

If God is a foot washer, so are we!

Children's Sermon by John Strommen on John 13:1-17

Feb. 25, 2018

When I was your age or a few years older, my family used to take summer vacations out to the mountains in the Pacific Northwest. We used to always stay at this Lutheran summer camp called Holden Village in the Cascade Mountains outside of Seattle. One of the things people did when they stayed at Holden Village was to go hiking in the mountains. Have any of you ever gone on a hike in the mountains? How about a hike in Minnesota or Wisconsin?

Well, my family went on a big overnight hike in the mountains where we hiked during the day and then camped at night. We did this a couple days. So we camped, hiked for miles, climbed a mountain while we were out there. Eventually it was time to hike back to Holden Village, but it seemed like we'd never get there. We were so tired from all our hiking and climbing and we were also dusty and dirty because the paths we hiked on were just dirt and dust. I'll never forget when we could finally see the village up ahead. Oh, I couldn't wait to get back and take a hot shower, and to the store and buy some candy bars.

But as we got closer we could also see some people waiting for us in the distance. They were sitting on the benches at the softball field. They had jugs of water and plastic basins like this. When we got to them, we recognized them as people who were also staying at the village, but we didn't know them that well. They welcomed us home from the hike, but they obviously knew we were coming. They then asked us to sit down on the benches. Then this group split up and each one of them tended to each one of my family. They took our dusty, dirty hiking boots off, and placed our feet in warm, soapy water. Then with a washcloth, they washed our feet. Afterwards they rinsed our feet, then dried them off for us.

OK, so do you think we liked this? We loved it! And I'll never forget it.

Why do you think they did it for us, these friends from the village? They did it because Jesus told them to love their neighbors this way. Shortly before Jesus died, he washed his disciples' feet. Now, in Jesus' time, people often did this for their guests, but often, it was a servant who did this. But when Jesus grabbed a towel and water and began washing his disciple's feet, they were really surprised, but Jesus told them it was because he loved them, God loved them. And Jesus told them that they were supposed to do the same thing for other people. Show them love by washing their feet.

Do you think that's a good way to show your love? We don't wash people's feet very often, but what this really means is to show our neighbor, even strangers, that we love them and God loves them.

Can you think of things you can do to show others that you love them?

Let's pray...Jesus, thank you that you love us so much, you are even willing to become a servant and wash our feet to show us. Help us to show your love by finding ways of being a servant to others. In Jesus' name, Amen.