**Humus, Humility,**

**and Three Keys to Serving Others**

Jesus showed us how to act toward others by washing his follower’s feet as a slave and giving us *his* only commandment: *"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another.**(John 13:34).* Wow! To love others just like Jesus loves them. That’s a tall order! How do we that *specifically*?

I’d like to propose we learn three lessons from dirt. That’s what I said: dirt. But I’m going to use the term for dirt with lots of organic material, ***humus***. I like that term because it’s related to the words *humility* and *human.* Remember, God created the first human being from a handful of dirt. But it’s the word humility I’d like to focus in on.

Humility means we are surrendered to God’s vision of reality. It means we see ourselves as deeply loved and empowered in Jesus, who is Life. It means we see others as held in the nail-scarred hands of God. Humility means I voluntarily embrace my powerlessness so that the relentless love of God may be released like a mighty river pours out of the floodgates.

Humus, *dirt*, can remind us how to serve others in humility in three ways:

1. **Dirt doesn’t control who or what walks on it.** It receives whatever foot traffic comes its way. Jesus received people in similar fashion. The good, bad, and the ugly were all beautiful to Him, the “friend of sinners”. We too look for ways to extend “unconditional love” to ***all*** persons, learning to exchange faith for fear.

***Isaiah 53:7*** *He was oppressed and He was afflicted, Yet He did not open His mouth; Like a lamb that is led to slaughter…*

***Luke 15:2***  *2 Both the Pharisees and the scribes began to grumble, saying, "This man receives sinners and eats with them."*

***Matthew 5:39***  *"But I say to you, do not resist an evil person…*

1. **Dirt provides an environment for growth.** It doesn’t cause growth but simply provides a safe and nurturing place for growth to take place. Jesus gave people safe “space” to grow by inviting them to live deeper into Father’s love. He showed others a generosity of spirit, a profound permission-giving, that sometimes is called “grace”. We too can give hospitality to allow people to grow in their own God-directed way (trusting the Spirit to always be faithfully present and moving).

***Matthew 20:32***  *32 And Jesus stopped and called them, and said, "What do you want Me to do for you?"*

***Hebrews 13:2***  *2 Do not neglect to show hospitality to strangers, for by this some have entertained angels without knowing it.*

1. **Dirt can be mixed with water to make clay which can be molded and shaped into useful vessels.** The potter’s hands skillfully and patiently apply pressure to the turning pot. An object of art and beauty emerges. God molds our hearts and minds if we choose to be “pliable”. As we experience the tender touch of Jesus’ hands reshaping our attitudes and actions, we are able to tenderly influence others in love.

***Luke 7:47*** *"… her sins, which are many, have been forgiven, for she loved much; but he who is forgiven little, loves little."*

***Galatians 6:1-2***  *Brethren, even if anyone is caught in any trespass, you who are spiritual, restore such a one in a spirit of gentleness; each one looking to yourself, so that you too will not be tempted. 2 Bear one another's burdens, and thereby fulfill the law of Christ.*

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