

## LESSON PLAN

### JESUS WASHES THE DISCIPLES' FEET

John 13:1-20

**Lesson Memory Verse:** Mark 10:44 - "And whoever of you will be the chief; shall be servant of all."

**Lesson Aim:** Teach the children that they should be willing to do the lowly work as they serve God.

**Lesson Plan:** Use the KEY – HE – SEE – WE – BE plan (explained in the Introductory Notes).

**KEY (for Attention):** Can you think of any jobs that you do not like to do at home? (Washing dishes, cleaning the house, carrying out the garbage, weeding the garden, scrubbing the floor, picking up your toys) These jobs may not be fun to do, but someone has to do them. We usually wait for someone else to do the jobs that we do not like to do. In today's Bible story, we learn that the disciples were the same way. There was a certain job that they did not like to do and so no one did it, but they were embarrassed when Jesus finally did it. It was a lesson they would never forget. He taught them to be humble and be willing to serve anybody. This is an important attitude to have and our memory verse will help us to remember it, So let us look at the memory verse and hope you memorize it.

**HE (for Authority):** Our Bible memory verse tells us that we must be the servant of everyone, if we want to be the first in God's sight. Let us read Mark 10:44 together: "And whoever of you will be the chief, shall be servant of all." To be "chief" means to be the greatest or most important person of all. It takes humility to be the servant of everyone. This is one reason why Jesus was the greatest. He was the most humble.

**SEE (for Apperception) and WE (for Application): PLEASE do not read these comments until you have read the Scripture for this lesson. First let the Holy Spirit teach you directly from His Word.** This lesson will tell us part of what Jesus did the night before He was crucified.

#### I. The Setting - John 13:1

Jesus and His disciples were in a large upper room in Jerusalem (Luke 22:11-13). They were eating the Passover Supper just before Jesus was going to die on the cross. The disciples did not know that Jesus was going to die on the cross the next day, but Jesus knew it. It must have made Him very sad to hear His disciples arguing over which of them was the greatest (cf. Luke 22:24-27).

**WE:** Have we ever argued about being the greatest, the biggest, the toughest, the prettiest, the fastest or the smartest? If we have, we were like the disciples, and it makes Jesus very sad when we act like that. Why do you think it makes Him sad? (It shows we are not humble like we should be, but proud.)

#### II. The Washing - John 13:2-11

##### A. Jesus' Action (2-5)

Jesus took off His outer garment, took a towel and basin, and proceeded to wash the disciples' feet. Jesus washed their feet, possibly while they were still eating their meal. (Some manuscripts on John 13:2 indicate that Jesus began washing their feet during the supper.) If so, He probably did it to teach them a lesson on humility while they were arguing about who would be the greatest in Christ's Kingdom, which they thought was about to begin.

1. It was a humbling experience to wash feet. That was a servant's job. It was customary for the servants to wash the guests' feet as they arrived at a home. It cleansed the dirt of the road from their feet and the cool water refreshed them from the burning heat of the hot road so they would be relaxed and ready for fellowship with their friend. If their friend had no servants, then he would provide the water and towel so they could wash their own feet or he would have someone in his family do it for them.

2. This time no one's feet were washed; they did not wash their own feet, nor did they wash one another's feet. Everyone must have thought that they were too important to take the servant's job and wash someone's feet. So they began to eat the Passover Supper with dirty, hot feet.

3. Then Jesus stood up and took the servant's job and He washed His disciples' feet.

**WE:** Have we ever noticed that few people offer to take out the garbage or wash the dishes? It needs to be done by someone, so why do we wait for someone else to do it? Is it because we are proud and think

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someone else should do it? We should follow Jesus' example and do the humble jobs even if no one else will. We may be lowly in our friends' eyes, but we will be great in God's eyes.

### B. Peter's Reaction - 6-11

Peter was ashamed, as he should have been, to have his Master wash his feet. He refused to let Jesus wash his feet until Jesus told him that this cleansing was necessary if he were to remain His disciple.

**WE:** Have we ever been ashamed when our parents, teacher or pastor had to do a lowly job that we should have done? We should be. If we are not ashamed, it is a sure sign that we are proud.

**NOTE:** Jesus taught another lesson which might be good for older children to hear, but too much for children in the lower grades to learn without considerable confusion in their minds. Stick with one aim for younger children. The lesson Jesus taught Peter is the difference between the bath (one cleansing for salvation) and foot washing (many cleansings for service and fellowship). The bath is a picture of being cleansed from all sin – past, present and future. Just one "bath" is needed. The foot washing is a picture of being cleansed from daily sins which come during our walk in the world. We need many "foot washings," but only one "bath."

### III. The Teaching - John 13:12-20

#### A. The Act Explained (12-17)

He told them to wash one another's feet in the future if they truly wanted to be great (13:12-16). Since we usually do not walk on dusty roads in our part of the world, our culture does not wash feet when entering a home, but the principle of being humble to do a lowly job is still required of a believer that wants to be great in the sight of the Lord. He also told them that they would be happy if they did these things (13:17).

**WE:** If we want to be great we must do the lowly jobs around our homes. Are you willing to do the lowly jobs in your home, even if one of your brothers and sisters mocks and laughs at you? Great people in God's eyes are humble people (Mark 10:44). He will not laugh at you; He will honor you. And we will be happy when we are humble, because we know we are pleasing the Lord. Happy people are humble people.

#### B. A Prophecy Made (18-20) (For older students)

Jesus foretold Judas' betrayal without naming him. Why did Jesus choose Judas and allow him to remain as one of His disciples? Several reasons could be given.

1. To fulfill prophecy (13:18).
2. To show that Jesus was God and could foretell what was going to happen (13:19). Judas did not upset Jesus' plans; he only fulfilled them.
3. To show that those who receive Christ receive God, the Father (13:20). However, it is implied that those who reject Jesus Christ reject God, the Father. This was Judas. He was not humble. He was proud. He was a thief. He thought he was getting ahead of the rest of the disciples by betraying Jesus. Instead, he robbed himself and went into eternity without Christ. The proud will be destroyed (Prov 15:25). Judas could have repented as Jesus washed his feet, but instead he remained proud. As a result, he went to Hell a day or two later when he hung himself. It is a dangerous thing to be proud. Peter learned this lesson well and wrote about humility and pride in I Peter 5:5-6.

**WE:** Do we want to be proud like Judas or humble like Peter? Judas' pride sent him to Hell; Peter's humility allowed him to enter Heaven. We need to hate pride and be humble.

**BE (for Action):** With heads bowed, ask the children to raise their hands if they can see where they have been proud and unwilling to do the lowly jobs in their homes, at church, or anywhere they might be. Lead them in a step-by-step silent prayer to God. First, have them tell God how they have been proud. Tell your students to tell this to God silently. Tell them to be honest with God and He will hear their prayer. Second, have them ask God to forgive them of their pride. Third, have them ask God to help them to stop being proud. After they have finished praying, tell them that they should follow these three steps in prayer to God, if they should slip and act proudly. Review the three steps: confess sin; ask for forgiveness; ask for victory.