

ORDINANCE OF FEET WASHING

Feet washing, ordinance of 5BC 1138-9; DA 642-51; Ev 274-6; EW 116-7; 3SG 226-7; 4T 373-4

by Christ, rebuke to disciples RC 261

calls for: self-examination 5BC 1139; 3SG 226-7

unselfish ministry 5BC 1139; DA 651

Christ by instituting, discharged His disciples from burdens of Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies 5BC 1139

Christ's example of, given for all believers to follow 3SG 226; 4T 225

Christians should observe, through all time and in every country 5BC 1139; Ev 276

cleansing of heart is tested in 5BC 1138

confess anything that would separate when RC 283:6

confusion in observance of, avoid EW 117

holy kiss in EW 15, 117; LS 65; 1T 59

illustrates need of true humility DA 649-50; 5BC 1139; 4T 225

instituted for work of reconciliation between brethren DA 644-6, 650-1; Ev 275; SD 157

institution of, by Christ 5BC 1138; DA 642-51; Ev 275; 3SG 226-7

is: designed to teach humility DA 649-50; 3SG 226-7; 4T 225, 373-4

memorial of Christ's humiliation DA 650-1

sacred ordinance DA 650; Ev 275

type of higher cleansing DA 646-7

is ordinance of: humility 5BC 1138-9; DA 649-50; 4T 373-4

service 5BC 1138; DA 649

is service preparatory to eating Lord's Supper DA 646, 650-1, 659; Ev 275; 3SG 226-7

lessons from 4T 374

made a: consecrated ordinance DA 650

religious service DA 650; Ev 275

much in, that is not seen and appreciated Ev 278

not obligatory on visitors Ev 276-7

observance of: among God's people shortly before second advent EW 15; LS 65; 1T 59

Christ's example in, should be followed as exactly as possible EW 116-7

covenant made by, that life shall be given to unselfish ministry DA 651

do not defer, because some believers present are not spiritually clean 5BC 1138

in new places EW 117

is time for brethren to settle every difficulty SD 157
men should not wash women's feet in EW 117
on Sabbath day Ev 276-7
right, brings God's people into holy relationship to help and bless each other 5BC 1138; DA 651
should be more than mere form DA 651; Ev 274
should precede Lord's Supper DA 650; Ev 275
Spirit's presence and work during DA 650-1; Ev 274-5
performance of, calls for self-examination 5BC 1139
pitcher, basin, and towel used in DA 644
prejudice against, how to meet EW 117
should be observed more frequently EW 116
should never become mere ceremonial DA 651
significance and purpose of DA 642-51; Ev 274-5; 3SG 226-7; 4T 225, 373-4
teaches that true service calls for unselfish ministry DA 651; Ev 276
teaches walking in humility before God RC 261:4
tedious ceremony should not be made of EW 117
tests our loyalty to God Ev 275
women may wash men's feet in EW 117

10, 11. **A Test of Heart-cleansing.**--Christ gave His disciples to understand that the washing of their feet did not cleanse away their sin, but that the cleansing of their heart was tested in this humble service. If the heart was cleansed, this act was all that was essential to reveal the fact. He had washed the feet of Judas; but He said, "Ye are not all clean." Judas brought a traitor's heart to this scene, and Christ revealed to all that He knew him to be the betrayer of his Lord, and that the washing of his feet was not an ordinance to cleanse the soul from its moral defilement. . . . {5BC 1138.6}

Jesus would give convincing proof that He understood perfectly the character of Judas, and that He had not withheld His ministry even from him whom He knew to be working to betray Him into the hands of His enemies. And we have, in His example, the lesson that the ordinance of feet-washing is not to be deferred because there are some professed believers who are not cleansed from their sins. Christ knew the heart of

Judas, yet He washed his feet. Infinite love could do no more to bring Judas to repentance, and save him from taking this fatal step. If this service of his Master, in humbling Himself to wash the feet of the worst sinner, did not break his heart, what more could be done? It was the last act of love that Jesus could evidence in behalf of Judas. Infinite love could not compel Judas to repent, confess his sin, and be saved. Every opportunity was granted him. Nothing was left undone that could be done to save him from the snare of Satan (RH June 14, 1898). {5BC 1138.7}

13-17. **A Dedication to Service.**--The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other. {5BC 1138.8}

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the

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natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13-17 quoted]. {5BC 1138.9}

This ceremony means much to us. God would have us take the whole scene, not only the single act of outward cleansing. This lesson does not merely refer to the one act. It is to reveal the great truth that Christ is an example of what we through His grace are to be in our intercourse with each other. It shows that the entire life should be one of humble, faithful ministry. . . . The ordinance of feet washing most forcibly illustrates the necessity of true humility. While the disciples were contending for the highest place, in the promised kingdom, Christ girded Himself, and performed the office of a servant by washing the feet of those who called Him Lord. He, the pure, spotless Lamb of God, was presenting Himself as a sin-offering; and as He now ate the Passover with His disciples, He put an end to the sacrifices which for four thousand years had been offered. In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, He instituted a memorial service, in the ceremony of feet washing, and the sacramental supper, to be observed by His followers through all time and in every country. These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service called for unselfish ministry (MS 43, 1897). {5BC 1139.1}

14, 15 (Matt. 23:8; 1 Cor. 11:28). **Humility an Active Principle.**-- Humility is an active principle growing out of a thorough consciousness of God's great love, and will always show itself by the way in which it works. By taking part in the ordinance of feet washing we show that we are willing to perform this act of humility. We are doing the very thing Christ did, but this is not to be talked of as an act of humiliation. It is an act which symbolizes the condition of the mind and heart. {5BC 1139.2}

"All ye are brethren." As brethren we are identified with Christ and with one another. As brethren we are identical with Christ, and through His grace identical with one another. **And as we wash the feet of Christ's followers, it is as though we were indeed touching the Son of God. We do this act because Christ told us to do it, and Christ Himself is among us. His Holy Spirit does the work of uniting our hearts. To become one with Christ requires self-denial and self-sacrifice at every step.** {5BC 1139.3}

The performance of the ordinance of humility **calls for self-examination.** The noble principles of the soul are strengthened on every such occasion. Christ lives in us, and this draws heart to heart. **We are led to love as brethren, to be kind, tender, courteous in daily service, having hearts that can feel another's woe** (Letter 210, 1899). {5BC 1139.4}

(1 Cor. 11:23-25.) **To Feel the Pulse of Conscience.**--In this ordinance, Christ discharged His disciples from the cares and burdens of the ancient Jewish obligations in rites and ceremonies. These no longer possessed any virtue; for **type was meeting antitype in Himself,** the authority and foundation of all Jewish ordinances that pointed to Him as the great and only efficacious offering for the sins of the world. **He gave this simple ordinance that it might be a special season when He Himself would always be present, to lead all participating in it to feel the pulse of their own conscience, to awaken them to an understanding of the lessons symbolized, to revive their memory, to convict of sin, and to receive their penitential repentance. He would teach them that brother is not to exalt himself above brother, that the dangers of disunion and strife shall be seen and appreciated; for the health and holy activity of the soul are involved.** {5BC 1139.5}

This ordinance does not speak so largely to man's intellectual capacity as to his heart. His moral and spiritual nature needs it. If His disciples had not needed this, it would not have been left for them as Christ's last established ordinance in connection with, and including, the last supper. It was Christ's desire to leave to His disciples an

ordinance that would do for them the very thing they needed--that would serve to disentangle them from the rites and ceremonies which they had hitherto engaged in as essential, and which

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the reception of the gospel made no longer of any force. To continue these rites would be an insult to Jehovah. **Eating of the body, and drinking of the blood, of Christ, not merely at the sacramental service, but daily partaking of the bread of life to satisfy the soul's hunger, would be in receiving His Word and doing His will** (RH June 14, 1898). {5BC 1139.6}

Chap. 71 - A Servant of Servants

In the upper chamber of a dwelling at Jerusalem, Christ was sitting at table with His disciples. **They had gathered to celebrate the Passover.** The Saviour desired to keep this feast alone with the twelve. He knew that **His hour was come**; He Himself was **the true paschal lamb**, and on the day the Passover was eaten He was to be sacrificed. He was about to drink the cup of wrath; He must soon receive the final baptism of suffering. But a few quiet hours yet remained to Him, and these were to be spent for the benefit of His beloved disciples. {DA 642.1}

The **whole life of Christ had been a life of unselfish service.** "Not to be ministered unto, but to minister," (Matt. 20:28), had been the lesson of His every act. But not yet had the disciples learned the lesson. At this last Passover supper, Jesus repeated His teaching by an illustration that impressed it forever on their minds and hearts. {DA 642.2}

The interviews between Jesus and His disciples were usually seasons of calm joy, highly prized by them all. The Passover suppers had been scenes of special interest; but upon this occasion Jesus was troubled. His heart was burdened, and a shadow rested upon His countenance.

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As He met the disciples in the upper chamber, they perceived that something weighed heavily upon His mind, and although they knew not its cause, they sympathized with His grief. {DA 642.3}

As they were gathered about the table, He said in tones of touching sadness, "With **desire I have desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer:** for I say unto you, I will not any more eat thereof, until it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God. And He took the cup, and gave thanks, and said, Take this, and divide it among yourselves: for I say

unto you, I will not drink of the fruit of the vine, until the kingdom of God shall come." {DA 643.1}

Christ knew that the time had come for Him to depart out of the world, and go to His Father. And having loved His own that were in the world, He loved them unto the end. He was now in the shadow of the cross, and the pain was torturing His heart. He knew that He would be deserted in the hour of His betrayal. He knew that by the most humiliating process to which criminals were subjected He would be put to death. He knew the ingratitude and cruelty of those He had come to save. He knew how great the sacrifice that He must make, and for how many it would be in vain. Knowing all that was before Him, He might naturally have been overwhelmed with the thought of His own humiliation and suffering. But He looked upon the twelve, who had been with Him as His own, and who, after His shame and sorrow and painful usage were over, would be left to struggle in the world. His thoughts of what He Himself must suffer were ever connected with His disciples. He did not think of Himself. His care for them was uppermost in His mind. {DA 643.2}

On this last evening with His disciples, Jesus had much to tell them. If they had been prepared to receive what He longed to impart, they would have been saved from heartbreaking anguish, from disappointment and unbelief. But Jesus saw that they could not bear what He had to say. As He looked into their faces, the words of warning and comfort were stayed upon His lips. Moments passed in silence. Jesus appeared to be waiting. The disciples were ill at ease. The sympathy and tenderness awakened by Christ's grief seemed to have passed away. His sorrowful words, pointing to His own suffering, had made little impression. The glances they cast upon each other told of jealousy and contention. {DA 643.3}

There was "a strife among them, which of them should be accounted the greatest." This contention, carried on in the presence of Christ, grieved and wounded Him. The disciples clung to their favorite idea that Christ would assert His power, and take His position on the throne of David. And in heart each still longed for the highest place in the

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kingdom. They had placed their own estimate upon themselves and upon one another, and, instead of regarding their brethren as more worthy, they had placed themselves first. The request of James and John to sit on the right and left of Christ's throne had excited the indignation of the others. That the two brothers should presume to ask

for the highest position so stirred the ten that alienation threatened. They felt that they were misjudged, that their fidelity and talents were not appreciated. Judas was the most severe upon James and John. {DA 643.4}

When the disciples entered the supper room, their hearts were full of resentful feelings. Judas pressed next to Christ on the left side; John was on the right. If there was a highest place, Judas was determined to have it, and that place was thought to be next to Christ. And Judas was a traitor. {DA 644.1}

Another cause of dissension had arisen. At a feast it was customary for a servant to wash the feet of the guests, and on this occasion preparation had been made for the service. The pitcher, the basin, and the towel were there, in readiness for the feet washing; but no servant was present, and it was the disciples' part to perform it. But each of the disciples, yielding to wounded pride, determined not to act the part of a servant. All manifested a stoical unconcern, seeming unconscious that there was anything for them to do. By their silence they refused to humble themselves. {DA 644.2}

How was Christ to bring these poor souls where Satan would not gain over them a decided victory? How could He show that a mere profession of discipleship did not make them disciples, or insure them a place in His kingdom? How could He show that it is loving service, true humility, which constitutes real greatness? How was He to kindle love in their hearts, and enable them to comprehend what He longed to tell them? {DA 644.3}

The disciples made no move toward serving one another. Jesus waited for a time to see what they would do. Then He, the divine Teacher, rose from the table. Laying aside the outer garment that would have impeded His movements, He took a towel, and girded Himself. With surprised interest the disciples looked on, and in silence waited to see what was to follow. "After that He poureth water into a basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith He was girded." This action opened the eyes of the disciples. Bitter shame and humiliation filled their hearts. They understood the unspoken rebuke, and saw themselves in altogether a new light. {DA 644.4}

So Christ expressed His love for His disciples. Their selfish spirit filled Him with sorrow, but He entered into no controversy with them

regarding their difficulty. Instead He gave them an example they would never forget. His love for them was not easily disturbed or quenched. He knew that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He came from God, and went to God. He had a full consciousness of His divinity; but He had laid aside His royal crown and kingly robes, and had taken the form of a servant. One of the last acts of His life on earth was to gird Himself as a servant, and perform a servant's part. {DA 644.5}

Before the Passover Judas had met a second time with the priests and scribes, and had closed the contract to deliver Jesus into their hands. Yet he afterward mingled with the disciples as though innocent of any wrong, and interested in the work of preparing for the feast. The disciples knew nothing of the purpose of Judas. Jesus alone could read his secret. Yet He did not expose him. Jesus hungered for his soul. He felt for him such a burden as for Jerusalem when He wept over the doomed city. His heart was crying, How can I give thee up? The constraining power of that love was felt by Judas. When the Saviour's hands were bathing those soiled feet, and wiping them with the towel, the heart of Judas thrilled through and through with the impulse then and there to confess his sin. But he would not humble himself. He hardened his heart against repentance; and the old impulses, for the moment put aside, again controlled him. Judas was now offended at Christ's act in washing the feet of His disciples. If Jesus could so humble Himself, he thought, He could not be Israel's king. All hope of worldly honor in a temporal kingdom was destroyed. Judas was satisfied that there was nothing to be gained by following Christ. After seeing Him degrade Himself, as he thought, he was confirmed in his purpose to disown Him, and confess himself deceived. He was possessed by a demon, and he resolved to complete the work he had agreed to do in betraying his Lord. {DA 645.1}

Judas, in choosing his position at table, had tried to place himself first, and Christ as a servant served him first. John, toward whom Judas had felt so much bitterness, was left till the last. But John did not take this as a rebuke or slight. As the disciples watched Christ's action, they were greatly moved. When Peter's turn came, he exclaimed with astonishment, "Lord, dost Thou wash my feet?" Christ's condescension broke his heart. He was filled with shame to think that one of the disciples was not performing this service. "What I do," Christ said, "thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter." Peter could not

bear to see his Lord, whom he believed to be the Son of God, acting the part of a servant. His whole soul rose up against this humiliation.

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He did not realize that for this Christ came into the world. With great emphasis he exclaimed, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." {DA 645.2}

Solemnly Christ said to Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me." The service which Peter refused was the type of a higher cleansing. Christ had come to wash the heart from the stain of sin. In refusing to allow Christ to wash his feet, Peter was refusing the higher cleansing included in the lower. He was really rejecting his Lord. It is not humiliating to the Master to allow Him to work for our purification. **The truest humility is to receive with thankful heart any provision made in our behalf, and with earnestness do service for Christ. {DA 646.1}**

At the words, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with Me," Peter surrendered his pride and self-will. He could not endure the thought of separation from Christ; that would have been death to him. "Not my feet only," he said, "but also my hands and my head. Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." {DA 646.2}

These words mean more than bodily cleanliness. Christ is still speaking of the higher cleansing as illustrated by the lower. He who came from the bath was clean, but the sandaled feet soon became dusty, and again needed to be washed. So Peter and his brethren had been washed in the great fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Christ acknowledged them as His. But temptation had led them into evil, and they still needed His cleansing grace. When Jesus girded Himself with a towel to wash the dust from their feet, He desired by that very act to wash the alienation, jealousy, and pride from their hearts. This was of far more consequence than the washing of their dusty feet. **With the spirit they then had, not one of them was prepared for communion with Christ. Until brought into a state of humility and love, they were not prepared to partake of the paschal supper, or to share in the memorial service which Christ was about to institute.** Their hearts must be cleansed. Pride and self-seeking create dissension and hatred, but all this Jesus washed away in washing their feet. A change of feeling was brought about. Looking upon them, Jesus could say, "Ye are clean." Now there was union of heart, love for one another. **They had become humble and teachable.** Except Judas, each was ready to concede to another the highest place. Now with subdued and grateful hearts they could receive Christ's words. {DA 646.3}

Like Peter and his brethren, we too have been washed in the blood of Christ, yet often through contact with evil the heart's purity is soiled. We must come to Christ for His cleansing grace. Peter shrank from bringing his soiled feet in contact with the hands of his Lord and Master;

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but how often we bring our sinful, polluted hearts in contact with the heart of Christ! How grievous to Him is our evil temper, our vanity and pride! Yet all our infirmity and defilement we must bring to Him. He alone can wash us clean. We are not prepared for communion with Him unless cleansed by His efficacy. {DA 646.4}

Jesus said to the disciples, "Ye are clean, but not all." He had washed the feet of Judas, but the heart had not been yielded to Him. It was not purified. Judas had not submitted himself to Christ. {DA 649.1}

After Christ had washed the disciples' feet, and had taken His garments and sat down again, He said to them, "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him." {DA 649.2}

Christ would have His disciples understand that although He had washed their feet, this did not in the least detract from His dignity. "Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am." And being so infinitely superior, He imparted grace and significance to the service. No one was so exalted as Christ, and yet He stooped to the humblest duty. That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set the example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it, that He Himself, One equal with God, acted as servant to His disciples. While they were contending for the highest place, He to whom every knee shall bow, He whom the angels of glory count it honor to serve, bowed down to wash the feet of those who called Him Lord. He washed the feet of His betrayer. {DA 649.3}

In His life and lessons, Christ has given a perfect exemplification of the unselfish ministry which has its origin in God. God does not live for Himself. By creating the world, and by upholding all things, He is constantly ministering for others. "He maketh His sun to rise on the evil

and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." Matt. 5:45. This ideal of ministry God has committed to His Son. Jesus was given to stand at the head of humanity, that by His example He might teach what it means to minister. His whole life was under a law of service. He served all, ministered to all. Thus He lived the law of God, and by His example showed how we are to obey it. {DA 649.4}

Christ, the Majesty of heaven, laid aside His robes of royalty and came to this world, all seared and marred by the curse, to teach men how to live a life of self-denial and self-sacrifice, and how to carry out practical religion in their daily lives. He came to give a correct example of a gospel minister. He labored constantly for one object; all His powers were employed for the salvation of men, and every act of His life tended to that end. He traveled on foot, teaching His followers as He went. His garments were dusty and travel-stained, and His appearance was uninviting. But the simple, pointed truths which fell from His divine lips soon caused His hearers to forget His appearance, and to be charmed, not with the man, but with the doctrine He taught. After teaching throughout the entire day, He frequently devoted the night to prayer. He made His supplications to His Father with strong crying and tears. He prayed, not for Himself, but for those whom He came to redeem. {4T 373.1}

Few ministers pray all night, as did our Saviour, or devote hours in the day to prayer that they may be able ministers of the gospel and effectual in bringing men to see the beauties of the truth and to be saved through the merits of Christ. Daniel prayed three times a day, but many who make the most exalted profession do not humble their souls before God in prayer even once a day. Jesus, the dear Saviour, has given marked lessons in humility to all, but especially to the gospel minister. In His humiliation, when His work upon earth

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was nearly finished and He was about to return to His Father's throne whence He had come, with all power in His hands and all glory upon His head, among His last lessons to His disciples was one upon the importance of humility. While His disciples were contending as to who should be greatest in the promised kingdom, He girded Himself as a servant and washed the feet of those who called Him Lord and Master. {4T 373.2}

His ministry was nearly completed; He had only a few more lessons to impart. And that they might never forget the humility of the pure and spotless Lamb of God, the great and efficacious Sacrifice for man humbled Himself to wash the feet of His disciples. It will do you good, and our ministers generally, to frequently review the closing scenes in the life of our Redeemer. Here, beset with temptations as He was, we may all learn lessons of the utmost importance to us. It would be well to spend a thoughtful hour each day reviewing the life of Christ from the manger to Calvary. We should take it point by point and let the imagination vividly grasp each scene, especially the closing ones of His earthly life. By thus contemplating His teachings and sufferings, and the infinite sacrifice made by Him for the redemption of the race, we may strengthen our faith, quicken our love, and become more deeply imbued with the spirit which sustained our Saviour. If we would be saved at last we must all learn the lesson of penitence and faith at the foot of the cross. Christ suffered humiliation to save us from everlasting disgrace. He consented to have scorn, mockery, and abuse fall upon Him in order to shield us. It was our transgression that gathered the veil of darkness about His divine soul and extorted the cry from Him, as of one smitten and forsaken of God. He bore our sorrows; He was put to grief for our sins. He made Himself an offering for sin, that we might be justified before God through Him. Everything noble and generous in man will respond to the contemplation of Christ upon the cross. {4T 374.1}

I long to see our ministers dwell more upon the cross of

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Christ, their own hearts, meanwhile, softened and subdued by the Saviour's matchless love, which prompted that infinite sacrifice. If, in connection with the theory of the truth, our ministers would dwell more upon practical godliness, speaking from a heart imbued with the spirit of truth, we should see many more souls flocking to the standard of truth; their hearts would be touched by the pleadings of the cross of Christ, the infinite generosity and pity of Jesus in suffering for man. These vital subjects, in connection with the doctrinal points of our faith, would effect much good among the people. But the heart of the teacher must be filled with the experimental knowledge of the love of Christ. {4T 374.2}

The mighty argument of the cross will convict of sin. The divine love of God for sinners, expressed in the gift of His Son to suffer shame and death that they might be ennobled and endowed with everlasting life, is the study of a lifetime. I ask you to study anew the cross of Christ. If all

the proud and vainglorious, whose hearts are panting for the applause of men and for distinction above their fellows, could rightly estimate the value of the highest earthly glory in contrast with the value of the Son of God, rejected, despised, spit upon, by the very ones whom He came to redeem, how insignificant would appear all the honor that finite man can bestow. {4T 375.1}

Dear brother, you feel, in your imperfect accomplishments, that you are qualified for almost any position. But you have not yet been found sufficient to control yourself. You feel competent to dictate to men of experience, when you should be willing to be led and to place yourself in the position of a learner. **The less you meditate upon Christ and His matchless love and the less you are assimilated to His image,** the better will you appear in your own eyes, and the more self-confidence and self-complacency will you possess. **A correct knowledge of Christ, a constant looking unto the Author and Finisher of our faith, will give you such a view of the character of a true Christian that you cannot fail to make a right estimate of your own life and character in contrast with those of the great**

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Exemplar. You will then see your own weakness, your ignorance, your love of ease, and your unwillingness to deny self. {4T 375.2}

Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. Matt. 18:4. {RC 261.1}

The disciples had just been disputing as to who should be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven. They could not agree. One would claim the honor for himself; another for himself. None of the disciples were in a proper frame of mind to comprehend the significance of coming events, or to appreciate the solemnity of the present occasion. They were not prepared to participate in the Passover Supper. {RC 261.2}

Christ looked upon them sadly. Trials, He knew, were before them, and His great heart of love went out to them in tender pity and sympathy. As a manifestation of His love for them, He "took a towel, and girded himself. After that he poureth water into a bason, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel wherewith he was girded." This was a great rebuke to them all. . . . {RC 261.3}

"So after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." . . . {RC 261.4}

By the ordinance of humility we are taught an impressive lesson. Christ had shown to us the necessity of walking humbly before God, and of realizing what He has done for us by the gift of His Son. Christ knew that His disciples would never forget the lesson on humility given them at the Last Supper. In taking upon Himself the humblest form of service, He administered to the twelve the sternest rebuke that could have been given them. {RC 261.5}

In the eighteenth of Matthew there is recorded another lesson on humility. These lessons in the Word are given for our admonition. Those who neglect to profit by them are inexcusable. {RC 261.6}

The disciples came "unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, and said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven." {RC 261.7}

Many do not realize that by walking humbly with God, we place ourselves in a position where the enemy cannot take advantage of us. . . . Only when we submit, as willing children, to be trained and disciplined, can God use us to His glory.--Manuscript 102, 1904. {RC 261.8}

13-17. A Dedication to Service.--The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other. {5BC 1138.8}

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the

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natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in

man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13-17 quoted]. {5BC 1138.9}

This ceremony means much to us. God would have us take the whole scene, not only the single act of outward cleansing. This lesson does not merely refer to the one act. It is to reveal the great truth that Christ is an example of what we through His grace are to be in our intercourse with each other. It shows that the entire life should be one of humble, faithful ministry. . . . **The ordinance of feet washing most forcibly illustrates the necessity of true humility.** While the disciples were contending for the highest place, in the promised kingdom, Christ girded Himself, and performed the office of a servant by washing the feet of those who called Him Lord. He, the pure, spotless Lamb of God, was presenting Himself as a sin-offering; and as He now ate the Passover with His disciples, He put an end to the sacrifices which for four thousand years had been offered. In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, He instituted a memorial service, in the ceremony of feet washing, and the sacramental supper, to be observed by His followers through all time and in every country. These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service called for unselfish ministry (MS 43, 1897). {5BC 1139.1}

Christ ate the passover supper with his disciples, then arose from the table and said unto them, "With desire have I desired to eat this passover with you before I suffer." He

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then performed the humiliating office of washing the feet of his disciples. **Christ gave his disciples the ordinance of washing feet for them to practice, which would learn them lessons of humility. He connected this ordinance with the supper.** He designed that this should be a season of self-examination, that his followers might have an opportunity to become acquainted with the true feelings of their own hearts toward God and one another. If pride existed in their hearts, how soon would it be discovered to the honest, erring ones, as they should engage in this humble duty. If selfishness or hatred to one another should exist, it is more readily discovered as they engage in this humble work. This ordinance was designed to result in mutual confessions to one another, and to increase feelings of forbearance, forgiveness of each

other's errors, and true love, preparatory to engaging in the solemn ordinance of commemorating the sufferings and death of Christ. He loved his disciples well enough to die for them. He exhorted them to love one another, as he had loved them. The example of washing the feet of his disciples was given for the benefit of all who should believe in him. He required them to follow his example. **This humble ordinance was not only designed to test their humility and faithfulness, but to keep fresh in their remembrance, that the redemption of his people was purchased upon conditions of humility and continual obedience upon their part.** "So,

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after he had washed their feet, and had taken his garments, and was set down again, he said unto them, Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. **If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them,"** {3SG 225.2}

Jesus then took his place again at the table, whereon were placed bread and unfermented wine, which arrangements had been made according to Christ's directions. He appeared very sorrowful. "And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body, which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me. Likewise, also, the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood, which is shed for you. Verily, I say unto you, I will drink no more of the fruit of the vine until that day that I drink it new in the kingdom of God." {3SG 227.1}

Here our **Saviour instituted the Lord's supper, to be often celebrated, to keep fresh in the memory of his followers the solemn scenes of his betrayal and crucifixion for the sins of the world. He would have his followers realize their continual dependence upon his blood**

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for salvation. The broken bread was a symbol of Christ's broken body, given for the salvation of the world. The wine was a symbol of his blood, shed for the cleansing of the sins of all those who should come unto him for pardon, and receive him as their Saviour. {3SG 227.2}

The salvation of men depends upon a continual application to their hearts of the cleansing blood of Christ. **Therefore, the Lord's supper was not to be observed only occasionally or yearly, but more frequently**

than the annual passover. This solemn ordinance commemorates a far greater event than the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egypt. That deliverance was typical of the great atonement which Christ made by the sacrifice of his own life for the final deliverance of his people.

{3SG 228.1}

13-17. A Dedication to Service.--The ordinance of feet washing is an ordinance of service. This is the lesson the Lord would have all learn and practice. When this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into holy relationship with each other, to help and bless each other. {5BC 1138.8}

That His people might not be misled by the selfishness which dwells in the

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natural heart, and which strengthens by self-serving, Christ Himself set us an example of humility. He would not leave this great subject in man's charge. Of so much consequence did He regard it that He Himself, One equal with God, washed the feet of His disciples [John 13:13-17 quoted]. {5BC 1138.9}

This ceremony means much to us. God would have us take the whole scene, not only the single act of outward cleansing. This lesson does not merely refer to the one act. It is to reveal the great truth that Christ is an example of what we through His grace are to be in our intercourse with each other. It shows that the entire life should be one of humble, faithful ministry. . . . The ordinance of feet washing most forcibly illustrates the necessity of true humility. While the disciples were contending for the highest place, in the promised kingdom, Christ girded Himself, and performed the office of a servant by washing the feet of those who called Him Lord. He, the pure, spotless Lamb of God, was presenting Himself as a sin-offering; and as He now ate the Passover with His disciples, He put an end to the sacrifices which for four thousand years had been offered. In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had observed, **He instituted a memorial service, in the ceremony of feet washing, and the sacramental supper, to be observed by His followers through all time and in every country.**

These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service called for unselfish ministry (MS 43, 1897). {5BC 1139.1}

Test of the Heart.--This ordinance of feet washing was made a religious service. . . . It was given as something to test and prove the loyalty of the children of God. When modern Israel observes the sacramental ordinance, this ceremony should precede the partaking of the emblems of the Lord's death. {Ev 275.3}

This ordinance was given for the benefit of Christ's disciples. And Christ meant all that He said when His lips uttered the words, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. . . . If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." He designed by this to test the true state of the heart and mind of those who participated therein.--Manuscript 8, 1897. {Ev 275.4}

For **All Time in Every Country.**--In the place of the national festival which the Jewish people had

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observed, **He instituted a memorial service, the ordinance of feet washing and the sacramental supper, to be observed through all time by His followers in every country.** These should ever repeat Christ's act, that all may see that true service calls for unselfish ministry.--Signs of the Times, May 16, 1900. {Ev 275.5}

To Be Often Commemorated.--In this last act of Christ in partaking with His disciples of the bread and wine, He pledged Himself to them as their Redeemer by a new covenant, in which it was written and sealed that upon all who will receive Christ by faith will be bestowed all the blessings that heaven can supply, both in this life and in the future immortal life. {Ev 276.1}

This covenant deed was to be ratified by Christ's own blood, which it had been the office of the old sacrificial offerings to keep before the minds of His chosen people. Christ designed that this supper should be often commemorated, in order to bring to our remembrance His sacrifice in giving His life for the remission of the sins of all who will believe on Him and receive Him. This ordinance is not to be exclusive, as many would make it. Each must participate in it publicly, and thus say: "I accept Christ as my personal Saviour. He gave His life for me, that I might be rescued from death."--Review and Herald, June 22, 1897. {Ev 276.2}

Experience: Dealing Faithfully With an Interested Minister.-- Sabbath morning, when the church at _____ celebrated the ordinances, Brother _____ was present. He was invited to unite in the ordinance of feet washing, but said he preferred to witness it. He asked if participation in this ordinance was required before one could partake of communion, and was assured by our brethren that it was not obligatory,

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and that he would be welcome to the table of the Lord. This Sabbath was a most precious day to his soul; he said that he had never had a happier day in his life. {Ev 276.3}

He afterward desired an interview with me, and we had a pleasant visit. His conversation was very interesting, and we had a precious season of prayer together. I believe that he is a servant of God. I gave him my books Great Controversy, Patriarchs and Prophets, and Steps to Christ. He seemed much pleased, said he wanted all the light he could get in order to meet the opponents of our faith. He was baptized before leaving for his home, and will return to present the truth to his own congregation.-- Letter 23a, 1893. {Ev 277.1}

Not Close Communion.--Christ's example forbids exclusiveness at the Lord's supper. It is true that open sin excludes the guilty. This the Holy Spirit plainly teaches. But beyond this none are to pass judgment. God has not left it with men to say who shall present themselves on these occasions. For who can read the heart? Who can distinguish the tares from the wheat?--The Desire of Ages, p. 656. (1898) {Ev 277.2}

There may come in among you those who are not in heart united with truth and holiness, but who may wish to take part in these services. Forbid them not. --Manuscript 47, 1897. {Ev 277.3}

With Reverence.--Everything connected with it should suggest as perfect a preparation as possible. Every ordinance of the church should be uplifting. They should not be made common or cheap, or placed on a level with common things. . . . Our churches need to be educated to a higher order of reverence and respect for the sacred service of God.-- Manuscript 76, 1900.

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{Ev 277.4}

This ceremony is not to be performed listlessly, but earnestly, keeping in view its purpose and object.-- Manuscript 8, 1897. {Ev 278.1}

A Blessed Meeting.--This day has been a most precious season of refreshment to my soul. The little company here are organized into a church, and I met with them to celebrate the ordinances. I spoke from John 13, and precious ideas were impressed upon my mind in regard to the ordinance of humility. . . . There is much in this simple rite that is not seen and appreciated. I was blessed in partaking of the symbols of the broken body and spilled blood of our precious Saviour, who became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. He was our sin bearer. {Ev 278.2}

The meeting today was a very solemn occasion for all present. The testimony meeting was excellent. Everyone whose name was called responded willingly. I know that the Lord Jesus was in the midst of us, and all heaven was pleased as we followed the example of Christ. On these occasions the Lord manifests Himself in a special manner to so soften and subdue the soul, to expel selfishness, to imbue with His Holy Spirit, and to bring love and grace and peace into hearts that are contrite. {Ev 278.3}

As the meeting closed, and we turned to our tents in the woods, a soft, sweet, holy influence pervaded our hearts. My soul was filled with sweet peace.-- Manuscript 14, 1895. {Ev 278.4}

The **Purpose of the Ordinance of Service.**-- Reconciliation one with another is the work for which the ordinance of feet washing was instituted. By the example of our Lord and Master, this humiliating ceremony has been made a sacred ordinance. **Whenever it is celebrated, Christ is present by His Holy Spirit. It is this Spirit that brings conviction to hearts.** {Ev 275.1}

As Christ celebrated this ordinance with His disciples, conviction came to the hearts of all save Judas. So we shall be convicted as Christ speaks to our hearts. The fountains of the soul will be broken up. The mind will be energized, and, springing into activity and life, will break down every barrier that has caused disunion and alienation. Sins that have been committed will appear with more distinctness than ever before; for the Holy Spirit will bring them to our remembrance. The words of Christ, **"If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them," will be clothed with new power.**--Review and Herald, Nov. 4, 1902. {Ev 275.2}

As the lesson of the preparatory service is thus learned, the desire is kindled for a higher spiritual life. To this desire the divine Witness will respond. The soul will be uplifted. We can partake of the Communion with a consciousness of sins forgiven. The sunshine of Christ's righteousness will fill the chambers of the mind and the soul temple. We "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. {DA 651.1}

To those who receive the spirit of this service, it can never become a mere ceremonial. Its constant lesson will be, "By love serve one another." Gal. 5:13. In washing the feet of His disciples, Christ gave evidence that He would do any service, however humble, that would make them heirs with Him of the eternal wealth of heaven's treasure. His disciples, in performing the same rite, pledge themselves in like manner to serve their brethren. Whenever this ordinance is rightly celebrated, the children of God are brought into a holy relationship, to help and bless each other. They covenant that the life shall be given to unselfish ministry. And this, not only for one another. Their field of labor is as wide as their Master's was. The world is full of those who need our ministry. The poor, the helpless, the ignorant, are on every hand. Those who have communed with Christ in the upper chamber will go forth to minister as He did. {DA 651.2}

Jesus, the served of all, came to be the servant of all. And because He ministered to all, He will again be served and honored by all. And those who would partake of His divine attributes, and share with Him the joy of seeing souls redeemed, must follow His example of unselfish ministry. {DA 651.3}

All this was comprehended in the words of Jesus, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." This was the intent of the service He established. And He says, "If ye know these things," if you know the purpose of His lessons, "happy are ye if ye do them." {DA 651.4}

Duties are laid down in God's Word, the performance of which will keep the people of God humble and separate from the world, and from backsliding, like the nominal churches. The washing of feet and partaking of the Lord's supper should be more frequently practiced. Jesus set us the example, and told us to do as He had done. I saw that His example should be

as exactly followed as possible; yet brethren and sisters have not always moved as judiciously as they should in washing feet, and confusion has been caused. It should be introduced into new places with carefulness and wisdom, especially where the people are not informed relative to the example and teachings of our Lord on this point, and where they have prejudice against it. Many honest souls, through the influence of former teachers in whom they had confidence, are much prejudiced against this plain duty, and the subject should be introduced to them in a proper time and manner. {EW 116.2}

Again and again Jesus had tried to establish this principle among His disciples. When James and John made their request for pre-eminence, He had said, "Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister." Matt. 20:26. In My kingdom the principle of preference and supremacy has no place. The only greatness is the greatness of humility. The only distinction is found in devotion to the service of others. {DA 650.1}

Now, having washed the disciples' feet, He said, "I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." In these words Christ was not merely enjoining the practice of hospitality. More was meant than the washing of the feet of guests to remove the dust of travel. Christ was here instituting a religious service. By the act of our Lord this humiliating ceremony was made a consecrated ordinance. It was to be observed by the disciples, that they might ever keep in mind His lessons of humility and service. {DA 650.2}

This ordinance is Christ's appointed preparation for the sacramental service. While pride, variance, and strife for supremacy are cherished, the heart cannot enter into fellowship with Christ. We are not prepared to receive the communion of His body and His blood. Therefore it was that Jesus appointed the memorial of His humiliation to be first observed. {DA 650.3}

As they come to this ordinance, the children of God should bring to remembrance the words of the Lord of life and glory: "Know ye what I have done to you? Ye call Me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet; ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you. Verily, verily, I say unto you, The

servant is not greater than his lord; neither he that is sent greater than he that sent him. If ye know these things, happy are ye if ye do them." There is in man a disposition to esteem himself more highly than his brother, to work for self, to seek the highest place; and often this results in evil surmisings and bitterness of spirit. **The ordinance preceding the Lord's Supper is to clear away these misunderstandings, to bring man out of his selfishness, down from his stilts of self-exaltation, to the humility of heart that will lead him to serve his brother.** {DA 650.4}

The holy Watcher from heaven is present at this season to make it one of soul searching, of conviction of sin, and of the blessed assurance of sins forgiven. Christ in the fullness of His grace is there to change the current of the thoughts that have been running in selfish channels. The Holy Spirit quickens the sensibilities of those who follow the example of their Lord. As the Saviour's humiliation for us is remembered, thought

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links with thought; a chain of memories is called up, memories of God's great goodness and of the favor and tenderness of earthly friends. Blessings forgotten, mercies abused, kindnesses slighted, are called to mind. Roots of bitterness that have crowded out the precious plant of love are made manifest. Defects of character, neglect of duties, ingratitude to God, coldness toward our brethren, are called to remembrance. Sin is seen in the light in which God views it. **Our thoughts are not thoughts of self-complacency, but of severe self-censure and humiliation. The mind is energized to break down every barrier that has caused alienation. Evil thinking and evilspeaking are put away. Sins are confessed, they are forgiven. The subduing grace of Christ comes into the soul, and the love of Christ draws hearts together in a blessed unity.** {DA 650.5}

As the lesson of the preparatory service is thus learned, the desire is kindled for a higher spiritual life. To this desire the divine Witness will respond. **The soul will be uplifted.** We can partake of the Communion with a consciousness of sins forgiven. The sunshine of Christ's righteousness will fill the chambers of the mind and the soul temple. We "behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world." John 1:29. {DA 651.1}

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