

We aim to reconcile people unto God through Christ

SERMON TITLE:	BECOMING LIKE CHRIST
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Reading: John 13:1-17

Key passage John 13:17 "I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

These are the words of our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the greatest example of how our Father God wants us to live our lives. Christianity is about being a follower of our Saviour and the Master of our lives. The word disciple mean follower, and the root word for disciple is discipline which indicates that it takes discipline to be a follower of Christ. No discipline, is equal to not being a follower thus not being a disciple. If we call ourselves Christians we confess we are followers and disciples of Jesus who desire to do as He did. That is why I said that our greatest challenge in 2010 will be to become more Christ-like. Our continuous prayer this year should be transform me Lord so I can become a transformer.

In this passage Jesus did one of the most unlike things a leader in any culture would do. He did something only a slave would do to his master and his guests. The disciples of Jesus who at one stage argued about whom the greatest in His Kingdom would be, must have cringed as they watched their Master/Teacher fulfil this lowly servant duty.

Jesus set one of the greatest and significant examples to His disciples and then told them to **be** His disciples/followers in this act. Verse ⁵"I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you".

All they had seen in Jesus and experienced of Him and seen Him do, He made it the rule of their lives. "do as I have done". These words are not only for the disciples of Jesus but for His disciples of all ages as well "do as I have done" He says to us.

These are forceful touching words of someone who was coming to the end of His earthly ministry and are for all who have experienced the forgiveness and the grace of God, for all who have experience the washing away of their sins the command remains "do as I have done"

With this act of servanthood Jesus blew the pedestal of today's kind of hierarchical leadership or disciples mindset into pieces and created a platform of servanthood for all who wanted to be called His disciples. It is clear that with Jesus, bigger is smaller and more is less and higher is lower. Jesus asks everyone of us in everything we do to act as we seen Him do. He is our supreme example and our greatest challenge is to follow in His footsteps.

The power of any example is in two things; one the attractiveness in what we see in the example, and two the relationship and influence the example has on us personally.

How much I like about someone will be the measure I will allow them to influence me.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16 NKJV

The more time we spend finding out who Jesus is the more we will like who He is and what He did and the more we will allow His influence over our lives.

I pray with Paul "I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better." (Eph 1:17).

I also "pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength,²⁰ which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (Eph 1:18-23)

We have been blinded to the many attractions of the Heavenly Beauty. We have also been distracted to not see or follow the example of the King Of Heaven, who came to dwell among us so that we may see how we should walk here on earth and live out this Christlike life. Jesus has given us His example that we may imitate it and become as attractive as possible to our Father who created us for his glory and pleasure.

Dear brother and sister in Christ if it is our goal to become more Christlike then we need to follow His example of servanthood.

John 13:13-14

You call me Teacher and Lord and rightfully so, for that is what I am. 14 now that I, your Lord and Teacher have washed your feet, you should also wash one another's feet."

We looked at the fact that Jesus wanted us to follow him in doing what He did, now He makes it clear that He wants us to wash one another's feet. We want to look at this concept for a while and discover the meaning of this phrase.

Everything was ready for the evening, the guest had arrived, the last supper was prepared, the water bowl filled with water was there, the cloth to dry the feet was there, the only thing that was missing was the slave to wash the feet of those who were the guests. All the disciples of Jesus were standing around but not one was willing to do the job, all were concerned not to be seen as the lowest among them, no one was willing to humble himself to take this humiliating job on. Among them is a teacher and they call him Lord He is a miracle worker and He gets up and lay aside His garments and puts the towel around His waist and begin to wash their filthy dusty feet - what a spectacle.

Jesus illustrates that what He takes into His hand is not unclean, He demonstrates that the most terrible of jobs never lowers the person, but that a person honours and elevates the job. The most lowly of tasks become great and worthwhile because we do it for God's glory. The Leader of the Church demonstrates that what we see as something low and humiliating He sees as something great and honourable. He says in Matt 20:26-27 "whoever wants to become great among you must be your slave- whoever want so to first must become your servant".

Jesus in this passage illustrates the law of rank in His church. "The higher we want to rise in becoming like Christ the deeper we must stoop to serve all around us." Our desire should be to serve others to be a blessing to them, my own honour is not what I should seek. But to be a blessing to others.

For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:16 NKJV

Servanthood for the glory of Christ is the gateway to His heart. Don't walk around too much complaining that you do not receive love and attention. But pray every day that God will awaken in you and me the spirit of servanthood. That God may give us the grace here at The Barn to do loving deeds and that His love may be seen through the way we follow Christ in obedience and take on the role of servants of the most high.