

## Feet and Following

*<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 every one was clean." John 13:27*

This passage shows Jesus as the truly humble servant, because that is essentially the role that he took on. After a long hot day of walking on dirt roads, traveling the same roads as donkey, horses and other animals, Jesus takes on the role of the lowest servant of a household and offers to wash his disciples feet. For those disciples who were still expecting Jesus to claim his role as earthly ruler and messiah, the idea of Jesus putting himself in this position would have been really confusing. Jesus got that. He got that what he was doing ran counter to culture and expectations, but here he was clearly stating through his actions that those who followed him, must make themselves less, they must humble themselves even to the point of humiliation and crucifixion so that other might have forgiveness. Here he calls his disciples to self-sacrifice.

In the gospel of Luke, Jesus calls his disciples to the same sort of self-sacrifice even as they discussed their coveted roles in His future kingdom:

*"Then a dispute arose among them as to which of them would be greatest. <sup>47</sup> And Jesus, perceiving the thought of their heart, took a little child and set him by Him, <sup>48</sup> and said to them, "Whoever receives this little child in My name receives Me; and whoever receives Me receives Him who sent Me. For he who is least among you all will be great." Luke 9:46-48*

Jesus again and again calls his disciples to self-sacrifice and humility and again and again they seem to miss the point. It is easy for us to stand on the sidelines and call out their lack of vision and understanding of God's plan, but let's take a look at ourselves first.

In a four dollar latte world, have we somehow lost sight of this call to sacrifice? Are we willing to give up our creature comforts much less live lives of complete sacrifice to the gospel?

Our Savior equated himself amongst the homeless, reminding his disciples that "birds have nests and foxes have dens but the Son of man has no place to lay His head". In the words of the singer/songwriter Rich Mullins "The hope of the whole world rests on the shoulders of a homeless man". We all want to be greatest, but few are willing to become least to do it. When Jesus washed those feet, He was calling us all into the dirt and hurt of this world. We are called to take up our cross and our towel. Will you follow?

**Prayer:** Holy God, help me to humble myself and recognize that my rights and comforts do not superceed my call to self-sacrifice as a follower of Christ.