

“Never. I'll follow you, protect you, fight for you, die for you. But not this.”

“Unless I wash you, you can have no part in me.”

“Right then, my hands and my feet too.”

“Just your feet. Once your feet are clean, you will be a new person.”

Peter hangs his head and turns his face away. We see the tears trickling down his chin. As the dirt of his feet is washed away, his bravado seems to be washed away too.

And me? How do I feel? Overwhelmed. Overwhelmed by love. His love for me, my love for him. And refreshed, cleansed, almost new-born and especially alert. Something momentous is happening right here but I'm not quite sure what.

- How about you?
- Jesus comes and kneels at your feet. What do you say?
- He runs the water over your tiredness, your hurt, your guilt, your past regrets and washes it all away.
- What does he say to you?

**“If I your Lord and teacher have washed your feet,
you also should wash one another's feet.
For I have set you an example
that you should do as I have done to you.”**

Meditation taken from Roots on the Web

Our song to sing or to read: (TiS 650 continued)

Brother, sister, let me serve you, let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

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Church in a Bag
9 April 2020
Maundy Thursday
Dubbo Uniting Church



In preparation

No longer at the temple

Jesus met with his disciples in a home.

I have longed to celebrate this feast with you.

Tonight, we take time to meet with mystery

Uncertain of the unfolding story

familiar, yet strange.

In absence, be present.

In faith, we dedicate time to be set aside

to honour God's story and pray with one another.

We come to this unexpected table, waiting upon God.

(Source: Rev Dr Amelia Koh-Butler)

A song to sing or to read: Servant Song (TiS 650)

Brother, sister, let me serve you; let me be as Christ to you
Pray that I may have the grace to let you be my servant too.

We are pilgrims on a journey and companions on the road

We are here to help each other walk the mile and bear the load.

I will hold the Christ light for you in the night time of your fear

I will hold my hand out to you, speak the peace you long to hear.

I will weep when you are weeping, when you laugh, I'll laugh with you

I will share your joy and sorrow till we've seen this journey through.

When we sing to God in heaven, we shall find such harmony

Born of all we've known together of Christ's love and agony.

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Meditation based on John 13:1–12

My time has come, and you still don't understand.

My time has come, and you still don't understand.

How can I make it clear to you?

Can I wash away your preconceptions, misconceptions and mistakes and open your eyes to what I shall be doing when I wash the feet of the world and cleanse all sin away?

I need to overturn all complacency, to flush away the stains of pride, the grasp of power, the lure of position and focus your attention on the ultimate significance of loving service. Unforgettable, discomfoting, embarrassing, unsettling.

“I should be doing that, not you!”

“Only I can do it.”

Although you were too proud to wash each other's feet.

Very soon on Calvary, in utter devotion and humility, the Holy One will wash the feet of the whole world.



- Do you find it easier to give or to receive?
- Is it easy to accept love and to receive forgiveness?
- Do you feel unworthy of generous or unexpected gifts, as if you need to earn what you get?
- Do you prefer to serve or be served?
- How do you cope with demonstrative behaviour when you are on the receiving end?

Read John 13:1–12

Let me take you back to that last Passover festival. Come with me through the hot, dry streets of the holy city. Dust is rising from your sandals, coating your sweaty feet and clinging between your toes. Come this way. Slip through the crowds, along the narrow alleyways till you see the stairway to the upper room. Come on up. Bend down, through the low doorway, into the flickering lamplight. We're all friends together here, companions and fellow disciples. Come to find the centre of our universe: Jesus, welcoming us all to sit round his table.

There's a mouth-watering smell of roasted lamb and fragrant fresh bread, making me realise how hungry I am.

We celebrate the Passover, when our people, slaves in Egypt, were saved from death by the blood of Passover lambs, and the Pharaoh at last agreed to let the people go. The blood that was shed bought our freedom. Jesus seems quiet and pensive. I wonder what is coming. Perhaps he's tired after all his teaching and debating.

As we share the bread he has broken, we half notice that he's left his seat and is removing his outer garments – his rabbi's robes. It is hot in here. When he turns around, he has a towel tied around his waist and he's coming towards us with a bowl of water in his hands.

He kneels down at the end of the table and has already begun to wash the feet of the nearest person before they realise who is doing it. We fall silent. All eyes are on him. He pours the water over, cleansing gently, firmly, like our mothers did when we were little children. Towelling the feet dry, unhurriedly, then moving on to the next. We feel so small. We're struck dumb. We've never done this, even for each other. This is the job of the lowliest serving maid, and we are respectable tradesmen and business people. There aren't any servants here tonight and it would be undignified for us to do it. It isn't our responsibility. It isn't our place. It would be demeaning. Except ... except how often has he told us how we must serve as he does ... but surely not like this?



Our Lord and leader, our friend and teacher, the one who reveals God to us, is on his knees, doing it for us.

Peter starts up when it comes to his turn. “No, no. This is all wrong. I'll do it for you! You'll not do this for me Jesus. I can't have it. I won't allow it!”

“I must do this for you, Peter. You will come to understand.”