

Calvary Chapel Viewpoint

“Iron Men”

Study in John

Jesus Washes Feet

John 13:1-17 (English Standard Version)

[1] Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

[2] During supper, when the devil had 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 back to God,

[4] rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.

[5] Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

[6] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, do you wash my feet?”

[7] Jesus answered him, “What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.”

[8] Peter said to him, “You shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered him, “If I do not wash you, you have no share 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, “The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you.”

[11] For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, “Not all of you are clean.”

[12] When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, “Do you understand 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, 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 also should do just as I have done to you.

[16] Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

[17] If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.

Chapters 13 through 17 contain the final discourses of the Lord with His disciples just before His crucifixion and conclude with His great high-priestly prayer on their behalf. In these passages, the disciples hear the voice of Jesus leading them into a greater understanding of His new place before the Father and consequently also of His new position in the world.

These chapters can be compared to love letters from the Lord. The great and faithful Bridegroom of the church—Jesus—speaks to His disciples and assures them of His special and enduring love for them.

It is now the day before the crucifixion. The setting is the Upper Room, prepared for the Last Supper. The evening meal is the Passover meal.

Jesus gets up from the meal, takes a towel, and wraps it around His waist and washes the disciples’ feet. What do we know about the act of foot washing in Jesus’ day? Why was it done?

Who normally washes the guests' feet?

By washing their feet, what messages does Jesus send to His disciples?

Note: Reflect on verse 3 and consider Jesus' thought process before washing the disciples' feet. Remember as you move up the ranks that no matter where you find yourself on the leader-follower scale, the Christian is to serve God by serving others. Leadership is simply one place of service. It enables one to serve as others cannot. Rank and privilege are not occasions for arrogance but are opportunities for service.

Application: What does servant leadership look like in our lives? What are some examples of specific things we can do to serve others in Jesus' name?

John 13:6 (English Standard Version)

^[6] He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"

In verse 6, Peter's comment might be better phrased, "You're not going to wash my feet are you?"

Application: How would you characterize Peter's response when Jesus approaches him to wash his feet? "I don't deserve to have my feet washed by you." That's exactly the point! None of us would ever deserve to have Jesus serve us. But think about the many ways that Jesus has served you throughout your life.

Why does Jesus wash Judas' feet knowing he would betray Him?

Application: Does God expect us to conduct foot washing services today?

- *In verse 14 Jesus says, "you also should wash one another's feet." • In verse 15 He says, "do as I have done for you" not what I have done.*
- *Jesus is clearly teaching the principle of servanthood/servant leadership, rather than merely commanding the practice of foot washing. The washing of the disciples' feet is an example to be followed—not just an act to imitate as a ritual.*

Note: It is amazing how much Jesus loves these men knowing that they have been arguing (or will shortly do so) about who is the greatest and which one will sit at His right hand. He knows that they are about to forsake Him and flee for their lives. He knows that Peter will deny Him, Judas will betray Him, and Thomas will doubt Him.

It is one thing for people to love us, who do not know all of our wicked deeds, thoughts, and motivations. It is another for the Holy God of heaven to love us, knowing every wicked thing we have done and will do. This is, indeed, amazing love. He loves us because it is His nature. It is impossible for Him to not love us. What a comfort to the Christian, knowing that our Lord's love is constant and

unchanging, knowing that He chose to love us—and to keep on loving us—purely out of His grace, and not based upon our performance but on the basis of who He is. What security! What grace! What a Savior!

John 13:15-16 (English Standard Version)

^[15] For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

^[16] Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him.

What is the active verb in verses 15 & 17?

What's the message in these verses?

Do we get more joy and satisfaction from knowing or doing?

Where do works fit into the Christian's relationship with God?

“For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” (Ephesians 2:10).

What is the proper motivation for doing good works?

What point is Jesus making in verse 16?

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