

The Final Days of Jesus

DIRTY FEET

Monday, March 9

Reading: John 13:1-11

**John 13:8** "No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me." **9** "Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!" **10** Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you."

It is the night before the crucifixion. Jesus and His disciples are celebrating Passover in an upper room in Jerusalem. Jesus began the evening by telling them "I have eagerly desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. For I tell you, I will not eat it again until it finds fulfillment in the kingdom of heaven" (Luke 22:15-16). But while Jesus is speaking of suffering, the disciples are arguing about who would be the greatest in the kingdom (see Luke 22:24-27). It is probably this argument that prompted Jesus to the action recorded in John 13.

It was customary for a host to provide a servant to wash the dust from a guest's feet. However, the disciples had felt this menial task was beneath them, so Jesus took the role of a servant and began to wash their feet. In stunned silence, the disciples watched as their Master washed their dirty feet. Peter, as usual, could not keep his mouth shut. He refused to let Jesus "humiliate" Himself by washing his feet. Even Jesus' assurance that he will understand later would not persuade the apostle.

Jesus turned Peter's rejection into an opportunity to teach a spiritual truth. He told Peter that unless he is washed, he can have no relationship with Christ. He is not talking about physical washing or baptism, but of Christ washing away his sin. Peter now does an about-face and requests that Jesus give him an entire bath. Jesus continues His spiritual lesson by saying that once one is washed from their sins (bathed) they do not need to be washed again. All that is necessary is to confess the daily sins (wash his feet) that they commit. After His object lesson is finished, Jesus reaffirms the major purpose of His actions - to teach His followers the importance of humility. Since Jesus Himself came to be a servant, we as His followers should follow His example.

LESSON ONE: "Jesus Knew That the Hour Had Come." Notice that Jesus knows that this is His last night with these men. He knows that Satan has already used Judas to betray Him and that the cross loomed before Him. He knew all this before the religious leaders, Pilate, or anyone else had made a move against Him. On top of this, Jesus knew that God the Father had "put all things under His power." Earlier Jesus had said it this way, "I lay down My life – only to take it up again. No one takes it from Me, but I lay it down of My own accord. I have authority to lay it down and authority to take it up again" (John 10:17-18). Jesus was in complete control of everything that was happening. He still is in complete control today! How does this make you feel about trusting Him with your life?

LESSON TWO: "Wash Your Feet." When we are saved "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). But we are not perfect. We still sin and need to "wash our feet." Sin hurts our relationship with God. Confession brings us back. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).