

"THE FOOT-WASHING"

Introduction

1. Here we see Christ washing disciples' feet.
2. Marvellous example of edifying conversation
3. Many lessons here – for our comfort

1. THE TIME WAS JUST BEFORE THE PASSOVER (v.1)

- (i) The most difficult work ever done on earth
- (ii) We need to know Christ's thoughts just then
- (iii) God here informs us of Christ's thoughts
– no ignorance of what he faces – no unholy terror.
APPLICATION: Appreciate the perfection of Christ seen here. It should move us to trust God in hard times.

2. THE MIND OF CHRIST WAS FULL OF UNDERSTANDING

- (i) He knew that "his hour was come" (v.1) – and what an hour!
- (ii) He knew he would pass through his agonies and return to his Father (v.1)
- (iii) He knew "the Father had given all things into his hands" (v.3): a mighty fact!
What was this? (Atonement – Resurrection – Pentecost – Redemption of a people out of every nation – authority to judge the world)
- (iv) He knew his identity + his future (v.3)
OBSERVE: The mind of Christ as he faced the Cross was full of light, knowledge, understanding.
APPLICATION: O let us rejoice that he now reigns! There is never doubt or uncertainty in what Christ says or does. It came to pass and all he says will come to pass sooner or later.
APPLICATION: O let us believe + rely on Christ!

3. CHRIST WENT TO THE CROSS FULL OF LOVE FOR ALL THOSE WHO WERE HIS IN THE WORLD

- 1) See v.1: "Having loved...unto the end".
APPLICATION: Some love us for a time – but Christ loves us to the end and he will save us to the uttermost.
- 2) What love is this?
 - (i) Christ has a love of benevolence because he is good in his own nature.
OBSERVE: This is seen in his kindness to those who came to him for help – notably the Ten Lepers, of whom 9 were unthankful
 - (ii) But Christ has a special love for those who believe in him – see chap. 17 where he prays for them in terms of the highest love (John 17:24-26)
APPLICATION: this special love of Christ brings salvation to those who are his – it is the love of election – for them he dies and now in heaven makes intercession.
- 3) Grow not only in grace + holiness but also in appreciation of Christ's love for you: See Ephesians 3:18-19
APPLICATION: We are reminded of this love in the Lord's Supper. Do not stay away if you love Christ but taste more of his love for believers.
APPLICATION: There is very much more love to enjoy than we have ever yet experienced.

4. CHRIST SHOWS HIS LOVE FOR HIS OWN BY WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET

- 1) It was an action full of meaning:
 - (i) In Christ's religion the way of greatness is not to be high and mighty but lowly.
APPLICATION: Who is so great a King as Christ? Yet he does a servant's work gladly.
 - (ii) Christ is our example of kindness and practical care. He washes our feet!
APPLICATION: The best Christians are those who are most humble and who serve others.

(iii) Christ's ways are mysterious – we do not always understand why he treats us in life as he does, as here.

ILLUSTRATION: Peter was confused, amazed.

APPLICATION: Christ will at times do things in your life which you cannot understand

(iv) Christ here points us to two forms of washing which his people have – the greatest and the lesser.

2) These are:

(i) the complete washing of a bath

The meaning is the New Birth

(ii) the lesser washing

This is the daily cleansing of sin as we confess our faults to God

APPLICATION: We need both washings.

5. **HOW UNGRATEFUL UNBELIEVERS ARE!**

1) See v.11: one of their number was a false Christian, a hypocrite.

APPLICATION: There are such in the midst of God's dear children. They do great harm – "betray "him"

2) If we have an outward profession of faith but no inward grace we are "unclean" in God's sight.

3) Ah! Make sure you have a new heart – the heart is what God sees:

(i) if not, you will be a willing instrument of Satan – as here.

(ii) you are little better than a Judas – and you may yet betray Christ's cause, as he did.

4) So the passage here

(i) comforts the Lord's people with the sight of a loving Saviour

(ii) and warns us all of our need to be washed in Christ's precious blood.

CONCLUSION

The Lord's Supper is a reminder of both these great lessons.

May God help us to learn them.

PSALM

31: 19 – 24

118: 19 – 26

106: 1 - 5