

# *The God of Great Grace*

by Max Lucado

He doesn't speak. He removes his robe and takes the servant's wrap off the wall. Taking the pitcher, he pours the water into the basin. He kneels before them with the basin and sponge and begins to wash. The towel that covers his waist is also the towel that dries their feet. It's not right.

Isn't it enough that these hands will be pierced in the morning? Must they scrub grime tonight? And the disciples ... do they deserve to have their feet washed? Their affections have waned; their loyalties have wavered.

Look around the table, Jesus. Out of the twelve, how many will stand with you in Pilate's court? How many will share with you the Roman whip? And when you fall under the weight of the cross, which disciple will be close enough to spring to your side and carry your burden?

None of them will. Not one. A stranger will be called because no disciple will be near.

Don't wash their feet, Jesus. Tell them to wash yours. That's what we want to say. Why? Because of the injustice? Because we don't want to see our King behaving as a servant? God on his hands and knees, his hair hanging around his face? Do we object because we don't want to see God washing feet?

Or do we object because we don't want to do the same? Watch Jesus as he goes from disciple to disciple. Can you see him? Can you hear the water splash? Can you hear him shuffle on the floor to the next person? Good. Keep that image.

John 13:12 says, "When he had finished washing their feet ..." Please note, he finished washing their feet. That means he left no one out. Why is that important? Because that also means he washed the feet of Judas. Jesus washed the feet of his betrayer. He gave his traitor equal attention. In just a few hours Judas's feet would guide the Roman guard to Jesus. But at this moment they are caressed by Christ.

That's not to say it was easy for Jesus.

That's not to say it is easy for you.

That is to say that God will never call you to do what he hasn't already done.

From A Gentle Thunder

Copyright (W Publishing Group, 1999) Max Lucado

## Responsive Reading: Psalm 130:1-2, 4-5, 7b

**ALL:** Out of the depths I cry to you, LORD;  
**RDR:** Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy.

**ALL:** With you, LORD, there is forgiveness,  
so that we can, with reverence, serve you.

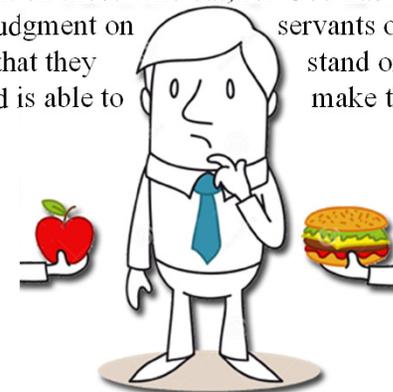
**RDR:** I wait for the LORD, my whole being waits,  
and in His word, I put my hope.

**ALL:** With the LORD is unfailing love  
and with him is full redemption.

## Lesson: Romans 14:1-12

Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not for the purpose of quarreling over opinions.

Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand.



Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God.

We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, so that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. For it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God." So then, each of us will be accountable to God.

## Gospel: Matthew 18:21-35

Peter came and asked Jesus, "Lord, if another member of the church sins against me, how often should I forgive? As many as seven times?" Jesus said to him, "Not seven times, but I tell you, seventy-seven times."

Jesus continued with this parable: "For this reason the kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who wished to settle accounts with his slaves. When he began the reckoning, one who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him; and, as he could not pay, his lord ordered him to be sold, together with his wife and children and all his possessions, and payment to be made. So, the slave fell on his knees before him, saying, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you everything.' And out of pity for him, the lord of that slave released him and forgave him the debt."

"Now, that same slave, as he went out, came upon one of his fellow slaves who owed him a hundred denarii; and seizing him by the throat, he said, 'Pay what you owe.' Then his fellow slave fell down and pleaded with him, 'Have patience with me, and I will pay you.' But he refused; then he went and threw him into prison until he would pay the debt."

"When the other slaves saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed, and they went and reported to their lord all that had taken place. Then the lord summoned the first slave and said to him, 'You wicked slave! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. Should you not have had mercy on your fellow slave, as I had mercy on you?' And in anger his lord handed him over to be tortured until he would pay his entire debt.

"So my heavenly Father will also do to every one of you, if you do not forgive your brother or sister from your heart."

## SALEM FAMILY EVENTS



Watch for on-line Sunday School information (on our website or in future bulletins)...coming soon!



Last Week



Confirmation Class/process for adults (confirmed or refresher), will be on Tuesday nights 7-8:30pm **Starting mid-September!!** – more info ... see Pastor Rob!

## UPCOMING EVENTS



The church council will meet on Tues, Sept 8<sup>th</sup> at 6:30. Please contact any council member (see reverse of prayer list) w/ thoughts/concerns, particularly about our Sunday gatherings once it's too cold to meet outside (especially since COVID cases are on the rise again).

Prayer List – Updates – please send name to either Pr. Rob [robkrajewski72@gmail.com](mailto:robkrajewski72@gmail.com) or, Jerry Youngquist [jerry.youngquist@gmail.com](mailto:jerry.youngquist@gmail.com)

The women's bible study and men's group will be starting soon. More information to follow - watch for it!

Options For Women (pregnancy and family resource organization) is having their annual Fundraiser Meal and Silent Auction (w/ Covid precautions). Two events, both at Access Church, North Branch: 10/1 at 6:30 and 10/3 at 12:30. For additional information and/or to RSVP, call 651.674.2121 or go to [www.optionsforwomenhelp.org](http://www.optionsforwomenhelp.org).



- How do you make a pirate furious? Take away the p.
- After an impromptu song, our pastor asked the church pianist, "What key did I sing that in?" The pianist replied, "Most of them."
- Q: What do you get when you play New Age music backwards?  
A: New Age music.