



March 17, 2023

### **Are you Happy to Wash Feet?**

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God from here on the Gulf Coast. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you doing well, and that again your week has been blessed. We've just returned from a wonderful visit to east Texas to spend time with our spiritual family and friends.

I'd like to have you go back with me a few decades if you will...a little over 50 years ago actually...as a young person, growing up in the church. There was a ceremony that I will not easily forget...in fact, every year I reflect on it deeply, in a most profound and very personal way.

The minister had talked for a while, sharing the history of the people of God, and then we single filed into separate rooms, and in within a few minutes, we knelt down to wash the feet of another family member of the church of God. Yes, some younger people and teenagers did that back then. We did not partake of the bread or the wine, (as we were not baptized) but we did wash feet. It has always left a profound impression on me, and I carry it with me to this day.

Today, I'm blessed to again be able to encourage young people to wash feet, a part of this evening that contains deep connections within the body when we partake of it.

Let's look at 1 Timothy 5:9. The Apostle Paul writes to Timothy, and it's a most interesting scripture. "*If she has washed the saints feet...*"

This woman had a home of her own, had strangers stay in her home, and she washed "the Saints feet" on a regular basis. The Greek word here means, "On a very regular basis, or having a record of serving God's brethren".

In a little over 2 weeks we who are baptized will gather together to celebrate The Lord's Passover. I still encourage the older teens and young adults, though not

baptized, to come and observe the service, sitting with the baptized members, participating in the foot washing, but not partaking of the bread or the wine.

As we come upon our renewing of our covenant via observing the Passover, there are several aspects of this service I would like to consider. There are 4 parts to this simple, yet profound service.

1) The foot washing 2) The Bread 3) The Wine, 4) The Readings.

Between now and Passover it's a good idea to think, meditate, ponder, muse, and reflect about each of these parts of the service. We'll learn more about the bread and the wine that night.

We'll read the passage of scripture starting with Christ and the disciples leaving the Passover meal, and then end with the reading of John 17, "The Real Lord's Prayer" as I like to refer to it, or the final prayer before He was murdered.

Through this letter to all this Friday evening and next I would like to focus on the Foot Washing Ceremony.

I try to write about this every year, because not only are there some who have not heard a lot about this aspect of the service, but if we are not careful, it can become, well, for lack of better words, "tradition" and lose parts of its meaning.

I realize there are many divergent views regarding the foot washing. If you do a search on the Internet you'll get everything from "people saying it's commanded" to people saying "it's just a spiritual lesson of service, and optional", to "it's not even needed to be done".

What can you and I learn about the foot washing? Why is it so important?

As we have so often been taught, washing another's feet is an act of humility when we participate in it as Christ instructs us. We find that the washing of feet is throughout the bible. Let's look at several examples. Because it was not just done on the Passover.

- Abraham fetched water for the feet of Christ and the two Angels, See Genesis 18:3 (KJV) *“Let a little water, I pray you, be fetched, and wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree”*
- Lot did the same Genesis 19:2 (KJV) *“I pray you, into your servant’s house, and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early, and go on your ways.”*
- When Eliezar of Damascus went to find a wife for Isaac, Laban got water for the men to wash their feet. Genesis 24:31 (KJV) *“And the man came into the house: and he ungirded his camels, and gave straw and provender for the camels, and water to wash his feet, and the men’s feet that were with him”.*
- When Joseph’s brothers came back to Egypt on one of their trips to buy Grain, the steward of the house set water before them so they could wash their feet. Genesis 43:24 (KJV) *“And the man brought the men into Joseph’s house, and gave them water, and they washed their feet; and he gave their asses provender.”*
- In the tabernacle, the laver of brass was there for Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet. Exodus 30:17-19 (KJV) *“And the LORD spoke unto Moses, saying, 18 Thou shalt also make a laver of brass, and his foot also of brass, to wash withal: and thou shalt put it between the tabernacle of the congregation and the altar, and thou shalt put water therein. 19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat:”*

In the book of judges there’s an interesting story of an old man from Mount Ephraim who showed mercy to a wayfaring man by bringing him into his house. The rest of the story sounds a lot like the story of Lot and Sodom and Gomorrah. Judges 19:21 (KJV) *“So he brought him into his house, and gave provender unto the asses: and they washed their feet, and did eat and drink.”*

- When David called Uriah back to try and hide his sin, he commanded Uriah to go down to his house and to wash his feet. 2 Samuel 11:8 (KJV) *“And David said to Uriah, Go down to thy house, and wash thy feet. And Uriah departed out of the king’s house, and there followed him a mess of meat from the king.”*

- In the New Testament there's the story of the woman who washed Christ's feet with her tears and hair. Luke 7:36 (KJV) *"And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eat with him. And he went into the Pharisee's house, and sat down to meat." vs 44*"And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, See thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gave me no water for my feet: but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head."

After reading these several verses, what I find also interesting, is where we learn the most about the foot washing ceremony is in the gospel of John. It's interesting, because none of the other Gospels mention the foot washing. They do however discuss the bread and Wine. John's the opposite. He doesn't mention the bread and wine, but only the foot washing.

John 13:1-17 (KJV) This is to me, one of the most powerful sections of scripture!

*1 "Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put 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 was come from God, and went to God; 4 He rose from supper, and laid aside his garments; and 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 wherewith he was girded. 6 Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? 7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do you know not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. 8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. 9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. 10 Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. 11 For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean. 12 So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? 13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. 14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed*

*your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. 15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. 16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. 17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them."*

Notice Christ's explanation of what he did. "*If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them*". This last statement by Christ gives us insight into His mind. I don't think we should just rush right past it. Are you and I happy to wash another's feet?

Next Friday evening, we'll continue, and I'll answer the question, "*Why the foot washing service?*"

Arms up friends! Our sincere prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Thanks in advance for your heartfelt prayers for us.



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