

Introduction:

- Lessons in humility.
 - During the American Revolution a man in civilian clothes rode past a group of soldiers repairing a small defensive barrier. Their leader was shouting instructions, but making no attempt to help them. Asked why by the rider, he retorted with great dignity, "Sir, I am a corporal!" The stranger apologized, dismounted, and proceeded to help the exhausted soldiers. The job done, he turned to the corporal and said, "Mr. Corporal, next time you have a job like this and not enough men to do it, go to your commander-in-chief, and I will come and help you again." It was none other than George Washington. (Today in the Word, March 6, 1991.)
 - During the civil war, a young corporal came riding into the camp of the northern army. Seeing a wanton looking old man, he handed him his sword and sheath and asked him to polish it while he walked away to the officers tent. The next day, a meeting of the officers was held early morning. What surprise must have been on the corporals face when he discovered that it was General Ulysses Grant that had polished his sword and sheath and returned it.
 - There are some lessons in life that are very humbling...but those lessons are not soon forgotten!
- John 13:1-17 NLT
 - When you read the book of John, you read an account of action that none of the other Gospels refer to. When you read the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, John makes this story stand out to all others in matters of importance.
 - For example: Vs 1. "*Now he loved them to the very end.*" I thought that would have been the cross. vs 7. "*You don't understand now but someday you will.*" We have to look beyond the event of the washing of feet. vs 15 "*I have given you an example to follow.*" Do as I have done. vs. 17 "*Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.*"
 - We see in this passage the prophetic action symbolic of Jesus death. The betrayal is mentioned in verse 2 so the reader connects the foot washing with the death of Jesus.
 - Some how what happens at the foot washing and what happen at the Passover and what happens on the cross is all tied together.
- Lets begin our journey through the word.

I. Washing Dirty Feet**A. The context**

1. When one walked along the road, it was not paved but dusty. Ie. Typical road in Zambian bush. You get dust all over your feet!
2. It was typical that when you entered into someones home to share a meal that the servant of that house would wash the feet of the guests. Jesus more than likely 'set this story up' by telling the servant to be gone this night. "According to the Midrash on Ex 21:2 the washing of a masters feet could not be required by a servant. As a sign of devotion a disciple could occasionally wash the feet of their teacher or rabbi." (The Gospel According to John 13-21, Raymond Brown p.564)
3. In our story, there is no servant at the house.
 - a) Murmuring...Peter and John must have forgotten that small detail.
 - b) Murmuring...somebody should at least wash Jesus' feet, but what would everyone else think of me if I did that? It might demote me in the eyes of my peers.
 - c) Murmuring...I could get stuck with job all the time if I do it.
 - d) Murmuring...maybe if I wait long enough someone else will do it.

B. Jesus humbles himself.

1. At just the right time, after the disciples have had a chance to think about the fact that they did not get their feet washed when they came in, Jesus stands up takes off His outer garment and wraps a towel around waist and begins to wash their feet.
 - a) Prophetic picture of Jesus standing at the right hand of the Father, taking off His heavenly garment to put on humanity.
 - b) This foot washing is almost as if Jesus is acting out Luke 12:37 *“The servants who are ready and waiting for his return will be rewarded. I tell you the truth, he himself will seat them, put on an apron, and serve them as they sit and eat!”* (Luke 12:37, NLT)
2. None there were deserving of what Jesus was doing.
3. None there had earned what Jesus was doing.
4. In their minds, all who were there were ‘above’ what Jesus was doing. That is why they were not first to wash feet.
5. Jaws dropped when Jesus stood up and wrapped a towel around himself. The embarrassment/shame of not washing others feet was now becoming the greatest lesson for them. What Jesus is wanting them to see was divinity putting on humanity in order to raise them up.
6. So, rather than begin with a lecture he gave them an example.
- C. *“You don't understand now what I am doing but someday you will.”* vs 7 Is spoken to everyone but aimed at Peter. vs 8. *Unless you let me do this....you won't belong to me.* This puts the burden of action on the disciples if they want what Jesus is doing to have effect on them. The effect is not the washing of feet but the cleansing that will come by faith in the work of Christ on the cross. The foot washing is pointing to that simple understanding.
 1. Peter gets a big dose of understanding when he experiences the rooster crowing three times. He suddenly realizes that he is not worthy nor will he ever be worthy of what Jesus is doing for him. **He is humbled!**
 - a) The Gr word belong is *meros* meaning to be a part of. Some Bible translate this as fellowship. The Heb word is *heleq*-the word that describes the God given heritage of Israel. Then Peter wants everything washed but Jesus ‘nips that in the bud too’ “No Peter, it is not how much you can wash but do you have the faith to receive the washing.
 - b) Again, the foot washing was declaring the necessity of His humiliation in death that it might bring men into their heritage with Him and it would cleanse them of sin.
 2. Judas hears the same words that Peter hears but he is already thinking about the betrayal of Jesus. vs. 10. That is why Jesus could say that not all are clean who are here at the table.
 3. What we have in the foot washing is John’s way of stressing the necessity of accepting the scandal of the cross. The innocent Son of God was about to die for crimes He did not commit.

II. Preparing to do the Wash - Luke 22:14-23

- A. The Passover is a precursor to the Word of God being fulfilled in Christ Jesus. It is a shadow of the reality of the Jesus the Lamb of God.
 1. The passover meal is loaded with symbolism. Each part of the meal reflects the greatness of God in delivering a people who are most weak in all the earth.
 2. The passover celebration was instituted by God so that Israel would forever celebrate God who is a God of Freedom and not bondage; so that Israel would celebrate the great strength with which God delivers; so that Israel would know that they did not deserve the mercy of God which He so freely lavished upon them.
 3. The Passover provided Israel with the assurance that a merciful God once a year provided the detergent of heaven that made them clean but did not remove the stain. Passover was

preparation for the great washing that Jesus would accomplish...not just a cleansing of heaven but complete stain removal.

- B. The Passover was to remind Israel that they were getting something that they did not deserve nor would they have received had it not been for the faith of Abraham.
1. Passover was Israel remembering their weakness and recognizing God's strength.
 2. Passover was Israel recognizing that they did not deserve what God was giving them but celebrating his mercy (Hallels)!
 3. Passover was Israel's time to believe once again in the power of the blood of the Passover lamb! To exercise their faith in God who delivers. Jesus desires to share this meal with them!!! It was father writing upon the heart of his children.
- C. Jesus adds new meaning to Passover.
1. The foot washing was pointing to something. Revolutionary words!
 2. And the Passover was pointing to something. Revolutionary words!
 - a) Luke 22:19 He gave them bread saying *this is my body given for you.*
 - b) Luke 22:20 He gave them the cup saying *this is the cup of the new covenant between God and His people an agreement confirmed with my blood, which is poured out as a sacrifice for you.*
 - c) *"Who is more important, the one who sits at the table or the one who serves? The one who sits at the table, of course. But not here! For I am among you as one who serves."* (Luke 22:27, NLT)
 3. Jesus was stating I am that Lamb! The Lamb that must be slain whose blood must be placed upon your hearts by faith.
 4. Again John is stressing the fact that the Son of God became the Son of Man that He might take away the sin of the world. God lowered himself, to do that for us, who do not deserve it.
 5. The foot washing is John's way of stressing the necessity of accepting the scandal of the cross. The Passover declarations is the Gospel writers way of stressing the fact that The Passover pointed to the Christ who is about to die for the sin of all humanity. You must believe that this Jesus is the Christ the divine Son of God.
 6. By Jesus saying, *"My blood is the blood of the New Covenant"* he was letting them know that he was washing preparing to wash dirty hearts!

III. Washing Dirty Hearts

- A. The cross was all about the washing of the sin stained heart of humanity. It could only be accomplished by the death of the Son of God that in His sinlessness He might be raised up to cleanse all men who would believe on Him!
1. *"he saved us, not because of the righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He washed away our sins, giving us a new birth and new life through the Holy Spirit."* (Titus 3:5, NLT)
 2. *"Some of you were once like that. But you were cleansed; you were made holy; you were made right with God by calling on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God."* (1 Corinthians 6:11, NLT)
 3. *"let us go right into the presence of God with sincere hearts fully trusting him. For our guilty consciences have been sprinkled with Christ's blood to make us clean, and our bodies have been washed with pure water."* (Hebrews 10:22, NLT)
 4. *"...To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood,"* (Revelation 1:5, NKJV) It was the humility of the Son of God that brought us this great salvation!

- B. To be great you must be a servant to all. Jesus served us all by his humble obedience on the cross that you and I might live.
1. *“Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross. Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name,” (Philippians 2:5–9, NKJV)*
 2. *“looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider Him who endured such hostility from sinners against Himself, lest you become weary and discouraged in your souls.” (Hebrews 12:2–3, NKJV)*
 - a) The prophetic impact of John 13:12. *“After washing their feet He put on His robe again and sat down.”*
 - b) After humbling Himself to death on a cross, He rose up again put on resurrected body and sat down at the right hand of the Father.

Conclusion:

- What happens at the foot washing and what happen at the Passover and what happens on the cross is all tied together. Jesus is ‘driving home’ the fact that God humbled himself for people that did not deserve what he was doing nor could they ever repay Him for what He has done.
- Let me ask you this morning before we receive communion. Are you like Peter, wanting every part of you to be washed, or are you like Judas (the one at the table who is not clean) [no faith]?
- If it was important enough for the Son of God to give Himself up for all humanity, then let that same heart be in us! A willingness to serve others, this is the Gospel message.
- Let’s receive communion together today.