

Week Five: *Choose to Serve*
John 13:1-17

Spend FIFTEEN – Day One

1. When was a time that someone affirmed you by saying nice things about you? How did that make you feel?
2. Read John 13:1-17. What is the setting for this story?
3. Jesus is making some final points to his disciples before his death and resurrection. What are some of the things he asks them to do in this passage?
4. What good thing does Jesus say about his disciples (most of them, anyway!) in verse 10?
5. How do you think it felt to them to hear their master describe them in such a way?
6. Today, as you “choose to serve,” write down five people whom you are going to speak positive and true things about in order to encourage them.
7. Finish your FIFTEEN by praying for these five people, and ask God to reveal to you the true things he knows about them and to use you to affirm them today.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Two

8. When was a time that someone spent quality time with you—a memory that you especially treasure? What made that moment so memorable?
9. Read John 13:1-17. How much time do you think Jesus spent with his disciples at this dinner?
10. This was a long, ritualistic event in Jewish culture. What value did Jesus’ spending it with his disciples communicate to them?
11. Now read again John 13:1. How much time had Jesus spent with his followers during this ministry?
12. In what way was Jesus’ quality time an act of service to his disciples?

13. Today, as you “choose to serve,” think of one person who is important to you. Take a moment with your calendar to carve out some intentional time with them today—even if it means rearranging some things. This could be a spouse, or a child, or a friend you haven’t spoken with in a while.

14. End your FIFTEEN praying over your schedule, ask God to help you accomplish all those urgent things that feel pressing, even as you carve out space to serve someone with your time.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Three

15. What is the best gift anyone ever gave you? What made it so meaningful to you?

16. Read John 13:1-17. How well does it seem that the disciples understood what Jesus was doing at this dinner?

17. Peter especially seemed perplexed. Look again at verses 12 and 13. In a Lord/Servant relationship (or a Teacher/Student relationship), which direction does the gift-giving tend to go?

18. Why do you think Jesus’ actions were so confusing to his disciples?

19. Now look at verse 17. What gift does God promise to his followers?

20. Today, as you “choose to serve,” think about a relationship that is important to you. Ponder what you know about that person. What gift could you give them that would make them feel blessed and known?

21. As you finish your FIFTEEN, ask God to give you his wisdom and insight as you seek to bless someone in your life.

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Four

22. This is often a hard thing to admit in our culture, but when was a time that you really just needed a hug?

23. Read John 13:1-17. What kind of physical touch happens in this scene?

24. Be honest with yourself: how comfortable would you be with letting the Lord of the Universe touch your feet?

25. Why would you struggle (or not struggle) with this concept? What makes physical touch such a complex concept in our culture?

26. Studies show again and again how crucial physical touch is to our well-being. Evaluate how much healthy physical touch you receive—is it more or less than what you might need? About right?
27. Today, as you “choose to serve,” make a point of offering (appropriate!) physical touch to the people you interact with today. Whether it’s a handshake or a side hug or making a point to kiss your spouse or child, find ways to encourage people with a comforting, connecting touch.
28. Conclude your FIFTEEN in prayer by thanking God for the intimacy he offered to us through Jesus Christ, a God who was willing to come down and touch people’s mortal, dirty feet!

Spend FIFTEEN – Day Five

29. When was a time someone did something for you that you couldn’t have done for yourself?
30. Read John 13:1-17. What service did Jesus offer to his apostles in this moment?
31. Why do you think Peter was so bothered by Jesus’ act of service?
32. How have you felt when people have served you? Blessed? Uncomfortable? Grateful or awkward?
33. Have the motivations or agenda of the person/group that served you changed how it made you feel about the act of service?
34. Today, as you “choose to serve,” think of someone you are not particularly close to but interact with regularly. What is something about their life that you’ve noticed they could use help with? Find a way to perform an act of service for that person, with no agenda or expectation other than wanting to bless them.
35. Close your FIFTEEN in prayer, asking God to use the choices you’ve made this week to truly bless those whom you are “choosing to serve”!