

WEEK 1 – HE LOVED THEM TO THE END

Scripture Focus: John 13:1–17

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to our new series, **The Upper Room**. Over the next 8 weeks, we'll walk through John 13–17, where Jesus shares His final and most intimate moments with His disciples before the cross. This is sacred ground—truths that bring comfort, clarity, and courage to every believer.

THE SETTING:

- The Feast of Unleavened Bread (Passover)
 - Jesus shares His third Passover with His disciples (John 2:13, 6:4, 11–19)
 - Matthew 26:17–19: Jesus tells the disciples to prepare for the Passover meal at a certain man's house.
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WHAT JESUS KNEW (*John 13:1–3*)

- Jesus **knew who He was**
- Jesus **knew the time He was in**
- Jesus **knew His possession and authority**
- Jesus **knew where He was going**

Jesus lived with mission on purpose.

THE FOOT WASHING MOMENT (*John 13:3–5*)

- Foot washing was a servant's job—often the *lowest* servant.
- They reclined at a **triklinion** (low table), so dirty feet were a big deal!
- Jesus doesn't just tell a story—He takes *action*.

Jesus' Actions:

1. Rose from supper.
2. Removed outer garments (rabbinic identity).
3. Girded Himself with a towel (servant's role).
4. Poured water and washed feet.

Jesus didn't just preach servanthood—He embodied it.

WHAT KIND OF LEADER?

- A true leader leads by example.
- Look for leaders who:
 - Have *scars* from the journey.
 - Have *testimonies* of their own.
 - Have *walked the walk*, not just talked the talk.
 - Are not above *serving*.

Word Study:

- *Servant* (Greek: **doulos**) – slave, bondservant
- Connection: *Doula* – one who helps carry a personal burden (birth or death)

BALANCING SERVANTHOOD (*John 13:6–11*)

- Peter resists Jesus—calls it out: “You’ll never wash my feet!”
- Jesus insists: “If I don’t, you have no part with Me.”

Peter’s struggle: **False humility or servant’s pride?**

Receiving is just as holy as giving.

BALANCE ILLUSTRATION: *Two Cups & a Pitcher*

- *Only receiving* → *spiritual bloating*
- *Only giving* → *spiritual dryness*

THE GREATEST (*John 13:12–17*)

- Jesus teaches AFTER He acts.
- “If I, your Lord and Teacher, washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s.”
- This is the *model* for greatness.

Cross References:

- **James 1:22** – Be doers of the word, not hearers only
- **Matthew 20** – The greatest must be a servant
- **Revelation 5:9** – Jesus ransomed us by His blood

BE READY TO SERVE (*Luke 12:35–38*)

- Stay dressed for action
 - Keep your lamps burning
 - Be ready to *open the door when the Master comes*
 - Blessed are those the Master finds *awake*—He will serve *them*!
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CHRIST'S EXAMPLE OF LOVING UNTIL THE END (*Philippians 2:1–18*)

- Be of one mind and one love
- Count others more significant
- Have the mind of Christ: HUMILITY
- He took on the form of a servant and became obedient—even to death

Let's be a people who live low, love well, and lead like Jesus.

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

1. What part of Jesus' example in John 13 speaks most to your life right now?
2. Where do you need to humble yourself and serve?
3. Are you allowing others—and Jesus—to minister to you?