

Week Five

Life's Washing in Love to Maintain Fellowship

Hymns: 16

Scripture Reading: John 13:1-17, 34-35

§ Day 1 & Day 2

- I. **Since John is a book of signs (2:11), what is recorded in John 13 concerning foot-washing should be considered a sign, which is a symbol with spiritual significance (vv. 1-17):**
 - A. **Foot-washing should not be taken merely in a physical sense but rather, and even more intrinsically, in a deeper, more important, and spiritual sense.**
 - B. **In John 1—12 the Lord as life came and brought forth the church, composed of the regenerated ones; in their spirit the regenerated ones are in God and in the heavenlies, but in their body they are still living in the flesh and walking on the earth; this shows us the necessity of the Lord's fellowship in John 13.**
- II. **“Jesus knowing that His hour had come for Him to depart out of this world unto the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the uttermost...Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all into His hands and that He had come forth from God and was going to God, rose from supper and laid aside His outer garments; and taking a towel, He girded Him-self; then He poured water into the basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded”—vv. 1, 3-5:**
 - A. **The outer garments that the Lord laid aside signify the Lord's virtues and attributes in His expression; hence, He was putting off of what He is in His expression.**
 - B. **The Lord's girding Himself signifies His being bound and**

restricted with humility—cf. 1 Pet. 5:5.

C. In ancient times the Jews wore sandals, and since their roads were dusty, their feet easily became dirty; if, when they came to a feast, they sat at the table and stretched out their feet, the dirt and smell would certainly frustrate the fellowship; hence, for the feast to be pleasant they needed foot-washing.

D. The Lord washed His disciples' feet to show them that He loved them to the uttermost (John 13:1), and He charged them to do the same to one another in love:

1. “If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet”—v. 14.
2. “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you, that you also love one another”—v. 34.

E. The Lord's washing of the disciples' feet was the washing away of their dirtiness so that their fellowship with the Lord and with one another could be maintained.

III. In our experience the defilement of the feet signifies separation from God and from one another through contact with the world; foot-washing signifies the recovery of spiritual freshness and vitality and the recovery of our fellowship with the Lord and with one another:

A. In our experience the washing water in John 13 signifies the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), the word (Eph. 5:26; John 15:3), and life (19:34; 10:10; 1 Cor. 15:45b; 2 Cor. 3:6; 1 John 5:16); the Lord washes our feet by the work of the Holy Spirit, by the enlightenment of the living word, and by the operation of the inner law of life.

B. This is not the washing away of our sins by the blood (1:9); this is why, after John 12, there is the need for such a sign in chapter 13; spiritual foot-washing saves us from staleness in our fellowship with the Lord.

C. Today the world is dirty, and we, the saints, are easily contaminated; for us to maintain pleasant fellowship with the

Lord and with one another, we need spiritual foot-washing carried out both by the Lord in His love and by one another in love.

- D. This is absolutely necessary for us to live in the fellowship of the divine life, which is revealed in John's first Epistle, a continuation of the Gospel of John.**

§ Day 3

IV. For us to experience the washing, we need to spend time in the Lord's presence and with the saints who are full of the Spirit, the word, and the divine life—cf. Matt. 6:6; 1 Cor. 16:17-18; Acts 6:5, 8; 2 Cor. 1:15:

A. If we remain in the Lord's presence, the Lord will come to us and wash us, not with the blood but with the Spirit, the living word, and the inner life:

1. Whenever we are in need of such a washing, we can just open ourselves up to the Lord as we spend time in His presence and allow the inner life to flow within us.
2. Spontaneously, something living will water, flow, and wash us, and we will become clean again; our spirit will be uplifted, and our whole being will be so pleasant in the Lord's presence.

B. “You also ought to wash one another's feet”—John 13:14:

1. In our experience, the Lord Jesus Himself and the saints who have much life can afford us such a washing.
2. It is the spiritual foot-washing ministered to one another that keeps us clean from the earthly touch; while we are walking and working on the earth, we not only need the Lord's foot-washing ministered directly within our spirit but also the foot-washing from the brothers and sisters.

C. Whenever we are about to wash others' feet, we need to follow the Lord's pattern by “laying aside our garments”; this is to lay aside our attainments, virtues, and attributes:

1. We must humble ourselves and empty ourselves; many wear a garment of spirituality and look down on others; they are proud of being spiritual.

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2. To lay aside our garments means to dethrone ourselves.

§ Day 4

- D. To be girded with a towel means that we are bound and are willing to lose our liberty; we give up our liberty for the purpose of ministering life to our dear brothers and sisters.**
- V. Each of us must learn how to love the brothers and sisters by ministering the spiritual foot-washing to them to cleanse them from the earthly touch; this keeps them new, fresh, and living; our loving one another in this way is a sign that we belong to Christ—vv. 34-35:**
- A. We can summarize defiled feet as staleness in our fellowship with the Lord; clean feet, however, denote fresh fellowship with the Lord:**
1. Not many can say today that they treasure and love the Lord as much as they did five or ten years ago; many people have to say that they do not have the same feeling that they had a year ago.
 2. Their feet are defiled, and they have become weary; this is spiritual weariness; it is the loss of spiritual freshness and vitality.
- B. The Lord is always fresh, and He wants us to be fresh all the time, not spiritually enervated; this is why He makes us lie down in green pastures, He leads us beside waters of rest, and He restores our soul; foot-washing sustains an intimate fellowship between us and the Lord and rekindles our spiritual vitality and spiritual freshness—Psa. 23:2-3; Acts 3:20; cf. Deut. 34:7.**
- C. We should never allow ourselves to become old, which is to be set, settled, and occupied; we must keep ourselves empty, open, fresh, new, living, and young with the Lord; we need to pray that the Lord as the Spirit of reality would guide us into the reality of Psalm 110:3—“Your people will offer themselves willingly/In the day of Your warfare,/In the splendor of their consecration./Your young men will be to You / Like the dew**

from the womb of the dawn.”

§ Day 5

- VI. There must be an enigmatic freshness, power, nourishment, and supply within us that will drive others to seek after God by our presence; others should desire to seek after God, and their spiritual energy should be revived as a result of meeting us and speaking to us—cf. Acts 20:20, 31:**
- A. We need the renewing of the Holy Spirit day by day so that we can always be fresh and invigorated—Titus 3:5; 2 Cor. 4:16-18.**
 - B. Foot-washing means recovering our former feelings, bringing us back to the freshness and newness of life (Rom. 6:4), and giving us fresh strength (Psa. 27:1, 4) to recover how we previously treasured the Lord as our first love by giving Him the first place in all things (Rev. 2:4-5; Col. 1:18b).**
 - C. We cannot wash others' feet unless we enjoy the Lord as our overcoming life and obtain the Spirit's help to live out such a life; the Spirit within us is our Comforter, the One who takes care of our case, our cause, and our affairs—John 14:26; Phil. 1:19-21a.**
 - D. Every one of us needs our feet washed, and every one of us needs to be prepared to wash others' feet; among all the services that Christians minister to one another, nothing is more crucial or precious than foot-washing—“If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them”—John 13:17.**

§ Day 6

VII. Foot-washing is a matter of the Lord's loving us to the uttermost in order to meet our uttermost need; each of us must learn how to love the brothers and sisters by ministering the spiritual foot-washing to them:

“How can we wash one another's feet? Suppose you have completed

your day's work and feel tired. You cannot utter any praises from your mouth. In the evening when you come to the meeting, someone asks you to pray. Halfway through your prayer, you cannot go on, and you stop. You feel as if your prayer is nothing more than a composition. However, perhaps one brother in the meeting has a fresh spirit, and his prayer refreshes your spirit. Your spiritual energy is renewed. This is washing one another's feet. Many times when we come to the meeting, we find the saints' spirit weak and downtrodden. We pray and read the Word, but nothing seems to work. The reason for this is that everyone's feet are defiled, and there is no basin to wash the feet. It is as if something is quenching our spirits. If someone would stand up at this point and wash everyone's feet by offering a prayer or saying a few words, the whole meeting will be refreshed. Without the basin and without the foot-washing, everyone's spirit is bound. The same is true in our family life. A brother or sister may unexpectedly drop by your home and fellowship a short while or give a testimony, and everyone in the family is brought into the presence of God. Before that time there was a separation between them and God, but after such a simple conversation, all the separation is gone. This is washing one another's feet. Those who do this are precious in the Lord's eyes.

“We should have an ambition before the Lord to wash others' feet. In order to wash others' feet, we must have the water; that is, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit and be in constant fellowship with the Lord. For this cause we must live in the Holy Spirit daily. Only then will we have the living water to wash others' feet. Every time we come to the meeting, we must have the living water to wash others' feet” (The Collected Works of Watchman Nee, vol. 42, pp. 281-282).

VIII. Without the spiritual foot-washing, the church life cannot be realized, and the reality of the church life would be gone:

- A. In order to wash others' feet, we must daily be filled with the Holy Spirit, be in constant fellowship with the Lord, and live in the mingled spirit—Eph. 5:18; 3:19; 2 Cor. 3:16-18; Rom. 8:16; 1 Cor. 6:17; Rom. 8:4, 6.**
- B. Therefore, the daily foot-washing definitely needs to be exercised by the Lord Himself on the one hand and by all the saints on the other hand; then we shall be able to maintain an excellent fellowship with which we shall have the real church life.**
- C. “Now I rejoice at the coming of Stephanas and Fortunatus and Achaicus, because these have filled up the lack caused by your absence; for they refreshed my spirit and yours. Acknowledge therefore such ones”—1 Cor. 16:17-18; cf. 2 Cor. 7:13.**
- D. May we have fresh spiritual experiences every day; Romans 15:32 says, “I may refresh myself and rest with you”; this is the result of foot-washing.**

DAY 1

Morning Nourishment

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

John 13:1 says that the Lord “loved His own who were in the world” and that “He loved them to the uttermost.” Because of this love the Lord washed the disciples’ feet. Hence, the foot-washing is a matter of love, a love to the uttermost... This shows the importance of foot-washing. This is our uttermost need...Therefore, the Lord has to take care of this by showing us His love to the uttermost.

When the Lord Jesus was about to wash His disciples’ feet, He laid aside His garments (v. 4). Garments here, in figure, signify the Lord’s virtues and attributes in His expression. Hence, the laying aside of His garments signifies the putting off of what He is in His expression.

The Lord washed the disciples’ feet with water (v. 5). Here water signifies the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5), the word (Eph. 5:26; John 15:3), and the life (John 19:34)...The Lord washes us spiritually by the working of the Holy Spirit, by the enlightening of the word, and by the operating of the inner law of life. In the Scriptures each of these three items is symbolized by water. (Life-study of John, pp. 327-329)

Today's Reading

The Lord came through incarnation to bring God into us and He went through death and resurrection to bring us into God... As far as our spirit is concerned, God has been brought into us by the Lord’s coming, and we have been brought into God by the Lord’s going. Yet, as far as our physical

body is concerned, we are still here on this earth. In our spirit we have been joined to something heavenly, spiritual, and eternal, but in our body we are still on the earth. In our spirit the Lord has brought God into us and us into God, in our spirit we are one with God, and in our spirit we are in the heavenlies because we are in God. But in our body we are still on earth. As far as our regenerated spirit is concerned, we are no longer the old creation; we are the new creation. However, as far as our body is concerned, we are still in the old creation and on the earth.

Although we have the divine life and have become the church, we are still living in this fallen flesh on the earth. Through the earthly touch we are often dirtied... In the ancient days of Judea, the people went almost everywhere by walking, by contacting the earth with their feet...Consequently, foot-washing was a necessity for them. Spiritually speaking, it is the same for us.

To be sinful is one thing and to be dirty is another. You may be absolutely sinless and yet be very dirty. Perhaps nothing is wrong, but you are dirty simply because of the earthly touch...We constantly touch the earth, and this makes us dirty. As a result, much of the time we are not clean. Therefore, we need foot-washing.

[The Jews] washed their feet especially when they came to a feast. A feast is a center for fellowship. At that time the Jews wore sandals, and since their roads were dusty, their feet easily became dirty. If, when they came to a feast, they would have sat at the table with dirty, outstretched feet, the dirt and smell would have frustrated the fellowship. Therefore, for a pleasant feast they needed foot-washing. When the guests were invited to a feast where they fellowshiped with one another, they had to wash their feet before the fellowship. Without the washing the fellowship would have been hindered. Before they could come together to feast and fellowship at the table, they had to be washed. Otherwise, they simply could not have had pleasant fellowship. (Life-study of John, pp. 329-331)

Further Reading: Life-study of John, msgs. 27-28

DAY 2

Morning Nourishment

Titus 3:5 ...According to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

John 15:3 You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.

Since the Gospel of John is a book of signs, what is recorded in chapter 13 concerning foot-washing must also be considered a sign having a spiritual significance. We should not take foot-washing merely in a physical sense but rather in a spiritual sense. Since this is a sign, the significance of foot-washing is that it is for fellowship with the Lord and with one another...While we are in this world, we touch the earth day by day...Foot-washing means that while we are still on this earth, the Lord as the life-giving Spirit washes our feet; that is, the Lord always keeps our walk clean from every kind of dirt due to the earthly touch.

In chapter 13 the Lord established an example by washing the disciples' feet that they might have a pleasant time of fellowship, enjoying the Lord and one another. We need such foot-washing today...Today the world is dirty, and we, the saints, are easily contaminated. For us to maintain pleasant fellowship with the Lord and with one another we need spiritual foot-washing. (Life-study of John, pp. 331-332)

Today's Reading

Many times you are not sinful, but you are dirty. Dust is everywhere. How easy it is to get dirty... Even as you are driving down the street on the way to the meeting, your eyes may accidentally see something that causes you to become dirty. Before you got into the car, your spirit was living and uplifted but... simply by seeing certain things on the way to the meeting place you were dirtied and your spirit went down. Sometimes, even in our fellowship we can become dirty.

For things that are sinful we need the cleansing of the blood, but for things that are dirty and not sinful we need the spiritual washing. We need a washing by the Holy Spirit, the living word, and the inner life. (Life-study of John, p. 332)

There are many things which separate us from God. These things may not be sin, but there may be worldly elements that are produced through our contact with the world. When you read the Bible and prayed in the morning, you felt that heaven was very close. But as a businessman who spends three to six hours in your office doing many seemingly “proper” things (you may not have lied or sinned at all), are you still as close to God in the evening as you were in the morning?

Students busy themselves in schoolwork at the schools, and housewives engage themselves in their household chores at home. Once a person occupies himself in these affairs, he feels as if heaven has moved away... He may still be able to set aside some time to pray, but he has nothing to say. He can only touch the superficial letter of the Word; he can no longer touch the inward reality. When the prayer meeting comes, he may want to pray, but he is short of words. Even when he does manage to think of some words to say, his conscience bothers him. He may still shout Hallelujah, and the words and sounds may still be the same, but the meaning and taste are different. He feels that something has separated him from God, but he cannot pinpoint any sin... If he was separated from God through sin, he should deal with it through the application of the blood shed on the cross. But this does not seem to be a question of sin. He only feels somewhat dimmed and has lost the former brightness ...This is different from ordinary sins. What is needed is the foot-washing. What is foot-washing? It is dealing with everything apart from sin that separates us from God.

This happens to us all the time... It is understandable when a person is separated from God through sin. But we do not know what to do when we have not sinned, yet cannot touch God. Thank the Lord that He has not only washed us of our sins, but washed our feet as well. (CWWN, vol. 42, pp. 233-234)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 42, chs. 31, 36

DAY 3

Morning Nourishment

John 13:14-15 If I then...have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example so that you also may do even as I have done to you.

34-35 A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another, even as I have loved you... By this shall all men know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another.

You need to spend time in the Lord's presence. Remain in the Lord's presence, and the Lord will come to you and wash you, not with the blood but with the Spirit, the living word, and the inner life... Sometimes it takes only a few minutes to wash the dirt away; at other times it may take half a day. Whenever you are in need of such a washing, just open yourself up to the Lord as you spend time in His presence, and allow the inner life to flow within you. Spontaneously, something living will flow, water, and wash you, and you will become clean again. Your spirit will be uplifted, and your whole being will be so pleasant in the Lord's presence. (Life-study of John, p. 333)

Today's Reading

We need not only the foot-washing that is exercised directly by the Lord Himself but also the mutual foot-washing of one another. The Lord told us to wash one another's feet...We must wash one another's feet by ministering the work of the Holy Spirit, by ministering the enlightenment of the Word, and by ministering the operation of the inner life. In this way, I help you, you help me, and we help one another to be washed in the work of the Holy Spirit, in the light of the Word, or in the operation of the inner life. Whenever we brothers come together for fellowship and prayer, we need to minister the spiritual foot-washing to one another.

When the Lord washed the disciples' feet, He laid aside His garments... In figure, garments here signify the Lord's virtues and attributes in His expression, and...the laying aside of His garments signifies the putting off of what He is in His expression... Likewise, whenever you are about to wash others' feet, you need to lay aside your attainments, virtues, and attributes. This is real humility, the genuine humbling of yourself. We need to humble ourselves to such a degree that we can wash others' feet.

Many [believers] are so spiritual, but they are also proud... When they come together, they look down on others, thinking that the others have never seen a heavenly vision or known anything spiritual... If we take this attitude, it will be impossible for us to minister foot-washing to others. Whenever we come together with the saints, on the contrary, we must take off our garments and forget our attainments...We all have been guilty of this attitude... If we take this proud attitude, we can never help others...We must lay aside all degrees of spirituality and become simple and general, saying to ourselves, "I am nothing, and nothing within me is special. I have only a towel, a piece of cloth, to gird me."... Sometimes people come threateningly with the attitude of a policeman wearing a uniform. Some come wearing a uniform of spirituality, while others wear the uniform of the deeper life, and still others are clad with the uniform of the so-called gifts. They all must lay aside their uniforms before they can minister any kind of foot-washing to others. We should not say this to others; we must say it to ourselves.

Whenever we have the sensation that someone has offended us, we always consider ourselves higher than that person, thinking that he is lower, that he owes us something, and that we have a claim upon him...You need to put aside your garments, lower your standard, and come down from your throne. In a sense, laying aside your garments means to dethrone yourself. Do not sit on the throne judging your brother, saying, "You offended me." (Life-study of John, pp. 337-340)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1982, vol. 2, "The Fulfillment of the Tabernacle and the Offerings in the Writings of John," chs. 33-34

DAY 4

Morning Nourishment

Psa. 23:2-3 He makes me lie down in green pastures; He leads me beside waters of rest. He restores my soul; He guides me on the paths of righteousness for His name's sake.

Acts 3:20 So that seasons of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord and that He may send the Christ, who has been previously appointed for you, Jesus.

Not only do we need to lay aside the garments of our attainments, but we also need to be girded with a towel. This means that we must be bound, that we must lose our liberty. The feet were washed with water and also wiped with the towel with which the Lord was girded. In other words, the more we are willing to be bound for the sake of others, the more we shall be able to minister to others and wipe their feet. Otherwise, the more we are free, the more we shall damage others...We simply give up our liberty for the purpose of ministering something to our dear brothers and sisters. (Life-study of John, p. 340)

Today's Reading

Each of us must learn how to love the brothers and sisters by ministering the spiritual foot-washing to them. Sometimes when I come to visit you, you can minister some sort of foot-washing to me by showing your love toward me, and I have to show the same love toward you so that some foot-washing will be ministered to you to cleanse you from the earthly touch. We must do this, otherwise the fellowship between us could not be maintained. Fellowship can be maintained between one another only when love ministers such a foot-washing... More than twenty-five years ago when I was working with the leading co-workers such as Brother Watchman Nee and others, I received much help by this kind of

foot-washing from them. Every time I contacted them, I sensed some sort of foot-washing to keep me clean from the earthly touch. They loved me and showed their love to me by ministering the spiritual foot-washing to cleanse me from the earthly touch. (Life-study of John, pp. 342-343)

We can summarize defiled feet with a few words—staleness in fellowship with the Lord. Clean feet, however, denote fresh fellowship with the Lord. How many can say today that they treasure the Lord and love the Lord as much as they did five or ten years ago? Many people have to say that they do not have the same feeling that they had a year ago. Their feet are defiled, and they have become weary. This is spiritual weariness; it is the loss of spiritual freshness and vitality.. [Foot-washing] means recovering our former feelings, bringing us back to the freshness of life, and giving us fresh strength to treasure what we previously treasured ...Thank the Lord that He washes our feet all the time.

Today many believers in Christ have become stagnant in their spiritual growth. They sing, praise, and pray reluctantly. Sometimes this is the result of sin, but many times this is not the result of any sin. They simply have defiled feet, and they have become spiritually enervated. We have to realize that the Lord wants us to be fresh all the time. This is why He says that He leads us to the green pastures (Psa. 23:2)...The Lord wants us to be fresh... every day. We may have been yellow yesterday, but we can be green again today. We may have been yellow this morning, but we can be green this afternoon. The Lord is fresh running water; He does not flow for five minutes and then stop. He flows continuously, daily, monthly, and yearly. There is not a minute in which He is short. He is always fresh, and He is constantly refreshing us. This is the life that the Lord is leading us to live. Here is power, joy, peace, and holiness. Only by living this way can we express the Lord's life. After the victory at Jericho, there is still the victory at Ai. After great victories, there are still small, daily victories. This should be our daily experience before the Lord. (CWWN, vol. 42, pp. 235-237)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1964, vol. 1, "A Young Man in God's Plan," ch.

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DAY 5

Morning Nourishment

2 Cor. 4:16 Therefore we do not lose heart; but though our outer man is decaying, yet our inner man is being renewed day by day.

Rom. 6:4 We have been buried therefore with Him through baptism into His death, in order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so also we might walk in newness of life.

I have a word specifically for the co-workers... [God] has put us in the world so that our presence would create a hunger and thirst for righteousness in sinners, believers, and the world... There must be an enigmatic freshness, power, nourishment, and supply within us that will drive others to seek after God by our presence. Others should have a desire to seek after God as a result of meeting us and speaking to us... If our reading of the Bible, prayer, service, and gospel preaching do not produce such a powerful hunger within man, our work has failed. (CWWN, vol. 42, p. 238)

Today's Reading

Many who knew Miss Barber can testify that she was very different from others. Whenever someone went to her and sat in front of her, spontaneously he would realize how much he was off. He would realize that he did not have what she had and would aspire for what she had. Fifteen years ago (1921) when I first became a Christian, I was very proud. I thought highly of myself because I was able to read one or two chapters of the Bible a day with some understanding. (Very few people are proud outwardly; most people are proud inwardly.) I went to her to tell her about this. After I prayed a few words with her, I saw my pride before she even opened her mouth to rebuke me. I knew that I did not have what she had.

This is foot-washing. My feet were washed by her presence. I met God. Prior to that I was living outside of God, and I was old and dark. But once I came to her, I was refreshed and enlightened...We often have the same sensation—we feel that we are washed after talking to certain brothers. Our spiritual energy is revived; we can touch and feel God once more. This is foot-washing.

A few days ago, I felt that my feet were defiled. At first I thought that I had sinned, and I proceeded to deal with my sins. But God was still very far from me. I felt that there was a separation between myself and God... Later, I saw a sister who had been saved for only two or three months. She told me of her salvation experience and told me how she was persecuted by her family. She hoped that I would give her some help. When I heard this, I said, "Thank the Lord. When I came, my feet were defiled. But when I leave, my feet will be clean because your testimony has washed away the oldness in my experiences." The book of Titus mentions the renewing of the Spirit (3:5). This is a very precious expression. We need the renewing of the Spirit so that we can always be spiritually fresh and invigorated.

We have to aspire to wash others' feet. However, we cannot wash others' feet unless we have the overcoming life and the Spirit's help to live out such a life...We have to be fresh all the time before we can wash others' feet.

The Lord said, "You also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14)...Those who were spiritually fresh but who have lost their freshness need the washing. Every one of us needs our feet washed, and every one of us needs to be prepared to wash others' feet. The Lord said, "If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet." Among all the services that Christians minister to one another, nothing is more crucial or more precious than foot-washing. "If you know these things, blessed are you if you do them" (v. 17). I love what Brother Yu has said many times: "The Bible today is more precious than the Bible yesterday." May we have fresh spiritual experiences every day. Romans 15:32 says, "I may refresh myself and rest with you." This is the result of foot-washing. (CWWN, vol. 42, pp. 238-240)

Further Reading: CWWN, vol. 37, ch. 18

DAY 6

Morning Nourishment

Eph. 5:18 And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissoluteness, but be filled in spirit.

Rom. 15:32 So that coming to you in joy through the will of God, I may refresh myself and rest with you.

How can we wash one another's feet? Suppose you have completed your day's work and feel tired. You cannot utter any praises from your mouth. In the evening when you come to the meeting, someone asks you to pray. Halfway through your prayer, you cannot go on, and you stop. You feel as if your prayer is nothing more than a composition. However, perhaps one brother in the meeting has a fresh spirit, and his prayer refreshes your spirit. Your spiritual energy is renewed. This is washing one another's feet. Many times when we come to the meeting, we find the saints' spirit weak and downtrodden. We pray and read the Word, but nothing seems to work. The reason for this is that everyone's feet are defiled, and there is no basin to wash the feet. It is as if something is quenching our spirits. If someone would stand up at this point and wash everyone's feet by offering a prayer or saying a few words, the whole meeting will be refreshed...The same is true in our family life. A brother or sister may unexpectedly drop by your home and fellowship a short while or give a testimony, and everyone in the family is brought into the presence of God. Before that time there was a separation between them and God, but after such a simple conversation, all the separation is gone. This is washing one another's feet. Those who do this are precious in the Lord's eyes. (CWWN, vol. 42, p. 281)

Today's Reading

We should have an ambition before the Lord to wash others' feet. In order to wash others' feet, we must have the water; that is, we must be

filled with the Holy Spirit and be in constant fellowship with the Lord. For this cause we must live in the Holy Spirit daily. Only then will we have the living water to wash others' feet. Every time we come to the meeting, we must have the living water to wash others' feet. We should never try to wash others' feet without water; that will only defile their feet even more. Those who cannot wash others' feet may still fellowship and communicate with God, but their spirits are definitely cold. Today the Lord does not wash anyone's feet directly. Instead, He charges us to wash one another's feet. We must all learn to be those who can wash one another's feet. (CWWN, vol. 42, pp. 281-282)

We need the spiritual foot-washing to cleanse us from the earthly touch and to keep our spiritual fellowship in a good condition. Then it is possible to realize the church life. If the church life is to be kept fresh, new, pleasant, and living, we continually need this foot-washing... Every church needs to pray for this. Then the church will be preserved in newness and freshness.

The Lord came to bring God into us, and He went to bring us into God. Now there is the real mingling of the divine Spirit with our human spirit. Humanity is mingled with divinity, and divinity is mingled with humanity. This is the church, the Body of Christ. In their spirit the Christians are heavenly, eternal, and spiritual, but in their physical body they are still on this earth and in the old creation. Hence, there is the need for them to be kept clean from all the earthly touch in order that the fellowship of the Body and the fellowship with the Lord might be maintained. This fellowship is maintained by foot-washing. Foot-washing is very, very important because the fellowship with the Lord and with one another can never be maintained without it. Without it, the church life cannot be realized. In fact, the reality of the church life would be gone. Therefore, the daily foot-washing definitely needs to be exercised by the Lord Himself on the one hand and by all the saints on the other. Then we shall be able to maintain an excellent fellowship with which we shall have the real church life. (Life-study of John, pp. 343-344)

Further Reading: CWWL, 1994-1997, vol. 5, "The Vital Groups," ch. 8

<< **WEEK 5 — HYMN** >>**Hymns, #16 Our Father, as the evergreen**

Worship of the Father — His Newness

- 1 Our Father, as the evergreen,
Thou art forever new;
Thou art the ever living Lord,
Thy freshness as the dew.

Chorus

- O Father, Thou art unchanging,
Thou never hast grown old;
Thru countless ages, ever fresh,
Thy newness doth unfold.
- 2 O Thou art God, and Thou art “new”;
Without Thee all is worn,
But all with Thee is ever fresh,
Though many years have gone.
- 3 Each blessing Thou hast given us
Thy newness doth contain;
Thy covenant, Thy ways are new,
And ever thus remain.
- 4 Now we Thy new creation are—
New spirit and new heart;
We’re daily from the old renewed,
New life Thou dost impart.
- 5 The earth and heavens will be new
And Thy new city share;
New fruits each month will be supplied,
For all is newness there.
- 6 O Father, Thou art ever new,
And all is new in Thee;
We sing the new eternal song,
New praise we give to Thee.

