



Jesus Washed His Disciples' Feet

John 13:1-17

Squire Gus paced nervously back and forth in the castle courtyard. Sir Praisealot had told him to put on sandals and meet him in the garden at noon. He had come early and could not imagine what his teacher had in store for him. Suddenly the knight appeared through a gate in the garden wall.

"Greetings to you, Squire Goofus! Today is a momentous day in your career," Sir Praisealot announced grandly. He motioned for Gus to kneel before him. "You have been practicing so hard and serving the King so well that I am promoting you to Senior Knight in Training!" He gently touched the squire's shoulders with his sword.

"That is wonderful!" Gus looked up, "What does this mean?"

"It means you get to wear this nifty sash!" he said as he placed a satin sash over his shoulder. "And now we must have the ceremonial washing of the feet!"

Gus stood slowly and stared at his teacher. "Are you going to bathe me?"

"No, you are clean in God's eyes. I shall only wash your feet." Sir Praisealot replied as he lifted a bucket from the well and poured it into a large golden bowl. Sir Praisealot removed a white cloth from around his waist dipped it in the water and knelt down before Gus.

Gus grabbed the cloth from Sir Praisealot's hand and cried, "No! I must wash your feet, sir!"

"No Gus, I must wash your feet!" Sir Praisealot gently took the cloth out of Gus' hand and said, "This is a long standing tradition! Let it be so for now."

Gus sat on a stone bench and obediently removed his sandals. "Sir Praise-a-lot, I am filled with joy and I am so grateful, but I don't understand why you need to wash my feet?"

Sir Praisealot smiled as he slid the bowl of water under Gus' feet. "Ah, this is a special way a teacher can show his love to his student just as Jesus did. I shall get out the Word of God and show you right now!" He stood up and removed the Bible from its window. "In this report Jesus knew He would be leaving soon."

"Leaving? You mean to go back to heaven?" Gus asked.

"Yes, but before going to the cross, Jesus wanted to show His disciples how very much He loved them by washing their feet. When He had finished washing their feet, He asked them, 'Do you understand what I have done for you?'"

"I was asking myself that very same question," said Gus. "Jesus was their Lord and King; they should be serving Him!"

"Ah, but the greatest king is the King who loves His people enough to serve them." Sir Praisealot found his place in the Bible and read, "Jesus said, 'Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.'"

"So, Jesus was teaching us that we should show our love by serving those around us," Gus said.

Sir Praisealot smiled and nodded. "You have learned well." He knelt and washed Gus' feet. As soon as he was finished, he helped Gus put his shoes back on.

Gus looked a little lost. "Oh, Sir Praise-lot," he said, "I only wish I could serve well. I feel like everyone around here does nice things for me and I never get to return the favor. Like just now...you, my teacher, washed my feet, but I should be the one serving others!"

Sir Praisealot smiled, "And so you shall when the time is right."

"There is no time like the present!" Gus shouted as he leapt to his feet. "I am going to begin right now by washing Duncan's feet! Come Duncan, I shall wash your hooves and then we shall have the royal painting of the toenails!"

"Wait! Gus! You don't have to paint your horse's hooves!"

"I don't?"

"No." Sir Praisealot encouraged. "Don't you see, Gus? The foot washing was just an example. During the days when Jesus walked the earth, most people wore sandals so, when they walked all day their feet got dirty. When it was time for dinner they would have to get cleaned up."

"Oh, you mean like when I wash my hands before eating?" Gus questioned.

"Yes, the Israelites would also wash their feet," Sir Praisealot explained. "Now, in wealthier homes there were servants that would come around to each person and wash their feet for them."

"But Jesus was God's own Son! He shouldn't have to do that!" Gus said.

"Precisely! Jesus didn't have to...He chose to do the lowest job to show His love for us. He did it so that we could learn from His example that we should always show love by serving one another!"

"When we do things for others we are showing our love," Gus replied, "and being more like Jesus!"

"Yes!" cried Sir Praisealot.

"And we don't necessarily have to wash their feet," said Gus. "We can serve others in many ways...like doing their chores or taking out the trash! Or we could help our little brothers or sisters with their homework! We could even give a friend a ride to church on Duncan!"

"Or, we could clean out Duncan's stable!" Sir Praisealot added.

"Yes!" Gus shouted, "No, wait! I don't want to do that! It's filthy!"

"Did Jesus say we should just do the jobs we like to do?" Sir Praisealot asked.

"No," Gus replied, "Jesus took the filthiest job. And I want to be more like Jesus so I shall serve Duncan and clean up his stable!"

"Good show my Knight in Training!"

"*Senior* Knight in Training!" Gus reminded him. "Come Duncan I shall serve the Lord by serving you! After all...Serving the King is the noblest thing!"

"And I shall help you!" Sir Praisealot added, "You're never too old or too young to set an example."

Together the two servants led Duncan to the stables.