



**Educate  
+ Engage**



DIFFERENCE  
MAKERS:

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The Heart  
of Jesus

### OVERVIEW

This Difference Makers series will teach us that sharing the gospel is our Christian calling right here and now. It's about taking action, diving into the power of serving others, and making a noticeable difference locally, nationally, and globally.

#### **Scripture Passage**

II Corinthians 5:17 (NKJV)

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.

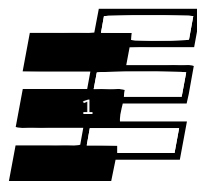
### EDUCATE

New year, new me, right? What about new office, new me; new PS5, new me? Those work too. But the truth that we are going to discuss the next few weeks is that you have an opportunity to make a difference with your life anytime. Sharing Jesus with others isn't confined to a New Year's resolution or a summer missions trip. It is our duty to serve Him right here and now, taking action and making a real difference.

If you have been filled with the Holy Ghost and baptized in the name of Jesus, you are made new. Jesus doesn't just make us good; He gives us new life. With new life comes a new set of desires and callings.

By nature, we are selfish in our thinking. Such behavior is evident from a very young age. Have you ever been around a toddler who wants something and screams like a pterodactyl if they aren't allowed to have it? Nobody has to teach them that response.

Have you ever been around an overly selfish person? They may be in a group of people but don't seem to care at all about the well-being of the group; they just want to do what they want to do. It doesn't matter if there is a better option, a better place, a better thing. If it's not what they want, they throw a fit until they get their way. How do you feel when you are around those kinds of people?



## Lesson 1

We tend to fill up our lives with what we want, but at times we need a deep clean. Christmas or birthdays happen, we get some new clothes or new shoes, and we must make room for the new stuff. Out with the old and in with the new. When we give our lives to Jesus, we become new. Instead of only chasing after things that make us happy, what if we clean out our inner closets and refill them with the heart of Jesus? If we are filled with His Spirit and are led by His Spirit, it is impossible for us to remain the same. May we all allow the life-changing power of Jesus to make us more like Him.

*Discussion Questions: Why would anybody not want to have the heart and desires of Jesus, who at the core of His message was about serving others and making a difference?*

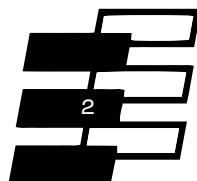
Keep in mind that you can't have a new you without a change of heart about where your priorities lie. To be effective we must have the right view of God, the right view of self, and right relationship with others.

The Bible isn't just some random book of ancient writings; it's still as relevant today as the day in which it was written. Jesus' disciples were frequently selfish. They fought for themselves. They cared about having power, being right, looking right, and saying the right things. If we have the same problems as the disciples did, we need the same teachings they received.

When Jesus was in the last few hours of His life, He and His disciples were in an upper room. (See Luke 22:19–24.) Jesus was about to die, but the disciples were selfishly arguing with each other! They wanted to know who was greatest among them. Is this how we think? Do we try to prove who is the best among us—how many likes we get, whose video can go “viral,” who has the best memes?

Sometimes these issues reveal how close to or how far away we are from Jesus. We have moments of feeling close to Him, but we may have other moments when He seems far away because we are too consumed with ourselves—our status, our popularity, our looks, what others think of us—and forget about the heart of Jesus. We fill up our “closets” with things rather than Him and His mission to seek and save that which was lost (Luke 19:10).

Following their last meal together, Jesus served His disciples by washing their feet. (See John 13:1–17.) Wearing sandals in the dusty, dirty conditions of their region necessitated foot-washing. Although the disciples might have been happy to wash Jesus' feet, they could not conceive of washing each other's feet. Their reluctance and disdain for the task was because foot-washing was reserved for the lowliest of menial servants. Peers did not wash one another's feet, except very rarely and as a mark of great love. When Jesus washed their feet, they were shocked. His actions also served as a symbol of spiritual cleansing and a model of Christian humility. By



# Lesson 1

washing His disciples' feet, Jesus taught the lesson of selfless service that He supremely exemplified by His death on the cross.

Why does this matter? Followers of Jesus must emulate Him, serving one another in lowliness of heart and mind, seeking to build one another up in humility and love. Those with a servant's heart will be greatly blessed as the Lord promised. The dictionary defines humility as "a modest or low view of one's own importance; humbleness." In John 13 the Lord knew His time on earth was ending and His love for the disciples was on His mind. Out of love, He taught them one last lesson: humility.

It should not be surprising that this was an important lesson for the disciples to learn. Jesus declared "love your neighbor as yourself" as the second greatest command ever. It is second only to loving God with all that we are. To fulfill the mission of spreading the gospel, the disciples would need to learn to serve. Otherwise pride and arrogance would ruin their relationship with God, with each other, and with the people they were trying to tell about Jesus. Humility and service to others are evidence of love.

*Discussion Questions: What can we do to prepare to serve others? What talents, resources, and services can we give to make a difference?*

Read John 13:1–2 and I Corinthians 13:1–3, and then discuss:

- What role does love play in our service to others?
- Why did Peter not want Jesus to wash his feet? Why did he change his mind?
- John 13:2 says that Judas had already decided to betray Jesus, yet Jesus still washed his feet. What do you think Judas thought as that was happening? What does this situation mean for us?

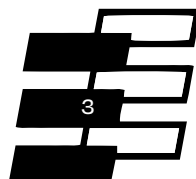
It comes back to this: the right view of God, the right view of self, and right relationship with others.

## **The right view of God.**

This is the realization that we are not God. We don't have the abilities He does. We are flawed. Jesus is the perfect one who came down to serve and offer His life for you and me to forgive us of our sins and give us power over our sinful nature.

## **The right view of self.**

No one is above anyone else. We are all created in the image of God with the heart of God.



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We are messed up, broken people who are selfish at our core and who tend to fill ourselves with things that will not matter in the end.

### **The right relationship with others.**

We will determine our relationship with others by how we view God and how we view ourselves. If we think of ourselves as lord of our lives, our view of self will be nothing but a selfish, look-out-for-your-own-good type, but that is the opposite of Jesus.

If we are not right with God, we cannot be right with others. The converse is true: if we are not right with others, we cannot be right with God. (See Matthew 5:23–24; 1 John 4:20.)

### **Closing**

Let's consider again: if the heart of Jesus is service, how close is your heart to His heart? Are you willing to embrace His way of thinking? Are you willing not to focus on yourself but let yourself get down on a knee and wash the feet of those you care about? Are you willing to have the heart of Jesus and begin to live out His example—to serve? Emulating Him is how we become difference makers.

## ENGAGE

Read John 14:6–15 and discuss:

- If you are to do the things Jesus does, how can you better serve those around you?
- Are you actively serving right now? If so, where? If you are not, what is keeping you from serving?
- Why do you think it can be hard to put aside selfishness to serve others?
- How can you serve the people around you this week?

Spend some time praying with your peers. Bearing one another's burdens draws us closer to them and to God. Do not skip this precious, important time.

