

The Final Days of Jesus

WASHING FEET

Tuesday, March 10

Reading: John 13:12-20

John 13:13 "You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. **14** Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. **15** I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

With bewildered faces, the barefoot disciples watched as Jesus returned to His place at the table. Their minds were having trouble wrapping around the idea of Jesus, their Lord and Master, taking the job of the lowest slave. And that is exactly what Jesus intended. Instead of arguing about who was the greatest, He wanted them to think about how they could serve one another. It was an object lesson in humility.

There is one disciple at the table who will not learn Jesus' lesson. Judas Iscariot has already agreed to betray Jesus to His enemies. Jesus quotes from Psalm 41:9 where King David laments over the betrayal of his friend Ahithophel who deserted him in favor of David's rebellious son Absalom. But unlike David's situation, Judas' betrayal was not a surprise to Jesus. He warns the other disciples in advance to strengthen their faith. Unlike Judas, they had accepted Him and by doing so showed their faith in God. They were His ambassadors and those who received their message would be accepted by God the Father.

LESSON ONE: "Wash One Another's Feet." Some people believe that Jesus is instituting a third ordinance here (with baptism and communion). But Jesus makes it clear that this was an object lesson. Humility cannot be a planned action to be observed at a particular time. It must be the spontaneous outflow of a servant's heart. Nowhere in the New Testament is foot washing commanded nor is there any reference to it in the writings of the early church until the 4th century. However, Christians ARE repeatedly commanded to display a humble, servant attitude. The inner attitude of the heart is far more important than the outward action. The action is meaningless without a servant's heart behind it. I have witnessed several foot washings and they are very meaningful and personal experiences. No Christian should say that any act of service is beneath them. This is to despise the lesson Jesus taught here. We are all called to do whatever is necessary to serve others and God will bless us when we do. Has pride ever stopped you from answering God's call to serve someone? What is something you can do today to humbly serve someone else?

LESSON TWO: "Whoever accepts Me accepts the One who sent Me." Jesus wanted His disciples to remember that believing in Him was the same as believing in the Father who sent Him. By rejecting Christ, Judas had also rejected God the Father and sealed his fate. Many people today say they believe in God but refuse to put their faith in Jesus Christ. All the good things they do and say are meaningless for their salvation. The only way to God is through Jesus Christ. Perhaps you have friends who will not turn to Christ because they are "good enough" and God will surely let them into heaven. Pray for these people that the Holy Spirit will open their eyes to the fact that Jesus is "the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me" (John 14:6).