



Serving like this is unheard of!
A study on John 12:12-14:31

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The Gospel of John: Lesson plan

- Lesson 1 — Apr 15 — Jesus' ministry is so...unique! (John 1-3)
- Lesson 2 — Apr 22 — A deep-deep understanding about faith! (John 4-7)
- Lesson 3 — Apr 29 — Jesus IS God! (John 8:1-12:11)
- Lesson 4 — May 6 — Serving like this is unheard of! (John 12:12-14:31)
- Lesson 5 — May 13 — Living a powerful life (John 15-17)
- Lesson 6 — May 20 — The tomb is empty! (John 18-21)

John 12:12-36, The hour has come!

As previously shared, the death and resurrection of Jesus in the Gospel of John is described as a moment of *glory*. Everything in the Gospel leads to this moment of glory, because it is here where Jesus can show beyond any doubt, once and for all to all who He truly is...He *is* God!

We see this once more here in chapter 12. The disciples don't quite understand Jesus' entry into Jerusalem and the prophecies surrounding His entry as shared in vv. 12-15, but after "Jesus was glorified", in other words after His death and resurrection, they realized what it all meant (v. 16). We continue to see the clear connection between the theme of glory, *hour*, death and resurrection in v. 23 when Jesus says to His disciples, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified". Therefore, even though Jesus' heart is heavy with His death upon Him (v. 27a), He also knows that His Father should not "save" Him from this hour (His death), as this hour is exactly the reason why He came (v. 27b). It is through *Jesus' death and resurrection* that the Father will be *glorified* (v. 28a). God even affirms this truth directly from heaven (v. 28b), for our sake (v. 30), so that people don't miss it that Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection (v. 33) brings victory over death and the devil (v. 31), and at the same time draws all people like a magnet close to salvation in Christ (v. 32)! Remember though, you need to find Jesus before the darkness overtakes you...it is a mistake that will cost you eternity to believe the lie that you have unlimited time to come to the cross (vv. 35-36)!

Serving like this is indeed unheard of! Nobody serves others like this! Yet, Jesus does! He dies like a kernel of wheat, but then only to come forth again and produce many seeds (v. 24)! We should do the same, we should follow Jesus (v. 26a) by also hating a life stuck to this world (v. 25a), so that we don't lose our lives, but rather keep it forever (v. 25b). Serving Jesus in this radical way will lead us to the home of our Lord (v. 25b), and a life honored by our Father (v. 26b)!

What does such a life look like? It is a life where we serve obediently, sacrificially, putting others always above ourselves, and seeking God's honor...not our own.

John 12:37-50, Believing in Jesus = Believing in God, and this is available for all!

Sadly there were many who didn't come to faith, even after all the miracles (John 12:37)! One stumbling block for many was that they just couldn't risk losing their positions in the synagogue (v. 42)—they just simply “loved the praise from men more than the praise from God” (v. 43).

When you do come to faith though, the great news is that believing in Jesus, is most certainly also to believe in the Father (v. 44); believing in the One sent, is also to believe in the “Sender” (v. 45), with the purpose that no one who believes in Jesus should stay stuck in darkness (v. 46)!

And this singular action is the powerful truth that can bring eternal life to you (v. 50)!

John 13:1-38, How can “washing feet” be missional?

Jesus performs the washing of feet right before his “time has come” to be crucified (v. 1). As He washes the disciples feet, Jesus tells Peter that he will later come to understand the meaning of what is happening (v. 7), which surely raises the question why he would not be able to understand it—simply washing feet could not have been that difficult to grasp! Therefore, there must be more to understand than what meets the eye, so to speak...

The very next verse, v. 8, helps a lot, where Jesus states that if He doesn't wash Peter's feet, then Peter will have “no part with Jesus” (no part in His eternal inheritance)! Clearly this washing of feet has some meaning on another level too...

As Jesus continues to explain that all is clean (v. 10), except Judas (v. 11), it makes sense that Jesus is referring to the process of being washed spiritually clean, something that can only be done completely at the cross (which now also allows v. 7 to become clear).

Therefore, when Jesus teaches his disciples to “wash one another’s feet” in v. 14, it challenges them not only to serve each other well, as He did, but also to “wash” people spiritually by leading them to the cross, where they can become truly clean!

Indeed, the “washing of feet” is missional to its core...serving like this is unheard of!

To serve like this is not easy, but we have to believe Jesus, and follow Him faithfully and without fear. We know that He is worthy of following, as He knows all, just like His Father (vv. 18-19). As we go and “wash feet” those who allow us to do so will actually accept Jesus (v. 20a), and whoever accepts Jesus, *actually accepts the Father* (v. 20b).

Jesus continues right after the washing of feet to show how extreme service and supreme love cannot be separated, when He shares a meal with Judas, His betrayer (vv. 18, 21-30a). It should not be a surprise by now that John’s Gospel emphasizes that Judas went into the “night” to go and betray Jesus (v. 30b)!

John 14:1-31, We are not alone...ever...so stop living in fear!

So many of God’s children still live in fear. This is not God’s will. Jesus gave the solution to drive out fear (v. 1a). It is trust, total trust in Jesus and the Father (v. 1b)! We need to believe that the Father and Jesus really wants us to be with them. In fact we will find that God is preparing enough rooms for *all* of His children (vv. 2-3).

We know by now how to get to God (only through Jesus, vv. 4-6), and we also know God (because of Jesus, vv. 7-11). How can such a truth, such a faith, not bring about peace, and drive trouble away from our hearts?!

These are not only words, this truth that we are not alone, is not only something we need to believe without ever seeing it. Just as we could see that the Father was with Jesus in the things that Jesus was doing (vv. 10b, 11b), we will realize that Jesus is with us when we do extraordinary things...recognizing that there is no way that things could turn out the way it does in our lives, simply because of our own efforts (v. 12)! In fact, when we do things, we need to remember to ask Jesus to help us, and as Jesus responds in power, it will all bring glory to our Father's Name (vv. 13-14). As we see the Father in Jesus, people will then see Jesus in us, as we will see Jesus in what we do, realizing our faith is surely real!

If we love the Lord, then we will obey Him to live like this (v. 15), and we'll be able to live like this, because we will have, *forever*, the Holy Spirit with us, *in us* (vv. 16-17)! And before long our Lord will return (v. 18), but even till then we will still be able to "see" Him, because the Spirit opens our spiritual eyes (as we have seen throughout John's Gospel) (v. 19). We are absolutely not alone, and loved by God (vv. 20-21). Why would we not want to obey such a God and love Him wholeheartedly (vv. 21-24)?!

The Holy Spirit continues to remind us of all these truths, and makes it clear to us (vv. 25-26), so that God's peace will never leave us (v. 27a), our hearts will not be troubled (v. 27b), and we will never need to live in fear (v. 27c). We should hear and see: Jesus is giving honor to the Father and living in victory over the "prince of this world", and therefore we too should give honor to Him and live in love, knowing that this world has no hold on us (vv. 28-31)!

Want to dig deeper, or just stay connected?

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