PETER who refused to have his feet washed PETER who refused to have his feet washed (John 13:8)

All the major religions of the world are agreed on one basic fact. It is that man is a sinner and needs to be cleansed. All these faiths Christianity excepted-are also agreed that man's cleansing depends upon his degree of merit. Man must do something in order to obtain forgiveness. The teachings of Christ are diametrically opposed to this, for He said that man's greatest efforts would be insufficient. Unless He cleansed men, they would not be clean.

The Sublime Saviour

The room was very still as every disciple watched the Lord. Tragedy seemed to hang in the air, and the idea of a kingdom was swiftly receding. The rugged disciples were beginning to realize that something was wrong. Anxiety clutched at their hearts as they saw the shadows gathering on the Master's face. He had risen from the table, and having girded Himself with a towel, He had placed a bowl of water on the floor, and was preparing to wash His followers' feet. Rather reluctantly the first disciple obeyed the Lord's invitation, and allowed Jesus to take hold of the travel-stained foot. The Lord tenderly washed away the dust, and then repeated the operation with the other foot. Radiantly He looked up into the face of His silent follower and then, carefully pushing the bowl along the floor, He prepared to wash the feet of the next disciple. The company was truly amazed, but only Simon Peter prepared to give utterance to his feelings.

The Stubborn Simon

"Then cometh He to Simon Peter: and Peter saith unto Him, Lord, dost thou wash my feet?" "Yes, Simon. You will not understand the meaning of this now, but soon all will be made perfectly clear to you." "Peter saith unto Him, Thou shalt never wash my feet." Slowly the Lord sat back on His heels and looked into the face of His determined friend. Peter's statement had electrified the atmosphere, for all the strained emotions of his soul had suddenly found an outlet. Perhaps there are two ways of interpreting Peter's determination. Maybe he thought his feet were not needing to be washed; but more probably he considered himself unworthy of such attention. He was very determined, and had any other than the Lord been in charge of the situation, the position might have become grave. Calmly the Lord continued to watch His outspoken disciple, and then quietly He spoke again.

The Startling Statement

"Very well, Simon Peter; but 'If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me.' Friend, all who belong to me must be washed by me. They cannot cleanse themselves. I must do it for them. I have already told you that what I do thou knowest not now; but thou shalt know hereafter. Therefore make your choice now. Submit and be washed, or go thy way-thou hast no part with me." And in those heartsearching moments, Peter's boisterous determination died within him. Had he been observant he might have seen the great satisfaction which suddenly shone in the Lord's eyes. It would appear that Christ succeeded in teaching far more truth through this one action than He had through all His PETER who refused to have his feet washed sermons. In one delightful moment, He implanted seeds within their hearts which in after days would produce a great harvest of eternal blessing.

The Sensible Surrender

With great grace the Lord washed the feet of Peter and said, "He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet." And His eyes seemed to add, "When a man has been really cleansed, his chief concern should be to attend to his daily walk." Peter was destined to remember that incident, and when at Pentecost the Holy Spirit came to lead him into the truth, he suddenly realized the imperativeness of being cleansed by the Saviour. Man at his best is still unclean, and needs to be washed by the Lord. As that realization burst upon his mind, Peter went out to preach, and his fiery utterances gained inspiration from the pre-Calvary scene. He cried, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved" (Acts 4: 12). This document was created with Win2PDF available at http://www.daneprairie.com. The unregistered version of Win2PDF is for evaluation or non-commercial use only.