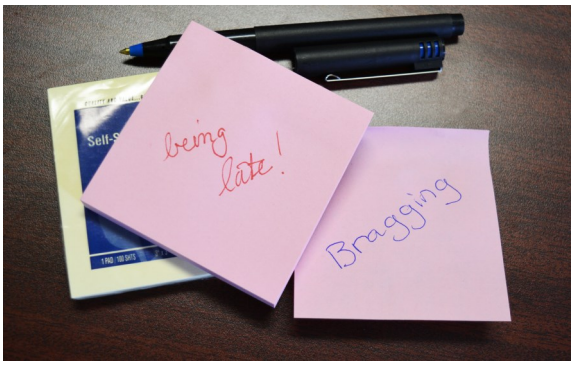
Washing the Lord's Feet

Materials Needed

pad of small sized sticky notes, pens or pencils

Prepare in Advance

Purchase or gather supplies.



Our view of the Lord and others can sometimes be clouded by selfishness. Selfish attitudes in ourselves prompt us to notice selfishness in others and prevent us from seeing the Lord and others clearly. To see clearly, we must approach the Lord and ask for His forgiveness.

The woman who stood behind Jesus and washed His feet with her tears pictures the way we can cleanse our minds so we can clearly see and embrace the Lord. Students will explore the relationship between evil and forgiveness by writing selfish attitudes on sticky notes and using them to cover someone's feet. Through guided discussion a "woman" removes the notes so that "the Lord's" feet are seen.

The Lord's feet stand for the Word—the part of Him that touches the earth. The dirt on His feet pictures evils *in us* that cover Him and stand between Him and ourselves. The woman used her tears and hair to wash the Lord. This act of love stands for her taking true ideas (tears) she knew to help her see and accept responsibility for her evils and repent of them.

1. Brainstorm behaviors students find annoying in others, e.g. lying, cheating, boasting, etc. (Note: It is often easier to see annoying behaviors in others than in ourselves; but what we see in others generally shows things we struggle with too.)
2. Give each student 4-5 sticky notes and a pen or pencil. Invite students to write one annoying behavior or bad habit (evil) on each sticky note. Provide more sticky notes as needed.
3. Choose a student or the teacher to be "the Lord." Seat "the Lord" in the group and invite students to put their bad habit sticky notes on his or her feet. Option: "The Lord's" shoes may remain on or be taken off.
4. Ask students whether they see the Lord's feet. What is blocking them?
5. The dirt on the Lord's feet stands for attitudes that blind us to His goodness in our lives—for example wanting qualities we do not have (e.g.

New Church Concept
Weeping & Tears

Both 'shedding tears' and 'weeping' signify grief on account of falsities and from falsities, but 'shedding tears' grief of mind, and 'weeping' grief of heart on account of falsities. Grief of mind is grief of the thought and understanding, which pertain to truth, and grief of heart is grief of the affection or will, which pertain to good; and as there is everywhere in the Word a marriage of truth and good, both 'weeping' and 'tears' are mentioned in the Word when grief is expressed on account of falsities of doctrine or of religion. *Apocalypse Explained* 484.3

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Washing the Lord's Feet *continued*

good looks, intelligence), opportunities (e.g. vacations, sports) or things (e.g. bike, bedroom) we want, etc.

6. The Lord's "feet" represent the Word—the lowest part of Him, where we can go to meet him. Our own feet are the lowest or most natural part of our bodies. The Lord is willing to be with us in that lowest part, to cleanse the lowest part of us.
7. So how do we go about removing the evil? First we must take an honest look inside ourselves, measuring our actions against true ideas we know from the Word. We must see bad attitudes and habits for what they are and accept responsibility for them. We must ask the Lord's forgiveness, and His help in not doing them again. And just as He told the woman her sins were forgiven; He immediately forgives!
8. Ask for a volunteer, a "woman," to take the "sins" off the Lord's feet. As the sins are removed, acknowledge them by reading them aloud, tearing them up, and throwing them away.
9. When the Lord was in the world He washed His disciples' feet. When Simon Peter, a disciple, objected, the Lord said, "If I do not wash you, you have no part in Me" (John 13:8). He meant that by washing the feet—the lowest part of our lives—we would be made clean. All He asks is that we recognize selfish actions, admit that we have done them, and try not to do them again.

New Church Concept: Because She Loved Greatly

Good people out of the good treasure of their hearts bring forth what is good. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks. (Luke 6:45; Matthew 12:35) In the Word, the heart means our will, and since this is the source of our thinking and speaking, it says that "out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaks." And Jesus said of the woman who had washed his feet with anointing oil that her sins were forgiven because she loved greatly; and later added, "Your faith is saving you" (Luke 7:46-50). We can see from these words that when our sins are forgiven—that is, when they are no longer there—our faith saves us. See *Doctrine of Life* 51

New Church Concept Washing

'To wash' signifies to be purified from evils and falsities, which is to be regenerated. Therefore 'a person that has bathed' signifies a person who has been purified or regenerated in respect to the spiritual. This is done by a life according to the goods and truths and doctrine from the Word. To the extent that this is done, the person is purified or regenerated; for to live according to the goods and truths of doctrine from the Word is to will them and so to do them, that is to be affected by them and to love them. See *Arcana Coelestia* 666

New Church Concept Fragrant Oil

The fragrances of aromatic substances correspond to qualities connected with spiritual love, or with charity and faith. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 394

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