

## LESSON 7

## JESUS WASHES HIS DISCIPLES' FEET

## BEFORE YOU TEACH

**Foot Washing**

During Biblical times, the poor often walked barefoot while those with money wore simple sandals usually made of cowhide. With the dirty, dusty, and sandy roads, a person's feet easily became dirty.

When guests were invited to a dinner or feast, they would first bathe themselves before leaving their own home. Upon arriving at their destination, they would be greeted and then have their feet washed as an act of hospitality. According to the Jewish custom, a slave would remove the guests' sandals. This was also to prevent the sandals from bringing dirt into the house. The slave then poured water over the guests' feet in a basin, rubbed their feet with his hands, and then dried them with a towel.

The Bible has many examples of the practice of footwashing. Abraham and Lot invited guests to their homes and had the guests' feet washed (Gen 18:4; 19:2). Abraham's servant was welcomed by Rebekah's family who provided water to wash his feet (Gen 24:32). Abigail agreed to be David's wife by stating that she would wash his feet (1 Sam 25:41). Paul instructed Timothy that a sign of a true widow was that she must have washed the feet of the saints (1 Tim 5:10).

What makes the sacrament of footwashing, recorded in John 13, different from the customary Jewish ritual is that the Master, Lord Jesus, washed His disciples' feet. The Lord Jesus established a beautiful example of servitude, love, humility, forgiveness and holiness. The Lord Jesus also said to Peter that if He did not wash Peter's feet, Peter would have no part with Him. The sacrament of footwashing, therefore, has a direct relationship with salvation. Today, footwashing is one of the three important holy sacraments performed in the True Jesus Church.

## BIBLE TEXT

John 13:1-17, 34-35

## BIBLE TRUTH

Jesus set an example of love by washing His disciples' feet.

## LESSON OBJECTIVES

1. To introduce the origin of the sacrament of footwashing and how foot washing allows us to have a part with the Lord Jesus.
2. To instruct the students to serve one another with love.

## MEMORY VERSE

"If I do not wash you,  
you have no part with Me."

(John 13:8b)

## PRAYER

In the name of the Lord Jesus, we pray. Lord Jesus, You love us very much. You came into the world to die for our sins so that we can have a part in the heavenly kingdom. Before You left the world, You washed Your disciples' feet. From this act, You left us an important example to follow. Lord, thank You for showing us the way to heaven and for showing us how to serve and help others. Hallelujah! Amen.

## UNDERSTANDING YOUR STUDENTS

There are many chores in life that people do not want to do, such as cooking, cleaning, and working, but people do them because they are necessary. However, sometimes it requires a great deal of convincing to motivate people to help others. People tend to complain when they have to clean somebody else's car, run someone else's errands or just do extra "stuff." Aside from money, love is what motivates people to help. Love was what motivated Jesus to wash His disciples' feet. To wash His disciples' feet, Jesus lowered His status from a master to a servant. It was

love that allowed Jesus to humble Himself.

Your students may have been given tasks that they do not like to do. Most likely, they complain and procrastinate to avoid doing them. Remind your students that Jesus had the unpleasant task of washing His disciples' feet. Through the great love He had for His disciples, He reduced Himself to the status of a servant and humbly washed their feet. Jesus said that those who do what He instructed would be blessed (Jn 13:17). Encourage your students to work humbly and joyfully for the Lord. It is the path to heaven.

### VOCABULARY

**Passover:** an annual Jewish feast that celebrates the deliverance of the Israelites from Egypt

**basin:** circular container for holding water or other liquids; a large bowl

**sacrament:** an act, such as baptism, footwashing, or Holy Communion, that is essential for salvation

### REVIEW

Last week, we learned about the last supper that Jesus had with His disciples. During the meal, Jesus took a piece of bread, blessed it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body." He then took a cup of grape juice, gave thanks and told His disciples to drink it, for it was His blood. He told them that whenever they eat and drink of His body and blood, they were to remember His great love and His death on the cross to save mankind from sin. This is the Holy Communion sacrament. Today, whenever we partake of Holy Communion, we are eating the body and drinking the blood of Jesus. This will give us life so we can be with the Lord Jesus in heaven.

## BIBLE STORY

If you had to help out in the house, which kinds of jobs would you like to do? Which kinds of jobs would you dislike or find difficult? Why?

Oftentimes, we like the jobs that are pleasant, easy, clean and do not require too much work. In today's story, we will learn about how the Lord Jesus performed a task that most people would not like to do. Let's find out what Jesus did.

### The Passover Meal

When Jesus was on earth, He went about preaching the gospel, healing the sick, and teaching the people about the kingdom of God. But Jesus' time on earth was ending very soon. Jesus knew that He would soon be handed over to the enemies, beaten, mocked, and crucified on the cross for the sins of man. On the last night before His capture, Jesus and His disciples ate a special meal called the Passover meal. This was also to be the last supper that He and His disciples would share. Jesus wanted to do something very special to show His disciples how much He loved them.

### Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

During the dinner, Jesus arose from His seat and took off His garment. He tied a towel around His waist. Then, He poured some water into a basin and brought it to His disciples. At first, the disciples did not know what Jesus was planning to do. But when they realized what Jesus was doing, they were very shocked. Kneeling down on the floor, Jesus began washing His disciples' feet, one by one. Jesus removed His disciples' sandals and, with His own two hands, used water to slowly clean the sand and dust off each of His disciples' feet. Afterwards, He dried them with the towel tied around His waist.

### Peter Speaks Up

When Jesus came to Simon Peter, Peter said, "Lord! Are You going to wash my feet?"

Jesus was his Master and Teacher. How could he let his Lord, someone who was greater than he, wash his feet? This was something that only a servant did when guests came to the home. Peter felt totally unworthy that the Lord was washing his feet.

But Jesus said to Peter, "You don't understand now why I'm doing this but someday you will."

"No! Never! You shall never wash my feet!" Peter cried.

Jesus replied, "Peter, if I don't wash you, you will have no part with Me."

When Peter heard this, he was shocked. If Jesus didn't wash his feet, he would be separated from Jesus and have no part in the heavenly kingdom. Peter quickly changed his mind.

"Lord, not just my feet then but wash my hands and my head too!" Peter cried.

Jesus then said to him, "When someone has already bathed, only their feet need washing. After I wash your feet, you will be clean too."

Peter stretched out his feet and allowed the Lord to

wash them. After Jesus had finished washing all the disciples' feet, He sat down again at the table.

### Jesus Explains

Jesus then asked His disciples, "Do you know what I have just done for you? I have given you an example. Although I am your Master and Lord, I am willing to serve you. You should do the same for others as I have done for you."

The disciples now understood why Jesus washed their feet. Jesus loved them very much. He showed His love for them by washing their feet. Servants washed the feet of their masters. By washing His disciples' feet, Jesus humbled Himself to the status of a servant. Jesus hoped that His disciples would follow His example and love and serve others in the same manner.

## CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING

### Fill In the Blank and True or False

1. Jesus and His disciples ate the \_\_\_\_\_ (Passover) meal together.
2. Footwashing was usually performed by \_\_\_\_\_ (servants).
3. Jesus rose from the table, took off His garment, tied a \_\_\_\_\_ (towel) around His waist and poured water into a \_\_\_\_\_ (basin).
4. Jesus did this to set an \_\_\_\_\_ (example) for His disciples and for us to follow.
5. Jesus said to Peter, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with Me." True.
6. Jesus did this to show us that we should love and serve one another. True.
7. Jesus did not wash Judas' feet. False; Jesus still washed Judas' feet even though he would later betray Him.
8. Jesus washed His disciples' feet because there were no servants around. False; He did it to set an example.

## MEMORY VERSE PRACTICE

Please reinforce the memory verse every week.

You can practice the memory verse with your students anytime during class.

**"If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me." (John 13:8b)**

## HOMEWORK ANSWER KEY

1. False; servants usually performed the footwashing.
2. True
3. True
4. False; Jesus still washed Judas' feet even though he would later betray Him.
5. A
6. C
7. C
8. So that they could have a part with the Lord. He also did it as an example for us to follow. He was teaching us how to love and serve one another, just as He did with His disciples.
9. Answers may vary.
10. "If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me" (Jn 13:8b).

## SPIRITUAL TEACHING & LIFE APPLICATION

### 1. To Have a Part with the Lord

In Jesus' time, footwashing was very common. People wore sandals, and as a result, their feet became dirty from walking on the dusty, dirty roads. Upon entering a house, people would first have a slave or servant wash their feet. Today, we wear closed shoes and walk on paved roads. As a result, our feet are less dirty, so footwashing is not commonly done.

Though footwashing is not practiced in our homes, it is still practiced in the church. Many of us received footwashing after we were baptized. The footwashing that was performed in Jesus' time is different from the footwashing that is performed in the church today. The footwashing performed in the church has a very special meaning.

When Peter refused to let Jesus wash his feet, what was Jesus' reply? [Allow students to respond.] Yes, Jesus said to Peter that if He did not wash Peter's feet, Peter would have no part with Him. This meant that Peter would not be with Jesus in heaven. That's why Peter was shocked and quickly changed his mind. From this event, we know that footwashing is needed for salvation. Without it, we

have no part with Jesus and will not be with Him in heaven.

**This is what happens during the sacrament of footwashing (the teacher may wish to demonstrate this to class):**

1. A minister or minister's wife will perform the footwashing. He or she represents the Lord Jesus.
2. The minister commences the footwashing by saying, "In the name of the Lord Jesus, I perform footwashing that you may have a part with the Lord."
3. Using a basin of water, the minister washes the believer's feet. Afterward, the minister dries the feet with a towel.

Although the sacrament looks very simple, without it, we would have no part with Jesus and will not be with Him in heaven. After we have been baptized and have had our feet washed, we have to make sure to obey God's commandments and keep ourselves from sin.

### 2. To Love and Serve One Another

Do you think it was pleasant for the servants when they were washing the people's feet? Probably not. Jesus is not a servant. He is the Master and Lord of all. And yet, He humbled Himself to do the job of a servant by washing His disciples' feet. His love for His disciples was so great that He even washed the feet of Judas, the disciple who was going to betray Him and hand Him over to the enemies. To love someone and do something nice to someone who will hurt you is extremely difficult. By washing their feet, Jesus showed His love for His disciples, even Judas. Jesus shows us that we need to love, forgive, and serve one another, even when it is difficult. [Read John 13:14-15 to the students: "If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have

washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that you should do as I have done to you."]

Were there times when you found it difficult to help others? Maybe your mom or dad asked you to help with something you did not want to do. Maybe your mean sibling needed your help. During these times, we need to imitate the Lord Jesus who was willing to do something even though it was difficult and not pleasant. James 1:25 tells us that if we are not just hearers of the word but are also doers, we will be blessed.

### What Happens After I Receive Footwashing?

#### a. Keep your feet clean

Your feet—"the walk" you choose to walk—represent your behavior and lifestyle. Receiving footwashing means allowing Christ to be the Lord of your life and committing yourself to walk in His footsteps. The Lord calls us to reject the sinful influences of society. He wants us to walk daily with Him and follow His examples in word and in deed. The word of God "is a lamp to [our] feet and a light to [our] path" (Ps 119:105). We can keep ourselves clean by obeying God's word, for His teachings direct our feet toward the right way.

The Bible says, "Trust in the LORD with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways acknowledge Him, and He shall direct your paths" (Prov 3:5-6). In everything we do, we should always seek to do God's will rather than follow our own desires. God promises that He will direct our paths if we follow His truth at all times. Let's do a short exercise on choosing the path that our feet should walk on. [You may have your students work in groups. Make sure that they turn to the reference Bible verses. In the end, ask them to share their answers with the rest of the class.]

**For each case study below, choose from the two solutions given and explain which is the right choice. In addition, explain how you are or are not walking according to God's teachings in each scenario.**

*Scenario 1*

Everyone knows that you are excellent at math. Every year, you get As on all your math quizzes and exams. Last year, during one of your math quizzes, you came across a question that you didn't know how to answer. You tried a couple of ways to solve it, but none of them seemed correct.

*Refer to 1 Peter 5:5 and Proverbs 12:22.*

- a. Since you were the best student in your math class, you didn't want your friends to find out that there was a question on the quiz that you didn't know how to answer. Therefore, you cheated by taking a peek at your friend's exam.
- b. Even though all your classmates knew that you always do very well on math quizzes, you were not afraid to tell them that there was a question you found difficult. After the quiz, you went up to a few of your friends and asked them if they knew the answer to the question you didn't know how to solve.

*Scenario 2*

Your mom had promised to take you to the zoo last Sunday. You had been looking forward to it for quite some time. However, your mom caught a cold and had a high fever the night before last Sunday. Your trip to the zoo was canceled. You were very disappointed.

*Refer to Ephesians 6:1 and James 1:20.*

- a. Since your mom didn't keep her promise, you became angry with her. You went back to your room and slammed the door after she told you that she couldn't take you to the zoo.
- b. Even though you were very disappointed, you were more worried about your mom than anything. You took the day that you were supposed to go to the zoo to take care of your mom, making sure that she took her medicine on time and drank lots of water. You also helped her take care of your younger brother and did some chores around the house.

**b. Keep your feet in His church**

We have a part with Jesus Christ as members of His body, the church. David, a king in Israel, sang, "I was glad when they said to me, 'Let us go to the house of the LORD.' Our feet have been standing within your gates, O Jerusalem!"

(Ps 122:1-2). Jerusalem was where God's temple resided, and it symbolizes the church today.

Today, it is very important that we keep our feet in the church. This is where God abides, and therefore we can draw closer to God by coming to church to worship Him. This is also where we can find the best spiritual support system—our brothers and sisters in Christ—who will keep us company in our lifelong spiritual journey. Not only do we learn the word of God together, we also share the love of God here with one another through words and actions so that whoever comes to the church may experience the joy of being in God's fold. Let me share a testimony with you!

Sometime last year, my mom received a phone call in the evening from the hospital and found out that my dad had been injured in a car accident. Thank God, my dad looked relatively fine when we arrived at the hospital. He was lying in bed with a bandage on his forehead, talking to the doctor standing next to his bed. As we began to feel more relieved, the doctor told us that my dad's legs were very badly injured and that he would have to go through at least a year of physical therapy in order to be able to walk normally again.

For the next few months, my dad was in the wheelchair. He couldn't go anywhere without the help of my mom. Since my mom had to work all day Monday through Friday, my dad was very bored at home. At that time, my dad's faith was not very good. Since he didn't want other church members to see that he was in the wheelchair, he refused to go to church. After a while, my dad began to complain that my mom should spend time with him on Saturdays rather than going to church while he was still in the wheelchair. However, my mom insisted that she had to take us to church and worship God on every Sabbath. After many arguments, my mom finally convinced my dad to go to church with her.

That Saturday, my dad was very sure that he would receive many strange looks from other church members since he was in a wheelchair. He was not looking forward to it at all. Surprisingly, he ended up enjoying church very much that day. Instead of strange looks, my dad received many words of encouragement and acts of love from other church members. Through his conversations with them, he felt genuine love and care from the church. He also learned that they had been praying for him since they had heard about his car accident. My dad was also reminded that it was God's grace that saved his life from a major accident. After the last service, one of the council members led an extra prayer session for

my dad. Many members stayed to pray for him, and my dad was very touched. That day, my dad not only felt the love from other church members, he also felt how much God loved him by letting him experience the joy of being in God's fold.

Shortly after that, my dad was able to walk with a staff by himself. But he no longer refused to go to church because of embarrassment. Instead, he became very excited to go to church with us, and his faith has been growing since! May all the glory be unto God's name. Amen.

### c. Walk in Christ's Love

After His last meal with the disciples, Jesus left them with these words: "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another" (Jn 13:34-35). By washing our feet, He sends us out to love our neighbors and enemies to the same extent that He did. "If you know these things," Jesus said, "blessed are you if you do them" (Jn 13:17). Let me share a testimony with you.

Uncle John is the owner of an auto shop. Many years ago, when I was still in kindergarten, he hired my dad as one of his employees. Growing up, I always heard my dad say that if it weren't for Uncle John giving him this job, we would not have been able to live in this

house we have or live the same quality of life we live today. More importantly, he told us that it was Uncle John who brought our family to know Christ. Now that I am older, my dad told me more about his story with Uncle John. In fact, Uncle John didn't need an extra employee when he hired my dad. But since my dad had been unemployed for quite some time, and he desperately needed a job to support our family, Uncle John gave him a job. My dad also told me that in the past, there were times when Uncle John was not getting enough business to pay for his own salary, but he never thought about laying off his employees because he knew that they, including my dad, all had a family to take care of. Instead, Uncle John always relied on God to take care of his business.

Today, my dad always uses this story to remind himself and to inspire us to help others with love. Every day, for my dad to be able to work at Uncle John's shop is a reminder of God's love. God loves us so much, and He sent Uncle John to help us understand that deeper through his demonstration of the love of Christ. My dad said that we should always walk in Christ's love and give all the glory to God, just as Uncle John did.

May our footprints be the imprints of God's love in the world!

## ACTIVITY

### Do to Others as I Have Done to You

**Objective:** To remind students to follow in Jesus' example and do things for others.

#### Materials

- Large poster-sized paper
- Colored construction paper
- Markers

#### Instructions

1. Ask the students to take off their shoes and socks.
2. On the construction paper, have the students outline both of their feet.
3. Cut out the template of each foot.
4. Have the students think of something special that they can do for others.
5. Have the students write down their idea on one of the foot cutouts. They may also choose to decorate it.
6. Write down the following questions on a sheet of paper and staple the second foot template to the sheet.
  - a. How did you feel when you were helping others?
  - b. How did the person feel when you did something special for them?
  - c. How do you think this makes God feel?
7. The students are to write down their reflections to the above questions on the second foot cutout after they've helped someone out. They need to bring the reflection back to class next week.
8. In the following week, gather the reflections and paste all the feet on the poster paper to create a collage.

E1 Year 3 Book 2 Lesson 7—Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

# Homework Assignment

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Parent signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Bible Truth:** Jesus set an example of love by washing His disciples' feet.

**Lesson Objectives:** 1. To introduce the origin of the sacrament of footwashing and how footwashing allows us to have a part with the Lord Jesus.  
 2. To instruct the students to serve one another with love.

**Bible Reading:** Please put a check mark in the space when you complete the reading each day.

**Prayer:** Please put a check mark in the space on the days you prayed to God.

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
Bible Reading							
Prayer							

## Memory Verse

Please write down this week's memory verse.

(John 13:8b)

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## What I Learned from the Bible This Week

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

# Homework Assignment

*Understanding What You Have Learned*

**True or False**

1. Foot washing was usually performed by the master of the house. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Jesus rose from the table, took off His garment, tied a towel around His waist, and poured water into a basin to wash His disciples' feet. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Jesus performed the footwashing to set an example for us. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Jesus did not wash Judas' feet. \_\_\_\_\_

**Multiple Choice**

5. \_\_\_\_\_ : Jesus had a special meal with the disciples called \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. The Passover meal
  - b. The New Year meal
  - c. The Festival of the Unleavened Bread
  
6. \_\_\_\_\_ : The footwashing sacrament is very important because \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. It gets rid of all the dirt and gives us nice, clean feet.
  - b. Our sins can be washed away.
  - c. It allows us to have a part with the Lord.
  
7. \_\_\_\_\_ : When Jesus came to Peter, Peter said, \_\_\_\_\_.
  - a. "Thank You, Lord Jesus, for washing my feet."
  - b. "This is a little embarrassing!"
  - c. "You shall never wash my feet!"

**Short Answer**

8. Why did Jesus wash His disciples' feet?  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
9. What are some things that you can do to serve others?  
\_\_\_\_\_

10. Choose the right words to fill in the blanks.

If \_\_\_\_\_ do not \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ have \_\_\_\_\_ with \_\_\_\_\_.

1                      2                      3                      4                      5                      6                      7

