



President Walton's March 2019 Message

A Model of Servanthood



As we enter into the season of Lent in a few days, our minds should be drawn again to the Cross as we remember how Jesus paid the price of our sin by dying on the Cross. The season of Lent is a six-week preparation for our Easter celebration. It is often marked by repentance, prayer, self-denial, and additional opportunities for worship, self-reflection and study of God's Word. Over the years I have

found that deeper devotions have been extremely meaningful as we hear God speak to us through His Word. I encourage you to spend time in the Word over this season of Lent and let the Holy Spirit draw you closer and deeper in your appreciation of the sacrificial love that Jesus poured out as a servant Leader. Jesus is the model of Servanthood for us. Often we are tempted to make the season of Lent so personal and about what we do that we forget God's call to live in the world as His witnesses. Yet, our call is to let Jesus be seen in 2019!

What if this season of Lent we took up the mantle of servanthood instead of giving up chocolate or soda? What if we earnestly sought to live sacrificially for the sake of Jesus as a bold witness for Him? Could God be calling us to actually live out our faith in ways that display the love of Jesus? That's not to say that some don't already do this. In fact, many do, but Lent is a great time to remember the sacrifice of Jesus and model it. As we study the life of Jesus He was never the intended beneficiary of His sacrifice. He didn't need His sins forgiven. In other words, Jesus' sacrificial life served others rather than Himself.

In the Upper Room, the night before He was crucified, Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. We know that washing dirty, dusty feet was one of the lowest jobs, generally reserved for the lowest ranking servant. Jesus assumes this position of lowliness with great purpose. In John 13, when He had finished, Jesus said to them, ***"Do you understand what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. 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. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."***

Here Jesus says two very important things to His disciples, which, by the way, includes each of us. He says that He is giving us an example. In other words, He is showing us what He wants us to do, how He wants us to live in the world. In a day where Christian privilege is challenged at every turn, not unlike in the days of Jesus, there may be an opportunity for us to rediscover the call to live as Jesus did. Paul tells us in Philippians 2 that our lives should reflect Jesus, becoming servants and humbling ourselves. I'm not suggesting that

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...I shall remain... then I shall... You will look... where I am... you cannot...
...the Jews then said... to find him? Is I... Greeks and will b...
...“You will l... where I am... you cannot...
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...scripture says: F... He was speaking... there was no Sp...
...sh discussions o... Several people w... some said, ‘He... Galilee? •Does not... come from the... •Some would...
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James, the brother of Jesus writes in James 2, ***“What good is it, my brothers [and sisters], if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can that faith save him? If a brother or sister is poorly clothed and lacking in daily food, and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, be warmed and filled,” without giving them the things needed for the body, what good is that? So also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, “You have faith and I have works.” Show me your faith apart from your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. You believe that God is one; you do well. Even the demons believe—and shudder! Do you want to be shown, you foolish person, that faith apart from works is useless? Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up his son Isaac on the altar? You see that faith was active along with his works, and faith was completed by his works...For as the body apart from the spirit is dead, so also faith apart from works is dead.”*** James 2:14-22,26. You see, how we live out our faith in the world matters. Faith will always result in action. It’s really God’s plan from the start. We know that people are constantly watching, maybe pre-judging, but certainly taking notice. When our words and actions don’t match it seems to further justify the popular world opinion of Christians. The old song sums it up so well—“They will know we are Christians by our love...” Jesus provides us with a wonderful example of servant leadership.

The second thing that always strikes me in John 13 is the simple, but oft overlooked statement that Jesus makes. He says, ***“If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.”*** In other words, knowing the words of Jesus isn’t enough. We have to be bold to put them into practice, especially as we focus on letting Jesus be seen in 2019. Perhaps that brings us back to the season of Lent. Rather than giving something up, what could you take up, what could you do, that would serve another and bring honor and glory to Jesus? Look around in your congregation and you will find opportunities. Look in your neighborhood or community, in your city or town. All around us are a multitude of ways we can show the love of Jesus, show His care and compassion, and impact the world with His grace as He is seen in our lives.

As we continue to explore how we can plant new mission opportunities in our communities that connect people to Jesus, you can be personally involved. Our goal remains to plant 2 new ministries in each region in this year so that Jesus can be seen in 2019—in our lives, in our churches, in our communities. And I would challenge you, during this season of Lent, to pray and ask the Lord of the Harvest what He would have you do as a servant leader to make an impact on the world for the sake of the Gospel. It might be a new church start, starting up a food bank or clothing closet, a Christian coffee shop or some kind of caring ministry. It may be a new educational ministry, tutoring ministry, ESL, or the like. Maybe God is calling you to consider short-term mission trips which will open your eyes to the mission in your own backyard. Whatever it is, know this—it’s not enough to simply pray about it. Jesus says that the blessing comes when you do it! How will He use you?

Dear friends in Jesus, the season of Lent is a precious gift. Take care not to neglect it or waste it. Let it be a time of renewal and strengthening of your faith. Then put that faith into action as a servant leader for Jesus, following His example, loving with His love, and living sacrificially for Him. That will make for a very blessed Lententide as we journey once again to the foot of the Cross!

In His peace,

Greg

UPCOMING EVENTS:

- [FLGA District School Music Festival](#)
- [Veterans of the Cross Retreat](#)
- [National Youth Gathering](#)

...on behalf...
...119-105; cf. Rom 2:19-... 1-79; 12:35; 1 Jo 2:8-11... and with the bright clo... 12; cf. Ex 13:23; Ws 16:... n whom the light of G... eans, Mt 5:14-16; Lk 9... mbolic of Ws, conceit... of death, unwappines... 5:7; cf. Ps 17:15-4... s, the deliverance and a... 19 light, Is 6:12-9:1... 2. This light shines... 26:32; Ac 13:47; thro... n (cf. texts just quoted... in the kingdom of heav... 12:5; cf. 21:3-4, 3. The... se to be used for the m... and Evil (cf. the E... in the 74.T. there are... of one Satan of the oth... 26:18; 1 P 2:9, each... 2:53; In 13:29-30. Me... 'sons of darkness', 1... 12:36, according as... (Christ) or by darkne... 2:9-10, and what they... 13:12-14; Ep 5:8-11... es clear this distincti... because this com... himself either for of... 1:46; cf. Ep 5:12-13. W... day the darkness w... 8; Rm 13:12... It is enough for the... he alone knows t... n; cf. Mt 11:270... d. The Jews judg... themselves; "In that Pa... 'a Son shining' (S... e. In the semitic 'S...



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