

Jesus Washes the Disciples Feet

John 13:2-17

2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him, 3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, 4 rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded. 6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this." 8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never 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, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you." 11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." 12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 14 "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. 17 If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. NKJV

As we come into the shadows with Jesus and the disciples, Jesus begins to prepare them for the future. They were ready to take positions of power in the kingdom. But they were not ready to be servants. Everybody likes to boss. It comes from our idea that we are smarter than everyone else. But so few are ready to serve. We like it if people ask our advice but not if they ask for our help. The one puffs up our ego but the other is just a bother.

In Luke's gospel we get a glimpse of what has lead up to this time. Luke 22:24-27

24 Now there was also a dispute among them, as to which of them should be considered the greatest. 25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. 27 For who is greater, he who sits at the table, or he who serves? Is it not he who sits at the table? Yet I am among you as the One who serves. NKJV

Let us look at this passage. It has so much to tell us about what we are like and how we should be.

1. And supper being ended
 - a. There is some question as to the proper translation.
 - b. Lightfoot acknowledges the problem but I do not think that he knows the solution.

“[And supper being ended.] I acknowledge the aorist, and yet do not believe the supper was now ended.”

- c. Lightfoot, as well as other think this refers to the supper two days previous, but that would put the passage completely out of context,
 - d. Most would translate this as the supper having begun.
2. The devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon’s son, to betray Him,
- a. This happened just after the supper in Bethany where Judas had criticized Mary for anointing Jesus feet with such an expensive offering.
 - b. Judas has already bargained with the rulers to betray Him, Judas is just waiting for the right time.
 - c. Very soon, when Jesus will give Judas the sop, Judas will leave to bring the soldiers to get Jesus.
3. Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God
- a. John includes this to tell us that Jesus was not confused or frustrated.
 - b. He knew exactly who He was and what He was doing and where He was going.
4. Rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself.
- a. The normal Jew wore an outer garment that was sort of like a robe. It is this that Jesus removes.
 - b. He removes it because a servant would not wear one while working.
 - c. Also the robe would get in the way of what He was doing.
5. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded.
- a. It is not surprising that Peter speaks up, but that none of the others that Jesus washes say anything.
 - b. This was against all culture of that day.
 - c. A woman might do this, if a servant was not available, but never the Rabi or anyone who was somebody. It would just be unheard of.
6. Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?"
- a. But Peter will put a stop to the non-sense, he will not allow Jesus to wash his feet and immediately objects.
 - b. It was not that Peter was a humble man, but that he understood the order of

authority.

- c. That is why he had not offered to wash the disciples feet. He knew he was too important to do that.
7. Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."
 - a. Jesus is calling on Peter to have faith.
 - b. Many times in life, it is as if God says, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this"
 - c. But as we see Peter, like us has a problem accepting Jesus without explanation.
8. Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!"
 - a. Peter says this in the most empathetic way, You, you shall never never wash my feet.
 - b. We might see this as a form of humility but it is really pride.
 - c. Pride in thinking you know better than God.
 - d. Pride in not yielding to will of God for your life.
 - e. Wanting to be in control, rather than in simple faith accepting what Jesus has for us.
9. Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."
 - a. But Jesus puts it in the strongest sense.
 - b. When we truly submit our lives to God, we cannot hold back anything.
 - c. So many think they are helping God get them to heaven, because they would not have it any other way.
 - d. But God is not open to other options.
 - e. God does not say, We will do it My way unless you have a better idea.
10. Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!"
 - a. Peter again over reacts.
 - b. He has not fully grasped the grace of God.
 - c. We are washed by the blood and our future is changed forever.
 - d. But we still get our feet dirty as we travel in this sinful world.
 - e. We need daily confession of sin and forsaking it. That is sanctification.
11. Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean;

- and you are clean, but not all of you."
12. For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."
 - a. Judas
 13. So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you?"
 - a. Luke 22:25-26 25 And He said to them, "The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them, and those who exercise authority over them are called 'benefactors.' 26 But not so among you; on the contrary, he who is greatest among you, let him be as the younger, and he who governs as he who serves. NKJV
 14. "You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am.
 15. "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.
 - a. Jesus did not give us another, a third, ordinance here.
 - b. Rather He tells them this was to shape their lives.
 - c. This was to shape their service in the kingdom.
 16. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you.
 17. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.
 - a. The idea is that if Jesus, our master, became a servant than we too must be servants.
 - b. Everyone seems to like to be in charge.
 - c. I don't have to be in charge of anything.
 - i. If I can better serve by taking the place of authority then I will.
 18. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.
 - a. Notice, with this as well as with the rest of Jesus' teaching, we are blessed if we do it, not know it.
 - b. Religion is not knowing what to do, but doing it.
 - c. Where are you in the kingdom work of our Lord?
 - d. Do you think you are great in the kingdom, then you probably are not.
 - e. Do you think you are only a servant in the kingdom, they you are probably great.