

FAMILY DEVOTIONAL

AUGUST 23

"NO GREATER LOVE"
GRACE - THE TOWEL AND THE BASIN

Scripture References

- **John 13: 1 -17**

Quick Re-Cap

Have you ever gotten in trouble, and then someone was still nice to you anyway? That's kind of what happened at the Last Supper, except way bigger. Jesus knew His time was almost up. He was about to die on the cross. And He knew something else too: He knew Judas was going to betray Him that very night, and He knew Peter was going to pretend he didn't even know Him. Jesus wasn't confused about any of this. He knew exactly who He was, and He knew exactly what everyone in that room was about to do to Him. So what did He do with His last few hours? He didn't give a speech about how disappointed He was. He got a towel and a bowl of water, got down on His knees, and washed everyone's dirty feet, including the feet of the **guy who was about to betray Him**. Back then, washing feet was the job of the lowest servant in the whole house. It was dirty, smelly work, and important people never did it. But Jesus wasn't just being nice, He was showing everyone what grace looks like. **Grace means getting something good that you didn't earn and don't deserve.** Nobody in that room deserved to have God Himself kneel down and clean them up. That's exactly the point. Grace isn't for people who have it all together, because there's no such thing. Grace is for people who *know* they don't. When it was Peter's turn, he got uncomfortable and said, "You'll never wash my feet!" That might sound humble, but it wasn't. **Peter didn't want Jesus to see him at his dirtiest.** But Jesus told him something important: unless Jesus washes us, we can't really be close to Him at all. That's the big lesson here! We don't clean ourselves up first and THEN come to Jesus. **We come to Jesus exactly as we are, mess and all, and He's the one who cleans us up.**

Illustration

Imagine you're playing outside and you fall and scrape your knee bad. It's bleeding, it stings, and honestly it might even be a little bit your fault because you were told to slow down. Now imagine your mom or dad doesn't lecture you first or make you clean it up on your own. They just kneel right down next to you, wash the dirt out, and put on a bandage. They do this because they love you, not because you earned it. Now stretch that picture out as far as it can go. Jesus didn't wait for His followers to get their act together, apologize, or prove they deserved His help. He knelt down with a towel and basin, knowing full well what each of them had done or was about to do, and cleaned them up anyway. **That's grace: Jesus reaching for the towel before we even ask, before we even say sorry.**

Application

This week, let's ask God to help us "drop the pride", that part of us that wants to look good, or get ourselves cleaned up, before we come to Him. Instead, let's bring our real mess straight to Jesus, just like we are. Then let's ask Him to help us "pick up the towel" too. That means finding someone this week we can serve especially someone we don't think "deserves" it. That's exactly what grace looks like when we hand it to someone else.

Convo Starters

- **Has anyone ever been kind to you when you knew you didn't deserve it? How did that feel?**
- **Why do you think Peter didn't want Jesus to wash his feet, even though Jesus was trying to help him?**
- **Who is someone we could "pick up a towel" for this week? (Someone we could serve, even if it's hard?)**