

Why Did Jesus Wash Feet?

Text: John 13:1-17, 33-35 NAS 1995

Introduction: Dear friends: Did Jesus wash feet, so that we would be encouraged to wash feet? **No!** *Jesus did it to teach us how to love one another!*

Let's get into **John 13** to ➡ learn what happened in the upper room, ➡ rightly understand the meaning, and ➡ make application in our own daily lives.

1. **To the End:** ¹ **Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He would depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.** // On Good Friday, which began on Thursday at sunset, Jesus gathered with the twelve in the upper room to celebrate the Passover meal. Jesus knew the end of His life was approaching fast, **but** *He did not seek pity from the twelve; instead, "He loved them to the end."*
2. **Living with Knowledge, Humility, and Love:** ² **During supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, ⁴ got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself. ⁵ Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel**

with which He was girded. // When a person knows he is dying, his words and actions are more significant. Think about the events of Holy Week, *that was true for Jesus!*

- a. Jesus Knew Everything: **He knew** ♦the devil was working through Judas, ♦the work of saving the world was in His hands, and ♦He would soon return to God.
- b. Jesus Demonstrated Humility: The foot washing was normally done by the *lowest* servant. **Since** ♦no servant was present, ♦having clean feet was proper, and ♦no one was volunteering, **Jesus, the Greatest**, made Himself *the lowest* (Mk. 10:45).

3. **Loving Action:** ⁶ So He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, “Lord, do You wash my feet?” ⁷ Jesus answered and said to him, “What I do you do not realize now, but you will understand hereafter.” ⁸ Peter said to Him, “Never shall You wash my feet!” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.” ⁹ Simon Peter said to Him, “Lord, *then wash* not only my feet, but also my hands and my head.” ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, “He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all *of you*.” ¹¹ For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, “Not all of you are clean.”

- a. Childlike Faith: Such faith believes, *even when it does not understand*. Jesus called Peter to such faith, **but** he refused – *which was a most serious matter!* Jesus said in Mark 10, “...whoever does not receive the kingdom of God like a child will not enter it...” (15).
- b. Washed Feet Pointed to a Washed Soul: As Jesus cleansed their feet on the outside, *He was soon to*

complete His soul-washing work. All **repentant** ones are already clean, *but Judas was **unrepentant***. Let us always have ♦godly sorrow and ♦trust alone in Jesus!

4. **Powerful Example:** ¹² So when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments and reclined *at the table* again, He said to them, “Do you know what I have done to you? ¹³ “You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. ¹⁵ For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master, nor *is* one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them....”
- a. Do You Get It? Since I – *the Lord and the Teacher* – served you, *so you ought to serve others*. Let us never think we are too good to follow Jesus’ example!
 - b. Knowing Versus Doing: Now we know what to do, **but** we are blessed only when we willingly take loving action, *resulting from our faith alone in Jesus!*
5. **Show Yourselves to Be My Disciples:** ³³ “Little children, I am with you a little while longer. You will seek Me; and as I said to the Jews, now I also say to you, “Where I am going, you cannot come.’ ³⁴ “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. ³⁵ “By this all men will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.”

- a. Jesus Would Soon Lay Down His Life: Jesus would †die, †be raised, and †ascend, **but** His disciples would ♦live, ♦receive the Holy Spirit, and ♦proclaim repentance for the forgiveness of sins!
- b. Love One Another: Jesus saw their dirty feet, *so He loved them by washing their feet*. We love one another when we ♦see what a person needs and ♦take action to fill that need. Example: During the Black Plague (1346-1353), when most people avoided infected people, *Christians ministered to them!*
- c. Holy Versus Maundy: Thursday of Holy Week is called Holy Thursday. But when the alternate readings are used, *which include [John 13](#)*, we can call it Maundy Thursday. Why?
 - i. The word, “Maundy” is derived from the Latin word, “mandatum.”
 - ii. “Mandatum” means “mandate” or “command,” as when Jesus said in verse [34](#), “[A new commandment I give to you...](#)” We could say that ***Maundy Thursday*** is ***Mandate Thursday***.
 - iii. However, when we don’t read [John 13](#), we call today Holy Thursday.

Let Us Pray: Dear Lord Jesus, You are the greatest, yet You served us in the greatest ways – by †living for us, †suffering for us, and †dying for us. Please move us to ❤️ gladly take action to help people in need and ❤️ show ourselves to be Your disciples!