

So let's begin with a picture – not provided by me – but one created in your mind --- and then move to a word. And perhaps it's best to close your eyes.

And imagine yourself in that upper room. You're with the man who taught you everything you know about being a follower, about being a disciple, about expending your time, talent, and treasure in building not your own kingdom – but the kingdom of God.

This man, Jesus, is your master and your teacher, and you have come to know him as the Son of God – and as your friend.

There is yet another lesson Jesus wants to teach us tonight – as he empties himself taking the form of a slave – a slave whose job it is to wash the feet of household guests.

And the lesson taught more by actions than words is: “If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.”

And so the word for this Holy Thursday --- is **SERVICE**: work done for another; also – acts of devotion to God witnessing to one's faith.

And you can open your eyes if you have them closed

The word for today is --- *Service*: as in the Lord saying, “whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sister – you do for me.”

Service: as in Martin Luther King saying, “Everybody can be great. . . because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love in order to serve.”

Service: as in Mahatma Gandhi saying: “the best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.”

Service: as in our willingness to enter into the simple path as put forth by Saint Mother Theresa: “Silence is prayer. Prayer is faith. Faith is love. Love is service. And the fruit of service is peace.”

Service: in that we should never be too big for our britches that we are afraid to wear out their knees by our humble, slave-like posture ---- not so proud that we aren't willing to roll up our sleeves and get a little dirty and worn out – serving the needs of those around us.

“If I, therefore, the master and teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you a model to follow, so that as I have done for you, you should also do.”

Tonight, we don't have to worry about having or not having a college degree – we don't have to make our subject and verb agree ----- we only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.

Let's roll up our sleeves and wear out our knees --- as we assume a humble, slave-like posture --- as we serve the needs of those around us.

Fulfilling the words of Doctor Albert Schweitzer, who said: “I don't know what your destiny will be – but one thing I do know: the only ones among you who will be really happy, are those who have sought and found and discovered – how to serve.”

