

## “Love in Action”

### I. **INTRO:**

- A. During the **American Revolution** a man in civilian clothes rode past a group of soldiers repairing a small defensive barrier. **Their leader** was shouting instructions, **but making no attempt to help them**. Asked why by the rider, he retorted with great dignity, “**Sir, I am a corporal!**” The stranger apologized, dismounted, and proceeded to help the exhausted soldiers. The job done, he turned to the corporal and said, “Mr. Corporal, next time you have a job like this and not enough men to do it, go to your **commander-in-chief**, and **I** will come and help you again.” It was none other than **George Washington**.<sup>1</sup>
1. That’s an impressive example on a servant leader...but how about **the God of the universe washing your feet?**
- B. Ch’s.1-12 Jesus is the **Light**; Ch’s.13-21 Jesus is **Love**.

### II. **LOVE IN ACTION!**

- A. **LOVE TO THE END!** (1-5)
- B. Jesus knew that His hour had come - The 11th hour.
1. This hour didn’t creep up on Him & take Him unaware.
  2. Yet, He also wasn’t staring at His watch, watching His life tick away.
  3. He knew He only had 15 hours to live. Yet, He is not anxious; nor nervously looking for a back door. He knows death is His destiny.
    - a) He knows that not only is **His death** the Father’s will but even His **betrayal** is too<sup>2</sup>
- C. **Loved them to the end** - to the uttermost, eternally.
1. Or, He loved them **to the end of His life & to the end of love**.
- D. (2) **Supper** - Here we have a “5 chapter supper”! (ch.13:1-18:1)
1. His **last meal, last night, & last opportunity** to teach His disciples!
  2. Jesus’ last words speak of **all the resources** that will be at the disciples disposal, after His departure.
  3. **Location?** a room in Jerusalem. **Occasion?** the night before Passover.
    - a) *Passover* - The day to remember back when an innocent, blemish free lambs blood was spilt, to spare a household from deaths visit to their home.

<sup>1</sup> 10,000 Illustrations; Today in the Word, March 6,1991

<sup>2</sup> Chuck Swindoll; John; pg.72.

- E. (2,3) **Judas** self-serving; **Jesus** self-giving.
- F. (3) He has *all things in His hands* or under His power, & does **what** with it? *Washes feet.*
1. **Wow, what humility!**
    - a) **Did you Hear about the pastor** who was voted **The Most Humble Pastor in America?** The congregation gave him **a medal** that read, *“To the most humble pastor in America”* - Then they had to **take it away from him** that next Sunday...**because** he wore it!!!
  2. **Humility** = *To stoop low* (Gk). Carries the idea of **servicing** another person.
  3. **Q:** What did the angels in heaven think now? *“Ok, that’s too far Lord!”*
- G. How clear - He had come from God & was going to God.
- H. (4) And now the demonstration of the verse, **“I did not come to be served, but to serve.”**<sup>3</sup>
- I. Here he deals with **4 principles** regarding humility:
1. **Humility is unannounced** - Jesus didn’t say, “Ok, men, I’m now going to demonstrate humility!”
    - a) Greatness does not consist of **exhalation** but **self-sacrifice**.
    - b) **As nature teaches us, the branch most full of fruit...bends the lowest!** :)
      - (1) The question is: *How low can you grow?*
  2. **Humility is willing to receive, w/o embarrassment** - Tucking his feet under himself, Peter pulls away.
    - a) **Jesus stoops, Peter resists**...a resistance that leads to a rebuke.
  3. **Humility is not a sign of weakness** - Here Jesus “boldly rebukes” in the midst of this humble task.
  4. **Humility does not play favorites** - Humility is neither selective nor exclusive.
    - a) Jesus washes each foot...even Judas’.
    - b) If Jesus were only human, He probably would have been tempted to use **boiling water** to wash Peter’s feet, & **ice cold water** to wash Judas’.
    - c) But He didn’t come to **scold** or to **shun**; He came to serve **gently & humbly**.
- J. Jesus was able to perform this act of **utter humility** because of His keen understanding of **who He was, where He came from, & where He was going**.
1. **This is key to humility in all persons** - a healthy & balanced understanding of who they are.

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<sup>3</sup> Mt.20:28

K. **COMPLETELY CLEAN!** (6-11)

L. (9) Peter's pendulum swing. (I can relate)

1. This causes Jesus to put His finger on the pulse of a critical theological matter.

M. (10) Explain public baths -

1. **Example:** Early Haiti showers. Once showered, walk to room in flip flops, feet get dirty.

2. **Q:** How clean? **Completely!** - **Wow! That's clean.**

3. **Q:** When would they be clean? They **are!**

a) No need for "double dippin" (Need to be saved again? No, 1 bath is a enough!)

b) We notice this doesn't deny, but explains, *a Christian will still sin*, even after being **saved** (bathed) his **feet** (Christian walk) will still get dirty.

N. **Bathed** (λούω [loo-o]) = washing the whole body; **washed** (νίπτω [nip-to]) = sponge off *feet*

1. God **bathes** us at conversion, cleansing our scarlet sins white as snow.

2. **But**, walking through life's dirty streets, we pick up some of the world's grunge & grime.

a) What we need in that case is not another **bath**...just **cleansing**.

b) 1 Jn.1:9 **If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.**

(1) [Context? a believer already bathed]

O. **Q:** What did **Jesus** feel as He was washing Judas' feet? Did He pinch him? **or** do ½ a job? **Or**, did He feel sorrow knowing his feet would **never** ever come clean!

P. **Q:** What did **Judas** feel? It's moments before Satan would possess Him(27) & the last thing for Judas to remember is **The One** he was about to betray...**washed his feet!!!**

Q. **Application:** So I'd like **you** to recline at this table this morning. Jesus is getting to your feet next. **He stooping to wash your needs.** And not your *clean & polite needs*, but your dirty needs; your dirty feet of **pride**, your dirty feet of **insensitivity**, your dirty feet of **selfishness**.

1. He wants to **wash** our dirty feet & teach us how to live as **cleansed** people.

R. **BLESSED ARE YOU IF YOU DO!** (12-17)

S. (12) Jesus finishes & reclines at the table again. **It's quiet.** To drive this message into their hearts He asks a penetrating question. **Do you know what I have done to you?**

1. **2 lessons emerge:** **[1]** Humility includes serving **one another not just the Lord.**  
**[2]** Happiness results from **demonstrating** humility, not just **learning** about it.

- T. [1] Humility includes serving **one another** not just the Lord! (14-16)
- U. (14) Wash **one another's** feet - The *synoptic gospels* tell us that on their way to the feast, the disciples had yielded to **contention & pride**. [They needed to be put away!]
1. They were arguing on the way over here regarding, *who was the greatest!*
    - a) They were ready to fight for a **throne** but not for a **towel!**
  2. So at least **2 reasons** why Jesus chooses this activity on His last night w/His disciples: **Proud Hearts & Dirty feet**.
- V. The command to **do for one another** what *Christ had done for them* was not confined to washing feet.
1. Some churches have a "Foot Washing Service". **But we don't do that in our Western culture.**
  2. If we're not simply **humbling ourselves & serving someone**, then we've missed the whole point.
  3. **Note:** Do wash someone's feet. It's **very special** both to do & to have it done to you.
- W. [2] Happiness results from **demonstrating** humility, not just learning about it! (17)
- X. (17) **Blessed are you if you do them** - Our faith is to be intensely **practical!**
1. Not just a **great theology**, but a **practical outliving of it**.
  2. How you **treat people**; How you **spend money**; How you **spend your time**.  
*That's predicated on how you view God.*
  3. **Love is best proved by service.**
- Y. **Blessed are you if you do them** - Simple obedience. *As a soldier obeys his commanding officer, even when the order conflicts with his comfort, convenience, or safety.*
1. The motto of the Prince of Wales is "**I Serve!**" - And there is nothing nobler or more royal than service.
  2. **Christianity is more than creed, & includes deeds.**
- Z. Servanthood is Love at Work, **Love in Action!**
1. **Q:** How can you model Humility to those around you?
    - a) What's the one job no one likes to do in your office? Or job site? Or in your home?
    - b) Do it & reap the Blessings of servanthood!
- AA.**Q:** Have you **humbled yourself** to receive His humble care? **Or** have you tucked your feet underneath you, as Peter did, too proud to let Jesus deal with your needs **His way?**
- BB.For some of us, letting Jesus do that is **not a struggle**, we're comfortable with our relationship staying between Him & ourselves. The **hard part** comes when we're challenged to serve **one another**. **But that's what Jesus tells us His way is all about!!!**
1. **Q:** How is your attitude toward humbly serving others?
- CC.**Jesus has passed us His towel.** Who will He bring in your life this week to **serve?**