

Week of April 16 - 22

Washing the Disciples' Feet (John 13:1-20)

Knowing that the time had come for him to leave the ones he had come to know and love and return to his Father, Jesus got up from the dinner table, took off his shirt, laid it aside, and put on an apron. He poured water into a basin, then proceeded to go around the room, washing the disciples' feet and drying them with the apron he was wearing.

When he came to Peter, Peter asked if he intended to wash his feet, too. Jesus replied, "You don't understand why I'm doing it, but someday you will." "No," Peter protested, "you'll never wash my feet!"

"But if I don't, you can't walk with me," Jesus replied.

Peter exclaimed, "Then wash my hands and head, too!" Jesus replied, "One who has bathed all over only needs to wash his feet to be clean. Now you are clean, but that isn't true of everyone here." Jesus knew who would betray him.

When he had finished, he put on his robe and sat down and asked, "Do you understand what I was doing to you? You call me 'Master' and 'Lord,' and it's true that's who I am. Since I am your Lord and Teacher and washed your feet, you ought to wash each other's feet. I've given you an example to follow: do as I have done to you. How true it is that a servant is not greater than his master, nor is the messenger more important than the one who sends him. You know these things. Now do them! You'll only be at peace if you put them into practice. This doesn't pertain to all of you. The Scriptures say, 'One who eats supper with me will betray me,' and this will happen soon. I'm telling you this now, so when it happens, you'll believe that I am who I say I am. Whoever does my will honors me, and he that accepts me honors the one who sent me."

Jesus Dismisses Judas (John 13:20-30)

Jesus was in great anguish and exclaimed, "Yes, it's true-one of you will betray me." The disciples looked at each other, wondering who he could mean. Peter motioned to John to ask him who it was. So John turned and asked, "Lord, who is it?" Jesus said, "It's the one to whom I will give the bread dipped in the broth." And when he had dipped it, he gave it to Judas Iscariot. As soon as Judas had eaten it, Satan entered into him. Then Jesus told him, "Hurry up and do what you have to do." None of the disciples knew what Jesus meant, thinking since Judas was their treasurer, he was telling him to go and pay for the food or to give some money to the poor. Judas left at once, going out into the night.

The New Commandment (John 13:31-36)

Then Jesus said, "My time has come. The glory of God will soon surround me, and God will receive great glory because of everything that happens to me. God will give me his glory, and this will be very soon. Boys, I won't be with you very much longer! Though you search for me, you can't come where I am going. Your final instruction is to love one another like I have loved and cared for you. Everyone should be able to see you are my disciples by the way you love and care for each other."

Peter's Denial Foretold (John 13:37-38)

Peter said, "Where are you going that I can't come?" Jesus replied, "You can't follow me now, but you'll follow me later." "But why can't I come now?" he asked, "because I'm ready to die for you." Jesus answered, "Die for me? No, Peter, three times before the cock crows tomorrow morning, you'll deny you even know me!"

The Way, the Truth, and the Life (John 14:1-14)

"Don't worry. You trust in God, believe in me, too. There are many homes where my Father lives, and I'm going to prepare one for you. When everything is ready, then I'll come and get you, so you can always be with me where I am. If this weren't so, I would tell you. You know where I'm going and how to get there.

"No, we don't," Thomas said. "We don't have any idea where you're going, so how can we know how to get there?" Jesus told him, "I am the Way, and the Truth and the source of Life. No one finds the Father except through me. If you had known who I am, then you would've known who my Father is. From now on you know him and have seen him!"

Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father and said that would be sufficient. Jesus replied, "Don't you even know who I am, Philip, even after all this time I've been with you? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father! So why are you asking to see him? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and he's in me? What you hear me say are not my words but are from my Father, who lives in me, and he does his work through me. Just believe it. I am in the Father, and the Father is in me or else believe it because of the miracles you've seen me do. Anyone believing in me can do the same miracles I've done, and greater ones because I'm going to be with the Father. You can ask him for anything using my name, and I will do it on your behalf because it will bring praise to the Father because of what I will do for you. Yes, ask anything using my name, and I'll do it!"

The Promise of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-24)

"If you love me, do as I instruct. I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Comforter who will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Truth. The rest of the world can't receive him because they don't recognize and appreciate real truth. But he abides in you and will be your guide. No, I won't abandon you. I will direct you. In a little while, I'll be gone from your sight, but I'll still be present with you. I will live again-and you will live again, too. You will know that I am in my Father, and you in me and I in you. Whoever follows my instructions shows respect for me and gains my Father's respect. I will care for him and reveal myself to him."

Judas (not Judas Iscariot, but his other disciple with that name) said, "Sir, how are you going to reveal yourself only to us disciples and not to the whole world?" Jesus replied, "Because I will only reveal myself to those who love me and obey me. The Father will love them too, and we'll come to them and live with them. Anyone who doesn't follow me doesn't love me. And remember, I'm not making this up! It's the answer given to me by my Father. I'm telling you these things while I'm with you. But when the Father sends the Comforter, he'll instruct you in every matter and bring everything I told you back to your memory.

The Promise of Peace (John 14:25-31)

"I'm leaving you with a sense of peace, not the peace the world knows, but real peace. So don't be troubled or upset. You heard me say I must leave and that I would come back for you. If you love me, you will be glad for me. After all, I am going to the Father, which is the best thing for me. I don't have much more time to talk to you because the prince of this world is coming against me. He has no power over me, but I will freely do what the Father requires of me so that the world will know that I love the Father. Now get up. Let's go.

"I am the genuine vine, and my Father is the gardener. He cuts off every branch that doesn't bear fruit. And he prunes every branch that bears fruit, so it'll produce even more fruit. Allow what I say to prune you. Abide in me, and let me live in you. A branch can't bear fruit on its own separated from the vine. You can't bear fruit unless you abide in me.

Jesus the True Vine (John 15:1-17)

"I'm the vine; you are the branches. Whoever lives in me and I in him produces much fruit. Apart from me, you can do nothing. If anyone doesn't abide in me, he is thrown away like a useless branch, withers, and is thrown into the furnace and burned. But if you abide in me and obey my commands, you may ask any request you like, and it'll be granted! My true disciples produce abundant harvests. This brings great glory to my Father.

"I love you as the Father loves me. Live within my love. When you follow my instructions, you are living in my love, just as I follow my Father's guidance and live in his love. I've told you this, so you'll be filled with my joy. Your cup of joy will overflow! Remember, you are to love each other as much as I love you. Here is how to measure it. -The greatest love is shown when a person lays down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you follow my instructions. I don't call you slaves, because a master doesn't share his thoughts with his slaves; you are my friends, proved by the fact that I have told you everything the Father told me.

The Hatred of the World (John 15:18-16:4)

"You didn't choose me! I chose you and appointed you to go and produce fruit. Whatever you ask the Father for my sake will prosper. I only ask that you love one another." You get enough hate from the world! But it hated me before it hated you. The world would embrace you if you belonged to it, but you don't-because I chose you from the world, and so it hates you. Don't you remember what I told you? 'A slave isn't greater than his master!' Since they persecuted me for revealing their sin to them, naturally they will persecute you. If they'd listened to me, they would listen to you, too! The world will persecute you because you belong to me. After all, they don't know the one who sent me.

"They wouldn't be guilty if I hadn't come and spoken to them. But now they have no excuse for their sin. Anybody hating me hates my Father. If I hadn't done mighty miracles, they wouldn't be guilty. But as it is, they saw these miracles, and yet they hated both of us, me and my Father. This fulfills what the prophets said about the Messiah, 'They hated me without reason.' But when the Comforter comes to you from the Father, he will tell you all about me. You also must tell everyone about me because you know my intentions from the beginning.

"Don't lose faith. You'll be excommunicated from worship services, and the time is coming when those who kill you will think they're doing God a service. This is because they have never known the Father or me. I'm telling you these things now, so when they happen, you'll remember I warned you. I didn't tell you earlier because I was going to be with you a bit longer. But now I have to return to the one who sent me. None of you will know where to find me. Instead, I expect you to grieve. But trust me, it's best for you that I go away. If I don't, the Comforter won't come. If I do, I'll send him to you. And when he comes, he'll convince the world of its sin, and God's goodness available to them, and of deliverance from judgment. The world's sin is unbelief in me. Righteousness is possible because I'm going to the Father and you won't see me. There is deliverance from judgment because the prince of this world has already been judged.

The Coming of the Spirit (John 16:5-15)

"Oh, there is so much more to tell you, but you can't grasp everything now. When the Holy Spirit comes, he'll guide you into all truth. He'll tell you about the future. He'll praise me and bring me great honor by showing you my glory. All the Father's glory is mine; this is what I mean when I say he will show you my glory.

Jesus' Farewell to His Disciples (John 16:16-33)

"In just a little while I will be gone, and you will see me no more; but just a little while after that, you will see me again!"

"What is he saying?" some of his disciples asked. "What is this about 'going to the Father'? We don't know what he means." Jesus realized they wanted to ask him, so he said, "Are you asking yourselves what I mean? The world will rejoice over what is going to happen to me, and you will be sad. But your sadness will turn to joy when you see me again. It'll be the same joy as a woman in labor when her child is born. She'll forget about her pain because she's so delighted to have the child. You're upset now, but I'll see you again, and then you'll rejoice, and no one can rob you of that joy. You won't need to ask me for anything because you can go directly to the Father and ask him, and he will give you what you ask for because you use my name. You haven't tried this before. Ask, using my name, and you will receive, and your cup of joy will overflow.

"I've spoken to you in riddles, but the time will come when I will tell you all about the Father. Then you will present your petitions over my signature! I won't have to ask the Father for your requests. He loves you dearly because you love me and believe that I came from the Father. Yes, I came from the Father to the world and will leave the world and return to the Father.

" Now we understand that you know everything. We believe that you came from God," they said.

"Do you finally believe this?" Jesus asked. "The time has come for you to be scattered, each returning to his own home, leaving me alone. Yet I won't be alone, because my Father is with me. I've told you all this, so you'll be at peace. You'll have trials and sorrows on the earth, but cheer up, because I've overcome the world."

Jesus Prays for Himself and for His Disciples (John 17:1-26)

When Jesus finished, he looked up to heaven and said, "Father, the time has come. Reveal the glory of your Son so he can give the glory back to you. You've given him authority over everyone in all the earth. He gives eternal life to each one you have given him. And this is the way to have eternal life-by knowing you, the only true God, and Jesus Christ, the one you sent to earth! I brought glory to you on earth by doing everything you told me to do. Now, Father, reveal my glory as I stand in your presence, the glory we shared before the world began.

"I've told these men all about you. They were in the world, but then you gave them to me, and they have obeyed you. Now they know everything I have is a gift from you because I passed on to them the commands you gave me, and they accepted them and know I came to earth from you, and they believe you sent me.

"My plea isn't for the world but for those you've given me because they belong to you. And all of them belong to you, and you have given them back to me. They are my glory! Now I am leaving the world and leaving them behind, and coming to you. Holy Father, keep them in your care, all those you have given me so they will be united just as we are, with none missing. During my time here, I guarded them and kept them safe, so none of them perished, except the Son of hell, as the Scriptures foretold. Now I am coming to you. I've told them many things so they'd be filled with my joy. I've given them your commands. The world hates them because they don't fit in with it, just as I don't. I'm not asking you to take them out of the world, but to keep them safe from Satan's power. They are not part of this world any more than I am. Make them pure and holy by teaching them your truth. As you sent me into the world, I am sending them into the world. Purify their ambitions and motives even as I have kept my objectives and motives pure.

"I'm not praying for these alone but for the future believers who will come to me because of what they see in them. Unite them. Join them to us, so everyone in the world will know you sent me. I am in them, and you are in me, making us one complete entity. Let everyone see you sent me, and you love them as you love me. I've given them the glory you gave me, the unity of being one, as we are, I in them and you

in me, all being perfected into one-so the world will know you sent me and will understand that you love them as much as you love me. Father, I want them with me; these you've given me so they can see my glory. You gave me the glory because you loved me before the world they know began! Oh righteous Father, no one has known you, but I do; and these disciples know you sent me. I've revealed you to them and will keep on revealing you so the mighty love you have for me may be in them, and I in them."