

Caring

Footwashing

DOWN AND DIRTY

Introduction

Where would you look in the Bible for a model of true caring? This story occurs during a special meal Jesus ate with his disciples on the night before his death. It was customary for people's dusty, sandaled feet to be washed, usually by the lowest ranking servant, before a meal was served.

JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET

13 *It was just before the Passover Feast. Jesus knew that the time had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he now showed them the full extent of his love.*

²The evening meal was being served, and the devil had already prompted Judas Iscariot, son of Simon, to betray Jesus. ³Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; ⁴so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. ⁵After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. ...

¹²When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. ¹³"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. ¹⁴Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. ¹⁵I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you."

John 13:1-5, 12-15

Listen to the story. Imagine yourself sitting there as the tension mounts. Watch Jesus as he gets up ... takes off his garment ... wraps a towel around his waist ... and begins to wash ... your feet. Then, move into groups of 4 and discuss the questionnaire.

1. What is your first impression of this story about footwashing?
 - ☐ This is confusing.
 - ☐ This is gross.
 - ☐ This is embarrassing.
 - ☐ This is moving.
 - ☐ This is irrelevant for our culture.
 - ☐ This is a model for any culture.
2. What would you have done if you had been there and Jesus started to wash your feet?
 - ☐ left the room
 - ☐ refused to let him
 - ☐ broken down and cried
 - ☐ felt honored by his caring act
 - ☐ just sat there—feeling guilty
 - ☐ jumped up and tried to wash *his* feet
3. When you were in the seventh grade, what kind of servant-tasks were you expected to do around the house?
 - ☐ make my bed
 - ☐ clean my room
 - ☐ take out the trash
 - ☐ wash the dishes
 - ☐ look after my sibling(s)
 - ☐ do yard work
 - ☐ help with cooking
 - ☐ do laundry
 - ☐ dust and vacuum
 - ☐ all of the above
 - ☐ none of the above