



The Forgotten Path to Greatness

John 13:1-17 (NIV)

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ²The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" ⁷Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand." ⁸"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me." ⁹"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" ¹⁰Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." ¹¹For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean. ¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. ¹⁶Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

I. Neighbors know who they are not.

- Biblical humility is simply the opposite of selfishness and empty conceit.

Philippians 2:3-4 (NIV)

Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility value others above yourselves, ⁴not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.

- Biblical humility is something we do, not something we feel.
- We will never have true love without true humility.
- Neighbors realize imperfect people are now the authorized agents to receive what I owe the king.

2. Neighbors know who they are.

- Humility is not a lack of confidence or a low opinion of ourselves. (John 13:3)
- Biblical humility flows out of our strength and security.
- Jesus knew His identity, knew His mission, and knew His destiny.
- Serving out of insecurity will drain us and it will destroy relationships.

3. Neighbors know the forgotten secret to greatness.

- Humbly servicing others is the forgotten path to greatness. (Matthew 20:26-28)
- If we want to get to the top and stay there, we need to humbly serve those above, below and around us. (Proverbs 20:28)
- The irony of life is that our greatest satisfaction doesn't come from grabbing the throne but the towel!