

This King Washes Feet

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Date: 18 March 2023

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[0 : 00] John's gospel is very different. When you read the four gospels, you'll see that John's gospel is clearly very different from the other three gospels.

Because what John is doing with his gospel is he is making an argument as to who Jesus from Nazareth is. And he's making an argument with supporting evidence that Jesus is the redeeming king.

This is the thrust of his argument that he is the long-promised, long-awaited, longed-for king who's coming to save his people. And having adopted that himself, he's saying, and here's the evidence. And the evidence John uses in his gospel to support his argument, the seven signs, the seven miracles that he uses, and the seven sayings of Jesus on the cross, all of these things are his chosen evidence that he presents to his readers as to who this is.

But Jesus isn't a regular king. This king washes feet. I doubt in May, when King Charles is crowned, I doubt that he will go and get a towel and take his robes off and go and start washing folks' feet.

[1 : 32] I really don't think that we're going to see that on telly. I might be wrong, but I don't think we are. Because Jesus is a king on a different level.

He's a different kind of king. Jesus' final night, as we just read a few verses, dipped into the story. As far as last night's goal, this was a busy night for Jesus. He kept Passover with his disciples. He prayed his high-placedly prayer in the garden later. He got betrayed by Judas. He got arrested by the mob.

He was tortured. He was beaten. And he was tried. All in the one night. But before all of that, after they'd eaten together, Jesus, he teaches his disciples something about Christ-like service, about the ties that bind believers together that still resonates with us today.

[2 : 56] He came to serve, not to be served. You normally expect a king, a monarch, a ruler, to be served. But this monarch, this king, he's the one who serves.

And he left us a vivid portrait of the kind of heart that he wants his people to have for others. He's left a vivid image here in this little, almost vignette, almost sketch as he plays out sacrificial love for his disciples.

Verses 1 to 5, loved them to the end. He knew that his hour was come. This is something that you'll see repeated throughout John. This concept of his hour, the hour, the time, the appointed time. And he knows that his appointed time here has come. the time of his death. At this stage, he's maybe got 12, 15 hours left of life.

He knows he's going to be betrayed. He knows he's going to be arrested. He knows he's going to be tortured. Why doesn't he get out of town?

[4 : 21] Why doesn't he say, right boys, you've had your food, let's go. This place is going to get too hot to handle shortly. Because having loved his own, he loved them to the end.

Having loved them all, he loved them to the end. He's not looking for a way out. Because he knows that death is his destiny. He knows that it's the Father's will.

And he knows it's what he's here for. It's what he's come to Jerusalem for. It's what he's come to Jerusalem at this Passover time for.

All of these symbols, all of these icons of Messiah are converging together into this one place at this one time to fulfill God's plan and to show God's love for you.

And he loved us to the end, to the uttermost, to the end of his life. He actually loved them, loved us to the end of love, actually.

[5 : 32] We see here that this is the Last Supper. And John has compressed three years into the previous twelve chapters.

and then all of a sudden when we get to the upper room, we get to the Last Supper, he goes into slow motion. The Last Supper and Jesus' teaching of his disciples now takes five chapters of John to convey his message.

It's like one of these, you know, one of these nature programs where they're filming maybe a hummingbird feeding from a flower. And normally you can't see the wings beating because they're so fast, but if you slow everything down, if you slow it right down, you catch all the detail.

You catch it every second. And John here wants us to catch all the detail about what's happening, about what's, the scene that's being played out.

and he wants us to see it in slow motion, in high res, so that we miss nothing and we see everything of Jesus loving us to the end.

[6 : 53] This is Jesus' last meal. It's his last night. It's his last opportunity to teach his disciples and us through them. And he takes full advantage of it.

But Judas is there. We see this in verses two and three. During supper when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray him.

Jesus and Judas are side by side at the table. Jesus is self-giving. He's going to sacrifice himself. Judas is totally and utterly and completely self-serving.

He's looking to line his pockets with the 30 pieces of silver. Jesus is the friend of sinners. Judas is nothing more than a pretend friend.

And then in verses three to five we see King Jesus do something that is just quite simply mind-blowing. for a king.

[8 : 03] The most powerful man who ever walked the face of the earth. The one whose voice we hear in Genesis 1 speak the cosmos into being.

Let there be the one who speaks at the very end of Revelation I am coming soon. And here he is and he does what?

He washes feet. He washes feet. He could have he could have as a special treat for his friends as something nice for the boys he could have arranged for a servant to come in and to wash their feet and he could have said boys this is my last night with you here is something from me to you just for you to remember me by he is going to come in and wash your feet he could have done that he didn't do that it's slaves who wash feet not kings he could have done that but he didn't he said he had said that he didn't come to serve to be served he came to serve and now he proves this by serving the men who were with him he gets off his seat he gets up from the table he takes his robe off he puts a towel on he gets away from his meal to serve

Judas he got off his throne to serve you and I he poured out water for Judas to clean his feet he poured out his blood for you and I with the cross always willing to go down always willing to go lower always willing to come down are you am I are we willing to operate like that would we have got down on our knees to wash the feet or would we have got somebody to come in to a nice treat Jesus shows us four things about humility about true humility firstly it's unannounced

Jesus didn't hear say right men watch me this is how you do the humble thing he didn't say that Christian greatness isn't about exaltation it's not about rising above others it's about self sacrificing it's about how low can we go when the king of glory got off the throne to serve us on the cross how low should we be willing to go to serve our brothers and sisters in Christ and those who yet are not our brothers and sisters in Christ we see it in nature don't we you look at a fruit tree the branch with the most fruit bends the lowest doesn't it that's what Christian service is all about that's what being in Christ is all about Christian fruit love joy peace how low can we grow humility receives without embarrassment you see

[11 : 56] Peter's reaction when Jesus comes to him and he's going to wash his feet Peter pulls away he resists no not my feet and Jesus has to rebuke Peter out of love humility isn't weakness it's meekness but it's not weakness because his rebuke of Peter is pretty bold because he points out where Peter is going wrong about that he boldly rebukes Peter and humility doesn't play favorites it's not selective it's not picky it's not well I'll do it for you but I'm not going to do it for him Jesus washes 12 pairs of feet 24 feet including Judas' feet now if

Judas if Jesus was was merely human if he was only human if he wasn't the God man he might have been tempted to use a bowl of freezing water when he came when he came to when he came to Peter's feet I know what you're going to do later or he might use boiling water when he got to Judas you won't get to the soldiers fast with your feet full of blisters but he doesn't he serves them all gently humbly cleans 12 pairs of feet and here's the thing we think about Judas betraying him we

think about Peter denying him by morning all these feet will have abandoned him all of them the disciples were obsessed with the question who's the greatest who's the top dog out of the 12 of us you can tell us

Jesus who's number one who's going to be top Peter you can almost Peter say Peter saying oh well it's got to be me I mean I walked on water and if there was a Scottish disciple there he'd have said I right he looked like a submarine walking on that water see they were with Jesus for so long and yet they got it so wrong and he's still teaching right up to the end he's teaching them here about humility he humbled himself like this because he knew who he was and he was secure in who he was that he was the son of God that he was the one who was sent to do to seek and to save the lost he had come to die he had come to serve and he knew where he was going as he prays later on this evening in his prayer to his father

I'm coming to you now there's the key to Christian humility it's a healthy understanding of who we are and where we are going who we are members of God's family joint heirs with Christ where we are going to a place that's prepared ready waiting where Jesus will take us verses 6 to 11 completely king Peter Peter doesn't want him touching his feet doesn't want him cleaning his feet you're not going to clean my feet Lord and he goes from not me Lord to he goes completely the other way well if I need that then do all of me clean me whole and that's understandable when you look at his reaction it's understandable but it's not quite right because this is all symbolic and Peter's not getting the symbolism of what Jesus is doing Jesus tells Peter that when someone washes their whole selves and then they go out into the street it's their feet that get dirty and they then only need to clean their feet because it's only their feet that's dirty that's dusty here's what Jesus means when Jesus saves us our sins are washed away we are cleansed forever eternally cleansed from head to toe by his cleansing blood the red blood of Jesus washes whiter than white and it's a one shot deal but in everyday life we still sin and we need that sin that daily sin dealt with so it's not a whole person that needs to be cleansed we don't need to be resaved every day but we do need the cleansing the sin that we pick up daily the sins of our mouth of our thought the sins when we're stuck in traffic and how good is it that nobody can hear you inside the car when you're wanting somebody to shift at the lights and they don't shift all of that needs to be dealt with every day we don't need to be resaved every time we sin but we do need forgiveness and we do need restoration and if that doesn't happen if we don't deal with these things then the gap between us and him widens he doesn't move we do we move further away but if we confess our sins the promise is that he is faithful and he is just to forgive us our sins there's the guarantee psalmist in psalm 32 says then i acknowledge my sin to you and didn't cover it up i said i will confess my transgressions to the lord and you forgave me you forgave the guilt of my sin jesus still washes feet every single day he washes my feet and he washes your feet every single day i wonder what jesus was thinking as he washed judas's feet i wonder if he did a sloppy job or was he sad because he knew that judas would never really be clean i wonder what judas felt on the other hand i mean this is right before satan possesses him we didn't read it but look at verse 27 then after he had taken the mortal that's judas satan entered into him satan took possession of it and he goes off out into the darkness of the night there's a beautiful image there as he opens the door from the brightly lit upper room and he goes out and

[19:48] John says and it was dark in every sense of the word the last memory judas has of jesus is of the one that he's about to betray to his death washing his feet showing how much he loves him imagine being at this table tonight and jesus is coming to you next you're next in the queue to wash your feet to wash my feet what are our feet dirty with pride selfishness temper the bad stuff that we've picked up along the way even just today you're ashamed by that I am most christians know that jesus forgives but they don't fully appreciate that he cleanses that he cleanses repeatedly that he washes our dirty feet daily so we'll live cleansed that we'll live without condemnation that we'll live without shame that we'll live without guilt even though tomorrow when we get up we're going to get stuff wrong again we're going to sin again and there is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in christ and that's a wonderful thing to have written in black and white that we can actually go to and check that it's there and take comfort from it maybe maybe maybe maybe maybe don't light it on to folk but maybe inside you feel like damaged goods dirty ashamed guilty condemned either what you've done in your past life what you've done is dirty it's filthy in

God's eyes or what's been done to you is dirty or filthy in God's eyes Jesus uses two words there to talk about those whom he cleanses completely clean not just a nice thought but a guarantee

completely clean friends when Jesus washes you you are clean and then Jesus in verse 12 he goes back to the table and he then says right do you know do you understand what I've just done this this this fruit washing do you understand do you get the picture and there's two lessons that he's teaching them in this one in this in this one little thing here the first lesson is that humility involves serving each other not just

God we get the image the understanding that we're that we're serving God but do we get the full picture that we're that we're that we're serving other people as well the disciples they they argued about who's the greatest wash one another's feet you can imagine John saying am I going to wash Peter's feet he's got big feet they're horrible I hate I'm not touching him they wanted a throne they wanted to know who was top dog amongst them they didn't want a towel one one of the reasons that Jesus did this for his disciples on his last night was that he wanted to show them what love sacrificial love looked like he didn't hold back he didn't get somebody else to do it he did it himself and what he's done for them wasn't just about washing feet it was symbolic of something greater if we're not humbling ourselves and serving others we're missing the point we like being asked to do the good stuff we like being asked to maybe do something that raises our profile a little bit that puts us in our own mind maybe a rung or two further up the ladder do you know what I got asked to do do we like being asked to do the stuff that means we go down the ladder do we like being handed the toilet brush and told can you go and unblock that please humility involves serving each other not just

God secondly happiness comes from showing humility not just learning about it not just reading about it in books verse 17 where Jesus says blessed are you if you do this Christianity is a deeply practical religion it's not enough to have good theology to have strong theology if we don't live that out because if we don't live it out then it's dead theology how you treat people how you spend money your priorities how you spend your time it's all about how you see God how much you love God because your love of God your love of Jesus is proved by your service it's not earned by your service we don't serve for God to for our approval rating with God to go up but it's proof of life it proves that we are alive in Christ if we are simply obedient and serve blessed are you if you do them simple obedience it's like a soldier obeying orders even when that order disrupts his comfort if you saw the film 1917 the start of the film an officer comes to a soldier who's asleep under a tree and he shakes him awake and gives him a message and then the tale starts that brings him close to death again and again and again a good soldier obeys even when his comfort or her comfort is disrupted and then verses 18 to 20 in the end we're nearly done he's explaining things are you ever like when

I was a young Christian are you ever tempted to think well if I'd actually seen Jesus or if I actually saw a miracle happening that it would be easier for me to believe it would be easier to follow him because I'd be able to point to this concrete thing that I saw do you ever think that sorry to burst your bubble but no no Judas was side by side with Jesus every day for three years he was in the trenches of the deepest spiritual warfare on the face of the planet for three years he saw Jesus every day he witnessed every miracle that Jesus performed but he never loved

[28 : 17] Jesus he loved money more than he loved Jesus he saw Jesus love he experienced he was on the receiving end of Jesus love he sat under the best preaching that the world has ever witnessed that the world has ever heard and it didn't move him Jesus loved Judas we can see that here but Judas didn't love Jesus don't be like Judas don't be like Judas and there are ways in which we can all be a bit like Judas forgive me I don't mean to offend anybody but there are ways in which we can be very like Judas we come to church we hear Jesus preached we hear regularly

Sunday after Sunday maybe not so much in the middle of the week but Sunday after Sunday at least in the morning with you but you know the 21st century doesn't really move us like it did my parents or my grandparents but even so but even so there is hope because Jesus did not stop reaching out to Judas throughout their three years together he kept reaching out to Judas Judas could never accuse Jesus of not loving him of not of not trying to save him he didn't give up until we're told in verse 27 of this chapter that

Judas was possessed by Satan but shows us how far Jesus is willing to go to the last minute he holds out his arms and says come to me I love you I'm dying for you so serving the way Jesus did the way we see Jesus doing here is it's love at work it's love in action what's the one job that no one in your work in your school in your office in your home what's the one job that nobody likes doing okay do it do it live like Jesus serve others like

Jesus because you're doing it for the good of others show them Jesus show them Jesus have you humbled yourself to receive Jesus humble care or like Peter you won't let Jesus deal with you in his way for some of us letting Jesus care for us isn't really difficult he's there next on the hit list after Judas after

Jesus and he still washes every foot around that table that's what Jesus is saying here that's what his way is all about love Jesus love people Jesus passes us his towel for us to use who's he going to bring into our lives who's going to cross our paths this week from Jesus for us to reach out to for us to serve because that's what he does people don't come into our lives randomly or coincidentally it's with a purpose and for a plan and please don't be like Judas I care too much for all of you not to warn you about being like Judas and as we sit at the table tomorrow remember that he washes your feet every day every morning whenever we go to amen

[33 : 45] Lord that your word would speak to us this evening that you would challenge us in our hearts and in our minds yes but also in our lives in our walk and in our work that you would remind us that we are your servants and we are here to serve to serve one another but also to serve those who don't yet know you even those who will throw it in our face all we ask is for Jesus sake amen you or start û your to you you you