

John 13:1-15

Maundy Thursday Sermon
“A God Who Serves”
Pastor Stephen Reynolds

Grace to you and Peace from God our Father and crucified Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

A Question I would like you to ponder as we begin this evening- What is God's ordinary way of working? Think about that for a moment before we move on.

As you thought about that, you may have said something like “speaking”, thinking about how God spoke at the beginning and creation happened. Perhaps those of you that have been theologically trained said something like “law and gospel”. These are certainly true and born out by the biblical witness.

Recently, our family visited a small restaurant in Milwaukee that has been a favorite of ours for over 30 years. It's one of these order at the counter, they'll bring it out to you type places. As we sat down after we placed our order, I noticed a man in his 70s working as the bus boy- he would clean up tables after customers left, take care of drink refills, take out the trash and just do general bus boy stuff. It would have been completely unremarkable except that the man was in his 70s-typically you'd see a high schooler doing a similar job.

What made a seemingly innocuous moment incredibly remarkable occurred as my mom informed me that the man busing tables and taking out the trash was the owner of the restaurant. Here was a man who ran a fine establishment, known all over Milwaukee as the best Greek food in town, certainly making a great income, and he was there busing tables.

You never would have known he owned the place-he was simply serving the folks who came into his restaurant in simple, yet profound ways.

This is what we see tonight in our Gospel reading from John. Jesus, knowing that the hour is at hand and what is to come, gets down on His knees and washes the disciples feet. The God of the universe did not think it beneath him to stoop down and do the work of a servant. Philippians 2 tells us that Jesus took on the form of a servant-nothing was beneath him! Cleaning up tables, washing dirty feet, refilling sodas- nothing was beneath Jesus.