

Feetwashing

- I. Jesus commanded us to wash each other's feet (**Joh 13:14-15**).
- II. Feetwashing is an ordinance of the church.
 1. Jesus washed the disciples feet after they finished eating the first Lord's Supper (**Joh 13:1-5**).
 2. The supper that the disciples ate with Jesus that night was the institution of the ordinance of communion which was to be repeated by all churches (**Luk 22:13-20 c/w 1Co 11:23-26 c/w 1Co 10:16-17**).
 3. Just as Jesus commanded the disciples observe the ordinance of communion after the pattern which He showed them by saying "this do in remembrance of me" (**Luk 22:19**), in like manner He commanded them to wash each other's feet after the pattern He showed them by saying "ye also ought to wash one another's feet" (**Joh 13:14**).
 4. To maintain that communion is an ordinance of the church, but feetwashing is not, when they were both commanded by the same Lord to the same men at the same meeting is a poor interpretation of scripture.
 5. Feetwashing is one of the ordinances that is to kept by a church (**1Co 11:2**).
 6. The washing of the saints' feet was a practice of the churches in the New Testament, which is evident because Paul made it one of the qualifications for a widow to receive support from the church (**1Ti 5:10**).
- III. The purpose of feetwashing.
 1. Feetwashing is a picture of our eternal and temporal salvation.
 - A. When Peter refused to have Jesus wash his feet, Jesus told him that "if I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (**Joh 13:6-8**).
 - B. Peter then wanted Jesus to wash his whole body (**Joh 13:9**).
 - C. Jesus told him that "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit: and ye are clean, but not all" (**Joh 13:10**).
 - i. All of the disciples were clean, except for Judas who was the son of perdition (**Joh 13:11 c/w Joh 17:12**).
 - ii. The other disciples had been cleansed by God, just as all of God's children are (**Act 10:15, 28**).
 - iii. They were Christ's bride who had been sanctified and cleansed, being made holy and without blame (**Eph 1:4; Eph 5:25-27**).
 - D. The disciples had been saved eternally from their sins by being washed in the blood of Christ (**Joh 17:2-4; Rev 1:5**).
 - E. Since eternal life cannot be lost, they didn't need to be washed again (**Joh 10:28-29**).
 - F. But as we walk through this world, we sin and get our feet dirty, spiritually speaking.
 - i. When that happens, we need to *cleanse* ourselves temporally (**2Co 7:1; Jam 4:8**).
 - ii. We do this by confessing our sins; which, when we do, God will *cleanse* us from all unrighteousness (**1Jo 1:9**).

- iii. Brethren can help each other to be cleansed from sin by correcting each other when they stray from the faith (**Jam 5:19-20**).
 - G. Washing each other's feet is a depiction of cleansing our walk in this world through confession of sin.
- 2. Feetwashing is a lesson in humility and serving one another.
 - A. Few things are more humbling than washing another person's feet.
 - B. Jesus Christ is God manifest in the flesh (**1Ti 3:16**).
 - C. Yet, He made himself of no reputation and became a humble servant (**Php 2:5-9**).
 - D. We are not greater than our Master, and one of the ways that we show that is by washing each other's feet (**Joh 13:12-16**).
 - E. In the church we are all each other's servants (**Mar 10:42-45; Gal 5:13; 1Co 9:19; Heb 6:10; 1Pe 4:9-10**), and feetwashing helps to remind us of it.

IV. The blessings of feetwashing

1. Jesus said that we are *happy* if we wash each other's feet (**Joh 13:17**).
2. Happy *adj.* - 2. a. Having good 'hap' or fortune; lucky, fortunate; favoured by lot, position, or other external circumstance. b. Blessed, beatified. *Obs.* of happy memory, a phrase conventionally applied to the deceased. 1611 Bible John xiii. 17 If yee know these things, happy are ye if ye doe them.
3. We are blessed to be able to continue the ordinance that Jesus instituted for His church.
4. We are blessed to serve our brethren.
5. We are blessed to keep Jesus' commandment which is pleasing to Him.

V. Objections to feetwashing

1. Objection #1: Washing another person's feet was a custom of the day in Biblical times and is therefore not relevant for us today.
 - A. This is false.
 - B. People washed their own feet in the Bible, but it was not customary to wash someone else's feet.
 - i. When the three men appeared to Abraham in the plains of Mamre, he told them to wash their feet (**Gen 18:4**).
 - ii. When the two angels appeared to Lot, he told them to wash their feet (**Gen 19:2**).
 - iii. When Abraham's servant came to Laban's house, he gave him water to wash his feet (**Gen 24:32**).
 - iv. When Joseph's brethren came to his house in Egypt, they were given water and they washed their feet (**Gen 43:24**).
 - v. When the wayfaring man and his concubine entered an old man's house in Gibeah, they washed their feet (**Jdg 19:21**).
 - vi. When Uriah came to David, he told him to go to his house and wash his feet (**2Sa 11:8**).
 - C. When David sent his men to get Abigail to be his wife, out of gratitude she offered to be a servant to wash their feet (**1Sa 25:41**), but it is not recorded as to whether she even did it.
 - D. A woman which was a sinner who had been forgiven much showed her love to Jesus by washing His feet with her tears and hair (**Luk 7:38**), but this was not a common custom of the day.

- E. The custom of the day was rather to give a guest water for him to wash his own feet (**Luk 7:44**).
2. Objection #2: If Jesus came today, He would have done something more fitting to our culture.
 - A. This is nonsense.
 - B. First of all, how do you know that?
 - C. Secondly, washing another person's feet was not a custom in Jesus' culture.
 3. Objection #3: Jesus only instructed the twelve disciples to wash each other's feet; it was not a commandment for all Christians, nor a church ordinance.
 - A. The same could be said of communion which was initially only given to the 12 disciples.
 - B. Communion is an ordinance of the church, and the command to wash each other's feet was given by the same Jesus to the same men at the same time (see Section II).
 - C. The same could be said of many other things that Jesus taught His disciples.
 4. Objection #4: Jesus said that we "ought" to wash each other's feet, but that doesn't mean that we must do so.
 - A. By this logic, the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith, and the love of God are also not must-dos, but are optional (**Mat 23:23; Luk 11:42**).
 - B. By this logic, always praying and not fainting is optional (**Luk 18:1**).
 - C. Who are we to say that we don't need to do things that Jesus says we *ought* to and *should* do!
 5. Objection #5: Hardly any Christians practice footwashing today.
 - A. Few people walk on the strait and narrow way; most walk the broad road that leads to destruction (**Mat 7:13-14**).
 - i. Noah and his family were right and the whole world was wrong.
 - ii. True Christians will always be in the minority (**Luk 12:32**).
 - iii. John said that we are of God and the whole world lieth in wickedness (**1Jo 5:19**).
 - B. We should not follow a multitude to do evil (**Exo 23:2**).
 - C. It doesn't matter if others don't do it and it appears that God is prospering them; we must do what God tells us to do (**Joh 14:15**).
 - D. If we break one of the least commandments we shall be called least in the kingdom of heaven (**Mat 5:19**).