

“Travel Stains”

John 13: 1 – 17

This portion of scripture is alive with many truths, but I would like to focus on two which are full of significance; comfort as well as warning. Jesus washed the disciples’ feet and tried to help them understand what he did to them and how he gave them an example as to how they should act toward others. Peter said he did not want Jesus to wash his feet, but Jesus told him that if he would not allow Jesus to wash his feet, he had no part with Jesus and then Peter said if that is so then give me a whole bath. Jesus answered in (John 13:10), “A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” So, what is the difference between bathing and washing? Let’s consider what that meant in the time of this scriptural setting.

An illustration of this would be a wedding guest who performed all the sanitary and ceremonial rites and then travelled to the wedding and marriage feast by walking through the dusty streets and on arrival his feet are washed free from dust, “travel stains” which he could not help contacting along the way.

Those who are “in Christ”, have received a great cleansing in the act of repentance and self-surrender now should be living by faith in the cleansing power of the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Accepting Christ as Savior is no guarantee of instant perfection, but rather the help that is needed to live for him is available day by day as the journey through life continues. None of this is determined by merits or attainments on our part, but through the free forgiving grace of God in Christ.

When we come to Jesus for cleansing from our sins they are indeed washed away, however there is a need to be constantly on guard concerning our spiritual condition. We live in a wayward and evil world and we are in constant touch with its contaminating influence so again we are reminded that; “A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet.” (John 13:10).

Surely, we have begun our walk with Jesus and with the sincere resolution to follow him closely and do his will. But can we say that our journey, day by day through the dusty roads of this life has been free from all stains? If our guard is left down only for a moment the possibility of being stained is very real with the need to have our feet washed.

We dare not fall into the pattern of thinking that we can take care of ourselves and imagine that we are immune from the defilement around us. Only by unbroken friendship with Jesus and entire surrender to his gracious and healing power can we avoid falling away from him. So, in each day to come let us each cultivate divine fellowship and remember that we have no part with the Savior unless we maintain a childlike willingness to submit to his purifying touch and allow him to wash away the ‘travel stains.’

Much of what is written here comes down to the prayer life of the believer. Let me share a little story with you entitled; “How Much Does Prayer Weigh? This is a story of a grocery store owner who tried to weigh one.

A tired-looking woman came into the store and asked for enough food to make a dinner for her children. The grocer asked her how much she could spend. The frail woman answered, “I have nothing to offer but a little prayer.” The storekeeper was not very sentimental or religious, so he said, half-mockingly, “Write it on paper and I will weigh it.” So, she did. The grocer placed the paper on the weight side of his old-fashioned scales. Then he began piling food on the other side; but to his amazement, the scale would not go down. He finally became flustered and gave the woman a large bag of food. The grocer never saw the woman again, but he treasures the slip of paper upon which the woman’s prayer had been written - “Please, Lord, give us this day our daily bread.”

Pastor Garry Culler