

# **May I Wash Your Feet?**

Joy Haney

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by Joy Haney

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Hazelwood, MO 63042-2299

Printing History: 1994, 1997, 2000, 2002, 2005, 2009

Cover Design by Paul Povolni

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Printed in United States of America

Printed by



WORD AFLAME PRESS

8855 Dunn Road, Hazelwood, MO 63042

[www.pentecostalpublishing.com](http://www.pentecostalpublishing.com)

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## Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Haney, Joy, 1942–

May I wash your feet?/Joy Haney.

p. cm.

Includes bibliographical references.

ISBN 0-932581-87-0

1. Service (Theology) 2. Christian life—1960–

I. Title.

BT738.4.H364 1991

248.4—dc20

91-21855  
CIP

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## CHAPTER 1

# The Great Servant Speaks

**H**arsh, blackened shadows became the backdrop for the solitary figure as he furtively made his way to the closed meeting. Unrest permeated the air, making the young man tense and his senses alert. Upon hearing measured footsteps behind him, he paused and flattened himself against the stone wall of the outer court by one of the city's prominent dwelling places.

As he waited for the footsteps to pass by, the air was suddenly punctuated by the anguished cry of a commoner being assaulted by a soldier. Breathing heavily as fear fastened itself upon him, the young man listened for the footsteps to continue on by him, when he realized the footsteps had stopped.

Questions raced through his brain, which was paralyzed with fear. What happened to the footsteps? Was someone waiting to ambush him? As the city became

somewhat quieter he knew he had to make a decision. He would miss the important meeting he was supposed to attend if he did not venture forth, but on the other hand he did not want to risk being robbed or killed. He decided to make a wild dash and start running since he was only three blocks away from his destination. Very swiftly and quietly he ran as if a pack of dogs were after him. After two blocks of heavy running he looked back, and upon hearing and seeing no one, he slowed down and walked quickly the rest of the way.

As he arrived at his destination and started up the stairs to the upper room that had been supplied by one of the good men of the city, he thought with excitement about tonight's meeting. It was to be the Passover dinner with Jesus and His disciples. He opened the door and went in, finding everyone else already there. As the disciples greeted him he quickly found his place at the long table.

It was not long until conversation flowed. Great things were being discussed when suddenly strife came among them. They began to try to decide who would be the greatest among them (Luke 22:24).

Jesus turned to them in the damp room that was uncluttered by much furniture and uttered these words that still ring and reverberate down through the corridors of time:

*He that is greatest among you, let him be as the younger; and he that is chief, as he that doth serve (Luke 22:26).*

In doing so, He reiterated what He had taught them earlier:

*Whosoever will be great among you, let him be your minister; and whosoever will be chief among you, let him be your servant (Matthew 20:26-27).*

*But he that is greatest among you shall be your servant (Matthew 23:11).*

*And whosoever of you will be the chiefest, shall be servant of all (Mark 10:44).*

Jesus not only spoke of being a servant, He showed them what it meant. He rose from the table, took a towel, and girded himself with it. After that He poured water into a basin, began to wash the disciples' feet, and then wiped them with the towel. (See John 13:1-17).

As they sat there with stunned expressions, some with dismay, Jesus came to Peter. Peter asked Him if He was going to wash his feet also. Jesus told him that he would not understand what was happening right then but that in time he would understand.

This answer did not satisfy Peter. He emphatically told Jesus that he would never allow Him to wash his feet. Jesus answered Peter, "If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me" (John 13:8).

Peter, as quickly as he had denied, promptly affirmed to Christ that he did want a part of Him. He said, "Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head" (John 13:9).

After Jesus finished washing the disciples' feet, He sat down and asked them a question: "Know ye what I have done to you?" (John 13:12).