

The Rev. Michael J. Bridge  
Sermon- John 13:1-15  
Thursday, April 13, 2017

### Jesus serves

1. On Sunday I talked about Paul telling us to have the same mind as Christ, and to humble ourselves in love and service following the manner in which Jesus did. Today we see a great example of Jesus' humility and service in the washing of the disciples' feet.
2. A lot could be said about the significance of what Jesus did here, but this is one of those times when I think we get it. The work of washing someone's feet would be the work of a servant or household slave. So we wouldn't expect the King of kings and Lord of all creation to wash our feet. We can also relate to Peter in trying to reject this act of service. The foot washing part of the Maundy Thursday service has easily been the most uncomfortable for people to receive in my own experience is a pastor.
3. In Jesus' day, someone who was otherwise clean would still have dirty feet from walking in the dust of the desert. In our day, someone who is otherwise clean may still have dirty or smelly feet from keeping them covered with shoes.
4. The example that Jesus gave was one of doing something very uncomfortable and unpleasant. He- the Son of God- did not think himself to great to serve mankind in this way. And he is very clear in his teaching that we, his disciples, are to follow suit.

### Serve like Jesus

1. I don't think that Jesus is saying that we are to wash each other's feet specifically; but that we are to serve one another, never thinking that a task is beneath us. When we see a brother or sister in need, or when there is a way that we can serve, we should do what we are able.
2. In a very literal sense, I have seen this in action in Ethiopia. Kim, Ginger, Lou, DW, and Sharon Daly all washed the feet of the poorest of the poor as an act of love and devotion. I documented it by taking pictures, and even that was hard. To see what these feet looked like, and to see Christian brothers and sisters willingly touching them without repulsion, was such a sign of humility and love. For some of the people who were worst off, you could see in their faces that they truly felt loved- not only by people, but by God himself- through this act of the washing of their feet.
3. If I want to have the mind of Christ and follow in his ways, I have to be willing to wash the feet of my neighbor, both literally and figuratively. To be a Christian is to have faith in action. We believe, we trust, we obey.
4. Jesus served us by washing us in his blood. He additionally serves us by a continual washing of our feet- spiritually cleaning us even as we are purified by his blood. He then issues a two-part command to us. First, we are to receive his act of humble service; then we are to imitate it.
  - a. So now I invite you forward to receive the washing of your feet, after which I send you out in Jesus' name to partake in the same humble service to others.