

Weekly Devotions: LOVE FOR ONE ANOTHER 1

God's Love Should Define Who We Are

One Name summarizes what the Christian faith is about – JESUS! One Word summarizes what we believe – LOVE!

Jesus' final teaching on the night of His arrest leading to His crucifixion was clearly about love; God's love, what it means for us to love God and the importance of loving one another. The apostle John had used the noun for love, *agape*, only once and the verb, *agapao*, 7X in the first 12 chapters of the gospel. But in the Upper Room discourse, John 13-17, John used the noun for love 6X and the verb 24X.

Read John 13: 1-17

The evening started with an act of humble, loving service by Jesus. During supper, Jesus took a basin of water, knelt down and began to wash the disciples' feet. He knew that one of them, Judas, would betray Him and, before long, Peter would deny knowing Him to protect himself and the rest would desert Him and go into hiding. Yet He still loved them and was concerned for them.

Jesus' action showed His deep love and compassion for those who are unworthy and unfaithful. Initially, Peter refused to have his feet washed by Jesus. It takes humility to serve others especially those lower than us; it also takes humility to receive help from another.

Jesus instructed that those who acknowledged His Lordship should also follow His example of loving and humbly serving fellow believers regardless of their unworthiness (vv. 12-15).

Questions to ponder

1. Why did Peter initially refuse to have his feet washed? What are some reasons why you find it difficult to serve or care for others in the church and to allow others to care for and serve you?
2. What lessons was Jesus teaching His disciples through this act of feet-washing (12-16)? Who did Jesus say would be blessed (17)?
3. What is the difference between caring for others in humility and being patronizing in our care for others? Is there something you can humbly do for a fellow believer this week without coming across as being condescending?

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