

March 16, 2014

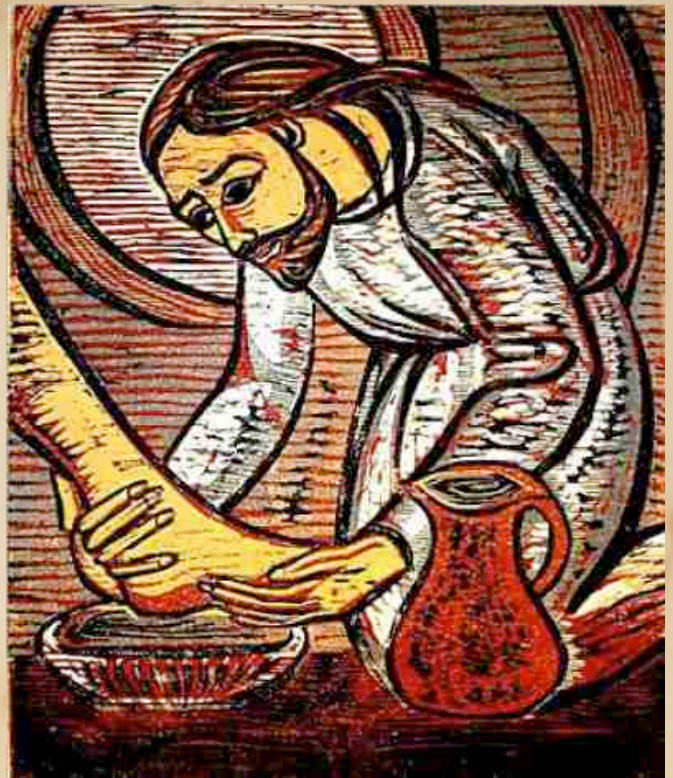
Lesson 23: Footwashing

John 13:1-17

Now before the festival of the Passover, Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart from this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. The devil had already put it into the heart of Judas son of Simon Iscariot to betray him. And during supper Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going to God, got up from the table, took off his outer robe, and tied a towel around himself. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was tied around him. He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, 'Lord, are you going to wash my feet?' Jesus answered, 'You do not know now what I am doing, but later you will understand.' Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered, 'Unless I wash you, you have no share with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'One who has bathed does not need to wash, except for the feet, but is entirely clean. And you are clean, though not all of you.' For he knew who was to betray him; for this reason he said, 'Not all of you are clean.'

After he had washed their feet, had put on his robe, and had returned to the table, he said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are right, for that is what I am. So if I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you. Very truly, I tell you, servants are not greater than their master, nor are messengers greater than the one who sent them. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.



Footwashing

John 13:1-17

“Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.”

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The Big Story Truth: We love because Jesus loves us!

About This Scripture Passage: This is an important passage in the Gospel of John. The “hour” that we first heard Jesus talking about back in the story of the wedding at Cana has finally come. The time has come for Jesus to say goodbye to his disciples and to prepare them for his death on the cross. The whole rest of the Gospel will be about this series of events. Just before today’s reading, Jesus rode into Jerusalem on a donkey to shouts of Hosanna. He knows full well that he will be betrayed after this meal by one of his own disciples. He takes this opportunity to warn his disciples about what is to come and to prepare them for the life that they will live even after he has gone.

In those days when people wore sandals, their feet would become dusty and dirty. As a sign of hospitality, the host of a meal would provide water for the guests to wash their own

feet. Or perhaps a servant to do it for them. Jesus became both host and servant by washing the disciples feet himself. Peter objected, but Jesus used this as a teaching moment. For Jesus to wash his feet wasn’t about having clean feet, but it was about a relationship in which Jesus provides all that is needed. The washing of feet is about the loving relationship between God the Father and Jesus that we are invited into and called to share with one another.



Making the Connection: Jesus offers the disciples the gift of his love. As he washes their feet and tries to help them understand his upcoming death, he is teaching them that what he is doing is all about love. Jesus has come to love the world. He has come to give of himself fully, completely. Love is a characteristic mark of Jesus' relationship with the world. It is also what Jesus desires to be the characteristic mark of his followers when he is no longer physically present. We love because Jesus loves us. This is what our kids need to hear out of this lesson. It starts with helping our kids really truly hear the good news that they are loved by Jesus. Then, after they are loved beyond description, it is time to talk with kids about how we share that love and live out that love in caring relationships and service to others.

Where in the World Are We? Jesus is in Jerusalem for the Passover celebration. John's Gospel is a little different from the others about the timeline of when the events surrounding Jesus' crucifixion occur. In John's Gospel this meal isn't "the" passover celebration, but occurs earlier, before Passover begins. By the time Passover occurs in John's Gospel, Jesus is being crucified....

For Your Reflection:

What most clearly reminds you of Jesus' love for you?

How might you express Jesus' love (and your own) to your kids this week?

