



Do You Understand What I Have Done For You?

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John 13:1-17

Before the Passover celebration, Jesus knew that his hour had come to leave this world and return to his Father. He now showed the disciples the full extent of his love. It was time for supper, and the Devil had already enticed Judas, son of Simon Iscariot, to carry out his plan to betray Jesus. Jesus knew that the Father had given him authority over everything and that he had come from God and would return to God. So He got up from the table, took off His robe, wrapped a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he had around him.

When he came to Simon Peter, Peter said to him, "Lord, why are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You don't understand now why I am doing it; someday you will."

"No," Peter protested, "you will never wash my feet!"

Jesus replied, "But if I don't wash you, you won't belong to me."

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

Jesus replied, "A person who has bathed all over does not need to wash, except for the feet, to be entirely clean.

And you are clean, but that isn't true of everyone here." For Jesus knew who would betray Him. That is what he meant when he said, "Not all of you are clean."

After washing their feet, He put on His robe again and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing? You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and you are right, because it is true. And since I, the Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I have given you an example to follow. Do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than the master. Nor are messengers more important than the one who sends them. You know these things—now do them! That is the path of blessing."

The question that Jesus asks us demands a response from us. It's difficult when we read the story of Jesus washing the disciples' feet, for us not to want to respond in some way. Either we reject a God, who would kneel down and wash someone else's feet, in the form of a servant, or we embrace this God, and we accept Him, and we want to be like Him.

When Jesus poses this question, in Verse 12 "Do you understand what I have done for you", it's very obvious that the disciples don't have an answer to this question. Jesus is using this as a divine teaching moment.

I. This is a Picture of Genuine Christianity --- Humility & Service

In washing the disciples' feet, he challenges us to participate, in a life of humility. Humility is simply giving yourself in service to others. We can embrace a lifestyle of service no matter what it is we do, who we are, or where we go. We can take up a towel and basin and serve others in love just like Jesus did.

As we look at this account we get an unobstructed view of the Father's great love for us. If you doubt the love of God for you, this story should clear that up. If you read the Gospel of Mark in particular, you realize right up until the end, the disciples were so ignorant, and naïve, and yet Jesus is so long suffering and patient with them. He's just like that with us. He loves us with an unbridled, boundless love that we cannot even comprehend or imagine.

There are several significant events in the life of Christ. His birth, his death, his resurrection, but this was a defining moment. The lesson that this act provided to His disciples and to us is timeless. Obviously the disciples didn't understand what Jesus was teaching them until after He died and rose again. Their calling was to serve others.

In reading the Book of Acts, you will see that after the Holy Spirit came on people, they acted in ways Jesus acted. They responded to people's needs the way Jesus would respond. So washing their feet was something that left them with a strong visual picture of serving.

Jesus asks them, **“Do you understand what I have done for you?”**

I think down deep Jesus wants them and us to answer Him this way. *You've given us an unforgettable image of what authentic Christianity looks like.*

In His action of washing feet, Jesus is saying, “This is the picture of the life, I want you to live.”

We see from John 13:3 that Jesus clearly understands who He is, that He belongs to God and God belongs to Him and He is going to return to God.

He is very clear about his mission and objective here on Earth. In verse 4 we read, “Understanding who He was in God. He got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around His

waist. After that, He poured water into a basin, and began to wash His disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around Him.” And that included all twelve disciples; that included even the one, who would betray him, the one who would kiss him in betrayal. That included the one who would give Him over to the guards, and the soldiers of the Sanhedrin. He washed even his feet, the one who really couldn't stand Jesus, The Messiah washed Judas' feet.

Who of us can argue, with a picture of a “Foot-washing God”? Who of us can ever come up with a greater picture than this?

Isn't this a picture of true Christianity? A man on his knees washing someone's dirty feet? It sure looks like giving yourself in service to others. Remember this is God the Son touching us at the place where we live and move.

II. This Frees Us From Defining Christianity Only With Words

I think Jesus answers this question in another way too. I think Jesus says: “I freed you from the burden of defining Christianity solely with words.” Sometimes we don't need to define Christianity with a creed, or a cause. We just need to define Christianity in terms of humble service to others.

Christianity is a life-altering love affair with Jesus Christ. Entering into a relationship like that will change the whole course and direction of your life. Don't embrace Jesus Christ, unless you're willing to have your life altered. If your life has not been altered to any substantial degree since you're professed faith in Jesus Christ, then you need to fall deeper in love with Him. You have simply accepted some creed, or some cause and said, “That sounds good.” But you need to embrace Christ as a person.

To define Christianity in terms of a creed or a cause diminishes the significance of becoming intimate friends with a “Foot-washing God.” Think of it. You and I can become friends with the person who washes the feet of the disciples. We can become intimate friends, with this man, named Jesus.

We can communicate with our actions what Christianity really is. When words fail to communicate, love has the opportunity to take over. It's this kind of love

motivated service to a watching world that makes Christianity genuine.

Jesus provided us with a new vision of greatness. If you've read the Gospels you know that when this supper concluded, the disciples got into an argument over who would be the greatest. Jesus redefined greatness; painting a new picture, showing them a new vision, and helping them gain a new perspective.

It's no different for us. It is no longer necessary to grasp for position, or power, or prestige. It is no longer necessary to climb the ladder. No longer do we have to do all these things that culture tells us we have to do to be great.

In Luke 22:24, Jesus tells them to "let the senior among you become like the junior; let the leader act the part of the servant. Who would you rather be: the one who eats the dinner or the one who serves the dinner? You'd rather eat and be served, right? But I've taken my place among you as the one who serves."

We can now embrace the towel and basin, as the tools to make a difference in the lives of other people.

iii. I Have Shown You the Full Extent of My Love

Lastly: "**Do you understand what I've done for you?**" I just hear Jesus saying: "I've shown you the full extent of my love."

Have you ever come in contact with anyone more worthy of your full devotion, your complete trust and total dependence? Has there ever been anyone like Jesus? Has there ever been anyone in your life that you can think of that does the things Jesus does?

There is nothing that you can embrace that will satisfy you, like Jesus Christ. When we answer this question: "Do you understand what I have done for you," we've come to the conclusion, that nothing could ever replace Jesus Christ. He has given us a pathway to blessing, to power, and true greatness.

"Do you understand what Jesus has done for you? Do you understand that He has given you access to all the riches of His Father's Kingdom, and all the power of His Father's Kingdom, and all the tools of His Father's Kingdom? He has established, once for all, the example that we are to follow, when he paints this humble picture of a "Foot-washing God."

The towel and the basin become symbols that every-day tools can be useful to advance the kingdom He died to establish.

Every single thing you own can become an instrument God uses. Christ offers us purpose and hope through a towel and a basin. As we come to the table, let's remember His example, and dedicate ourselves to follow Him.