Lesson 13 [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:

Can I Give Ya' a Shine?

Bring a shoeshine kit from home and begin to quietly clean the shoes of your students while seated. If they object or question you, go about your task until you feel you have adequately made the point. Explain to your class that cleaning someone's shoes is a very humble job. You must bow down before the person, clean a potentially dirty and even "germy" article of clothing, etc.

Explain that in today's lesson, we will see that Jesus humbled Himself to do what was considered a very lowly job to be an example to His disciples. Jesus wants us to serve one another.

Lesson Body:

Story telling slide show: https://missionbibleclass.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/11.07-Jesus-Washes-the-Disciples-Feet_Mary1.pdf

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet 13:1-17

When Jesus and His closest disciples gathered for the Passover meal, Jesus performed a task usually done by servants. He was their teacher but modelled true service and love by washing His disciples' feet. He then goes on to teach them that they should show this kind of love and service to others.

Like we do today, the food was gathered, and the dishes were laid out. It was time to eat, but there was a problem.

The dishes were clean, and the cups were clean. The problem was that there was still something that was not clean. In those times, there was something else that should be cleaned before anyone else began to eat. Can you guess what else needs to be cleaned? What do you think it was?



If you guessed “feet”, then you are correct. In those days, washing your feet before the meal began was very important. People wore sandals and walked in the very dirty streets at that time.

Normally, a servant would wash the feet of people as they entered a house. This was very important when eating a meal. Instead of sitting in chairs at tables, diners of the time reclined on low couches. They would have been reclined close to the feet of the person beside them.

But then something happened that they never expected. Jesus stood up and took off His outside clothes. He got a towel and a bowl of water and then bent down in front of each of the disciples to wash their feet.

Everyone was in shock! Jesus was their teacher! He was too important to do this job. This was a job for servants and not teachers!

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.

When Jesus came to Peter, Peter was shocked. “Stop, I will never allow you to wash my feet!”

But Jesus told Peter that it was all right. Jesus wanted Peter to know that good teachers and leaders love their friends and take care of them. They don’t have to act better than everyone else. Jesus was the teacher, but He was willing to be like a servant and show love to others.

Jesus was going away soon. He was setting His followers up to be genuine and effective leaders. If Jesus could humble Himself in this way, they could also go on to serve others after His death.

Jesus told Peter that He wanted to show love to His people in this way. “Peter,” Jesus said, “if you do not let me wash your feet then you are not one of my people”.

Of course, Peter wanted to be one of Jesus’ people. He wanted this so much that he said, “If you want to, then you can wash my feet and my hands and even my head!”

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 taught His disciples many other things after this. He knew He would die on the cross, so He told them that He would have to go away. Jesus wanted His disciples always to remember that they should love one another. They should not act proud and try to be bossy. They should be like servants and help one another. If Jesus could do this, then so could they.

After washing their feet, Jesus continues the meal and mentions the upcoming betrayal and denial by Judas and Peter. This is followed up by many of Jesus’ teachings. In chapters 14-17, St. John covers vast subjects such as Jesus preparing a place, the comfort of the Holy Spirit, Jesus as the true vine, rejection by the world, sorrow turning to joy, overcoming the world and finally, Jesus’ prayer.

In John 13:31-35 Jesus makes it clear that love will be the key to helping people understand God. If people see love expressed between disciples, then they will recognize that they are God’s people.

Review:

1. Who washed the disciples’ feet when Jesus and the disciples were at a meal together? (Jesus)
2. Which disciple said Jesus could wash not only his feet, but his hands and head as well? (Peter)
3. Why did Jesus wash the disciples’ feet?
4. Why do you think Jesus decided to spend time serving His disciples on His last night with them?
5. Why did Peter not want Jesus to wash his feet?
6. After Jesus washed the disciples’ feet, what does He say the disciples should do? (serve each other, just like how Jesus served them)

7. Jesus said that people will recognize His disciples if they have something for each other. What is it? (love)
8. What did the disciples learn about love from Jesus washing their feet?
9. What did you learn about Jesus in this story?
10. What did you learn about people in this story?

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

The Lord unveils the plan of Judas to betray Him to Peter and John which He had covered before. No one suspected him at all. When the Lord dipped the bread and gave it to Judas, the disciples thought He had done so to have him hurry up and accomplish a certain task.

After the Lord had given Judas the piece of bread, the devil entered him. Jesus gave him the permission to leave as he wished.

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

The tightrope walker:

Have you ever seen a tightrope walker at a circus? A tightrope walker walks across a wire that is stretched high in the air with just a pole to balance him. Well, there was once a tightrope walker that decided to go across Niagara Falls with a wheelbarrow to balance him. As he put his wire across the falls, a crowd gathered. They waited breathlessly as he walked slowly across the wire pushing the wheelbarrow. When he reached the other side, the crowd cheered. He then turned to the crowd and asked, "Do you think I can make it back across?" They all said, "Yes!" He asked again, "Do you really believe I can?" They answered, "We just saw you go across. Of course you can!" The tightrope walker then said, "Then get into the wheelbarrow and go with me."

Our story today is about trust. Can we trust Jesus enough with our lives to "get into the wheelbarrow" and go with Him?

Jesus, in the upper room with His disciples, was trying to prepare them for what was coming. He was telling them not to be afraid and to trust Him no matter what happened. Even when it doesn't seem like it, Jesus is in control!

We can also trust Jesus with every part of our lives both now and in the future. Sometimes things may happen in our lives that we don't fully understand or that frighten us. But like Jesus' disciples, we can put our eyes on Jesus and not on the problems. When you are afraid, just trust in Jesus.

When Jesus wanted to encourage His disciples, He would tell them about heaven. Jesus is preparing an eternal home for all of us that will make this world seem like a memory. Jesus will keep His word.

Thomas was asking an honest question. He was saying that he didn't understand where Jesus was going [The cross then Heaven].

JOHN 14:6 Jesus said to him, *"I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me"*. Jesus was telling us very clearly that He is the only way to God the Father, to heaven and eternal life.



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, they could do the same deeds as those the Lord had done, and even greater ones [all in His name].

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 lawyer or advocate, for He stands in defense of the Lord's Church and against her enemies.

Verse 14:21 "He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me.": It is not enough to just know the commandments. We need to observe and apply them to the full.

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

Takeaway:

Love and obedience can't be separated. Jesus makes it clear that if we love Him, we will obey Him. If you are not, you are a hypocrite if you say that you love Him. We really need to consider our lives to examine if we really do love Him or not. Saying it with our mouth is not enough.

Jesus is saying, "Words are not enough. Show me by action."

Imagine Christy is talking to her mom. Mom says, if you love me, tell me how you show it. Christy says, "Come on. I listen to you at least half the time. I don't track mud onto the floor at least half the time. I respond to at least half of your questions. I don't throw my dirty clothes on the floor at least half the time. I am there for you half the time. I've only broken 40% of the dishes." Will her mom be happy with that? It's not really love if we only do it half of the time. We need to make a practice of obeying God's commandments **all the time**.

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.

Activities:



