

Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm 116:1-2, 12-19
1 Corinthians 11:23-26
John 13:1-17, 31b - 35

Sermon Maundy Thursday April 14th 2022

Jesus Washes Our Feet

Tonight, we reflect on the last meal Jesus shares with his disciples. His students. His friends. Before he faces death on the cross.

Tonight, we reflect on Jesus' act of washing his disciples' feet, and all that means for them and for us moving forward.

In our gospel this evening, we see that through this meal, through this act of washing feet, Jesus is trying to make one thing clear to his disciples before his arrest. Jesus has come to serve them.

Yes. Jesus is their teacher. Yes. Jesus is the Messiah. Yes. Jesus is crowned king. Yes. Jesus is the one with the authority and power.

And yet, Jesus strongly states that he has come to serve them. Jesus has come to serve us. And they/we are to do likewise to others.

More specifically, in the meal, Jesus talks about how he will suffer and die for us, his friends. Jesus will serve us by giving up his life for us. When we take and eat his body, and take and drink of his blood, we remember this act of service (**Image**). Both, what Jesus has done for us, as well as, what we are invited to do for others.

Then while they are eating, Jesus humbles himself further to make his point crystal clear. Jesus gets down as a servant would to their master, and washes the disciples' feet.

When Jesus gets to Peter, he is unwilling to let Jesus wash his feet. Jesus challenges Peter by saying that he can only follow Jesus if he receives this service Jesus has to offer. Or in other words, Peter can only understand Jesus' purpose if he participates in this foot washing ritual.

Because another point Jesus wants to make before he leaves them is that Jesus' ministry, following Jesus, has nothing to do with gaining status. Jesus' ministry is about serving one another, and it starts with the leader serving those they lead.

Well, like the disciples, Jesus washes our feet. Jesus serves us. Jesus serves us when he takes the time to comfort us when we grieve. Jesus serves us when he forgives us for our shortcomings. Jesus serves us when he heals us. Jesus serves us when he feeds us, and clothes us (**Image**). Jesus serves us when he listens to us ramble on. Jesus serves us. Jesus washes our feet.

And invites us to do the same. To wash each other's feet. To love one another as Jesus loves us.

Now, on this night we often have participated in a practice of washing each others feet. But contextually this doesn't make much sense. For a few reasons. First off, we rarely walk barefoot anymore unless we are on a beach somewhere. So, our feet stay cleaner. Second, we are much more aware of our feet, and what they look like. Unfortunately, this makes us more insecure about showing off our feet to others. Warts, boils, ingrown toe nails, blisters, athletes' foot. Often times our feet are the least attractive part of our body. Third, we live in a germ conscious world where we worry about getting some kind of infection (**Image**).

That being said, we can still see the act of washing feet as a metaphor inspiring us to serve others. As Jesus probably meant by this action. He didn't expect his disciples to actually wash each other's feet. He did this to make the point that they should serve one another in all their needs.

So, Jesus invites us to wash each others feet. To wash each other's feet by comforting one another in grief. To wash each other's feet by offering forgiveness to one another when we are hurt. To wash each other's feet by healing one another when we are suffering. To wash each other's feet by taking care of one another's needs (**Image**). To wash each other's feet by genuinely listening to one another. Like Jesus washes our feet, we wash one another's feet.

Let us pray, loving God, thank you for Jesus who washes our feet. Whom chooses to serve us. Whom comforts us in our grief. Whom forgives us when we fall short. Whom heals us when we are hurting. Whom feeds us when we are hungry. Whom clothes us when we are cold and naked. Whom listens to us when no one else is willing to listen. Thank you, Jesus, for all you do to serve us. Move our hearts to serve others as you serve us. Washing one another's feet. **Amen.**

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