

Washing Feet

John 13:1-20



Sally Dingeldein, age 8

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Jesus Washes His Followers' Feet

¹ It was almost time for the Jewish Passover^a festival. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go back to the Father. Jesus had always loved the people in the world who were his. Now was the time he showed them his love the most.

² Jesus and his followers were at the evening meal. The devil had already persuaded Judas Iscariot to hand Jesus over to his enemies. (Judas was the son of Simon.) ³ The Father had given Jesus power over everything. Jesus knew this. He also knew that he had come from God. And he knew that he was going back to God. ⁴ So while they were eating, Jesus stood up and took off his robe. He got a towel and wrapped it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a bowl and began to wash the followers' feet.^b He dried their feet with the towel that was wrapped around his waist.

⁶ He came to Simon Peter. But Peter said to him, "Lord, you should not wash my feet."

⁷ Jesus answered, "You don't know what I am doing now. But later you will understand."

⁸ Peter said, "No! You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "If I don't wash your feet, you are not one of my people."

⁹ Simon Peter said, "Lord, after you wash my feet, wash my hands and my head too!"

¹⁰ Jesus said, "After a person has a bath, his whole body is clean. He needs only to wash his feet. And you are clean, but not all of you." ¹¹ Jesus knew who would hand him over to his enemies. That is why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² When Jesus finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and went back to the table. He asked, "Do you understand what I did for you?" ¹³ You call me 'Teacher.' And you call me 'Lord.' And this is right, because that is what I am. ¹⁴ I am your Lord and Teacher. But I washed your feet. So you also should wash each other's feet. ¹⁵ I did this as an example for you. So you should serve each other just as I served you. ¹⁶ Believe me, servants are not greater than their master. Those who are sent to do something are not greater than the one who sent them. ¹⁷ If you know these things, you will be happy if you do them.

¹⁸ "I am not talking about all of you. I know the people I have chosen. But what the Scriptures^c say must happen: 'The man who shared my food has turned against me.'^d ¹⁹ I am telling you this now before it happens. Then when it happens, you will believe that I AM.^e ²⁰ I assure you, whoever accepts the person I send also accepts me. And whoever accepts me also accepts the one who sent me.

a 13:1 *Passover* A very important holy day for the people of Israel and their descendants. They ate a special meal on this day every year to remember that God made them free from slavery in Egypt in the time of Moses. The name may come from the word in Ex. 12:13, 23, 27 that means "to pass over" or "to protect."

b 13:5 *wash ... feet* A social custom of the first century, because people wore open sandals on very dusty roads. It was a humble duty, usually done by a servant. Also in verses 6-14.

c 13:18 *Scriptures* Or "Holy Writings"—the Old Testament.

d 13:18 *has turned against me* Literally, "has lifted up his heel against me." Quote from Ps. 41:9.

e 13:19 *I AM* This is like the name of God used in the Old Testament. See Isa. 41:4; 43:10; Ex. 3:14. However, it can also mean "I am he (the Christ)."

What's The Question?

Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

Kids' Answers

"Children!"

Kelly, 6

"Whosoever humbles himself like a little child is greatest in the kingdom of heaven."

Daniel, 11

"A servant will be greatest in heaven, next to God."

Philip, 12

What's Your Answer?

Carey's Comments!

Jesus showed us how to serve one another. He took the lowest job of a servant by washing the feet of his disciples. The lowest servant in someone's house usually did foot washing. We don't do foot washing today because we wear shoes. In Jesus' time, people wore sandals. Feet had to be washed because most streets were made of dirt. If it rained, dirt turned to mud.

In this world, most people want to be served. They want the kind of job where they can tell people what to do. In Jesus' kingdom, things don't work that way. Jesus told his disciples, "Whoever wants to be the most important must make others more important than themselves. They must serve everyone else" (Mark 9:35). In other words, the way up in Jesus' kingdom looks like the way down in this world.

Peter was shocked at the idea of Jesus washing his feet. At first he refused to let Jesus do it. We are so used to the way of this world that we can't imagine a kingdom where the greatest person is the greatest servant. We think of greatness as being served. Isn't that the way of the world? Give me the big house, the big job, the big car and let everyone serve me.

We must allow God to change the way we think and the way we see things. It begins by allowing God to serve us. Peter couldn't imagine Jesus washing his feet. When we allow God to serve us, we learn to serve others. We must receive God's grace before we can serve others with acts of grace. Like most of us, Peter had to learn this lesson.

Jesus said a servant is not greater than his master. If Jesus served his disciples, then we should serve one another. Service begins in the way you think. Speaking of the Lord Jesus, the Apostle Paul wrote, "He was like God in every way, but he did not think that his being equal with God was something to use for his own benefit" (Philippians 2:6).

Jesus gave up something when he became a servant. He gave up the glories of heaven to come into this world as a baby. He was born to a working class family, not to a family of power and wealth. He lived in a small town and worked as a carpenter. What if the President of the United States gave up his job to work as a carpenter in a small town? It's hard to imagine, but Jesus did much more than that.

Jesus served everyone who ever lived when he gave up his life to die for our sins. We allow God to serve us when we believe in the Lord Jesus as savior. Heaven is the perfect place because God lives there. We cannot clean ourselves to enter heaven. We must allow God to do that for us. Jesus told Peter that if a person has had a bath, his whole body is clean. Only God can cleanse us from the penalty of sin and make us ready for heaven when we believe in his Son. If Jesus paid for all our sins on the cross, how could we possibly earn our way to heaven?

We cannot earn our way to heaven by serving God or people, but we can earn rewards. God wants to reward us for serving him. Even something small like giving a cup of water in Jesus' name will be rewarded (Mark 9:41). Amazing, isn't it? God gives us eternal life as a gift. Then God rewards us for serving people in his name. Serving people in Jesus' name means you're doing it for God.

Think About This: God wants his children to serve one another. Jesus is our example. He gave up his life so we could live.

Memorize This Truth: "I am your Lord and Teacher. But I washed your feet. So you also should wash each other's feet" (John 13:14).



Heaven Herald



By Grace Through Faith Ephesians 2:8-9

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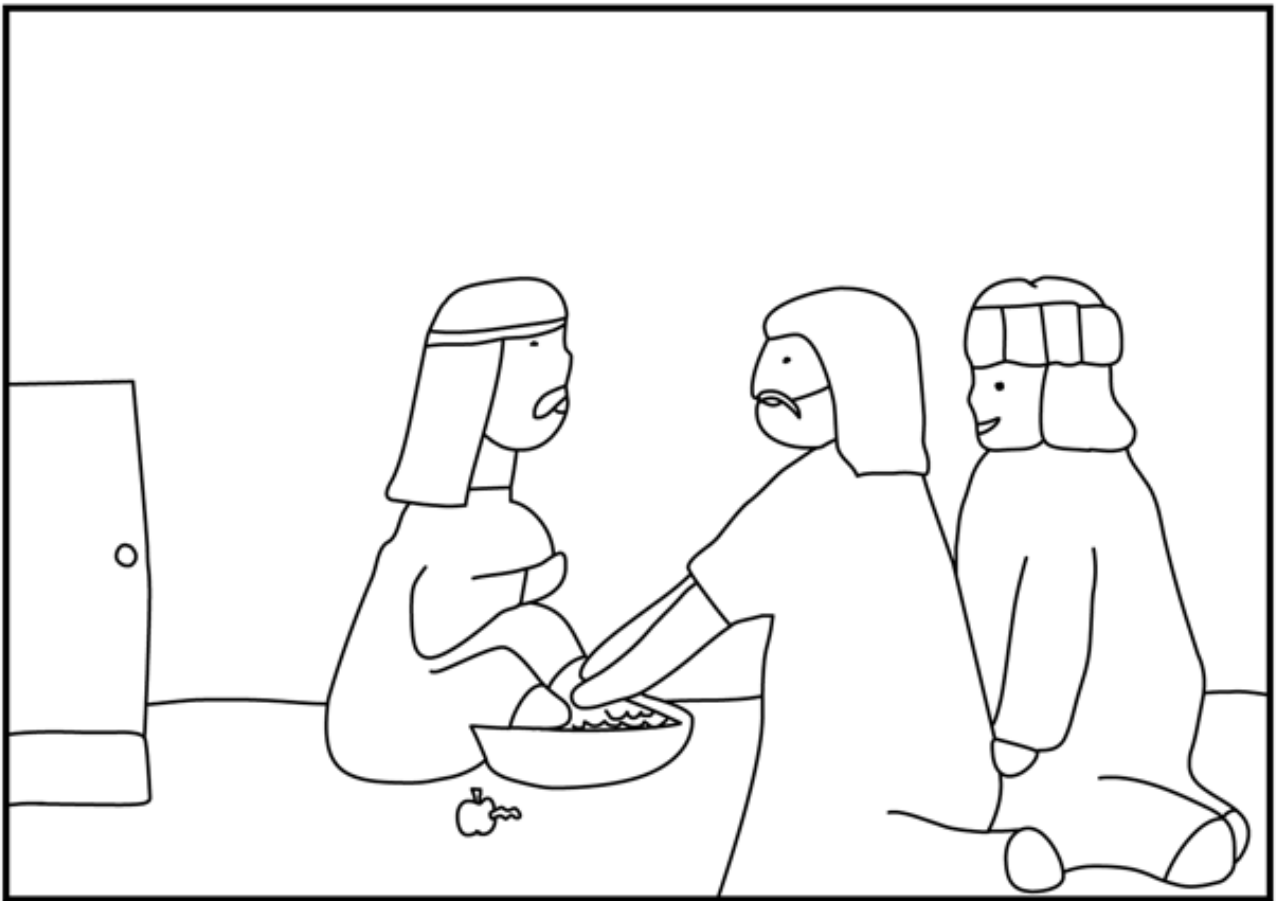
Jesus Washes Disciples' Feet

Name of Artist: _____

Age: _____

Washing Feet

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Sally Dingeldein, age 8

Colored By: _____ Age: _____