

“The Foot-Washing”

John 13:1-17
6-8-2025

Introduction:

**** Are you humble enough to have your feet washed and to wash the feet of others?***

I. Our Lord & Master washed His Disciples Feet (v.3-11)

By washing the disciple’s feet:
A. He manifested an <u>enduring PRACTICAL LOVE</u> (v.1)

By washing the disciple’s feet:
B. He demonstrated a <u>HUMBLE SERVITUDE</u> (v.3-5)

By washing the disciple’s feet:
C. He illustrated a <u>SPIRITUAL CLEANSING</u> (v.6-11)

II. We ought to wash one-another’s feet (v.12-17)

A. “Foot-washing” requires the <u>HUMILITY of a servant</u> (v.13-14, 16)

B. “Foot-washing” follows the <u>EXAMPLE of the Savior</u> (v.15)

C. “Foot-washing” results in the <u>HAPPINESS of obedience</u> (v.17)

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Introduction:

Think of the most famous person you know (a sports hero, a movie star, or a national political leader). Now think of that person of fame, wealth, or power, coming to your house to wash your car or clean your attic or serve you breakfast. What humility it would take!

John 13:1-17 details one of Christ's greatest acts of self-humiliation.

**** Are you humble enough to have your feet washed and to wash the feet of others?***

I. Our Lord & Master washed His Disciples Feet (v.3-11)

By washing the disciples' feet:

A. He manifested an <u>enduring PRACTICAL LOVE</u> (v.1)

v. 1

"His hour was come" – Christ's time to give his life as a sacrifice for our salvation had arrived. Although that would be the ultimate humiliation and shame (Heb. 12:2), our Lord expresses self-humiliation by this dramatic act of foot-washing.

"Loved His own" – The Lord loves all men (Jn. 3:16) but has a special love for His own.

If you belong to Jesus Christ, He has a love for you that He does not share with the world. Although His disciples were often not worthy recipients of His love, He loved them just the same. And He loved them right up to the end of His earthly ministry.

The reason John mentions His love in this context is because this act of foot-washing would be another demonstration of His special love for them.

"Unto the end" – to the uttermost; the fullness of Christ's love for them is shown in these great chapters (13 to 17) (Robertson, p. 236).

v. 2

"The devil. . . put into the heart" – Satan influences many peoples' actions by planting a thought into their minds and stirring their emotions toward some devious act.

By washing the disciples' feet:

B. He demonstrated a <u>HUMBLE SERVITUDE</u> (v.3-5)

v. 3

"All things into His hands" – He is the Creator, owner, and controller of all things in the universe!

"By Him all things consist (hold together)" – (Col. 1:17).

"All power (authority) is given unto Me in heaven and in earth" (Mt. 28:18)

The point of verse 3 is this: Jesus knew His greatness (he was fully aware of who He was, what He possessed, and where He came from) and yet He still humbly served His disciples.

It is one thing for someone of low stature, low "caste," low position to serve someone by washing their feet. But for the "Lord and Master" (v. 14) to do this is the ultimate demonstration of humility and selfless service. How often do we see someone of great wealth or position performing a humble task for some no-name individual?

The duty of the <u>lowest</u> domestic slave was to wash the feet of visitors.

v. 4

"He ariseth from supper" – Normally we are tempted to rest after a big meal, but Jesus gets up and washes 12 men's feet

"Laid aside His garments" – In order to have freedom of movement, Jesus humble removes His royal outer garments (His tunic) and wraps a towel around His waist to get to work on the disciples' behalf.

Sometimes we, too, just take off our suit coats and roll up our sleeves to do something on behalf of someone else.

"Girded Himself" – Perhaps this humbling foot-washing was recalled by Peter "when in 1 Peter 5:5 he exhorts all to 'gird yourselves with humility'." (Robertson, p. 237).

v. 5

The action of washing feet required several humiliating features:

1) Jesus got on His hands and knees
2) Jesus would scrub one of the dirtiest and stinkiest parts of their body
3) Jesus would pour water onto their feet, then rub the feet and in between the toes before drying them with His towel

By washing the disciples' feet:

C. He illustrated a <u>SPIRITUAL CLEANSING</u> (v.6-11)

v. 6

"Doest thou wash my feet?" – Why does Peter ask this question?

He is humbled and embarrassed to have His Lord perform such a lowly task for him.

(You will have to humble yourself before Jesus Christ in order to allow Him to wash you of your sin also!)

v. 7

There was a greater <u>spiritual significance</u> to Christ's actions than Peter realized.

By this washing away of dirt from the skin, He was vividly illustrating the washing away of sin from the soul, which He would soon die to accomplish.

v. 8

"If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me" – Jesus says, "Peter, unless you are washed by Me, you have no relationship with Me."

Note: the same is true today. Unless Jesus (not Mary or some saint or guru) washes you clean from your sin, you have no relationship whatsoever with the Lord Jesus Christ. Unless you are cleansed by Him, He will one day say to you, "Depart from Me. . . I never knew you."

v. 9

"If that's the case," Peter says, "then Lord, give me a bath! Never mind just my feet! Wash all of me!"

The one thing Peter wanted was a relationship to Christ. If washing was a prerequisite for that to happen, then Peter wanted not the economy wash, but the full service-deluxe wash!

"A moment ago he told his Master He was doing too much: now he tells Him He is doing too little" (Dods, cited by Robertson, p. 238).

v. 10

Based on Christ's impending sacrifice for sin, the disciples (11 of them) were already fully washed. They, like the Old Testament saints, were saved by grace through faith, based on a future payment for sin.

Due to their faith in Christ they were already washed (lit. "bathed") and therefore were totally clean in God's sight (justified -- or made righteous; and sanctified -- or made holy).

"He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet" – As Charles Ryrie observes: "There are two different words here for 'wash' so that the phrase literally reads, 'He that has bathed needs not wash except his feet'."

Just as in the natural life a man who is bathed needs only to wash the dust off his sandaled feet when he returns home, so in the spiritual life a man who has been cleansed from sin need not think that all is lost when he sins in his walk through life.

He needs only to confess these sins to be entirely clean again (1 Jn. 1:9) (i.e. to maintain close fellowship with Christ).

Note: believer's baptism by immersion pictures the believer's cleansing (bath) based on the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

II. We ought to wash one-another's feet (v.12-17)

v. 12
After the visual object lesson (or the acted-out parable), the Master-Teacher now applies the lesson to those whose feet He washed.

A. "Foot-washing" requires the <u>HUMILITY of a servant</u> (v.13-14, 16)

v. 13
"Master" – the authoritative <u>teacher</u> (there is only <u>one</u> of these; and He is Christ).

"Lord" – the authoritative <u>ruler</u> and <u>God</u> (*Yahweh* & *Adonai*).

"For so I am" – so much for those who say that Jesus never claimed to be "Lord." Here He clearly asserts His ultimate power and authority.

v. 14
If the sovereign God of the universe would humble Himself to wash our feet, who do we think we are not to do likewise toward each other?

If Jesus were here today, would you wash His feet if He asked you? He is not asking you to do so, but He is commanding us to wash one another's feet.

Does this mean I should purchase a portable ceramic or stainless steel tray and buy towels to literally get on my hands and knees to scrub the dirty toes of the saints? Well, in a figurative sense, yes!

To wash feet back in the Bible days was a practical service rendered to a people who walked dusty roads with sandals.

Note: Foot-washing is not an ordinance (as baptism or the Lord's Super) as some might think.

1) Its practice was not part of the early church in the book of Acts

2) Nor was it commanded by the apostles in the epistles

"One another's' feet" - Note the reciprocal nature of the service. It's two-way service.

Note: All of the "one another's" in the book of Romans

How should we take care of each other?

1. **BE MEMBERS with one another (Rom.12:4-5)**
   (A plea to contribute our gift to each other)

2. **HONOR one another (12:10)**
   (A plea to show family honor to each other)

3. **LOVE one another (13:8)**
   (A plea to pay the dept of love to each other)

4. **EDIFY one another (14:13,19)**
   (A plea to be a stepping stone, not a stumbling block to each other)

5. **BEAR with one another (15:1)**
   (A plea for patience toward each other)

6. **PLEASE one another (15:2-4)**
   (A plea for unselfishness toward each other)

7. **UNITE with one another (15:5-6)**
   (A plea for oneness with each other)

8. **ACCEPT one another (15:7)**
   (A plea for impartiality toward each other)

9. **ADMONISH one another (15:14)**
   (A plea for loving confrontation with each other)

10. **WARMLY GREET one another (16:16)**
    (A plea to show loving affection to each other)

"One another" – Some of you want to have your feet washed, yet you never wash the feet of anyone else. You like it when they serve you, yet you rarely go out of your way to do something for someone else.

What practical service can you render for another believer?

Whether it be helping, teaching, cleaning, giving, or forgiving others, all this is part of the humble service we can render for others.

v. 16
Jesus says, "You are not greater than Me, and yet I did it for you; how then could you refuse to do even the most humbling of tasks for someone else?"

B. "Foot-washing" follows the <u>EXAMPLE of the Savior</u> (v.15)

"Do <u>as</u> I have done" = Jesus is <u>not</u> saying, "Do <u>what</u> I have done, but do <u>as</u> I have done."

"Example" – model; pattern; copy

We should follow in our Savior's steps in many areas of our lives.

VINNY REFER TO EXAMPLE NOTES

C. "Foot-washing" results in the <u>HAPPINESS of obedience</u> (v.17)

This verse contains God's formula for happiness (blessedness) –

Knowing what's right
Plus doing what's right
Equals happiness

Just <u>knowing</u> what's right does not bring happiness; nor does rare occasional <u>doing</u>. But continual obedience is the well-spring of blessing.

If you <u>know</u> the truth and <u>do</u> the truth, you have found the secret to real joy.

Depression comes to those whose focus is on <u>self</u>. Get your attention on the needs of others, and you will see your problems melt away (as you reap for what you sow).

CONCLUSION:

To the unsaved: Are you humble enough to have Jesus wash you clean from your sin?

To the saved: Are you coming to Him for the daily foot-washings?
Are you willing to humbly wash the feet of others by serving them in some beneficial way?