

**Read: John 13:31-35**

## Dirty Feet and Washed Hearts

### **John 13:34-35**

[Jesus said], "A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another."

*In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

Remember the last time you slept in a hotel room? Did you sleep in a bed with clean sheets? Hotels don't change sheets once a week and expect you to snuggle in ones already used by total strangers. Eww! That's why they are in the habit of changing out the bedsheets. As their guest, you want everything to be clean, not dirty, right?

One time, Jesus gathered with his closest followers in a special room for a special celebration. There was the habit of providing water for someone to wash the dusty, dirty feet of the guests as they entered. And should there be no one to do it for them, you would think that after three years of walking with Jesus, one of them would volunteer, "I'll do it!" But no one did.

So Jesus washed their dirty feet. He didn't pick the nicest ones or the worst ones. He washed them all and made them clean. Then he asked, "Do you understand what I've done for you?" I washed. Now you wash. I've set you an example, "A new command ... love one another." Dirty feet were not the real problem. Your feet aren't your problem. Our problem is our dirty hearts. Out of our dirty hearts has poured out more bad manners, bad feelings, and bad words than we would want anyone to see, much less admit. As Jesus washed their dirty feet, he could see their dirty hearts as well.

The day after Jesus washed and dried feet, his hands went to work on the cross. There, Jesus washed our hearts so clean, our feet can pivot in a new direction to love one another. If you want to find love, don't look inside your heart. Look at Jesus. "As I have loved you." There's nothing new about the idea of loving each other. Here's what's new: Before Jesus, no one had a clue what love really is. We're used to loving in order to be loved. But love for the unlovable? That's new! And that's Jesus!

That love doesn't end with Jesus. It's a chain, and now you are a part of it. "As I have loved you, so you must love one another," Jesus said. Jesus set the bar of love high and says, "Go for it! I'll help you love like me!" And do you know what? When you go for it, people will notice something different about you. They will see Jesus in you!

*The questions below are to help families discuss this devotion. The questions are divided by age group as suggestions, but anyone could reflect on any of the questions as they desire.*

### **Questions for the Younger Children**

- What did Jesus wash for his disciples—their a) hands, b) faces, c) feet, or d) hearts?
- What did Jesus wash for us on the cross—our a) hands, b) faces, c) feet, or d) hearts?

### **Questions for Elementary Age Children**

- If following Jesus means to love one another, why don't people just love each other?
- TRUE or FALSE: If you want to find love, all you have to do is look inside your heart.

### **Questions for Middle School and Above**

- AGREE or DISAGREE: We have trouble keeping the last nine commandments because we keep breaking the first one.
- “Love each other as I loved you,” Jesus said. But he did more than just say it, he showed it. List at least one way you can show Christ-like love for each of the following: while doing a chore at home, when arguing with a parent, when teasing a friend.

### **Closing Prayer:**

Dear Jesus, today you make very clear what you want of me. Help me to love like you love me so that way everyone will know that I follow you. Amen.