

THE CHURCH THAT JESUS BUILT

Daily Briefing • Day 3 of 5 • Love With Receipts

WEEKLY MEMORY VERSE

By this all people will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.

John 13:35

Sunday we looked at a church that met one another's needs without guilt-tripping anybody into it. Today we get specific about what that actually costs, and who it is actually for. You can watch or listen to the sermon at 1mso.church or on the One Missoula app.

OPENING PRAYER

Heavenly Father, I pray that You would make me a person of action, not just someone with good intentions. Grow me into someone who sees needs and meets them, just the way You saw my need and brought the solution through the Cross. Jesus saw the need for His disciples' feet to be washed and He did it without being asked. God, give me the same eyes to see the needs all around me and a creative mind to solve them. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

TODAY'S TEACHING

"Let me know if you need anything." Almost nobody who says that ever hears back, and almost nobody who says it follows up. It is a real sentence spoken by real people who mean well, and it costs nothing, commits to nothing, and moves nothing. Sunday we looked at a church that met one another's needs without guilt-tripping anybody into it. Today is about the distance between meaning well and taking action.

We have looked at this scene before, so today we turn it and look at a different side of it. On His last night, hours before He was arrested, Jesus got up from supper, took off His outer clothing, wrapped a towel around Himself, and washed His disciples' feet. Roads were dirt, people walked in sandals, and washing feet was the job handed to the lowest servant in the house. Nobody in that room had done it, so Jesus took it on Himself. Then He said, "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you" (John 13:14-15). He does not tell them to admire it. He tells them to copy it.

John, who was in that room, writes about it decades later and puts the Cross underneath it. "By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers" (1 John 3:16). Then he gets uncomfortably practical. If someone has what his brother needs, sees the need, and closes himself off from it, what has happened to God's love in that person (1 John 3:17)? The answer is left hanging on purpose. He lands it plainly: "Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18).

Here is what makes this doable instead of crushing. You cannot meet everybody's needs, and Jesus never asked you to. He washed the feet of twelve specific men in one room on one night, including the one who was about to betray Him to His death. You change the world by changing one person's world, and that person has a name, a situation, and something they actually need. A meal. A ride. Your truck and two hours on a Saturday. A hard conversation you have been avoiding. Specific, and it costs you something, or it is word and talk.

Jesus closed the foot washing with a line that separates people who know this from people who do it: "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (John 13:17). Reading this page does not count. Agreeing with it does not count. Somebody has to actually get their feet washed.

READ & MEDITATE

John 13:12-17

When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵For I

have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”

1 John 3:16-18

By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers. ¹⁷But if anyone has the world's goods and sees his brother in need, yet closes his heart against him, how does God's love abide in him? ¹⁸Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in deed and in truth.

Read John 13:12-17 and notice Jesus asks a question before He gives the instruction. He wants them to understand what just happened before He tells them to repeat it. Then read 1 John 3:16-18 and notice the order. The Cross comes first, then the brother in need, then the command.

REFLECT

Reminder: honest introspection and Scripture-informed self-assessment are far more beneficial than self-delusion and wishful thinking.

Hours from His own execution, Jesus took the job assigned to the lowest servant in the house and did it for twelve men, including the one about to betray Him.

What does that tell you about God, and about what He considers beneath Him?

Fill in the blank from 1 John 3:18:

“Little children, let us not love in word or talk but in _____ and in truth.” (1 John 3:18)

*These fill-in-the-blank questions use the ESV text. Your Bible may use different words for the same idea.

“Let me know if you need anything” is a real sentence that commits to nothing and moves nothing.

Who have you said some version of that to recently, and what would it have taken to just do the thing instead?

You change the world by changing one person's world. Jesus washed twelve pairs of feet in one room, not everybody's.

Name one person, not a category of people, whose specific need you already know.

What specifically will you do about it, and on what day this week?

Jesus ended the foot washing by separating the people who know this from the people who do it.

What is the barrier between knowing what God is asking you to do and actually doing it? Do some honest introspective self-assessment before moving on.

PRAYER

Write your prayer or pray out loud. As we've read, God's ear is not dull. Talk to Him like He is listening and wants to hear from you.

MEMORY VERSE

Write or recite John 13:35 from memory:
