

The Heart of Servanthood

by Phil Beach Jr.

The sermon emphasizes the importance of recognizing Christ's worthiness and our own spiritual poverty, leading to a life of humility and servanthood.

Duration: 1:00:54

Scripture: Revelation 5:1

Topics: "Servanthood", "Humility"

Description

Phil Beach Jr. emphasizes the profound truth that Christ alone is worthy, urging believers to recognize their own unworthiness in light of His holiness. He laments the lack of genuine weeping in the church, which stems from a failure to grasp the depth of Christ's worthiness and our need for His grace. The sermon calls for a fresh revelation of servanthood, highlighting that true service comes from a heart transformed by the Holy Spirit, not mere theological knowledge. Beach warns against the arrogance that can arise when we forget our position as servants, reminding us that Christianity is about being redeemed to serve. He concludes with a plea for divine visitation to restore humility and a servant's heart within the church.

Transcript

I would like to read a Scripture in Revelation and then share some things from the heart of the Lord. In Revelation chapter 5, beginning in verse 1, And I saw in the right hand of him that sat on the throne a book written within, and on the backside sealed with seven seals. And I saw a strong angel proclaiming with a loud voice, Who is worthy to open the book and to loose the seals? And no man in heaven nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon.

And I wept much. There is a weeping that needs to come into the house of God in this late hour that springs out of a fresh revelation that there is no man worthy. The fact that Christ alone is worthy has not escaped our theology, but it has escaped our hearts' realization.

The fact that no man is worthy has been dimmed in the eyes of our heart. And there is a cessation, a ceasing of a certain kind of weeping in the house of God that brings great sorrow to the Lord's heart. When was the last time you wept? Because in the presence of Jesus you saw that no man was worthy.

Have you seen the depths of Christ's worthiness and your own undone-ness? Have you seen it? And no man in heaven, neither under the earth, was able to open the book. And I wept much because no man

was found worthy. If Christ is to be welcomed back into our lives and back into our homes and back into our gatherings, whether it is in an auditorium or in a home, we have got to pray that God will be gracious to give us a revelation once again.

Theology is not sufficient. Theologically, everyone would agree that Christ alone is worthy, but the reality, the living freshness of that revelation has to be brought once again back into our hearts and back into our lives. And we have to live under the power of that revelation.

We have to live under the power of that revelation. And the absence of that revelation will free your own strength and your own self-righteousness. It will free your own sense of feeling significance.

And even to the point where you'll begin to look down on your brother and sister, supposing that you are better than they, supposing that you are more righteous than them, supposing that you have attained something greater than them. Brothers and sisters, I can't emphasize enough this morning, my tongue cannot speak the things that my spirit are beholding because of the grace of God. The only safety that we have in this race called Christianity is living under the power of that revelation that Christ alone is worthy.

And the only source where you can get this revelation is from the Spirit of God ministering into your spirit. And I would encourage, admonish each and every one to fervently, with earnestness, pray that you would be, because of the grace of God, a partaker of the revelation that John had, that he described here, that you can see by revelation of the Holy Spirit that you nor any other human being, whether on earth, in heaven, or under the earth, is worthy to stand before God on our own grounds or on our own merits. The absence of this living revelation is working havoc and ruin and destruction in our lives.

And it cannot be remedied, it cannot be fixed, except by a divine visitation of God. A divine visitation whereby we become receivers of this revelation. And as Peter, we turn our face from the Lord and we say, Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man.

Depart from me, Lord, for I am not worthy to even unloose your sandals. Where is this revelation in the church of God, beloved? Where is the power of this revelation governing our daily lives? Where is the power of this revelation? This revelation will bring humility in your life. It will bring gentleness in your life.

It will bring submission in your life. It will weaken your strength and your tenacities and tendencies to want to do your own thing and exert your own will and exert your own way and abuse authority that you have. Everybody in this room has some measure of authority.

Albeit a father, a mother, albeit a business employee, employer, you will abuse that authority if you lose sight that there is none worthy but Christ. You will abuse that authority. You will be found exalting yourself in some way.

And so, my prayer this morning as we walk together in the Word of God is that the Holy Spirit would be pleased to bring and keep a fresh revelation of the truth that Christ alone is worthy and that out of that there would grow a weeping in our spirits that would never depart from us, that would never become dim to our eyes, that would always be there as a power restraining us from getting too high, restraining us from getting too mighty, restraining us from getting arrogant, restraining us from feeling that we are called to be something greater than a servant. Oh yes! Oh yes! Oh yes! We have thought that we are called to be greater than our Lord and Master, for He, the Lord of Heaven and the Lord of Earth, emptied Himself and walked in the likeness of sinful flesh and took off His outer garments and bowed down and washed the

feet of His disciples. And for some strange reason, we suppose the Holy Spirit is giving us revelation that we are to exceed this calling, that we are to somehow exceed this, and that we are to be lords, we are to be kings, we are to be rulers, and we are to be elevated above the posture of a servant.

Beware of such leaven, beloved. Beware of this leaven. It is the poison of asps.

And if it gets a hold of your spirit, it will defile your thinking and your actions and your dreams, even the dreams God gives you. And it will destroy it and bring ruin to it. Christ, with much love but much concern, warns us this morning to remember that the sum total of Christianity is a redeemed spirit continuously beholding the Redeemer.

And when our Christianity becomes something other than that, it begins on the road of ruin. We must pray, Holy Spirit, bring back into our hearts, bring back into our homes, the revelation that Christ is the worthy One. Go beyond our theology.

Go beyond our profession of faith. And lay hold of our hearts. And let us see this revelation to the point where it devastates us, where it brings us down, down, down, down, off of our high pedestals.

We are too arrogant. We are too arrogant. We are too strong, beloved.

Notice I'm saying we, not you, including myself, along with the mess that we're in. We must see Jesus once again. We must see Him.

And we must be lowered. It is impossible. Listen carefully, please, for the next few moments.

It is impossible to fulfill the call that God has placed upon our lives to be servants. It is impossible to fulfill this role, and that is one who belongs to another, having no rights or will. Rather, He exists to do and serve the will of His Master.

It is impossible, beloved, for you and I to fulfill this calling of being servants. Those who belong to another having no rights or will. Rather, we exist wholly to do and serve the will of our Master.

Christianity is about God redeeming men who become servants. And it is impossible to fulfill this role of being a servant unless the Holy Spirit maintains and sustains in our hearts the revelation that Christ is worthy, Christ is worthy, and that apart from Him we are not worthy. Listen, it is the absence of seeing the truth that Christ alone is worthy, and in light of that light, in light of that revelation, we see how undone we are.

We see how altogether crooked we are. It's the absence of that revelation that results in us wanting to be elevated above that of a servant. And it's when we want to be elevated above that of a servant that we begin to sow trouble in our lives and in the lives of those who we are in relationship with.

The Holy Spirit must make us into servants with a servant heart. Servants are those instrumental in the hands of God that bring unity in a local body or unity in the body at large. It's only the servants, those who are willing to serve, those who are willing to see Jesus as the only worthy one, and by the power of the Holy Spirit, follow His example in serving.

Isaiah, a familiar portion of Scripture. Isaiah chapter 6. Again, I want to emphasize to everyone, listen closely. You ought to be saying to yourself, I am failing as a servant if I am not seeing my Lord every day.

Listen, you cannot be a servant by obeying the theology that you know. That only results in hypocrisy. How many have gone down that road? I know what I ought to be, so I'm going to try real hard.

Doesn't work, does it? What it does is it promotes hypocrisy. The word hypocrisy is a dramatic word that was used in the New Testament times to describe actors who put on costumes and pretended they were characters that they really weren't. And so when we try and become servants by obeying our theology, what we're really doing is we're trying to dress ourselves up and make us look like servants when in our hearts we are still struggling with the resentment of having to serve.

Why? Because what God calls us to be can only be the result of the transforming power of Jesus Christ. This is the difference between the Old and the New Covenant. The Old Covenant is, I am God, I am holy, and this is what you need to be.

And so we struggle and strive to be that, and we struggle to line ourselves up with the standards of God. But the New Covenant is, I am holy and I am God, and you have miserably failed me, and I'm placing all your sin and all your guilt and all of your condemnation and all of your judgment upon My Son, Jesus Christ. And now, if you will only acknowledge your sin, only acknowledge your iniquity, I will come and be your God and dwell in you.

And once I come and become your God, the basis of your Christian life from that moment on to perfection will be the law of faith, not the law of works. It will be a continued recognition of your spiritual poverty apart from Me. It is the law of faith that brings us into the Kingdom.

It's the law of faith that enables us to run the race, and it's the law of faith that enables us to arrive at that day blameless, without spot in His presence. The law of faith is a posture of the heart where we recognize our spiritual poverty and we look to Jesus Christ as the only source from whom I can find the goods to become this person God wants me to be. But the New Testament Christianity today is no longer looking to Jesus.

We've gathered the New Testament teachings. We've gathered the theology. And now, we're going to do it.

And we've lost sight of the revelation of the Son of God, that He alone is worthy. In the year that King Uzziah died, Isaiah 6, I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up. And His train filled the temple.

And above it stood the seraphims. Each one had six wings. With two, He covered His face.

With two, He covered His feet. And with two, He did fly. And one cried unto another saying, Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord.

Or set apart is the Lord. Or altogether different is the Lord than any other creature, any other being in the world. Or, oh Lord, You are so different than I am.

You are so contrary to me. Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord. Lord, You are different.

Lord, You are altogether pure. You are altogether righteous. You are altogether light.

Holy, Holy, Holy. That word holy has become too common to us. It's become too common.

Oh yes, the Lord is holy. We can say that while eating a bowl of pasta. We can say that while going down a roller coaster.

When in reality, if we see God is holy, we will have to fall down upon our face and cry out, have mercy on me, a sinner. The things of God have become too common. The things of God have become commonplace.

The things of God are no longer that which is sacred to us. And my spirit, I find, is crying out these days, night and day, Oh God, what will it take to restore us back to the place where we are living in communion with You and our hearts are once again soft before You? What will it take to bring us back to our knees? I know as a preacher, 20 years, that preaching doesn't do it. I know that legalism doesn't do it.

I know that getting upset with people doesn't do it. I know creating a church with all kinds of rules and activities doesn't do it. It doesn't do it.

The only thing that will do it is God. God alone can do it. That does not mean we don't preach the Word.

That does not mean that we don't gather together. But I'm telling you, brothers and sisters, we've got to have an encounter with God. We've got to invite Him back into our lives.

And I've sensed the travail of Christ, the travail of His heart. And just this morning I was weeping in the car saying, God, You are so different than I am. And I thought I heard Him say, Thank God I am.

But He didn't. I think I said it. I said, Lord, You're so different than I am.

Here, only God can love us so much that He blesses us. He takes care of us. He speaks nice things to us.

He speaks gently to us. He embraces us when we're weeping. He protects us when we're in danger.

And yet, He is aware that our hearts are far from Him. Now, you try and do that. You try and embrace someone and love someone and not ever act out of your anger or frustration over that person because you recognize they're failing in something.

You try and do that. And I'm telling you, you're going to find that you can't do it. You can't raise your kids like that.

You're going to fail. You can't have a relationship with your brother or sister. The moment you sense that they're not doing something or lining up to an expectation, whether it's true or not, you're going to begin to change your attitude toward them.

Yet, God doesn't do it. He doesn't do it. I said, Lord, this isn't fair.

This isn't fair, Lord. I'm fighting a losing battle. And I hear Him say, the battle's not yours, it's mine.

I said, well, I'm sure in it. Only God can do that. And if you think you can sit and be able to righteously judge people and righteously act in your family and among the saints without a continuous influx of the Spirit of God and a continuous infilling of the presence of God, you are self-deceived.

Loved, yes. Accepted by Him if you're one of His, yes. Blessed by Him, yes.

But self-deceived. You are self-deceived if you have come to the place where you don't feel your desperate need for God's touch in your life. And I prayed and said, God, what can be done to awaken us so that we live in a sense of urgency, a sense of continuous awareness of our desperate need for You? God, what can be done? What can be done? What can be done to awake us out of sleep and slumber? What can be done to wean us from the love and affection and fondness of this world and ourselves? What can be done, oh God? What can be done, oh God? I hope to answer that question in the next few moments.

Verse 5, Then said I, Woe is me! For I am undone. I am unclean. I am crooked.

I am incapable of leading. You know, in 1 Kings chapter 3, God appeared to Solomon in a dream. And God said to Solomon, Son, Solomon, ask of Me whatever you want and I'll give it to you.

And Solomon began to talk to the Lord and say, God, You made my father David a great king and You gave him a great kingdom and You honored him and You blessed him and now I am his son and have inherited this entire kingdom. And then Solomon began to say, And I am only a child, Lord. Who can know how to judge righteously? Who can know how to properly represent Your heart to the people? And so as a result, Solomon said, Lord, I'm asking that You would give me a heart that is able to know and understand true judgment and true righteousness so that I can properly represent Your heart to this great kingdom.

The Bible says that that pleased God and that God gave him that very heart of wisdom. You will never ask God for such a thing until you have seen the Lord in glory and you have heard the angels crying holy and you've seen the seraphims flying to and fro with their faces covered and their feet covered and their wings flapping and then you have cried out, But woe is me! Crooked am I! Wholly undone am I! And it's got to go beyond theology. It's got to become a heart-gripping, heart-wrenching revelation.

Then and only then will we truly be able to cry out of the poverty of our spirit and begin to receive things from God. And so Isaiah here demonstrates the result of seeing the Lord. He cried out, Woe is me! For I am undone.

And I am among a people who are unclean. When you see the Lord, you will not simply see the sin of others. Some people, every time they get up from the prayer closet, it seems like God's talking to them about everyone else's sins but their own.

Beware of a Christian who is constantly identifying everyone else's sins and faults, but cannot and will not see their own. Woe is me! The real pattern, if you want to go by Isaiah 5, is when we see glory, we don't see our brother's sins. We see our own, David.

That's what we see first. And then we realize everyone else is just like we are. And we're just like everyone else.

And there's none holy but the Lord. And then I weep. There's John.

That's the same revelation John had right there. When was the last time your heart saw this? When was the last time you were overcome by this revelation? You might say, Brother, I can't even ever remember seeing this. Oh, brother, sister, then pray and ask God to show you.

Turn your Bibles to John chapter 13, please. Here is one of the most profound lessons that Jesus ever demonstrated. I'm going to read the section of Scripture, and then I'm going to read a commentary on that

section of Scripture from God's Dream Team, authored by Tommy Tenney.

A Call to Unity. Profound book. Outstanding author.

A man who knows brokenness. A man who knows what it is to give up titles, and give up protocol, and give up four generations of being a preacher. His great-grandfather, his grandfather, his father, and then him.

But oh, how God brought him through a journey where he was lowered to the point of dust, where he absolutely was persuaded that he wasn't worthy to be a preacher anymore. He wasn't worthy to speak. He wasn't worthy to do anything.

And it was in that state that God commissioned him. Just like in Isaiah. I didn't read the whole thing.

It was after Isaiah saw that he was totally undone that God commissioned him and sent him forth. And I'm telling you, brothers and sisters, there's really no qualification to do anything for the Lord, or for the Lord to do anything through you, until you have come to see by revelation, and God has brought it in you, the truth that you are undone. And whatever God has to do, He will do it because He loves us too much to let us be self-deceived.

Luke, John, Acts. John chapter 13. Listen carefully to this profound lesson that the one who is only worthy demonstrated.

I can see a person being a servant who is not worthy of anything else. Agreed? I can see someone who is not worthy to take the lowest place, but what about someone who is worthy to be praised? What about someone who is worthy to be honored? What about someone who is worthy to be called King of Kings and Lord of Lords? Now, before the feast, John chapter 13, of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour was come, that He should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own, which were in the world, He loved them unto the end. Bear with me, please, for the word of exhortation and teaching this morning.

This is profound. There is so much in this. Jesus, having fulfilled His mission, having accepted the fact that His soul was going to be made sin.

You know, I stumbled for many years over the fact that if Jesus was without sin, how come He aged, Alan? I thought aging was the result of sin. The Pharisees even thought He was what? It says, you're not even 50. So, did He look 45? Did He look 43? And recently the Holy Spirit whispered to me, Christ was without sin, but suffered the full effects of sin.

And part of the effects of sin is aging. But His soul was not permitted to see corruption because He was without sin. And God reversed it.

He reversed it. He was without sin, but yet He became sin. And oh, God help us never to make that an ambiguous statement, but to say He became my sin.

Go ahead. Begin to name your sins. I hope you can name a few sins in your life.

Boy, I really get concerned when I meet believers who have to think a while before they can make a list of the sins in their life. You ever meet someone like that? Well, let me see now. Let me see.

Something's wrong. Something's wrong. Come on, begin to mention that sin.

That sin of rebellion. That sin of insensitivity. Come on, that sin of dishonesty.

That sin of whatever. Say, go ahead and mention it. Say, that's the sin that Jesus bore.

His soul became an offering for sin. In the Old Testament, when you took a spotless lamb, the priest put his hand on that lamb, and it was the priest imparting the sins of the people onto the lamb. And then what happened to that lamb? Had to be killed.

Why? Because even though that lamb was spotless, it had to suffer the full consequences of the sin. That's what Jesus did. We're talking about a man here who is without sin.

Having loved His own, He loved them unto the end. Just a quick note on that. Jesus did not give up on His disciples.

You know, recently I was reading about geese. And first of all, I learned that they fly in a V formation. And this V formation is very significant, in that the lead goose, that's the correct way to say it, the lead goose is bearing the brunt of the wind.

And scientifically, it's a fact that all of these geese behind the lead goose are flying with much less wind resistance. And after a while, the leader goes back here and rests, and another one comes up and takes the lead. The geese have put us to shame.

They bear one another's burdens. You know what Christians would do if they turned into geese? They would criticize the head goose. Come on, you're falling behind.

Start flapping those wings a little harder. Come on. They'd criticize.

They'd find fault with the head goose. Instead of flying up next to him and saying, Hey, guy, take a rest. I'll lead for a while.

Where is that in the heart? It's not there. You know it's not. The only place it's found is in the heart of God.

I hope God helps us to see our need for him this morning. And another thing I learned about geese, and that is this. This one gets sick.

Two or three of them will follow this one and go with it and nurse it and wait until it gets better, and then they will fly and find the rest of the crew. What do we do? Good riddance. Good riddance.

Couldn't make it. Too bad. It's the way it goes.

Oh, how we need Christ. How we need Christ. And what has our theology done for us? Nothing.

Because every one of us here knows what we should be doing, but we're not. And so our theology is not doing anything, but really indicting us. Because it's better that we shouldn't know than to know.

It'd be better that we were ignorant and God could come and say to us, why didn't you do this? And we'd say, well, Lord, we didn't know. And he'd say, you're right, you didn't. But the servant that knows his will, isn't that what Jesus said in the parable? The servant that knows the will of the Master and doesn't do it shall be subject to greater punishment.

So I learned a lot about geese and how I pray, I actually pray. Can you believe? Do you think this was inspired by God, this prayer? You be the judge. I said, Lord, at least make me as spiritual as a goose.

Come on, how many here would have to put your hand up and say, those geese are more spiritual than I am? Come on, we think we're so hot. We think we're so great and here the Holy Spirit is showing us that a silly old goose that makes a weird sound and pollutes rivers are more spiritual than we are. I hope to God geese don't stand on the day of judgment.

They might end up with a better place in the kingdom of the age to come than the church does because at least they bore one another's burdens and what? Fulfill ye the law of Christ. I believe one day God's going to humiliate us by geese and probably everything else in His created creation is teaching us something about what we're not doing because we have failed to see that Christ alone is our source. He loved them to the end.

He didn't give up on them. Watch out when you're tempted to give up on people. Watch out.

Jesus loved Judas even to the end. Now that doesn't mean that God doesn't implement seasons of chastening and discipline. It doesn't mean that sometimes we have to do certain things, but there's a difference between doing certain things that are necessary for seasons of discipline and correction and giving up on a person.

And make sure you've got the difference in your heart because you can't give up on anyone. And if you do, God will say to you, shall I do unto you what you have done to this one? How would you like it if God comes to you tomorrow morning and says, I think I'm going to give up on you like you did brother or sister so-and-so? How would you feel? Would terror come into your heart? I don't know if I could live a minute if I heard God say, son, I've given up on you. I'm tired of your sin.

I'm tired of your rebellion. I'm tired of your stiff-neckedness. I'm going to find someone else.

Oh my God, that would be worse than hell itself. We need Him, don't we? Sometimes we have to be brought to face-to-face with the reality of where we're lacking. You know, every time God gives us a season where we're learning about grace, it's always because He's setting us up for a season of purging.

This has been the pattern in my life as a preacher, it's been the pattern. Every time God has seemingly burned my heart with messages on grace and forgiveness and God's long-suffering, it's always followed with messages that are revealing our sin and our crookedness because God always wants us to be sure that during the time of deep searching and exposure of sin, we're not in danger of being rejected by Him. And that's why He lays that foundation of grace.

Now listen carefully. Jesus knowing, oh no, verse 2, and supper being ended, the devil having now put into the heart of Judas Iscariot Simon's son to betray him. Jesus knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands.

Profound statement. All things into His hands. And that He was come from God and went to God.

He rose up from supper. And what did He do? He decided to perform miracles in order to convince His disciples that He was really the head honcho. He decided to exert His authority over His disciples and give them one final rebuke because of how unfaithful they were and how dreadfully carnal they were.

For the last year they've been fighting over who was going to sit next to Him in His kingdom. They were struggling with power and control. That's what He was going to do, right? He was going to call fire down from heaven and say, you see? You see? You haven't given Me the honor that's due Me.

You don't even know who I am. Is that what He did? He laid aside His garments. If you can't lay aside your garments, you'll never be a servant.

The garments there represent whatever you think gives you the right to be honored. Whatever you think gives you the right to be esteemed. Whatever you think gives you the right to be looked up to.

I don't care what it is. You might think it's your gray hair. You might think it's your money.

You might think it's your education. You might think it's your theology. You might think it's whatever.

But if you can't lay that aside, lay it aside, you can't be a servant. And if you can't be a servant, you'll be leased in the kingdom. The moment you find it difficult to lay aside your garments, you're losing sight of Revelation chapter 5 and Isaiah chapter 5. The moment you can't lay aside your garments, what garments are you wearing right now that have gotten in the way of your calling to be a servant? Come on! What garments are you wearing that you can't pull aside? You think you're important? What garments? You better be able to lay them aside.

You better be able to lay them aside. And if it gets too difficult to lay them aside, I suggest once you get them off, you burn them. I suggest you have a campfire and get some marshmallows and invite your children and burn those garments, Norman, because no matter how important you think they are, if they're keeping you blind from the fact that you're really nothing but a servant, a slave, then they're not worth wearing.

I don't care what they are. And God might have even given them to you. God does give us things and they become snares to us.

I'd rather give back to God the thing that He gave me if that garment is so heavy on me I can't take it off and wash my sister or brother's feet. I don't want to wear it because having a heart like Jesus is more to me than being thought of by others as being something. Is that what's more important to you? Are you into what people think of you? Or are you into knowing that your heart is broken before God? He laid aside His garments, took a towel, and girded Himself.

After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel. Listen, I'm going to close with this, although I don't want to, but I have to. I might make a few comments.

Listen, this is dramatic. Jesus dramatically illustrated this. That is, being a servant.

This man's revelation is unity, true unity in the body can never happen until everyone gets reduced to being servants. And I agree with his thesis. Sound.

Jesus dramatically illustrated this in John 13 when He ignored the traditions of man to choose the servant's towel as His symbol of New Testament leadership. The common practice of the day was for the newest servant, the low man on the totem pole kind of guy, to be assigned the job of washing the feet of all guests who entered the household. I think the real significance of this incident in the Scriptures is

somewhat lost on us.

Allow me to clarify exactly what this meant. When Jesus walked the earth, He did just that, walked the earth. There were no paved roads.

Perhaps a few had some type of cobblestone, but primarily roads were primitive, to say the least. Mud, grit, sand, and just plain old dirt. Men didn't wear boots.

They wore open sandals. Open sandals. The beasts of burden that were the available mode of transportation of the day were camels, mules, donkeys, and horses.

Needless to say, and I think this is funny, I added that, they had a problem with emissions. Pollution is not a new problem. We just breathe it.

They stepped in it and smelled it. Even today, the Eastern cultures from the Middle East to Japan, if you visit someone's home, the first thing you do is take off your shoes at the door. This custom dates back to even before the days of Jesus.

Walking down the footpaths that existed in those days was a lot like trying to tiptoe through a barnyard without getting your feet dirty. It was almost impossible. To make things worse, much of Jesus' ministry took place in Jerusalem, the capital city and religious center of Israel.

Human and animal traffic was extremely heavy, especially in the days preceding a high holy day. Obviously, people didn't want the mud, dirt, and animal dung of the roads in their homes. The solution to the problem was simple.

Everyone took off their shoes before they entered the house. Then, the first item on the agenda after entering your host's front door was to wash your feet. Remember that the footwear of the day was the open sandal.

It was common for animal excrement to wind up on their shoes and on their feet as well. It is no surprise that the lowest servant in the household was always assigned the dirty job of washing everyone's feet. If you were the host or the caterer in charge of banquets along with the waiters or waitresses, the one other thing you always had to supply was a foot washer.

Jesus walked into the room as the highest-ranking invited guest. A meal had been prepared for the disciples and Jesus. Someone had set up the room in advance.

Someone had cooked the food and prepared everything except for one small but very necessary detail. No one had been hired to wash the feet of the dinner guests. If you study the text in John, you will see that among the disciples, the team spirit was waning.

They seemed to all be fighting this ego thing, all wanting to sit at his right hand. In those days, they didn't eat at tables like we do. They reclined on low couches or benches along the wall.

So their brother's feet were a little bit closer than was pleasant, especially for smelly, unwashed feet. And when they got in and got settled, they all had to pretend that nobody's feet smelled bad because no one wanted to humiliate himself to wash the other's feet. Evidently, Jesus was a few moments late in joining the group.

He walked in, assessed the situation at hand, and immediately took action. I love leadership that sniffs out a problem and says, let's fix it instead of ignoring it. He noticed that nobody's feet had been washed.

He noticed too that in the absence of a hired foot washer, no one else had been willing to humble himself to do the dirty work. Nobody wanted to be a servant. Displaying eminent leadership, Jesus took off his robes.

Now, if you think you've got some pretty important-looking robes to take off, think about the robes Jesus took off. Compare them to yours. He took off the robes of and knowing that Father had given all things into His hands.

I don't care what kind of robe you're wearing. You can't top that robe. I don't care how important you think you are.

You can't top that, can you? But He took it off. That's why the Father could give it to Him, because He knew it wouldn't go to His head. Took off His robes, grabbed the basin, and began to wash His way around the room, washing the feet of those 12 men.

What a magnificent statement and demonstration of servanthood at its best. Jesus took off His authority, clothed Himself with humility, and knelt to do the task of a servant. He was not born a servant.

According to Philippians, He made Himself a servant. He made an act of choice. He forced Himself to be a servant.

These proud disciples, none of whom wanted to humble Himself, all of whom were more interested in arguing and arm-wrestling over who was going to sit where, found themselves the object of His humility. They refused to seek the place of servitude. He accepted it without a word.

Servants, one who belongs to another, having no rights or will. Rather, He exists to do and serve the will of His Master. I'm not through.

That was basically the introduction to my notes, but we will look to the Lord for continued utterance in this way. But that's enough for this morning, and I do want to close by asking Colette if she would come to the piano and asking you this question. Is your heart aware that if you do not see Him every day, you will fail Him? No matter how hard you try, no matter how sincere your heart is, if you do not see Him and see His worthiness, and at the same time see your own personal unworthiness, you will fail Him.

Let's bow our hearts in a few moments of prayer. As we look to the Lord for a few moments in prayer, I've got to read this one scripture. These words jumped out for me.

This is really the next part. Things that hinder us from being servants. We'll go into that next time.

Very, very piercing things. Many of these things are born out of the last two weeks of the Lord's rebuke in my own life. And I'll go into that next time we get together.

And I have this utterance to preach. Born out of rebuke. Each time the Lord said to me, Son, is it your greatest desire to be a servant? I said, Yes, Lord.

He said, Then this has got to go. Son, is it your greatest desire to be a servant? I said, Yes, Lord. He said, Then this has got to go.

In one of the words He spoke to me, being satisfied with less than that which is due. Being satisfied with less than that which is due. If you're going to be a servant, you have to be satisfied with far less than what you feel is due.

That's in relation to what people say and do to you, how they act towards you. That's in relation to everything. Because servants cannot have preconceived expectations of what they think is due to them.

Because the moment you allow that to happen, your servant heart will die. The moment that expectation is not met. And you will slowly enter into bitterness, grumbling, complaining, resentment, and eventually, you will close your heart.

Father, we bow our hearts before You this morning. We thank You for the presence of Jesus. Lord, I'm asking that the power of the Holy Spirit would visit us and confirm the Word.

Confirm the Word, O God, and plant it deeply within our heart. Help us, Lord, to take off the garments that we're wearing that are preventing us from being servants. Help us, Lord, to take off those garments.

O God, there's a struggle in our hearts to take them off. There's a struggle. And therefore, Lord, we need Your help.

Lord, remove some of the garments that we've been wearing permanently, because they've only prevented us from being true servants. Help us, Lord, we pray. Visit us now in these few moments.

For Jesus' sake, we pray.

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