



WK.2 - GROUP DISCUSSION ***SERVING***

Message by Shawn Johnson

START

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

Think about one of the best customer service experiences you ever had, whether a vacation place, restaurant, or store. What made it so great and why do you think you can remember it now?

SHARE

Welcome back to our series entitled, "Happy."

When we think of happiness, most of us think of external things or activities that make us happy. Happiness to many of us might be the first few days driving that new car, the job promotion, recognition for our accomplishments, vacations or that one relationship that had eluded us for so long.

While we all have ideas of what would make us happy, what does God say will bring us happiness? In his word he makes it pretty clear that true happiness is a matter of the heart. God wants to change our hearts so that happiness will no longer be out of reach no matter what circumstances we find ourselves walking through.

This week we are going to dive into scripture and walk into a dinner party with Jesus and discover one of the most important lessons about life and the true secret to happiness.

Read John 13:1-11

Is there anything that catches your attention in this passage?

It is interesting to note that Jesus, being God, knew everything about what was going to happen that night and ultimately, who would betray him and hand him over. Yet, he still humbles himself before his disciples and washes their feet.

What does this say to you about being a servant?

Does this change how you view serving people?

Does this reveal anything to you in your own heart in the area of service?

GROW

As Jesus was quickly approaching the culmination of his ministry here on earth, he takes some quiet, private time with his disciples and imparts something really important. Of all the things that he could have gone over or talked about with them, in the hours before his death he chooses to demonstrate the heart of a servant.

If we are honest, we can agree that serving people is not something we often do without thinking or putting effort into. In fact, just a simple act of service can be enough of a challenge that the thought of taking on the nature of a servant seems impossible. Yet becoming a servant is what Jesus is communicating to his disciples.

Read John 13:12-17

Does anything Jesus said or did in this passage stand out to you?

Note:

Pay attention to what Jesus says after he is done washing their feet. Of all the parables and situations he has used to teach in his ministry, rarely has he paused like this to ensure they understand what he is communicating.

Why does he do this?

Read: English Standard Version Commentary:

With his crucifixion imminent, Jesus washes his disciples' feet as a final proof of his love for them, setting an example of humility and servant-hood and signifying the washing away of sins through his death. In a striking demonstration of love for his enemies, Jesus washes all of his disciples' feet, including those of Judas. Jesus' act is all the more remarkable, as washing people's feet was considered to be a task reserved for non-Jewish slaves. In a culture where people walked long distances on dusty roads in sandals, it was customary for the host to arrange for water to be available for the washing of feet. Normally this was done upon arrival, not during the meal.

What is your reaction to Jesus washing his disciples' feet?

What is your reaction to Jesus washing Judas' feet?

Why is Jesus making such an effort to communicate this lesson to his disciples?

As humans, why do you think we struggle with this so much?

MOVE

As Jesus' ministry moves into its final stages, we see him yet again challenging the hearts of his disciples. At this point his disciples realize that he isn't the Messiah the Jews were expecting, but something better. He wasn't interested in overthrowing Rome and conquering nations by force. He was gentle, compassionate, and meek. He didn't just want people following rules, thinking

that would earn them an IOU from God. He wanted to make sure the people of God understood how much they needed a savior and that it was the posture of the heart that mattered most.

Re-read vs. 16-17

Jesus starts with “Truly, truly” a common way at that time to indicate that you were about to say something really important, gives them proof for why they as his followers need to be servants, and then tells them that if they do it they’ll be happy.

He’s basically saying, “Listen, if you call yourselves my followers, you will serve. And if you humble yourselves just as I demonstrated for you, this service won’t feel like work. It will actually be something enjoyable, it will bless you, **and it will make you happy!**”

Discuss this quote:

The secret to true, lasting happiness is never about what you get, it’s about what you do.

Read:

Matthew 20:28

John 12:26

Matthew 23:11

Proverbs 11:25

In the scheme of life here on earth, we know that Jesus is concerned with our hearts (our motives for doing what we are doing). What does the physical act of serving have to do with the posture of our hearts?

What would have to change for you to become the type of servant Jesus is challenging us to be?

Is there someone in your life -- a friend or an enemy, that God has put on your heart to serve today? If you are comfortable, would you share with the group?

PRAY

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women’s groups to talk more freely.

TO GO

Luke 22:26-27

But you are not to be like that. Instead, the greatest among you should be like the youngest, and the one who rules like the one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one who is at the table? But I am among you as one who serves.