

Values Matter Discovery Starters

We Are Visionary

11. EXHIBIT SERVANT LEADERSHIP

YWAM is called to servant leadership as a lifestyle, rather than a leadership hierarchy. A servant leader is one who honors the gifts and callings of those under his/her care and guards their rights and privileges. Just as Jesus served His disciples, we stress the importance of those with leadership responsibilities serving those whom they lead.

[Deu 10:12-13](#); [Psa 84:10](#); [Isa 42:1-4](#); [Mic 6:8](#); [Mar 10:42-45](#);
[Joh 13:3-17](#); [Rom 16:1-2](#); [Gal 5:13-14](#); [Php 2:3-11](#); [1Pe 4:10-11](#)

Value 11 – Exhibit Servant Leadership: The Foot-washing Redeemer

Biblical Foundation:

Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me." Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you." For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them" (Joh 13:3-17).

Discovery Starter:

Jesus didn't just talk about servanthood, he walked the talk. As Jesus was "going up to Jerusalem" he spoke of his imminent sacrificial suffering (Mar 10:32-34). Immediately, two of his disciples asked him if he could guarantee them a special place in his coming kingdom (Mar 10:35-37). Had they even been listening? Their hunger for position, status, prestige, power sounded so dissonant to what Jesus had just said. Jesus continued, "Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. 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" (Mar 10:42-45).

A few days later, on his last evening with the twelve, Jesus washed their feet. His servant-hearted actions turned the world's messed-up value systems right-side up. As he washed the disciples' feet, something happened. He refocused our understanding of success. He redefined what is desirable and praiseworthy. From that moment on, the highest goal for anyone is to be a foot-washer. This seems totally crazy to the world; but absolutely sane to all who have had their feet washed by Jesus.

Reading an excerpt from the well-known children's story, *The Little Prince*, may shed fresh light on Jesus' foot-washing. Because of the unique, laughter-filled relationship the little prince had with the aviator, his death and return to his planet gave the aviator a new perspective on the stars. Because he knew that the little prince would be laughing on one of them, all the stars would now seem to ring out in laughter for him. From that moment on the aviator would laugh as he gazed into the star-lit sky, a seemingly insane action to all those who had not known the little prince. The same is true for us. As we walk in relationship with Jesus, we will seek to imitate his counter-cultural servant-hearted values. How could it be otherwise? The world might think us crazy, but after being touched by his transformative servanthood, we can only aspire to serve others like Jesus served us.

Keep Going:

Reread Jesus' words which he spoke after washing his disciples' feet. He begins with a question, "Do you understand what I was doing?" (Joh 13:12). He wanted to make sure that they understood that through his actions he had done more than give them clean feet. He had given them a new value system for life. He concluded this encounter, "Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them" (Joh 13:17). The blessing lies not just understanding, but in applying the insights from this study. Consider how you might better serve those around you in a very practical way. Make a list of actions you can undertake to serve those you will encounter in the next few days. Make a plan to walk the talk.

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