

Gamma – Gospel of John

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| Book | Gospel of John |
| Topic | The Glory of Love |
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This chapter starts off with love...verse 1 *he loved them to the end*. It also ends with love...34... *if you have love for one another.*"

This whole chapter is about love. How should we love and is Jesus telling us a new commandment which is different from the Old Commandment to love God with all your heart and soul and also your neighbor. How is it new when you come to the new covenant and the new commandment that Jesus gives you? Here Jesus gives you a paradigm. A paradigm is a pattern of foot washing.

A. LOVE IS SACRIFICIAL

John 13:2-3 (ESV) During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, **3** 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, **4** He rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. **5** 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.

All this is done in the context of the first verse which is basically he had loved them to the end. So therefore he loved the disciples to the very end of his life and he was utterly, fully completely totally dedicated to these disciples. As a demonstration of love, love is sacrificial.

Cultural Context:

In those days there are no socks to wear. Their shoes were like slippers and they will walk all over the streets and when they walk all over the streets and inevitably they will be touched by a shit and when they come in then they would expect a slave to wash the shit off and a Jewish slave cannot wash your shit off. It only has to be a gentile slave, the lowest of the low. In fact, there was historical records of the mother who wanted to wash the son's feet who was a rabbi. The son said, mother you cannot wash my feet. Mother took her son to the court to argue that she loved him so much, she must be allowed to wash his feet. So it is the lowest of the lowest who would wash the feet.

Social context was just before the meal in in Luke 22

Luke 22:24 (ESV) A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest.

It is in the context of that who will be greatest that actually what Jesus did was in contrast to this. So actually he lay aside his outer garments, take a towel, tie around his waist which is basically a picture of humiliation. He was probably not dressed from the top downwards and he bent down and cleaned their feet.

The theological context is very-very important; how could Jesus do this. A lot of people miss this verse,

3 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,

The foot washing comes in context of this being said about Jesus. He knew what was going to happen to him, who he was, he was going back to the father and then he starts to pour out and clean. So therefore he is actually God. At one stage in the future, every knee will bow, every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord and Savior, he will come and this is who he is and the God of the whole universe now comes down to clean their feet. It looks as if it basically emphasizes the fact that love is a sacrifice. It actually brings great honor to the person's having their feet washed.

The feet washing was done at Passover, where people are saved through the blood of the lamb.

John 12: **24** Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

So it is said in this context, the washing of the feet is said in the context of Passover, salvation of Israel and the fact that you die in order to live. So therefore it illustrates that this is actually the acted parable. The fact that he is cleaning them is that he is anticipating that one day he will hang on a cross and when he is hanging on the cross, he is cleaning their shit which is their sin. So this is an acted parable to show the extent of his love and the glory of the love, because the wider this is from that, the huge gap tells you the extent of his love. Paul writes

Philippians 2 : **5** Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus, **6** who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, **7** but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. **8** And being found in human form, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to the point of

death, even death on a cross. 9 Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name that is above every name,

This is what Jesus is doing. So sacrificial love, any love has sacrifice, it is a measure of his love and the measure of our worth. Our sin is so bad that it takes God to die for you. It shows the extent of our sin and the extent of his love that we are actually worth it.

The second paradigm of love here is that, love is humble. Jesus takes the form of a servant. Our ideas of humility are actually quite false. We see a humble person is weak, shameful and useless, that's why you are humble. This is what the Greeks use to think. In fact, Aristotle exalted the greatness of soul. He did not list humility as one of the virtues of life. The idea of humility being a virtue of life only came because of Jesus Christ. Before that right is might. The Greek idea of humility is to avoid excessive pride which will attract the savage vengeance of inscrutable and remorseless gods. So they really don't have an idea of humility. What Jesus did was very counter intuitive.

The great philosopher William James said, *"The deepest craving in all human beings is the desire to be appreciated."* At the heart of human beings that is what we want. We try to compare ourselves to each other, the things that we can see, race, social standing, money, power, all these things we use to enhance our image, so that we are appreciated and the thing that we cannot see, perhaps character, good deeds, morality, humility, whatever it is, we will use all these things to add some meaning or glory to our lives. So we actually want the motivational engine for self-enhancement. We are all designed for glory. We are seeking glory because that's how we are actually created. So therefore when we actually look at ourselves, we are often very biased.

- Australian study 86% of workers assessed themselves as above average and 1% below average
- 90% of business managers judged their performance better than their peers
- 12% of people feel old for their age but 66% think they are young for their age
- College entrance exam board did a survey on 829,000 high school leavers with regard to ability to get along well with others and found
 - 0% below average
 - 60% at top 10%
 - 25% at top 1%

So everybody thinks they are god, you always think that you are clever than the next guy. You always think you are nicer than the next guy. We are self-biased. The danger of that is that if you over value yourself, you will under value others and you might oppress them, which happened many years ago. The Nazis thought that they were better than everybody else, the white race. They are still around in America and then they oppress other people. The Japanese had the same problem, they thought the Chinese were less than humans and

they actually did many cruel things to them, especially the city of Nanking. Jesus's humility comes from his strength

3 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,

How can we be humble?

We can be humble if you actually realize that Jesus Christ is from the father. He is God and he is going back to the father. Now if that is your true identity then you can be humble. Humility comes from your identity. If you are secure in your identity then you are able to be humble.

Where our strength comes from?

Romans 8:28 (ESV) And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose.

Romans 8:30 (ESV) And those whom he predestined he also called, and those whom he called he also justified, and those whom he justified he also glorified.

Which means we are glorified. We think of ourselves as like Jesus, coming from God and going back to God, we have been glorified, we will go back with God. Then we will look at our fellow man, it is okay to be humble, we are filled, we are rich, that's where your humility comes from and so therefore this is the extent of his love. We are the people who have great sin but this is how valuable His love makes us that the king of glory would actually come and die for us.

Karl Albrecht, a psychologist says, *the greater your sense of self-worth, the easier it is to appreciate others, to praise them, and to encourage them.* Because encouraging other people and praising other people doesn't detract from you, because you are already filled with the great sense of self-worth. We need to know the difference between false humility and true humility. False humility is when they come and say nice things to you and you say, no la I am not. They said nice things to Jesus, you are the son of God. Jesus said,

John 8:31-32 (ESV) If you abide in my word, you are truly my disciples, 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

John 8:58 (ESV) Jesus said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, before Abraham was, I am.

John 7:37-38 (ESV) If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. 38 Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'

So Jesus is not like China man, no la I am not really God. He is truthful. We are not asked to have false humility. We actually have to be truly humble.

What is being truly humble?

Dennis Voskuil said, *"not that we have been freed by Christ to love ourselves but that we are free from self-obsession. Not that the cross frees us for the ego trip but the cross frees us from the ego trip"*

The problem with pride is self-obsession. The need to glorify yourself, the need to do anything like just compare with other people, get more things in your CV in order for people to think well of us. All of us walk into the world and we are always less than what we think. We try to gain, so that others will have a good view of us.

Jesus Christ is looking to the needs, whatever the need is and at that time the need was to clean their feet and he did that. Jesus washed Judas feet, that's called love your enemy where you treat everybody the same. Judas is a horrible person, this guy will stab you in the back in a few minutes' time and yet he washes his shit off. That is the paradigm of love, total humility, even our enemies deserve our love and you basically wash people based on their needs, not based on their worthiness. So in our minds when we interact with people in church and outside, we are always thinking about good and bad about them. We cannot do that because we are all bad, so therefore you only want to be friends with the good guys or the ones who like you and the ones who don't like you, you don't want to be friends with them, but actually that's artificial. Jesus washed everybody based on their needs, not based on their worth. So when we look at some people around church or outside, we have to look at them with eyes of their need, not their worth, because if we look at ourselves we are not worth very much outside the love of Jesus Christ.

Self-love is assumed. The Bible never tells you to love yourself. The psychologist say, you must learn to love yourself, which is not correct.

[Mark 12: 31 The second is this: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'](#)

It doesn't teach you to love yourself, already you love yourself, already love themselves. In some way we all love ourselves, the Bible always assume you love yourself.

[Ephesians 5:28 \(ESV\) In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies.](#)
[Philippians 2:4 \(ESV\) Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others.](#)

So therefore the Bible always says self-love is assumed, you don't have to teach it.

What is humility?

Humility is self-affirming verses self-forgetful. So basically you are self-forgetful, you are also positive, as well as realistic. You are also grace filled as well as unpretentious. There

are lot of facets to what humility is. So you are not looking down at yourself. You are self-affirming, you know who you are and yet you are self-forgetful but you don't think you deserve all the attention, you should actually put your attention to other people.

When you actually engage in conversation with people, how does the conversation go, if it is always going, you telling people what you are, what you had for dinner, where you want, then you are very self-centered. What you need to be doing is self-forgetfulness and yet self-affirming. You need to be positive and yet realistic, filled with grace and unpretentious. So the paradigm of love is sacrificial, it is humble, love needs to be received.

[John 13:8-10 \(ESV\) 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"](#)

Everybody let Jesus washed his feet but Peter doesn't want to let Jesus wash feet, because he thought of himself that he is better than the others. Sometimes the people who say they are most humble and terrible, actually they are the most proud and that's exactly what Peter is doing. Now he is doing that.

[Luke 5: 5-8 And Simon answered, "Master, we toiled all night and took nothing! But at your word I will let down the nets." 6 And when they had done this, they enclosed a large number of fish, and their nets were breaking. 7 They signaled to their partners in the other boat to come and help them. And they came and filled both the boats, so that they began to sink. 8 But when Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, "**Depart from me, for I am a sinful man, O Lord.**"](#)

The reason why he says that is basically he suddenly realized Jesus is like God and so perfect and so therefore Peter cannot go near him, because Peter is too sinful, because Peter would like to be less sinful then he can come into the presence of God. In truth, however hard you try you can never be so sinless that you can stand next to Jesus and this shows an overestimation in Peter's eyes of his own self-worth that he actually can come to that kind of level. So the way to find God is not to look up but to look down at your sin. We cannot find God if you keep on looking up. When we realize we are truly sinful is then where we can find God in our lives. Then Peter says

[John 13:9-10 \(ESV\) Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" 10 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."](#)

This is mixed metaphor. If you go back to John 10, Jesus says I am the door, within two seconds he says I am also the shepherd. It is a bit confusing. So Jesus uses mixed metaphors. So here he is using this metaphor, salvation, washing of feet equals to salvation and then in the middle of the passage, salvation is actually taking a bath and then you have

got washing your feet as well. Jesus was telling Peter that he need continual cleansing day by day.

1 John 1:8-10 (ESV) If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.

So we need to continually ask for cleansing. So love needs to be received.

LOVE REVERSES OUR VALUES:

John 13:12-16 (ESV) 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? **13** You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. **14** If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. **15** For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. **16** 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.

So basically leaders serve

Luke 22:24-27 (ESV) A dispute also arose among them, as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. **25** And he said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those in authority over them are called benefactors. **26** But not so with you. Rather, let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. **27** For who is the greater, one who reclines at table or one who serves? Is it not the one who reclines at table? But I am among you as the one who serves.

The one who is greater is the one who serves. So this idea is completely different. The greater you are, the more you serve. This is complete reversal of values. It is only in Christianity that this was actually put in.

Lao Tze said, *"A leader is best when people barely know he exists; when his work is done, his aim fulfilled, they will say: we did it ourselves."*

Inn Fuhr is one of the top CEOs in the world. He says, *"success should be measured by the contribution you have made to other peoples' lives."*

Sheryl Bachelor actually won top prize in the US. She says, *"leadership is an extreme sport requiring both courage and humility."*

These are her values

You are called to serve the people well. But you cannot serve them well without spending time with them. Unhurried time. Time to know their strengths, values, experiences, and concerns. Lots of people talk about how much they care about their people. Very few people dedicate any time to it. If you truly believe that people create performance – make them a priority. The best leader I have met suggested you should spend 30% of your week with your direct reports, largely in one-on-one coaching conversations. In my experience, this has an amazing impact on the growth in your team

She has accepted biblical values as a Christian woman. She put servant leadership first, people first, leaders serve. This paradigm actually works in real life.

APPLICATION OF THE NEW PARADIGM OF LOVE

John 13:18-19 (ESV) 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.' 19 I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he.

John 13:21 (ESV) After saying these things, Jesus was troubled in his spirit, and testified, "Truly, truly, I say to you, one of you will betray me."

He was not troubled because they are going to take him away. He was troubled because the person whom he has spent time three years with was going to betray him and that struck a blow into Jesus heart.

John 13:26-27 (ESV) Jesus answered, "It is he to whom I will give this morsel of bread when I have dipped it." So when he had dipped the morsel, he gave it to Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot. 27 Then after he had taken the morsel, Satan entered into him. Jesus said to him, "What you are going to do, do quickly."

So satanic influence was in Judas, he wasn't possessed but he was influenced by the devil and he went and did what he had to do.

APPLICATION TO THE LIVES OF DISCIPLES

John 13:14-17 (ESV) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 16 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. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

The wrong application is to have your elders come, every Sunday, take the soap and then go and wash and go so. Feet washing is basically a catholic ritual. Jesus has sacrificial and humble love, it is a lot easy to wash feet and curse you afterwards, because you promote

hypocrisy. This feet washing is only an example of love, so you are not supposed to go and practice it.

Why should we love like Jesus?

We should love like Jesus because he washed our feet. If our Lord and teacher washes your feet, you should wash each other's feet. It means you are incredibly valued by God, self-esteem filled by God, you are not looking for love and appreciation, sometimes you do things to others in order for them to say good man. If the king of kings does things for you and he holds you in high regard, you don't need appreciation from others.

15 For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. **16** 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

It is part of our discipleship, not based on the merits of disciples or the recipient, he never said, you only wash your friend's feet. He washed the feet of Judas and this is a command. The word of God has three functions

1. Revelation. You see how great Jesus is, how he has loved you.
2. It always contains a promise.
3. It always comes with a command and it demands obedience.

Three factors and every time the word of God hits you it has got revelation, promise and command and he expects worship, faith and obedience.

WE WILL BE BLESSED IN SERVING

[John 13:17 \(ESV\) If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.](#)

The meaning of blessing is actually the Greek word Makarios, which is divine favor

[Matthew 5:4-6 \(ESV\) Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.](#)

5 "Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. **6** "Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

A lot of people think that blessing is finding a car park, blessing is finding a good job. That is really one dimensional. Jesus never talked about carparks. Jesus says, if you mourn you will be comforted. If you are meek, you would inherit the earth. You hunger and thirst for righteousness. These are the people who are blessed.

Blessing comes when you actually use your hands and work and serve people. Blessing comes when you mourn, blessing comes when you are meek, blessing comes when you

hunger and thirst for righteousness, blessing comes when you lay your life down and serve other people. If you don't serve you won't get divine approval.

We are made in the image of God; we are made in such a way that when we serve there is actually physiological benefit. They have shown in MRIs with functional MRIs looking at blood flow that if you actually give social support to other people, without expecting back return, you can reduce stress related activity, greater activity and the reward related center, which means when you do something good to other people at your own cost, you actually feel you got reward.

Stephen Post, at Case Western Reserve University School of Medicine, did about 50 studies through the institute of research and inhibited love and he found

- 50 scientific studies funded through The Institute for Research on Unlimited Love,
- Those who volunteered were living longer than non-volunteers.
- 44% reduction in early death among those who volunteered a lot
- Greater effect than exercising 4 times/ week

There is a 1956 Cornell University Study that looked at 427 married women with children followed for 30 years. There were some who volunteered and some didn't volunteer. The difference is major illness is 52% for those who didn't volunteer. Those who volunteer 36% major illnesses.

Why people don't serve? They want to focus on personal happiness.

24 Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.

So if you don't fall down and die and volunteer, it remains alone. Dead sea is the lowest part of the earth. All the River Jordan flow down right into Dead Sea and the Dead Sea got no outlet. If you have got no outlet, the water evaporates, nothing lives in the Dead Sea. You got to have an outlet.

Jennifer Aaker, a social psychologist, did another study. She looked at 397 people a month-long period, examining whether people thought their lives were meaningful or happy, as well as their choices, beliefs and values. They found five key differences between meaningfulness and happiness

| MEANING | HAPPINESS |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| Linking the past, present and future | Is about the present |
| Money cannot buy meaning | Money can buy happiness |
| Is about giving, effort and sacrifice | Is about meeting desires and appetites |

So there is a difference between living your life for happiness, which meet short-term desires but it doesn't give meaning to your life. We need to give our lives to sacrifice and giving to bring it any meaning. She also discovered, there are two kinds of people in the world. There is the giver and the taker. The ones who are givers have more meaning in their lives, the ones who are takers have more happiness in their life, because they got the present.

Viktor Frankl is a very famous Jewish writer who was stuck in Auschwitz. He didn't die, most of his family all died and were killed a lot of people died in the concentration camp and he actually did a study and he wrote a book. He described those who survived and those who didn't survived. He looked at the survivors and he wrote, *"Life is never made unbearable by circumstances, but only by lack of meaning and purpose in your life."*

If you don't have meaning and purpose in your life, you don't even have to have happiness. Those people in the concentration camps died, if they didn't have meaning and purpose.

What about getting older?

This is a publication from Harvard Medical School and it looked for two years at 4500 adults and 1500 adults on how far they can walk and has grip strength and they followed them for five years and they found that those with higher purpose and meaning in life, 13% less likelihood to decrease their grip strength and 14% decrease risk of developing a slow walk, which means you are actually healthier if you have got meaning in your life. So this is a paradigm of love.

Love needs to be sacrificial, it needs to be humble, it needs to be received, it needs to reverse our values and when we actually give our lives, it is actually God will be pleased, we are blessed and sense physically it actually fits with our physiology. We are created to serve; we are created to live for meaning. The deepest need that we could meet in this world as servants, giving our lives up for it is gospel.

We need to connect:

- Find an area of need
- Make a commitment that last and cost you. Making short-term commitments doesn't glorify God.
- Prepared to sacrifice. Love is incomplete without sacrifice.
- Prepared to deal with the dirt. When you serve in church, people will say bad things about you, but you still have to be obedient to the call.
- Pray for the Spirits empowerment

2 Thessalonians 1:11-12 (ESV) To this end we always pray for you, that our God may make you worthy of his calling and may fulfill every resolve for good and every work of faith by his power, **12** so that the name of our Lord Jesus may be glorified in you, and you in him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

So everything that you resolve for good, God will bring it to completion, every work of faith by his power, so that in the end God is glorified.