

**JESUS HAD DIRTY FEET**  
**Mark 1:21, 29-39**

Let take a close look into the earthly journey of Jesus the Christ, the Messiah, Our Redeemer and Savior. According to Scriptural reports, he was born in Bethlehem in very humble beginnings. His earthly parents, Joseph and Mary realized it was nearing time for her to give birth. This prompted them to seek lodging at an inn. It is reported when they inquired, there was no room in the inn. Just in case you don't know how this story begins and I can't assume that everyone does know it. My job as a messenger is to leave you with a clarity so that you can understand how awesome God is and how He plans and takes care of every detail of that plan. God's plan was and is that the sins of humankind that keeps us separated from Him would be redeemed. He planned it in order that we could get back in right relationship with Him. I can imagine a conference or a discussion occurred in heaven to decide what to do about these humans He created who had turned to wicked, sinful disobedient ways. The decision was made to have their\our sins forgiven by shed blood. Therein, Jesus the only Begotten Son of God volunteered to come to earth in the form of a man as a newborn baby. His mission then was to show us a new way of life with love for our fellowman as the main focus. In 13:34 Jesus said, "A new commandment I give unto you. That you love one another as I have loved you." He also came to give his life as a ransom that we might be reconciled with God our Creator by repenting of our sin and God's forgiveness of our sin. God loves us so much that He gave his only Begotten Son that we might have the right to eternal life.

As this message began resonating in my spirit all sought of questions popped up in my mind. What kind of house did Jesus live in? If Joseph, his earthly father, was a carpenter; did he build the house they live in? From my research I found that Jesus lived in a house that was carved out of a cave. I learned also that the houses during that time were all made of stone. So then what did a carpenter do? Carpenters like Joseph were called on to construct or repair plows or threshing sleds, cutting a roofing beam or to shape a yoke. So the carpenters did little to no wood work on the houses as carpenters do today or have done for the last hundred years. Evidently, there was not an abundance of work and the income was low. We can summarize from this that Jesus did in fact come from humble beginnings. Therefore, he had no problem identifying with the poor, the indigent and those on the margin of life. The love, care and compassion he offered was the reason he traveled surrounding his hometown of Nazareth and near to Galilee.

Now you may be wondering how she came up with the title “**JESUS HAD DIRTY FEET**”. Well I’ll tell you. You see in the time period that Jesus lived, walking was the main way people travelled. There were no horse and buggies, cars, public transportation, taxis or ubers. People walked from town to town on dusty roads. Since that area of the world had a warm climate, sandals were the foot attire of the time. There were no paved roads of black top or cement. All this accounted for people having dusty dirty feet. I can relate to dusty roads and dirty feet. As a child growing up in the late 1930’s and early 40’s, I lived on an unpaved road. There were few cars that traveled that road. My next door neighbor/playmate and I would make sand cakes in the road, using sticks for birthday candles. Way down the road we would see the dust and know to get out of the road until the car went past. Then we would go back to our play again. When we got ready for bed at night our parents made sure we washed those dirty feet.

We see from our Gospel Lesson in Mark 1 that Jesus’s ministry was a traveling ministry. After calling the disciples from their fishermen work they went into Capernaum where Jesus taught in the synagogue. After leaving the synagogue he and some of the disciples went to Simon and Andrew’s house. They found Simon’s Mother-in-law sick with a fever. They told Jesus, he came and lifted her by her hand, she was healed and ministered to them. The people of the city heard of this and gathered at the door. He healed many people, cast out devils and did not allow the devils to speak. He got up early the next morning and went alone to pray. When the disciples found him he said vs 38 “Let us go into the next towns, that I may preach there also: for therefore came I forth. So we can see here he commissioned the disciple to travel from town to town as well.

In Math 10; 6-8, 14 you will find these words, “But rather go to the lost sheep of Israel. And as you go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand. Heal the sick, cleanse the lepers, raise the dead, cast out devils; freely you have received, freely give. There is a message here for us that we ourselves minister to those who need support. I learned that you at Bethany Beach Church have a very strong outreach and giving program. I applaud you on that ministry. However, there is always something more we can do. There was a saying a few years back that caught on. It was simply WWJD What would Jesus do? He didn’t have money but he gave of himself, his time and energy. We can too. Now that the pandemic is lifting maybe sometime in the future churches could work together to house homeless people for a weekend, providing a family like atmosphere. That is to

serve a meal and sit with them to share a meal, conversation and a scripture or prayer. This could be an example of getting our hands dirty as we deal with these marginalized people. The cluster of churches I've been working with during the pandemic was invited by a church outside our community to send letters to people who were incarcerated. They were generic letters sharing scripture, or a poem and /or words of encouragement. They were signed from a sister or brother in Christ. The church gave specific guidelines so that the letter writer would not be identified. The director of the program said people were happy to get these letters. We know that people incarcerated often feel isolated and alone. A ministry such as this could brighten someone's day. Seek God's guidance to find out how you can enrich a personal touch ministry. In Jesus ministry, he got dirty feet. We may get a dirty look or a gruff attitude. Showing love may very well win them over and point them to Christ. After all that's the requirement of disciples to bring the good news of love to those who don't know. We are all ministers/ disciples according to the Scriptures. Some won't hear and will turn a deaf ear. Just continue to minister to those who are receptive. Vs. 14 of Math 10 says, "And whosoever shall not receive you, nor hear your words, when you depart out of that house or city, shake off the dust of your feet." I believe the implication here is if people aren't receptive of the good news of salvation and repentance. Don't waste your time, move on to the next place and person.

We remember that Jesus walked during his ministry from place to place. The culture of that day had a warm custom of providing travelers that entered their home a basin of water and a towel to wash their dirty tired feet. This must have been a wonderful jester for a weary traveler. Water has that soothing quality. When you come in from a long day, a warm bath or invigorating shower can relax you and make you feel so much better. During my recent vacation with family, I had the opportunity to take a jacuzzi bath. The jets and the bubbles were a great way to end my day. Looking out on the water at the beach, a lake or even a mountain water fall reminds us the peace water brings and of the awesome power of God's Creation.

Jesus understood the soothing and healing effect of water. He made mud and paced on the eyes of a blind man then had him go wash in the pool of Soloam. The Bible says the man born blind received his sight. Then we have the story in John 13 where Jesus washed his disciples feet and dried them with a towel. Vs. 14 & 14 and I quote "If I then, your Lord and master have washed your feet; ye also

ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you." Jesus gave this example that he came to serve rather than to be served. He passed this message on to the disciples and to us that we live a life of service that might include us getting dirty hands, feet or clothing.

Having dirty and tired feet never stopped Jesus from showing kindness and compassion to the throngs of people. He was aware of his mission to heal, save and deliver. He kept that focus even to death on the cross. The hope came and h for us when he rose on the third day with the promise to all who have a personal relationship with him , that we too can inherit eternal life. Mary Magdalene honored him as Lord and Savior. She didn't have a basin of water, but she washed his feet with her tears and dried them with her hair. She used her precious oil to anoint his feet. Even at the grumbling of some of the disciples she made a sacrifice of love to her Master. Let's all be agents of Christ love as we seek new ways to share his love, tell the story of who he is and what he did to save us. Amen! Amen!