

## “Lenten Series: The Upper Room”

2018: *The Year of the Winner*

### Scripture:

John 13:1-11 (NIV)

It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.<sup>2</sup> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.<sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;<sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.<sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

<sup>6</sup> He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, “Lord, are you going to wash my feet?”<sup>7</sup> Jesus replied, “You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand.”<sup>8</sup> “No,” said Peter, “you shall never wash my feet.” Jesus answered, “Unless I wash you, you have no part with me.”<sup>9</sup> “Then, Lord,” Simon Peter replied, “not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!”

<sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.”<sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

**Subject Question:** What three characteristics concerning Christ’s gentleness and humble personality does John, the beloved apostle, unfold for us in his Upper Room narrative in chapter 13?

**Compliment answer:** The Example of Humility. (Vs.1-5), The Extent of Humility. (Vs.6-9), and The Expectation of Humility. (Vs.10-11).

**Big Idea:** The three characteristics concerning Christ’s gentleness and humble personality John, the beloved apostle, unfolds for us in his upper room narrative in chapter 13 are: The Example of Humility. (Vs.1-5), The Extent of Humility. (Vs.6-9), and The Expectation of Humility. (Vs.10-11).

**Homiletical Idea:** “Winners are Concerned with ‘Soles’”

**Purpose:** I want the congregation to hear the narrative of the Upper Room and take to heart the lessons concerning humility that Christ examples for us as His modern day followers.

**Ground Work:** Ellicott's Commentary for English Readers

(1) **Now before the feast of the passover.**—Comp. John 12:1; John 12:12; John 12:36, and *Excursus F: The Day of the Crucifixion of our Lord.*

**When Jesus knew that his hour was come . . .**—He knew during the course of His earthly work that His hour was not yet come, and again and again declared this. (Comp. Note on John 2:4; John 7:6; John 11:9.) Now He knows with equal certainty that the hour is at hand that He should depart unto the Father. Having loved his own which were in the world . . .—By “his own” are here meant those who by believing on Him had received power to become the sons of God; those who by walking according as they had light were becoming sons of light. They are the true members, of the family of God. (Comp. Note on John 1:11-12.) The words as here used refer specially to those who had been called by Him, and had left all and followed Him. He is the head of this family, and He knows that these His “little children” (John 13:33) will be left as orphans (John 14:18). He would depart “out of the world;” they would be left “in the world,” as sheep among wolves, and as sheep without their shepherd. St. John places these facts in touching contrast. His thoughts are for them and not for Himself. For Him there would be the return to the glory of His Father’s throne, but His mind dwells on the bereavement and sorrow of those He leaves behind, and this moves Him to a special manifestation of His love.

**He loved them unto the end**—It has been usual to explain these words of the continuance of our Lord’s love—“Having loved His own, He continued to love them until the last moment.” This is, of course, true, but is a truth so certain and necessary from every conception of our Lord’s character as St. John has portrayed it, that we may doubt whether he would in this formal way state it. And though the phrase rendered “unto the end” sometimes means “finally”—as, e.g., in the New Testament, Luke 18:5, and 1Thessalonians 2:16 (see Notes)—the sense, “unto the end” is very rare, and the general meaning is, “in the fullest degree,” “up to the limit.” It thus answers exactly to our “extremely.”

What seems not to have been noted is that the whole sentence may be a common Hebrew idiom in Greek dress. It belongs to the simple syntax of a primitive people to express intensity by repetition. The Vale of Sodom was “pits, pits of bitumen “(Genesis 14:10). Esau asked Jacob to feed him with “that red, red, thing” (Genesis 25:30). The intensity of the verbal idea was expressed in like manner by a simple form of the verb which brought the thought before the mind, and then by the special form which denoted the action. This is sometimes preserved in the English, as, e.g., in Genesis 20:17—“That in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed” (I will bless thee abundantly, and will multiply thy seed exceedingly). Sometimes it is not. We have, e.g., in Amos 9:8, “I will not utterly destroy the house of Jacob, saith the Lord,” where the Hebrew is literally, “Destroying I will not destroy . . . (Vulgate, *conter ens non conter am*). In these passages the English exactly follows the Greek—*i.e.*, the Greek in the passage of Genesis repeats the words as the Hebrew does, and in that of Amos, expresses the intensity by an adverbial phrase (εἰς τέλος). Now that phrase is exactly the same as the one used by St. John here, and which is rendered “unto the end.” St. John was a Jew writing in Greek. May we not naturally expect a Hebrew thought in Greek form? He thinks of the intensity of our Lord’s love, and speaks of it in the simple expressiveness of the old Hebrew phrase, “Loving, he loved them with fulness of love.” (Comp. John 12:13.) This is not given as an amended rendering, because authority has been sought for it without success; but it is offered, as an explanation, to the reader’s judgment. The student will find in Schleusner’s *Lexicon Veteris Testamenti* other instances which support this view.

### **Matthew Henry’s Concise Commentary**

13:1-17 Our Lord Jesus has a people in the world that are his own; he has purchased them, and paid dear for them, and he has set them apart for himself; they devote themselves to him as a peculiar people. Those whom Christ loves, he loves to the end. Nothing can separate a true believer from the love of Christ. We know not when our hour will come, therefore what we have to do in constant preparation for it, ought never to be undone. What way of access the devil has to men’s hearts we cannot tell. But some sins are so exceedingly sinful, and there is so little temptation to them from the world and the flesh, that it is plain they are directly from Satan. Jesus washed his disciples’ feet, that he might teach us to think nothing below us, wherein we may promote God’s glory, and the good of our brethren. We must address ourselves to duty, and must lay aside every thing that would hinder us in what we have to do.

Christ washed his disciples' feet, that he might signify to them the value of spiritual washing, and the cleansing of the soul from the pollutions of sin. Our Lord Jesus does many things of which even his own disciples do not for the present know the meaning, but they shall know afterward. We see in the end what was the kindness from events which seemed most cross. And it is not humility, but unbelief, to put away the offers of the gospel, as if too rich to be made to us, or too good news to be true. All those, and those only, who are spiritually washed by Christ, have a part in Christ. All whom Christ owns and saves, he justifies and sanctifies. Peter more than submits; he begs to be washed by Christ. How earnest he is for the purifying grace of the Lord Jesus, and the full effect of it, even upon his hands and head! Those who truly desire to be sanctified, desire to be sanctified throughout, to have the whole man, with all its parts and powers, made pure. The true believer is thus washed when he receives Christ for his salvation. See then what ought to be the daily care of those who through grace are in a justified state, and that is, to wash their feet; to cleanse themselves from daily guilt, and to watch against everything defiling. This should make us the more cautious. From yesterday's pardon, we should be strengthened against this day's temptation. And when hypocrites are discovered, it should be no surprise or cause of stumbling to us. Observe the lesson Christ here taught. Duties are mutual; we must both accept help from our brethren, and afford help to our brethren. When we see our Master serving, we cannot but see how ill it becomes us to domineer. And the same love which led Christ to ransom and reconcile his disciples when enemies, still influences him.

### **MacLaren's Expositions**

#### **THE SERVANT-MASTER**

**John 13:3 - John 13:5.**

It has been suggested that the dispute as to 'which was the greatest,' which broke the sanctities of the upper chamber, was connected with the unwillingness of each of the Apostles to perform the menial office of washing the feet of his companions. They had come in from Bethany, and needed the service. But apparently it was omitted, and although we can scarcely suppose that the transcendent act which is recorded in my text was performed at the beginning of the meal, yet I think we shall not be wrong if we see in it a reference to the neglected service.

The Evangelist who tells us of the dispute, and does not tell us of the foot-

washing, preserves a sentence which finds its true meaning only in this incident, 'I am among you as He that serveth.' And although John is the only recorder of this pathetic incident, there are allusions in other parts of Scripture which seem to hint at it. As, for instance, when Paul speaks of 'taking upon Him the form of a servant'; and still more strikingly when Peter employs the remarkable word, which he does employ in his exhortation, 'Be ye clothed with humility.' For the word rendered there 'clothed' occurs only in that one place in Scripture, and means literally the putting on of a slave's costume. One can scarcely help, then, seeing in these three passages to which I have referred echoes of this incident which John alone preserves to us. And so we get at once a hint of the harmony and of the incompleteness of the Gospel records.

### **I. Consider the motives of this act.**

Now that is ground upon which the Evangelists very seldom enter. They tell us what Christ did, but very rarely do they give us any glimpses into why He did it. But this section of the Gospel is remarkable for its full and careful analysis of what Christ's impelling motives were in the final acts of His life. How did John find out why Christ did this deed? Perhaps he who had 'leaned upon His bosom at supper,' and was evidently very closely associated with Him, may, in some unrecorded hour of intimate communion during the forty days between the Resurrection and the Ascension, have heard from the Master the exposition of His motives. But more probably, I think, the long years of growing likeness to his Lord, and of meditation upon the depth of meaning in the smallest events that his faithful memory recalled, taught him to understand Christ's purpose and motives. 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him,' and the liker we get to our Master and the more we are filled with His Spirit, the more easy will it be for us to divine the purpose and the motives of His actions, whether as they are recorded in the Scripture or as they come to us in the experience of daily life.

But, passing that point, I desire for a moment to fix your attention on the twofold key to our Lord's action which is given in this context. There is, first of all, in the first verse of the chapter, a general exposition of what was uppermost in His mind and heart during the whole of the period in the upper room. The act in our text, and the wonderful words which follow in the subsequent chapters, crowned by that great intercessory prayer, seem to me to be all explained for us by this first unveiling of His motives. 'When Jesus knew that His hour was come that He should depart out of this world unto the

Father, having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end.'

And then the words of my text, which apply more specifically to the single incident with which they are brought into connection, tell us in addition why this one manifestation of Christ's love was given. 'Knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God.' There, then, are two explanations of motive, the one covering a wider area than the other, but both converging on the incident before us.

The first of these is just this—the consciousness of impending separation moved Christ to a more than ordinarily tender manifestation of His love. For the rendering which you will find in the margin of the Revised Version, 'He loved them to the uttermost,' seems to me to be truer to the Evangelist's meaning than the other, 'He loved them unto the end.' For it was more to John's purpose to tell us that the shadow of the Cross only brought to the surface in more blessed and wonderful representation the deep love of His heart, than simply to tell us that that shadow did not stop its flow. It is much to know that all through His sorrow He continued to love; it is far more to know that the sorrow sharpened its poignancy, and deepened its depth, and made more tender its tenderness.

How near to the man Christ that thought brings us! Do we not all know the impulse to make parting moments tender moments? The masks of use and won't drop off; the reticence which we, perhaps wisely, ordinarily cultivate in regard to our deepest feelings melts away. We yearn to condense all our unspoken love into some one word, act, look, or embrace, which it may afterwards be life to two hearts to remember. And Jesus Christ felt this.

Because He was going away He could not but pour out Himself yet more completely than in the ordinary tenor of His life. The earthquake lays bare hidden veins of gold, and the heart opens itself out when separation impends. We shall never understand the works of Jesus Christ if we do as we are all apt to do, think of them as having only a didactic and doctrinal purpose. We must remember that there is in Him the true play of a human heart, and that it was to relieve His own love, as well as to teach these men their duty, that he rose from the supper, and prepared Himself to wash the disciples' feet.

Then, on the other hand, the other motive which is brought by the Evangelists more immediately into connection with this incident is, 'knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He was come from God, and went to God.'



The consciousness of the highest dignity impels to the lowliest submission. 'All things given into His hands,' means universal and absolute dominion. 'That He was come from God,' means pre-existence, voluntary incarnation, an eternal divine nature, and unbroken communion with the Father. 'That He went to God,' means a voluntary departure from this low world, and a return to 'His own calm home, His habitation from eternity.'

And, gathered all together, the phrases imply His absolute consciousness of His divine nature. It was that that sent Him with the towel round His loins to wash the foul feet of the pedestrians who had come by the dusty and hot way from Bethany, and through all the abominations of an Eastern city, into the upper chamber.

This was He who from the beginning 'was with God, and was God.' This was He who was the Lord of Death, Victor over the grave. This was He who by His own power ascended up on high, and reigns on the throne of the universe to-day. This was He whose breast the same Evangelist had seen before he wrote his Gospel, 'girded with the golden girdle' of priesthood and of sovereignty; and holding, in the hands that had laid the towel on the disciples' feet, the seven stars.

Oh, brethren! if we believed our creeds, how our hearts would melt with wonder and awe that He who was so high stooped so low! 'Knowing that He came from God, and went to God,' and that even when He was kneeling there before these men, 'the Father had given all things into His hands,' what did He do? Triumph? Show His majesty? Flash His power? Demand service? 'Girded Himself with a towel and washed His disciples' feet'!

The consciousness of loftiness does not alone avail to explain the transcendent lowliness. You need the former motive to be joined with it, because it is only love which bends loftiness to service, and turns the consciousness of superiority into yearning to divest oneself of the superiorities that separate, and to emphasize the emotions which unite.

## **II. The detailed completeness of the act.**

The remarkable particularity of the account of the stages of the humiliation suggests the eye-witness. John carried them all in his mind ineffaceably, and long, long years after that memorable hour we hear him recalling each detail of the scene. We can see the little group startled by the disturbance of the order of the meal as He rose from the table, and the hushed wonder and the open-lipped expectation with which they watched to see what the next step would

be. He rises from the table and divests Himself of the upper garments which impeded movement. 'What will He do next?' He takes the basin, standing there to be ready for washing the apostles' feet, but unused, and not even filled with water. He fills it Himself, asking none to help Him. He girds the towel round Him; and then, perhaps, begins with the betrayer; at any rate, not with Peter. Cannot you see them, as they look? Do not you feel the solemnity of the detailed particular account of each step?

And may we not also say that all is a parable, or illustration, on a lower level, of the very same principles which were at work in the mightier fact of the greater condescension of His 'becoming flesh and dwelling among us'? He 'rose from the table,' as He rose from His place in 'the bosom of the Father.' He disturbed the meal as He broke the festivities of the heavens. He divested Himself of His garments, as 'He thought not equality with God a thing to be worn eagerly'; and 'He girded Himself with the towel,' as He put on the weakness of flesh. Himself He filled the basin, by His own work providing the means of cleansing; and Himself applied the cleansing to the feet of those who were with Him. It is all a working out of the same double motive which drew Him downwards to our earth. The reason why He stooped, with His hands to wash the disciples' feet, is the same as the reason why He had hands to wash with-viz., that knowing Himself to be high over all, and loving all, He chose to become one with us, that we might become like unto Him. So the details of the act are a parable of His incarnation and death.

### **III. And then, still further, note the purpose of the deed.**

Now although I have said that we never rightly understand our Lord's actions if we are always looking for dogmatic or doctrinal purposes, and thinking of them rather as being lectures, and sometimes rebukes in act, than as being the out gush of His emotions and His human-divine nature, yet we have also to take into account their moral and spiritual lessons. His acts are words and His words are acts. And although the main and primary purpose of this incident, in so far as it had any other purpose than to relieve Christ's own love by manifesting itself, and to comfort the disciples' hearts by the tender manifestation, was to teach them their duty, as we shall presently see, yet the special aspect of cleansing, which comes out so emphatically and prominently in the episode of Peter's refusal, is to be carried all along through the interpretation of the incident. This was the reason why Jesus Christ came from heaven and assumed flesh, and this was the reason why Jesus Christ, assuming flesh, bowed Himself



to this menial office-to make men clean.

I venture to say that we never understand Jesus Christ and His work until we recognize this as its prominent purpose, to cleanse us from sin. An inadequate conception of what we need, shallow, superficial views of the gravity and universality and obstinacy of the fact of sin, are an impenetrable veil between us and all real understanding of Jesus Christ. There is no adequate motive for such an astounding fact as the incarnation and sacrifice of the Son of God, except the purpose of redeeming the world. If you do not believe that you-you individually, and all of us your brethren-need to be cleansed, you will find it hard to believe in the divinity and atonement of Jesus Christ. If you have been down into the depths of your own heart, and found out what tremendous, diabolic power your own evil nature and sin have upon you, then you will not be content with anything less than the incarnate God who stoops from heaven to bear the burden of your sin, and to take it all away. If you want to understand why He laid aside His garments and took the servile form of our manhood, the appeal of man's sin to His love and the answer of His Divine condescension are the only explanation.

Again, let me remind you that there is no cleansing without Christ. Can you do it for yourselves, do you think? There is an old proverb, 'One hand washes the other.' That is true about stains on the flesh. It is not true about stains on our spirits. Nobody can do it for us but Jesus Christ alone. He kneels before us, having the right and the power to wash us because He has died for us. Kings of England used to touch for 'the king's evil,' and lay their pure fingers upon feculent masses of corruption. Our King's touch is sovereign for the corruption and incipient putrefaction of our sin; and there is no power in heaven or earth that will make a man clean except the power of Jesus Christ. It is either Jesus Christ or filthiness.

If I might pass from my text for one moment, I would remind you of the episode which immediately follows, and suggest that if Jesus Christ is not cleansing us He is nothing to us. 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part in Me.' I know, of course, that it is possible to have partial, rudimentary, and sometimes reverent conceptions of that Lord without recognizing in Him the great 'Fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness.' But I am sure of this, that there is no real, living possession of Jesus Christ such as men's souls need, and such as will outlast the disintegrating influences of death, unless it be such a possession of Him as appropriates for its own, primarily, His cleansing power. First of all He must cleanse, and then all other aspects of His glory, and gifts of

His grace, will pour into our hearts.

No understanding of Christ, then, without the recognition that cleansing is the purpose and the vindication of His incarnation and sacrifice; no cleansing without Christ; no Christ worth calling by the name without cleansing.

#### **IV. And so, lastly, note the pattern in this act.**

You will remember that it is followed by solemn words spoken after He had taken His garments and resumed His place at the table, in which there blended, in the most wonderful fashion, the consciousness of authority, both as Teacher of truth and as Guide of life, and the sweetest and most loving lowliness. In them Jesus prescribed the wonderful act of His condescending love and cleansing power as the law of the Christian life. There are too many of us who profess to be quite willing to trust to Jesus Christ as the Cleanser of our souls who are not nearly so willing to accept His Example as the pattern for our lives; and I would have you note, as an extremely remarkable point, that all the New Testament references to our Lord as being our Example are given in immediate connection with His passion. The very part of His life which we generally regard as being most absolutely unique and inimitable is the fact in His life which Apostles and Evangelists select as the one to set before us for our example. Do you ask if any man can copy the sufferings of Jesus Christ? In regard to their virtue and efficacy, No. In regard to their motive-in one aspect, No; in another aspect, Yes. In regard to the spirit that impelled Him we may copy Him. The smallest trickle of water down a city gutter will carve out of the mud at its side little banks and cliffs, and exhibit all the phenomena of erosion on the largest scale, as the Mississippi does over half a continent, and the tiniest little wave in a basin will fall into the same curves as the billows of mid-ocean. You and I, in our little lives, may even aspire to 'do as I have done to you.'

The true use of superiority is service. Noblesse oblige! Bank, wealth, capacity, talents, all things are given to us that we may use them to the last particle for our fellows. Only when the world and society have awakened to that great truth which the towel-girded, kneeling Christ has taught us, will society be organized on the principles that God meant.

But, further, the highest form of service is to cleanse. Cleansing is always dirty work for the cleaners, as every housemaid knows. You cannot make people clean by scolding them, by lecturing them, by patronizing them. You have to go down into the filth if you mean to lift them out of it; and leave your smelling-bottles behind; and think nothing repulsive if your stooping to it may save a

brother.

The only way by which we can imitate that example is by, first of all, participating in it for ourselves. We must, first of all, have the Cross as our trust, before it can become our pattern and our law. We must first say, 'Lord! not my feet only, but also my hands and my head,' and then, in the measure in which we ourselves have received the cleansing benediction, we shall be impelled and able to lay our gentle hands on foulness and leprosy; and to say to all the impure, 'Jesus Christ, who hath cleansed me, makes thee clean.'

**Introduction:** Humbleness and meekness... true characteristics of Christians throughout the ages. Why did Jesus, do such a menial task just hours before His Passion on the cross. He certainly did not have to. It wasn't anything that was expected and hardly, to be frank, even imagined. Yet, He tossed aside His outer garments, wrapped a towel around His waist, took a basin of warm water and did the unthinkable—and not to one but to all. Today we consider Christ's humility and its wondrous, challenging, and more, heart provoking example for you and me. Let's consider humility at its best by exploring: The Example of Humility. (Vs.1-5), The Extent of Humility. (Vs.6-9), and The Expectation of Humility. (Vs.10-11).

(Are there dirty feet in here?)

- A. The Example of Humility. (Vs.1-5): *It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.<sup>2</sup> The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus.<sup>3</sup> Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God;<sup>4</sup> so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.<sup>5</sup> After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.*
- B. So here we have the ultimate example of humility and yet, at the same time the ultimate paradox: the Mighty doing the Menial, the Way, the truth and the Life... washing; the King Himself, bending low and kneeling before His subjects, God serving man. The picture is not something most of us like; it rubs us the wrong way. From our point of view this isn't the way that it should be! . As Maclaren points out: *There are too many of us who profess to be quite willing to trust to Jesus Christ as the Cleanser of our souls who are not nearly so willing to accept His Example as the pattern for our lives*

- C. Our Converted hearts cry out, let us serve you! Yet, yet... from God's perspective it's everything He wants us to know and more, wants us to aspire to become. The bended, basin carrying Christ will soon enough be the bruised, battered, crucified Christ... And as the scripture said, <sup>3</sup> *Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God... he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist.*
- D. I guess the real question that arises for you and me in watching this event unfold is to ask ourselves, really... was there anything below Christ's dignity and humility to show the world the way of servanthood and love? And of course our question: what's below our dignity? I mean if we were to be true examples of Christ, then is there anything that should be below us in our lives as followers? Of course, we piously, no I piously, want to say there's nothing I wouldn't do—there no level I wouldn't stoop to for you Lord... But that simply is not totally true yet in my life. But, I want it to be... Humiliation is not something that we run to—it's something most of us want to avoid... we try run from. But, when you get down and think about it: is putting others first and serving them such a bad way to live? Is being ridiculed for talking about our precious Savior something be embarrassed about. Really? Really? Is being associated with a person with such love and compassion something to be ashamed of... or gloried in! Lent is not only about Christ indispensable humanity and willing humility and His Cross, as it is about yours and my humanity and willing humility and our comfortableness in choosing to live, being examples for and of Christ, and finding ourselves ever increasingly comfortable living in the obscurity and shadow of His cross--thinking more of Him than us—considering others more than ourselves. Practicing a heavenly humbleness in our attitudes and actions in this brief life that we live. Maybe that's what this example was all about; a lesson, a teachable picture... a way of not just living, but life. And then of course comes Peter... the spokesman for humanity.

(Are there dirty feet in here?)

- A. The Extent of Humility. (Vs.6-9): <sup>6</sup> *He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"* <sup>7</sup> *Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."* <sup>8</sup> *"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."* <sup>9</sup> *Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."* *"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"*

- B. We tend to chuckle at Peter for His seemingly uncomfortableness in what's happening to Him and His defensiveness in response. Peter is so much like us... I actually think that Jesus kind of laughed a little to Himself. But not for reasons that we may think... Why? Because that is exactly what Christ had in mind—not a spiritual sponge bath, not a kind of physical scrub down from Peter's feet and hands and head. But, rather a total and permanent, eternal cleansing of Peter's heart and soul.
- C. O Peter would later sing out: What can take away my sins? Nothing but the blood of Jesus. What can make me whole within, nothing but the blood of Jesus? But first Peter had to see humility—see the extent and example of the life that a cleansed person is beckoned to live. And so it is for you and me. But there is a greater lesson here. When Christ came into your heart and forgave you of your sins, He washed you thoroughly and cleansed you entirely from the one thing that there can't be in heaven and that is sin. He forgave you and washed you from the sins of your past, He forgave you and washed you from the sins of the present, and He forgave you and washed you from the sins you will commit in the future. Children of God don't lose their salvation when they sin and do thoughtless things... now understand this... they lose their joy, their awe, their confidence, and their spiritual vitality... they feel increasingly comfortable not coming to church or praying or being with other Christians. They lose their intimacy in prayer and their deep love for Christ himself. And humility? Humility gets replaced by pride... "I'm just as good as anybody else... nobody's perfect... I'll give a little extra in the offering plate.
- D. But their salvation? NO. You may ask, you mean I can do anything that I want to and get away with it? Well, yes, as long as your "want-to's" have changed since Christ came into your life. Christ does not take our ability to sin; He does however take away our ability to enjoy it. The problem with that question is even considering asking the question itself. Because if that's how you are living, then, humility, true humility hasn't taken hold and found a home in your heart... nor have you relished the true extent of that humility. Maybe you too need to do what I and others often do: take Peter's good advice and cry to the Lord, not only my feet but my hands, my head, my heart... wash me... wash all of me. And finally.

(Are there dirty feet in here?)

- A. The Expectation of Humility. (Vs.10-11): <sup>10</sup> Jesus answered, “Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.” <sup>11</sup> For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.
- B. In considering the last part of this section of scripture, Matthew Henry observes: *17 Our Lord Jesus has a people in the world that are his own; he has purchased them, and paid dear for them, and he has set them apart for himself; they devote themselves to him as a peculiar people. Those whom Christ loves, he loves to the end. Nothing can separate a true believer from the love of Christ. We know not when our hour will come, therefore what we have to do in constant preparation for it, ought never to be undone*
- C. I’ve heard it said, it’s hard to be humble when you are you wonderful... For the Christian we see it in a slightly different way: IT IS hard to be humble when HE is so wonderful. And because He is wonderful, nothing He may ask me to do or to be is below me, beneath my so called dignity—why? Because only the truly strong can do what is totally right in whatever Christ-honoring situation arises. It is only the brave who don’t mind taking a stand for Christ so that someone somewhere can come to know the Savior. Its only those who are willing to look in the mirror every day and say, I am going to do my best to be like Christ that someday will find that familiar likeness now saying to them, welcome home, good and faithful servant.
- D. Let me leave you this morning with 2 promises from Scripture:
1. 2 Chronicles 7:14, *if my people, who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and I will forgive their sin and will heal their land*
  2. James 4:10, *Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up.*