

# Questions God Asks Us

## Chapter 10: Do you understand what I have done for you?



### Welcome

- What question or insight from *across this series* have you continued to think about or wonder about (if any)? Have the readings or discussion changed how you connect with God or with others in any way?

### Opening Question

- Tell about a time when you had a chance to serve someone else. It might be as a volunteer or as a caring friend or family member. It could be something very simple.
- Share with one another a cause or an issue that you are concerned about or a place where you've been a volunteer.

### Responsive Reading – Psalm 139

One: O LORD, you have searched me and known me.

All: *You know when I sit down and when I rise up;  
you discern my thoughts from far away.*

One: You search out my path and my lying down

All: *You are acquainted with all my ways.*

One: Where can I go from your spirit?

Or where can I flee from your presence?

All: *If I ascend to heaven, you are there;  
if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there.*

One: If I take the wings of the morning  
and settle at the farthest limits of the sea,

All: *Even there your hand shall lead me,  
and your right hand shall hold me fast. Amen.*

### Bible Text

#### Read John 13: 1-17

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. <sup>2</sup>The devil had already decided that Judas son of Simon Iscariot would betray Jesus. And during supper <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 to God, <sup>4</sup>got up from supper, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. <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 tied around him. <sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" <sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, "You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand." <sup>8</sup> Peter said to him, "You will never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I 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, "One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you." <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, "Not all of you are clean."

<sup>12</sup> After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had reclined again, he said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? <sup>13</sup> You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup> So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup> For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. <sup>16</sup> Very truly, I tell you, slaves are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.

## Questions

1. What did you notice in the Bible reading or in the chapter? What spoke to you or surprised you? What resonated with you? What was a new idea?

*Allow for a few minutes of silence as you gather your thoughts.*

2. Has someone ever washed your feet? What was it like?
3. How is the element of "surprise" or "the unexpected" part of the story? What does it tell us about ourselves... about God?
4. Jesus uses ordinary things (water, towel, feet) to do something extraordinary. How could something ordinary in your life become infused with meaning or carry a deeper message of love? Do you have an ordinary object that reminds you of something deeper?
5. Do you find it easier to serve or be served? Why?
6. How does Jesus' teaching and example in John 13 challenge the way our world works today? How does it challenge the way you understand your own role in serving?
7. What excites you or scares you most about following the servant-pattern of Jesus?
8. If someone asked you how they can begin to live Jesus' example in a way that genuinely communicates to others how much he has loved them, what would you say? What does this look like in your life? And what are some small steps that each of us can take?

## What's Next?

- At the end of the small group, spend some time in silent reflection using "Answering God's Question" at the end of the chapter.
- Think about a simple kindness or a way of supporting someone you know and take that step. Is there someone who would be especially surprised by your care today?
- Invite someone to take part in an act of service with you. It might be with an organization like Feed My Starving Children or Ralph Reeder. Or it could be someone you know who needs a supportive, caring hand.

## Closing Reading, Question & Prayer

- What is something that you want to carry with you from the readings or this small group experience? Is there a question or an insight that you want to continue to reflect on?

*"The directive to wash one another's feet is a call to share the kind of love that startles and surprises. It is a call for love to show up when no one might expect it. God put all things into Jesus' hands, and Jesus did the unexpected by stooping down and using his hands to wash feet. The followers of Jesus, too, have been entrusted with abilities and opportunities. The example of foot washing is a call to do what is needed, not merely expected, a call to translate love into service that might even catch someone off guard." – Craig Koester, Luther Seminary*

We give thanks for the radical love and service that Jesus shares with his disciples – and with us. We pray for the courage and love to extend this love to a world desperate to hear of God's love, grace, healing, care, presence, and peace.

*Read this prayer together from Numbers 6: 24-26 as a blessing to one another (or the leader may use it as a blessing for the group):*

The LORD bless you and keep you;  
the LORD make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;  
the LORD lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

One: God is with you no matter what. Go, now, in God's presence and love to be the hands, heart and hopes of Christ for our world. Amen.

*Thank you for being part of this small group experience!*

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*This outline is to be used alongside Questions God Asks Us by Trevor Hudson. Some of the questions and reflection prompts questions listed here also come from Questions God Asks Us.*

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