

Foot-Washing

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BIG SANDY, Texas—On April 9, 2017, many people will be commemorating the suffering and death of our Lord and Savior on a date representing the night that He was betrayed.

Many among the Church of God will be using symbols that Jesus instituted in the New Testament. Those symbols are:

- Foot-washing
- Broken bread
- Small portion of wine

In this article, we will discuss the first symbol—foot-washing.

Mentioned in John

It is easy for Bible students to identify the second and third symbols listed above. Those two are listed in the Gospel accounts (Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; and Luke 22:15-20) and in a letter to the disciples in Corinth (1 Corinthians 11:23-26).

But the symbol of foot-washing is not mentioned in those sections of the Bible. So where is foot-washing mentioned in the Bible? Notice some scriptures in John 13.

John 13:1-2—"Now before the feast of the Passover, when Jesus knew that His hour had come that He should depart from this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And supper being ended, the devil having already put it into the heart of Judas Iscariot, Simon's son, to betray Him."

John 13:3-5—"Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments, took a towel and girded Himself. After that, He poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded."

John 13:6-11—"Then He came to Simon Peter. And Peter said to Him, 'Lord, are You washing my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I am doing you do not understand now, but you will know after this.' Peter said to Him, 'You shall never wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you

have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!' Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, 'You are not all clean.' "

John 13:12-17—"So when He had washed their feet, taken His garments, and sat down again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord, and you say well, for so I am. 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. Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him. If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them.' "

Way of life

Many Bible students like to explain that the example of foot-washing points to a way of life. And, as you know, that is correct. Notice a few examples.

- Matthew 20:25-18
- Matthew 23:5-12
- Philippians 2:5-8
- Philippians 2:19-22
- 1 Peter 5:1-4

Helpful ritual

Yet many disciples are pleased to practice this helpful ritual at an annual event picturing the night that He was betrayed.

John 13:17—"If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them."