be glorified. Now I'm going to be crucified and then He gives His great command of love. Judas did not get that part of the command; it's given to the eleven and they are sent out to go and preach the gospel and then we want to say Amen... and the Chapter comes and he tells us about Peter's denial another negative thing to encourage us.

Verse 36-38: **Peters denial**

If we get this command to be humble, and do the command based on the love we received, we sometimes fail, sometimes the rooster will crow... But then we also know Peter was restored, Jesus' love is so great that even though we make mistakes he sends us, and he sends us to people who will hear.

So here is the chapter summary:

Verse 1: Jesus **loves to the extreme** and **is great and high**

Verse 2: **Judas at the table. The Enemy already convinced him**

Verse 3-9: **Jesus knew everything is in His hands.** Jesus washes the disciple's feet

Verse:10-11 **You are clean but not everyone, not Judas**

Verse 12-17: **follow my example and you will be blessed**

Verse 18-19: **Not talking about everyone. Judas...**

Scripture fulfilled... that you may believe

Verse 20: Who **receives someone I sent**, receives me

Verse 21-30 **Judas is declared a traitor and he leaves the room**

Verse 31-34: **Now the Son gets glorified ... Gives great command to love.**

Verse 36-38: **Peters denial**

Reflection

Today, this passage taught us new things about the love and the glory of God the Father and Son, as well as the great command to make disciples through love. Read the passage again and write down what you have learned.

Thanksgiving

When you see the love of God in this chapter, to what acts of thankfulness does that lead you? Will the great command of making disciples remain a task that you feel guilty about today, or will it become something that will just naturally overflow from you out of gratitude, because of the love you received first?

Prayer

Let us pray

O God, thank you that Your Son is so gloriously high that you gave everything into His hands and that He came from you and went back to You. Even more: That he took the form of a slave in our place, not only to wash our feet, but to die for us.

You are now calling us with the words "you also". Grant that we will love just as much and not only them in our community of believers, but also the other flock that needs to be gathered and even our enemies. Let us stay in your love. Let our joy overflow so much, that we cannot help but fulfil your great command and make disciples.

Oh God, open the borders for us soon that we can go to Zimbabwe again, but until then Lord, make disciples with this video.

Amen