

Bible Study on HE WENT FIRST — John 13:1-20

For Sunday January 15, 2023

****Attention: I plan to preach on this passage on January 15 unless our new baby has arrived. If that happens, Eugene Bontrager will be preaching on Luke 2:41-52.** -Nic**

John 13:1-20 (ESV)

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

13 Now before the Feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour had come to depart out of this world to the Father, having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end. ² During supper, when the devil had already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray him, ³ Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into his hands, and that he had come from God and was going back to God, ⁴ rose from supper. He laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. ⁵ Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ⁶ He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, do you wash my feet?" ⁷ Jesus answered him, "What I am doing you do not understand now, but afterward you will understand." ⁸ Peter said to him, "You shall never wash my feet." Jesus answered him, "If I do not wash you, you have no share with me." ⁹ Simon Peter said to him, "Lord, not my feet only but also my hands and my head!" ¹⁰ Jesus said to him, "The one who has bathed does not need to wash, except for his feet, but is completely clean. And you are clean, but not every one of you." ¹¹ For he knew who was to betray him; that was why he said, "Not all of you are clean."

¹² When he had washed their feet and put on his outer garments and resumed his place, he said to them, "Do you understand what I have done to you?" ¹³ You call me Teacher and Lord, and you are right, for so I am. ¹⁴ If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. ¹⁵ For I have given you an example, that you also should do just as I have done to you. ¹⁶ Truly, truly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. ¹⁷ If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them. ¹⁸ I am not speaking of all of you; I know whom I have chosen. But the Scripture will be fulfilled, 'He who ate my bread has lifted his heel against me.' ¹⁹ I am telling you this now, before it takes place, that when it does take place you may believe that I am he. ²⁰ Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever receives the one I send receives me, and whoever receives me receives the one who sent me."

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1. Have you ever done a craft or project that required you to follow a very strict pattern? What did you find difficult about the process? What did you find rewarding? In this passage, what pattern does Jesus give us to follow?

 2. What significance do you see in the fact that Jesus served the disciples by washing their feet? Is there cultural significance to this act?

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3. In verses 6-8, what is Peter's initial response when Jesus began to wash his feet? How does Peter's response indicate that he misunderstood what Jesus has been trying to communicate to his disciples about his mission and purpose on earth?
4. Jesus must wash us if we are to belong to him. Yes, he has already washed us, therefore, what we need day by day is the regular washing of those parts of ourselves that get "dusty and dirty." In what ways do you need Jesus to "wash your feet" today?
5. What particular lesson does Jesus seek to teach his disciples by this act of foot washing (verses 14-15)?
6. Why is it necessary for Jesus to mention and emphasize in verse 16 that the slave is not greater than the master, that the one who is sent is not greater than the one who sends?
7. How does Jesus' teaching and example in this passage challenge the way you understand your role in serving him and the world?