

## **Bibles???**

### **The Word of God is the Absolute Truth and the Final Authority**

Turn your bibles with me to John 13

We are continuing our verse by verse study through the Gospel of John

For the past couple of Sundays, our studies have focused on Jesus' triumphal entry into Jerusalem and Jesus' last message to the multitudes.

I had mentioned to you in previous studies, that from now on, – Jesus ministry is focused on His disciples.

And as we come to chapter 13— I want to remind you that we are less than 15 hours from the cross.

For the next five chapters (13-17), the Holy Spirit inspired John to provide us with the details of what is known as the Upper Room discourse.

This was such an important 6-hour period that John spends one-quarter of his entire gospel recording it.

This is Jesus' farewell message to His disciples - where He endeavors to comfort their hearts in the present but also preparing their hearts for what is to come.

This is His final exhortation before He goes to the cross

And so, we will see Jesus' message to His disciples beginning with our study this morning – it is a message, not only a spoken message – but one that Jesus demonstrated to them by giving them – as an example.

Defining for them and us, today – what true greatness is in the eyes of God and how it is manifested in the lives of His people.

Let's pray...

What makes someone a good leader?

If you go to Amazon –

You could find thousands upon thousands of books from people that think they have the answer.

They will tell you how to dress

How to speak

They will tell you what a good leader is supposed to do and what a good leader is not supposed to do.

Besides book – there are countless seminars that one can go to

Even at work – we have special training for those in leadership positions.

The problems with many of these philosophies are that they are based on the wisdom of man – they are based on what the world defines as qualities / characteristics of a leader.

And the scary thing is that some of these philosophies have even crept into the church.

That is not the way of the church -

I want you to keep your finger in John 13 and turn to Mark 10

Because I want to show you that this isn't something new – we shouldn't be surprised by this – because even during Jesus' ministry, there was a worldly system of leadership.

And Jesus addresses this worldly system of leadership and corrects His disciples

**[Mar 10:42-45 NKJV] 42 But Jesus called them to [Himself] and said to them, "You know that those who are considered rulers over the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them. 43 "Yet it shall not be so among you; but whoever desires to become great among you shall be your servant. 44 "And whoever of you desires to be first shall be slave of all. 45 "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many."**

In our text – Jesus is going to live this out practically.

Jesus doesn't just give us the teaching – He gives us the example

Go back to John 13

**[Jhn 13:1-17 NKJV] 1 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end.**

Several times throughout His ministry we read Him say, “My hour has not yet come”— but now we read “His hour had come.”

He is hours away from being nailed to the cross.

He is hours away from the ultimate expression of His great love for us.

**[Jhn 15:13 NKJV] 13 "Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one's life for his friends.**

After 4000 years of human history – ever since the fall of man in the Garden of Eden – the hour has come for the completion of our redemption.

A few weeks ago, we read that Jesus told the audience -

**[Jhn 12:24 NKJV] 24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it produces much grain.**

This is it –

Jesus knows it

I want us to think about this –

Jesus knows that in a few hours, He is going to be betrayed by a close friend

He knows that He is going to be beaten cruelly and then crucified on a Roman cross.

And Jesus as we will see – is going to be a servant to His disciples.

He is going to show them what a true spiritual leader is.

I also had you make a note that He loved them to the end.

In other words, “He loved them (and us) completely, perfectly, and unconditionally—  
thru everything in spite of their weaknesses, their faults and failures.”

He loved them and us “to the last” or “utterly and completely”

We need to remember this the next time we think that God is fed up with us because  
we blow it.

When John says that Jesus loved them to the end – I found it interesting that word that  
John uses in the Greek here is the same word that Jesus uttered from the cross before  
He bowed His head and gave up His spirit , “It is finished” or “Paid in full”

John is telling us that Jesus loved us all the way to the cross—all the way to the  
completion of our redemption

He didn't just love us with words, He didn't just start the work of redemption but stop short and not finish what He started.

Our Savior loved us completely, unconditionally—and demonstrated His great love for us by going to the cross and finishing the work He came to the earth to accomplish—to redeem us with His own blood:

**2 And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's [son], to betray Him,**

I want you to notice the contrast between verse 1 and verse 2

The contrast between light and darkness here

The contrast between love and hate

The contrast between God and the devil

We have Jesus who is fully God and Judas who has succumbed to the influence of the devil

Judas has already made up his mind

Already, put in in his heart – was this decision that he was going to betray Jesus

I had you make a note of the word put – because the same word is used here by John to describe Jesus pouring the water into the basin in verse 5.

It's as if Satan had already poured the idea of betraying Jesus into the mold of Judas' heart, and it had been cooking there for some time.

**3 Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God,**

For generations upon generations – philosophers and great minds have struggles with 3 great questions.

Where did I come from?

Why am I here?

Where am I going?

And these three questions can be summed up into one supreme question = “Who am I?”

John tells us here – that Jesus knew the answers.

Everything was crystal clear; He knew precisely Who He was as God & Man.

*1) He was the Messiah, the Redeemer, the Savior.*

*2) He knew He was the Eternal Son who'd become human so that He could restore fallen humanity to its original destiny.*

3) *And He knew that soon He would be returning to the glory of heaven, that His mission on Earth complete.*

Church, that same knowledge is going to give us the type of security you and I need to be the servant of God that He desires.

And with this awareness of Who He was - came the knowledge that He possessed all power & authority.

This verse sets the foundation for what is about to happen –

**4 (He) rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. 5 After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe [them] with the towel with which He was girded.**

The question is always asked, why would Jesus, in the middle of the last supper – stop everything and start washing their feet?

There are two reasons –

Dr. Luke tells us in his gospel that it was during the supper that the disciples began to argue among each other as to who was going to be the greatest in the kingdom.

Luke also tells us that this argument broke out after Jesus had just told them that one of them was going to betray Him.

So again – all they are thinking about is “self”

They knew the religious rulers wanted to kill Jesus – Jesus had told them already that one of them was going to betray Him

They could care less about what is going to happen to Jesus

His needs were the farthest thing from their minds and yet their needs were always near to Him.

So Jesus proceeds to wash their feet

Now, it is hard for us to totally grasp what is happening here.

We have to remember that during this time – there was no sneakers or boot.

People walked around dirt roads with a piece of leather tied to the bottom of their foot.

So even if you washed your feet when you left your house, by the time you got to the place you were going – they would be filthy.

And so, it was customary that every Jewish home had a pitcher of water, a basin and towel near the door.

This was not only customary—it was a courtesy for all visitors that entered your home.

Whenever a person entered your home back then, one of your servants would immediately come and wash their feet as a courtesy and an act of hospitality—

Now, regarding these servants –

The foot washing was always done by the lowest servant

If you were too poor to have any servants – then, it was the responsibility of the host to wash the guest's feet.

But I just want to make sure we understand—the washing of another's feet in that culture was considered to be the lowliest task a servant could perform—it was an act which required true humility.

So what is happening here in the Upper Room – where this is taking place is – they apparently had no servants.

The proper thing to do was for one of the disciples to wash the feet of the other disciples or for the disciples to take turns, washing each other's feet.

However, that is not what is happening.

They are arguing over who among them is the greatest.

So, Jesus seeing what was going on and listening to them arguing among themselves as to who was the greatest—quietly stood up took off his outer robe and tunic, tied a towel around his waist like an apron (as a lowly servant would have been dressed), poured some water into a basin, knelt down and began to wash the disciple's feet!

Jesus could have easily commanded one of His disciples to do it –

He could have told Judas to do it – after all, Jesus knew what was in his heart

He could have commanded Peter to do it or John to do it

But He didn't –

He saw a need and took care of it – even a need that normally would have been taken care of by the lowliest servant

God, He steps down and steps down and steps down – that church, is humility.

And the greatest picture of humility is found in Jesus Christ.

But church, there is another reason why Jesus washed their feet – it's a practical one and that is that their feet were dirty.

God has saved us to serve Him, to be used by Him, to be open to the work of the Holy Spirit, so that our lives might make a difference in someone else's lives for His glory.

**[Gal 5:13 NKJV] 13 For you, brethren, have been called to liberty; only do not [use] liberty as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.**

**6 Then He came to Simon Peter. And [Peter] said to Him, "Lord, are You washing my feet?" 7 Jesus answered and said to him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this."**

The Apostle John doesn't record for us a reply from any of the disciples until Jesus gets to Peter.

We don't know if they were silent because they were in shock or simply too convicted to speak

Until Jesus comes to Peter -

You see, Peter is having a hard time watching his rabbi humbling Himself, bending down and serving him as a slave.

You're going to wash my feet???

And Jesus responds here with a promise.

That the meaning behind what He's doing was at present a mystery, but one that will soon become clear to them.

You see, the washing of their feet foreshadowed the cross.

Jesus, their Master, their Lord, was about to perform an act of service for them that was so humiliating it made foot-washing look noble in comparison.

He wanted to make sure they would understand that the cross was FOR THEM!

It's the reason He came.

It's why He was Who He was & why He possessed all power & authority.

It was all so He could serve them & bring about their salvation.

But as Jesus said, they would only understand later – on the other side of the cross.

**8 Peter said to Him, "You shall never wash my feet!" Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."**

First of all, Peter didn't say this because he was ticklish.

He wouldn't let his feet be washed because he wouldn't see Jesus humble Himself by this humble service.

You see, in Peter's world, rabbis do not wash their disciples' feet!

Because in Peter's world washing feet is nothing more than a social custom

And I had you make a note of Jesus' response - **"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me."**

What Jesus is saying here proves that the washing of their feet pointed to the cross.

By Peter saying don't wash my feet – what he is saying is – I don't want to be served.

When Jesus said to Peter, "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me"

He was saying that in order to belong to Him we must let Him serve us through the cross.

**9 Simon Peter said to Him, "Lord, not my feet only, but also [my] hands and [my] head!" 10 Jesus said to him, "He who is bathed needs only to wash [his] feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you."**

In that culture – when a person took a bath – usually in the morning – they would be considered clean (that is the word bathed) that is what Peter is asking for.

However, during the day, as one would walk down the street – they would get their feet dirty and then go through the foot washing ceremony

So Jesus is making the distinction between the two

No, Peter once you have been bathed – you only need a washing throughout the day

Jesus is referring to our salvation

What happens when we come to Jesus and make Him our Lord.

And He washes us in His blood.

Our sins are forgiven.

We are given a new start:

**[2Co 5:17 NKJV] 17 Therefore, if anyone [is] in Christ, [he is] a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new.**

However, as we walk through this defiled world, it is easy for our feet to become dirty or defiled.

When that happens, he or she doesn't need to be fully "bathed" again (saved again)—they simply need to have their 'feet' washed.

**[1Jo 1:9 NKJV] 9 If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us [our] sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

So, we can say that The Christian life consists of one bath but many “foot-washings”.

**11 For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean."**

When Jesus says, you are not all clean – He is referring to Judas

Judas followed Jesus for the goodies it would get him, for the promotions & advancement it meant.

Remember, I mentioned a few weeks ago that when Mary of Bethany washed Jesus' feet with the oil – it drove Judas to go to the religious rulers.

This washing of the feet is the trigger that makes him take the next step

He had no interest in following a guy Who'd embarrass Himself by such a humiliating act as washing feet.

**12 So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, "Do you know what I have done to you? 13 "You call Me**

**Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for [so] I am. 14 "If I then, [your] Lord and**

**Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. 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. 17 "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.**

The goal of the disciple is to be just like the rabbi.

That means as disciples we are called to BE SERVANTS too!

Church, I don't want us to miss this –

This is not a simple call to serve.

It is deeper than that

We aren't called to serve so much as to BE SERVANTS.

That's the identity we must embrace.

If all we do is serve, we'll put limits on our service.

We'll only serve when it's convenient or there's a reward.

When those we serve aren't appreciative, we get upset. We get burnt out

Being a servant means seeing things completely differently.

Servants look for opportunities to serve because that's what they are – they are servants

Look around you church – everyone in here has stinky, dirty feet

Everyone in here has a need.

The question we must ask ourselves is, are we willing to humble ourselves like our Lord and Savior and be the servant we are called to be.

And we can summarize what Jesus says in verse 17 –

Happiness comes from washing feet

That is what the word blessed means – happy.

It's through humbly serving one another.

Let's pray...

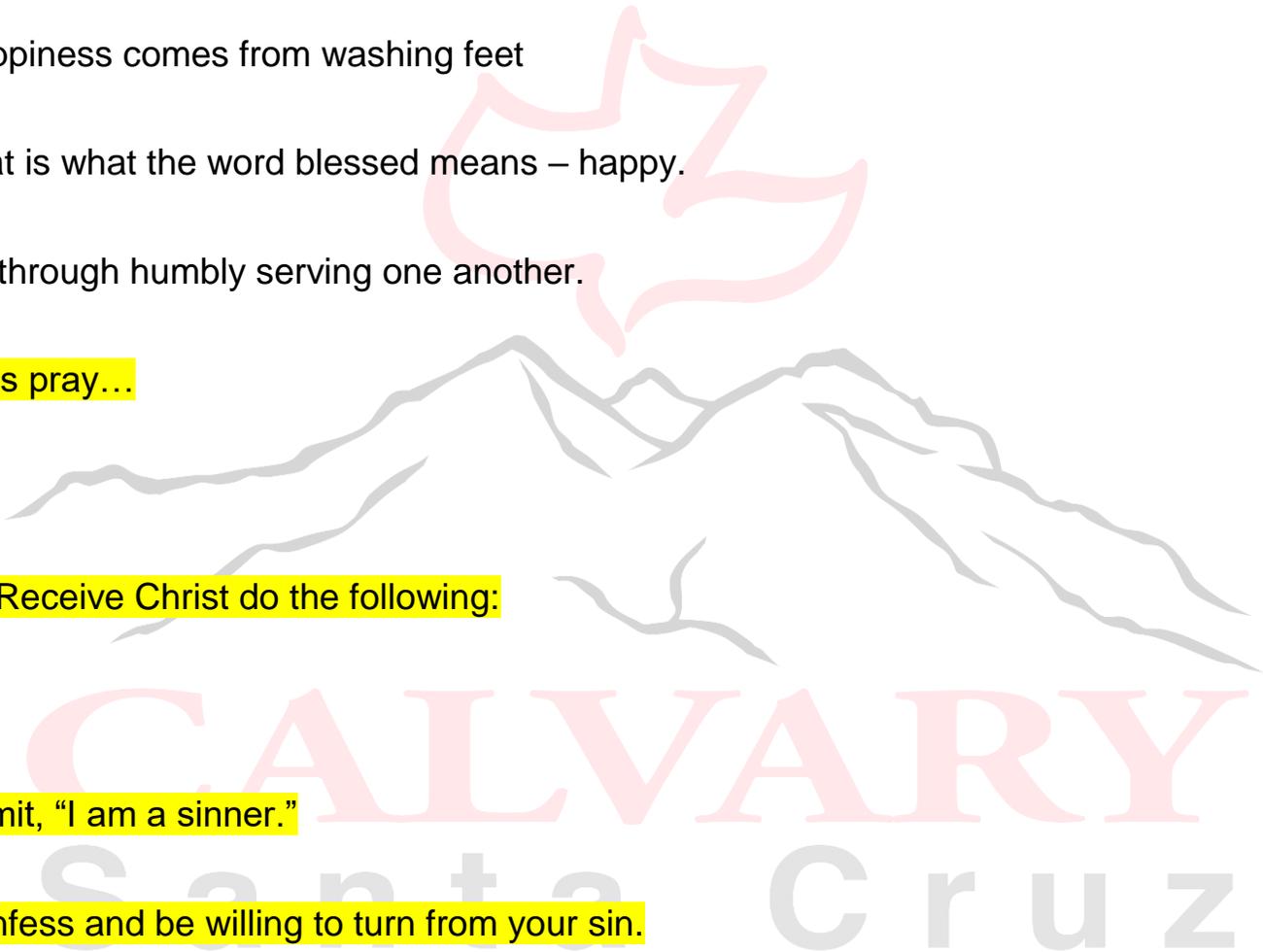
To Receive Christ do the following:

Admit, "I am a sinner."

Confess and be willing to turn from your sin.

Believe, by faith that Jesus Christ died for you on the cross.

Receive, through prayer, Jesus Christ into your heart and receive eternal life.



Dear Lord Jesus,

I know that I am a sinner and need Your forgiveness. I believe that You died on the cross for my sins. Please forgive me for my sins and cleanse me by Your blood. I accept You by faith as my personal Lord and Savior. Give me a thirst for Your Word and Help me to follow You all of my days. In Jesus' name I pray, Amen.

[Num 6:24-26 NLT] 24 '

May the LORD bless you and protect you.

May the LORD smile on you and be gracious to you.

May the LORD show you his favor and give you his peace.'

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