

JESUS WASHED DISCIPLES' FEET

Mark 14:12-17; Luke 22:7-30; John 13:1-16

STRUCTURE

Key-person: Jesus

Key-location: Upper room in Jerusalem

Key-repetitions:

- Passover: Passover lamb was sacrificed on first day of Feast of Unleavened Bread (Lk 22:7); Jesus sent two disciples to prepare the Passover meal (Lk 22:8-9); disciples were to ask home owner for directions to the guest room for Jesus to eat the Passover Meal with his disciples (Lk 22:11-12); Jesus desired to eat the Passover meal with disciples, but he didn't eat (Lk 22:15-16).
- Wash: Jesus began to wash disciples' feet (Jn 13:5); Peter said Jesus would never wash his feet (Jn 13:6, 8); Jesus said that unless he washed Peter's feet, Peter had no part with him (Jn 13:8); Peter replied for Jesus to wash his hands and head as well (Jn 13:9); Jesus said a person who had bathed only needed to wash his feet (Jn 13:10); Jesus finished washing feet (Jn 13:12); Jesus told disciples that he washed their feet; they should wash one another's feet (Jn 13:14-15).
- Service/serve: example of Jesus washing disciples' feet (Jn 13:1-11); Jesus declared that no servant is greater than his master (Jn 13:16); Jesus said the leader should act like the one who serves (Lk 22:26); Jesus said he was one who serves (Lk 22:27).

Key-attitudes:

- Jesus' shrewdness in having his disciples follow a man carrying a water jug.
- Jesus' seriousness.
- Jesus' confidence that the Father had put all things under his control.
- Peter's shock when Jesus began to wash his disciples' feet.
- Disciples' selfishness when they argued about who was the greatest.

Initial-situation:

At the end of three years of public ministry, Jesus went to Jerusalem for the Passover Feast. On Sunday, he made his Triumphal Entry into Jerusalem. On Monday, he cleansed the temple by expelling those who were buying and selling. On Tuesday, Jesus and the religious leaders argued. On Tuesday evening, Jesus was honored at a banquet at Lazarus' home where Mary anointed him with perfume. After the banquet, Judas bargained with the chief priests to betray Jesus. On Wednesday, Jesus rested in Bethany.

Initial-problem:

On Thursday, the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal?"

Final-situation:

Jesus told his disciples that he had set an example for them and they should do for one another as he had done for them.

BIBLE STORY**Jesus Determines the Place for the Passover Meal**

On the first day of the Feast of Unleavened Bread, it was customary to sacrifice the Passover lamb. Jesus' disciples asked him, "Where do you want us to prepare the Passover meal?" *The Passover Meal commemorated the night the Death Angel passed over Jewish homes in Egypt whose door posts were covered by the blood of a Passover lamb (Ex 12:1-4).*

Jesus told Peter and John, "Enter the city. You'll meet a man carrying a jar of water. Follow him to the house he enters and say to the owner of the house, 'The Teacher asks, Where is the guest room where I can eat the Passover meal with my disciples?' The owner will show you a large upstairs room furnished and ready. Prepare the meal there for us."

The two disciples left, went into the city and found everything just as Jesus had promised. So they prepared the Passover Meal (Mk 14:12-16; Lk 22:7-13).

Evening came. Jesus arrived with the other disciples (Mk 14:17). Jesus and his apostles reclined at the table. Jesus told them, "I have a deep desire to eat this Passover with you before I suffer. But I tell you, I'll not eat it again until it finds its full meaning in the Kingdom of God" (Lk 22:14-16).

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Jesus showed his disciples the full extent of his love.

The evening Passover Meal was being served.

The devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus.

Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God.

Jesus got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. Jesus poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around his waist.

Jesus came to Simon Peter. Peter asked, "Lord, you wash my feet? No, you'll never wash my feet."

Jesus replied, "You don't understand now what I'm doing, but later you'll understand."

Peter persisted, "No, you'll never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash your feet, you've no part with me."

Peter replied, "Then, Lord, not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

Jesus answered, "A person who has taken a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean (Jn 13:1-11).

Jesus finished washing their feet, put his outer garment back on, and returned to his place. Jesus asked them, “Do you understand what I’ve done for you? You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so. That is what I am. If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I’ve set an example for you; what I’ve done, you should do. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master; no messenger is greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know this truth, you’ll be blessed if you practice it” (Jn 13:12-17).

Within minutes, the disciples were arguing about which of them was the greatest. Jesus said to them, “The kings of the Gentiles lord it over them. But you are not to be like that. Instead, let the greatest among you become like the youngest; let the leader act like the one who serves. I am among you as one who serves” (Lk 22:24-30).

GENERIC DIALOGUE QUESTIONS

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| 1. What catches your attention in the story? | 5. How did the characters face their problems? |
| 2. Is there anything in the story that is hard to understand? | 6. How have you faced similar problems? |
| 3. Who are the main characters in the story? | 7. Is there someone in the story who is similar to you or who is different from you? |
| 4. What problems did the characters face? | 8. What does the story tell about God? |

SPECIFIC DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Who did Jesus send to prepare the Passover Meal?
2. How did Jesus feel about sharing the Passover Meal with his disciples?
3. The washing of feet was normally performed by the lowest servant in a household. What was Jesus demonstrating when he washed his disciples’ feet?
4. When it comes to acts of humility and service, do you find it easier to:
 - Serve others hand-and-foot?
 - Have others serve you hand-and-foot?
 - Stay on the sidelines observing?
5. What are the characteristics of a “servant leader”?

LIFE-LESSONS

1. **Times of opposition and persecution require Jesus’ followers to use wisdom in order not to take unnecessary risks.** Jesus gave the disciples a secret signal for finding the room for the Passover Meal. It was strange for a man to carry a water jug, since that chore was typically performed by women (Lk 22:10-11).
2. **The life and death of Jesus shows the love he has for his followers.** Jesus showed his disciples the full extent of his love (Jn 13:1).
3. **Jesus is all powerful.** Jesus knew that the Father put all things under his power (Jn 13:3).

4. **Jesus, the Master, is a servant.** Jesus served the Father (Jn 5:36; 6:38; 9:4; 10:32, 37; 14:10) and he was a servant to people (Mat 20:28; Lk 22:27; Phil 2:2-7). Jesus proved he was a servant by washing his disciples' feet (Jn 13:4-5). Washing guests' feet was a job assigned to the lowest household servant.
5. **Jesus wants disciples who are servants.** Jesus demands that his disciples be servants of others (Jn 13:15-16). Service rendered to one of Jesus' followers will be recognized by Jesus (Mat 10:42).
6. **Great spiritual experiences do not make a person into a mature Christian.** The disciples had the great experience of celebrating the Passover Meal and the first Lord's Supper conducted by Jesus himself. Immediately, they argued among themselves about who was greatest (Lk 22:24).

LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Journalistic Interview of Characters in the Story:

Tell the story one time. Ask for a volunteer who will represent Peter. Retell the story. The leader, as a reporter, interviews the volunteer, asking questions related to Peter. Example: Peter, why didn't you want Jesus to wash your feet?