

# Readings

## Scripture

<sup>3</sup> Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, <sup>4</sup> rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. <sup>5</sup> Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." <sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." <sup>9</sup> Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" <sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

<sup>12</sup> When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. <sup>14</sup> If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

<sup>16</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. <sup>18</sup> I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' <sup>19</sup> I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. <sup>20</sup> Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

- John 13:3-20 (English Standard Version)

# Sermon Outline

## The Debt of Love

John 13:3-20

*Table Talk in an Upper Room*

Stephen Baldwin

*God's word in the thirteenth chapter of John's gospel shows us that every follower of Jesus needs to learn what it means to live in the debt of love.*

### What does it mean to live in the debt of love?

#### It means our hearts must be open to what Jesus' heart models (John 13:3-11)

...he demonstrates the servant way (John 13:3-5)

...he disturbs the assumptions of the world's way (John 13:6-11)

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#### It means our hearts must be humbled for loving service (John 13:12-20)

...he instructs us in a radical change of mind (John 13:12-15)

...he calls us to a blessed change of behavior (John 13:16-19)

...he sends us into the world with a bowl and towel (John 13:20)

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### Reflection Questions

- Think about a time when you were given a chore or task to do that was messy, dirty, embarrassing, or way below your training, education, position or expertise. How did you react?
- Were you able to complete the task? What changed your attitude toward it?
- What is the most helpful way for you to learn something new? Is it to read about it, or to see it demonstrated? Why do you think this teaching was so powerful for the disciples?
- When do you find that your heart is most open to learning something new from the Lord: when someone tells you what to do, or when you're caught by surprise by something you are seeing embodied?
- How do you think the disciples were feeling as Jesus rose to wash their feet?
- In verse 14 Jesus says, "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet you also ought to wash one another's feet." Was this a command to literally wash one another's feet, or was Jesus making a bigger point? The word "ought" carries with it the meaning of a debt, that someone has incurred an obligation to be discharged. How is Jesus teaching us that this debt is to be discharged? Who do we owe?