



To Lead is to Serve

John 13 tells the story of Jesus washing the disciples feet. The meal that they had sat down to eat was not just another evening meal. They were partaking in the traditional Passover Seder. In addition, it would be the last meal that Jesus would have prior to his death.

John 13:3-5

[3] Jesus, knowing that the Father had handed all things over to Him, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, [4] *got up from supper and *laid His outer garments aside; and He took a towel and tied it around Himself. [5] Then He *poured water into the basin, and began washing the disciples' feet and wiping them with the towel which He had tied around Himself.

John 13:12-15

[12] Then, when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined at the table again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done for you? [13] You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord'; and you are correct, for so I am. [14] So if I, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. [15] For I gave you an example, so that you also would do just as I did for you.

Jesus, while knowing all of who He was, where He came from and where He was going, laid it all aside and took the position of the lowest in position and performed an act of service no one had done or would have done as they believed they were too good to do so.

Then when he had completed this service for each of them, he again got dressed and asked them what he had done for them.

He directed them as he does us that if He was their "Teacher" and "Lord" could do this, they/we should do the same.

So what exactly was the example that he set? Was it simply about washing feet? My personal belief that washing feet was simple symbolic, not of a specific act of service, but an attitude and approach to being not only a Godly but an effective leader.

So what is this attitude and approach?

- We honor and respect one another putting the needs of others above our own.
- We serve with an attitude of humility not of authority.
- We treat those we are leading the way we would want to be led.
- We lead by walking with and beside those others not from above or ahead of them.
- Compassion and care are more important than power.

When people KNOW they are cared for they will follow you just about anywhere, because they believe that you have their best interests in mind in the direction you are going. In addition, they are more devoted and loyal to leaders they trust which is another consequence of servant Leadership.

So, no matter who you are or what your position, we can all learn and apply this important example set by "The Teacher."

When we do can change the lives of those closest to us and our communities for the better.

Will you serve with me?