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Did you hear? Did you hear that He, the Christ, the Son of God, the Saviour of the world has risen, and because of that fact that has an ongoing implication I asked yesterday a question; “What would we give for a way of being God’s people that is...” a lived encounter with Jesus Christ in the Spirit?

Today, for the same reason, I ask; “What would you do for a way of being God’s people that is...”

One of the most challenging, hence unheeded and therefore unseen by the world around us is the life of Jesus expressed in “[Do to others whatever you would like them to do to you.](#) This is the essence of all that is taught in the law and the prophets.”

Remember, Jesus came to fulfill the law not to abolish it, but to set us free from its curse. In others words; [Always do](#) for other people [everything](#) you want them to do for you still stands today. Doing, being, belonging is the essence of faith and belief (pistis) in Christ. Perhaps we have lost the text, in a measure, because we have grown up in self-sufficiency and affluence, and we no longer “*need*” to be reminded of the more dangerous powers that still float around our thinking and doing. Self-sufficiency makes these words not only an unwelcome intrusion, with its talk of doing, being and obedience, but is has become so remote that we do not know and do not intent to learn, we no longer recognize the voice of the Shepherd. But since we fail in this *always* and in this *everything*, including our listening we have an advocate in Christ, he not only came, he is still with us.

Therefore, we would have had a service today of washing each other’s feet. We would do that because we recognize something behind the action Jesus took at the last supper with his followers, washing their feet. To be

clear, the washing of feet is a very menial task, but a sign of the host welcoming a guest. Although it is not the host himself who washes the feet of his guests, this task is left to a slave to be done, a slave who has no power, no self-reliance, no affluence, it is an act, a sign that you are invited, you are welcomed, you are wanted. You are important because of who you are, not because of what you have done for the host; you simply showed up, responding to an invitation you did nothing for to deserve. Come, Go, Follow me, not because you are a sinner or a saint, but because in you there is the unique presence of God, being made in the image of God.

"I have washed and will wash your feet because you are going to be fishers of men and women and it is you who then have to wash other people's feet," not because they are saints or sinners, but because there is a unique presence of me in all people, because they all are made in the image of me.

Doing, ministering to each other's needs – Jesus shows, practices – is at the heart of the Christian Gospel. My service – Jesus was and is saying – is "to have lived among you, to have died among you, and to have risen among you and to give new life in the here and now. But it does not end here and now, there is more to come."

Therefore our service is to go forward and wash people's feet, meeting their needs, elevating them from oppressed, rejected, forgotten and reminding them of the unique presence of God in them, simply because they too are made in the image of God, to show that it is love, which is not a feeling or a thought, but a person and an action that really counts, and that reaches out to them through us. Perhaps you wash your spouses feet or your wash your own feet, to say – In you there is the unique presence of God, you too are made in the image of God, you too are loved with an unending love not because you are a saint or a sinner...but because of what God has done, is doing and will be doing."

Long ago the LORD said to Israel: "I have loved you, my people, with an everlasting love. With unfailing love I have drawn you to myself. (Jer 31:3). Just as faith and belief is expressed in relationship, so is love. Neither can be expressed, felt or be true without a relationship that continues to draw us closer to the One who created us.

Do we think that God's love or His caring purpose of creation has changed in any way?

Let me close with a word from Paul; "Either way, Christ's love controls us [compels us]. Since we believe that Christ died for all, we also believe that we have all died to our old life. He died for everyone so that those who receive his new life will no longer live for themselves. Instead, they will live for Christ, who died and was raised for them. 2 Cor 5:14-15

Holy Week – Maundy Thursday

On Holy Week Thursday, things got real. In an act of love and humility, Jesus washed His disciples' feet. They shared their last meal together. They had communion. They went to the Garden of Gethemane to pray. Judas kissed Jesus and sealed the deal for the next three days. Jesus was arrested and taken for trial. And Peter, the one who had recently declared Jesus the Messiah, denied that He even knew Him. These things hurt to read. They hurt to imagine. And they hurt because while we like to think we would have done better, we know we would likely have done the same.

Let's pray: Lord, we believe in You. Help us in our unbelief! Forgive us our lack of faith. Forgive our forgetfulness. Forgive our spiritual laziness. Forgive our judgementalism and our lack of love. Forgive our failings. And above all things, while we repent, may the burden of Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Black Saturday be overshadowed, knowing that Sunday is coming. Hover over us, protect us in Your presence, lead us out of desperation straight to Your feet. Thank You God for your unfailing kindness. Amen.

I Surrender All

Let this be true of us all!

Your friends Debbie Smeaton and Manfred