



Integrating faith & everyday life

Discovering ways to bring life and faith together, to help you see God in everything you do

## REVIEW

Recap on your experience of the challenge. Ask the following questions:

### How did it go? Was it helpful?

If you weren't able to try the challenge, explore the question:

Where and how did you experience God last week?

## WHOLE LYFE

### (EXTRA) ORDINARY LIFE

How do we begin to appreciate ordinary stuff – in a world where a simple coffee comes in twenty varieties and TV has to offer hundreds of channels plus 3D. How do we learn to appreciate the ordinary, mundane and everyday stuff of life? Jesus often referred to ordinary things in life – sparrows, the lilies in the field, housework and vineyards; he often turned the ordinary into extra-ordinary (water into wine!) It's so easy to lose our sense of wonder and not notice God in everyday life.

## READ

### ✠ John 13.1–20

## Jesus Washes the Feet of His Disciples

<sup>1</sup> It was before Passover, and Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and to return to the Father. He had always loved his followers in this world, and he loved them to the very end.

<sup>2</sup> Even before the evening meal started, the devil had made Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, decide to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that he had come from God and would go back to God. He also knew that

the Father had given him complete power. <sup>4</sup> So during the meal Jesus got up, removed his outer garment, and wrapped a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup> He put some water into a large bowl. Then he began washing his disciples' feet and drying them with the towel he was wearing.

<sup>6</sup> But when he came to Simon Peter, that disciple asked, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup> Jesus answered, "You don't really know what I am doing, but later you will understand."

<sup>8</sup> "You will never wash my feet!" Peter replied.

"If I don't wash you," Jesus told him, "you don't really belong to me."

<sup>9</sup> Peter said, "Lord, don't wash just my feet. Wash my hands and my head."

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, "People who have bathed and are clean all over need to wash just their feet. And you, my disciples, are clean, except for one of you." <sup>11</sup> Jesus knew who would betray him. That is why he said, "except for one of you."

<sup>12</sup> After Jesus had washed his disciples' feet and had put his outer garment back on, he sat down again. Then he said: Do you understand what I have done? <sup>13</sup>

You call me your teacher and Lord, and you should, because that is who I am. <sup>14</sup> And if your Lord and teacher has washed your feet, you should do the same for each other.

<sup>15</sup> I have set the example, and you

should do for each other exactly what I have done for you. <sup>16</sup> I tell you for certain that servants are not greater than their master, and messengers are not greater than the one who sent them. <sup>17</sup> You know these things, and God will bless you, if you do them.

<sup>18</sup> I am not talking about all of you. I know the ones I have chosen. But what the Scriptures say must come true. And they say, "The man who

ate with me has turned against me!" <sup>19</sup> I am telling you this before it all happens. Then when it does happen, you will believe who I am. <sup>20</sup> I tell you for certain that anyone who welcomes my messengers also welcomes me, and anyone who welcomes me welcomes the one who sent me.

Contemporary English Version - CEV

*'Then Jesus took a towel and a basin and redefined greatness.'*

Richard J Foster *Celebration of Discipline*

## REFLECT

Setting the scene:

- ▶ This is the start of Jesus' 'Farewell Discourse' (Ch 13 – 17), Jesus knows that his death is imminent and that he will soon return to the Father. John indicates that this meal took place before the Passover Feast, which becomes known as 'The Last Supper'.
- ▶ We must assume that there was no-one present to do the foot-washing – a necessary and routine requirement for

dusty (smelly?) desert-covered feet. This was usually done upon arrival and carried out by a non-Jewish slave. We must also assume that there was an embarrassed silence (as Jesus took the towel and water) as none of the disciples wanted to volunteer. This was an act of extreme devotion and love for his community of disciples.

- ▶ Jesus takes the ordinary elements of a basic meal, clothing, a towel, water and a bowl and turns this ordinary event into something extraordinary. He prepares this

new community by cleansing them (symbolically and literally) through the ordinary task of foot-washing, in doing so he sets an example of humility and service.

- ▶ What are the 'shockers' and 'blockers' for you in this passage?
- ▶ What 'ordinary stuff' reminds you of God each day?
- ▶ Are you tempted to only look for signs of God in the spectacular or miraculous?

*'To do everything for God is to put your whole heart into whatever you are doing at the present moment. Imagine the difference such wholehearted living would make to the quality and meaningfulness of our daily labour.'*

Trevor Hudson *Discovering Our Spiritual Identity*

## I RESPOND

(Extra) Ordinary Life challenge: Create a challenge this week to help you to notice God's presence in the ordinariness of life.

**Challenge ideas:**  
If you struggle to come up with your own challenge then why not try one of the following...

### 01 Observation

Become a God-observer this week. Often we 'limit' God to only showing up in the spectacular and miraculous. Look out for signs of God in the ordinary and everyday stuff of life – see if you can see God in the TV you watch, the music you listen to, the conversations and situations you face in life this week. Regain your capacity for wonder and awe as you see the 'little signs of God' become new again.

### 02 Spirituality of the Ordinary

Make a conscious effort to involve and interact with God in the mediocre and mundane stuff of life this week. Whatever you are doing – washing up, housework, exercising, dropping off the children at school – ask God to be present with you. Intentionally welcome God into every activity before it begins. Follow the advice of Paul: 'So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do everything for the glory of God' (1 Corinthians 10.31 ESV).

### 03 Service

It was in self-sacrifice, humility, love and great humility that Jesus took the ordinary elements and mundane job of a slave and turned it into something

extra-ordinary. Humility and gratitude help us to recover a great sense of appreciation and capacity for wonder. This week, aim to serve someone everyday. Find an opportunity to make a drink, offer a lift, run an errand, help with a mundane task – whatever it may be and do it with love and humility. Whilst you are giving, also make it possible to receive from others – as Peter received the service of Jesus, it was then that he received from God. Allow yourself to receive the love of God through other people this week.

## Don't Forget

1. To record your experience of the challenge so that you can accurately share it with your lyfe group when you next meet. You might like to text/tweet each other throughout the experience!
2. Consider posting your created challenge on the lyfe facebook site for others to view.

## More resources on 'Whole Lyfe'

- Watch video interview with Paula Gooder
- Read 'lyfe story' biographies on GK Chesterton and Brother Lawrence
- Recommended Reading *Seeing God in the Ordinary* by Michael Frost