

MAUNDY THURSDAY, MARCH 29

JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET (JOHN 13:1-17, 31-35)

What would you do if you knew that your time on earth was coming to an end? You might want to gather the people you love the most and spend some time with them. Just before Passover, Jesus gathered for a last holiday meal together with his friends, his disciples. As they ate and enjoyed one another's company, Jesus took the opportunity to teach another lesson on how they should live.

In John 13, Jesus's instructions were given through a practical action for that time. Today, we consider Jesus's actions as an object lesson that many of us practice as a reminder during Maundy Thursday worship gatherings. Jesus was the leader, teacher and the Son of God, who taught the disciples with principles and parables that some understood and some did not. However, the lesson on this final evening together was evident. Jesus took a towel and bent down before his disciples to serve them in the way that they only experienced from the least of the servants. Jesus washed his disciples' feet. The disciples' surprise at Jesus's actions was vocalized by Simon Peter as he resisted the whole idea of Jesus washing his feet. A few days later, the humble action of washing feet was surpassed by Jesus's sacrifice on the cross.

As John 13 continues, Jesus uses the time left with his disciples to command them to love others. The love that the disciples would show to other people is how the world could recognize them as Jesus's disciples. As we carry forward Jesus's instructions, we know that Jesus loves us, and shows us how to love through his actions.

What does a disciple of Jesus look like? If we are Jesus's disciples, we will grab a towel and bend down to wash feet. Even though that physical action is not part of our common practices today, the heart and mind to serve is what we need to practice toward all the people around us. As we follow the example of Jesus, other people will know that we belong to Jesus and that they can experience Jesus's love coming through us.

Have you served in a way that stretches you beyond your usual behavior and actions?

How can you show Jesus's love to others today?