



John 13:1-17 New International Version (NIV)

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

13 It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

2 The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. 3 Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;⁴ so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. 5 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.

6 He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

7 Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

8 "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

9 "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

10 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." 11 For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not every one was clean.

12 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. 13 "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. 14 Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. 15 I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. 16 Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. 17 Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

31 When he was gone, Jesus said, "Now the Son of Man is glorified and God is glorified in him. 32 If God is glorified in him, God will glorify the Son in himself, and will glorify him at once.

33 "My children, I will be with you only a little longer. You will look for me, and just as I told the Jews, so I tell you now: Where I am going, you cannot come.

³⁴ ***“A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another.”***

As Jesus approached, Peter, the ever popular ‘apostle of the foot shaped mouth,’ pulled his legs under him and refused to let Jesus wash his feet.

The imagery of servanthood had overwhelmed Peter, and he would not allow the Lord to serve him. It was not humility as much as pride that drove Peter’s resistance. ‘You’ll never wash my feet!’

Christ immediately drove home the point of the exercise. It wasn’t about clean feet; it was about having a clean heart, a heart that was continually being cleansed by the ongoing works of the Saviour.

It was intended to serve as the symbolic equivalent of 1John 1:9: “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

The point? As we confess our sins to Christ, He provides the cleansing that allows our relationship with the Father to be unhindered. But we must be willing to humble ourselves before him to submit to His cleansing and his Word. Peter’s salvation had been cared for, secured when he gave his life to Christ. Foot washing was to picture the ongoing, day to day relationship of walking with God through a dirt laden world.

Immediately, Peter’s emotional pendulum swung to the other extreme “Not just my feet then! Wash me all over!” Christ’s response was direct and plain: “No. That has already been resolved. It is the ongoing cleansing of the dirt of the world that is needed.”

Peter submitted, as we too must submit in allowing Christ to cleanse us and the celebration, albeit at this time a very different celebration from the one we had anticipated, will be glorious.

So today let us reflect upon the parts of our lives that are in need spring cleaning, that are perhaps a little dirty and in need of attention, so that we may be right with Christ our Lord and Saviour. **Amen.**