

Series: EXTREME

Text: John 13

Title: "Extravagant Love"

Introduction: WELCOME, BACK ROADS CHURCH! Glad you're with us TODAY as we Continue with "**EXTREME**"! EXTREME DEVOTION ... The ONLY WAY to TRULY Follow JESUS is at the EXTREME! There is no half-apple following of Jesus. Following JESUS is ALL IN or ALL OUT ... You are EITHER in a CLOSE RELATIONSHIP with JESUS or you are NOT. We do NOT want JESUS to SPEW US from His MOUTH ... make Him SICK!

We're using JOHN'S ACCOUNT of what happened in The UPPER ROOM the NIGHT before JESUS is ARRESTED. According to JOHN, JESUS used this TIME ALONE with the DISCIPLES to GIVE and EXTREME FAREWELL TEACHING. It's EXTREME! EXTREME DEVOTION shows up in EXTRAVAGANT LOVE!

Let's GET to JOHN'S POINT of VIEW as he WATCHES / LISTENS to JESUS... And LIKELY JESUS' POINT of VIEW as He TELLS JOHN what to WRITE DOWN (in resurrected body). "*John, I need you to understand what all was going on that evening...*"

So, John 13-17 = Jesus' FAREWELL MESSAGE. It is ALL GOOD, BUT the MOST IMPORTANT PART of Jesus' MESSAGE shows up in JOHN 13 / IN the UPPER ROOM ...

JOHN 13:1 = *Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end.*

Jesus was NOT IGNORANT of His ETERNAL PURPOSE or the TIMING ... His HOUR had COME! What we OBSERVE of JESUS comes from HIS LOVE for His FATHER and His LOVE for His DISCIPLES. GOD is LOVE. JESUS is GOD. Jesus is OBEDIENT to His FATHER and The FATHER LOVES US. The HOLY SPIRIT is GOD. It is ALL CONNECTED to GOD'S LOVE for US. (GMC?)

Briefly, I am NOT FORGETTING JUDAS TODAY, I'm just NOT putting the FOCUS on him. HE is IN the ROOM until the END of this CHAPTER (according to John). Do NOT FORGET Judas is THERE!

How to Understand and Live Extravagant Love:

Let me ask ... HAVE you EVER had to DO a JOB you DIDN'T WANT to DO? Maybe you THOUGHT it was BENEATH your PAY GRADE, or it was just GROSS? My guess is WE ALL HAVE.

DIAPER CHANGES / TOILET CLEANING in a DORM / TRASH COMPACTING after SUNDAY DINNER ... DOGGY DOO-DOO?

Now, the STARTING POINT for JESUS AND for US is a PLACE of HUMILITY...

#1 = HUMILITY

JESUS HUMBLER Himself to COME to EARTH ... KING of KINGS as a BABY. He was HUMBLE throughout His MINISTRY. And now, at the END of His EARTH LIFE, He continues to be HUMBLE. He is ABOUT to ENDURE ULTIMATE PAIN and HUMILIATION at the HANDS of the SANHIDRIN, PILATE, and The ROMAN GUARD. And HUMILITY does NOT seem to BOTHER JESUS. He SEEMS to EMBRACE IT. Listen ...

JOHN 13:3-5 = *Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. 4So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, 5and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.*

Did you CATCH THAT? Jesus had ALL AUTHORITY OVER EVERYTHING! Jesus had EVERYTHING IN HIS HANDS! And WHAT did He DO? He PICKED UP a TOWEL! Jesus WASHED His DISCIPLES FEET! This was a TASK a JEWISH MASTER did NOT ask a JEWISH SERVANT to do. This TASK was LOWLY ... ONLY GENTILE SLAVES would be ASKED to WASH FEET! It was NOT just HUMILIATING, it was EMBARRASSING to WASH FEET.

Jesus CHOSE to WASH 24 FEET. And EVERY TIME Jesus washed ONE of the Disciple's FEET, there were ELEVEN (11) others WATCHING. Watching JESUS, their RABBI perform the LOWLIEST of DUTIES. Do YOU THINK THEY were UNCOMFORTABLE?

Well, when it came to PETER, he was having NONE of IT. NO WAY (you need to read it ... Next Steps) JESUS was going to WASH HIS FEET! **JOHN 13:8 = "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!" Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."** Peter immediately CHANGES his TUNE ... **"WASH ALL OF ME!"** And Jesus explains that this is NOT ABOUT your SPIRITUAL CLEANLINESS (only one is unclean). JESUS was TEACHING SOMETHING to THOSE who are ALREADY CLEAN... **JOHN 13:12 = "After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing?"**

Jesus was TEACHING a LESSON in HUMILITY. Humility is NOT thinking LOWLY of SELF. It's simply NOT THINKING of YOURSELF AT ALL! **In the PRESENCE of JESUS, WHY would we EVER THINK about OURSELVES?** TRUE HUMILITY GROWS out of a RELATIONSHIP with our HEAVENLY FATHER. IF we DESIRE to KNOW and DO The FATHER'S WILL, and bring GLORY to HIS NAME, it COMES from FOLLOWING Jesus' EXAMPLE of NOT THINKING of SELF AT ALL and SERVING OTHERS. Ultimate HUMILITY ... SURRENDER!

Andrew Murray WROTE ... **"HUMILITY (not pride) is the ONLY SOIL in which GRACES ROOT** (He's talking about God's Grace!). **The LACK of HUMILITY is the SUFFICIENT EXPLANATION of EVERY DEFECT and FAILURE."** Look at our WORLD... (repeat quote) **"IF it becomes about ME, WE have a PROBLEM."** PRIDE LIES at the HEART of EVIL.

LISTEN IF you have EARS! The WORD says without HUMILITY, there is NO ... **#2 = HOLINESS** (serving)

Remember, this WHOLE FOOT WASHING THING is for JESUS to TEACH His DISCIPLES an IMPORTANT LESSON ... SO IMPORTANT He TEACHES it in The Upper Room! FAREWELL TEACHINGS... IT'S EXTREME TEACHING!

Like the DISCIPLES that night, we TODAY, DESPARATELY NEED this LESSON on HUMILITY. As I OBSERVE, the CHURCH TODAY is FILLED with a WORLDLY SPIRIT of COMPETITION, CRITICISM, and NEGATIVITY to make MYSELF FEEL BETTER about MYSELF (put others down) ... THAT is PRIDE! We ARGUE about WHO of US is the GREATEST!

If we can NOT HUMBLE OURSELVES ... NOT THINK of SELF AT ALL ... LAY down my RIGHTS to MYSELF and TAKE UP a CROSS and FOLLOW MY LEADER ... we will NEVER EXPERIENCE TRUE RELATIONSHIP with Our ALMIGHTY, HOLY GOD! Jesus = **"You must be HOLY as My Father in heaven is HOLY!"** NOT an OPTION!

WITHOUT HUMILITY, we'll NEVER EXPERIENCE HOLINESS in the EYES of THE LORD! We will NEVER EXPERIENCE His EXTRAVAGANT LOVE for US, NOR will we be ABLE to OFFER it to OTHERS. Can't OFFER what we HAVEN'T EXPERIENCED!

JESUS CLARIFIES His TEACHING ... JOHN 13:13-16 = *You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. 14And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. 15I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. 16I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message.*

Question: IS JESUS TRULY **"Teacher and Lord"** for YOU? If NOT, I understand ... As JESUS taught, IF you are NOT CLEAN ALL OVER (SURRENDERED to Jesus for FORGIVENESS and SALVATION) ... all this SERVING and FOOT WASHING and HUMILITY seems BENEATH YOU, DOESN'T IT? You have **RIGHTS**. You are **ENTITLED** in LIFE to SOMETHING BETTER, aren't you?

You have the RIGHT to CRITICIZE OTHERS and be NEGATIVE about EVERY LITTLE THING and NEVER TRUST ANYONE and CONTINUE to COPY the BEHAVIORS and CUSTOMS of THIS WORLD! You have RIGHTS, RIGHT?! Right, CHURCH PEOPLE?

As LONG as YOU have RIGHTS, you will MISS OUT on EXPERIENCING GOD'S EXTRAVAGANT LOVE for YOU ... AND He can NOT USE YOU to **"GO INTO ALL the WORLD and MAKE DISCIPLES."** **Your RIGHTS DISQUALIFY YOU!**

IF you CLING to your RIGHTS, you will CONTINUE to be ARROGANT and TELL GOD what PARTS of the WORLD you are WILLING to GO INTO for DISCIPLE MAKING!

Listen, IF we do NOT LEARN this LESSON of HUMILITY and SERVANT HEART from JESUS and STOP BEING like EVERYONE ELSE, we'll NEVER EXPERIENCE ...

#3 = HAPPINESS (following the Master)

EXTRAVAGANT LOVE BRINGS Happiness / JOY! JESUS said to STOP TALKING ABOUT IT and DO! He said to **"DO AS I HAVE DONE TO YOU!"** IF you are NOT WILLING to DO as HE has DONE for YOU (SERVE), then YOU are your OWN MASTER. IF you are CHOOSING to BE your OWN MASTER, you should TELL HIM. Actually, FORGET THAT. You DON'T NEED to ... YOUR ACTIONS have MADE it CLEAR!

Do you want to EXPERIENCE the DEEP SEEDED JOY and HAPPINESS Jesus wants you to EXPERIENCE in LIFE? Then DO! Jesus ... JOHN 13:17 = *Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.* UNDERLINE, **"doing them."** There are MANY who CLAIM CHRISTIANITY who **KNOW** ALL ABOUT IT ... They just REFUSE to **DO IT!**

EXPERIENCING ALL in LIFE that GOD WANTS for YOU and ME comes through our OBEDIENCE to HIS WORD / TEACHINGS / LESSONS. Jesus TEACHES that IF we LOVE the LORD, we will OBEY HIS COMMANDS. IF we LOVE The LORD, we will **"DO THEM."**

Our BLESSINGS from GOD come WHEN we DO what GOD WANTS. JESUS taught EXTRAVAGANT LOVE with a BASIN and a TOWEL and said for US to GO SHOW LOVE by being a SERVANT to OTHERS ... even THOSE PEOPLE! We do NOT get to CHOOSE!

I get it ... FOR US to ACTUALLY FOLLOW JESUS, we will NEED to WORK with PEOPLE WE THINK are LESSER than US and DO THINGS WE THINK are BENEATH US. AND? The KING of KINGS DID THEM. WHY WOULDN'T WE?

So, the FOOT WASHING was a LESSON in CHRISTLIKE LOVE ... then ... JOHN 13:31 = *As soon as Judas left the room, Jesus said, "The time has come for the Son of Man to enter into his glory, and God will be glorified because of him."*

"HIM" being JESUS. GOD will be GLORIFIED because of HIM! IT will CHANGE ...

#4 = HISTORY

HIS STORY CHANGED the WORLD! What JESUS TAUGHT and PEOPLE DID in OBEDIENCE to their TEACHER and The LORD CHANGED the WORLD.

Do NOT FORGET THE OBJECT LESSON. Jesus WASHED their FEET as their LORD and MASTER. THEN He said ... THEREFORE, ***“YOU OUGHT TO WASH EACH OTHER’S FEET ... DO as I have DONE for YOU.”***

That is the OBJECT LESSON for WHAT JESUS is ABOUT to COMMAND. Jesus COMMANDS they DO as THEY have OBSERVED HIM DOING ... for THREE YEARS ... JOHN 13:34-35 = *So now I am giving you a new commandment: Love each other. Just as I have loved you, you should love each other. 35Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.* (ONLY PLACE / way) Paul called this COMMAND, ***“The LAW of Christ.”*** PAUL and The APOSTLES ABIDED BY that LAW and TAUGHT OTHERS to DO the SAME. AND ... It DID PROVE to the WORLD ... THEY NOTICED!

Have you EVER WONDERED HOW a CULT of FOLLOWERS of a DEAD Teacher from NAZARETH in the FIRST CENTURY EVER MADE it OUT of the FIRST CENTURY? Do you have ANY IDEA HOW MANY CULTS and RELIGIONS have COME and GONE in the PAST 2,000 YEARS? Well, if there are CURRENTLY about 4,000 recognized RELIGIONS in our WORLD and approximately 10,000 CULTS, I THINK it would be HARD to COUNT.

Then HOW did a DEAD CARPENTER LAST SO LONG?

Because JESUS was PROVEN to the WORLD by HIS DISCIPLES ... NOT by the DISCIPLES’ TACTICS, but by FOLLOWING JESUS’ LAW / NEW COMMAND.

The BOOK of ACTS tells of the EXPLOSIVE GROWTH across the KNOWN WORLD of The JESUS MOVEMENT. But it’s NOT just IN the BIBLE. IT is in HISTORY BOOKS!

AND AFTER the FIRST CENTURY, it did NOT QUIT. In fact, CHRISTIANITY continued to EXPLODE in the 2nd and 3rd CENTURIES across The ROMAN EMPIRE. You know HOW? People FOLLOWED JESUS’ COMMAND. His STRATEGY! Listen, in GREEK and ROMAN CULTURE, doing GOOD for SOMEONE who was NOT ABLE to DO GOOD BACK to YOU was considered FOOLISH ... NOT STRONG ... NOT VIRTUOUS ... it was something ***“DONE by WEAK-WILLED WOMEN.”***

The CHRISTIANS considered ***“NO STRINGS ATTACHED GENEROSITY”*** to be a GREAT VIRTUE ... SO ... They DID IT! It was a NOTICEABLE WAY of FULFILLING Christ’s NEW COVENANT COMMAND. It was a TANGIBLE WAY of LOVING OTHERS the way CHRIST LOVED. It was ***THE WAY*** to CHANGE the WORLD ... Then and NOW!

They RESCUED ROMAN BABIES who were ***“PUT OUT.”*** June 17, BC 1 Letter (on phone). **Self-Evident!** They LOVED and were GENEROUS to THOSE WHO PERSECUTED THEM. They asked for FORGIVENESS for those who KILLED THEM for their FAITH ... The CHRISTIANS were ALWAYS to BLAME ... they were TAKING FOLLOWERS from the GREEK and ROMAN GODS and the GODS were ANGRY! So, Christians had to DIE!

TERTULLIAN was a ROMAN who CONVERTED in the 2nd CENTURY to CHRISTIANITY ... he was IMPRESSED with their DEVOTION, COURAGE, COMPASSION, and MORALITY. He joined a HOUSE CHURCH in ROME. A Great DEFENDER of THE FAITH. As CHRISTIANITY SPREAD across the EMPIRE, TERTULLIAN wrote that although The ROMAN EMPIRE was LIMITED ... ***“CHRIST’S NAME is EXTENDED EVERYWHERE, BELIEVED EVERYWHERE...”***

EXTENDED Everywhere. HOW? By BEING CHRISTIAN. NOT AMERICANIZED RELIGIOSITY. CHRISTIAN. The ANTIOCH VERSION of Christian! They LIVED OUT Jesus’ NEW Covenant COMMAND! While CHRISTIANS were still HANGING on Roman CROSSES, CHRISTIANITY SPREAD. Will it continue to through us? Will we OBEY Jesus? Let’s get EXTREME ... EXTRAVAGANT, Christlike, LOVE! Let’s Pray!

Next Steps: *Memorize John 13:34-35*
Read John 13-14
Pray about who I will invite to Easter Worship, March 31st.

Hosting (Closing)

HEY, it has been a GREAT DAY here at BMZ... Glad you've been here with us!
 In a moment, we are going to RECEIVE the OFFERING so please take this time to finish COMPLETING any information.

- Or NEXT STEPS on your CONNECTION CARD (**FULLY FILLED OUT!!**)
- AND when our ushers come around to RECEIVE our OFFERING
- You can drop that card in the offering basket.

IF you are a First-Time Guest with us today

• We are so glad you joined us ... And we have a GIFT for you.
 It's this book "**UNSHAKABLE**" and it's at the BACK TABLE / By the DOORS...

- all you need to do is HIT "**SEND**" your COMPLETED Connection Card

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As our ushers GET READY to come forward

- I just want to remind you ... STEWARDSHIP is DISCIPLESHIP ... we RECEIVE an OFFERING EVERY Sunday BECAUSE it is BIBLICAL ... AND it HELPS us GROW in our FAITH!
- STEWARDSHIP VERSE ... **JOHN 13:35 = *Your love for one another will prove to the world that you are my disciples.***
- FIRST of our EARNINGS go back to the ONE who Blessed us in the first place! That's why WE/I do Automated Giving! I get paid ... the TITHE comes OUT FIRST!
- God's plan for BUILDING His Church was through TITHING and GIVING of the FOLLOWERS ... Share the GOOD NEWS! To REFRESH OTHERS!
- As Developing Followers of Jesus Christ, WE need to KNOW what the BIBLE says about GIVING ... NOT just what we THINK it should say.
- **MONEY is a HEART ISSUE.** And GOD wants what is BEST for your HEART! Listen, if GOD LOVES US so much that HE is willing to GIVE UP His OWN SON FOR US, WHY would GOD LEAD us ASTRAY in FINANCES?! USHERS ...
- Next Week: **MORE HISTORY ... Let's get EXTREME, NOT for the PURPOSE of BEING EXTREME, but for an EXTREME PURPOSE! See you next week!**

"Truth without Grace is Fundamentalism (Brutality). Grace without Truth is Sentimentalism (Hypocrisy)."
Special thanks to Andy Stanley, Warren Wiersbe, Nelson Searcy, and R.A. Pegrum for outlines and ideas for this worship series.