

# Do as I Have Done unto You

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- [ 0 : 00 ]     Seeking the Lord's help and blessing, let us turn back to the portion of scripture that we read in the Gospel according to John chapter 13.
- And we can read again from verse 14. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, he also ought to wash one another's feet.
- For I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. 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.
- If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. The fourth Gospel is unique in many respects.
- It is marvelously simple, yet it is boundless in its depth. The writer of the Gospel was John, who along with his brother James were disciples of Jesus.
- [ 1 : 10 ]     They were the sons of Zebedee, and they were fishermen by trade. His mother's name was Salome, who is believed to be a sister of Mary, the mother of Jesus.
- He, along with his brother James and Peter, were among the Lord's circle of three who were with Jesus on special occasions.
- Shortly before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans in 70 AD, John moved to Ephesus in modern-day Turkey.
- And he became the pastor of the church in Ephesus and had a special relationship also with other churches in this area, as we know from the letters to the seven churches that we have in Asia that we have in the book of Revelation.
- John's brother James was the first of the apostles to die. On the other hand, John was the last. All of the apostles made a violent death.
- [ 2 : 18 ]     However, we are told that John died peacefully in Ephesus at an advanced age around the year 100 AD. While in Ephesus, by order of the Roman Emperor, John was exiled to an island called Patmos.
- And while in Patmos, he was given a vision by Jesus, which is now written for us in the New Testament in the book of Revelation.
- This fourth gospel differs from the other gospels in that it makes no reference at all to the birth of Jesus. There is no reference to the baptism of Jesus.
- There is no reference to the transfiguration or to the institution of the Lord's Supper or what took place in the Garden of Gethsemane.
- However, it does make mention of the first miracle performed by Jesus in turning water into wine. And it also makes reference to the resurrection of Lazarus and here to the washing of the disciples' feet.
- [ 3 : 30 ]     And also we find in this gospel the discourse that took place between Jesus and his disciples in those final hours before Golgotha.

At the end of the gospel in chapter 21 and verse 31, John makes a clear statement of his precise purpose and intention in writing. He says, This morning we are going to look at this action undertaken by Jesus in the Abroam when he washed the feet of his disciples.

Now this is not the first time that we have looked at this event in the life of our Lord and I am sure that you will have heard many sermons upon it.

Nevertheless, we are apt to forget and we need to be reminded again and again of the Lord's teaching. What took place in the Bible is the first time that we have heard many sermons. What took place in the Abraham covers four chapters in John's Gospel.

But it all occurred in just a few hours. In John 13 to 16 is the most complete record that we have of what occurred and what was said that evening.

[ 5 : 14 ] Now the foot washing is a significant action given to us right at the beginning of the discourse that took place in the Abroam.

And it seems to be a deliberate action and not simply the usual act of courtesy. For we read in verse 8 that when Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.

Jesus answered him and said, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Now there is more than a hint in his answer to Peter that by washing the disciples' feet, Jesus is doing more than simply following the usual practice.

And we shall come back to that point in a moment. There is a sense in which this action of washing the disciples' feet was in itself a sign, or a prophetic action in which Jesus was showing forth his identity and the nature of his ministry.

Jesus and the disciples travelling by foot, Naturally, by the time that they arrived in the upper room, their feet were covered with dirt from the journey.

[ 6 : 33 ] Everyone faced the same problem. So at the entrance to every Jewish home was a large basin or jugs of water to wash the feet of those who would enter the home.

Now normally foot washing was regarded as a slave's task. The duty was always delegated to the lowest ranking servant that would be on site.

And when guests came, the servant was expected to go to the door and wash the traveller's feet. When Jesus and the disciples arrived at the upper room, everything was prepared and everything was ready, and they took all their places around what was probably a U-shaped table.

The food was on the table and the meal was about to begin. However, no servant had come to wash their feet. It is not clear whether this was an oversight on the part of the person who owned the home or a failure that can be attributed to one of the hired servants or some other cause.

We're just not told. What is clear is that it was a breach of protocol. Yet no, not one of the disciples was willing to step into the servant's role and sacrifice their own personal pride or social status in order to see that the needs of the group were made.

[ 8 : 06 ] The basin was ready. The towel was at hand. And everything necessary was within reach of all the disciples. But none of the twelve stepped up to the task.

With arguments constantly among them about who was the greatest, no one was voluntarily going to take up a towel and perform the task of a slave.

If the idea occurred to them, they looked upon it as being below their status. It was then that we see that Jesus acted. Jesus rose from the supper and laid aside his garments.

Notice it's in plural, the same in verse 12 when he took them on. He took off the outer garment. He took off the tunic and the belt. So he stood probably wearing nothing but a loincloth just like a slave.

Then Jesus took up the towel, which would have been a long linen cloth, and he tied it around his middle so that at the end of the towel he would be able to dry the disciples' feet after he had washed them with his hands.

[ 9 : 21 ] Jesus then poured water from the pitcher into the basin and knelt down to wash and dry the disciples' feet. 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.

How symbolic is his position as he kneels down before his disciples as a servant, for truly he was the servant.

Here he shows forth his identity as the father's servant. He is the one of whom God the father says, Behold my servant whom I have beheld, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth.

I have put my spirit upon him. He shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles. And all that he did in his life and all that he suffered in his life, including his death, was done as a servant to the father.

The servitude of Jesus is certainly one of the lessons that we are learning about here. Paul writes to the church at Philippi and 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 been found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

[ 11 : 08 ] And we have here, in the action of Jesus, these words being brought forth before us. The foot washing shows Jesus in the role of a servant.

It is a parable of his entire ministry, in which his thought was one of service.

Even as the Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life, a ransom for many. Secondly, the foot washing is symbolic of the benefits that Jesus procured to us through his sufferings and death on the cross of Golgotha.

We have only the reaction of one of the disciples recorded for us, that of Peter. We are told that when he cometh to Simon Peter, and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now, but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet.

[ 12 : 22 ] Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. In fact, the words, no part with me, is a phrase that is used with respect to inheritance.

So Peter may have linked these words of Jesus to participation in God's kingdom. He certainly shows to us that he wants to be linked with Jesus.

Spiritually, Jesus is saying to Peter, Unless I cleanse you from your sins, you will not share with me in the benefits of my redemptive work.

And Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Peter's reply to Jesus is something that is highly characteristic of Peter.

He is very impulsive, excitable, and very zealous. But Peter here is brought before us as one with more love than knowledge, and more feeling than spiritual discernment.

[ 13 : 28 ] He is taken aback by the thought of having no part with Jesus and his kingdom. And so he cries out that Jesus may wash him all over his hands, head, as well as his feet.

If the interest of Jesus depends on that. If the interest in Jesus depends on it. Great love can be consistent with slowness to comprehend spiritual truth.

One commentator says, the passionate, strong expression of Peter in this verse is just the language of a warm-hearted but dull-minded disciple, just beginning to understand as if light had suddenly flashed on him.

Peter shows us that a person may have faith and love and yet be destitute of clear knowledge. There may be many believers who like Peter may have, who may make many mistakes and who may lack understanding and like Peter have a heart that is right with God.

This brings, this Jesus brings before us in his answer to Peter objection of having his feet washed. These words that were spoken to Peter by Jesus and the shadow of the cross has to do with cleansing.

[ 14 : 58 ] That cleansing without which anyone belongs to Christ. That cleansing which is given by the cross alone. Then cometh he to Simon Peter and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

Jesus answered and said unto him, what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.

If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in my inheritance. The deeper meaning is that there is no place in his fellowship for those who have not been cleansed by his atoning death.

Whether Jesus began with Simon Peter it is not quite clear. But the reaction of Peter to Jesus washing his feet is the one that is recorded for us.

Whatever the other disciples may have been thinking, maybe their embarrassment may have led to their silence. But Peter is one who does his thinking aloud. Lord, dost thou wash my feet?

[ 16 : 11 ] As if Peter was shocked as he feels and sees the insuperability of the inappropriateness of what is happening. So he raises an objection to what Jesus was doing.

Peter completely failed to understand or to realise that what Jesus was doing was a foreshadowing of all the events of this most memorable night and the hours that were to follow.

Jesus answered Peter's request, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet but is clean every whit. Another translation would be he who is bathed has no need of washing anything except his feet but is clean all together.

The imagery is that of a person going to a feast he will bathe at home and then when he arrives he need only wash his feet which had been soiled by the dirty roads so he can sit then at the table wholly clean.

The first washing or bathing points out the washing of the whole body which is not necessary to repeat. It brings before us the permanent character of the event.

[ 17 : 28 ] He that is washed he that is bathed needs not but to wash his feet. the person who is bathed is not simply one who once upon a time was washed but one who continues in the character of the washed one.

Such a person has no need for washing except the washing of his feet. Obviously Jesus here is not speaking about the physical but about the spiritual and very often that is what he does.

In chapter 3 he speaks about spiritual rebirth. In chapter 4 he speaks about spiritual water. In chapter 6 about spiritual nourishment which he as the bread of life provides.

And here in verse 10 he is speaking about spiritual cleansing. Here Jesus is speaking of the washing of our sins and our justification.

He who has been cleansed by my blood he has been justified has no need of washing anything except his feet. A person who has been justified has no need now but of sanctification.

[ 18 : 50 ] What's justified is an act never to be repeated while sanctification is a continuous work. Justification is once for all act while sanctification is progressive.

There is such a thing has been cleansed altogether. Every wit he says. All the sins forgiven. Now he needs only one thing namely sanctification.

It is as if Jesus is saying he that is justified and pardoned by me is entirely washed from his sins and only needs the daily forgiveness of the daily defilement that he contracts and travelling through a sinful world.

Once washed justified and accepted by me he hath cleaned before God. Once joined to Christ and cleansed in his blood he hath completely absolved and free from all sports of guilt and are continued and counted without blame before God.

But for all this you need every day as you walk through the world to confess your daily sins and failures and seek pardon. It is very striking to observe that even the poor and the weak and the erring disciples Jesus says you are clean.

[ 20 : 16 ] You are clean. He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet but is clean every whit. Maybe Jesus is also pointed to the fact that anyone who has identified with him anyone who has become identified with him by faith and has been washed by him has no need to supplement that washing.

If you have been justified by Jesus our sins washed away there is no need to try and supplement that washing by our own works or whatever.

And then he says to Peter what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter.

Jesus does not tell when it shall be but he does prophesy that one day Peter will understand what at the present moment is hidden from him.

And this is often the case with the disciples. For instance when Jesus said to the Jews destroy this temple and in three days I will raise it up. Then said the Jews forty and six years was this temple and building and will thou raise it up in three days.

[ 21 : 34 ] But he spoke of the temple of his body. Then we read when therefore he was risen from the dead his disciples remembered that he had said this unto them and they believed the scripture and the word which Jesus entered into Jerusalem we are told these things understood not his disciples at the first but when Jesus was glorified then remembered they that these things were written of him and that they had done these things unto him.

Jesus is going to remind them in the upper room but the comforter which is the Holy Ghost whom the Father will send in my name he shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.

It is doubtful that Peter or anyone else of the disciples grasp the basis of the cleansing foreshadowed by the washing of the feet that lay ahead before the cursed death of the cross but what Peter understood was enough to prompt his reply not Lord not my feet only but also my hands and my head today there are many who can have at least some understand of the physical aspects of the cross but who yet cannot comprehend it spiritually until like Peter they are enlightened by the Holy Spirit that is how the Lord works the crucifixion of the cross can be so confusing to us until we are enlightened by the Holy Spirit then we receive an understanding of what the cross all means and what

Golgotha all means and the disciples were to come to the place where they would understand what the washing of their feet meant your need today is to understand that to be linked with Jesus and receive or share the inheritance with Jesus you need the cleansing you need the washing that Jesus alone can provide in many ways the Lord can deal with us in ways that at present we do not understand and just like he said to Peter he says to me and you what what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter there are many providential dealings in our lives to which we must confess that we do not understand now and of which at present we cannot see the wisdom in it all just as the washing of the feet puzzled Peter so many events in our providence leaves us puzzled and perplexed but we must believe that we shall know hereafter the full purpose the why and the needs be of each and of all

God's providential dealings with us in sickness in sorrow in bereavement in disappointment we must summon up faith and patience and hear the words of Jesus what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter you see what is required of me and you is not to understand everything but what is required of me and you is to believe to believe that all things work out together for good to them that love the Lord to those who are called according to his purpose now thirdly Jesus did this deed in the full consciousness that the father had given all things into his sons and that he was come from God and went to God so at this hour he wanted to reassure his disciples he wanted to set his seal to his own people who were in the world for in verse one we are told having loved his own who were in the world he loved them to the end to the end literally means that he loved them to perfection he loved them to the uttermost he loved them with total fullness of love which in a short time was to be expressed in his suffering in his death as well as in his resurrection greater love hath no man than this that a man laid down his life for his friends and the upper whom

[ 26 : 25 ] Jesus is going to demonstrate in action and in word how that love is being poured down his love to them was not going to end because he is leaving them physically for he is teaching them of the continuance of his love for them his own are the object of his love and to the end is the extent of his love having loved his own which were in the world he loved them to perfection he loved them to the end some may ask how could Jesus be so preoccupied with the needs of others when he knew what was laid out before him well I think the answer is given in these words Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the father and in verse three he knew that he was returning unto the father who had sent him into the world he knew that the way back to the father was the way of the cross he knew that he would soon complete the purpose and mission given to him by the father in sending him unto a prophetic action by which he was showing forth his identity and the nature of his ministry but fourthly it also served as an example to us here he says for

I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you 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 if you know these things happy are ye if ye do them we know that what filled his mind that evening because it is reflected in what he spent those hours in the upper room talking about he immersed himself in personal ministry to the twelve disciples he was consumed with the task of strengthening and reassuring them preparing them for the trial they would soon endure he was preparing them for a lifetime of ministry that would follow it is truly short time is a truly short time is physical and visible presence on earth would come to an end and he knew that such would cause confusion and bewilderment in the minds and hearts of the disciples that would set them on a path of fear and in his action of washing their feet he was giving them a lesson on humility and the way that we ought to serve one another not only was it showing forth his identity and the nature of his own ministry but it was also serving as an example to the disciples and to me and to you a lesson for me and you on humility and the way that we ought to serve one another a parallel passage in

Luke gives some insight into just what the disciples were thinking about that evening and we mentioned that just a few moments ago they were preoccupied with the issue of personal rank within the circle of fellowship as they reclined around the table according to Luke a dispute also rose among them as to which of them was to be regarded as the greatest now as we read the gospels we notice that this was not a new topic of discussion among them it was an extension of a long running feud between the twelve as the fort or was striving for positions of high honour and it was in the midst of such that Jesus performed the disciples feet Jesus had previously taught them if anyone would be first he must be last of all and servant of all he that is least among you is the one who is great everyone who extols himself will be humbled and he who humbles himself will be exalted if he had simply given mind and heart to his teaching one of the twelve would have washed the others feet they would have mutually shared the task the others may have been ashamed of the fact that

Jesus was doing what they should have done for him and what they should have done for one another but we read here 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 you call me master and lord and you say well for so I am if I then your lord and master have washed your feet ye also ought to wash one another's feet for I have given you an example that you should do behind the feet of his disciples and having answered Peter's objection and also spoken of the tragedy of Judas he now returns to dress himself and he takes his place at the table and he says to his disciples know ye what I have done to you are you grasping the practical teaching of what I have just done to you he says to his disciples that it is right to call him master or teacher or rabbi one that teaches with authority and also right to call him lord the owner of all things the heir of all things he endorses this way of speaking he commands the disciples for it for it where they were truly expressions that pointed to his true identity now when

Jesus here is washing the disciples feet we must remember that he is not instituting a new ordinance that of feet washing but a principle or an inner attitude that of humility and that of an eagerness to serve one another verily verily I say unto you the servant is not greater than his lord neither he that is sent greater than he that sent it if ye know these things happy are ye if ye do them no act of service for one another should be beneath us Jesus makes it clear here that his action was no casual event but was set forth as an example that they were to follow notice notice that

[ 34 : 24 ] Jesus did not say happy are you if these things are done to you but rather happy are you if you do them to others we so often make ourselves unhappy by thinking that we are not treated with the kindness to which we consider ourselves to be entitled but here we are told to think more of others and to think less of ourselves for I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you how much we need to give heed and learn from the words of Jesus for I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you that we should humble ourselves to serve one another all those who are washed by the blood of

Jesus then it is our duty to serve one another for I have given you an example that you should do as I have done to you now we noted already what he said there to Peter what I do thou knowest not now but thou shalt know hereafter and many years after Peter wrote a letter and in his letter he said this ye all of you be subject one to another and be clothed with humility for God resisteth the proud and giveth grace to the humble and where did Peter learn that well I'm sure that he reflected back the years to what happened in the upper room when Jesus washed his feet to be washed by the blood of Jesus and serving one another is the greatest position that anyone could have in this world it is a position that is commended by our

Lord to serve one another and to serve one another for here we are told if you know these things happy are you If ye do them.

If ye do them. As we already said. There is no greater service we can do. There is no greater position. For anyone than to serve one another.

And to serve one another in the Lord. To serve one another following the example. Of our Lord and our Saviour.

[ 37 : 39 ] If ye know these things. Happy are ye. If ye do them. May the Lord bless our thoughts. Let us pray.