

# Why Washing Jesus' Feet was Necessary!

## Overview

And she was a little upset at me going, come on, like, and then, of course, my other one's like, yeah, well, I told her to sew my jacket a week ago and then she walks away. But I took that away and I want to share with you because it made me realize something, that children are children, which means their worldview and their life and their day is that it's about them and rightfully so. They're 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, whatever. They go to school and their last memory of me is me saying bye when I drop them off.

And then basically their memory of life with me picks up the moment they bust through that front door and say, hi, mom. Anything that happens in between that space is not relevant. It's also not even existent to them because their lived experience of relationship with me is only the time that they have with me, correct? And I really doubt that they're sitting in class learning spelling or playing with their friends in the field going, hmm, I wonder what mom is doing.

No, because apparently they think I'm doing absolutely nothing, all day. And I'm supposed to be fully ready for them when they come in. And I share that with you because I find that sometimes, I don't know about you, I'm speaking for myself, but I hope some people can relate. Sometimes we read scripture and we read about the life of Jesus and we read and we're like, oh, yeah, I totally know it because we know what is going to happen.

Just like as we're anticipating Good Friday and Easter Sunday, we know that the cross is coming and we know that the resurrection is coming and that's all good news. But because we know, we miss things, right? And the reality is this, and I was just reminded of that as I dove into Matthew, Mark, Luke and John, is that even those who wrote the scriptures, each one of them were writing about their limited but true experiences of Jesus himself. But this is why having four and having different perspectives offers a fuller picture.

But yet, in the midst of it all, only one person knew everything. And as we read the text it started with, it was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew. He knew from the beginning that he was going to be here at this moment.

He knew that the time was getting close. He knew what he had to do. And so I invite us as we reflect today and with the things I'm going to bring up, is that from the posture and perspective of only Jesus knew. And so what is it that he knows that we need right now, 20 Church, for us in this place as a gathered people, but also for you individually as you serve and live your kingdom life outside of these walls.

And while we know that the work of washing the disciples feet was really a metaphor and a symbol for something greater. This text has been taught to talk about servant leadership, about humility and all of that is true. But for today, I believe that the Lord is bringing us to a specific posture and it culminates to one word. In a few passages ahead of John, which we will read later today, John 17, Jesus prays this and he says, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us that the world may believe that you have sent me.

He says, Father, as I am in you and you are in me, may they also be in you. May they also be in us. That was Jesus praying for all people amongst his disciples. There's something about the heart of God that sometimes we might forget or miss.

But here we're reminded that the whole point of all this is to be with God and with each other. There is a holy union that existed before the creation of the world as we read in Genesis, as we read and know in Genesis. There is the Father, Son and Spirit, the Trinity that existed before time existed, before the creation of all things that we know and see and that existed was God himself in perfect union, in perfect unity. And when Jesus is praying this, he's tapping into that and saying, please let these people experience the fullness of what you have for them.

A divine unity that cannot be apart from kingdom life, apart from life with the Lord himself. That's what he was praying. And then when we go back to washing the disciples feet, and you see Peter going, I can imagine him sitting here. Sandals, make your feet dirty. And back then, they were only walking in sandals all day long, days on end. And it was dusty. And so this was a job that no one wanted to do for anybody, let alone for your friends. But yet sitting here, people probably lined up around a table or in a row.

One by one, Jesus prepared himself and washed his friends' feet, one by one. And Peter, when it was his, he's like, no. No, you can't do this. You are my Lord. it was hard for him because this idea of God, this idea of someone that has authority over him, to do something that was beneath him, that was beneath his, his authority, that was, that was underneath. That's not for you to do. But yet, what was Jesus' response? He says, unless, unless I wash you, you have no part with me.

Church, that is the one verse in chapter 13, verse 8, that just stood out as I sat with it this whole week. And paired with Jesus' prayer in chapter 17 that says, like, as I am in you, Father, and you are in me, let them also be in us. The word that came out is found in the New Testament, Testament, and it's the word fellowship. And when you read it, it actually starts existing after the first church established in the Church of Acts.

And the word fellowship, also known in Greek, like it's called *koinonia*, that's where the word comes from, it's actually defined as shared participation in community. Shared participation. And I want to bring out two critical things for us to walk away with when it comes to fellowship. And why Jesus was focusing on this through demonstrating the Lord's Supper and through washing his disciples' feet when he had days, less than days, before the cross and his resurrection.

Unless I wash you, you have no part in me. Fellowship can only happen through the necessity of service. And I know, I think we know this, but I think there's something deeper that gets drawn out when we really sit with this truth, because it made me realize that as a follower of Jesus, sometimes I think service is optional. Does that make sense?

Sometimes I think service is based on when I can, when I want, or it could be limited to this outside optical, okay, if I do this, check, check, I serve people, I did the good thing. But the thing about what Jesus says is a lot more than just do something and therefore you are with me. He's saying unless I do this, unless I actually serve you this way, you have no part in me. There's no participation in the type of fellowship that God has ordained for his people.

So there is a, this essence of, there's like a critical nature that I think even for myself, I've overlooked. It's not optional, but then is it legalistic? Is it like, oh man, like I just have to go and serve everybody and even if I don't have time for myself, I've got to do everything for everyone else. No. It's not. Jesus was foreshadowing the cross, for sure. But it narrows down to this difficulty of Peter sitting and having a hard time allowing Jesus to wash his feet. Underneath the difficulty was a wrestling, a very human struggle of not being able to receive.

Peter found it hard to receive this act of service from his Lord. Totally understandable, right? Because it's easy when things are not embarrassing or when things are not in the nitty-gritty, when things are just like, I'm doing, you ask someone how they're doing, I'm doing all right. But when you go into the toe cracks of life, when you go into the dirt underneath your feet of where you've stepped and walked, when someone gets to see the calluses on your foot, you hide those.

Man, I get pedicures and I'm embarrassed and I don't want people to see my feet. I want them to look nice so that it's not embarrassing. So imagine, it's like, because that is the way of the world. Our world subtly teaches us that we are to handle things on our own and that we do things on ourselves, by ourselves.

And when people were praying and saying and proclaiming Hosanna when Jesus was walking through, they were called, if they were Jewish, they knew, man, he's like, he must be the Savior that we've been waiting for. Praise his name. It was a declaration of praise, but also a declaration of a need for a Savior. But the amazing thing is that no, no one there actually knew the fullness of what they needed to be saved from.

Does that make sense? They knew that they wanted saving and rescue from their oppression and circumstances and valid, 100% they needed that. But Jesus came for so much more and that moment where Peter was sitting there and struggling, going, no, you can't do this. It was yet another picture of the limited scope as humans we have on the heart of the kingdom.

The things that are woven and deep, the things that Jesus came to save us, are not just the things that are circumstantial and situational, but it's for the freedom in the heart. It's to realize that in that fellowship, in the unity that is experienced in Father, Son, and Spirit, there is no shame. There is no guilt. There's no piece of you that cannot be exposed.

There's not a part that is too ugly that cannot be seen and loved and known. That's an image I have of just being willing to show people the toe cracks, my toe cracks and dirt of life, my calluses. And he's saying, unless you let me do this and unless I serve you this way, the fellowship is not there. You have no part in me and I have no part in you, unless you know how to receive in full. It's not, it's not based on all, like, our circumstances. It's not based on how much we want to receive. It's saying, if you allow me fully, you will learn to receive fully. And we're on this sanctifying journey in our whole lives to release more and more to Jesus, but he says here, he's like, unless this happens, we're playing a part.

Unless this happens, there is no part. And I sense this, this critical nature of this time and moment for us because I started with telling you how wonderful it's been to get to know some of you. And as you let me into your life, I let you into my life. Even the way we pray for each other is no longer general. The way he washes disciples' feet, every single foot, every single toe. He didn't just take them, tell them to jump in a pool and wait around and say, clean yourselves and say, job done. He made them sit and watch each other and witness it. Then he went person by person and he cleansed them one by one because that matters.

Because you can't rush and blanket the community. You can't do that and we can't do that. And so friends, there's an invitation for us as 20 Church and as a people of God to be in real fellowship. To be in a union where we are partaking in each other in a way where God has taught us to receive from him and in that way we give and receive from each other. Amen. Like beyond the comforts of just the day, but in the foot washing kind of way. You don't have to let everyone see your toe cracks. I'm not saying just go everywhere, but I'm saying who are those people in our life at this moment?

Who are the people in this church that it's easy to come in on a Sunday and say you've had a good week. See you later. Who are the people? And I'm gonna tell you from my perspective as someone in her 40s in a community that has so much wisdom and experience with the Lord. I said this probably in my first sermon last year. I said pour into me. Do it and I'm gonna speak on behalf of a generation who needs you. That's why we're here. We need each other. We need to partake in the living and breathing unity of Christ and in through Christ because every season comes with amazing blessings and gifts, but also trials and tribulations. And a week ago we were praying in the back with a couple people and when I was asked, hey, do you have anything? Do you need prayer for?

I'm like, oh, and I said, oh, yeah a few things and as I spoke it kept coming out. There was like, oh this health issue and this and this and this and this and I was like, oh, okay. There was actually a lot. Can you please pray for me? And then people sitting around those men and women were saying, oh, I remember distinctly might have been you Alfred or a few other people saying, I remember what it was like to be where you are. Partaking. It doesn't mean you, sometimes it doesn't mean that you're doing anything super tangible. It just means allowing each other in each other's lives intimately.

Shaving away the external things that keep us apart because really when we come down to what all of us have dirty feet, that's the only thing that we have in common. We need cleansing. Amen. We need our feet washed. So why is it that sometimes we operate like some of our feet are cleaner than others and we don't or my feet are pretty clean right now. We don't need you. The invitation to fellowship is a deep need for Jesus and a deep need for Savior and a deep need for cleansing and what the way we receive that from the Lord is the way we're called to live in community and fellowship. Amen.

And so the other part from the text I want to draw some insight to today is that fellowship is the blessing from doing what we know. Jesus finishes this text and says to his disciples after he says there's no servant greater than his master. There's no messenger greater than the one who sent him. He goes now that you know these things you will be blessed if you do them.

So notice that both statements have a if you do this then this happens or unless you do this, this won't happen. There's action that creates or causes a circumstance of some sort and in this case you will be blessed if you do what you know. We started off by saying how Jesus knew right in the beginning 13 he went. Jesus knew that the hour had come to leave this world and to go to the Father and having loved his own who were in this world he loved them to the end. So because he loved he chose to be faithful and obedient to the end.

Because he knew he committed and took action. Then it says Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power and that he had come from God and was returning to God and because he knew that it says so he got up from his meal. He took out his outer clothing and he began to wash his disciples feet. Because he knew these things because he knew the will of God he did what he knew.

And then he calls for his disciples and us to do the same thing. But also notice that twice in this exact text he goes to Peter he goes you won't understand now but you will later. And then after he does his foot washing he goes do you understand what I have done for you? Church to move from knowledge to understanding truly involves doing what we know.

Because if we understand it becomes who we are and what we do. That is the call of Jesus for his disciples. Because as we know in the New Testament, we see religious leaders the entire time of Jesus' ministry fighting him asking him manipulative questions to set him up for failure because why? Because it contradicted their knowledge of what a Savior was supposed to look like and do and be.

We can get trapped in a deception that what we know is enough. But as Pastor Dave always preaches if it doesn't if you know in your knower, right? You got to know in your knower and your knower is not in here. It comes in as knowledge but it must turn into understanding and when it becomes understanding it gets lived out because it's written on your heart. It is not the letter of the law, the spirit of the law is written on the tablets of our hearts Church. And he's saying now that you know these things you will be blessed if you do them. So it's just pointing back to the same thing saying Church we got to do and be the fellowship that he has called in Korea to live. And I don't know your stories and your circumstances.

I don't know your dirty toe cracks and your calluses, but I'm sure that you got them. And that's a good thing because again, we might not look alike, but we all got toe cracks and calluses, right? And so the invitation is who are we going to invite to see and clean the dirt on this journey that we're on? Who are we going to let in our life to do that here and also out there?

How do we do that as a community? How to become that fellowship of believers in Acts 2 where it says God will add to their numbers though for those are being saved as we are in fellowship breaking bread gathering in prayer and eating together. God says Jesus says here that if we do these things we will be blessed because the blessing is in experiencing the fullness of the union that he has and he's bringing us in as we have a life in Jesus. Church, I'm just gonna ask you to take a minute and seek the Lord.

Just seek the Lord for a moment and I'd like to end today with Jesus's prayer over us. His words to be poured over to us as we ask the Lord, how are you inviting me into a place of fellowship with you and with others, God? What does it mean for me, God, to become a person whose heart is like yours because you did not come to be served but to serve. How do I need to learn to receive from others and from you? So that I have more to give to those that you've brought in my midst. Father, just as you are in me and I am in you, may they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. I have given them the glory that you gave me that they may be the one as we are one. I in them and you in me so that they may be brought to complete unity.

Then the world will know that you sent me and you have loved them even as you have loved me. Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am and to see my glory. The glory you have given me because you love me before the creation of the world.

Church, can you rise if you are able to and just sing one more time together.

Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Lord, Lord, we lift up your name with hearts full of praise.  
Be exalted, O Lord, my God. Hosanna in the highest. Lord, we lift you up.  
Lord, we lift up your name with our hearts full of praise.  
Be exalted, O Lord, my God. Hosanna, Hosanna in the highest. Hosanna in the highest.  
Now may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you now and always and forevermore. Amen.

Be well church and make sure you have some coffee up front and stay for a few minutes.