

Having No Part In Jesus

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John 13:8

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.”

Who of us doesn't want to go all the way with Jesus? I speak to all my brothers and sisters this morning; who of you who love the Lord do not long to draw nearer to His heart? How often I languish that my part in Jesus is not larger and more consuming. Surely, Peter would have all of Jesus, but he wanted all of Jesus his way.

He was quite satisfied not to have Jesus wash his feet. Having a share in Jesus and His ministry, thought Peter, did not have to include the embarrassing act of Jesus taking his dirty feet in hand and washing them.

Often there are things that Christ will demand we submit to if we are to have part in Him, things not easy and maybe even embarrassing. Often they come very small and insignificant. What Jesus asked Peter to submit to was not extraordinary; it was not a huge thing. In fact, Peter's role was completely passive. There was nothing for him to do but to submit to the extraordinary and huge thing Jesus was doing. Nothing at all for him to do but let it happen.

I wonder if there were events in your past, small things that you didn't recognize them as important at all. You didn't take care to do what the Bible says, or you did not consider the moment consequential, and, therefore, you sinned. You argued with yourself and the Spirit that it was a small thing. In the grand scheme of things it did not matter, but since then your faith and relationship with Jesus have not been the same. Remember, the Bible says it is the small foxes that spoil the vines. Oh, yes, we must guard against the scandalous sins, the public hypocrisy, the sins that stain and tarnish our testimonies before men, but we must also work diligently to keep ourselves clean from the small sins that only stain our own consciences. It is those sins tarnish our relationship with Jesus as much as the outrageous sins.

I. The Bible's Missed Opportunities

The Bible is full of stories where men resisted the Lord in small ways—that is what men deem small. There were Adam and Eve. Their sin was not murder or adultery. It was snacking on some fruit that God told them not to eat. And then there was Lot's wife who did no more than sneak a peek at one of the most amazing displays of God's judgment. It was not like she was planning

to reject God's plan for her life. She had left all her belongings, clothes, and furnishings; home; she left everything when the angels of God said leave. Yet, in her obedience there was half-heartedness; there was something that kept her back from full and complete obedience. She became a pillar of salt, a long enduring monument of the price of missing God. Is there half-heartedness in your obedience?

King Saul is another reminder of a missed opportunity to go all the way with God and see God do amazing things. His divine directive was simple—leave nothing alive. But a few choice livestock and one king that Saul could parade around, lauding his conquest kept him from being a great king who had God's heart and his kingdom was taken from him and given to one who was a man after God's heart.

Remember the nameless prophet of First Kings 13? You perhaps don't, let me remind you. God sent him on a mission to prophesy against wicked King Jeroboam. The power of God was mightily unleashed by the young prophet with no name. When Jeroboam stretched his arm and told soldiers to seize the prophet, his hand withered and the king's altar of abomination split in two. Humbled and scared, Jeroboam cried to the prophet for healing and the prophet prayed and Jeroboam was healed. It was a revival, nothing short of miraculous. But the story does not end as it began for the young prophet.

When an old retired and compromised prophet heard about the impressive meeting the young prophet had earlier that day, he got up and went after the mighty man of God. Finding the preacher, the older prophet lied to him and told him that God gave him the command to find him and bring him back home for dinner. The young man consented, but herein was the problem—God had commanded him not only to King Jeroboam but not to eat dinner nor be social with anyone. After dinner and on his way back home, God sent a lion to kill him. He died without his name being recorded. What was his crime? His crime was believing a backslidden preacher rather than God and staying for dinner.

As you can see you don't need to sin in a big way to miss God. You don't need to sin in a scandalous way to lose out fellowship with Christ. Peter came close, but Jesus warned him and he reconsidered. I wonder how many of you Jesus is warning this morning and how many of you will reconsider and obey, and how many will not and will disobey?

II. Peter's Almost Missed Opportunity

The English does not translate well what Peter actually said. It was a bit more boisterous than our Bibles read, but, then again, when did Peter not speak boisterously. Even after Jesus rebuked him, his change of mind was dramatically stated, "Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!'" (John 13:9).

Listen to verse eight and what Peter actually said, in the Greek, as I transliterate it as best I can. When the towel-clad Jesus placed the basin of water at Peter's feet, Peter said, "Never, never shall

you wash my feet as the long as the ages roll.” It was like Peter said, “You’re never, ever washing my feet, even until the end of the age!” At least you knew where Peter stood, even when he was wrong. He’s like what one deacon said about his pastor, “My pastor is not always right, but he’s never in doubt.”

Peter emphatically made sure everyone in the room knew his position. But, here’s my question, why resist the Lord in something so small? A foot washing was customary in that day, especially when you visited someone’s home. Why make a big deal out of nothing? I suggest it’s for the same reasons we resist the Lord and full obedience. It comes down to one word, and you already know what it is, don’t you?

A. Pride.

Look at Peter. He realized it ought to be him, Peter, that washed Jesus’ feet. He knows foot washing is a job that belongs to the servant and so he’s humiliated at this moment. He’s caught realizing he didn’t think enough of Jesus to offer to wash His feet. But did you notice that Peter doesn’t try to wash the Lord’s feet? Humility is a clever mask of pride. Not all pride is chest-thumping and loud-mouthed. Some pride hides behind a false humility. We act the part of humility and then take pride in our fine performance.

A man was nominated to a position in the church and got up, in what appeared to be great humility, and said, “I’m not worthy for this position; I’ve a terrible temper and I’m very undependable.” He then sat down proud of how humble he must have appeared to everyone. Just then another man in the church stood up and said, “I second everything he just said. He has a terrible temper, and you can never count on him to keep his word. He’s right he’s not worthy.” The other man jumped up and shouted, “How dare you say such terrible things about me!”

Oswald Chambers said this about false humility that is really pride: “Never bother your head as to whether what you say sounds humble before men or not, but always be humble before God, and let Him be all in all” (*My Utmost for His Highest*). C. S. Lewis put it like this, “Humility is not thinking less of yourself, it’s thinking of yourself less”.

So much of what we do in the name of humility is nothing more than “look at me.” Peter, caught and embarrassed, says, “Oh no, Lord, You’ll never wash my feet. I’m too humble to let you do this.” But all he signaled was his proud heart. Where there is pride there will always be a carnal resistance to the ways of God.

B. Carnal Resistance to the Ways of God.

You can’t walk in step with God when you’re caught up in you. Along with pride comes a carnal resistance to the ways of God because we feel they are undignified and humiliating, or just not appropriate for the moment. How many times has the Lord knocked on the door of your heart and whispered that still small voice, “This is what I want you to do, talk to a friend, maybe even

apologize,” but because of pride you resisted. It’s because there is this carnality within us, this fleshly worldliness that says, “That’s too humiliating, too embarrassing, that wasn’t even that big of a deal anyway.” You cannot walk with God and insist upon your ways of doing His will.

C. Carnal Confidence in our Relationship to God.

There is a carnal confidence in our relationship with God that is not humble or spiritual. I mean by that this: we take for granted our salvation and God’s amazing grace. It becomes so familiar it loses its power. We mistakenly think that grace not only cleanses us from sin but covers our sin. We use grace like a cover, a shield to justify our fleshly desires. We are become so confident in the saving power of God that we become casual of our sin. Sin loses its horror and we become no longer fearful of sin.

Afraid of sin? Yes. “Pastor, I thought we were only supposed to fear the Lord.” Dear friend, when you know God—note the qualification—you know He’s holy. And when you know a holy God, you naturally fear that which is unlike God, that which is unholy. The closer you draw to His blessed heart of love, the more you are afraid of sin, not less.

Why do I say this?

III. Jesus Foot Washing Illustration

Jesus was trying to illustrate something to the disciples. Yes, He was saying to serve and love one another, but there is a sub theme and Jesus mentions it in verses nine and ten. When Jesus said, “You’ll have no part in Me if you don’t let Me do this,” well, Peter wants a bath now.

“Simon Peter said to Him, ‘Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head!’ I O 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.’” (John 13:9-10)

Jesus is stating a fact. The fact is this:

A. Salvation has Multiple Stages.

Salvation is not one-dimensional it’s multi-dimensional. To say I’m being saved means many different things. I’m being saved from a whole lot of things, namely Michael. The old Devil has already gotten his but Michael is still getting his. In one blow, Jesus put a blow to old Lucifer’s head, but He’s not after my head or to give me a crushing blow. He’s after me to sand and smooth and polish until I’m finally changed into His image. Salvation is multi-staged.

One of the most clever and saddest things the devil has done is to convince good people that salvation is a single event. I’ve preached it so much; I know you’re tired of it. But I must do this until my last breath. Just because you had an event and you called that conversion doesn’t mean

you have been saved. Just because you prayed the prayer and went forward doesn't mean you received all of God's salvation. Salvation is infinite and eternal, tell me how you got it all in one moment. You're just getting started.

To equate salvation as one event is analogous to considering the birth of the baby as the sum total of the child's life. The birth is the beginning of life not infant-hood, adolescence, young-adulthood, middle-age, and old-age all wrapped up in one. Life has stages and so does eternal life. None of us would disagree that eternal life in heaven with our Beloved Lord is going to be different than life with Him here on this side of heaven. It's going to get better.

When we were praying for the Bridges the other day as their husband and dad was enduring a sudden stroke, Greg was perceptive to say, "We need to be careful not to pray him out of heaven, because that's where we're all wanting to go." Or are we? I sometimes wonder as I watch believers put all their eggs in the basket called this present evil age. We live as if we're going to live here forever. No, there is a difference yet to come, and I'm telling you that eternal life "yet to come" has already begun now.

"And this is eternal life that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent."

Jesus says eternal life has already begun for those who believe and know God. So there are different phases of the Christian life here and now as there will be in the heavens to come.

B. Regeneration.

One of the stages is the regenerative stage.

"Jesus said to him, 'He who is bathed ...'" (John 13:10)

Jesus is saying that when a man truly believes upon the Lord Jesus Christ he gets a full bath, a complete bath. He is washed by the Lord in the blood of the Lamb and he comes out spotless.

If you've believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ, I want you to know that you were cleansed of every sin—past and present and, hallelujah, future! As far as their penalty, all my sins were dealt with. The Bible says, "according to His mercy He saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Spirit." There is a washing one believes upon Jesus Christ, truly trusting Him. This washing is so thorough the Bible calls it the new birth. You become a new creation.

But that's not the only stage.

C. Sanctification.

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.' (John 13:10)

If you've had a bath, why do you need to wash your feet? You need to understand the first century's bathing ritual. It wasn't a daily experience, no, there were no daily showers in Jesus' day. And, by the way, there weren't antiperspirants or deodorants either. But for sure, you took a bath when you were invited over to dinner as a guest to someone's home. Customarily, you would take a bath, put on your best clothes, and go to that person's home. But, of course, the streets weren't paved so by the time you got there your feet were dirty. Upon arrival at the person's home, it was again customary that the homeowner, if he had a servant or slave, that person would wash your feet or maybe homeowner would do it or at least offer you a basin or towel and you would do it. Then you would be completely clean.

That's what Jesus is saying. "Let Me wash your feet, Peter. You don't need a bath, you've already been regenerated, you've already been cleansed, but your feet are dirty, and I'm using the metaphor of feet washing to tell you that after you're saved there is an ongoing cleansing that's necessary. Then you're clean."

Those whom God justifies, He sanctifies. Those who have been genuinely born again, you were bathed and every bit cleaned. The stain of sin was removed. What a detergent is the blood of Jesus. But as you walk in this world, your feet get dirty. Walk is an important New Testament word. I don't know if you know that or not, but it's used often to be a metaphor for the way you live.

For example, "we walk by faith and not by sight." Here it has nothing to do with being a pedestrian, it's about your lifestyle. You live by faith. The Bible says, "Walk in the Spirit and you shall not fulfill the lusts of the flesh." "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, that God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

The metaphor of walking means that as you live in this world you get some dirt on you. Dirt, in this case, is sin. That's why the Bible says in 1 John 1:9, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness." He's already given you a bath. It's not that you need to be regenerated or re-regenerated or re-born again. No. You've already had a bath, but as you're walking through this world, that which touches this world, that part of you that interacts with the world, gets a little dirty. Therefore God must continually apply the sanctifying power of His grace. Salvation, therefore, continues in this measure.

What is Jesus saying to Peter? "Peter, if you don't let Me sanctify you, you will have no part in Me." To refuse to let Jesus sanctify you beyond your conversion experience is to lose your part in Christ.

Notice to whom He's talking. He's not talking about Judas, although He mentions him at the end of the tenth verse. He's not talking about an apostate here; He's talking to His apostle Peter, His chief apostle at this point. He says, "Peter, if you think salvation is a single event and you've got

it taken care of and that's all there is to it, I'm telling you, you have no part in Me. You need to keep going on with Me. You need to keep letting Me work in you because you still need your feet cleansed as you traverse through a polluted world.

How clean are you this morning? Is there something there that you've let stay because it would be too hard to rectify or too embarrassing to try and correct? Are you refusing Jesus to wash your feet? You know, we Christians, we'll rationalize and justify. We think "worldliness" is those scandalous sins normally associated with the world. You know, adultery, fornication, prodigal living. But worldliness can also be found in the normal, routine, mundane life.

A man can be straight as an arrow, upright, and not participate in those activities we call "worldly" and be just as worldly. Jesus taught us that worldliness includes more than those terrible sins we think of. He said in Luke 17:26-30,

"And as it was in the days of Noah, so it will be also in the days of the Son of Man: 27 They ate, they drank, they married wives, they were given in marriage, until the day that Noah entered the ark, and the flood came and destroyed them all. 28 Likewise as it was also in the days of Lot (listen to their great sins): They ate, they drank, they bought, they sold, they planted, they built; 29 but on the day that Lot went out of Sodom it rained fire and brimstone from heaven and destroyed them all. 30 Even so will it be in the day when the Son of Man is revealed."

I have to ask you, what's so wicked about planting a garden or building a home or eating and drinking or buying and selling? Nothing. You should have answered that for me. I'm going to enjoy my meal today. A great thing about Mother's Day is that we guys get to enjoy the trimmings. And in order to eat you have to buy and somebody's got to sell. And if they didn't build homes, where would you eat and drink? Thank God for homebuilders.

So what's the point? How is this so dreadful that God would send fire and brimstone? Here's the point. When building homes and eating and drinking and buying and selling and planting gardens are more important than Jesus, it's worldliness.

Where is your thirst for holiness? That's what Jesus is saying. "Peter, where is your thirst to be clean as I am?" Where is your desire to walk in holiness as before? Holiness is one of those words that has fallen on disrepute these days. It's fallen on evil times. No one likes to talk about holiness and the moment you do it always comes with another word. Legalism. The moment you try talking about holiness someone will say, "Oh, that's just a bunch of that legalism stuff. We live by grace." Well, what does the Bible say? The Bible says, "Pursue holiness, without which no man will see the Lord."

"Peter, if you don't let Me wash your feet, you can't have a part in Me." You see, God has so much more planned for you if you would submit to all His commands. The Bible defines grace in Titus 2:11-12,

“For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men, I 2 teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in the present age...”

That’s an interesting definition. The next time somebody asks you what it means to be saved, tell them it means that you have to deny your ungodly and worldly lusts and live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present evil age. That doesn’t fit our definition does it? How does the Lord know who are His? What’s the seal of the Lord? That “everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity” (2 Timothy 2:19). Are you willing to be clean today? Are you willing to do whatever Jesus says to you?

We sang it this morning. “I surrender all.” That’s kind of hard, isn’t it? A deacon wouldn’t sing that song and his little boy asked him after the service, “Daddy, why didn’t you sing ‘I Surrender All?’” “Because I couldn’t surrender all.” I appreciate the audience of that man. The next time we sing it, brother, we might not have many people sing it. It is hard when you really mean it, isn’t it? Or is it? Is it hard to say “I surrender all” when you know to whom you’re surrendering all? That’s what we’ve lost in all this.

“You shall have no part in Me.”

“Peter, it’s not about the ministry. It’s about Me. If you love Me, you’ll let Me do this.” One of the most blasphemous hours of the week is the worship hour. We sing songs like “All to Jesus I surrender,” and we don’t mean it. We’ve just blasphemed and taken His name in vain. We promise to do all this stuff but Jesus said, “That’s not what I’m after. I’m after you thirsting to be holy like me.”

As I bring this message to a conclusion, I pray it never concludes but ever lives in the conscience and heart. Let Him wash your feet. There is more for you to have.

I’ll never forget, and it’s been over 10 years now, when God dealt with me about reconciling with a brother. This brother had wounded my heart. I didn’t sin against him, he sinned against me, as far as I was concerned, but I would never go to him. I was too hurt. What do you call that? Pride. For years, the Spirit strove with me and I said no. “I didn’t do anything, he did this.”

One day came and there was no doubt in my mind that if I didn’t go, God would withdrawal His blessings and power in my life. I got on the phone and traced him down and went to him with arms extended and wrapped them around him and he around me and we were joyfully reconciled. I walked away from that meeting so clean, feeling so light and clean. I saw an increase of the anointing of the Lord following that.

A grandfather said to his grandson, “Let’s go!” The grandson asked, “Where you going?” With that, the grandfather got up and left. After a while he returned and the grandson asked, “Why didn’t you take me?” “Because you asked, ‘where you going?’ If you wanted to be with me, it wouldn’t have mattered where I was going.”

Where is Jesus asking you to go with Him this morning? If you love Him, it really doesn't matter where He's going to lead you because all you want is to have your part in Him. You just want to be with Him. Amen.