**Jesus Washes His Disciples’ Feet**

**A Bible Story From**

**John 13:1-20**

**Bible Story Number: 2010400**

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**Bible Story**

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**Background**

This event occurred the night before Jesus was crucified. It precedes what is often called “the Last Supper,” when Jesus celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples.

During the time Jesus lived on earth, washing a person’s feet was a practical matter as much as a custom. Most people wore sandals, and the streets were not paved. Dirt and mud were often even mixed with manure and whatever else was on the pathway. A person’s feet were usually dirty from the normal activities of the day.

Consequently, a host would often offer to have his or her guests’ feet washed. Washing someone’s feet was a lowly task. It was a dirty job and was usually given to the lowest ranking slave or servant in the household.

**Story from the Bible**

**John 13:1-20**

This is what the Bible says.

Jesus had instructed some of his disciples to prepare a traditional Passover meal. He knew that he would be put to death very soon. Judas had already decided to betray Jesus. Jesus knew about everything that was going to happen because it was the reason he had come to earth.

Before the meal began, Jesus got up, laid his robe aside, and tied a towel around his waist. He poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples’ feet. He dried their feet with the towel that was tied around him.

When he came to Simon Peter, Peter asked Jesus if he was going to wash his feet. Jesus answered him by saying that Peter would not understand what he was doing until afterward.

When Peter realized what Jesus was about to do, he said that he would not allow Jesus to wash his feet. Jesus responded by telling Peter that if he did not allow Jesus to wash his feet, he would not have anything to do with him. Then Peter asked Jesus to not only wash his feet, but to wash his hands and his head too.

Jesus told him that anyone who takes a bath would only need his feet washed to be completely clean. He told Peter he was clean, but also said that not everyone was clean. He knew who would betray him and that’s why he said that not everyone was clean.

After Jesus had washed the disciples’ feet, he put his robe back on. He took his place at the table and asked them if they understood what he had done. He didn’t wait for their answer. He reminded them that they called him “Lord” and “Teacher” and that was correct because that was what he was to them. Yet, he said that even though he was their Lord and Teacher, he washed their feet. He told them they should wash one another’s feet. Jesus told them that his actions were an example to them. They should do the same.

He taught them that a slave is not greater than his master and a messenger is not greater than the one who sent him. He told them that if they understood these things, they were blessed.

He also told them that the Scriptures had to be fulfilled and that one of his disciples would betray him. He wanted them to know ahead of time so they would believe what he was saying when it all came to pass.

He concluded by telling them that whoever receives anyone he sends is, by their actions, receiving him, and anyone who receives him, receives the one who sent him.

That concludes this story from the Bible.

**Retelling the Story**

Let’s review this story by retelling it as a group. We want to retell it as faithfully as we can to the story from the Bible. We do not want to add to it or leave out anything important. Who will get us started?

**Questions**

* Why were Jesus and his disciples gathered?
* Why did Jesus wash his disciples’ feet?
* What was Simon Peter’s objection? How did Jesus respond?
* Does this story mean that we should have foot-washing services or ceremonies today?
* What are some examples of modern-day equivalents to foot washing?
* What does this event teach us about God?
* What should we do in response to this teaching?

**Prayer**

Prayer is more than a way to end the session. It is time to talk to God. Public prayer is a model for others. Boldly ask God to guide participants to use the Bible story with others. Ask God to give you and the participant’s insight and understanding as you think about this biblical event.