

Faith In Community, February 19, 2006
THE JESUS JOURNEY: SEVEN THINGS TO PACK
“Play Your Music”, Ephesians 2:4-10
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CHARTING THE COURSE

“I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.” Ephesians 3:7

“It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers, to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.” Ephesians 4:11-13

--Paul

PACKING TRAIT #5: SERVER. A Server ministers humbly to others.

COME, FOLLOW ME . . .

Paul's letter to the believers in Ephesus begins with prolific and awe-inspired praise of God. Perhaps because of his own personal history of religious arrogance he is especially aware of how quickly we saints can forget where we came from. So as he opens this great letter of encouragement and instruction, he reminds them of their position in Christ—not a deserved position, but one given by the extravagant grace of God through Jesus Christ. Scan **Chapter 1**, and you will find it overflowing with words that describe our blessed state. Some of these words are listed below. Discuss what some of these words mean to you.

Chosen (v.4)

Adopted (v. 5)

Freely given (v. 6)

Redemption (v. 7)

Forgiveness (v. 7)

Lavished (v. 8)

Inheritance (14)

Hope (v.12)

Incomparably great power (v. 19)

Marked (v. 13)

Read Ephesians 2:4-10. To what point of view is Paul calling the believers in Ephesus? To what attitude?

If our salvation is based on faith and not works, then what are some reasons for performing “good works”? What are the rewards?

Read Romans 12:2. Have you ever performed an act of service that seemed like worship? Describe the experience. How can simple acts of service, performed through our daily work and play, be done in worshipful ways? What happens when boasting comes into the picture?

Read Matthew 20:20-28. Contrary to the push-comes-to-shove values of the secular world (then and now), Jesus says real power comes to the Christian through humble submission to God and to others. God lifts up those who humble themselves to serve. Jesus reminds his disciples often that their privileged position does not manifest itself in the world’s value system, but in the Kingdom of God.

Paul carries out this basic theme throughout Ephesians, giving instructions on how we are to carry out our everyday relationships at work, in families, in the church, in ministry and with those in authority over us. In which of these relationships do you most struggle to be a servant? What gets in the way?

AT THE CROSSROAD: Where Prayer Connects with Life

Read John 13:1-11. What is radical about the action Jesus takes before the Passover meal? What prompts him to do it?

What does verse 3 imply about Jesus’ relationship with the Father? Does it seem natural, or paradoxical, that this relationship would lead to the action in verse 4? Explain.

What, if anything, makes menial tasks difficult to perform? What, if anything, is difficult about accepting this kind of service from others?

Read vv. 12-17. What is Jesus providing through the act of washing the disciples’ feet? Do you think he is instructing us, literally, to wash each other’s feet, or is there a more symbolic meaning? Explain.

What, in addition to servanthood, is Jesus modeling for these future church leaders? (servant leadership—for in serving others, they will be preparing others to serve.)

What blessings is Jesus referring to in v. 17?

How has God designed, prepared and equipped you to “minister humbly to others”?

STEPS IN MY PERSONAL JOURNEY

Open your devotional to the center page to find the “Jesus Journey” path. The signposts mark some steps we can take as “Servers” to “minister humbly to others”. The rocks along the path indicate the scriptures that guide our steps. Consider where you are on the path. Pray for the Holy Spirit to direct this reflection time. Look up scriptures as you are led. What steps will you take to intentionally grow in “humble service” during “The Jesus Journey”? Circle the step and the scripture. If you are led to take a step that is not on the path, draw or write this in. Use this reflection page to guide you through the week. If there is time, share your “next step” with the class.

MARKERS IN THE ROAD & CLOSING PRAYER

Take turns washing one another’s hands with the basin, pitcher and towels provided. Pray for your classmate as you wash her hands. Pray that God will help this person discern the needs around him, and grow in the capacity to serve in Christ’s power. Pray that God will provide all that is needed.