Lesson 14 [Chapter 13 & 14] "Washing The Feet"

Remember:

Last lesson , chapter 12 marks the start of Passion Week, we saw Mary anointing Jesus' feet, the Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem, and Jesus predicting His death on the cross to draw everyone to Him.

Lesson Goal:

Jesus commands us to serve one another and to trust in Him as the "Way, the Truth, and the Life.

Lesson opener:

"Good and Faithful Servant" Game: Act as the "Master" and have students as "Servants." Ask them to bring you items within 15 seconds. Explain that while they tried to serve, Jesus took the role of a servant to the *lowest* level by washing feet.

Lesson Body:

When the Lord had completed delivering His teachings, He began to hold private conversations with His disciples. This was just before He was arrested and His aim was to comfort them throughout the time of His suffering. Moreover, the Lord desired to reveal His mysteries and offer His final advice to them. He spoke to His disciples as a Father would speak to His children.

Throughout John 13-14, Jesus calls us to something far deeper than what we think. For us, this means we do not just walk straight and follow His path but serve diligently along the way. And in these two chapters, we see what that looks like firsthand.

We are to love well by serving well.

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet 13:1-17

Our task is at hand, and as we venture into John 13, particularly, Jesus makes it very clear as to what shape that task is to take in our lives. We are to humble ourselves in love and serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It is as simple as it is difficult.

The Lord Jesus Christ announced that the time of His death was drawing near, and that one of His disciples would betray Him; another would deny Him; while others would abandon

Him. To Him, He perceived that all such events were permitted by God to enable Him to fulfill salvation.

At the same time, Satan was preoccupied with dominating the heart of Judas. He planned to move him to betray His Lord.



15 For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you. 16 Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

In what might be the most captivating picture of Jesus as King up to this point in John, we see Him kneel in front of each and every one of His disciples … to wash their feet. This act itself might have not been all that out of the ordinary for people in those days, it was an act done almost exclusively … by servants—and in most every case if there was more than one … the lowest of servants. There was and is no glory in such a humble act, and yet, Jesus our God did it regardless.

He calls us to do the same! How?

We see Jesus do what so many of us will not: He knelt and washed the feet of those He loved … including one who would soon deny Him, and another who would betray Him to death. Jesus did it then, and we should continue to do it as well.

May each person forgive the sins of his brother and pray for other sinners. In this manner each person would wash the other person's feet. St Augustine

Peter had often witnessed the Lord's humility, yet he never imagined it would get to the extent of appearing as a slave undertaking to wash feet.

In verse 7: It is as though the Lord is telling Peter, “Allow Me to do this now, and I will soon tell you the nature and purpose of this act.” The benefit of the lesson you learn is how the Lord leads us to all manners of humility.

A believer needs to be washed in the baptismal font by the action of God’s Holy Spirit. The Lord underlines that the washing with the baptismal water occurs only once.

Jesus Identifies His Betrayer and Peter’s denial 13:18- 38

The Lord unveils the plan of Judas to betray Him. From the start the Lord had known but covered up for him until this moment. But it was getting serious, and the Lord revealed the plan to His disciples who could never have imagined that such a thing could occur by someone from among them. Notice how the Lord did not generalize when He spoke about that sin. Rather, He praised the others for being pure vessels. At the same time, He neither gave details about the crime nor revealed the name of the offender. However, the Lord underlines that all these events had been foretold in the Holy Bible (Ps 41:9).

The Lord assured His disciples that although there are some people who are ungrateful and disloyal to Him; yet there are those who believe and accept Him. These are therefore counted as having accepted the Father as well.

Jesus was troubled because of the betrayal committed by one of His disciples; He wasn’t troubled when He spoke about His suffering before.

It is clear that the behavior of Judas Iscariot did not arouse any kind of suspicion. No one suspected him at all. When the Lord dipped the bread and gave it to Judas, the disciples thought He had done so in order to have him hurry up and accomplish a certain task rather than wait to have supper with them.

Just as John whispered his question into the Lord’s ear, so did the Lord whisper His response to him so that the other disciples would not hear. He told him who would betray Him.

After the Lord had given Judas the piece of bread, the devil entered him. Judas had already laid a plan with the wicked ones. They had agreed on a precise time and place. Jesus gave him the permission to leave.

Verse 33: After that, the disciples were scattered, leaving the Lord Jesus Christ alone throughout His judgment. They could not go into the place where His trial was held.

Verse 34: It is as though the Lord was telling them: you have become anxious because I'm leaving you. However, if you love one another, you will truly be my disciples.

We ask Peter the apostle: 'What are you saying, Peter? The Lord told you; you cannot follow Me now.' Do you ask: 'Why can I not follow You?' With experience, you will learn that your love means nothing if it is not accompanied by help from above. St John Chrysostom.

Peter had a good heart. I truly believe he wanted to follow Jesus. He never planned to deny Jesus or go his own way. But it happened. It happened largely because Peter was prideful. He didn't listen to Jesus' warnings but thought that he was strong and it would never happen to him. Pride comes before the fall. Don't ever think you are too strong, too mature, to fall. Satan is looking for a puffed-up balloon. They are easy to pop.

The Way, the Truth, and the Life 14:1-11

There are three farewell speeches for Jesus in chapters 14-16.

Jesus was about to die the worst death in history and pay the price for the sins of the world yet telling others not to be troubled! Completely selfless until the end.

The Lord warns us against anxiety and confusion. He offers us faith as a practical cure against the pain of anxiety. Anxiety was evident in the look on the disciples' faces.

The disciples had begun to lose hope of establishing a kingdom on earth. He lifted their hearts to heaven so that they would yearn for the things prepared for them over there.

He will go to heaven and prepare places and mansions for His followers. Therefore, everyone will feel that he is returning to the house of his heavenly Father or to the home awaiting him/her. By saying 'many mansions', the Lord assures us that God has many children; and that the heavens are big enough to hold them all.

The Lord had told His disciples about the Cross, and He had offered them His sacrificial Blood and Body. He considered that by then they knew where He was going; and the road He would take through the Cross, but they still didn't get it, they thought Christ will live forever.

It is good that Thomas admitted his ignorance. However, he is to be blamed for thinking of an earthly kingdom.

6 *Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.*

Jesus answered Thomas that in Him we have full satisfaction and contentment. There is no path outside Him and no truth without Him. Life can be found only in Him.

Since I am the way, you will not need anyone to take you by the hand and lead you. Since I am the truth then My words are not lies; and since I am the life, then even though you will die, you will receive what I have revealed to you…



8 *Philip said to Him, "Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us."* What was wrong with Philip's request was his ignorance concerning the unity of the Son and the Father. He did not understand the full divinity of the Son.

"Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?" In other words: I can be seen in the same essence. Anyone who looks at the Son sees the image of the Father.

Jesus Promises Another Helper 14:12-31

Jesus assured them that He would not leave them in their weakness. He would grant them the power to do great deeds, miracles, and wonders that would support them. In this manner, they could do the same deeds as those the Lord had done, and even greater ones [all in His name].

Their love to God would be demonstrated in a practical manner through their obedience of His laws. Moreover, it would grant them the power to work, especially in difficult times.

The Holy Spirit is the Comforter whom the Lord promised to send to His disciples. The word 'paraclete' is translated as 'Comforter.' It also means advocate and helper, for He stands in defense of the Lord's Church and against her enemies.

He comforted them that the Cross will not separate them from Him until the end of time. 'It would just make Me disappear for a short while only.'

Verse 21: It is not enough to just know the commandments. We need to observe and apply them to the fullest. St. John Chrysostom

He leaves them feeling peaceful as He grants them a precious inheritance: which is His peace!

What does "For My Father is greater than I" [14:28] mean?

The Lord became incarnate and humbled Himself to redeem us. According to the flesh, He become as someone who had lesser glory than the Father. If the pleasure of the Father and the Son require the Son to be humbled for the sake of mankind to glorify them, then it is appropriate that believers rejoice with the Son who finds it an honor to be humbled since His act fulfills their salvation and glory.

It is clear that He became Man while He continued to be God.

Lesson Delivery Idea:

For His Sake and for Your Joy, Go Low:

Jesus in Verse 13:15 sets an example, If I, the highest, have gone low, then you, the lower, from whatever high standing you have, should go low also.

Now remember, He is trying to show them the kind of person who is qualified or suitable for the high calling of verse 20: “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me.” In other words, He’s saying something like this: I am going away (verse 1), and you are about to become my representatives, my ambassadors, on the earth to take my words, and my salvation, and my own presence to the world on my behalf. If people receive you, they receive me.

And what I want to make most clear is that your fitness for this role is that you are the kind of person who gladly goes low. You step down from the privileges of your high standing, and you engage in lowly serving. Or to be more penetrating, let your whole life have this mindset: you are servants (Philippians 2:5–8). In all that you do, do it with a view to getting under others to lift them up, not getting over others to look down and feel superior.

So yes, you have a high calling. But no, you are not qualified for it if you need to hold onto the honors and the prerogatives of rank. The only people suitable to represent Jesus are the lowly. **The humble. The servant-like. The self-denying**.

Memory Verse: 14:6 Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

References: Bishop Youssef: https://www.suscopts.org/diocese/bishop/bible-study/new-testament/holy-gospel-according-to-st-john

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