



COMMUNITY GROUP LEADER GUIDE

Grow: John 13 - 17, Part 1

The Way Up is Down

LEADER REMINDERS:

- **John reading challenge: we are challenging everyone to read through the book of John this summer! A plan is available at mercycharlotte.com/readjohn**
- **Starting Point is July 24th. Please encourage your group to attend if they have not already! It's the best way to get connected to the church, and find out about baptism and covenant membership. RSVP at mercycharlotte.com/startingpoint.**
- **One of the best ways to apply this week's sermon is to serve on a volunteer team at Mercy Church. You can sign up for a team at mercycharlotte.com/serve.**

INTRODUCTION

LEADER NOTES: *This is simply a guide to help discussion about the Scripture that was preached over the weekend. You are not bound to it. Ultimately, you know your group best and if God redirects your group's time away from the Community Group Guide that is great. Please do not abandon a fruitful conversation for the sake of getting all the questions answered.*

This weekend, as we began our "Grow" series, we looked at John 13. Jesus is teaching His disciples incredibly important lessons for when He leaves them. He tells them that true followers of Christ are those who joyfully lay down their lives for one another. Not only does Jesus say this, but He also demonstrates it by washing the disciples feet. If we are going to grow in our Christian walk with God, we must follow His example and joyfully serve others.

Opening Questions

1. When you think of ways to “grow” in your Christian faith, what pops into your mind?
2. Was there anything in this week’s sermon that gave you a new perspective on growing in your walk with the Lord?

BIBLE STUDY

***LEADER NOTES:** The following questions will help you work through the passage(s). Have someone read the passage(s) aloud, dividing among two or three people if needed. If there is a good, fruitful conversation going, you do not have to cut it off to get back to the questions.*

A good way to study the Bible is by using three steps: Observation, Interpretation, and Application. We want to observe the passage first to get an idea of what is happening. Then we interpret the meaning of the passage so that we can apply it to our lives. The following questions will follow this pattern as we look through this Biblical passage.

Scripture: Read John 13

Observation

1. What do the first three verses of John 13 tell us about this event that makes it particularly important?
 - a. After three years of ministry with His disciples, the final hours before His death have come. He is giving His disciples the final preparations that they need before He leaves them. The final words that a teacher gives before He leaves always hold a particular significance and importance.
2. What is the “big deal” about Jesus washed the disciples feet?
 - a. Washing someone’s feet was pretty much the lowest job that anyone could have. It was a job reserved for servants and slaves. Jesus, the Son of God, is showing incredible humility by serving the disciples like this.
3. Why is it significant that Jesus washed the disciples feet?
 - a. Verse 14 - “If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.” Jesus is giving them an example to follow

once He is gone.

Interpretation

4. How does Jesus washing the disciples feet relate to the New Commandment that He gives to the disciples in Verse 34?
 - a. One of the primary ways that we love people is by serving them. Jesus is commanding them to “love one another” after He has shown them an example of love by washing their feet.

5. What do we learn about Jesus through Judas’ betrayal?
 - a. “For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin.” -Hebrews 4:15. We don’t often think about Jesus’ humanity. However, He was betrayed by one of His closest friends. This “troubled His spirit.” Whenever we feel tempted, betrayed, and weak, we can find comfort that our Savior knows how we feel because He has experienced it Himself.

6. What can Peter’s words in verse 36 teach us about “growing” in the Christian walk?
 - a. Sometimes we will have a lot of motivation and passion like Peter saying, “I will lay down my life for you.” But like Peter, we will quickly fall into sin. We need to see that even when we fall into sin, we have a merciful God who forgives us when we repent, in the same way that Peter was forgiven in John 21. It’s about progress, not perfection.

Application

7. What are some practical ways that you can love the Christian Community around you?

8. Who are some people in your life that God has given you an opportunity to serve?

PRAYER

1 John 4:7 - "Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God."

As Christians, the way that we show the world that we follow Jesus is by loving one another. This means that one of the highest callings on our lives as Christians is to love our Christian brothers and sisters. With this hope in mind pray for:

1. God to strengthen Mercy Church as the Body of Christ in unity and love for one another.
2. God's power to be present in our Community Groups as the Holy Spirit searches our hearts and grows us.
3. God to continue to give wisdom to our church leaders so that we continue to walk in His ways.