

The Path of the Towel

John 13:1-17

I. INTRODUCTION:

- A. The scene would be the last supper:
- B. Understanding the Passover:
- C. The connection we are making with communion:

II. JESUS TEACHING HIS LAST LESSON ON HIS WAY TO THE CROSS:

A. The motivation of a servant (vv. 1-3)

- 1. Love to the uttermost: Jesus knew His "hour" had come. Despite the impending betrayal and agony of the cross, His primary focus was "loving His own to the end".
- 2. Overcoming the Enemy: Even while the devil prompted Judas to betray Him, Jesus chose to serve, demonstrating that true love extends even to those who oppose us.

B. The Demonstration of a Servant (vv. 4-11)

- 1. The Acted Parable: Jesus laid aside His outer garments, just as He laid aside His heavenly glory, to take the role of a slave.
- 2. The Necessity of Cleansing: Peter's initial refusal highlights our human pride. Jesus explains that unless He washes us, we have "no part" with Him—a foreshadowing of the spiritual cleansing through His blood.
- 3. Justification vs. Sanctification: The distinction between "bathing" (initial salvation) and "washing feet" (daily confession) reminds us that while we are secure in Christ, we still need daily grace for our walk through a fallen world.

C. The Mandate for the Servant (vv. 12-17)

1. The Master as the Model: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet" (v. 14). Jesus establishes that no task is beneath a follower of Christ.

2. The Blessing of Obedience: Verse 17 concludes with a promise: "Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." True joy is found not in being served, but in serving.

III. APPLICATIONS:

A. Identify the "Basin": What is a tangible, perhaps "lowly" way you can serve someone in your family or community this week?

B. Examine Your Motivation: Are you serving to be seen, or out of a heart of gratitude for how Jesus has already "washed" you?

C. Call to Action: Don't just admire the example—imitate it. Greatness in the Kingdom of God is measured by the size of the towel you carry, not the title you hold.