

# The Servant Lord

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 30 June 2019

Preacher: Iain T. Campbell

[ 0 : 00 ] Now, turning back to the portion of Scripture that we read, chapter 13 in the Gospel of John. And we can have a look from verse 6 down to the end of verse 8.

He came to Simon Peter who said to him, Lord, do you wash my feet? Jesus answered him, What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand.

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.

If I do not wash you, you have no share with me. And we can look at these verses, firstly looking at humility and pride.

And secondly, looking at a serious attitude. And thirdly, the importance of servanthood.

[ 1 : 28 ] The importance of servanthood. And the picture, of course, that is brought before us here is the servant lord. The servant lord.

So firstly, humility and pride are serious attitude. And the importance of servanthood. And coming firstly to humility and pride.

We see Jesus here. And he has taken his leave of the outside world. And we are finding him in fellowship with his own spiritual family.

Those who had been faithful to him over his three and a half years of ministry. And now he is in fellowship with them in this, what we call the upper room.

And he speaks words of parting to them. In knowing that he has come from the father.

[ 2 : 33 ] And that he is going to return to the father. And his words of parting, we find some of them, we find some of these words in this chapter itself.

Chapter 13. And especially in chapter 14, 15 and 16. And then he ends it all with what we call the high priestly prayer in chapter 17.

These are his words of parting to those who had remained faithful to him. Of course, one of them was going to betray him. But he is preparing them for what is before them.

Because he is going to leave them. And they are going to be left with the responsibility of preaching the gospel to both Jew and Gentile.

And so he prepares them for all that is before them. This is what he is doing in the upper room. And as we look upon this scene. Suppose you imagine yourselves entering into this upper room.

[ 3 : 33 ] As we look upon this scene. Which John has given us the privilege to do so. What is the first thing if we entered into that upper room. What is the first thing we would note?

We would note Jesus washing his disciples feet. That is the first act of the evening. At this point before the fruit washing commences.

Before the fruit washing itself commences. As Luke reveals to us. In his own gospel. What would we find the disciples doing?

We would find them arguing amongst themselves. As to who would be the greatest. They are thinking of thrones. And crowns.

Thorns. And the thorns are far away. From which one of them. Would wash the feet of the rest. This of course was a custom in the near east.

[ 4 : 34 ] And it might still be so. That if you came from a short or a long journey. And you were going to sit down at a meal. You entered a house and you were going to sit down at a meal.

Then the servant in that house. Would wash your feet. There is no doubt. That every one of them. Every one of the twelve. Would have been unduly shocked. When they would see their master rising from his seat at the table. Casting aside his outer garment.

Tying a towel round his waist. And pouring water into a basin. With which of the twelve. Jesus made a beginning.

We are not told. But we are told. Who was the first. To question what he was doing. And of course it had to be.

[ 5 : 35 ] Simon Peter. When Jesus came to Peter. Peter. Peter would have got over the initial shock. Of what his Lord was doing.

And he would be capable of seeing. The indecency. Of a master. Serving. His servants. A master serving.

His servants. And so we find Peter. Speaking with a tone of astonishment. Do you. Lord. Do you. Wash. My feet. This surely was a task. In which his. Beloved Lord. Should not at all. Be involved. And was it not an outrage. Was it not an outrage. Against. Peter's own reverence.

[ 6 : 30 ] Towards. Jesus. Towards his Lord. Lord. And Peter. To shall be. That what is. What he was seeing. His Lord. Doing. Was to his credit.

As revealed. In Jesus. His own reply. His reply is. What I am doing. What I am doing. You do not understand.

Now. But afterwards. You will understand. And this reply. Was delivered. This reply. Was delivered. With a tone.

Of respect. As the words. Revealed. To us. The Lord. Knew full well. That Peter's. Opposition. To what he was doing.

Was not at all. Out of place. It was not something. That was. At all. Out of place. It was simply. A natural. Reaction.

[ 7 : 27 ] To what he was seeing. His Lord. Doing. Now. The thing is this. If Peter. Had been satisfied. If poor Peter. Had been satisfied.

With his Lord's reply. Then he would have revealed. Then he would have remained. Blimless. He was not content. However. But we find him.

Stubbornly. Resisting. Jesus's will. Resisting. The will of his Lord. In exclaiming. You.

Shall never. Wash my feet. You. Shall never. Wash my feet. And the tone here. Changes. Completely.

Peter's first words. Was an expression. Of his reverence. Towards. Jesus. Jesus. But no. Things.

[ 8 : 23 ] Completely change. To outright. Irreverence. And to downright. Disobedience. To downright. Disobedience.

His behavior. Is a strange. Mixture. Of humility. And pride. Of reverence. And reverence.

Towards. His. Lord. He is here. Dictating. He is here. Dictating. Order. To his Lord. You.

Shall never. Wash my feet. Is he not. A strange. Man. Are we not.

All strange. Strange. Strange. Strange. We do not understand. One another.

[ 9 : 19 ] Very well. We do not understand. Each other. Very well. We all. Can show. This mixture. Of emotions. Towards.

Our fellow beings. Or even. Towards. Christ. Himself. Which brings us. To. This. Second thing.

That we have here. A serious. Attitude. A serious. Attitude. Jesus. Replies. To Peter. If I do not.

Wash you. You have no. Share. With me. And that reveals. To us. The very serious.

Attitude. That Peter. Had adopted. Jesus. With that. Reply. Was posing. Two questions. To Peter. Do you want.

[ 10 : 17 ] To be my. Disciple. Or not. Do you want. To gain. Entrance. Into my. Kingdom. Or not. And we might. Think. That Jesus.

Was. Indulging. In exaggeration. Here. Trying. To force. Peter. Trying. To force. Peter's. Will. To come. Into line.

With his own. freedom. But we've. Got to pose. The question. What. Does. The foot. Washing. Mean?

What does. The foot. Washing. Mean? there is evidently more to it than meets the eye there is more to it than simply a literal washing of the feet if we go back to Jesus' own words, if we look back at Jesus' own words when he said, I have not come he said to be served upon but to serve and here he was taking the lowest position that anybody could take in that day washing his disciples' feet and what was this symbolic of?

what was it pointing to? well it was pointing to this that there was a greater service that he was still going to perform for them and for his people and it meant taking an even lower position than the position that he was now taking when he would give his life as a ransom for many and what he was doing at this very moment was simply symbolic of what Paul reveals to us in his epistle to the

Philippians in chapter 2 he humbled himself and was obedient unto death even death on a cross and as we have heard it so many times before said as he walked through this valley of the shadow of death so he was going lower and lower every step was taking him lower and lower until he finally took the lowest position he could take and until he finally would do the greatest service that he could ever perform for these disciples and for his people offer his life as a ransom for many offer his life as a ransom for many

[ 13 : 30 ] Peter takes a stand on two positions the first was that he was going to do nothing that would compromise the honor of his Lord and the second was that he set his own powers of discernment above Christ's will he set his own judgment above Christ's will the first position being involved in the question do you wash my feet and the second being involved in the resolution you shall never wash my feet and in the first Peter was saying to his Lord humiliation is not for you Lord be it far from you and the second was challenging

Christ's overall Lordship challenging Christ's overall Lordship if Jesus would not wash the feet of his disciples because it was beneath him to do so then one could challenge any act of self humiliation so we can pose the question should the Son of God have taken human nature to himself to dwell in order that he would dwell in the midst of this fallen human race or if we in going straight to the heart of the matter and going straight to the heart of the matter we can pose the question should Christ have set aside the robes of his glory in order to take to himself the likeness of sinful flesh should he have cast aside the robes of his glory in order to clothe himself with the likeness of sinful flesh because as the letter to the

Hebrews reveals to us he did not take to himself the form of angels but he took to himself the seed of Abraham the seed of Abraham well the question is surely or should he do this in order to serve rebels like you and I should this sinless son of God be made accursed through enduring crucifixion should his soul lower himself to the extent that he comes into close companionship with the corrupt sons and daughters of Adam shall this sinless son of God pour his lifeblood into a basin in order that undeserving sinners like you and me would have a fountain to resort to to cleanse us from our guilt and our transgression incarnation atonement temptation hardship suffering sorrows and rejection would all have to be set aside if Christ cannot wash his disciples feet because it was all symbolic of the cross

Christ's lordship is also void if a disciple can command him you shall never wash my feet and Peter was saying that he would not submit himself to this washing because his moral feelings and his judgment was telling him that it was all wrong this was all wrong this was not the place for his master what he was doing was he was setting his own powers of reason his own powers of reason and his own conscience above the word of God how often we do that ourselves how often we do it ourselves which brings us to the third thing that we have here the importance of servitude now that we see where

Peter's refusal was leading then we can discern we can discern the meaning of Jesus reply if I do not wash you you shall have no share with me Peter's refusal was an objection to Christ's humbling of himself but the seriousness about that is that if Christ does not humble himself he remains at a distance from each and every one of us he is forbidden by his exalted state to be made like unto his brethren or even call confess them to be his brethren the sanctifier cannot the sanctifier cannot be identified with those being sanctified if he does not take human nature to himself a great gulf therefore remains between

[ 20 : 37 ] God and his creation if God the creator cannot become a created being in the passion of his son and if that was so what would happen God would remain standing at a far off point from each and every one of us beholding a pathetic situation but he cannot he even dare not for his exalted state will not allow him to draw near to any one of us to lift us out of her pitiful condition and if

Jesus Christ cannot identify with me and you then we cannot identify with him if we cannot have fellowship with the son we cannot have fellowship with the father and he can never he can never become to us the friend that's the friend that sticks closer than any brother he cannot deliver me or you from the condemnation of the law neither can he deliver us from the tyranny of death he cannot give us grace to resist at the point at which we are tempted the point at which we are tempted if he cannot wash his disciples feet he cannot cleanse us from sin because that's what the washing of the feet was symbolic of if a fountain is not opened in the human nature of the son of

God for sin and uncleanness then sinners must remain unclean sinners must remain unclean a savior whose exalted state like a iron fist keeps him at a distance from sinners such as you and me can never effectively forgive never mind sanctify us there is no room for love there is no room for love in a savior who cannot lower himself to become the servant to become the servant of the many and that all reveals to us the seriousness of Peter's position it all reveals to us the seriousness of

Peter's resistance to Christ's will that it justifies this reply if I do not wash you you have no share with me you have no share with me it excludes us from salvation because if Christ cannot be Lord neither can he be a savior it excludes us from fellowship because Christ will give no place to self will and that is what Peter was guilty of setting his own selfish will above the will of a savior above the will of a savior it was all to do with false humility not true humility and we all remember

Christ's own prayer not my will but you should be done and he demands that attitude from all of his disciples he can only be the captain of salvation to those who obey him to those who obey him he does not require us to be servants at all times but he wants to elevate us to the status of friends and we can only attain to that high honor by beginning with a servant obedience by beginning with a servant obedience and you know how often scripture brings before us that

[ 26 : 07 ] God will resist the proud but give grace to the humble and what this is bringing what this is bringing before us is making it real to us what Christ demanded of his own disciples when he said to them love one another as I have loved you be ready be ready to take the lowest place simply to advance your brothers and sisters in Christ and if you are here tonight and you are still outside of Christ you and remember that you can only that he will only accept you as you come with a broken and the contrite heart to him not with your selfish will over rolling your desires but ready to humble yourself knowing that it is only as you humble yourself will

God exalt you may he bless to us these few thoughts let us pray