**WITH JESUS** (Week 10, March 14, 2018)

**Getting to Know Jesus Through the Gospel of John**

**John 13:1-17**

**Background for the Passage**

1. The pace of John’s narrative drastically slows at the beginning of chapter 13. The first 12 chapters provide highlights from the 3.5 years of Jesus’ active ministry, then John writes the next 7 chapters to cover the words, actions, and events that took place in a 24 hour period. He basically spends 6 chapters detailing the events of the last night of Jesus’ earthly ministry with His disciples. This pace is to demonstrate the urgency, significance, and importance of the words and actions of Jesus during the Last Supper, the dark night in the garden, and the arrest, trial, torture, and crucifixion.

2. Most likely the “Last Supper” was the Passover meal. Traditionally, faithful Jews started the celebration of the Passover meal around sundown on Thursday, and it could last for 3-5 hours. It was usually held on the 14-15 day of the month of Nissan, the first month of the religious calendar.

3. Jesus was fully aware that His time on earth was nearing an end, and that He would soon be returning to His Father. His final actions and words were packed with power and significance. He devoted His last hours to encouraging and instructing His disciples.

4. The last part of 13:1 can also be translated “*He showed them the full extent of his love” or “He loved them to the utmost.”* The statement means that Jesus continued His full devotion to His disciples until the very end of His life, even when He was on the cross and beyond. This phrase is not limited to the immediate context, but confirms that Jesus kept His loving perspective even when He was suffering a painful death. But before He left them, He wanted to demonstrate His love for them, one-by-one, by humbly serving each of them.

*5*. Jesus knew much in advance that Judas would betray Him. He knew that the Devil would cooperate with Judas, guide him, and in some ways, influence him to do it. In fact, Satan entered Judas to carry out the final act of betrayal. (Jn. 13:27)

6. Jesus, the son of God, knew His identity well. He knew “Who He was,” and even more importantly, He knew “Whose He was” from an eternal perspective; One with the Father.

Jesus knew His origin and His destiny. He knew that He would soon be returning to the Father where He belonged.

7. Jesus demonstrated and defined true humility. From a position of security and strength, He chose to lower Himself, humble Himself, put aside His divine rights, release His rights as a human teacher/leader, and literally, take up the position of a servant. Jesus knew fully “Who He was” and “Whose He was,” so from that position of security, humbled Himself to love. (Phil. 2:5-11)

8. Foot washing was a common act in the first century. People traveled mostly by foot, wearing sandals, and most roads and pathways were dusty. When entering a home, it was customary to wash the feet as soon as possible. To not offer to wash a guests feet (or have them washed by a servant,) was considered to be a serious violation of hospitality. (Lk. 7:44) Washing feet was an unpleasant but necessary job that was usually done by the lowest servant in the house, or by the least member of the family.

9. Peter came to realize that humble service means obedience to Christ. (1 Pet. 5:5-6) After years of reflection, Peter realized that Jesus was demonstrating the radical role of a servant leader, who serves first and then leads. Peter hadn’t understood during the actual washing, and articulated his confusion and distress at what Jesus was doing. When Jesus washed Peter’s feet, He was foreshadowing the ultimate sacrificial act that was soon to come when Jesus gave up His life for them.

10. The true significance of serving is to obey and imitate Jesus Christ. Likewise, accepting service from others is accepting Christ’s service. Jesus raised serving others to the highest way to which we can dedicate our lives.

**Review Questions**

11. (13:1) What did Jesus KNOW even before the Passover celebration meal? Why had He come? What was He about to do? How did He love His disciples? What does the final phrase of the verse indicate?

12. (13:2) What does it mean that it was “time for Supper?” Who had already been working with and around Judas? What was Judas being “prompted” to do?

13. (13:3) What did Jesus KNOW for certain? What was He fully aware of at this point? What’s the significance of Jesus knowing both His origin and His destiny/destination?

14. (13:4-5) What surprising action did Jesus do? What was indicated by His first actions? (Getting up, taking off his outer robe, grabbing a towel…) Why were these initials actions shocking? Then what did Jesus do? What did it mean to wash their feet?

15. (13:6-7) What strange question did Peter ask Jesus? How did Peter refer to Jesus? Why was Peter struggling with this situation? How did Jesus respond?

16. (13:8-9) Why did Peter keep resisting? What statement did Pete make and how did he make it? How did Jesus respond? What’s the point? How then did Peter change?

17. (13:10-11) How was Jesus statement both direct/practical (about feet,) and indirect/spiritual (about being truly cleansed?) How were His disciples now “clean?” Except for who?

18. (13:12-14) What did Jesus do after washing their feet? What’s the significance of taking a seat? How did Jesus explain His actions? How did He redefine leadership and leadership roles? How did He then challenge His disciples?

19. (13:15-16) What’s the purpose of an example? What’s significant about this example? What did “do as I have done” mean to the disciples? What about in modern times? How did the disciples define this and how do we? How is Jesus statement in 13:16 important to this?

20. (13:17) What is implied now that knowledge has been communicated? What will happen to the disciples if they do these things? What is the principle behind this statement?

**So What?**

\*21. What motivated Jesus’ choice to humble Himself? What made His choice possible? What motivated our choices to humble ourselves and serve? What’s the key to this?

22. What’s the difference between humbling yourself and humiliating yourself? Which did Jesus do by washing feet? How have you gotten these two confused? What have you done, or not done, because you got these 2 extremes mixed up?

\*23. What motivated Jesus to serve ALL 12 of the disciples? Have you been selective in your serving of others? How will you commit to following the example of Jesus?