

GETTING TO HAPPINESS BY SERVING DIRTY FEET
Next Steps Devotional Guide — John 13:1-20
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Sermon Series > The Gospel of John
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1. Sometimes we can be stubborn and not listen to God and sometimes God has to go to extremes to get our attention. It is possible that God is trying to get your attention. What do you think it will take for that to happen and why?
2. First, to achieve happiness with our own spiritually dirty feet, we have to refuse any desire for prestige.
 - (a) Read Matthew 20:20-21 in your sermon notes or Bible. Here are two grown men, rugged fishermen at that, standing behind their mother, as she pressured Jesus to do something prestigious for her sons. When is a time you used someone else to get you something you wanted rather than asking for it yourself?
 - (b) Second, to achieve happiness with our own spiritually dirty feet, we have to refuse any desire for pre-eminence. Read Matthew 20:24 in your sermon notes or Bible. The Greek New Testament implies that James and John put their mother up to this with Jesus. Her name is Salome and she was the sister to Mary, Jesus' mother. This makes her Jesus' aunt and James and John are His first cousins. Their family has sacrificed their fishing business for 3 years for their two sons to follow Jesus. Now it was pay back time. What pay back have you ever expected from the Lord and why?
 - (c) Read Matthew 20:17-29 in your sermon notes or Bible. Just prior to going up to the Upper Room, Jesus poured His heart to His disciples, telling them where this was going. It went right over their heads because of their desire for prestige and pre-eminence for power and jealousy with James and John. They are more concerned about positions of prestige and pre-eminence than the life of Jesus. All they can see is what they want; not Who is in need. When has this happened to you?
 - (d) Read Jesus' words in Matthew 25:41-46 in your sermon notes or Bible. Jesus says that refusing to serve others is refusing to serve Him and the person who does that will be punished for eternity. How does this impact your life?
 - (e) You can be so about your position and power due to your desire for prestige and pre-eminence that you miss God speaking to you to meet a need right in the front of your eyes. Read Mark 10:45 in your sermon notes or Bible. We love this about Jesus, but does the Lord and others see this in us and love us for it?
 - (f) Read Philippians 2:6-8 in your sermon notes or Bible. Jesus had the highest positions of prestige and pre-eminence but He gave it all up and humbling became human in order to serve us and not be served. What have you given up to reflect this in your own life?
3. Read John 13:1-2 in your sermon notes or Bible. This is a very convicting passage. Jesus knew Judas was going to betray Him and He still washed Judas' feet. Do you do this or do you refuse? Why?
 - (a) Read John 13:18-21 in your sermon notes or Bible. Imagine you are sitting there and you hear what Jesus said in John 13:21. How would you feel and who would you respond?
 - (b) Read John 13:3-4 in your sermon notes or Bible. The point of verse 3 is to stress that God Himself came down in human form. In Jesus' day it was customary when you entered your own home or another's, a servant or a slave washed your dirty, filthy feet. Even Jewish slaves were prohibited from doing this. They typically used Gentile servants or slaves. Since there were no slaves or servants present, one of the disciples should have taken the initiative to do this. Just prior to going to the Upper Room, Jesus said something to them in Matthew 23:11. Read this in your sermon notes or Bible. Now compare this to Luke 22:24 in your sermon notes or Bible. This was within minutes. Why do you think this did not register with them?
 - (c) Not one of the disciples would humble himself to wash his own feet, nor the feet of any one of the other disciples. Not one of them even offered to wash Jesus' dirty feet. What does this tell you?
 - (d) New Testament scholar D.A. Carson writes this: "With such power and status at His disposal, we might have expected Him to defeat the devil in an immediate and flashy confrontation, and to devastate Judas with an unstoppable blast of divine wrath. Instead, He washes His disciples' feet, including the feet of the betrayer" (Source: D.A. Carson, *The Gospel According To John*, p. 462). What Jesus could have done versus what He did is remarkable. Why and what does this say to you?
 - (e) Jesus had made all the arrangements prior, which included a basin of water and a towel. Do you think Jesus prearranged this because He knew His disciples would not humble themselves to the level of a servant or slave to do this OR do you think it was because Jesus wanted to teach them a lesson of the kind of disciples and servants they would need to be in the future? Read John 13:3-5

in your sermon notes or Bible. What Jesus did shocked His disciples because of all people who should have not been doing this in their culture, it was Jesus, their teacher, mentor and Rabbi. Now read John 13:12-15 in your sermon notes or Bible.

- (f) Some well-meaning Christians have suggested that Jesus was giving another command like baptism and The Lord's Supper, but He wasn't. This was not some kind of executive order, but an example. This wasn't a mandate, it was a model. What is the difference in these for your own life?
- 4. There are only 2 times in the New Testament we are told to follow Jesus' example. The first one is John 13:15 and the second one is 1 Peter 2:21. Read this in your sermon notes or Bible.
 - (a) Read John 12:37-40 in your Bible. John quotes from the Old Testament — Isaiah. His point is that the Messiah's message was here for a while and then it will be gone. What impact does this have on your life and why?
 - (b) Based on John 13:15 and 1 Peter 2:21, while we don't pursue death by crucifixion, we do pursue obedience in suffering. While we may not wash dirty feet today, we do pursue humility through serving. Unlike us, notice what Jesus DID NOT DO. He did not make a big scene of this, by intentionally drawing attention to Himself. Jesus didn't say, *"Well, boys, I am going to teach you a lesson in humility and being a servant. Notice what I am doing. You can put this in your Google Docs, okay?"* He just humbly got up and started washing His disciples feet with no fanfare. How could you do the same thing this week?
 - (c) Most of us love Simon Peter because we are like him so many times. Read John 13:6-8a in your sermon notes or Bible. Jesus' point to Peter and to us is this: to be a leader, a person must first be a servant to all. Does this describe you? Why or why not?
 - (d) Peter basically said to Jesus, "God forbid," refusing to let Jesus wash his dirty feet. Now read John 13:8b in your sermon notes or Bible. In Jesus' day, washing was also symbolic of spiritual cleansing and fellowship with God. Now read Peter's reaction to Jesus in John 13:9. Peter said, "Jesus, I want the works, the whole treatment." We can see the humor here, but Jesus responds with something that is not humorous in John 13:10. Read this in your sermon notes or Bible. Jesus refers to two different types of cleansing.
 - (e) One was a cleansing of regimentation; the other was a cleansing of regeneration. Peter's refusal was a self-assertive pride that refused to accept grace from another. Every day we have a regiment to bathe our physical bodies, but what we really need is regeneration of our souls. Our sin does not keep us out of heaven, but it does interfere with our fellowship with the Lord. This is why all of us must go through a daily cleansing of restoration.
 - (f) There is a bath of regeneration that solves your sin problem for all eternity. And there is a bath of restoration that solves you fellowship problem. How intentional are you about the second one?
 - (g) Read John 13:10-11 in your sermon notes or Bible. All of them were cleaned or saved spiritually, except Judas. There are many people in the church today who think because they go to church and are good people, tithe, and even serve that makes them spiritual clean. They have too much pride to humble themselves and ask the Lord to spiritually cleanse their dirty hearts. How would you help someone see the difference?
 - (h) Jesus' point to Peter and the other disciples is that communion must be preceded by cleansing. Some refuse to serve because they are out of fellowship with the Lord. Would Jesus say you allow Him every day to spiritually cleanse you? Why or why not?
 - (i) Read John 13:12 in your sermon notes or Bible as well as the explanation for the word translated as "blessed." Jesus' point is that happiness is not the result of information, but application. How intentional are you to apply the truth of Jesus and Scripture to your life?
- 5. We concluded with 2 biblical principles to apply to our lives:
 - (a) Principle #1 > Washing spiritually dirty feet means surrendering your privilege to receive a proper response. Jesus washed all 12 disciples' feet — 24 in all and what was their response later? Thomas still doubted Jesus. Judas still betrayed Jesus and Peter still denied Jesus. Jesus knew this in advance and He still chose to humble Himself and wash their feet. What does this mean to you and why?
 - (b) Principle #2 > Washing spiritual dirty feet means surrendering your prerogative to choose whom you will serve, when you serve, and how you will serve. Knowing that in a few hours all His disciples would forsake Him, He still chose to wash their feet. Do you pick and choose who you will serve? Why or why not? Whose feet do you need to wash spiritually today for the Lord?