

# Washing Feet

- Reading: John 13

- Old Superman Joke

- I share this joke because I feel like sometimes we view Jesus the same way that we see Superman in this joke

- We read this morning what Jesus says to us

- John 13:15

15) For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.

- This is a common message from Jesus

- In the next chapter Jesus says a very similar thing

- John 14:12

12) Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father.

- We're really quite clear of the concept that Jesus asks us to follow his example

- But, do we really think of it a little bit like Superman jumping off of a skyscraper, and then telling us that we should do so as well?

- That really isn't the point of Jesus' ministry though, is it?

- Sure, Peter asked to join Jesus walking on the water, and when Jesus asked him to come, Peter did walk out a bit to be with him

- But, that isn't what Jesus really requires of us

- A little further down in John 14, Jesus tells us what he wants from us in Verse 15

- John 14:15

15) If you love me, you will keep my commandments.

- Jesus really doesn't expect miracles from us
- He doesn't expect us to walk on water, or jump off tall buildings
- All he wants is for us to keep his commandments
- Look what John says in 1<sup>st</sup> John 5

- 1<sup>st</sup> John 5:3

3) For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments. And his commandments are not burdensome.

- The commandments of God are not burdensome
- What Jesus asks of us is not that hard
- I think of when the Lawyer tried to test Jesus

- Matthew 22:35-40

35) And one of them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him.

36) "Teacher, which is the great commandment in the Law?"

37) And he said to him, "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.

38) This is the great and first commandment.

39) And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself.

40) On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets."

- This guy was really trying to catch Jesus in his words
- He really thought that he could stump him by trying to find out if Jesus would commit to saying which one of the hundreds of commandments is most important
- I'm sure he was thinking that Jesus would pick something very difficult

- Look at what Jesus says, “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind”
- That’s it
- Love God
- That’s really what God wants from us
- And, of course, connected to that is, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
- You don’t have to be Superman to do this
- You don’t have to be some kind of sinless, perfect, Son of God in order to obey him
- The example that Christ gave us is really quite simple to understand
- That isn’t to say that I’m trying to lessen the importance of Christ being the Son of God and that he was blessed with miraculous powers
- But, he simply lived a kind, considerate and loving life, and asked us to do the same
- Let’s consider some of the concepts he wanted us to grasp
- Matthew 25:34-40
  - 34) Then the King will say to those on his right, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.
  - 35) For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me,
  - 36) I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’
  - 37) Then the righteous will answer him, saying, ‘Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink?
  - 38) And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you?
  - 39) And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?’
  - 40) And the King will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.’
- We often talk about how we want to hear, ‘Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.’

- Look at the kind of person that he will say that to:
  - Someone who is welcoming and warm to strangers
  - Someone who feeds people when they are hungry
  - Someone who offers to provide clothing and shelter for people down on their luck
  - Someone who visits the sick in the Hospital, and the lonely in Prison
- The types of actions that should fill our life are not super-human
- Jesus doesn't expect us to do the unbelievable
- He simply wants us to do what is right, and kind, and true, and peaceable
- Let's look at the example that we read about today in John 13:
- John 13:1-15
  - 1) Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.
    - Jesus KNEW that his hour had come to depart out of this world
    - If there ever was a time for his faith to falter...
    - If there ever was a time when he would be weak...
    - This would be it
    - It's actually time
    - That moment he has dreaded his whole life
    - What does he do when he realizes that THIS is the time that he has to face his end?
    - "Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end."
  - 2) During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him,
  - 3) Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God,

- Notice what that is saying...
- “Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands...”
- Jesus knew that he had unlimited power from God
- He was literally the second most powerful entity in the Universe
- And what does he do?
  - 4) (he) rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist.
  - 5) Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.
- He washed their feet
- This isn’t pretty business
- This isn’t some lovely, wonderful, foot massage that he was giving them
- This was gross and disgusting
- The cities they lived in didn’t have sewers, and the streets acted as the sewers
- People threw their waste out into the street, and everyone walked around in sandals with their feet covered in terrible things
- Washing someone’s feet was such a gross job that not only would you not do it yourself, or ask your spouse to do it, but you really wouldn’t even want your kids to touch that
- It was a job for the house slave
- The illegal alien that was so poor that they would work in your house for pennies, and you could have them do all of the really dirty jobs that no one wanted to do
- But, this Dinner was put together hastily with little time, and they had forgot to make arrangements to have someone there to take care of the feet
- In walks everyone, and there’s this awkward moment as they all look around at each other, realizing that there is no house slave available to wash their feet

- Of course, none of them volunteer to do it
- Then, the awkwardness turns even more awkward, as Jesus stands up, takes off his jacket, rolls his sleeves up, and ties a towel around his waist
- Before people can even fathom that the unthinkable is about to happen, Jesus bends down
  - 5) Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.
- Everyone is speechless and stunned as he works his way around the room and in turn washes each person's feet
- We simply can't relate to what this means...
- Try to imagine Barak Obama coming to your house for Dinner
- After Dinner, he asks to use the Restroom, and you are a little nervous because you hope that you have cleaned it up properly, and it looks nice in there
- After an awkward amount of time, you realize that he hasn't come out, and you hear some noise from in there
- You check on him and find out that the toilet has overflowed, because you haven't done a good job of keeping it clean, and he has taken his shoes off, rolled up his pant legs, and he's busy cleaning your bathroom floors
- This is not how you imagined this evening was going to go
- Peter feels the same way when Jesus gets to him...
  - 6) He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?"
  - 7) Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand."
  - 8) Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me."
  - 9) Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!"
  - 10) Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you."
  - 11) For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

- He works his way around the whole room, and has finished doing this awkward, uncomfortable job
  - 12) When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, *“Do you understand what I have done to you?”*
- Now, you realize that this is more than what it looks like...
  - 13) You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am.
  - 14) If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet.
- Jesus wanted to teach his Disciples, and he wants to teach us that this kind of service is what he wants from us
- It’s not the great and the amazing that he calls us to
- It’s often the lowly and simple
- He wants us to roll up our sleeves, get down on our knees, take a towel and do some cleaning
- The next verse is the verse we looked at in the beginning...
  - 15) For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you.
- The example that Jesus gives us, the example that he wants us to follow, is not Superman jumping off a building, but a lowly house servant kneeling down to wash dirty feet