

DEVOTION ELEVEN.

How clean are your feet?



Read: JOHN 13:1-5

[Jesus] poured water into a basin. Then he began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel he had around him. John 13:5



YOU'VE HEARD THE STORY BEFORE. They arrived in groups of two or three, talking loudly, laughing uproariously. They were Jesus' disciples: men of the sea, men of the soil, and a couple of men of the sword. They entered the second-floor room with the low ceiling, where they had occasionally met before.

By the time Jesus entered the room, they were already uncomfortable. Though no one spoke of it, everyone in the room faced the same problem: Who would wash their feet?

You see, the roads and alleys these men travelled on their way to this "upper room" were not paved. Their feet were caked with the mud, dirt, and sweat of their travels. Usually the host of a banquet would provide a slave-equipped with a pitcher of water, a pan, and a towel-at the door of his home to wash the feet of the guests as they arrived. Though no one said anything, all had noticed that there was no servant to wash their feet.

The table in the center of the room was surrounded by cushioned couches, and the head of each couch was pushed against the table, like spokes in a wheel. The table was spread with plates and cups, and the fragrance of roasted lamb and herbs and fresh bread mingled with the odour of their unwashed feet.

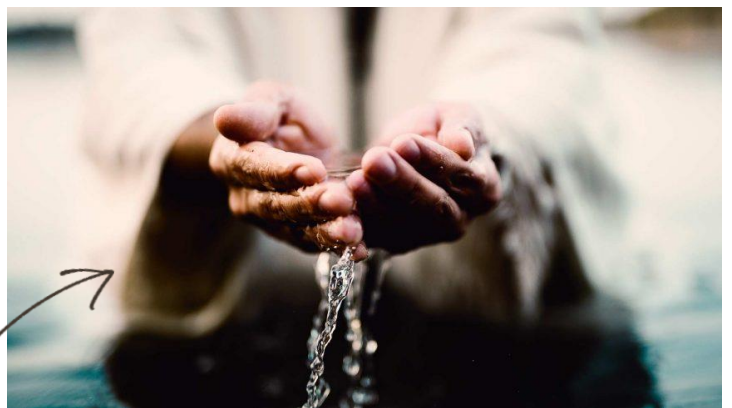
So Jesus started to wash the feet of his disciples. Tenderly, he washed the feet of James and John and the others. He even washed the feet of Judas.

Jesus knew that Judas had made arrangements to betray him. But he washed Judas's feet anyway. He treated Judas kindly and lovingly, even though he knew the terrible thing Judas planned to do to him.

It's easy to be kind to those who are kind to us. Everybody agrees that treating nice people kindly is a good thing. But kindness is right even when it isn't easy.

"If you are kind only to your friends," Jesus said, "how are you different from anyone else? Even the pagans do that" (Matthew 5:47). But Jesus said we are to be kind even when it's hard because kindness is right-whether it's easy or not.

Ask yourself: would you let Jesus wash your feet?



Have you missed any opportunities to be kind to someone recently? If so, is it too late to be kind to that person? Can you think of five different ways to show kindness to someone today? Remember that kindness has very little to do with the person you're being kind to and everything to do with what you are like.



"God, thank you that you'll help me follow through on being kind to _____ today."