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[0 : 00] I'd like to welcome you to the first week of our sermon series called See, Hear, and Do.! But before we really dive into any of the message, we just want to say Happy Mother's Day to those of you that are mothers out there, but also just to understand that we know that this is a day that is exciting for a lot, but it's also a day that brings a lot of other emotions as well.

We just want you to know that we're going to be praying for you today. My name is Mitch Sefton. I am the youth pastor here at the First Christian Church, and I am so excited to have the opportunity to be delivering a message to you and just the opportunity to be able to talk to you for just a moment about what Pastor Ray still is on his sabbatical, and we're so excited for him and for his entire family as he has gone for the entire month of May from here at our FCC family.

But we want you to be updated and keep you in the loop of some of the things that he has been experiencing. Right now, he is on vacation with his family, and we're really excited about that. But this upcoming week, he's going to be going to a conference, and one of the things that he's really excited about and that we are really excited about here at our church is just watching him grow in his faith over this next month and allowing him to really just refuel and recharge to be able to continue to lead the way here at the First Christian Church.

Pastor Ray loves this place so much, and as not only a staff member here, but also one of his dearest friends, it is amazing to know that he is getting a chance to have some time with his family, have some time for study just to be able to refuel, recharge, do all the things that a sabbatical has to offer, but also just to rest because we want him to be at his best at all times.

And so we're excited about the opportunity for him to be able to do that over this month. You see, this week for myself has been a bit of a whirlwind between getting things up and running for our book sale that we just had for our 220 youth and the fundraiser that we did that, and then the opportunity to be able to preach this weekend.

[1 : 50] I've been going a million different directions, it seems, but I want to take a moment just to talk to you for just a few minutes about the scripture that God has put on our hearts for this particular week of this sermon series.

I just want to say that I'm excited about diving into this scripture, about what it looks like to serve and what that looks like in your life. But before we dive into the message, as youth pastor, I just want to take a moment to say thank you to our church family because you guys have come alongside us in our youth ministry to help with our funding, to be able to send kids to camp and to conference this summer, and also for anyone that came and supported us during our book sale. That is a huge blessing for us, and all of that money will go towards our students. What a privilege it was to have Pastor Gary Johnson last week, and boy did he ever reveal some of the growing pains that we as a church have also felt.

You see, what a blessing it is for us to hardly be able to walk through our Holy Grounds Cafe between services because of the number of people that are there. Or to see that our kids' classes are growing leaps and bounds and just some unreal numbers to have the opportunity to minister to kids.

To have the need to ask the local funeral home about a block away from our church campus if we could use their parking lot on Sunday morning because our parking lot is overflowing each and every week.

[3 : 06] And the list can just go on and on and on. But it's amazing to me to be able to see the buzz that's around this place as we see lives of people being changed as we continue to see individuals making eternal decisions for Jesus and how to live their lives for Him.

You see, last week Gary hinted in where we would be headed with this particular sermon series throughout the rest of May. Whenever someone else on staff has the opportunity to share a message with you, besides Pastor Ray, we either are in the middle of a current sermon series and we get a chance to just preach whatever that next week is or we could possibly do something we call a one-off.

It's just a topic that God has just laid on our hearts to where we have the opportunity to share something that He has laid on our hearts to be able to teach you because He has taught us and it's an opportunity to do that.

Well, Pastor Steve and myself sat down about a month ago or so just trying to figure out the direction of what this particular sermon series needed to look like. And we landed on the idea of servanthood and what it truly looks like to be a follower of Jesus.

So today we are going to dive in to the see portion of this particular sermon series. See, hear, do. And today we're going to talk about see which is the why.

[4 : 25] The why we do what we do and why it's important to serve. But before we begin, I just want to take a moment to pray. God, we love you so much. And we thank you so much for just the opportunity just to be able to dive into your holy word today, Father.

We thank you for Jesus and who that He is. We thank you for just the life, the death, and the resurrection that He had here on this earth for us. And God, we ask you right now that as we just dive into your scriptures that you open our hearts to be able to hear what it is that you've called us to hear and to learn what it is that you've called us to learn in this.

In your precious and holy name, amen. I can tell you that one of my least favorite things that I can hear as a dad is why.

I have three boys and I hear a lot of times the word why around our house. Boys, turn the TV off.

Why? Boys, go get your rooms picked up.

Why? Boys, come to the kitchen. Why? Boys, go brush your teeth before bed. Why? Why?

[5 : 30] Why? Why? Why? As parents, you know the reason why for all of these things. But sometimes we just need someone to listen and do without questioning the why.

You see, today we're going to take an opportunity to look at a scripture that does just that. We are going to answer the question, why is it important to serve? You see, one of the things that we try to do with our 220 youth is to understand that when we say yes to Jesus, that we're saying yes to the entirety of scripture and allowing it to be the authority over our lives.

It's not just the parts that we want to give up to Jesus. It's the parts of our lives that we are called to give up complete control to him, control of everything. You see, growing up on a farm, I had the privilege of watching how hard people work in the world of agriculture.

The late hours and the early mornings to feed livestock, to plant and to harvest and all of the tasks in between. But I'll tell you, some of my fondest memories of growing up involved sitting in a vehicle at the end of a field, waiting on my dad to finish up whatever row that he was in so he could stop and come down into the car or into the truck or into the van or whatever we drove that night to get his lunch meat sandwich, his bag of potato chips, a few cookies, and usually topped it off with his favorite drink at the time, which was a Mountain Dew.

And see, that was dinner for my dad when he was in the fields. You see, there were so many days where this would be the only time we would get to see him when he was in the middle of planting or harvest season.

[7 : 09] You see, harvest seemed to be the worst because of this particular situation. You would go into the field and you would wait for the combine to come back. And as the combine come back, you would see all the dust and all of the debris from the soybeans or the corn or whatever it is that they were harvesting that particular time.

And all of the debris would just be flying everywhere. And the dust would just settle on your vehicle.

You see, one of the things that I remember vividly as we would drive away after giving dad his dinner is just watching my mom hit the windshield wipers to get the dust off of the windshield.

So then that way we could drive away and head home. Well, you see, I wouldn't have traded that for anything. That dust was so worth it because I knew that because of the dust, it was because I got a chance to spend some time with my dad and our family got a chance to spend some time together.

And there were so many times where I would take a couple laps with him in the combine or on the tractor or whatever that looked like. And the dust that you ended up with was so well worth it.

You see, I admired him because of who he was. And I wanted to live my life like he did, except for the farming part. I'm going to be honest. As soon as I could get off of the farm, farming life was not for me.

[8 : 26] I just didn't want to work that for the rest of my life. But I admire those people in the world of agriculture so much. But what I know is that in order for me to be close to my dad during the field, when he was in the fields for harvest and planting season, I had to go get dusty.

I had to go get a little bit dirty in order to make that happen. It was just what came along with learning from him, being with him and growing closer to him.

Well, you see, in the Jewish culture, there was a saying that was very similar to this particular picture that I just mentally painted for you. When someone would become a disciple of a rabbi, their goal was to grow so close to them that they would be covered in the dust of their rabbi.

Now, I want you to think about that visual. You're walking so closely to someone that you're getting the dust from their steps onto you.

No wonder Jesus wanted to go off and pray by himself sometimes. You see, Jesus probably wanted just some alone time. That's what I would want if I was in his shoes, to have someone or a group of someone following me around all the time, trying to be just like me, act like just like me, learn from me, do the things that I was doing, learn how to serve and how to love the way that Jesus served and loved.

[9 : 50] Do you think that you would get to know that person pretty well if you were that close to him all the time? Would you get to the point where you understood who they were on a deep and intimate level?

You knew the things that made them tick. You knew the things that made them happy. You knew the things that brought them joy. You knew the things that really frustrated them. You know so much about someone because you're choosing to spend time with them.

You see, this is what Jesus desires from each and every one of us. He wants us to know him so deeply so that we understand what it truly looks like to be more like him.

You see, when we grow close to someone, we learn about them. Likely, we know things about them that maybe other people might not know because we have chosen to intentionally spend time with that particular person.

We know what makes their world go round. We know the things that they love. I can tell you this right now. I know my wife, Courtney.

[10 : 52] I love her so much, but I know that she hates being touched when we're eating dinner or when we're having a meal together. There's just something about someone touching her while she's eating that just throws her over the edge.

And so every now and again, and I don't advise doing this, every now and again, right as she's getting ready to take a bite, I'll reach my hand over and grab hers, trying to be so loving and hold her hand, knowing that I'm just going to get a reaction.

And it's so fun and it's so funny. And she knows that I'm doing it out of just joking and teasing, but it's also something that really gets under her skin. But I also know that her love language is acts of service.

And so this week, along with everything else that we've been doing, we've been planting trees and we've been getting her garden ready. And before long, we're going to be building a shed for her baby ducks that are going to be coming in.

And we're going to be building a coop for her baby chicks that are going to be coming. And all of the things that we're going to be doing in those ways, I know that that's the stuff that fills her up.

[11 : 52] And I know that those are the things that bring her joy and happiness. And those are the things as a husband that I can know the intimate details of who she is because I know her.

You see, I know my son, 16 Aiden. He knows more about college basketball than any other 16 year old kid that I know. We share a love of sports together. And it is one of my greatest joys when I can give him a piece of information about college basketball, anything news that he hasn't heard yet.

It's become kind of a game for us. But on 99% of the time, he always says, oh yeah, dad, I heard about that earlier. I already knew about that. I saw that yesterday. Like, oh, I thought I got you, but I didn't.

And then my 14 year old Elias, this kid loves music. And one of our favorite things to do is we go on drive, we roll the windows down, we crank the music as loud as we can stand it. And we just sing

our hearts out as the wind just blows through it.

Well, it blows through his hair. It doesn't blow through my hair a lot, as you can probably tell. But the wind just blows. And it's so fun. And it's something that we truly love doing together. And I know that that is something that brings him joy.

[12 : 59] And last, my youngest, he's nine. His name is Neum. And he, I got a chance to coach him last year for the first time in baseball. And I loved it. It was so fun. And I thought that he really enjoyed playing baseball as well.

I'm a baseball person. I've played baseball my entire life. I coached it many, many years. It's just something that I love. And I was so excited to be able to coach my youngest for the first time ever. And then this season rolled around.

And he told me he would rather do spring soccer than he would rather play spring baseball. And I'll be honest, my heart was crushed just a little bit. But I love that he loves to play soccer as well. And it's something that he has really enjoyed doing and enjoyed watching him get a chance to do something that he loves and that he's learning about and he's having tons of fun with. You see, I know that you're probably seeing these particular situations in my life and thinking of maybe some situations in your life that might be very similar, where the people that you spend the most time around, that you know pretty well, some of which you choose to want to be more like because of the qualities and the characteristics that they have or that they draw you in.

But I want you to take just a moment. If you're at home right now and you're watching, I know that you can do this. I want you to hit pause here in just a second. And I'm going to ask you to do something. I want you to think of someone in your life that you are close to just like that.

[14 : 25] You see, the people that we're talking about, they're here on earth that we choose to be close to. This is exactly what Christ is asking from us when it comes to being one of his disciples.

He wants us to know him, what he does, how he lived, the people he served, who he loves and how he goes about loving them.

You see, in Matthew chapter 20, verse 28, it says, just as the son of man did not come to be served, but to serve and to give his life as a ransom for many.

You see, this brings us to a place where we see Jesus once again, taking on the role of a servant and teaching us how to serve, who to serve and what it truly looks like to do it sacrificially.

You see, coming out of the Easter season and Holy Week, we have discussed the upcoming passage. But when we take a look at the example of Jesus as the ultimate servant, we cannot not look at this passage from John 13, where Jesus is reclining with his disciples for the Passover feast.

[15 : 34] We're going to read through the passage and then we're going to come back and we're going to break it down to hopefully be able to see some of the life application that this lesson that Jesus is teaching through this particular act of servanthood.

So we're going to be in John chapter 13. If you have not found that in your Bible yet, go ahead and take a moment to do so. We're going to be reading from verses 1 through 17. And it says, Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from, that that had, he had come from God and was returning to God.

So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

He came to Simon Peter who said to him, Lord, are you going to wash my feet? Jesus replied, you do not realize what I am doing now, but later you will understand.

No, said Peter, you shall never wash my feet. Jesus answered, unless I wash you, you have no part of me. Then Lord Simon Peter replied, not just my feet, but my hands and my head as well.

[17 : 12] Jesus answered, those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet. Their whole body is clean and you are clean, though not every one of you.

For he knew who was going to betray him. And that was why he said not everyone was clean. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place.

Do you understand what I have done for you? He asked them. You call me teacher and Lord, and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet.

I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly, I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor his master greater than the one who sent him.

Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. Have you ever thought about, if you knew that today was going to be the last day that you have here on earth, what you would do? [18:23] You see, there's so many things that some of us might want to try. You might want to mark something off of your bucket list that maybe you've never done before. I'm assuming that not many of you would be too disappointed for not watching one more reel that pops up on your social media account.

You probably wouldn't worry as much about missing the latest episode of your favorite show. You probably even wouldn't be disappointed with not catching the game that you were planning on watching tonight. I'm going to guess, if you were anything like me, that you would want to spend those last moments enjoying the people you love the most.

Maybe reminiscing about some of your favorite memories. Looking at pictures, playing games, giving lots of hugs, getting snuggles from your kids, grandkids, or ones that you love or desire to spend your last moments with.

You see, but Jesus took his last moments to teach us to serve. You see, Jesus took the opportunity to live out Matthew chapter 20 verse 16 where it says, So the last will be first and the first will be last.

You see, this wasn't just a nice gesture that Jesus was choosing to wash the feet of his buddies. You see, this job was set aside for the lowest of the low when it came to people in the world of servanthood.

[19:39] The roads that these men would have walked on or traveled on would have been the same roads that they would have been used for all aspects of travel. You see, these men would have been having a wide variety of things between their toes, if you will.

We're not just talking about fuzz from your socks. We're talking about the different things that they could have stepped in. It could have been the dust from the road. It could have been the mud from the road. Or it could have been many other things that could have been stepped in, if you will.

Let's just say that there is a reason that the horses are always at the back of the parade, if you can pick up what I'm putting down. You see, this decision keeps the baton twirler from ruining her day in the middle of the parade.

The horses are in the back for good reason. People didn't have the luxury of nice paved roads that were cleaned each week by a big machine that would be driven by someone, that that was their main job, just to make sure the streets stay clean.

You see, the men would have stepped in. You know some of the things they would have stepped in. You see, that's why this job was reserved for the lowly of servants.

[20:47] But this is what Jesus chose to do for the ones that he loved. He was setting the example of what it looks like to truly serve sacrificially. Peter cracks me up in verse 6 where he says, Lord, you're not going to wash my feet.

Just think about Peter. What are you doing? This is Jesus. You're telling Jesus he's not going to do something? I'm pretty sure I would have made some sarcastic comment about Peter at that point. And I would have said something like, No, you're right, Peter. I'm just going to do everybody else and skip you. Let's go. No, Peter wasn't having it. He did not feel worthy to have the rabbi wash his feet.

But Jesus' response changed his tune very quickly. Unless I wash you, you have no part with me. You see, Jesus was not just teaching Peter in this moment.

But he was also, it was a message for all of us. Unless we accept to be cleaned through the blood of Jesus, then we cannot have a part in him either. You see, this decision was eternally separating us from the Heavenly Father.

[21:49] If we don't say, yes, Jesus, you can wash me, we are saying no to him and the Father in heaven. You see, all of this way, Jesus was going to show his love to his disciples.

He is describing that the way that we love one another is through the what we do for them. It's the way we serve one another. Love is an action. We cannot get so caught up in the words of love and miss out on the action of love.

My words mean nothing if my actions don't follow them. But it sure is easier just to say the words and actually show people what it looks like to love them.

I can tell you, I would much rather tell my wife that I love her than build a chicken coop. I would much rather tell my wife that I love her than to go out and dig in the garden to plant trees that she

desires to have planted.

But I know that my actions show my love for her because I'm willing to sacrifice my time to help. You see, this is one of the hardest parts in Scripture and all of my humanness that I have a hard time to comprehend.

[23 : 01] You see, verse 10, it says, Jesus answered, Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet. Their whole body is clean, and you are clean, though not every one of you.

For he knew who was going to betray him. And that was why he said not everyone was clean. You see, Jesus knew that Judas was going to betray him.

And what did Jesus do about it? He washed his feet. You see, Jesus chose to love even the one that was going to turn him in for his eventual death.

Jesus washed his feet. I want you to think about the person in your life right now that you struggle with the most.

I'm going to go out of line to say the person in your life right now that you despise, that you could never see them again and your life would be okay, that you're a person that you just, you walk the other way when you see them in Walmart, the person that you know has stabbed you in the back or could stab you in the back again, or has done things to you, spoken badly about you, spread untrue rumors about you, has done things to make your life absolutely miserable, and Jesus would have washed their feet.

[24 : 17] In order for us to be Christ-like, we have to do what he did. If we want to be like Jesus, we have to be willing to serve like Jesus.

You see, Jesus looked the man in the eye that was getting ready to betray him and loved him enough to continue to wash his feet. Jesus tells us that if we do these things, we will be blessed. This is not a situation where we say things, but he commands us to do them. It's not just that we are going to say that we're going to do something.

It's the action that is important. It's the service. It's the saying and then the doing. And this brings us to where Jesus gives us our marching orders. He tells us what we're supposed to be doing to serve the way that we are called to serve and to live a life that is like him.

I want you to flip in your Bibles to Matthew chapter 28, and we're going to be looking at verses 16 through 20. And many of you know this. Some of you may not, but that's okay. But this is called the Great Commission.

[25 : 22] And this is as Jesus is getting ready to eventually go away from this earth and go back into heaven with his Father and as he ascends into heaven, he gives us what I just called our marching orders.

This is what he tells us to do. He's talking to the 11 disciples at this point and understand that it's the 11 at this point because Judas has already gone off and he is no longer living. Then the 11 disciples went to Galilee, to the mountain where Jesus had told them to go.

When they saw him, they worshiped him, but some doubted. Then Jesus came to them and said, all authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go. Stop right there.

Therefore, go. Action. Go to people. Go to them. Go to the person that's hurting.

Go to the person that needs you. Go to the person that you don't want to talk to. Go to your sports teams. Go to your work environment. Go to the four walls of your own home. Go.

[26 : 23] This is a command. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

That obey is so important. Obey everything that I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always to the very end of the age. You see, it's so important that we understand that when we walk down into the waters of baptism, that we are not crossing the finish line.

It's the exact opposite. We are listening for the firing of the start pistol. As you're sitting there at the start line, you go into the waters of baptism and you come out and that is your start line.

You see, we have to step out of the baptismal ready to serve the one that we got in there for in the first place. Someone or many someones chose to serve you and show you what it means to sacrificially love the way that Jesus does.

Through coming alongside of you and loving you when you were unlovable, seeing you when you felt like no one saw you, and being willing to wash your feet when it was needed the most.

[27 : 48] You see, someone in your life is waiting on you to be the hands and the feet of Jesus, to get down on your hands and your knees and to wash their feet, to get down in their pit with them and to love them enough to walk through it with them.

Why do we do all of these things? And that's because Jesus did and He loves us enough to do it over and over again for us.

So today as we wrap up this idea of what it looks like to be a servant, we have to look at who is the ultimate servant and that is the life of Christ. So my challenge for you today is not to be afraid to get a little dusty.

The closer you are to Jesus, the better off you're going to be and the more you're going to become like Him. Pray with me. God, what a blessing it is just to be able to dive into Your Holy Word.

God, we thank You so much for the servant Jesus, for the Savior Jesus. We thank You for just the blessing of Him teaching us how to truly serve and what that looks like.

[28 : 58] And God, I pray right now for each person that is listening to this message, I ask You, Father, that You just give them opportunities to serve maybe when they don't even realize that it was going to happen or maybe they're going to have their eyes open to opportunities to serve people in powerful ways that can be truly life-changing.

I pray, Lord, that they are able to serve like Jesus and become more Christ-like and the closer that they get to Him, the more dusty that they become because we know that the closer that we are to the Savior, the better off that we're going to be and the more blessed that is going to make us.

God, we thank You for Jesus and His life and His servanthood. In Your precious name, Lord, amen. Have a great week, church.