



# THIS LITTLE LIGHT OF MINE

APRIL 9 - MAY 24

## (5) ""Jesus Washes Disciples' Feet""

### HIGHLIGHT: *Mark 10:35-45* and *John 13:1-30*

H

*Below are excerpts from the overall passage for use with the APPLICATION and RESPOND. It will be beneficial for the group to read the whole passage to understand the entire context.*

#### **Mark 10:35-45 NLT**

**35** Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came over and spoke to him. "Teacher," they said, "we want you to do us a favor."

**36** "What is your request?" he asked.

**37** They replied, "When you sit on your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to you, one on your right and the other on your left."

**38** But Jesus said to them, "You don't know what you are asking! Are you able to drink from the bitter cup of suffering I am about to drink? Are you able to be baptized with the baptism of suffering I must be baptized with?"

**39** "Oh yes," they replied, "we are able!" Then Jesus told them, "You will indeed drink from my bitter cup and be baptized with my baptism of suffering. **40** But I have no right to say who will sit on my right or my left. God has prepared those places for the ones he has chosen."

**41** When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant. **42** So Jesus called them together and said, "You know that the rulers in this world lord it over their people, and officials flaunt their authority over those under them. **43** But among you it will be different. Whoever wants to be a leader among you must be your servant, **44** and whoever wants to be first among you must be the slave of everyone else. **45** For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve others and to give his life as a ransom for many."

### John 13:1-30 NLT

**1** Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He had loved his disciples during his ministry on earth, and now he loved them to the very end. **2** It was time for supper, and the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. **3** Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. **4** So he got up from the table, took off his robe, wrapped a towel around his waist, **5** and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet, drying them with the towel he had around him.

**6** When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

**7** Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I am doing, but someday you will."

**8** "No," Peter protested, "you will never ever wash my feet!"  
Jesus replied, "Unless I wash you, you won't belong to me."

**9** Simon Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord, not just my feet!"

**10** Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean. And you disciples are clean, but not all of you." **11** For Jesus knew who would betray him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean."

**12** After washing their feet, he put on his robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? **13** You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because that's what I am. **14** And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. **15** I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. **16** I tell you the truth, slaves are not greater than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message. **17** Now that you know these things, God will bless you for doing them.

**18** "I am not saying these things to all of you; I know the ones I have chosen. But this fulfills the Scripture that says, 'The one who eats my food has turned against me.' **19** I tell you this beforehand, so that when it happens you will believe that I am the Messiah. **20** I tell you the truth, anyone who welcomes my messenger is welcoming me, and anyone who welcomes me is welcoming the Father who sent me."

**21** Now Jesus was deeply troubled, and he exclaimed, "I tell you the truth, one of you will betray me!"

**22** The disciples looked at each other, wondering whom he could mean. **23** The disciple Jesus loved was sitting next to Jesus at the table. **24** Simon Peter motioned to him to ask, "Who's he talking about?" **25** So that disciple leaned over to Jesus and asked, "Lord, who is it?"

**26** Jesus responded, "It is the one to whom I give the bread I dip in the bowl." And when he had dipped it, he gave it to Judas, son of Simon Iscariot. **27** When Judas had eaten the bread, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus told him, "Hurry and do what you're going to do." **28** None of the others at the table knew what Jesus meant. **29** Since Judas was their treasurer, some thought Jesus was telling him to go and pay for the food or to give some money to the poor. **30** So Judas left at once, going out into the night.

## EXPLAIN

*The purpose of this section is to deepen everyone's understanding of the Word.*

The two passages that are highlighted today will best be understood by remembering that Jesus' disciples—even at the night before His crucifixion—didn't fully understand His Messiahship. The old dregs of "political messiah" were still mixed in with the new wine of "Jesus, the Christ, the Son of the Living God—the One who would save His people from their sins" (Matthew 16:16 and 1:21). It was not until the Resurrection that they better understood who Jesus really was (John 20:9).

**Mark 10:35-45** Just before this passage Jesus gives the third and clearest prophecy of His death and resurrection (Mark 10:32-34; Matthew 20:17-19; Luke 18:31-34). It is Luke who provides commentary on Jesus' monologue: "But [the twelve disciples] didn't understand any of this...they failed to grasp what He was talking about" (v.34).

**vv.35-40** This is not the first time that ambition for "cabinet positions" in Jesus' messianic kingdom has been exposed (Mark 9:33-37). Pride and the thirst for power can draw out the worst in the best of us. James and John were smitten: **"When You sit on Your glorious throne, we want to sit in places of honor next to You, one on Your right and the other on your left."** Jesus knew that we often ask for things not appropriate, or not good for us. Or just don't think before we ask. James and John were asking to **drink from the bitter cup of suffering and to be baptized (submerged) in suffering** and sorrow (see Psalm 42:7 and 124:4). And they were—James was killed by Herod and John, though not martyred, was put under great waves of suffering. But the Sovereignty of God makes the **choice**. One of the great moments of growth in our spiritual lives is when we can honestly say, "God's will be done."

**vv.41-45** These verses prove the truth of James 3:13-16 (take the time to read). **"When the ten other disciples heard what James and John had asked, they were indignant."** Jesus reminded them that true leadership in His kingdom is **becoming a servant and a slave** to others. **"For even the Son of Man came not be served but to serve others and to give His life as a ransom for many."** In the Kingdom of God it is not "what can I get?" but "what can I give?" Just think how beautiful the world would be if we all lived like that. Whether everyone lives like that or not, the Body of Christ should.

**John 13:1-30** This takes place the evening before Jesus Christ's crucifixion. We don't find evidence of much activity the day before. Knowing what would be happening soon, maybe He spent Wednesday in communion with the Father, and that translated into an amazing personal peace in the Upper Room (John 13-17)—a peace that He wanted His disciples to experience (John 16:33).

**vv.1-5** Jesus was aware of all that would be happening in the next 18-20 hours, including the fact that **the devil had already prompted Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to betray [Him]**. Even with that backdrop, Jesus continued to have His disciples in His heart—**loving them to the very end**. Jesus was in control **having received authority over everything from the Father**. In an act that represented His entire mission to planet Earth (see Philippians 2:6-8) Jesus **washes the disciples' feet and dries them with the towel He had around His waist**. He probably did this in the part of the Passover Meal where those present wash their hands as the master of the feast passes the basin. Imagine their shock—rather than washing their own hands, the Master of Universe washes their feet! Power at its greatest!

**vv.6-11** Peter would have none of it: **"You will never ever wash my feet!"** Peter may have felt that it was beneath "messianic dignity" for Jesus to perform such a menial task. This would not be the first time that Peter "saw things merely from a human point of view, not from God's" (see Matthew 16:22-23). Such a spirit prompted Jesus' straight-forward teaching on denying self as the beginning mark of discipleship (Mark 8:34-38). Jesus answered, **"Unless I wash you, you won't belong to Me."** Peter must learn that there can be no discipleship without self-surrender. In typical fashion Peter goes to the other extreme, **"Then wash my hands and head as well, Lord."** Peter's relationship to the Lord—unbalanced as it may be—did not require a full bath **to be entirely clean. "You disciples are clean."** All they needed was the cleaning of the feet from the dusty roads they walked every day. Those of us who have been made clean by the blood of Jesus do not need a total cleansing again; only the forgiveness and purification that comes from repentance and confession (1 John 1:8-9)—the cleaning of the spiritual feet that are contaminated by our sinful nature. While Jesus was reassuring Peter, He fired a shot over the bow—**"Not all of you are clean."** Jesus was well aware of the machination of Judas' heart.

**vv.12-17** Jesus' gives the meaning of what He has done. Because He was their **teacher and Lord they were to do as He had done to them. Slaves are not great than their master. Nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends the message.** The lesson is the same 2,000 years later: "Don't think you are better than you really are" (Romans 12:3). Do unto each other as Christ has done to us.

**vv.18-30** Without letting the others know the identity of the "unclean one" Jesus lets Judas know that He is aware of everything. **"I tell you the truth, one of you will betray Me."** While **the disciples looked at each other, wondering whom He could mean"** Judas know that he had been found out (see Luke 22:1-6). I wonder if Judas could look Jesus in the eyes as He washed his feet. Did he feel any of the love Jesus still had for him? Did he have any inclination to back out of the deal with the religious powers? Did he hesitate at all when **Jesus told him, "Hurry and do what you are going to do"?** **Going out into the night**—what a telling description for one who is willing to sell out his Savior. It was the night that led to eternal darkness.

**Note:** The Gospel of Luke adds another account of arguing about *who is greatest among the disciples?* after they were wondering which one of them could bring such hurt to Jesus (22:24-27). I'm sure each of them promoted himself as one who could never do such a thing as that. Pride turned the Garden of Eden into a stagnant mess. Pride turned the Upper Room into a babbling chorus of self-promotion. That's the kind of sin that put Jesus on the Cross.

## A

### APPLY

*Be comfortable with some silence as people think back to the sermon or reread the text. Answer honestly. You don't have to answer every question.*

1. What stuck out to you in what you heard in the sermon or read in the text?
2. James and John misunderstood Jesus' mission on earth and his kingdom to come. Looking through the lenses of self, they boldly expected Jesus to do for them what they asked and wanted instead of what the Lord wanted for them. Why is it ill-advised to ask God for things from a self-focussed place instead of a God focussed place?
3. In v. 14 Jesus said, "And since I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet." How should we "wash" each other's feet?
4. What is the danger of pride? Why is it often so hard to see in ourselves?
5. Fact: We sin. Fact: Through Jesus, our sins are forgiven. Read 1 John 1:8-9. What is the role of confession and repentance in the spiritual washing of our feet?

## R

### RESPOND

*The purpose of this section is to take action with the truths you're learning. Answer honestly. Find someone who will hold you accountable to living out your response to Scripture.*

1. Think of a time pride in your life has led you to an expectation from God that does not line up with his desire(s) for you. (Maybe you have one right now that you need to confess. If so, confess it and ask God to reveal his true desire for you.) How were you able to get past your pride and sit in humble worship of the true king Jesus is?
2. Confession and repentance are incredible tools God has given us for change. Through them he tears down our pride and draws us back to the goodness of His grace and mercy. Is there something in your life right now that you need to confess and repent before God? If so, take it to your loving Father.
3. How can you specifically wash someone's feet this week? (v. 14)