

Teaching With a Towel — Part 2

January 22, 2023

Series: Living the Good Life (Gospel of John)

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[John 13:1-38](#)

-In ch. 13, Jesus demonstrated/taught a few important truths that were helpful for His disciples as they were nearing the time they'd witness His death/resurrection and these truths are helpful still for us as we seek to follow Him in the Christian life.

4 truths we glean from this intimate time Jesus had with His disciples:

I. Truth about Cleansing ([John 13:6-11](#))

-Then cometh he to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all. For he knew who should betray him; therefore said he, Ye are not all clean.

-3 practical approaches to dealing with personal sin as a believer (A-C-T):

1. Acknowledge that the struggle is real.
2. Confess sin for what it is when it happens.
3. Trust the cleansing forgiveness of Christ.

-[1 John 1:9](#), If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

-"If we are continuing to confess our sins, God is faithful to forgive us of those sins and to cleanse us from sin's dirtiness."

2 Considerations—

1. Have you been initially and eternally cleansed by the blood of Christ?
2. Are you continually going to Christ in repentance for His cleansing of your sin as you embrace continual closeness with Him?

2. Example to Follow ([John 13:12-30](#))

-He gives us 2 types of examples:

A. Example of Service (12-20)

So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his Lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. I speak not of you all: I know whom I have chosen: but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me. Now I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass.

cross with the nail into up the heel against the nail I tell you before it come, that when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he. Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that receiveth whomsoever I send receiveth me; and he that receiveth me receiveth him that sent me.

-Jesus addresses a mindset that needs to be corrected: "If I am your Leader/Lord and I am not above serving you, then it is incumbent upon you to consider what stops you from serving in similar fashion—the servant is not greater than His Master but should be concerned with the same kinds of pursuits as Him."

-(Weirsbe) *We today, just like the disciples that night, desperately need this lesson on humility. The church is filled with a worldly spirit of competition and criticism as believers vie with one another to see who is the greatest. We are growing in knowledge, but not in grace (see [2 Peter 3:18](#)). "Humility is the only soil in which the graces root," wrote Andrew Murray. "The lack of humility is the sufficient explanation of every defect and failure."*

-Lack of humility is a pandemic among believers needs intervention & that intervention is a good hard look at/following of the example of Christ's humility to wash His disciples' dirty feet—even the ones who mistreated Him.

-Could you sacrifice some time to visit a senior saint?

-Could you shoot a text of love/concern to a struggling bro/sis?

-Could you proactively look for something you can do to be a blessing to a fellow follower of Christ?

B. Example of Love (21-30)

-When Jesus had thus said, he was troubled in spirit, and testified, and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, that one of you shall betray me. Then the disciples looked one on another, doubting of whom he spake. Now there was leaning on Jesus' bosom one of his disciples, whom Jesus loved. Simon Peter therefore beckoned to him, that he should ask who it should be of whom he spake. He then lying on Jesus' breast saith unto him, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, He it is, to whom I shall give a sop, when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped the sop, he gave it to Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. And after the sop Satan entered into him. Then said Jesus unto him, That thou doest, do quickly. Now no man at the table knew for what intent he spake this unto him. For some of them thought, because Judas had the bag, that Jesus had said unto him, Buy those things that we have need of against the feast; or, that he should give something to the poor. He then having received the sop went immediately out: and it was night.

-Jesus did not kick Judas out of this special meal but seems to humbly serve Judas just the same as He did the others.

-Did Jesus know Judas was about to betray him big time? Yes!

-Did Jesus choose to still show love to Judas regardless of his betraying intentions? Yes!

-Do we see another example here from our Savior? Yes!

He chose to love even in the face of wrong-doing!

-Sometimes the most loving thing to do is not the most enjoyable thing to do.

-If we think about this example, perhaps one of the most Christlike things we will do this week is to love someone who may not return that love.

3. Mission to Embrace ([John 13:31-35](#))

-Jesus takes this opportunity to remind His disciples that soon, He will no longer be with them: (31-32) *Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him. If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him.*

-He is leaving them with a mission that is comprised of 2 concepts:

A. Love Each Other (31-34)

-Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come; so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

-“love” = agape = sacrificial love that loves even when there's no prospect of return on that love.

-Jesus want's His followers to go and love each other in like fashion.

B. Reflect Christ (35)

By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

-A mark of following Christ is showing His love to those who are also following Christ.

-When we choose to obediently show Christ-like love, we are reflecting the Savior we are emulating.

How we love shows Who we worship!

4. Caution to Consider ([John 13:36-38](#))

-Simon Peter said unto him, Lord, whither goest thou? Jesus answered him, Whither I go, thou canst not follow me now; but thou shalt follow me afterwards. Peter said unto him, Lord, why cannot I follow thee now? I will lay down my life for thy sake. Jesus answered him, Wilt thou lay down thy life for my sake? Verily, verily, I say unto thee, The cock shall not crow, till thou hast denied me thrice.

-Here, Peter shows great resolve to follow Jesus to the death and Jesus' prophetic words to Peter, I think, serve as a caution to us still today.

-Jesus tells him that before the rooster crows, Peter will have not followed Him to the death, but will have actually denied even knowing Jesus—not 1 time, but 3 times! ([Jn. 18](#))

-May we use this as a caution to be reminded that we are never too strong to fall.

-May we use this as a caution to be reminded that at all times, we need the help of the Lord Himself!

*We need the power of Christ to save us from our sins at the moment of salvation, but we also need the power of Christ to deliver us from sin's power on a daily basis as we follow Christ.

-There's a line in an old hymn we sometimes sing that says, "I need Thee every hour, stay Thou nearby; Temptations lose their pow'r when Thou art nigh...I need Thee, Oh I need Thee, every hour I need Thee..."

-May we never loose that realization of our neediness as we seek to follow Christ.

- I need the power of Christ in order to love my wife today just as much as when I married her.

-I need the power of Christ to love my children like Christ just as much today as the day they were born.

-I need the power of Christ in order to love my bros/sis in Christ today just as much as I did the day I accepted Christ.

-I need the power of Christ to resist temptation and to walk with Him just as much today as the day I first started down the Christian journey—maybe more actually!

-May we heed this observed caution to not trust in our self-deceived sense of strength and to fall upon the power of Christ in every moment, every decision, and in every action!

-So what are these thoughts that stem from Jesus' use of a towel?

1. We stand in need of continual cleansing through repentance not for repeated salvation, but in closeness of fellowship and He promises this cleansing freely to all who seek it.
2. We find a very needed example to Follow in Jesus, both in our service and our love toward our bros/sis in Christ—may we seek to continually learn from it.
3. We have a mission of loving each other and reflecting Christ—may we seek to show Jesus in our love for each other.
4. We have a caution to consider in not trusting our own flesh, but leaning on Jesus for His power each day as we seek to follow Him.