

*Suggestions: Read the starred \* articles first to do the questions. If scriptures are involved in the question be sure to consider the Bible Students Expanded Biblical Comments for more references. I am looking forward to what you find.*

PART 4 – WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET (Articles provided in Memorial Meditations Book.)

[R843](#) "FEET WASHING"

[R2278](#) "FEET WASHING" \*

[R2449](#) "I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE"

[R3542](#) "WASHING ONE ANOTHER'S FEET" \*

[Hymn 26](#) "SAVIOR, HELP US"

POEMS OF THE WAY - PAGE 91 "OUR RESURRECTION"

[R3785](#) POEM "THE ANGEL OF GETHSEMANE"

SPECIAL REQUIREMENTS FOR  
HELPFUL FEET WASHING\*

R2202 "It is a great honor to render such a service to one another, the privilege will be properly appreciated and much used only by the truly humble who have much love for the Master.

But, it requires peculiar qualifications to enable us to help each other in this respect; before we can help others to remove the motes out of their eyes, and to cleanse their way of life, in all its little particulars, so that every thought as well as every word and act shall be brought into subjection to the divine will, it is necessary that we have experiences along the same lines ourselves. We must endeavor to get rid of the motes and beams that would obstruct our own vision. We must cultivate purity in our own lives,—in our deeds, words and thoughts. Only as we cultivate the various graces of the spirit,—meekness, patience, gentleness, brotherly-kindness, love, can we hope to be specially helpful to others in putting on these adornments of character and purities of life, and to get rid of defilements of the world, and the flesh...

It is the sympathetic ones who are most successful in helping the various members of the body of Christ out of the difficulties, besetments and defilements incident to the following of the Lord in this present time. Oh, let us study and strive and pray that we may be very successful in obeying the Master's words, "Ye also ought to wash one another's feet."

[R4044](#) "LET ME TAKE OUT THE MOTE"

There is a depth of meaning in our Lord's parable in which he represents one as desiring to take a mote, a small speck, out of another brother's eye, whereas he had a

beam, a larger matter, in his own eye. The import of the parable is that each of the Lord's followers should look critically to himself and sympathetically at others of the household. This is the spirit of love; whoever lacks this spirit is in danger: hence we all should seek to cultivate this quality. Where an opposite spirit is entertained, encouraged, the beginnings may be small but the tendency is toward outer darkness. This spirit, we regret to say, manifests itself occasionally in various little companies of the Lord's people—a factional spirit—a fault-finding spirit. The proper spirit, on the contrary, should be loving consideration for one another, a gladness to see each other developing, and a willingness to assist in as kind and gentle a manner as possible. Any other spirit is sure to bring injury, and we urge all of the Lord's faithful to stand fast by the principle which the Lord enunciates on this subject and to cultivate in the heart the loving generosity which thinketh no evil, but, on the contrary, seeks to rightly understand and excuse an apparent error, especially if it be not along an important line of doctrine."

F583 "CONSCIENTIOUS MEDDLING"

"Busybodying in other men's matters" is severely reproved by the Apostle, as wholly inconsistent with the new minds of the New Creation. ([1 Tim. 5:13](#); [1 Pet. 4:15](#)) A busybody is one who busies himself in the affairs of others, with which he has properly nothing whatever to do...

Such, even if lacking a naturally sound mind on this subject, will be constrained in the right direction by the injunctions of the Scriptures, and by the realization that the time is short for the fulfilment of their covenant sacrifice. They should also realize that the Golden Rule, required of the New Creation, prohibits everything akin to busy-

bodying. Assuredly they would not appreciate having others meddle in their business, and should be equally careful to do to others as they would be done by. The Apostle realized, nevertheless, that the reverse of this is the general worldly spirit, and, hence, admonishes the saints to study, to practice, to learn, along this line. His words are, "Study to be quiet, and to do your own business."

[1Thess. 4:11](#)

This natural disposition to be careful about the affairs of others, and to lend a hand in correcting them, and in picking motes out of a brother's eye, to the neglect of the beam in one's own eye, as the Lord illustrated the matter ([Matt. 7:3-5](#)), [F584] sometimes attacks the New Creature in a peculiar form. He fancies that it is his "duty" to advise, to pick, to investigate, to chide, to reprove. As he turns the matter over in his mind he convinces himself that not to do so would be sin; and thus he becomes what we might designate a conscientious busybody, or meddler—one whose meddlesomeness is made doubly strong and aggressive by a misinformed and misdirected conscience. These, often sincere and good people, veritable New Creatures, are hindered by this flaw in all that they attempt to do in the Lord's service. Each should take himself in hand, and learn to apply the rules of justice and love already pointed out. He should educate his conscience to discriminate between brotherly duty and busybodying; and so far as our observation goes the majority of the Lord's people, as well as of the world, would find themselves doing a great deal less chiding, rebuking, faultfinding and picking, after coming to appreciate the rules of justice and of love, as combined in the Golden Rule and applied to the affairs of life and their intercourse with others."

[R843](#) (From Harvest Truth Database v10)

FEET WASHING

{1} In Eastern countries, where sandals were worn, and the feet thus exposed to the sand and dust, foot-washing was a regular custom, and an actual necessity. This service was considered very menial, and the humblest servants or slaves performed it for the family and guests.

{2} Jesus had noticed among his disciples a spirit of selfishness; he had overheard them disputing which of them should be greatest in authority and dignity in the kingdom he had promised to share with them. He had rebuked this spirit, which he foresaw would

injure them in proportion as it grew and strengthened. So indeed it did in the fourth to the sixth centuries, blossom and yield bitter fruit in the organization of Papacy, and the train of evils and errors which still flow from that impure fountain. He had taken a little child and set him in the midst of the disciples, and said, Except ye become (artless and simple) as a little child, you are not fit for the kingdom for which I am calling you. He had said, Ye know how the Gentiles lord it over one another, and recognize caste and station, but it must not be so with you. Ye have but one Master, and all ye are brethren;

and he that would [R844 : page 3] be chief, let him become chief servant ([Mark 10:42](#)). They who serve you most, you must mark as your chief ones. I am the chief servant myself, for the Son of man came not to be served by others, and honored thus, but he came to serve others, even to the extent of giving his life in their service. As therefore my greatest service towards you renders me your chief, so shall it be among you. Esteem and honor one another in proportion as you find in each other unselfish sacrificing love and service. Esteem such very highly for their service sake. *1 Thes. 5:13*.

{3} But for all this, the spirit of pride and a desire to "lord it" over others, and be revered as chief, was there, even after three years and a half spent with the Master, and under his example; and as he was about to leave them, Jesus sought, even on the last evening with them, to impress this lesson indelibly upon their hearts. So after the Passover supper was over, he arose from the table and performed for his disciples the most menial service, in washing their feet. They probably had not even thought of performing such a service for each other or for Him, and even had consideration enough to object to his thus serving them in so humble a manner.

{4} When Jesus had finished, he said to 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 is he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." If you understand and appreciate the lesson I have given you, and will practice it, you will be blessed thereby and helped in my service, and prepared for the kingdom in which I have promised you a share.—[John 13:4-17](#).

{5} That the lesson had its designed effect we can scarcely doubt, as we look at the course of several of the Apostles, and see how, with much self-denial, they served the body of Christ, of which they were fellow-members, following the example of the Head, who was chief servant of all.

{6} The question arises, What did the Lord mean when he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done"—was the example in the principle, and lesson of service one toward another? or was the example in the method of service, in the ceremony of feet washing? To suppose the latter would be to hide the real lesson under a form. And if the example was in the form, then every item of the form should be observed: an upper room—a supper—sandals should be worn—the same kind of garments—the towel girdle, etc. But no; the "example" which we should follow lay in the humble serving of the disciples by the Master, regardless of form. His example of serving the fellow-members in even the most menial manner, is what we should follow—and blessed will we be,

in proportion as we do follow it. In that proportion we shall be prepared for the everlasting kingdom and service of God.

{7} Those now living in Eastern countries where sandals are still worn, may find an opportunity now to follow the example in other forms, as well as in the same form which the Master used; and those differently circumstanced may follow the "example" in a thousand forms. Some of the fellow-disciples probably live in your city and in mine. How can we serve them? How can we refresh them? How can we show them our love and sympathy according to the Lord's "example"? Not in this climate by washing their feet—this would be an inconvenience the very reverse of a pleasure, and a service to them, and therefore contrary to the "example." But we can *serve* the "body" otherwise, and truly follow the example. We can improve our various opportunities to serve them in matters temporal as well as spiritual. We can be on the lookout, and when we see sadness or discouragement, we can lend a helping hand to lift our brother's burdens, or our sister's sorrows, and we can let them see by deeds, as well as words, our anxiety to serve them—figuratively speaking, to wash their feet.

{8} Don't wait until they ask you to assist; for in proportion as they are developed disciples, they will not beg your aid. Do not wait until they tell you of their burdens and trials, but watch to anticipate; for in proportion as they partake of the Master's spirit, they will not be complainers, but will live "always rejoicing"—rejoicing in tribulation even.

{9} Be not ashamed of but seek and rejoice in such service of the "body"—"ye do serve the Lord, Christ." But still more important than temporal service, is our service one of another as new creatures. The washing of the body with the truth—the sanctifying and cleansing of it with the word, is in progress now. ([Eph. 5:26,27](#).) What are you doing to cleanse and purify the faith and lives of your fellow members? Do you approach them humbly with the truth, sincerely anxious to serve them, to bless and comfort and refresh them therewith? If so, go on; grand is your service; the Master served thus; this is his example; follow on. The more you can thus serve, and at the greater cost of time, and effort, and convenience, and self-denial, the greater you will be in the eyes of the Master, the more honored and beloved of the body when they shall come to see and know you, as the Lord sees and knows your love and its service.

{10} Follow on then the noble "example" of Jesus; wash and be washed one of another, cleanse and purge away the defilements with which each comes in contact in the world daily, that ye may be clean "through the word spoken unto you." Purge out the old leaven of hypocrisy, and envy, and self-exaltation, even as ye have already been justified from all things and reckoned pure and holy by the merit of the precious blood which the chief servant and Lord of all gave for all.

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[R2278](#) (From Harvest Truth Database v10)

## FEET WASHING

{1} SOME feel that the feet-washing mentioned in [John 13:4-17](#) is as important as the Memorial Supper; and hence we will here consider the subject: altho only one of the Evangelists remembered even to mention it.

{2} In Eastern countries, where sandals were worn, and the feet thus exposed to sand and dust, feet-washing was a regular custom, and an actual necessity. This service was considered very menial, and the humblest servants or slaves performed it for the family and guests.

{3} Our Lord had noticed among his disciples a spirit of selfishness; he had overheard them disputing which of them should be greatest in authority and dignity in the Kingdom he had promised to share with them; and, foreseeing that this spirit would injure them in proportion as it grew and strengthened, he had rebuked them for their lack of humility. So indeed it did, in the fourth to the sixth centuries, blossom and yield bitter fruit, in the organization of Papacy, and the train of evils and errors which still flow from that impure fountain.

{4} To illustrate the proper spirit which should characterize all who would be his disciples, he took a little child and set him in the midst, and said, Except ye become (artless and simple) as a little child, you are not fit for the Kingdom for which I am calling you. Ye know how the Gentiles lord it over one another, and recognize caste and station, but it must not be so with you. Ye have but one Master, and all ye are brethren; and he that would be chief, let him become chief servant. ([Mark 10:35-45](#).) They who serve you most, you must mark as your chief ones. I am the chief servant myself; for the Son of man came not to be served by others, and honored thus, but he came to serve others, even to the extent of giving his life in their service. As therefore my greatest service toward you renders me your chief, so shall it be among you. Esteem and honor one another in proportion as you find in each other unselfish sacrificing love and service. Esteem such very highly for their works' sake.—*1 Thes. 5:13*.

{5} But for all this, the spirit of pride and a desire to "lord it" over others, and be revered as chief, was there, even after three

and a half years spent with the Master, and under his example; and as he was about to leave them. Jesus sought, even on the last evening with them, to impress this lesson indelibly upon their hearts. So, after the Passover Supper, he arose from the table and performed for his disciples the most menial service, in washing their feet. They probably had not even thought of performing such a service for each other or for him, and even had consideration enough to object to his thus serving them in so humble a manner.

{6} When Jesus had finished, he said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? You 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 you should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither is he that is sent greater than he that sent him." If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them. If you understand and appreciate the lesson I have given you, and will practice it, you will be blessed thereby, helped in my service, and prepared for the Kingdom in which I have promised you a share.—[John 13:4-17](#).

{7} That the lesson had its designed effect we can scarcely doubt, as we look at the course of several of [R2279 : page 88] the apostles, and see how, with much self-denial, they served the body of Christ, of which they were fellow-members, following the example of the Head, who was chief servant of all.

{8} The question arises, What did the Lord mean when he said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done?" Was the example in the *principle*, in the lesson of service one toward another? or was the example in the *method* of service, in the ceremony of feet-washing? To suppose the latter would be to hide the real lesson under a form. And if the example were in the form, then every item in the form should be observed: an upper room; a supper; sandals should be worn; the same kind of garments; the towel girdle; etc. But no: the "example" which we should follow lay in the humble serving of the disciples by the Master, regardless of form. His example of serving the fellow-members in even the most menial manner is what we should follow—and blessed will we be in proportion as we do follow it. In that proportion we shall be prepared for the everlasting Kingdom and service of God.

{9} Those now living in Eastern countries, where sandals are still worn may find an opportunity now to follow the example, the same form which the Master used, as well as other forms; and those differently circumstanced may follow the "example" in a thousand

forms. Some of the fellow-disciples probably live in your city and in mine. How can we serve them? How can we show them our love and sympathy according to the Lord's "example?" Not in this climate by washing their feet—this would be an inconvenience, the very reverse of a pleasure and service to them, and therefore contrary to the "example." But we can serve the "body" otherwise, and truly follow the example. We can improve our various opportunities to serve them in matters temporal as well as spiritual. We can be on the lookout, and when we see sadness or discouragement, we can lend a helping hand to lift our brother's burdens, or our sister's sorrows, and we can let them see by deeds, as well as words, our anxiety to serve them—figuratively speaking, to wash their feet.

{10} Do not wait until they request your assistance; for in proportion as they are developed disciples, they will not ask your aid. Do not wait until they tell you of their burdens and trials, but watch to anticipate; for in proportion as they partake of our Master's spirit, they will not be complainers, but will live "always rejoicing"—rejoicing even in tribulations.

{11} Be not ashamed of such service of the "body," [R2279 : page 89] but seek and rejoice in it—"ye do serve the Lord, Christ." But still more important than temporal service is our service one of another as "new creatures."

{12} The washing of the body with the truth—the sanctifying and cleansing of it with the word—is in progress now. ([Eph. 5:26,27](#).) What are you doing to cleanse and purify the faith and lives of your fellow members? Do you approach them humbly with the truth, sincerely anxious to serve them, to bless and comfort and refresh them therewith? If so, go on; grand is your service; the Master served thus; this is his example; follow on. The more you can thus serve, and at the greater cost of time, and effort, and convenience, and self-interest, the greater will you be in the eyes of the Master, and the more honored and beloved of the body when they shall come to see and know you, as the Lord sees and knows your love and service.

{13} Follow closely, then, the noble "example" of Jesus: wash and be washed one of another, cleanse and purge away the defilements with which each comes daily in contact in the world, that ye may be clean, "through the word spoken unto you." Purge out the old leaven of hypocrisy, and envy, and self-exaltation, even as ye have already been justified from all things and reckoned pure and holy by the merit of the precious blood which the chief servant and Lord of all gave for all.—[2 Tim. 2:20,21](#).

[R2449](#) (From Harvest Truth Database v10)

## "I HAVE GIVEN YOU AN EXAMPLE"

—APRIL 16.—JOHN 13:1-17.—

{1} OUR Lord's ministry was about ended. He had met with his twelve chosen disciples to celebrate the Passover supper, declaring, "I have greatly desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." (Luke 22:15.) The passover lamb which they were to eat typified our Lord himself, and the eating of it by his disciples represented how believers of the Gospel age were to feed upon Christ in their hearts, and by faith appropriate to themselves the blessings secured to them through his death, "For even Christ our Passover [Lamb] is sacrificed for us; therefore let us keep the feast." (1 Cor. 5:7,8.) But, inasmuch as Jesus was the antitypical Lamb, it was appropriate that the type should be discontinued; and hence it was that our Lord, following this last typical Supper, instituted the Memorial Supper of unleavened bread and fruit of the vine as representing the antitype—his broken body and shed blood.

{2} According to the Jewish custom the Passover supper was celebrated by families, and the twelve apostles, specially chosen by our Lord and giving their allegiance to him as their Head, constituted the nucleus of the family of God—whose hearts and hopes and aims were one—for "ye are all called in one hope of your calling" (Eph. 4:4). Judas was not excluded, altho our Lord evidently knew beforehand that it was he who would betray him. This furnishes us the lesson that, as followers of Christ, we should not judge one an-

other's hearts, nor surmise evil. After the evil of the heart has manifested itself in words [R2449 : page 79] or deeds is quite time enough to separate ourselves from others who profess the Lord's name and desire to fellowship with us. True, the evil begins in the heart, before the outward act, but we should always hope that the brethren may gain the victory, and should seek to do nothing to stumble any, but everything to help them to overcome the influence of the Adversary, and the weaknesses of their own flesh.

{3} John does not give a particular account of the Passover supper, but seems merely to bring in certain valuable features and lessons connected therewith, omitted by the other Evangelists. His declaration is that our Lord knew beforehand that he had reached the end of his earthly career, and was specially solicitous of improving the closing hours with his particular, chosen friends and companions, by inculcating some good lessons. "He loved them to the end"—completely, fully: his own sharp trials, present and approaching, did not distract him, nor absorb his attention. He was, as heretofore, still thinking of and endeavoring to bless others. Nor need we suppose that this love for the twelve applied to them exclusively; rather, that he viewed the twelve as the representatives of "them also which should believe on him through their word"—as he expressed the matter in his prayer to the Father. With this view in mind we can

realize that what our Lord said and did to the apostles was intended to be applicable and instructive to all who are his since then.—John 17:20.

{4} From Luke's account it would appear that on this occasion there was a strife amongst the apostles, a contention, respecting which of them should be esteemed greatest. (Luke 22:24-31.) This strife may not have been solely one of selfishness, in the evil sense of the word, but partially prompted by love for the Master—it may have been in respect to their several positions at the table, the coveted position possibly being closeness to our Lord's person. We remember how James and John had made request that they might be on the right and on the left of our Lord in the Kingdom, and we remember that in connection with this narrative it is declared that John was next to our Lord, and leaned upon his bosom.

{5} Quite possibly this dispute respecting greatness arose in part from the fact that they were not in this instance treated as guests, but merely had the upper room put at their disposal; having no host, no provision was thereby made for the usual washing of the feet, and it was neglected. The matter of feet-washing in eastern countries, when sandals were worn, was not merely a compliment, but a necessity, the heat of the climate, the openness of the sandals, and the dust of the roads, making it almost indispensable to comfort that the feet be bathed on arriving at the house after a journey. Apparently this question of who of the twelve was greatest, and of which should perform the menial service of feet-washing for the others, had developed the fact that none of them were anxious to take the servant's position.

{6} Apparently our Lord permitted them to thus disagree, without settling their dispute, without appointing any of their number to the menial service. He allowed them to think the matter over—time to relent and reconsider, and they even proceeded to eat the supper, contrary to custom, with unwashed feet.

{7} Then it was that Jesus arose from the supper, laid aside his outer garment, and attaching a towel to the girdle of his undergarments, took a basin and a ewer for the water, and began to pour the water and wash the feet of his disciples. It was not the custom of the East to pour the water into the basin and put the foot into the water, but to pour the water upon the foot being washed; thus each had clean water, and little was wasted—for water is much more scarce and precious there than with us. We are to remember also that in the East at that time tables and chairs such as we use were not in vogue. On the contrary, the tables were low and shaped somewhat like a horseshoe, and those who sat really reclined, lying upon the table, with the left elbow resting upon a pillow or divan, their heads toward the inside of the horseshoe, where there was a space provided for the food, and also a space for a servant to enter and place the food. Thus it will be seen that the feet extended backward, and could quite easily be reached without disturbing those who were eating.

{8} Our Lord very evidently had already washed the feet of several of the disciples before he came in turn to Peter. Seemingly none of them offered objection, altho no doubt the thought of their own contentions upon this subject, and unwillingness to serve one another, brought them blushes of shame and confusion of face. But when it came to Peter's turn, he protested. It would never do, he thought, to permit our Lord to perform so menial a service. He asks, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" But our Lord did not stop to reprimand Peter—to give him a thorough "setting down" and scolding, as some of his followers might be inclined to do under such circumstances: he merely insisted on continuing, and treating Peter the same as the others, saying that he would explain the matter later, and that if he washed him not, he could have no part with him.

{9} One cannot help admiring the noble traits in Peter's conduct, even tho with the same breath we be forced to acknowledge some of his weaknesses, and herein all the Lord's followers find a lesson of encouragement, for tho they find weaknesses and imperfections, if they find also the heart-loyalty to the Lord which was in Peter, they may continue to have courage and hope to press [R2449 : page 80] on as he did, from victory to victory, and at last to have the prize, the reward of faithfulness.

{10} When Peter learned that there was more meaning to the washing of the feet than merely its kindness and comfort, and its reproof of the lack of the spirit of humility amongst the disciples, he wanted, not only his feet, but also his hands and his head washed. Noble, thorough-going, whole-hearted, fervent Peter! But our Lord explained that this was not necessary, saying, "He who has been bathed has no need except to wash his feet, but is wholly clean." (Vs. 10—Diaglott.) Public baths were in use at that time, but even after having taken a general bath, on return to the home it was customary to complete the matter by washing the feet; and this seems to be the inference of our Lord's remark. The apostles had been with our Lord, and under the influence of his spirit of love, meekness, gentleness, patience, humility, for three years, and had been greatly blessed by "the washing of water through the word" spoken unto them.—John 15:3; Eph. 5:26.

{11} There is an intimation in the Lord's words, too, that this spirit of pride which had manifested itself among them had been inspired to some extent by their treasurer, Judas,—as evil communications always are corrupting. (1 Cor. 13:33.) This final lesson from their great Teacher was a very impressive one upon the eleven, whose hearts probably were in the right condition to receive the reproof and the lesson, but upon Judas, altho his feet also were washed, the effect evidently was not favorable. [R2450 : page 80] The spirit of evil which had entered into him before the supper—the desire to obtain money, and the proposition to obtain it by betraying the Lord, evidently continued with him, and instead of being moved aright by our Lord's humility and service, he was the more moved in the opposite direction—to think little of him. So it is with all who have professed the Lord's name in every time. Those instructions, examples and experiences, which are working out blessing and proving beneficial to some, are proving injurious to others. The Gospel, in its every phase, is either "a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death." As it was God's goodness and mercy that hardened Pharaoh's heart, so it was the love and humility of Jesus that hardened Judas' heart, and these principles are still at work, and may be witnessed in the harvest siftings to-day.—2 Cor. 2:16; Exod. 7:13.

{12} After accomplishing the work of washing the feet of all, our Lord resumed his outer garment and reclined again at the supper (this was the Passover Supper—the Memorial Supper of bread and wine being instituted afterward). Our Lord now improved his opportunity and explained to them the meaning of what he had done. He pointed out to them that this menial service did not signify that he was not the Lord and Master, but did signify that as Lord and Master he was not unwilling to serve the lesser members of Jehovah's family, and to minister to their comfort, even in the most menial service; and that they should not have been unwilling, but glad, to have rendered such service one to another.

{13} The example which our Lord set was not so much in the kind of service (feet-washing), as in the fact of service. Nothing in this example, as we understand it, was in the nature of a ceremony to be performed by the Lord's people, annually, weekly, monthly, or at any other time; but the principle of his service constituted the example, and is to be observed amongst his followers at all times—they are to love one another and to serve one another, and to consider no service too menial to be performed for each other's comfort and good.

{14} Those who have interpreted this to signify a ceremony similar to the symbolical ceremony of the Memorial Supper and the symbolical ceremony of Baptism, are, we think, in error. There seems to be nothing symbolical in it. It is merely an illustration of the principle of humility which is to attach to every affair of life. If any of the Lord's people need washing, or need any other assistance of a menial character, their brethren should gladly and joyfully serve them; and whoever possesses the spirit of the Lord will surely render such service; but to insist, as some do, that each of the Lord's people should first wash his own feet and have them clean, and then that each should wash one another's feet ceremoniously, is contrary to his example which he instructs us to follow. The example was a service, and not an inconvenience and ceremony.

{15} Once a year, on the day before "Good Friday," the pope washes the feet of twelve aged paupers who are brought from the streets and duly prepared by a preliminary washing in private. The pope's ceremonious washing is done in the presence of many notables. A similar ceremony is performed annually by Emperor Joseph of Austro-Hungary. Neither of these ceremonies, however, is, to our understanding, according to our Lord's example, but contrary to it—likewise the ceremonious washing performed by some denominations of Christians.

{16} All who are truly the Lord's followers should heed carefully and follow exactly the true example of the Master's spirit of meekness, humility and service to the members of his body. The whole thought is contained in his words, "The servant is not greater than his Lord, neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things [if you appreciate these principles applicable to all the affairs of life], happy are ye if ye do them [if you live ac-

ording to this rule, loving and serving one another]."—Vss. 16,17.

{17} Feelings of emulation, strife and vain-glory seem to specially beset any of the Lord's people who are possessed of any degree of talent or ability or honorable situation in life, and especially those who are in influential places in the Church; and while these, therefore, need to be specially on guard against this besetment of the flesh, it should not be forgotten that, as some one has said, "There is a pride that looks up with envy, as well as a pride that looks down with scorn." The Lord's followers are to remember that pride in any person, in any station, respecting any matter, is highly reprehensible in God's sight and displeasing to him. "The Lord resisteth the proud, but showeth his favor to the humble." Hence, all who would abide in the Lord's love have need to be very careful along this line—to keep very humble, very lowly in conduct, and particularly in mind.—Jas. 4:6; 1 Pet. 5:5

R3785 (From Harvest Truth Database v10)

Hymn 26

*Saviour, Help Us*

By thy birth, and by thy tears;  
By thy human griefs and fears;  
By thy conflict in the hour  
Of the subtle tempter's pow'r—  
Saviour, look with pitying eye;  
Saviour, help us, or we die.

By the tenderness that wept  
O'er the grave where Laz'rus slept;  
By the bitter tears that flowed  
Over Salem's lost abode—  
Saviour, look with pitying eye;  
Saviour, help us, or we die.

By thy lonely hour of prayer;  
By thy fearful conflict there;  
By thy cross and dying cries;  
By thy one great sacrifice—  
Saviour, look with pitying eye;  
Saviour, help us, or we die.

By thy triumph o'er the grave;  
By thy pow'r the lost to save;  
By thy high, majestic throne;  
By the empire all thine own,—  
Saviour, look with pitying eye;  
Saviour, help us, or we die.

By thy kingdom promised long;  
By thy pow'r to right each wrong;  
By thy church upon thy throne,  
Thou will seek out all thine own;  
Saving all of those who cry,  
Saviour, help me, or I die.



[R3542](#) (From Harvest Truth Database v10)  
**WASHING ONE ANOTHER'S FEET**

[JOHN 13:1-14](#).—[APRIL 30](#).

*Golden Text*:—"By love serve one another."—[Gal. 5:13](#).

{1} OUR lessons can only be properly understood by taking note of the surroundings. The feast at Bethany, followed by our Lord's triumphal entry on the ass amid the shoutings of the multitude, his several days' preaching in the Temple to large crowds, and the coming of the Greeks to inquire for him, all seemed to indicate a growing popularity; and the disciples, thoroughly unable to comprehend the Master's declaration that he was shortly to be put to death by the chief priests, were full of ambitious thoughts respecting the future—respecting their identity with the Lord, and how his exaltation as a king would bring them into prominence and honor with him, as well as confer upon them the coveted opportunity of accomplishing a large amount of good, blessing a larger number of people, etc.

{2} The thirteenth of Nisan apparently was spent by our Lord in quiet retirement, and the evening following, beginning the fourteenth, was the time appointed for the celebration of the Passover Supper in the upper room. Some of the apostles had, by the Lord's instruction, made ready beforehand; and now, as they assembled without a host to appoint them their places at the Supper, a discussion as to their prominence and their rights to the most honorable places, nearest to the Master, is not surprising. Our Lord twice before had rebuked them on this very line, assuring them that unless they cultivated and attained a spirit of meekness like little children they could have no part in the Kingdom. And only a week before, while en route to Jerusalem, James and John had made the request that in the Kingdom, when established, they might sit the one on the right hand and the other on the left hand of the Master, in closest proximity to his person. It was this spirit that controlled on this occasion, and led up to our Lord's washing of the disciples' feet as a lesson of humility and willingness to serve one another even in the humblest capacity.

#### SELFISHNESS EVEN IN LOVE

{3} Nor are we to think of the apostles as each striving for the highest position merely from a selfish standpoint. Rather we should suppose that Peter, James and John, whom the Lord had in various ways specially favored in times past and who seemed to be specially close to him, loved the positions nearest his person, not merely because of the honor thus implied, but largely because of their love and esteem for the Master himself, and perhaps with the feeling that they appreciated this privilege more than some others could appreciate the same. Indeed we may suppose that a considerable number of the other apostles strove on their behalf, insisting that they should have the most honorable position. But however we view the matter, it is evident that a wrong spirit had been engendered, one very inappropriate to the occasion, especially inappropriate to the Memorial Supper which our Lord intended to institute after the Passover Supper.

{4} It is difficult for us to gage our own hearts thoroughly and hence we should use great charity in measuring the hearts and intentions of others, and should err rather on the side of too great sympathy and leniency than on the side of too strong condemnation. Doubtless had the apostles been inquired of respecting the matter they would have denied any elements of selfishness in their motives and conduct, and would have thought and spoken only of their zeal for the Lord and desire to be near him. This illustrates to us, what the Scriptures declare, that the human heart is exceedingly deceitful—that it needs scrutinizing carefully lest, under the cloak of something good, it might harbor qualities which without that cloak we would despise or spurn.

{5} As further illustrating this subject, and as helping us each and all to apply the lesson personally, we relate a dream told by a Scotch minister, Horatius Bonar, shortly [[R3542 : page 119](#)] before his death. He dreamed that his zeal was represented in a package of

considerable size and weight, and that some angels came to it and weighed it and assured him that it was full weight, an hundred pounds—all that was possible. In his dream he was greatly pleased with this report. They next determined to analyze it. They put it into a crucible and tested it in various ways and then reported the result thus: "Fourteen parts selfishness; fifteen parts sectarianism; twenty-two parts ambition; twenty-three parts love to man; twenty-six parts love to God." Awakening he realized that it was but a dream, yet felt greatly humbled, and doubtless was profited by it throughout the remainder of life. That dream may be equally profitable to each of us in leading us to a close inspection of the motives which lie beyond our words and thoughts and doings—especially beyond our service for the Lord and for the brethren.

{6} The first verse of our lesson calls attention to our Lord's love as the basis of all his dealings with "his own." Because of his love he laid aside his glory and became a man; because of his love he devoted himself as the man Christ Jesus; because of his love he was now anxious to help his dear disciples over a difficulty which, if not conquered, would hinder their usefulness as his followers both in the present and future. This love not only led our Lord to administer the reproof necessary, but led him to do it in the wisest and best and kindest manner. His example in this respect should be observed and copied by all his followers, especially those who in any public capacity or service are his representatives in the Church.

{7} Had our Lord and his disciples been the guests of some host on this occasion, it would have been considered the duty of the host to have sent some menial [[R3543 : page 119](#)] to wash their feet. This was the custom of the country, and very necessary to comfort. The open sandals or imperfectly sewed shoes allowed the dust of the highway to soil the feet, and really made washing a necessity after every journey, but particularly on a festal occasion of this kind. As the Lord's company were not guests, but merely had the use of the room, no servant appeared to wash their feet, and it would have been properly the duty and custom for one of the number to have performed the menial service for the others. As we have just seen, however, the spirit of rivalry was warm in their hearts, and no one volunteered to render the service, nor had any one the right to demand it in a company in which the Lord had made no special rank and appointed none as menials. This, however, rightly understood and appreciated, would have left the greater opportunity for some of them to have volunteered this service to the others. What an opportunity they all lost!

#### A FAVORABLE OPPORTUNITY LOST

{8} Our Lord apparently let the matter go to the full limit to see whether or not any of them would improve the opportunity and make himself servant of all: he waited until the supper was being served (not ended, as in our common version;) then arising from the table he laid aside his outer garment or mantle and took a towel and girded himself—that is to say, tightened the girdle worn around the waist, which would hold up the flowing under-garments and keep them out of the way of his activity. We can well imagine the consternation of the apostles as they watched this procedure, and then saw the Lord go from the feet of one and another as they protruded from the couches on which they reclined (as illustrated in a previous lesson). The method of washing feet was different from ours: the basin was merely a receptacle for holding the soiled water, the water being poured from the pitcher in a small stream while the foot was being washed, rubbed, rinsed.

{9} Apparently the apostles were so astonished at our Lord's procedure, and so felt the condemnation which his course implied, that they knew not what to say, and so silence reigned until it came Peter's turn. Peter had a peculiar combination of character, part of which was extremely good. He objected to having his feet washed

by the Lord, saying, "Dost thou wash my feet?—It is not appropriate, Lord, that one so great as you should serve a person of my standing, a poor fisherman." But our Lord answered that although Peter did not discern the full meaning of the matter, he would explain to him later when he had finished the washing of all. Peter's second remark was less praiseworthy than his first. He said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet."

{10} It was hard for Peter to realize that he was the disciple and the Lord was the Teacher,—that it was for him to obey and not to dictate; but Jesus' answer, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me," at once brought out the better side of Peter's impulsive nature. If his washing had anything to do with his nearness to the Master and his relationship to him, then he wanted it. Going even to the other extreme again, fearing to leave matters in the Lord's care, he cried, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head." There is a lesson for us in this matter: We are not to dictate to the Lord, not to attempt to be wise or good or obedient in ways that he has not directed. This is a hard lesson for some dispositions to learn,—continually they want to do more than is written in the Scriptures. Such a course indicates either a lack of reverence for the Lord and his Word and the wisdom thereof, or else a too great self-confidence, too much self-esteem. A humble and trustful heart should learn to say, Thy will, O, Lord, thy way and in thy time—"Thy will, not mine be done."

#### WASHING THE FEET OF THE BATHED

{11} Our Lord's answer in our common version is somewhat obscure; the revised version is better—he that is bathed needeth not save to wash his feet to be clean every whit. Properly they had all bathed in accordance with the Jewish requirement of the putting away of all filth at the beginning of the Passover season. Our Lord's [R3543 : page 120] intimation, then, signified that having bathed they merely now needed the rinsing of their feet, the cleansing of the members that had come in contact with the earth. Our Lord added, referring to Judas, "Ye are clean, but not all." This expression shows us clearly that he had in mind a higher cleansing, of which this washing of their feet and their previous bath were but figures.

{12} The Lord knew that the hearts of his disciples were loyal. He had accepted them as his disciples and had reckonedly imputed to them the merit of his sacrifice as a covering of their blemishes, the full testimony of which would be given them by and by at Pentecost, the holy Spirit testifying that the Father had accepted the Lord's atoning sacrifice on their behalf. But there was one in the number whose heart was not clean. Our Lord did not pass him by, but washed the feet of Judas with the rest, knowing the while of his perfidy, and that he had already bargained with the chief priests, and was merely awaiting the opportune moment for the carrying out of his malevolent scheme.

{13} Our Lord's words, although not understood by the rest, must have been appreciated by Judas, as were also his subsequent words recorded in *verses 18,26,27,28*. Our Lord went so far as to quote the very prophecy which marked Judas and his disloyalty, his violation of even the common hospitality. None of these things moved Judas; none of these things appealed to his heart in such a manner as to change his course. We have thus strong evidence of the willful intention which marked his crime and enforced the meaning of our Lord's words when he called him the "son of perdition," and declared that it would have been better for him that he had never been born. The quotation from the Psalm was, "He that eateth bread with me hath lifted up his heel against me."

#### PATIENCE TO ITS LIMIT

{14} We may be sure that our Lord's conduct in dealing with Judas is not only a proper outline of what our conduct should be to any of a similar class, but additionally we should note the lesson that the Lord is long suffering toward all who become his disciples, not willing that any should perish, but disposed to do for them until the very last, and to bring to their attention the error of their ways repeatedly, in hope that thus they may be turned therefrom. The latter lesson has associated with it the thought that those who have re-

ceived the Truth, and who in spite of all the favors connected therewith encourage and develop in themselves the spirit of selfishness, are apt to become so hardened, so calloused, that not even the Master's reproofs and the words of the Scriptures will influence them. This reminds us of the Apostle's words, "It is impossible to renew them again unto repentance"—to a proper course—if once the Spirit of the Lord has been fully subjected to the spirit of selfishness in their hearts.

{15} In harmony with what he told Peter—that he should know later on the significance of the washing—our Lord explained the matter after he had gone the rounds of all the apostles. He said, "Know [understand] 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 ought also to wash one another's feet."

#### THE MEANING OF THE LORD'S ACTION

{16} Here we have the entire lesson explained. In their fear to be the least, all the disciples had shunned the opportunity of service for the Master and for each other. Our Lord, their acknowledged Head and Master, the Messiah, had humbled himself to serve them all, and had thus rebuked their inhumility, and at the same time set them an example that would apply to every affair of life, namely, that they should be glad to serve one another on every proper occasion, in the high things or in the common affairs of life. This washing of one another's feet we may readily see applies to any and every humble service of life, any and every kindness, though specially to those services and kindnesses which would be along the lines of spiritual assistances and comfort.

{17} From this standpoint it will be seen that we do not understand that our Master here enjoined a form or ceremony as our Dunkard friends and others believe. We do not even see in the matter the groundwork for the custom of the pope of Rome, who once every year, at this season washes the feet of twelve poor men, perhaps beggars, who are first prepared by a general washing and then brought in while the pope performs the special public service in the washing of their feet. We see no such formality in our Lord's intention. Indeed so far from it being a comfort or necessity to literally wash feet in our day and under our conditions, the reverse would be true. On the contrary, the Apostle points out, to wash the saints' feet in olden times was a mark of special hospitality, and entitled the performer to a loving respect in the Church.—[1 Tim. 5:10](#).

{18} How many blessed opportunities we have for comforting, refreshing, consoling one another and assisting one another in some of the humblest affairs of life, or in respect to some of the unpleasant duties, experiences or trials of life. As our Golden Text expresses it, we are in love to serve one another and not through formality. Any service done or attempted to be done in love, with the desire to do good to one of the Lord's people, we may be sure has the divine approval and blessing. Let us lose no opportunities of this kind; let us remember the Master's example; let us, like our Master, not merely assume humility or pretend it, but actually have that humility which will permit us to do kindness and services to all with whom we come in contact, and proportionately enjoy this privilege as we find the needy ones to be members of the Lord's body—the Church.

{19} As our Lord said to the disciples, "He that is bathed need not save to wash his feet," even so we may realize that all who are justified and consecrated members of his body have already had the bath, the washing of regeneration, and are already clean through the word spoken unto them. ([John 15:3](#)). Nevertheless, although thus cleansed and sanctified, so long as we are in contact with the world we are liable to a certain degree of earthly defilement, and it especially behooves each one not only [R3544 : page 121] to look out for himself but to help one another to get rid of earthly defilements, thus serving his brethren, helping them in the weaknesses, trials and imperfections of the flesh, assisting them to become overcomers. In these respects he is cooperating in the great work of washing the saints' feet, cleansing from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, and perfecting holiness in the reverence of the Lord.—[2 Cor. 7:1](#).

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*"Poems of the Way" Page 91*  
**OUR RESURRECTION**

Had we been there beloved Lord  
 When on that night you knelt  
 With anguished prayer upon your lips,  
 Would we your grief have felt?  
 Had we been there?

Had we been near, O precious Lord  
 When traveling Calvary's road  
 You fell beneath the cross you bore,  
 Would we have born the load?  
 Had we been near?

That early morn would we have gone  
 And sought thy sacred tomb  
 That we might thus anoint thee there  
 With spice and sweet perfume?  
 That early morn?

What joy is ours, for thou art raised  
 And nevermore shalt die.  
 Thy blood was shed that we might live,  
 Thy name we glorify!  
 What joy is ours!

We'll follow on, the call is clear  
 For all to consecrate.  
 A life anew in us begun,  
 All else do we forsake.  
 We'll follow on!

Then raised with him when life is o'er,  
 A crown for every cross.  
 What resurrection joy we'll know!  
 What gain for every loss!  
 When raised with Him!

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[R3785](#) (From Harvest Truth Database v10)  
**THE ANGEL OF GETHSEMANE**

'Twas midnight, and the Man of Sorrows took his chosen three,  
 And sought with weary step the shelter of Gethsemane  
 To pray, his soul exceeding sorrowful, e'en unto death,  
 And heavy laden with the sin and woe of all the world.  
 In agony of bloody sweat he fell upon his face,  
 And cried, with tears, "My God, my Father, if it be thy will,  
 Oh, let this cup of shame and numbering with transgressors pass,—  
**If it be possible!** Yet, not my will, but thine be done!"

And then his thoughts turned to the sacrifice,—a fear bore down  
 With agonizing weight upon his heart, lest to comply  
 With every jot and tittle of the Law, he might have **failed!**  
 He saw the priestly type, he knew eternal death awaited,  
 Should he seek to pass the second veil unworthily.  
**Eternal death!** Oh, anguish inexpressible,—to see  
 No more his Father's face!



He sought his well-beloved three,  
 Perchance they might refresh his fainting heart with some sure word  
 Of prophecy. Alas, their eyes were heavy and they slept.  
 Three times he sought them, and three times **in vain!** Yet he was heard  
 In that he feared. The Father sent a **heavenly** comforter  
 To touch with tender, strengthening hand that dear, devoted head,  
 And whisper, "I the Lord in righteousness have called thee, I  
 Will hold thine hand and keep thee, neither shalt thou **fail** nor be  
 Discouraged.' Lo, thou art 'a priest **forever**, and a king  
 Upon thy throne, like to Melchizidek.' And **thou shalt see**  
**The travail of thy soul, and shalt be satisfied."**

His heart Revived, he knew his Father's faithful word could never fail;  
 He knew it would accomplish that whereunto it was sent.  
 He rose, and from that hour went forth to trial and to death,  
 In peace,—a calmness born of perfect confidence in God.  
 How oft, throughout the many-centuried "night" of this dark age,  
 The Father's "little ones" have knelt in sad Gethsemane  
 To pray! E'en now the Garden's shade re-echoes with the cry  
 Of God's elect, "**How long**, oh Lord, how long until we see  
 The travail of our soul? How long until thou shalt avenge  
 Thine own elect, who cry to thee, with tears, both night and day?"

\* \* \*

Dear Lord, oh, use **me** as the angel in Gethsemane!  
 Oh, fill me with thy holy Spirit of divinest love!  
 Oh, make me sympathetic, **wise**, that every anguished heart  
 May come, nor seek in vain for consolation from thy Word,  
 And strengthened, comforted, go forth to prison and to death,  
 To suffer patiently the cruel mockings of the tongue;  
 To bear the cross unto the bitter end, then calmly say,  
 "'Tis finished," and **with faith unwavering pass beneath "the veil!"**

—G. W. Seibert, May 6, 1906—

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