



Vision and Commitment 2018  
**A year to focus on discipleship**

**Every day, in**  
**everything**  
&  
**everywhere**

## Discipleship Series Youth - Acting Out (Practising)

### Key message

Jesus' actions of servant leadership model the servanthood aspect of discipleship. He serves people by putting them first, healing them, encouraging them, loving them, and he asks his disciples to do likewise. Simple gestures of day to day kindness, grace and service speak volumes and show that we genuinely care and love others, keeping our focus outwards towards others rather than inwards on ourselves.

### Key Scriptures

John 13:1-17 and Luke 13:10-17

### Resources

- Bibles - or print outs of the Scripture passages
- Pens/paper
- A device on which you can watch YouTube videos
- Footprint shaped cards with discussion questions written on.

### Welcome

1. If you have a portable foot spa bring this along and see if one of your group members would like to use it during the group session. If you don't have one ask if any of your group members has had a foot spa before and if they enjoyed it.
2. Split into two teams and give each team some pieces of paper and a pen. Call out a 'category' of people and each team must write down as many names as they can of people who fit into that category. Allow a short time frame such as 30 seconds. When the time is up, collect in the paper and see which team has the most correct names. Write the scores on a score board and continue to the next category. Play for as long as you choose but ensure the final category that you call out is 'servants'. Add up the scores and announce one team as the winner.

Some examples of categories that you could use are:

- Footballers
- Vloggers
- Pop Stars
- Film Stars





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- Teachers
- Corp officers
- Politicians & World leaders
- Teachers
- Musicians
- TV presenters
- 14-year old's
- Servants

## Word

a) Read:

*'It was before Passover, and Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and to return to the Father. He had always loved his followers in this world, and he loved them to the very end. Even before the evening meal started, the devil had made Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, decide to betray Jesus.*

*Jesus knew that he had come from God and would go back to God. He also knew that the Father had given him complete power. So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.*

*But when he came to Simon Peter, that disciple asked, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?" Jesus answered, "You don't really know what I am doing, but later you will understand."*

*"You will never wash my feet!" Peter replied. "If I don't wash you," Jesus told him, "you don't really belong to me." Peter said, "Lord, don't wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head." Jesus answered, "People who have bathed and are clean all over need to wash just their feet. And you, my disciples, are clean, except for one of you." Jesus knew who would betray him. That is why he said, "except for one of you."*

*After Jesus had washed his disciples' feet and had put his outer garment back on, he sat down again. Then he said: "Do you understand what I have done? You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other. I have set the example, and you should do for each other exactly what I have done for you. I tell you for certain that servants are not greater than their master, and messengers are not greater than the one who sent them. You know these things, and God will bless you if you do them." (John 13:1-17 CEV)*

*'Jesus was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath day. A woman was there who, for eighteen years, had an evil spirit in her that made her crippled. Her back was always bent; she could not stand up straight. When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said, "Woman, you are free from your sickness." Jesus put his*





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*hands on her, and immediately she was able to stand up straight and began praising God.*

*The synagogue leader was angry because Jesus healed on the Sabbath day. He said to the people, "There are six days when one has to work. So come to be healed on one of those days, and not on the Sabbath day."*

*The Lord answered, "You hypocrites! Doesn't each of you untie your work animals and lead them to drink water every day - even on the Sabbath day? This woman that I healed, a daughter of Abraham, has been held by Satan for eighteen years. Surely it is not wrong for her to be freed from her sickness on a Sabbath day!" When Jesus said this, all of those who were criticizing him were ashamed, but the entire crowd rejoiced at all the wonderful things Jesus was doing.'*  
(Luke 13:10-17 NCV)

b) Use any of the following thoughts as you find helpful to unpack these Scriptures with your group.

Jesus' healing of the crippled woman on the Sabbath (Luke 13:10-17) broke all the synagogue rules, and the synagogue leader couldn't see beyond the law to Jesus' compassion. The synagogue, which should have been a place that served and blessed people, had become tied up in legalistic rules and regulations so that the needs of the people became secondary. In this short story Jesus tried to change all this, to wake people up to the kind of life that God wants for them, a life where people have equal worth and all life has dignity. We are encouraged through this story to live a life that is person-centred, where people take priority over programmes and tradition, where we bring joy and freedom to those who God has called us to serve.

The meal that Jesus was having with his disciples (John 13:1-17) took place on the very last night of Jesus' life. The disciples had gathered with Jesus and they were about to have a meal together. It was customary at the time for guests arriving at a person's home to have their feet washed. This was a menial task and was often done by a servant. Guests would have bathed before going out to a special meal but during the journey their feet would have become dirty on the dusty roads and the servant with a fresh bowl of water would be waiting for the guest's arrival. There weren't any servants available at this meal and not one of the disciples had offered to wash the other's feet. So Jesus did it. He took off his outer garment and was left in only his tunic - a shorter garment like a long undershirt. Slaves would be dressed like this to serve a meal. Jesus tied a linen cloth around his waist with which to dry their feet, obviously not what one would expect a master to do. According to Jewish text not even a Jewish slave could be required to do this, only a Gentile slave.

Jesus asks his disciples to follow his example, to serve others - for free - to show them how much we, and he, loves them. If we do the jobs that aren't glamorous and attractive, we demonstrate Christ's servant-hearted attitude and character.

*'The motive for serving is love. Paul says, "Serve one another in love." God is far more interested in why you serve others than in how well you serve them. He's always looking*





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*at your heart, serving willingly and eagerly out of love for Jesus and gratitude for all he's done for you.'* (Rick Warren)

c) Bring out a bowl of water, some soap and a towel into the centre of the group. Explain that to illustrate the theme of this session we are going to take it in turns to wash each other's feet.

You will probably see some looks of disbelief or discomfort, some groans, or some group members refusing outright to take part. Although some more amenable group members may start taking off their shoes and socks!

Act the part that you find it strange that people don't want to take part in this activity and ask them why? Are they embarrassed? Would it make them feel uncomfortable? Don't they want to touch someone else's smelly feet?! Don't force anyone to take part but if you do have a couple of willing volunteers let them wash each other's feet in front of the group. Afterwards ask them to describe how it felt.

d) This fun YouTube clip illustrates these Scripture passages in a humorous manner:

Wash My Feet

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m47pqJ6X9cU>

Or you could use this clip from Bruce Almighty, in which Bruce is surprised that God is also the janitor and the cleaner!

Bruce Almighty - Jim Carrey meets God

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FngXOUxklR4>

e) Group discussion

Write some or all of the following questions on footprint shaped cards (Appendix 1) and place in the centre of the group. Add your own questions too. Have one person in turn pick a card, read the question out loud, give their answer and then all discuss.

- Why did the disciples need to have their feet washed before the meal?
- What do Jesus' actions tell us about how he felt about his disciples?
- How did the disciples respond to Jesus washing their feet?
- Jesus said *'I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.'* (John 13:15). How can we live in a way that follows Jesus' example?
- Has anyone ever washed your feet... either literally or figuratively? What did they do? How did it make you feel?
- Jesus said *'Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.'* (John 13:14). What would a modern day form of 'foot washing' look like?





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- Describe the kind of person whose feet you perhaps wouldn't be too keen on washing. Why?

## Action

1. Watch the following YouTube video of real foot washing in action:

APU Students Show Acceptance of Homeless Community by Foot Washing  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rDLc8NGMlO4>

Discuss any projects in The Salvation Army or in your local community that a) either offer a literal foot washing service; or b) serve people in another practical way.

2. Jesus said '*...you should do for each other exactly what I have done for you.*' (John 13:14).

We probably aren't going to literally wash the feet of our friends and family, but what other practical actions of serving and helping others can you think of that would be following in Jesus' example?

Do you feel that you live a person-centred life, where the needs of others - and your ability to serve them - take priority over programmes and tradition?

3. Get everyone to think about the people who do a lot for them, maybe parents, teachers, youth leaders, grandparents and friends. Make a list of these people and what they do - try to build up a picture of just how much the group is on the receiving end of people's help and encouragement.

Then encourage everyone to think of one person that they would like to bless and think up a secret act of service that they can do for that person. You could set up 'rules' to get them thinking about what they could do:

- It has to be secret - they can't tell the person in advance what they are going to do, but they can own up to it afterwards.
- It has to be something that will be genuinely helpful to the other person - so not what your group member wants to do, but what they know the other person would like.
- It mustn't be done for reward - even if it is offered.
- It has to be done safely - no taking risks!
- They mustn't boast about it or tell anyone else.
- It has to be their choice - they don't have to do it.





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Play a music track to give everyone time to think. Give everyone paper and a pen and get them to write down what they are going to do. Keep hold of these pieces of paper for the following prayer activity.

(Adapted from <https://www.energize.uk.net/meeting-plans/127>)

## Prayer

1. Invite people to make a commitment to their secret act. If they have thought of something that they want to do, get them to stand up, or if you want to make even that fact secret, ask them to curl up their toes inside their shoes as a secret response! Then pray that everyone will be able to carry out their secret act of service and that God would use them to bless others.
2. Read these words of John Wesley aloud together, as an encouragement to each other to live your life in service to God and to others:

*'Do all the good you can, by all the means you can,  
In all the ways you can, in all the places you can,  
At all the times you can, to all the people you can,  
As long as ever you can.'*

Any of the following songs may be suitable for your time of prayer and worship.

These Hands by Jeff Deyo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3NAW4rchsyY>

Lifesong by Casting Crowns

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gnf1xczuOrA>

Do Something by Matthew West

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b\\_RjndG0IX8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b_RjndG0IX8)

Give Me Your Eyes by Brandon Heath

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5AkNqLuVgY>





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## Appendix 1

