

John 13:1-15

“Jesus: Turning the World Upside-Down”

Scripture: John 13:1-15

Memory Verse: Mark 10:45 “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*”

Lesson Focus: This chapter of John we see how Jesus completely turns things upside-down from what is normal in our fallen world. In this part of the chapter, we will see how Jesus shocks everyone with His *agape* love.

Activities and Crafts: Coloring Picture of Jesus Washing Feet Word Search of different terms from lesson, Bring It Home Discussion for 3rd – 5th.
Craft for 1st & 2nd: Feet

Starter Activity: The Worst Chores

We’ve all got chores to do and some we like better than others. To introduce our lesson, have some discussion about the chores that you all like the best. Ask them why they like them! Mention some of your own that you had as a kid that you actually liked and why (or maybe some that you like doing now!). Below are some ideas:

- 1) Mowing the lawn (enjoyed using the lawn mower as a kid)
- 2) Washing the car (enjoyed playing with the water)
- 3) Raking the leaves (got to play in the piles afterwards)

After having some good discussion on the chores that aren’t so bad then ask the kids what are some of the chores that they think are the worst and ask them why. Then share with them some of the chores that you like the least. Below are some ideas:

- 1) Unclogging the toilet or drain
- 2) Picking up doggie doo-doo

All of these chores are unpleasant for various reasons, but they all have to get done. That means that SOMEONE has to do them!

Q: What would you think if someone really powerful and famous, like President Trump, came to your house and said they wanted to “unclog your toilet” for you? You would think he is crazy! It would rock your world and TURN IT UPSIDE DOWN!

Something a little like this is what we will see in our text today. Let’s take a look!

Bible Study:

John 13:1: Jesus is now alone with the twelve disciples just before He is going to go to the cross to die. This is a key verse that helps us understand both this section and the rest of the gospel of John.

Q: What does it say Jesus had towards His disciples? LOVE! In fact, the expression “He loved them to the end” could also mean that He loved them “completely”.

“Love” is a word that is used so loosely and freely in our culture that we need to stop and consider what Jesus means here. *[B1]

Q: What is something that you might say you “love”?

A: Chocolate, video games, certain music, playing with friends

But do you think that is what Jesus means when He says He loves His own or do you think it goes deeper? It goes MUCH deeper. The original word here for love is *agape*. This is not a feeling, but a choice to joyfully put the needs of those you “*agape*” love above your own needs.

Jesus is going to show His *agape* to the disciples in ways they are not expecting!

John 13:2-3: Judas was preparing plans of betrayal while Jesus was preparing plans of *agape*.

Notice in v. 3 the power and authority that Jesus has! He has been given all things by the Father, being from God, and being the Son of God Himself.

Q: If you had such authority and you knew that the toilet needed to be unclogged, what would you do? Would you be the one to get down on your knees and “unclog the toilet” or would you be more likely to tell some minion of yours to go do it?

John 13:4-5: Wait a minute! Did we just read that the Son of God, the Great I AM, the Alpha and the Omega, the King of Kings got on His knees and began to wash the stinky, filthy feet of the disciples?

This is like the worst of chores in Jesus’s day! Back then there weren’t paved sidewalks, fancy tennis shoes, and cozy socks. There were dirty, dusty roads that people walked on with open sandals. Animals would poop on these roads and feet would get filthy! Only the lowest of servants would do such work as this! And here we have Jesus, the Master, stooping down and taking this lowest of roles!

John 13:6: Peter is totally shocked. How could the Master, Jesus, be serving Peter, the servant? *[B2]

Read Luke 22:24 which is Luke’s account of this event.

Q: What were the disciples arguing about? A: Who would be the greatest!

Imagine the shock of the disciples excited about how “great” they were going to be following Jesus only to have Jesus now stoop down and wash their feet like a slave!

Jesus turned their world COMPLETELY UPSIDE-DOWN!

Q: Have you ever had an opposite day at school or played opposites with friends? *[B3]

Teachers: At this point, consider doing a couple of the “upside-down” skits that we have on the last page (or come up with your own!). Create an area where the kids can act out the skits you choose. Discuss with your helper beforehand which one’s you will do and have them organize the kids and get them ready for each skit. After each skit, ask the kids why this was so “upside-down” from what is normal!

Q: Can you think of any other times Jesus did the opposite of what people were expecting?

- **John 6:29:** People want to work to earn God’s favor, but Jesus says believe in Him.
- **John 4:27:** Jesus cared for the Samaritan woman at the well.
- **Mark 10:13-14:** Jesus received children into His arms when the disciples thought they were just annoying.

Jesus didn’t do these things just to get attention and be different. All of these had a purpose to point us back to the *agape* love that He is, that He has, and that He gives.

We have one last “skit” and it involves us now washing YOUR feet.

Teachers: We will provide you with buckets and sponges. Have the kids take off their shoes and quickly wash/dry all of their feet (divide and conquer). Afterwards, wrap up the lesson returning to John 13 (I recommend picking back up at v. 12).

John 13:12-15: Jesus then asks them why He did this, reminding them that He is still their Lord.

Q: Why did He do this?

A: To give them an example to follow! Our God doesn’t just bark out orders at us from afar, but He shows us the way!

Q: Now why do you think we did this to you?

A: We want to show you that we love you and care about you.

But even more importantly, we want you to see how great Jesus’s *agape* love for you is! We want to point you to the Master who gave us this example to follow! Look back at v. 1. Remember it said that Jesus “*agape*” loves His own to the very end!

Key Point: Now read our memory verse, **Mark 10:45**.

Q: How does this verse show Jesus's *agape* love for His own?

- 1) He came not to be served, but to serve.
 - Jesus is the only One worthy to be served. He is the King and the Almighty. And yet when He walked this earth, He willingly walked it as a servant of others.
- 2) He gave His life as a ransom. He willingly went to the cross to purchase freedom and victory over sin and death for all those who believe.
 - Q: What is a ransom?
 - A: It means to pay for someone's freedom from slavery or punishment
 - Jesus willingly did that!

Jesus's *agape* love completely TURNED THE WORLD UPSIDE DOWN. It should also turn YOUR LIFE UPSIDE DOWN.

Our natural way is typically: ME, OTHERS, GOD

Once you come face-to-face with Jesus, this gets TURNED UPSIDE DOWN so that your new way, His way, is GOD, OTHERS, ME.

Which way will you live this week?

Bring It Home

(Devotional for the Family)

Lesson Theme: “Jesus: Turning the World Upside-Down” (Part 1)

Scripture: John 13:1-15

Memory Verse: Mark 10:45 “*For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many.*”

Teachers/Parents: Before we opened up our Bibles we had some discussion about chores, especially the ones they don’t like. Discuss as a family your chore likes and dislikes and the reasons behind your preferences. Then discuss what it would be like if someone rich and famous showed up at your door saying they came to do those chores you like the least. What would you think?

Discussion Questions:

- 1) Read **John 13:1**. The word “love” in this verse is *agape*. In class we contrasted the love that Jesus has for His people with the way the word love has become fluffy and hollow in our culture. What are something you say that you “love”? How is Jesus’s love so much deeper and greater than this?
- 2) Read **John 13:3**. Pause for a second and realize what this verse says about Jesus. Why is it so important to understand what this verse teaches before we can fully appreciate the act of Jesus’s washing His disciples’ feet later on?
- 3) Read **Luke 22:24**. This describes what was going through the disciples’ minds around this same time. While we can laugh at them, if we are honest, we all struggle with the same problem. Why do you think it is so easy for us to want greatness?
- 4) Read **Luke 22:25-27**. How does what Jesus say here completely TURN UPSIDE DOWN the way things normally are in the world?
- 5) Can you think of any other examples where Jesus completely TURNED THINGS UPSIDE DOWN from what was “normal”? (Check out **Mark 10:13-16, 1 Corinthians 1:26-27**, s for some examples)
- 6) Read **Mark 10:45**, our memory verse. Has your life been TURNED UPSIDE DOWN when you consider that Jesus has paid YOUR ransom for your sin? What are some things you can do this week to show thanksgiving to your Savior and Redeemer?

Upside-Down Skit Ideas

1) Cats and Dogs

- Pick two kids (or leaders) and identify one as the dog and one as the cat (tape a sheet of paper with “dog” or cat” on it to them).
- Have them sit down next to with their arms around each other.
- Then pick two more kids to approach them saying, “Wow. I never see cats and dogs getting along.”
- As they approach them to pet them have the dog “meow” and the cat “bark”.

2) Clean Room

- Pick a boy and a girl (or leaders) to be Mom and Dad
- Pick another boy or girl (or leaders) to be the kid
- Mom: We have something to discuss with you about your room
- Dad: Yes, please come here so we can talk
- Kid: Uh-Oh. Am I in trouble?
- Mom: Yes! Your room is way too clean! All your stuff is put away!
- Dad: In fact, it is so clean, that Mom and I are going to punish you by giving you more time to play Minecraft!
- Kid: No, please, not that! ANYTHING but Minecraft!
- Mom: No arguing, or we will even take you to Disneyland!
- Kid: OK!

3) Finders Keepers?

- Pick three kids (or leaders) and place some play money (something big like \$500) away from the group on the floor
- Have the kids walk over and “find” the money on the ground together
- Then have them argue about not taking the money (no one wants it)
- Then have one kid tear it up and have all of the kids breathe a sigh of relief that they got rid of it

4) No Homework

- Have a kid (or leader) pretend to be the teacher and have a few others kids be students sitting at school
- Teacher: Class, there will be no homework and only recess the rest of the school year!
- Kids: Oh no! No more homework? I don’t like recess!
- Teacher: No arguing and complaining or I will give you all candy!
- Kids: OK. We will listen.