

A Servant's Towel

(Sermon Notes) By Warren Zehrung – 3/31/2007

John 13 contains the meaningful conversation of Jesus with His disciples on the occasion of His final Passover where He explains the significance of the Footwashing and its difference from initial baptism.

Jesus then illustrates the spiritual meaning of the Footwashing comparing it to His own willingness to serve others by laying down His life for them.

These writings of John the beloved apostle are filled with a deep **symbolism** and meaning for the Church of God – the people of God.

The symbolism helps us to understand the Will of God and the **Mind of Jesus Christ**.

We study these writings for the purpose bringing our thoughts into accord with the **Mind of God**.

Where the synoptic Gospel accounts of Matthew, Mark, and Luke mention the establishment of the bread and wine at Passover,

John's Gospel entirely omits those accounts, giving **weight** to the **Footwashing** in the meaning of the Passover.

In this sermon we will see how Jesus **served** mankind --- And how Jesus intends that we **serve** one another.

I also want to show that the concept of **spiritual cleansing**, portrayed by the **Footwashing**, is one rich in spiritual depth.

When we go to a restaurant – we are **served** our coffee and our meal by a server, waiter or waitress.

True Christian **service** to one another entails so much more than being a **cordial host or hostess**.

On the evening before Jesus Christ died...

John 13:

- 1** Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that his hour was come that he should depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved his own which were in the world, he loved them unto the end. [Very powerful poetic words!]

John 13:

- 2** And **supper being ended**,

A proper translation yields that the Old Testament Passover Seder is in progress.

John 13:

- 2 And supper being ended, the devil having now put 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 was come from God, and went to God;

Jesus knew that having Godly authority allowed Him to update the Passover ceremony, from the way the Old Testament Passover was conducted, to reflect its fulfillment by the Lamb of God, and its deeper spiritual meaning for a converted church people.

Jesus did not abolish Passover as the world believes – Leviticus 23.

Leviticus 23:

- 4 These are the **Feasts** of the LORD, even holy convocations, which ye shall proclaim in their seasons.
- 5 In the fourteenth day of the first month at even is the LORD'S **Passover**.

Jesus fulfilled **Passover** by becoming our Passover Lamb **once and for all**.

Hebrews 7:

- 27 [Jesus] Who need not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for His own sins, and then for the people's: for this He did **once**, when he offered up Himself.

Jesus changed the symbols – for us – and Passover is still binding on Christians today.

Adding the **Footwashing** ceremony to the Passover Service was not a spur of the moment thought that came to Christ because of the **strife** among the disciples.

Mark 10:

- 41 And when the ten [disciples] heard it, they began to be **much displeased** with James and John.

... they had been arguing over who would **be greatest** among them.

Christ had long planned to institute the new Passover symbols of Footwashing, bread and wine that evening.

And it took **Godly authority** to make the changes to Passover – no man has the prerogative to change God's Feasts.

As we read John we see that Jesus is about to do something really **big** – it is so **important** that John records that Jesus has been given **all the authority of God** -- to perform what He is about to do – Institute the New Testament Footwashing!

Title from here:

**** John 13:**

4 He rises from supper, and lays aside His garments; and took a **servant's towel**, and girded Himself. [Amplified Bible Translation]

'Girded' means that Jesus wrapped the **servant's towel** around Himself.

Notice the profound **symbolism** that John presents to us.

We were not around to be eyewitnesses of the first century miracles that the early Church experienced like the tongues of fire at Pentecost.

But we, in the Last Days of the Church of God are privileged to see and experience the profound meanings of the words and actions of Jesus.

Jesus ***laid aside*** his garments – His coat, His cloak, His robe...

What is this symbolic of?

Jesus was ***divesting*** Himself of His customary **role** as **Master** and **Lord** to reveal His great transcendent role as the One who came to this earth for the very purpose of **servicing mankind**.

Jesus wrapped the **servant's towel** around Himself – having divested Himself of His robe.

Notice: Jesus was functioning in a different capacity.

(repeat) Jesus ***laid aside*** his garments – His cloak, His robe... meaning Jesus was ***divesting*** Himself of His customary role as **Master and Lord** to reveal His great transcendent role as the One who came to this earth for the purpose of **servicing mankind**.

Notice what Jesus **puts on** in place of his Robe.

**** John 13:**

4 ...and took a **servant's towel**, and girded Himself.

I will be using this phrase, **servant's towel**, [for '*len ti on*' – Greek for a linen apron] in today's sermon – **Servant's Towel**.

John 10:

11 I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd **gives His life** for the sheep.

Jesus gave His life for the sheep (us).

Luke 22:

27 For which *is* greater, he that sitteth at meat, or he that serveth? Is it not he that sitteth at meat? But **I am** among you as He that **serves**.

John 13:

5 After that he pours water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe *them* with the **servant's towel** wherewith he was girded.

- * Why did Jesus wash the disciple's feet, and **why** did He tie the **Footwashing** command to the New Testament Passover?
- * What spiritual lesson should we draw from the Footwashing?

Unfortunately, for many in God's Church, the Footwashing has not been given the recognition it commands.

The Footwashing has been played down – relegated to a minor status – as though it were of little importance.

(I capitalize Footwashing to give it the distinction it requires.)

The purpose of this sermon is to show the tremendous importance of the Footwashing – and what it should **mean to us** as Christians in the Church of God today.

- * We too, are to be servants – as Jesus Christ showed Himself to be a servant.

Drop down to verse 14 for a moment – we will see that Jesus was setting an example for us to emulate – to perform – so that you and I can learn the **spiritual lesson** that accompanies the Footwashing ceremony.

I say, "**spiritual lesson**" because it is not the **physical act** of Footwashing that cleanses us.

And yet – we "dirty" our feet – we go places through the year in our minds and hearts we ought not to go – and we dirty our feet.

We are not dirty all over – we were once washed all over by the blood of Christ at our baptism.

We **remain in that covenant** relationship with Jesus Christ as long as we have not turned our backs on God and walked away.

- * Because we have all sinned throughout the year, the Footwashing is a **yearly renewal** and rededication of our baptismal covenant and washing of regeneration.

Is the Footwashing optional, or is it commanded? That is a question we must seriously examine.

At this point Jesus has taken off the servant's towel and He has put His robe back on.

John 13:

14 If I then, *your* Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also **ought** to wash one another's feet.

When Jesus said, "*You also ought to wash one another's feet,*" He was giving **us** a most important instruction – a command.

* Right here, Jesus establishes the Footwashing as an ordinance for Christians – for us.

Why must we wash the feet of others?

Some people think that the Footwashing is for the sole purpose of teaching us to be **humble**.

The footwashing custom was a servant's menial task in those days.

The Footwashing does require that we have a humble attitude – that is true, but it means **much more** than merely humbling ourselves by washing the feet of others.

We must **be careful** not to fall into the trap of acquiring a false humility as a result of the Footwashing ceremony.

A Catholic bishop **prides** himself in washing the feet of the altar boys. (The altar boys are not allowed to wash the bishop feet in return.)

The 1907 edition of The Catholic Encyclopedia contains no article specifically on the 'Footwashing' as its significance was entirely lost on unbelievers.

In the same way we must be careful not to think **highly** of ourselves for our willingness to **lower** ourselves to wash the feet of anybody at the Passover service.

Humility can easily become a sin of pride.

** By His example, Jesus was teaching us how to serve others just **as** He has done. The Footwashing is about learning to **serve one another** in a **spiritual way**.

Spiritual serving is hard and difficult – it takes the Spirit of God and the Power of God.

However, not having yet received God's Holy Spirit, the disciples could not understand the **spiritual** aspect of the ceremony Jesus was establishing.

John 13:

6 "Then came Jesus to Simon Peter: and Peter said unto Him, Lord, is it **for you** to wash my feet?"

Peter was saying – don't you have it backward Lord?

Jesus had so much to teach the Apostles.

Luke 22:

15 And He said unto them, With **fervent desire** I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:

Jesus greatly looked forward to taking this Passover with His disciples.

But there was a lot going on behind the scenes that the disciples could not understand.

Footwashing is known to us today as a religious ceremony, – it was different back then – it was an everyday occurrence.

We were shoes and socks – we do not have this custom in our culture today. I've never gone anywhere and had someone wash my feet – that is until I began to observe Passover.

In Jesus' day it was their custom and expectation.

Luke 7:

44 And he turned to the woman, and said unto Simon, See thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gave me no **water for my feet**: but she hath **washed my feet** with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.

In the time of Christ and the apostles it was a part of the hospitality at people's homes, and was practiced by rich and poor alike.

Sandals and bare feet and dirt roads allowed feet to get dirty.

The rich had **servants** who performed the task of washing guests feet when they arrived at their home.

When Jesus took a **servant's towel** and began washing the disciples' feet it was reversing the order they were accustomed to.

It was out of the ordinary.

Strange – even “Unacceptable” behavior to the apostles.

Here was Jesus, their Lord and Master washing their feet.

* The Footwashing and Passover are central in our relationship with God.

The Footwashing shows a number of pictures/symbols beyond the obvious washing of dirty feet.

During this first New Testament Passover, the disciples **did not** fully understand the meaning of the Footwashing.

The **spiritual** meaning of the Footwashing was **totally lost** on the disciples. Notice:

John 13:

7 Jesus answered and said unto him, What I do, you **know not now**; but you **shall** know hereafter.

The purpose of the Footwashing is for us today to truly learn to spiritually serve one another.

It would only be **after** they had received God's Holy Spirit at Pentecost that the apostles would understand **the meaning** and importance of the yearly Footwashing at Passover.

* Jesus made the Footwashing a requirement for our salvation – it is that important!

* **John 13:**

8 Peter saith unto him, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered him, If I wash thee not, thou hast **no part** with me.

The **unbaptized** have **no part** with Jesus Christ.

No part in the Body of Christ – not in the Kingdom – that is eternal death!

Here is a verse in which the meaning is often **easily missed**.

1 Corinthians 12:

27 Now ye are the Body of Christ, and members in **particular**. [Each of us is a member of the Body of Christ.]

Particular is the same word as in verse :8 – **no part**.

No Part of the Plan of God!

No part of the Kingdom of God!

No part of the Body of Christ!

The Footwashing, when performed in the spirit in which Jesus Christ established it, **assures our place** in the Body of Christ, the Family of God, the Kingdom of God and eternal life.

We are not members of religious organizations.

We are only members of the Body of Christ.

When Jesus looks down from His heavenly throne, He sees His One Church (**1 Corinthians 12:13, Ephesians 4:4**), not many organizations representing Him.

John 13:

9 Simon Peter saith unto him, Lord, not my feet only, **but also my hands and my head**.

Peter wanted to be ceremonial clean like the Old Testament priests...

Exodus 30:

19 For Aaron and his sons shall wash their hands and their feet thereat:

Understand this: Peter had been baptized previous to this occasion.

John 4:

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

Peter was clean all over – forgiven of his sins.

John 13:

10 Jesus saith to him, He **that is washed** needeth not save to wash **his feet**, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all.

Here we see tremendous inspired writing on John's part as he records what Jesus said and did at the Passover service.

* Jesus clearly establishes here that Peter has been forgiven his sins – **washed all over** - cleansed from sin through baptism. When Jesus said, "*He that is washed, need not wash **except his feet**, but is clean every whit,*"

Jesus was alluding to baptism which cleanses a sinner completely of all past guilt. And, Jesus shows here that the yearly Footwashing is established, necessary and required for baptized Christians – **except his feet**.

Baptism shows that we bury the old man of sin.

Romans 6:

4 Therefore we are **buried with Him** by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Romans 6:

6 Knowing this, that our **old man** is crucified with him, that the **body of sin** might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

From the time of baptism a person strives to walk in righteousness and sin not – that is being '*clean every whit*'.

Jesus told Peter that he was '*clean every whit*' – clean all over – except his feet. His sins had been washed away.

Jesus is showing that the yearly Footwashing is still required.

When Peter suggested that Jesus wash him all over, Jesus told Peter, – I'm talking about **Feet only** right now!

Why '**except his feet**'? Because through the course of the year we slip and sin in our carnal nature – we still sin – but our covenant with God is not broken. We are still '**clean every whit**'- **except our feet**.

Amazingly this is **very clear** in the Greek language as there are **two** different words for "washed" – and John uses both of them to establish the clear distinction.

The King James Translators could have utilized a little more discretion here in their translation – but they were not converted and could not see what is revealed to us.

When Jesus said, "He who is **washed**," we find the Greek word, '*louo*' – meaning, '**bathe the whole person**'...baptism.

When Jesus said, "**wash** his feet," we find the Greek word, '*nipto*' – meaning, '**cleanse hands, feet or face**' ..small cleansing.

John 13:

10 He that is washed [*'louo*' - baptized] needs not except to wash [*nipto* – cleanse foot washing] his feet, but is clean every whit: and you are clean, but not all."

** This verse, **John 13:10**, clearly makes the distinction between our **initial baptism**, and the **Footwashing** which is a yearly **sprucing-up** [*nipto*] Passover cleaning.

I don't mean to make light of the Footwashing by saying '**sprucing-up**' because it is entirely required and extremely important.

I want to show you just how clear the distinction between the **initial baptism** and the **Footwashing** was to the disciples.

Acts 22:

16 And now why tarriest [What are you waiting for?] arise, and **be baptized, and wash away** [*apo louo* – wash off fully and completely] thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Baptism is a big lifetime cleansing – where we enter into a lifetime covenant – vow – with Jesus Christ to walk in the newness of life – washed all over calling on the name of the Lord.

Judas Iscariot had discarded his baptismal vow – his heart and mind were not pure.

John 13:

11 "For He [Jesus] knew who should betray him; therefore said He, You are not all clean."

Isn't it remarkable that that Jesus would refer to Peter as being thoroughly washed (v:10) – and to Judas Iscariot as "not all clean?"

The other disciples were also clean all over, but Judas was in the process of divulging Jesus' identity for 30 pieces of silver.

Only their feet needed washing because of their yearly trek through the world – but their carnal weakness had not broken their original baptismal covenant with God.

Besides the obvious reference to Judas Iscariot not being clean because of the betrayal – there was another, more important, meaning.

We all sin as long as we are in the flesh – but the **covenant** with Jesus Christ has not been broken.

*In the same way that the disciple's feet had become soiled as they walked to the Passover supper, we too, become soiled by sin after our initial cleansing that took place at our baptism.

Jesus establishes here that Peter's sins have been forgiven – washed all over (and again – it applies to all who are baptized.) ... cleansed from sin through baptism.

Please pick up on the **deeper meaning** here: all of you are not clean – Judas was up to his betrayal of Christ

And you are not all clean – because you have sinned since your baptism.

So, In addition to being a reference to Judas Iscariot, this statement by Jesus shows here that **a yearly Footwashing** is still necessary and required.

Though we were once washed at baptism, the Footwashing symbolizes our **renewed** commitment to walk in the newness of life that we made at our baptism.

Sin separates man from God.

God has a perfect Tabernacle in the heavens – it is always perfectly clean, pure, holy, and spotless, because no sin can come into His presence.

Isaiah 59:

2 But your iniquities have **separated** between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear.

Jesus and the Father abide in us (John 14:23), the tabernacle of our bodies has to be clean as well. But sin separates us from God because of our sinfulness through the year.

As long as we are in the flesh we are not perfect.

Because we are in the flesh, we are not perfect.

How can we take Passover – Christ in us – having sin – we are not clean?

* Even after our baptism we periodically need to go to Christ to be washed again by Him.

How do we go to Christ to be washed?

The service of the Foot washing holds the answer for us.

John is writing very late – in the neighborhood of 100 AD – and probably to the second and third generation Christians.

1 John 1:

8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.

9 If we confess [acknowledge before God daily] our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to **cleanse us** from all unrighteousness.
[This is **AFTER** baptism.]

This is about staying justified by Jesus Christ.

1 John 1:

10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him [Jesus Christ] a liar, and his word is not in us.

It is not the **physical** act of Footwashing that cleanses us – the water does not wash us clean – it is the blood of Christ that washes us clean.

Just as the physical act of going under water at baptism does not forgive our sins – wash away our sins – that is the symbolism that God has chosen to represent the greater reality.

Hebrews 10:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

Hebrews 10:

22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

How do we go to Christ?

The Footwashing, Baptism and Passover are **intricately** connected.

Sin can and does occur after baptism, and must be acknowledged, **repented of** and forgiven.

***The Footwashing is a needed spiritual cleansing** - because we come short throughout the year - we are sinners - and Jesus Christ is our advocate, our comforter, our intercessor and our consoler.

When an unconverted person has their feet washed – they end up with clean feet.

When a baptized / converted person has their feet washed – they end up with a clean heart before God.

Jesus Christ is ever before the Father in His presence – because He is pure and spotless.

1 John 2:

1 "If any man sin, we have an advocate [*parakletos*] with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." [He covers our sin.]

Though we were once washed at baptism, the Footwashing symbolizes our renewed commitment to walk in the newness of life that we made at our baptism.

Because we are weak and in the flesh, the yearly Footwashing is a **renewal** of our baptismal covenant vow with God.

The Footwashing takes place just before we partake of the Bread and Wine – representing Jesus making His abode in us. We must be thoroughly clean to receive Him.

Passover is the First and Greatest of the Feasts of God.

Because we are yet sinners, the yearly Footwashing indicates our desire to "clean our slate," so to speak, in a **reaffirmation** of our baptismal vow.

But, this explains only having **our own feet** washed.

* Why is it necessary to wash the feet of **others**?

Some people, in a **demonstrable** lack of courage conclude, "We don't help to clean the slate of others." (They say, "I Mind my own business")... as though that were a virtue – when our brother is in need of our help because he dying.

That is like Cain saying, "Am I my brother's keeper?" - Inferring that he wasn't - when he should have been!

Here in verse 12 Jesus has put His robe back on – instructing the disciples as their Lord and Master.

John 13:

12 "So after He [Jesus] had washed their feet, and had **taken His garments**, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you?"

Do you know what I have done?

"Yeah," the disciples were saying because they thought that Jesus had **ONLY** washed their dirty feet with the water in a basin.

The disciples thought they knew – but they did not!

Jesus had just told them in verse :7 – you **know not now**; but you **shall** know hereafter.

They knew this was a very special evening – Passover – they had been eating the roasted lamb and the bitter herbs.

You know not! They did not yet understand that Jesus was telling them **to serve** – as He had come to serve humanity by laying down His life for all mankind as our Savior and Messiah.

John 13:

13 Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.

14 If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also **ought [must, obligated, duty-bound]** to wash one another's feet.

15 For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you."

The Footwashing shows that Jesus tells us to do as He had done in service to others.

In the same way that we want to be clean before God, **Jesus Christ requires us to help other brethren to be clean** before God in our common spiritual quest.

It would make no sense to wash one foot and not wash the other foot. We are to serve all the brethren – where ever we possibly can – all who are led by God's Holy Spirit (Rom 8:14).

In the same way that we want our "own slate clean" before God, He requires us to help "clean the slate" of others.

Jesus taught, "This is my commandment, That ye love one another, **as** I have loved you. Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends."
(**John 15:12-13**)

AS? How did Jesus love us? He served us with a servant's towel.

Jesus laid His life down for us, so we must lay our lives down for others - but how do we do that?

Are we willing to serve **in the same way** – by laying down our lives for others – putting it "all on the line" to help them come out of their sin.

Most of the time we don't have to die – just take a strong stand for what is right.

Romans 12:

1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a **living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

It is only with God's help and the power of His Spirit that, we are able to renew our mind, to patiently endure the trials of this life,.. and live as Christians should by **laying down our lives** for the brethren.

That is easy to say – and very difficult to do.

When we are laying down our lives for others – it is the most dangerous; the hardest trial; the most difficult thing we will ever have to do.

When a brother or sister has strayed and allowed a serious sin to enter their life - we must **serve them** by going to their spiritual rescue, no matter what it takes - that is laying down our life for them.

James is the ½ brother of Jesus – but he does not capitalize on that close relationship...

James begins his letter by referring to himself:

James 1:

1 James, a **servant** of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,"

He calls himself a “bond servant” – that’s a slave – the ultimate servant.

James tells us how we are to go to the rescue of every brother or sister in Christ who is experiencing a spiritual problem.

James 5:

19 Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth [that is sin], and one convert him; [our obligation is to put him back on track when he is about to be lost – eternal death]

20 Let him know, that he which converts [**turns around**] the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins. [His life was about to be lost.]

Fast, pray, partnership with them. Help them! Turn them around to walk with Jesus Christ again. Don't let them go. Don't let them perish. That is what the Footwashing teaches us – no less.

James 5:19-20 is a perfect example of the spiritual application of the Footwashing. That is what the Footwashing is all about.

We, therefore, must wash the feet of one another.

Not only must we have an attitude of being *willing* to lay our life down for others, we are required to **actively** intervene in their lives whenever they go astray so that they may live.

John 13:

16 Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord/master; neither He [Jesus] that is sent greater than He [God the Father] that sent Him.

Jesus is making the point that He reversed the roles to show the supreme requirement to be servants.

Jesus was the greatest and yet He became our servant – it is not asking too much that we become the servants of those in need.

John 13:

17 If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them.

John 13:

34 A **new** commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; **as** I have loved you, that ye also love one another.

We love one another by keeping the Commandments – we don't steal from one another, we don't lie to one another, etc...

Here is the evidence that you are a Christian: Here's how to tell:

John 13:

35 By this shall all *men* **know** that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.

Brethren, throughout the year we all come short of God's perfect standards – we sin and fall short of the perfection of Jesus Christ.

We must acknowledge and admit these sins and shortcomings in a timely manner – as we come see them.

We do not wait until the Passover season to repent and ask God's forgiveness and cleansing.

We must deal with our sins on a daily basis.

It is too often overlooked that our Faith, and our salvation are intertwined, interlocked, **with** the Faith and salvation of **others**.

“Do unto others”... When we serve others – we serve God...

We, therefore, must **wash the feet** of others.

There is a vital lesson here!

*God makes His forgiveness of our sins contingent on our forgiveness of others. ...Our willingness to work with others.

Matthew 6:

14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:

15 But if ye forgive **not** men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Colossians 3:

13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also *do* ye.

We serve by forgiving others.

Ephesians 4:

32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven you.

Paul addressed the serious mistake of observing Passover "in an unworthy manner."

He admonished the Church of God – that is all of us – to examine ourselves before we partake of the Passover.

We cannot ask Jesus to come into a home that has not been cleaned. We de-leaven our homes – that is a picture of our putting sin out of ourselves – out of our lives.

We do it by being washed by Jesus Christ in the foot washing

We put sin out by washing one another's feet.

The Footwashing of each other's feet – cleans our house – these earthly tabernacles and prepares us to receive the Bread and Wine.

The Footwashing reinforces in us, the **serving** and repentant attitude that we must have to be able to come into God's presence.

The Footwashing helps us to **examine ourselves** before we invite Jesus Christ in.

The Good News Magazine, of March 1980 in an article titled, "Footwashing: Only a Lesson in Humility?" states:

"...there is a deeper meaning in the foot-washing episode than is at first apparent."

"...Jesus made it a requirement for salvation."

"...the foot-washing ceremony was instituted to symbolize a yearly renewal of and rededication to one's initial conversion and resulting cleanness through baptism.

In other words, [the Footwashing] represents the constant renewal of grace required to cover one's daily sins after the initial justification brought through Christ's sacrifice."

The Footwashing helps us to **discern** our relationship to all the brethren.

The Footwashing helps us to **discern** our relationship to **His Body**, the Church (**1 Corinthians 11:27-29**).

The Footwashing helps us to **worthily** partake of the symbols of the Bread and the Wine – the Body and Blood of Jesus Christ.

No sermon on the Footwashing is complete without Phil 2 describing Christ's example of lowly serving.

Philippians 2:

- 3** Let nothing be done through strife or vainglory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves.
- 4** Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others.
- 5** Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:
- 6** Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:
- 7** But made himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:
- 8** And being found in fashion as a man, He humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.
- 9** Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name:

The Footwashing ceremony defines our relationship with God and our fellow man.

The Footwashing symbolizes our renewed commitment to walk in the newness of life that we made at our baptism.

Jesus was willing to be a servant – and He served us to the very end.

Brethren, will we take the **Servant's Towel** and – serve others?

End: A Servant's Towel