

Maundy Thursday  
St. John 13:1-15  
April 18<sup>th</sup>, 2019  
Sts. Peter & Paul Evangelical Lutheran Church, UAC  
Simpsonville, SC  
Pastor Jerald Dulas

## You Are Not All Clean

*In Nomine Iesu!*

In the Name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

### **Prayer in Pulpit before Sermon:**

O Lord, send out Thy Light and Thy Truth, let them lead us. O Lord, open Thou my lips, that my mouth may show forth Thy praise. O Lord, graciously preserve me, lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be rejected. Amen.

Grace, mercy, and peace be to you from God our Father and from our Lord and Savior + Jesus Christ. Amen.

Our Lord + Jesus Christ left His throne of glory in Heaven. He divested Himself of the use and glory of His divine nature and He put on, in all humility, our flesh. The Lord and Creator of all things deigned to subject Himself to our life. He did this out of His great love for us. His hiding away of His divine nature so that He could dwell with us as a man was an act of His love. He came to serve us. He serves us by taking upon Himself our nature and by fulfilling the Law of God which we are unable to keep. He serves us by allowing Himself to be stripped bare, beaten and whipped, spit upon, mocked, and finally led to the place of the skull and crucified. He did this for us all out of His great love for us.

All things were in His hands. All things were placed into His hands by the heavenly Father. Our Lord + Jesus Christ in performing our redemption is not someone who has all the events of His Passion just happening to Him and He is reacting to them. No, our Lord is in full control of His Passion; He is in full control of our redemption from sin, death and the power of the devil. He knew when the time was at hand to complete our redemption; when it was time to fulfill all things necessary for our atonement from sin, death and the devil.

Our redemption was necessary because we were unclean on account of our sin. We inherited original sin from our first parents, Adam and Eve. We were washed in the waters of Holy Baptism, and were made clean—free from our sins. Our Lord + Jesus washed us with the waters of Holy Baptism through the working of the Holy Ghost through the Word of God connected to the waters of Holy Baptism. We are made clean on account of His love for us and for all mankind.

In Holy Baptism we were washed with water, but in a spiritual sense we were washed with the Blood of our Lord + Jesus Christ; the Blood that He spilled on the holy cross. We are now washed in His Blood. His Blood is poured out upon us. We were buried with Him in the grave. Our sins remain in His grave, and we now have life and redemption, just as He rose from the dead and lives and reigns to all eternity.

This Blood that was poured upon us in Holy Baptism; which washed away our sin, is the same Blood that we receive in the Lord's Supper. We drink our Lord's Blood and eat His Body in bread and wine, for the forgiveness of our sins. It is a weekly reminder of what our Lord has done for us out of love for us, and what we receive on account of His suffering and death on the tree of the holy cross.

He won forgiveness, life and salvation for us on the cross. We received those things in Holy Baptism, and we continue to receive those things whenever we gather together as sinners in need of God's grace and participate in this Holy Supper. He gives us the gifts He won for us.

We also have a daily washing away of our sins whenever we confess our sin in contrition, and remember in faith that we have absolution on account of our Lord's crucifixion and death. We even have the opportunity to hear that absolution—that proclamation of forgiveness—spoken into our ears whenever we confess our sins to the pastor and receive from his lips the forgiveness of the Lord God. In like fashion, we can bear with one another's sins, when we offer the grace of God to anyone who expresses to us that pain that they are enduring on account of their sin, or the result of living in a sinful world. We have the golden opportunity to wash the sins away of anyone struggling with sin, when we remind them that the Lord + Jesus paid for their sins on the tree of the holy cross.

In faith we claim this forgiveness, and it brings peace to our souls. There is no better cleansing that we can receive from the Lord + Jesus than to hear once again that He has suffered and died for us out of His great love for us. He humbled Himself to become a man, like us, so that He might fulfill the Law perfectly for us, and suffer our punishment and pay our ransom on the cross.

Our Lord + Jesus in the Gospel reading from the Apostle and Evangelist St. John gives us an example of His work of redemption for us. For knowing that all things were prepared for our redemption, and that all things were given into His hands by the heavenly Father, He got up from the meal, laid aside His garment, and wrapped Himself in a linen towel, poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of His disciples.

In this act He shows His humility. This task was not supposed to be done by those sitting at the table. It was usually done by a servant. Since there were no servants present in the upper room—it was just our Lord and His Apostles—there was no servant available to wash the feet of those present before the meal. You may recall a few weeks back in one of the Midweek Vespers that the reading was from the Gospel of St. Mark chapter 9 where the disciples were arguing about who was the greatest of them. The Evangelist St. John skips this narrative, and goes right into the response of our Lord + Jesus. He as Teacher and Lord acts like a servant, and does the job of a servant. It is meant as an example to the disciples.

In the same way that our Lord + Jesus humbled Himself, and became a servant to them, they too should act in a similar fashion. Our Lord acted with humility during His entire life on Earth. He first humbled Himself by leaving Heaven and taking on our flesh. He endured temptation, hunger, thirst, trial, and the constant questioning of the scribes and Pharisees. He was betrayed by one of His disciples, Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon. Finally, He was tried, falsely accused, and sentenced to die by crucifixion. There He was stripped of His clothes, crucified, died, and was buried.

All this was done out of love for us. For we were unable to save ourselves on account of our sinfulness. All things were placed into His hands by the heavenly Father. He could have done whatever He wanted to do with those things. He chose to endure hardship and pain and death for us. This is the example of humility that our Lord + Jesus gives to His disciples. An example of giving everything of yourself for the other person. It is the very definition of love: sacrificing your needs, your wants, your will for someone other than yourself. Love does for the other person over and against what you desire. Even if that love is not returned.

Even Judas Iscariot is loved by the Lord + Jesus. He is there at this meal. He has his feet washed. The Lord + Jesus, out of love for him, calls out his betrayal—twice. Once here where he says that not all the disciples were clean, and again during the meal when He tells his disciples that one of them would betray Him. These were meant to be a type of preaching of the Law, to draw Judas back

into the fold. But such was not to be the case. The devil had already cast into the soul of Judas the seeds of unbelief. Therefore, he became the son of perdition; the man who would betray the Lord + Jesus for thirty pieces of silver—for greed.

We follow our Lord's example of humility when we not only recognize the sinfulness inside of ourselves; when we daily acknowledge our breaking of the Commandments, but when we acknowledge that our brothers and sisters in Christ are also sinners in need of God's grace. This is why we gather together at this altar to receive our Lord's Body and Blood in bread and wine. We gather as a bunch of sinners in desperate need of our Lord's grace and mercy. We need Him to wash us all with His holy, innocent and precious Blood, so that we may all be clean.

We can wash each other's feet in a spiritual sense when we gently admonish those who have fallen into sin, and offer forgiveness when they turn again in contrition and faith. Our Lord + Jesus hid His divine nature and came down from Heaven to redeem us and clothe us with His righteousness. We have a picture and symbol of this when later in the service we will strip the altar bare. In the same way that the altar is stripped, our Lord is stripped of all things even His life for us and for our salvation. The altar will remain bare during our Lord's crucifixion, death and burial. Until on Easter morning the altar is once again dressed and decked out with beautiful plants and lilies. This is a picture of the glorified bodies that we will receive in Heaven, and the glorified body that our Lord takes upon Himself after His resurrection from the dead.

We enjoy a meal of our Lord's glorified Body and His innocent Blood at this altar where we receive forgiveness, life and salvation with all those who join us here today, and all the saints who join us in Heaven in eternity. All things are ready for your redemption. Come and receive the gifts that the Lord + Jesus won for you by His humble suffering and death on the cross. In the Name of our Lord + Jesus Christ. Amen.

**Prayer in Pulpit after Sermon:**

Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy Name give glory! I will extol Thee, O Lord, and I will praise Thy Name forever and ever. Amen.

**The Votum:**

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Amen.

*Soli Deo Gloria!*