



Bob Chisholm

“Momentum Ministry”

John 13

Small Group Plan

I will never forget one Sunday when I visited a church in St. Louis. I was in the balcony and watched a drama unfold below me.

The worship service was just about to begin. Everyone was seated and the room was thoughtful and quiet. Just as we were about to sing in walked a young man, down the right center aisle. I know that I can't judge his motives, but I can describe what I saw and heard. He was loud, boisterous, messy and dressed unlike anyone else in the room. His manner was so distracting that the worship leader waited until he was seated. The young man walked all the way down to the front and sat on the second row, by himself. It seemed to me that he was intending to make a challenging, almost threatening statement. Everyone was feeling uncertain and uncomfortable.

Our comfort level took another hit when one of the elders of that church immediately stood up and began walking down the same aisle from the back. We all wondered what he would do. Would he ask the young man to step out into the hallway to talk or would he simply ask him to leave?

With our eyes focused on what could have been a volatile situation, we all watched as the love of God began take over. The elder reached the second row and extended his hand in greeting. He then took a seat next to the young man, opened a songbook and offered to share it as the worship began.

As my good friend Gary Cochran would say, “*he didn't play the game.*” Instead, he changed the rules from “*in your face*” to “*wash your feet.*” In didn't matter what the young man had brought to the second row. What mattered is what the elder brought down the aisle — love and service.

OPEN IT / INTRODUCE IT ...

- Who are lifted up as the idols and stars of our culture? Why are they thought of as heroes?
- Do you think of them as heroes? Why or why not?
- Who is the most humble servant you know? Explain.
- How have they impacted or changed your life?

LOOK AT IT / STUDY IT ...

Read Aloud John 13:1-17

— JOHN 13:3-4 —

“Jesus Knew ... So, He Got Up From The Meal”

- What did Jesus “know” that led to his action?
- Why does true confidence (leadership) always lead to serving people?
- What kind of leadership is characterized by selfishness?
- Where have you seen these two kinds of leadership?

— JOHN 13:8 —

“Unless I Wash You, You Have No Part With Me”

- Why did Peter initially refuse to be washed?
- What lessons did Jesus want the Twelve to learn from the washing?
- Do you think they understood what Jesus was illustrating? Explain.

— JOHN 13:11 —

“You Are Not All Clean”

- Do you think Judas was ever really committed to Jesus? Explain your answer.
- How could a person live with Jesus for 3 years and then betray him?
- What is happening in a heart that first betrays and then regrets?

— JOHN 13:12 —

“Do You Understand What I Have Done For You?”

- Why did Jesus ask this question since he already knew the answer?
- Why is truth that slowly “dawns” on you more powerful than truth that is simply handed to you?
- When Jesus asked this question (v. 12) you think the Twelve understood?
- If you were one of the Twelve and Jesus had asked you to explain what he had done for you, how would you answer?

— JOHN 13:1 —

“He Now Showed Them The Full Extent Of His Love”

- How can simple foot washing be called the “full extent of his love?”
- How would you connect the act of washing feet with the act of dying on the cross?

USE IT / APPLY IT ...

- In his book **The God of the Towel**, Jim McGuiggan writes:

There were thirteen men in an upper room — how many servants and how many lords? “One Lord and twelve servants” sounds like the right answer, but is it? The truth is there were twelve lords and one Servant! Only one man in the room knew anything about service!

- How and when did you begin to “understand” the power of serving people?
- List the principles of “washing” that can guide our relationships today?
- What are the religious games that compete with true Christian service today?
- What are the signals that “betrayal” could be growing in our hearts?
- Close with prayer asking God for eyes to see His service to us and for hearts that desire to extend that service (“washing”) to others.