

Inspired by Christ - to Serve

Section Title

Foundation

Bible passage : John 13:12-15

In the last unit we saw how Jesus washed His disciples' feet, dressed like a servant. He was the Servant God promised to send.

This sort of service means counting others as better than ourselves. That is hard to do. Jesus taught them to serve, but more than that they saw Him serving others and He served them. He also served them at great cost, even death on a cross. That changed their lives as we will continue to see in future units.

At the Last Supper Jesus said to the disciples "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

Jesus said "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you." Jn 13:15

They were "inspired by Christ". But we can also see this in how the Bible presents the disciples.

Remember, two of the Gospels (John and Matthew) were written by disciples. Mark is said to have drawn particularly on Peter, whilst Luke describes how he relied on eyewitnesses. Luke in particular seems to have drawn on the experience of some of the women, who generally outlived the men by some years. Luke was also part of Paul's team and part of some of the events he recorded.



Learning by example

When John wrote his gospel, he didn't name himself, even when it is clear who is meant. But John's book is about Jesus. John had been there, but he wanted his readers to focus on Jesus.

Similarly, the other gospels and Acts have a lot to say about Peter, but he was often the disciple who got things wrong, blundering in. We see his failings. Peter, in many ways was the biggest name in the early Church, alongside James and John. But no-one was trying to disguise the truth about Peter. They told it 'warts and all' (to use the phrase of Oliver Cromwell).

In other organisations the leaders might have wanted other people to know about their successes, but not the church. They wanted people to read about Jesus, and see that their leaders were weak people like others. Jesus had called them to serve, and the only reason they were important was because of the Master they served.

Sadly many people in the world who lead spend a lot of time talking about how wonderful they are, and all that they do. As Jesus said their "leaders... lord it over them" Not so those first followers of Jesus, then wanted people to be like them, those who trusted in Jesus and were inspired by Him. (See John 10.42-43)



Jesus didn't just tell His disciples to serve, He served them. Today His followers ought to do the same, inspired by Christ.