

## Thursday

Jesus and his disciples are beginning their Passover meal when Jesus, without warning or explanation, takes on the role of servant and begins to wash people's feet. Peter looks on, we can't be sure what order Jesus did this in, but it seems that Peter was not the first one that Jesus came to. On this occasion Peter thinks for a little while before he speaks. As he watches some of the others having their feet washed, he tries to understand what is happening and how he should respond.

Is he trying to teach them something, and what might that be? But, how can this be right? Jesus is the Messiah, the Lord, the Son of God, God's chosen king, how can he be allowed to humble himself in this way?



Peter remains quiet until the moment that Jesus comes to take his feet and wash him. You can almost imagine him pulling his feet away from Jesus.

- Does Peter feel unworthy?
- Is this too personal, does Peter feel vulnerable as he realises, he needs to be cleansed by Jesus?
- Is Peter being protective of Jesus, not wanting to see him lowering himself?

In that moment Peter could remain quiet no longer, as you read the passage think about the reasons why Peter might have responded as he did?

## Jesus Washes His Disciples' Feet

**13** It was just before the Passover Festival. Jesus knew that the hour had come for him to leave this world and go to the Father. Having loved his own who were in the world, he loved them to the end.

<sup>2</sup>The evening meal was in progress, and the devil had already prompted Judas, the son of Simon Iscariot, to betray Jesus. <sup>3</sup>Jesus knew that the Father had put all things under his power, and that he had come from God and was returning to God; <sup>4</sup>so he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. <sup>5</sup>After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

<sup>6</sup>He came to Simon Peter, who said to him, "Lord, are you going to wash my feet?"

<sup>7</sup>Jesus replied, "You do not realize now what I am doing, but later you will understand."

<sup>8</sup>"No," said Peter, "you shall never wash my feet."

Jesus answered, "Unless I wash you, you have no part with me."

<sup>9</sup>"Then, Lord," Simon Peter replied, "not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!"

<sup>10</sup>Jesus answered, "Those who have had a bath need only to wash their feet; their whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you." <sup>11</sup>For he knew who was going to betray him, and that was why he said not everyone was clean.

<sup>12</sup>When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup>"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup>Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. <sup>16</sup>Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup>Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.

*John 13:1-17 New International Version (NIV)*

Peter knows his hope is in Jesus as God's chosen and sovereign king. He has read the scriptures and he says that he will defeat all of God's enemies, set his people free, and establish a kingdom of peace that will last forever. If Jesus is going to satisfy Peter's hope, he must be a king like no other.

In this deeply personal act of foot washing Jesus shows not just what he must do in humbling himself to serve others, but also the kind of king he must be to us, we must let him be our servant king if he is to be our saviour.



Peter is a leader amongst the disciples, and he feels a responsibility towards them, but like us he struggles to understand how the God of grace, mercy, and love works. Peter's hope is in Jesus the sovereign King, his faith is expressed when he accepts that Jesus' understanding is far greater than his own and lets Jesus wash him. In



that moment he allows Jesus to be the kind of king that matches God's design rather than his own. In that moment of submission, he acknowledges that Jesus' will is sovereign not Peter's, and not ours.

As we invite Jesus into the whole of our lives, our minds and our hearts often collide in confusion. Will we trust him as our sovereign and loving King?

Let's pray

Lord Jesus,

I thank you that you are my saviour and my God, my servant king.

I am sorry that I don't always trust you with every part of my life.

Please help me to let you be my sovereign King,

So that we can have the relationship that you desire,

Which is the longing of my heart,

And with your help, the focus of my mind. Amen.