

Labor of Love

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I trust that as I share God's words with you this afternoon, you will pray as I share. I believe that we have to cultivate a worshipping spirit and attitude always before the Lord. Even though you are sitting there listening, you are worshipping.

Yesterday, I shared on this matter of faith. Faith is the foundation. We read from Hebrew 11 yesterday: Those who come to Him must believe that He is. So these two words 'He is' are very, very important, because God wants us to believe who He says He really is. We believe who He really is. And He is the beginning. Our faith is a person; our faith is God Himself. For God has faith in Himself. Therefore He began what He began. Therefore He did what He did and He is doing what He is doing, because He has faith in Himself. He wants us to put our faith in Him so that all that is in His heart can be realized. So, faith is not just faith in God; faith is work. All God's work is the work of faith. For God is God of faith. When we put our faith in Him, God begins to do His work in us. So, faith is the foundation. We began our Christian life with faith. Our walk is also in faith. At the end of our journey, it is also faith. So, brothers and sisters, it is faith all the way, because God wants to be all in all to us. So, we need to have faith in Him.

Yesterday, I used I Thessalonians as our scriptural text. The saints in Thessalonica were greatly loved by the Apostle Paul. As we read I Thessalonian, we can see the saints in Thessalonica had a very healthy spiritual beginning. When they heard Paul preaching, they noticed that the words were not man's words but God's words. So when they took God's words in faith and took them into their hearts, something happened to them immediately. We are told that they

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turned away from idols and began to serve the living God. They also began waiting for the return of God's Son, our Lord Jesus.

But, in the meantime, they were doing three things. They were not waiting passively for the coming of the Lord. They were waiting actively. They were waiting, looking for and hastening, all very positively. It is waiting and looking in anticipation. They knew for sure what was coming. It is not waiting in vain. It is waiting with assurance, because the Lord Jesus had promised His disciples that He was leaving them but He was to come for them again. The Lord is away from us, but, in a sense. He is still with us. He is with us in the spirit, but His person is not with us. He is sitting on the throne. So, even though the indwelling Spirit is with us, there is a groaning in our spirit longing for Him to return and bring His kingdom with Him. As we look around at the chaotic situation in this world, if we love the Lord and we know God's words, we know the solution to all these problems is when He comes again. He will settle all our problems. So, we thank Him for His presence with us these few days. It is most wonderful, like heaven on earth. But we are not satisfied. It is good as it is, but we are not satisfied. We want Him to come back and to settle things for us. So, brothers and sisters, in a sense, we have Him with us and yet we are still longing for Him. The presence of the Spirit in our midst in the Church is preparing us for that day. So, we are people of hope; we are people of faith; we should be the people who love Him.

One of the three things that the Thessalonian saints had is the work of faith. Without faith we cannot please God. The unseen spiritual reality can only be proven by faith. Things not seen can be real. Someone says that things not seen and yet real speak of the present reality right now. What is real now that we cannot see, i.e. the spiritual reality that is real to the Lord's people now even if we cannot see it with our naked eyes but we can know it by faith. Things hoped for, we can look forward with the faith of assurance. These things we can hope for in faith because we know He is coming. This lies in the future. The manifestation of His kingdom lies in the future. But the reality of the kingdom to the saints today is a reality. We have to see that reality. We need to enter into that reality.

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This afternoon, we have to touch on this matter of love. Let us turn to John 13:1-17: Now before the Feast of the Passover, Jesus knowing that His hour had come that He should depart out of this world to the Father, having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end. And during supper, the devil having already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot, the son of Simon, to betray Him, Jesus, knowing that the Father had given all things into His hands, and that He had come forth from God, and was going back to God, rose from supper and laid aside His garments; and taking a towel, He girded Himself about. Then He poured water into the basin, and began to wash the disciples' feet, and to wipe them with the towel with which He was girded, and so He came to Simon Peter. He said to Him, 'Lord, do You wash my feet?' Jesus answered and said to him, 'What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter.' Peter said to Him, 'Never shall You wash my feet!' Jesus answered him, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' Simon Peter said to Him, 'Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head.' Jesus said to him, 'He who has bathed needs only to wash his feet, but is completely clean; and you are clean, but not all of you.' For He knew the one who was betraying Him; for this reason He said, 'Not all of you are clean.' And so when He had washed their feet, and taken His garments, and reclined at the table again, He said to them, 'Do you know what I have done to you? You call Me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, the Lord and the Teacher, washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. For I gave you an example that you also should do as I did to you. Truly, truly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; neither is one who is sent greater than the one who sent him. If you know these things, you are blessed if you do them.'

Brothers and sisters, yesterday we shared a few thoughts on Genesis 1:1. God is the beginning of everything. The beginning is God, and God is the beginning. So God is God of faith, and faith begins with God. Apart from God, there is no faith. So, in Genesis 1, God declared to men that He Himself is faithful and He wants men to have faith in Him. Without God, faith has no foundation. That is why faith is foundation. So, if our faith is on this solid rock of the Lord Jesus, this faith can carry us through. Not our faith can carry us through, but His faithfulness can carry us through. For He is faithful

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to Himself, and He is faithful to those who are His.

It is the same with love. In John's Epistle, we are told that God is love. Love is not something God gives, but God Himself is love. So, in the beginning, God loved. God is love. So, behind all His purposes, all His power and all His doing is love. God is love. Everything He does is motivated by love.

This passage we just read in John 13 is most touching. John is an apostle of love. So we notice in the gospel and the epistles he wrote the words are very tender. I always think that when we read the Gospel of John, the slower we read, the more we can get out of it. Now, in John 13, the Lord was about to depart from His disciples. He gathered together them to Himself. He said something very important to them, not only in words but also in action. So here in John 13 we see love in action. It is most moving if we meditate on what the Lord did on that occasion. Some of the words John used here are very moving. Now, the Lord was about to go back to the Father. In one sense, the Lord knew in His heart that the task, the mission which His Father had sent Him to do, was accomplished. He came for one purpose: to do the will of the one Who sent Him. He did not come just for you and for me. He came for the Father's will. But that will of the Father includes redemption. Redemption is great indeed. But redemption is but a mere beginning. In this chapter, we shall discover the immensity of God's purpose. How great His purpose really is! And love is behind it all.

In John 13:1, it says that Jesus, having loved His own who were in the world, loved them to the end. Those who were of His own, He loved them until the full realization of God's purpose. So, in anything the Lord does, He has God's end in view. He loved them to the very end, until God's purpose is fully and completely realized.

Now, just before He went to the cross, in the shadow of the cross, He gathered this small group of men to Himself. He called this small group of men His very own. This phrase 'His own' is found only in the Gospel of John. In John 1:11 we find these words: 'He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.' So we see that, although His own did not receive Him, He came anyway because

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of love. What love! Many of you came to this conference from places far away, because you knew you would be lovingly and warmly received by the brothers and sisters here. I came on Saturday, also knowing that I would be lovingly and warmly received. But, if I had known that no one would receive me and I would be thrown out, I would never have landed in San Francisco. I came because I would be loved here. Jesus came, although He knew He would be rejected. Those of His own would refuse Him. What kind of love is that! Love is stronger than death. This is the Lord's love. However, through all His days and His labor, He had few followers. Yet, at the end, He called them His own. So these words we find in John 13 are very moving. Thus, the few that He found to be His own, He loved them to the very end. He came for them. He called them His very own, because He had been with them all the time.

Then He went to the cross, and after He had gone through death and through resurrection, with the coming of the Holy Spirit, He Himself would be in them. So, when the Lord left them, in a sense, He left something of Himself behind, His own. When we gather together in the fellowship locally, how do we gather? Are you gathered as His own? Do you gather as His own people? Do you gather as you belong to Him? Or, do you gather as if you belong to something else? You have to forgive me. I have to confess that, when I hear brothers and sisters mention 'our church' or 'my fellowship', I feel very sad. Because when you say that, I feel I am excluded. And I would say to myself: How can you exclude me? We share one same life. Of course I know you do not mean it that way. But, brothers and sisters, we have to be very careful how we use this word 'church'. One brother once said, 'If you use that word "church" in a wrong way, I hope you would bite your tongue good. Then it will teach you a lesson.' That word 'church' was uttered from the very mouth of our Lord Jesus. It is very precious to Him. He died for the Church. He gave His life for the Church. Yet, we use that word very carelessly. Brothers and sisters, the Lord is looking wherever His people gather to see that they have this awareness that they are His very own.

When Paul wrote to the Corinthians, he said, 'You are not your own; you are purchased with the precious blood of the Lord Jesus. You are indwelt by the Holy Spirit.' The Holy Spirit is a seal of His

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ownership. When the Holy Spirit indwells in us, He says, 'That is My own.' If we have the Holy Spirit, we belong to Him. The Holy Spirit is a mark of His ownership over us. But, brothers and sisters, to get to the place where the Lord can say we are His own, it has cost the Lord Jesus everything. If we know what costs Him to make us His own, we will value these words 'His own' very much.

John 1:11 says, 'He came to His own, and those who were His own did not receive Him.' But in this same chapter, we see the door is open. When John the Baptist encountered the Lord, he said, 'Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!' He was seeking us. He was to come to settle our sins. Because of our sin, we could not be His. In order to bring us and make us His own, He had to become the Lamb of God to take away our sin. That was the first step He did for us, to undo all that sin had done to humanity and to open the way for us to come back to God's original thoughts and purpose for man. John 10 tells us that the Lord says, 'I am the good shepherd; the good shepherd lays down His life for the sheep.' In this chapter, the Lord calls the sheep His own. His sheep follow Him, and they hear His voice. He lays down His life for the sheep and gives them eternal life, and they will never perish. And He said, 'No one can snatch them out of my hand. No one can snatch them out of my Father's hands, because my Father is greater than all.' What assurance! What love behind!

Then in John 12, the Lord gave that parable about that grain of wheat that must go to the ground and die. He says, 'Unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains by itself alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit.' All the grains, all the fruit, will be exactly the same with the original grain that falls into the earth. Now, the Lord is further teaching us that He is not only going to settle our sin problems and not only give His life, He is also telling us about the nature of this life. This life is out of death. This life is a resurrection life. This life is a life of a new order. Brothers and sisters, this is our life. It is not earthly; it is heavenly. It is spiritual. On the cross, He took the old man, all that belongs to Adam, and crucified it there. Everything was finished. As the second man, God's man, He brought in a new order of humanity all together, a new man in Christ Jesus, according to God's desires. This new man is according to what was in

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God's heart in eternity past. That is why Paul said: We are one new man in Christ Jesus. All the natural things are all abolished. We are one new man in Christ Jesus.

We Chinese are all over the world. In our midst, we have some brothers from England; they are Chinese but they are very English. Some were brought up here in America. They are Chinese, but they are 100% American. Those who come from Taiwan and Hong Kong are half and half. You can call them either way. But, all these are not of much significance. The important thing is we can gather here, and we are one. Brothers and sisters, this is the testimony. Those who can never be one naturally can be one inwardly spiritually. It is a new life all together. It is not earthly; it is heavenly. Sometimes we may not be able to communicate with each other in human language, but inside spiritually we flow. We do not even have to ask. When we look at each other, we say we are brothers and sisters. It is a new life all together. It is a new humanity. It is beautiful to see a few Caucasian brothers here. You might feel they are out of place, but they are one with us. It is very beautiful. It is not their natural life; it is the life of Christ.

Now, before the Lord went away, He tried to comfort His disciples. He prepared them for His departure. He was also preparing for their future. He was preparing for His second coming. Even though He would leave them, He was assuring them His eternal love and unchanging love will remain with them forever. His love for them will realize God's purpose in them and for them.

As I shared with you a few moments ago, what the Lord showed them in John 13 was not just words of love but love in action. The Lord's love was displayed in a very concrete way. Of course, the most concrete way of demonstrating His love is on the cross. On the cross was that love only He Himself can express, because He went up the cross by Himself. He alone can do it. But He has given us an example, and we all have to follow. So, He has shown us a very concrete way to express this love not just to Him but to one another.

First, He took off His garments. Then He took a towel and girded Himself about. When we read this account, we notice that these

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actions were continuous. All actions He took were all unto one thing. It was very natural and spontaneous for Him to take off His garments, take a towel and gird Himself about. It was a continuous action. Why? Because of His love. That love is out of life, and it is flowing. In human love, we stop and go, and stop and go. Did I love too much? Love enough? Or, love in a right way? We keep wondering, but for the Lord, it is just flowing and flowing. He came to Peter. He not only washed Peter's feet but also all the disciples' feet. It was love in action. You cannot read John 13 without thinking of Philipians 2. How could the Lord, Who was God Himself, lay aside His glory and all His privileges as God? He emptied Himself voluntarily and became a man. As a man, He took the form of a bond-servant. And as a servant, at the end He even went to the point of death, even death on a cross. Just as He had said, 'I came to serve, and not to be served and to give my life as a ransom for many.' This love and serving sacrifice is not at all something calculated. It is His nature, because His love is there. Love never counts the cost. He serves. This servant's spirit remains with Him throughout eternity. He is our king, but He is always our servant-king. Even today, on the right hand of the Father, He is serving us as the high priest. For the sinners, they need a savior. But, for the saints, we need a high priest. He is still serving us.

Brothers and sisters, the Lord Jesus is just like what we find in Exodus 23. There we find a servant who can go free but refuses to go free. He would not go free because he loves his wife, his children and his master. He can go free, but he refuses. Our Lord can go to glory without the cross, but He chose the way of the cross, because of His love for the Father and His love for us. Of course, that was on the Mount of Transfiguration. But we are told that, even in the Garden of Gethsemane, twelve legions of angels could be put at His disposal, but He refused. He went to the cross. Why? Because He loved His own, and He loves them to the end.

The Lord initiated this washing. This washing is with water. This water washing is not a matter about our standing position before God. This washing has to do with our walk while we are here on this earth. For the Lord says, 'You are already bathed clean.' We already had our bath. We are all clean, but we are not all clean. He loves those who are in the world; He loves them to the very end, because in

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the world we all still face the pollution of this world.

Here, I will touch on the difference between washing with the blood and washing with water. The blood is for the deliverance of us from the wrath of God, so that we can have the right standing before Him. His wrath is satisfied through the sacrifice of the sacrifice. So, one brother once says, 'God forgives sinners, and God saves sinners, but He can never overlook sin.' For God is holy. God is righteous, and He has to judge sin. That is why the Lord Jesus had to come. He took our sin upon Himself, and God judged Him on our behalf. We go free, because the Lord Jesus has been judged on our behalf. He took our place; He took our sin upon Himself, and so God judged Him on our behalf. He died for us; He died as us.

His blood takes care of our standing before the Lord. But the cleansing with water has to do with our walk and our suitability to draw nigh to Him in fellowship with Him and to serve Him. So, in our Christian walk, there is a difference between our being accepted and our acceptability before God. It has to do with our suitability so that we can draw nigh to God. This is what we find in Exodus 29 and 30 in relation with the consecration in the service of the priests. After the priests were consecrated and before they could put on the garments, they had to bathe themselves thoroughly. Then they could put on their priestly garments. Later, every time when they came into the tabernacle to serve, they had to go through the same ritual of washing their hands and their feet before they could draw nigh to God.

Here, we have some lessons to learn together. We are still in the world. Thank God; His love remains with us. But we are such a small insignificant group of people. Yet, the flesh is still very much in us. We are surrounded by this corrupt world. The world is very harsh on us. Thank God. We have the life of our Lord Jesus within us. We can overcome sin. None of us sins intentionally. Those of us of the Lord do not sin, because the Holy Spirit dwells in us; we live by His life. We have the potential to sin, but we need not sin if we live by His life. His life in us is an overcoming life. We are told to live by that life. But we are still in the world. We cannot help but sometimes we are defiled. It is unavoidable.

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In the ancient world, people walked on dirt road. They did not have the kind of shoes we wear today; they wore sandals. If they walked out of the house five times a day, they had to wash their feet five times when they came home. For their feet easily got dirty on the streets. Now, we do not get our feet dirty intentionally. But somehow our feet get dirty without our knowing. Our defilement oftentimes comes to us unconsciously, because dust is very fine and powdery, sometimes invisible. If you live in one of the dusty countries, you know what I mean. So, since we are still in the world, the washing of feet is absolutely necessary. It is an act of love. The Lord Himself initiated this act. But we have to cultivate a sensitivity. If we know we are dirty, we need the washing. The problem with Peter was, when the Lord wanted to wash his feet, he refused. Sometimes we do not know how dirty we are in ourselves. But the Lord knows. The Lord initiated that washing with Peter. He knows how dirty we are. He initiates the washing.

Brothers and sisters, we should not rely on our conscience to know that we are dirty, because our conscience can deceive us. We need to rely on God's word. We need to rely on the Holy Spirit. God's word is light. In John 15, the Lord says, 'You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you.' Then Ephesians 5:26 says the Church is to be cleansed by the washing of water with the word. And the Lord said to His disciples in John 13, 'What I do you do not realize now, but you shall understand hereafter.' He was speaking of the ministry of the Holy Spirit and of Himself as the high priest. So, this washing was initiated by the Lord Himself. It is His acting, acting as the high priest on behalf. He is also our advocate. He told His Father that He was assuming all responsibility for our cleansing. He would do the washing through His word by the Holy Spirit. This is the ministry of our high priest. This is why we need God's word. We need the Holy Spirit. Thank God; the Lord Jesus is our high priest. He knows our defilement more than we ourselves. He knows where to wash us and when to wash us. The only thing we need to learn is not to be like Peter who said, 'Lord, do not wash my feet.'

This world is a very filthy place; we all know that. The Lord says that we are clean but we are not all clean. It is most comforting.

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When we are clean, the Lord wants us to keep clean. We are already clean, but we need to keep clean. The Lord demonstrates this cleansing act before us. He humbles Himself. He gets down to our feet to wash our feet. He says, 'I gave you an example. What I did to you, you do to one another.'

Before I share on some practical things for us to do, I share a few more things which are important. We are called into the fellowship of God's Son, Jesus Christ. If we know the value of this fellowship, if we know the preciousness of this fellowship, if we know not so much what this fellowship does to us but to Him, then we will discover how much we need that cleansing all the time. To maintain that personal fellowship, we need constant washing. The washing of our feet is not a luxury but a necessity, not so much for us but for Him. We are called into this fellowship by God. He created us for that fellowship.

Then the other thing is: if we want to serve God and really worship Him, to worship in spirit and in truth, to bring delight to His heart, how much we need the dust to be removed from our feet so that we can bow in His presence and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Then our worship will be accepted. So, if we see the importance of this fellowship and the nature of this fellowship, then we cannot come to this fellowship carelessly. We cannot come with our feet with dust, otherwise our fellowship will be hindered. Same would be with our worship. We cannot worship Him in spirit and in truth if we have dust on our feet. To bow our knees in His presence, we need the dust to be removed, so that our worship is acceptable to Him.

Now, the other thing will have to do with our service. If we are to serve the Lord's interest and His purpose, and even serve His people, how we need the objectives of our service and ministry cleansed. How we need the motive of our service cleansed. Brothers and sisters, even our service to the Lord and to His people is oftentimes mixed. There are often some earthly elements in it. We are all very capable to bring what is heavenly down to something earthly. But, fellowship is spiritual. Worship is spiritual. Our service to the Lord is also spiritual. How much of our service to the Lord has a touch of the earth? We need to be washed clean by the word and to

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keep ourselves pure before Him. Now we know the Lord is coming very soon. He is waiting for the Church to get ready. Especially when we enter into this last phase of human history, how much we need this washing of our feet so that we may be kept pure, spotless! Not just for ourselves, but for Him. For His testimony now, but also in anticipation of His coming. How we need the washing of our feet, so that we walk worthily before Him while we are here on earth.

The Lord spoke a very strong word to Peter. He said, 'If I do not wash you, you have no part with Me.' I mentioned earlier that it was not a matter of our position but a matter of our suitability or acceptability. But this washing is a way by which the Lord is getting us ready and making us suitable for His soon coming. If we allow Him to wash our feet through the word, that is our way of looking to Him and hastening the Day of the Lord.

Now the Lord is not with us physically. Then, who is going to wash our feet? I am sure, when you hear this, you would wish that the Lord was here so that He could wash all our feet. But the Lord is not here anymore. Yet, He has given His commandment. 'What I do, you do to one another.' This is where we come in. How can we do it? I will give you an example. The Lord says, 'Learn from Me.' This is a challenge to our heart. Thank the Lord! He who washed His disciples' feet indwells in you and me. Naturally we will never get that low to our brothers' feet and wash them. You cannot wash that brother's feet unless you get down to the level of that brother's feet so as to wash them. Who can do that? We cannot do it. But the life in us can do that. He in us can do it. His motivating power in us is love. Love is the shortest distance. Without love, for you to get down to your brother's feet is like going to Hong Kong. It is a long distance. But with love, it is a short distance.

I will share a couple more thoughts. First, we have to be consecrated people. Consecration is not preaching; consecration is to say to the Lord, 'Lord, I want to learn you.' This is our first step. To learn Christ is to learn consecration first. True consecration is a love decision. It is not something forced upon you, but it is out of love that you consecrate yourself. It is a sacrifice love, because you deem Him worthy. You bring yourself to Him voluntarily. Your decision to

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consecrate is also motivated by your love for Him. In Romans 12:1, you see that this consecration has to do with your body. It is to surrender this body totally to the Lord, to be controlled by the Holy Spirit. Then washing your brother's feet becomes possible.

ûâpÁ This washing of each other's feet is a very neglected ministry in the fellowship, because few are consecrated. But it is the most essential thing especially in the light of the Lord's coming. How we need to keep ourselves clean as a fellowship before His return! And the only way to keep our fellowship clean is to mutually wash each other's feet. There are many things we find in the Scriptures that we can do, especially in Romans 12. I believe this washing of feet is a calling to each of us. This is our ministry. May the Lord raise up brothers in local fellowships that will carry out this ministry. It is very practical.

I do not need to go into some of the practical things we can do. I will just give you a few examples we experienced on this campus. I particularly appreciate the service given by our younger brothers and sisters serving as ushers. It really touched my heart. When I passed them, they would greet me saying, 'Good morning.' They showed us the way to go. They are there to assist us. This is one way. Although it is a small ministry, it is so precious. It is so beautiful. And these brothers and sisters are so young. They look so unimportant, yet they are so important, not so much in our sight, but in the Lord's sight, because they do it so joyfully. You look at their smiles; you can see it is a ministry of love.

There are so many other things in our local fellowships that will bring us close together, and that will keep us clean and prepare us for the Lord's return. Brothers and sisters, the Lord initiated this act. How is He going to initiate in us? Through our consecration. When we are totally His, then He can do in us what we can never do for ourselves. Recently, a brother was visiting us, and we shared on love being the shortest way. Love is the easiest way. And, of course, love is the costliest way. It is not easy. Brother Morgan equated faith with rejoicing always, as I shared with you yesterday. He equated the labor of love with praying without ceasing, because love is not easy. We need prayer. We can never do it. We need the Lord's help. Without

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Him, we cannot love. We need to pray without ceasing. How we need to pray! How we need to come before the Lord! How we need for Him to fill our hearts with love so that His love will flow through us. Then we can serve our brothers and sisters. This is something we all can do. The easiest thing is just to have this greeting to one another. MARANATHA! May the Lord come! This is washing one another's feet. If we know the Lord is coming, we will quickly wash each other's feet, because we want to keep ourselves clean, not for ourselves, but for Him. May the Lord help us, especially when we approach the last phase of human history. How we need to restore this ministry of washing one another's feet!

I will conclude with 1 Corinthians 15:58. 'Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your toil is not in vain in the Lord.' Now, the Lord's work is multifacet. There are lots of work we cannot do. But this washing each other's feet we can do. And Paul says that this work in the Lord will not be in vain. It is not that we say it is not in vain, but in the Lord eyes it is not in vain. He says He will count that as real. Sometime we are afraid that we do something and in the end it is all in vain. But the Lord says, if we work in Him, and, if it is the Lord's work in Christ, it will not be in vain. The Lord says He will take note of it. These are the Lord's words to us. What an encouragement! Young brothers and sisters, what you do in love for the Lord, He says it will not be in vain because it is done to Him. Is it not wonderful to know to do something that the Lord counts because it is done for Him?

We thank the Lord for this opportunity to share on this message of washing each other's feet.

Let us pray: *Father, we just want to commit these very few and very feeble words back to You to keep. We pray that You use them for Your purpose and for Your glory. Use them to prepare us for the Lord's soon coming. Lord, we pray that whatever we do we have You in view. We know what is unto You and what is for Your purpose will not be in view. We thank You for Your love and for Your mercy. Thank You for your presence with us this afternoon. We give You all the praise and glory. In the Lord Jesus' name. Amen.*