

Washing The Disciples' Feet

By Casey Head

In one sense, it is hard for me to comprehend the fact that Jesus washed the feet of the disciples. After all, He said of Himself in Revelation 1:11, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last," and Colossians 1:16 says of Him, "For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him and for Him." Why would the very Son of God engage in such an unsavory act?

But in another sense, it is easy for me to comprehend this account. Jesus came not to glorify Himself, but to serve others. Everything He did in His life was an act of service. Philippians 2:5-8 says, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." Jesus was a servant. That is why He washed the disciples' feet in John 13.

Notice with me what is said in John 13:4-5, "He riseth from supper, and laid aside His garments; and took a towel, and girded Himself. After that He poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." It is so humbling to me to know that the very God I praise every week in the assembly once stooped down to wash the dirty feet of His disciples....even the one that would betray Him. Again, why did He do this? It was to teach us a very important lesson. We need to serve our brethren just as He served the disciples.

Another point that stands out to me in John 13 is found in verse 17: "If ye know these things, **happy** are ye if ye do them." In other words, it should be a joy to serve others; to be selfless and sacrificial.

Now, some might look at John 13 and conclude that Christians today must literally wash each other's feet, but I think they are missing the entire point. Yes, Jesus did say in John 13:14, "If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet." I do not believe that he was referring to the literal act of washing feet, but rather to the general act of serving others. After all, we never find the Christians of the New Testament engaging in foot-washing. We do, however, find them serving one another willingly and happily.

How do you measure up to the command of Christ? Are you selfless and sacrificial? Would you describe yourself as a servant? Or is there much room for improvement in this area of your walk with the Lord?