

The Ministry of The Church
Sunday, May 23, 2021

- * What is the most difficult act to understand of the earthly ministry of Jesus?
- * I personally believe for me it is found in John chapter 13!

John 13:1-5 (NLT)

1 Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. 2 It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. 4 So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, 5 and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

- * Some things to note: He knew Judas was going to betray Him!
The Father had already given Him authority!
Yet He still knelt and served the disciples!
- * Here we see The Creator serving the created!
- * As Jesus took on flesh, became Man, to show us a loving Father, the scripture reveals Jesus' statement as He said:

Matthew 20:28 (NLT)

28 For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

- * The "core thought" this morning is this; Too many people attend and are a part of a particular church congregation as CONSUMERS rather than SERVANTS! Too many people ask, "What are the benefits to attending here verses there?"
- I. The very foundation of The New Kingdom of God is SERVING!

A. Even The King of The Kingdom gave us that example!

Philippians 2:1-8 (NLT)

2 Is there any encouragement from belonging to Christ? Any comfort from his love? Any fellowship together in the Spirit? Are your hearts tender and compassionate? 2 Then make me truly happy by agreeing wholeheartedly with each other, loving one another, and working together with one mind and purpose. 3 Don't be selfish; don't try to impress others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourselves. 4 Don't look out only for your own interests, but take an interest in others, too. 5 You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. 6 Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. 7 Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, 8 he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross.

1. God's desire and instruction to His Church is that we look, act and think like Jesus! The perfect Human!
2. You see, since the redemption of Christ restored the likeness of God in our lives, it can be said that Jesus came to teach us how to BE FULLY HUMAN!
3. When we become more Christ like, we are not becoming some "super spiritual" person...we are merely being who we are created to be!

B. It is contrary to our "fallen sin nature" but yet it is said,

Acts 20:35 (NLT)

35 And I have been a constant example of how you can help those in need by working hard. You should remember the words of the Lord Jesus: 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'

II. God is so intent on us living out this New Covenant life of service that He gives us His supernatural or beyond our ability enablements to minister to others!

1 Corinthians 12:1, 4-7 (NLT)

1 Now, dear brothers and sisters, regarding your question about the special abilities the Spirit gives us. I don't want you to misunderstand this.

4 There are different kinds of spiritual gifts, but the same Spirit is the source of them all. 5 There are different kinds of service, but we serve the same Lord. 6 God works in different ways, but it is the same God who does the work in all of us. 7 A spiritual gift is given to each of us so we can help each other.

- A. Why have various traditions either denied or ignored this enablement by The Holy Spirit to serve others?
 - 1. Yes, they have been distorted by some!
 - 2. Yes, some have taken these abilities to the extreme!
 - 3. However; it is not our privilege to ignore The Holy Spirit living through us to serve others!
 - 4. Remember, service to others is the very foundation of faith as believers!

- B. It seems that in our American context, our Christian faith, is merely to decide to believe a certain way, show that belief by some act of commitment such as baptism and then choose a group that believes your way by joining a church!
 - 1. Literally, that's it!
 - 2. Oh, I forgot...give some money every now and then!
 - 3. Is that all that our Lord suffered, was brutalized and died for?
 - 4. If we dare to read carefully and respond to what we read, we will live a little differently!

- C. The inspired Word of God reveals a different way of life for those who are living "in community together" as a

local church!

Ephesians 4:1-7 (NLT)

1 Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. 2 Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. 3 Make every effort to keep yourselves united in the Spirit, binding yourselves together with peace. 4 For there is one body and one Spirit, just as you have been called to one glorious hope for the future. 5 There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all, in all, and living through all. 7 However, he has given each one of us a special gift through the generosity of Christ.

1. This is an encouragement in living in that community!
2. Live according to God's standard of behavior!
3. Be humble, gentle and patient with each other!
4. Then Paul says you have been given special gifts to bless each other in this new Christian community!
5. Then, he puts us all to WORK!

Ephesians 4:11-12 (NLV)

11 Christ gave gifts to men. He gave to some the gift to be missionaries, some to be preachers, others to be preachers who go from town to town. He gave others the gift to be church leaders and teachers. 12 These gifts help His people work well for Him. And then the church which is the body of Christ will be made strong.

Ephesians 4:12 (TPT)

And their calling is to nurture and prepare all the holy believers to do their own works of ministry, and as they do this they will enlarge and build up the body of Christ.

Ephesians 4:12 (NIV)

12 to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up.

D. THEN PAUL SAYS THIS!

Ephesians 4:16 (NLT)

16 He makes the whole body fit together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

- * If Christ came to serve, how do we think it is okay for us to not engage in serving!
- * The only true question is what gift do I have to give others and where is an area where that gift can benefit others?

1 Peter 4:10 (NLT)

10 God has given each of you a gift from his great variety of spiritual gifts. Use them well to serve one another.