

Reflection:

August 2025

UNLESS I WASH YOU, YOU WILL HAVE NO INHERITANCE WITH ME.

JOHN 13:8

When I was about nine, I had to row our small canoe across a storm-swept river to pick up my father coming back from work. The winds and waves were terrifying, yet I pressed on, not out of bravery, but from a quiet confidence that he was watching. This memory resurfaced as I reflected on Jesus washing His disciples' feet. He, too, possessed a quiet confidence in His Father's watchful love, enabling Him to perform such a humbling act and ultimately endure the crucifixion.

Foot washing is a profoundly beautiful and shocking moment in the Gospel—God Himself stooping to perform a slave-like action. We often see it as a symbol of humility, yet we frequently fail when we try to imitate such service. We resolve to be patient, forgiving, or joyful in serving, only to become tired, frustrated, or selfish.

Biblical scholars explain that Jesus' slave-like act was a prophetic foreshadowing of His death on the cross, revealing the immeasurable depth of His love for all humanity. The message transcends mere imitation; it's not just to "do what Jesus did," but an invitation to enter the love that makes such an action possible.

How did Jesus possess such profound love? As John shows us, Jesus lived in deep communion with the Father (John 1:1–8; 13:3). Secure in the Father's love, knowing all had been entrusted to Him and that He would return to the Father, Jesus was free to humble Himself, wash feet, and offer His life. Nothing surpassed the security and communion He shared with the Father.

It is precisely into this communion that Jesus invites us! His words to Peter, "Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me" (John 13:8), express His deep desire to share this inheritance. To all who believe, He grants the privilege of becoming children of God (cf. John 1:12). Like Peter, we must allow ourselves to be washed, to receive this inheritance opened through Jesus' death. This means letting Jesus stoop to our lowest places of shame and sinfulness, letting Him wash us, and granting us assurance in the Father.

But it isn't easy. When Jesus kneels before us with such great love to wash our feet, we're acutely aware of how dirty they are! This can be so embarrassing, even shameful. If only He'd given advance notice, we might have come prepared. Yet, His gentle but firm look invites us to face our shame and fears, to quietly consent, and let divine love wash away all the grime and dirt from our souls. As the



waters of His mercy wash us on the inside, we experience the tears of repentance breaking forth from our soul. Isn't this the true path to a deep intimacy with the Father, the very inheritance Jesus speaks of?

This truth extends even to our missionary lives as a Jesus Youth. A lack of zeal for souls or generosity to go the extra mile often points to a lack of love. When we experience the joy of the communion we have with the Father, all else fades. Then, with quiet confidence, and even excitement, we can die to our ego, go the extra mile, and, if necessary, even lay down our lives, secure in the inheritance awaiting us in the Father's house.

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