

Quick Backdrop

If you have a red-letter edition of the Bible (the kind where Jesus' words are printed in red), you'll notice that John 13-17 is almost entirely red. These chapters record Jesus' final, private moments with His disciples. They contain lots of promises and teachings to give the disciples confidence as they faced an uncertain future. Jesus kicked off this teaching time with an unbelievable act of humility. It's also an act Jesus told us to imitate.

1 Digging In (God, Show Me!)

First, read John 13:1-17 from your Bible or Bible app.

Next, read John 13:33-35 below. As you read, do the following:

1. Note any commands Jesus gave. If you've printed this out, draw a megaphone over any of Jesus' commands.
2. Note every mention of love. If you've printed this out, draw a heart over every mention of love.

John 13:33-35, Jesus Speaking (NIV)

³³ "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

³⁴ "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Then do this. Take a minute to process these verses with these questions (here and top of next page).

What was Jesus' big command?

Who was Jesus talking to? (See the opening paragraph above or look back at John 13 in your Bible.)

How are we to obey Jesus' command? (Hint: Look for the word "as.")

Who were Jesus' disciples told to love?

What will happen (and this is big!) if Jesus' disciples love on another the way Jesus said to? (Look for words "by this" or "if.")

2 Taking It Inward (God, Teach Me!)

Think for a minute of all the people the Bible tells us to love. Jot down two or three that come to mind. (To get the ball rolling, write down "my neighbors.")

Scripture tells us to love many kinds of people, but in John 13 Jesus told His disciples (including us!) to love *one another*, as in *fellow believers*! In your life, who would that be? We've listed some possibilities below. Check any that apply to you.

- Fellow youth group members
- Believers from other churches at my school
- My family members
- Fellow Christians from groups like Young Life, Campus Life, FCA, etc.

Jesus said that if His followers loved one another the way He loved them, then all people would see them as His disciples. Love should be our identifying activity---an activity that makes the gospel irresistible to those around us. You may be thinking, "But I could never love someone like Jesus did!" Remember, when Jesus said those words, He hadn't yet died on a cross. But He *had* washed His disciples' feet. You can do that!

3 Putting Into Practice (God, Change Me!)

Your love of fellow believers could launch a revolution. So, write down any names that pop into your mind as you read the questions below.

- Who have you been unkind to in the past?
- Whose feet can you wash? (Literally or figuratively.)
- Who can you serve?
- What needs to change in your youth group or student ministry so that it can show the kind of love Jesus commanded?

Fold or Cut