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# *We All Need The Cleansing Which Only Jesus Can Provide*

**JOHN 13:1-11**

## **Introduction**

1. There is a passage which we visited on a Sunday morning four months ago, that I would like for us to look at again.
2. It is found in *John 13:1-11* and is the passage of John washing the disciples feet.
3. We need it because it is so relevant to where our society is at and perhaps where some of us are at today.
4. Do you know of anyone, at one time or another, who . . .
  - a. was offended because he or she did not recognition to which they felt entitled?
  - b. because of their desire for prominence refused to take a subordinate position?
5. Perhaps you remember a young person who because they did not get the position on the team they wanted refused to play.
6. Perhaps we remember someone who received a truly unintentional slight and either exploded in anger or brooded and sulked about it for a long period of time.
7. If any of this describes you, I want you to visualize in your mind the picture which John paints for us here — the Son of God, girded with a towel, kneeling before His disciples feet in order to wash them.
8. Tonight, there are three things I want you to remember:
  - a. Jesus loves those who do not deserve it.
  - b. He demonstrated that love through His own humble service.
  - c. We each need His cleansing in our own lives.

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**A. JESUS LOVES THOSE WHO DO NOT DESERVE IT**

1. In Luke's account of the night's events leading up to Jesus' arrest in the Garden, He is with His disciples in the upper room eating the Passover meal.
2. In *Luke 22:17-20*, we find Jesus instituting the Lord's Supper.
3. Immediately after this, in *verses 21-22*, He tells them that the one who will betray Him is seated at the table with Him.
4. Two verses later, *verse 24*, we find these words, "*And there arose also a dispute among them as to which one of them was regarded to be greatest.*"
5. Here, in John's gospel, Jesus washes the disciples feet before He mentions the betrayer (*John 13:21*).

*"Truly, truly, I say to you, that one of you will betray Me."*

6. What that means is that the dispute among the disciples as to which was the greatest probably took place after He washed their feet.
7. Try to put yourself in Jesus' place for a moment:
  - a. You have just washed the feet of the twelve men with whom you have spent the last three years of your life.
  - b. You know that one of them, Judas, will betray you in the next few hours.
  - c. Peter, one of your closest disciples will deny knowing you before the sun rises in the morning.
  - d. All of these men will have deserted you by 9:00 a.m. tomorrow morning.
8. In spite of all this, John makes this statement at the end of verse 1, here in *chapter 13*: "*. . . having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.*"
9. We are in the same boat with the disciples — none of us deserve His love, but He loves us in spite of our sin.

*"But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8).*

10. Two verses later, in *Romans 5:10*, Paul tells us that it was "*while we were*

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*enemies we were reconciled to God through the death of His Son."*

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## **B. CHRIST DEMONSTRATED HIS LOVE THROUGH HUMBLE SERVICE**

1. Perhaps you have heard the statement, "Actions speak louder than words."
2. Jesus' actions on that evening showed His love for those who were unworthy.
3. The task of washing someone's feet in Jesus day was reserved for the lowest servants.
4. As I shared with you when we looked at this passage four months ago, there are no examples in ancient literature of a superior washing the feet of an inferior.
5. Perhaps you can imagine just how shocked the disciples were when Jesus began washing their feet.
6. Notice again what John writes in *verses 3-4* :

*"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God and was going back to God, got up from supper, and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself." (John 13:3-4, NASB95)*

7. Two things are brought out here:
  - a. Jesus knew that God had given into His hands authority over all of heaven and earth — the entire universe including all the angelic host.
  - b. He knew that He had come from His Father and a place of inestimable glory and would soon be returning there.
8. And yet, He humbly washed the dirty feet of his disciples.
9. True humility . . .
  - a. Recognizes that no task is beneath us when we are doing it for Christ's sake.
  - b. Requires that we think of others more highly than we think of ourselves.
  - c. Removes the focus from our rights and our needs and puts it on others' needs.

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10. Jesus died a cruel death for our sins.

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### **C. WE EACH NEED JESUS' CLEANSING IN OUR LIVES**

1. There is a truth which the apostle Paul makes abundantly clear in his letter to the Christians in Rome.  
*"All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God" (Romans 3:23, NASB95).*
2. Notice the two verbs which Paul utilizes:
  - a. *"Have sinned"* (Aorist Active Indicative)
  - b. *"Fall"* (Present Passive Indicative)
3. It is because we have sinned in the past that we continually fall short of God's glory in the present.
4. Just as the disciples feet were still dirty because they had not been washed, so we remain in our sins until they are washed away.
5. When Peter refused to let Jesus wash His feet and said to Him, *"Never shall You wash my feet!"*, Jesus responded, *"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (John 13:8).*
6. Neither you nor I can be a Christian without Christ's cleansing.

### *Conclusion*

1. Tonight, do we realize how little we deserve the cleansing which Christ offers in our lives?
2. Does His love for you humble you and cause you to hate your sin?
3. Are you willing to come to Him now and seek His cleansing in your life?
4. Without that cleansing, neither you nor I have any hope of an eternity with God.