

How are your feet doing today? Are they in good shape? Are they clean? Does anybody need a foot washing?

John's foot washing was a common practice in Jesus' day. The roads of Palestine were dirt. In dry weather, they were thick with dust and when wet, they were deep in mud. People wore sandals, which gave little protection against the dust or the mud. It is for that reason that there were always water pots at the door of a house; and a servant was there with a pitcher and a towel to wash the soiled feet of the guests as they came in. When Jesus and the disciples entered the house to celebrate the Passover, they did not have any servants to take care of their feet.

For some reason, none of the disciples noticed the pitcher of water, the basin or the towel that was set there for their use. Normally, they would have taken turns with the washing of feet, but tonight, they thought nothing about it. Tonight all of them sat stubbornly in their places and didn't want anything to do with that particular job because it was below them.

And so Jesus got up from the table and did the job of the servant. He got up to do the job of the servant in order to teach the disciples a lesson which is that there is only one kind of greatness, the greatness of service.

Not all the work that needs doing in this world is glorious or glamorous. But it is often the people who are willing to take on any task that are able to get the job done. Many ladies here have told me that I am the first pastor that they have seen do dishes. I have also cleaned bathrooms because somebody made a mess. These are jobs that others may see as below the pastor's responsibility, but if they need to be done, then they need to be done.

You remember how our lesson on foot washing ends. After Jesus finishes, he says, "If I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have set you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you." Jesus is

telling us that if we see something that needs to be done, then get up and do it. The task that needs doing doesn't matter.

Even though it was not included in our gospel for today, Maundy Thursday is the day in which we received the sacrament of Holy Communion. Through the sharing of his last supper with the disciples, we received the Eucharist and are able to eat of the body and drink of the blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins. But we also witnessed a foot washing which is the servant's work and Jesus did that very work as an example for us to follow. That means it is OUR work. Our Christian calling. And as Jesus said, "If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them."