



Foot Washers (Lent)

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. (John 13:14 ESV)

Jesus was a teacher extraordinaire! Not only did He explain with words, but He also used examples easily understood by common people. Jesus taught His disciples, including you and me, humility and love when He knelt down and washed the disciples' feet.

The custom of washing a person's feet was a sign of hospitality but it was usually done by a servant and not the host. Of course, Jesus could have asked a servant to do this demeaning task but because He wanted to make a lasting impression, He did it. Remember this took place on Maundy Thursday evening, just before He was betrayed, just before He became the Servant Savior of the world.

The reality of this story was made clear to a catechism class. The story goes that one afternoon the pastor walked into the class with a towel and a bowl of water. As the students sat and watched, he took off his coat, rolled up his sleeves, and asked them to remove their shoes. With giggles of embarrassment, they did what the pastor asked. He knelt in front of each student and washed his or her feet.

When he was finished he asked, "Why did I do that?" After a long silence, one student answered, "I guess you just wanted to get our attention!"

Not a bad answer. Jesus got the attention of His disciples, especially Peter who did not want Him to wash his feet because he felt unworthy. But Peter missed the point. Jesus wasn't just removing dirt from feet; He was showing His love by becoming a servant. No one is too great to serve another. He wanted to demonstrate humility and love to them so they would in turn show it to others, not necessarily by washing feet but by performing acts of kindness out of love. The pastor wanted his students to experience the same feeling as Jesus' disciples so they, too, would "wash the feet" of others.

Jesus expects us to imitate His example also. We are to show love to one another because He first loved us.

Sing or Read: Jesu, Jesu, Fill Us with Your Love, *LSB* 980 or My Song is Love Unknown, *LSB* 430

Prayer: Gracious Father, You showed Your great love for us by sending Your only Son, Jesus Christ, to live a life of love. You have taught us by Your example how to live; we need Your Holy Spirit to help us. Humble us Lord, so we might willingly "wash the feet" of others. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.