

Jesus Washed Feet, Should We?

In John 13, after Jesus had instituted the Lord's Supper, we find that he washed his disciples' feet (vs. 4-16). Many times the question arises, "Since Jesus washed the feet of his disciples, should we not wash one another's feet?" Some in the denominational world have used this as justification to have a "foot washing service" as a part of the worship to God.

Washing feet is also mentioned in Luke 7 where a woman washed the feet of Jesus with her tears and wiped them with her hair. Then it is mentioned in 1 Timothy 5 as one of the deeds that would characterize some widows.

The usual mode of travel in Jesus' day was walking. The roads and pathways were usually dusty. One of the signs of hospitality in that time was to wash (or, have a servant to wash) the feet of a guest when they arrived in your house. This seems to be the thought in Luke 7 and seems to be given as a symbol of hospitality in 1 Timothy 5. It is certain that the lesson Jesus taught in John 13 was that of humility and service.

Saints still need to be humble in the sight of God (James 4:10) and in this humility be willing to do anything they can to relieve the distress of another - including washing their body (not just feet). We should show hospitality to those who visit us, but washing another's feet is not necessarily the only way to manifest this. And, we all (not just widows) should be active in doing good deeds.

To go through a ceremony of washing another's feet when they don't need washing is NOT a show of humility nor godliness. So far as I can see it is NOT something to be done in worship to God.

Let us leave it as the Bible does - a symbol of hospitality and good works. Let us manifest hospitality in other ways and do all good works expected by God - but let us not fall into a ritual of washing feet in applying the Scripture improperly.

- by J. F. Dancer, Jr.

Bible Classes

I attend because they help me grow in grace and knowledge. I share in the lessons and thoughts from various ones. There my children learn lessons that will help preserve them from the pitfalls of life and prepare them for heaven and eternity. My participation shows to the world my interest in the church and spiritual things - which may influence others for good. My concern for others, my children and my own soul will not let me willfully neglect such activity.

Now, suppose you make a list of reason why you do not attend the classes:

- "I'd rather sleep late."
- "It's too much trouble to get up and get the kids ready. "
- "There's something else I had rather do."
- "The teacher doesn't interest me."
- "I'm good enough and know enough already. "
- "I need the extra rest (so I can work more overtime and/or engage in more recreational activities)."

Go ahead, make your list. Then present it to God when you pray! If you think God will accept such excuses, I suggest you read (before you reach judgment day) Matt. 6:33; Matt 25, and Rev. 3:14-21.

-by Hershel Patton

Unjust Criticism

Abraham Lincoln said: *"If I were to read, much less answer all the attacks made on me, this shop might as well be closed for any other business. I do the very best I know how, the very best I can, and I mean to keep doing so until the end. If the end brings me out all right, what is said*

against me won't amount to anything. If the end brings me out wrong, then angels swearing I was right would make no difference.

Others have suffered unjust criticism. Hannah moved her lips as she was praying silently and the watching priest accused her of drunkenness. Ahab said Elijah was a troubler of Israel. Jesus was said of his enemies to have no regard for real religion or for the king.

So many Bible characters are said to have experienced unjust criticism. Have you? And what should you do when you've explained, yet the criticisms continue? Some of it may be vengeful "cheap shots" to keep you stirred up. What should you do?

"Honest Abe" may well be reminding us of the Bible answer -- just keep going. There's too much good to do to look back. It may be like Nehemiah told his enemies seeking compromise. He knew it was a trick and said, "I am doing a good work and cannot come down."

Frankly, there are some things we are just going to have to let the Lord sort out at the end, and He'll do it right - don't worry. Our business is to get on and keep on with life, doing the best we can.

- by Bob Hines

Limiting God

God is "omnipotent", which literally means that He is "all powerful." Sometimes we express this idea by saying that "there is nothing God cannot do." That statement can lead to certain difficulties. For example:

- Hebrews 6: 18 says that " ... *it was impossible for God to lie.*" Here we have something that God CANNOT do.
- Hebrews 13:5 gives God's promise to his faithful children: " ... *for He hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.* " Again, this is a thing that God CANNOT do - He cannot desert His own.
- James 1 :13 tells us that " ... *God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man.*" To tempt or be tempted is contrary to the very nature of God.

With these things in mind, we can be more specific in describing God's "omnipotence." God has the power to do everything that is in harmony with His basic nature and His expressed will. But, He can never do anything that would contradict His promises or violate His holy and just character.

Often when discussing the subject of miracles we reference certain Scriptures which show that no miracles are being performed today (e.g. 1 Corinthians 13:8-13). Sometimes someone will object by saying that such a view "limits God" and that "God can do anything." These statements expose a misunderstanding of God's power. He IS limited. There are some things that He CANNOT do (such as perform miracles today). But, we are not the ones who limit God. He has limited Himself. He has taught us in His word that He will not do these things in our time.

Let us praise and honor our God. He has the power to do ALL things that are according to His will.

- by Greg Gwin