

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

Matthew 26:14-39; Luke 22:24-27; John 13:1-17

PPT Title

Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

Main Point: Jesus wants us to serve others and repent of our sin.

Key Verse: *I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you.*
- John 13:14-15

Props: A shallow bucket/basin; towel; water; an adult volunteer who is willing for you to wash their feet; a bicycle

Atmosphere: Set up a low table in the front of the room. Use many candles, and teach this with low lighting to get the effect of nighttime.

BACKGROUND/REVIEW



Say: We have been learning so many things about Jesus. Last week we learned that Jesus wants us to remember Him. He left us a "picture" – communion. When we take communion, we are to remember Jesus and all that He's done for us. Today we're going to see what Jesus did during the last few hours before He went to the cross. Remember, Jesus is God and He knows everything! He knew He would lay down His life very soon.

JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET (John 13:1-17)



Say: Here we are at the Last Supper on the night before Jesus knew that He was going to die. He was about to be betrayed by Judas, one of His own disciples. Soon, Jesus would be beaten, made fun of, and nailed to a cross. Even though Jesus knew all these things, His disciples did not understand that He was going to die and then rise again. It's interesting to see what Jesus did for His disciples on His very last night with them.



Teacher: You may demonstrate this. **Say:** Jesus got up from the meal. He wrapped a towel around His waist. He poured water into a large bowl. Then He began to wash His disciples' feet. He dried them with the towel that was wrapped around Him. In those days, foot washing was needed in every home. The streets were dusty and dirty. Roads even had garbage and waste from the animals that traveled up and down the same streets. People in those days wore sandals without socks, and their feet could become very dirty.



The dinner-time custom was to lean back around the table at the evening meal. It's hard to enjoy a meal when there is a very bad smell, isn't it? Usually, the lowest servant in the household was expected to wash the feet of guests. Having your guests' feet washed was a way to show honor to your guests.

Since the last supper was held in a private home, with just Jesus and His disciples, we can easily see why there were no servants there.

(Jesus) came to Simon Peter. "Lord," Peter said to Him, "Are you going to wash my feet?"

Jesus replied, "You don't realize now what I am doing. But later you will understand." 1



"No," said Peter. "You will never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you can't share life with Me."

"Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet! Wash my hands and my head too!"

Jesus answered, "A person who has had a bath needs to wash only his feet. The rest of his body is clean. And you are clean. But not all of you are." - John 13:6-10

Ask: Who do you think Jesus is talking about here when He says that not **all** of you are "clean"? *Judas.*



What do you think Jesus was trying to teach us by washing His disciples' feet? *Jesus wants us to serve others; wants us to think of others.* **Say:** Jesus was showing His disciples how much He loved them (John 13:1), and that they should serve others (John 13:14).

"Do you understand what I have done for you?" He asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord.' You are right. That is what I am. I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you.

"What I'm about to tell you is true. A servant is not more important than his master. And a messenger is not more important than the one who sends him. Now you know these things. So you will be blessed if you do them. - John 13:12b-17

Application: One of the things Jesus was teaching was that we should serve others. If Jesus, who is Lord of all, would choose to lower Himself to do the job of the least important servant by washing His friends' feet, then we should always be willing to serve others. Jesus said to follow His example. Foot washing was very common in Bible times, but not very common today. **Ask:** What is something you might do to serve another person today? *Listen for answers.*

CLEANSING OF SIN (John 13:8-11)

Say: One of the many wonderful things about each Bible story is that the Lord is usually teaching us more than one thing. The Bible is so rich! Every time you read it, God can show you more about Himself and your relationship to Him.

Another thing we can learn from Jesus washing His disciples' feet is that we all need daily cleansing through forgiveness to have fellowship with the Lord.

Unwashed feet is a picture of a believer trying to walk with the Lord, study the Word, pray, or serve Him while that person has known sin in his life. By this, I mean that the person knows he is committing a sin over and over, but is unwilling to try to stop doing that sin. An example might be that a boy always speaks disrespectfully to his mother. The boy knows that the Bible says, "All of you must have respect for your mother and father." (Leviticus 19:3) But the boy ignores God's command, and talks to his mother in a mean and sassy way. Symbolically speaking, that boy has filthy feet! How can the boy walk with Jesus, who is perfect and pure, when the boy's feet are covered in dirt? Jesus said, "If you love Me, you will obey what I command." (John 14:15) By ignoring Jesus' commands, by keeping sin in his life, the boy is showing that his relationship with Jesus is not valuable to him. Just the opposite, if the boy hears that the Bible commands him to respect his mom, so he goes to Jesus and asks for forgiveness and the grace to stop talking back to his mom, he is showing Jesus that he loves Him and wants to obey Him.

Say: Would you like to learn two Greek words today? It's fun to know words from another language. The New Testament was written in Greek. And there are two words used for the word "wash" in these verses.

Show the words: **NIPTW** (pronounced nip-toe) and **LOUW** (pronounced lu-oh)

niptw =
wash part

Louw = bathe
entire body

There is **niptw**, which was used for washing only a part of the body, such as the hands, face, and feet. You would use this word for washing your hands before dinner.

The second word is **louw**, which meant to bathe the body. It referred to a thorough washing of the entire body. You would use this word for taking a good long shower.

Jesus used both words in verse 10. We might say it this way: "He who has bathed (louw) his entire body needs only to wash (niptw) his feet."

In verse 10, Jesus pointed out the difference between being completely bathed and having one's feet washed by the Lord. When a person understands their helpless, sinful condition and comes to Jesus because He died to take away their sin, which is like the person getting the best, most complete bath ever. Jesus washes them inside out! Their sin is taken away and forgotten (Hebrews 8:12). Forgiveness is theirs (Romans 8:1-2). They will NEVER have to pay the penalty for their sin (John 10:28). But then, as they walk through life, they sin again (1 John 1:6-10). That sin keeps them from living the victorious kingdom life. It keeps them from abiding in Jesus and bearing spiritual fruit. Coming to Jesus, confessing and repenting of our daily sin is like a foot washing. Jesus made it very clear that **once we trust in Him, we don't need another "total bath", only the "daily cleansing" from the sins that occur as we walk down the dusty, dirty streets of life.**

Teacher: Hold the bicycle next to you. Let's say I really wanted a bicycle, so my parents bought me this bike. Wouldn't it be silly for me to keep asking for a bicycle? Everyday, I stood next to this bike and said, "Please buy me a bike. I really want a bike." Of course, that would be ridiculous. I already have this nice bike. The problem is: I am not using it to get places or to have fun! I'm still *walking* everywhere I go! Now, what would I have to do to use this bike the way I'm supposed to use it? *You have to get on it and pedal!* Right, I already own the bike. Now I just need to get on it and go!

Everyone who puts his or her trust in Jesus **is forgiven** of their sin! Jesus has given them forgiveness, just like my parents gave me this bike. Forgiveness is theirs! (Ephesians 1:6-8) They don't have to beg for forgiveness again, just like I didn't have to ask for a bike after my parents already gave me one. But we still sin everyday, so what do we do about those sins? The Bible tells us to **confess** and **repent** of our sin (Acts 19:18, Revelation 2:5).

We confess - we agree with God that our attitude or action is wrong.

We repent - we change our heart and mind about the sin and go in the opposite direction.

When I confess and repent, I "throw off" that sin that had a grip on me (Hebrews 12:1). Now I can live in victory. By God's grace, I can do the things that God wants me to do (Ephesians 1:4-14). I will bear wonderful fruit like kindness, goodness, and patience. Those who trust in Jesus already have His forgiveness, but if we don't confess and repent of our daily sins, we are not letting His forgiveness change our lives. Applying Jesus' forgiveness to my life by confessing and repenting is like finally getting on my bike and riding it! My life is different; it is better in every way.



All of Jesus' disciples, except for Judas (who was about to betray Jesus), had trusted and believed in Jesus. They were clean in the sense of a "total bath" of salvation from sin's penalty. They all, however, needed - and would need throughout their lives on earth - daily cleansing to live the full kingdom life.

When Peter refused to allow the Lord to wash (niptw) his feet, the Lord responded, "If I do not wash (niptw) you, you have no part (fellowship) with Me." Jesus was not saying that Peter could not trust and believe in God. The issue was whether Peter would

live the victorious, kingdom life that Jesus wanted him to live.

Application: The confessing and repenting of your daily sins is the **niptw** (washing part of yourself) that Jesus said was so very important. You must confess and repent so that you can abide in Jesus, so His grace will fill your life. Be sure to go to Jesus every day for your “foot washing,” so you can live the full kingdom life!

PPT Verse

Key Verse: *I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet. So you also should wash one another's feet. I have given you an example. You should do as I have done for you.* - John 13:14-15

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