

Helping Your Husband Avoid The Manure

"A wife of noble character
is her husband's crown!"

with
Sue Dowgiewicz

"She speaks with wisdom, and
faithful instruction is on her tongue!"



Help Get Salt In Your Home And Keep It!

Help #1

What Is Our Lord's Measure Of A Man?

*"He has shown you, O man, what is good; And what does the LORD require of you
But to do justly, To love mercy, And to walk humbly with your God?" (Micah 6:8).*

Men, if our Lord hasn't yet dismantled your life and rebuilt it in accordance with His own character, then that transformation is either still to come or you're hiding a lot of personal rebellion under a "Christian veneer." We want to give you a clear understanding of what our Lord as your holy and loving Master requires of you as a man — and especially a man who may be given responsibility by Him to lead our Father's children by His Spirit of grace in you.

You have an advantage if you've gone through any type of military or other preparatory training that was designed to first break down your individualism and then build you up as part of an interdependent team. During the probably-uncomfortable process of removing your natural *self* focus, you were being prepared to become an integral and effective part of a group which would be working together for a common objective. If you've been through that experience, you'll better understand where Mike is coming from in the Manure Pile videos.

Understanding someone else's perspective can be confusing, especially if their point of view runs contrary to what you're used to. Even Jesus faced puzzled looks and verbal objections from His disciples when they misinterpreted Him: "*Jesus replied, 'You do not realize now what I am doing, **but later you will understand**'*" (John 13:7). The event which prompted their dismay took place during His last supper with them. Our Lord got up from the table, took off His outer garments, and put a towel around his waist. That action alone must have startled them. But then He grabbed a nearby basin, poured water into it and washed their feet, drying them with the towel wrapped around Him (see John 13:1-17). When He finished He said to them,

*“For I gave you an example, that **you should do** as I have done to you. Most assuredly, I say to you, a slave is not greater than his master; nor a sent one greater than the one sending him. If you know these things, blessed are you **if you do them**”* (John 13:15-17, literal).

Talk about an example of teaching humility! In the Middle Eastern culture, the roads were dusty, and foot washing was a very necessary sign of hospitality toward a guest entering a home. Having to squat down to remove someone’s shoes and then bathe and wipe their feet was a job left to the lowest slave or servant in a household. Yet Jesus demonstrated in a very graphic way the *humble service* He was calling His own to emulate.

The practice of foot washing is recorded in 1 Samuel 25 in the account of Abigail’s encounter with David. Out of an abundance of wisdom, she sent to David and his hungry troops a large supply of provisions after her husband treated the young warrior with disdain. Forestalling needless tragedy, her swift action spared her household and all the workers as well. And upon her husband’s subsequent death David asked her to marry him, recognizing her selfless courage and trust in her Lord.

But there was another trait which emerged when David’s messengers arrived with his proposal: humility. This was her immediate response to them:

*“Then she arose, bowed her face to the earth, and said, ‘Here is your maidservant, a servant **to wash the feet of the servants of my lord**’”* (1Samuel 25:41).

Abigail’s humble response to wash the feet of David’s men is recalled as a standard for widows in need who have no family to care for them. That’s where the help of the extended spiritual family of a home fellowship comes in for widows who are trusting in God and calling upon Him to intervene. (Note that Paul’s command to Timothy is very clear in distinguishing between widows who are indeed needy and those who are either living for their own pleasure or whose relatives could and should help but aren’t — see 1Timothy 5:3-16 for his discourse on this topic.)

*“Do not let a widow under sixty years old be taken into the number, and not unless she has been the wife of one man, **well reported for good works**: if she has brought up children, if she has lodged strangers, if she **has washed the saints’ feet**, if she has relieved the afflicted, if she has diligently followed every good work”* (1Timothy 5:9,10).

It’s not just the action of foot washing which is commendable. Rather it’s the *humility of heart* which cares so much that the action itself becomes an act of love for the recipient. Such was the case of a woman of ill-repute who came to Jesus while He was dining at a Pharisee’s house. (Read the account in Luke 7:37-50.) Kneeling behind Him she wet His feet with her tears, dried them with her unbound hair, and poured fragrant oil on them. She was so filled with love for Jesus that she overcame any fear of being thrown out or of being shamed by the derisive whispers of the other guests. She **KNEW** she was in need of forgiveness, and she did what she could to show her love to the only One Who could forgive.

In contrast, the proud Pharisee figured he was doing Jesus a favor just by having Him in for a meal. Yet in his arrogance he failed to extend even the most basic aspects of hospitality. And Jesus confronted the man for his intentional slight, using the humble woman as a righteous foil in her act of love!

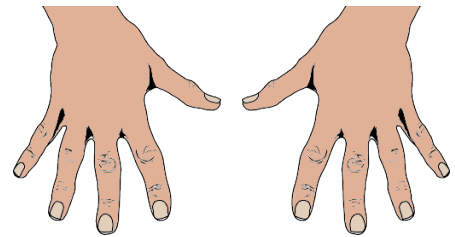
Now let's consider in your own life that essential character quality of *humility* that our Lord Jesus was insisting on if His apostles, and men in general, were to lead others. His disciples had been witnesses to the incident with the street woman (or at least they heard about it). Having been raised in that culture, they knew that it was the least person in a household, whether a slave, a servant, or yes, an elderly widow, who performed this humble task of cleansing someone else's dirty feet.

So how could they internalize that the One they knew to be their Master and Lord was giving them this example of humility — an example which expresses a heart value regarding other people — an example which we today who love and serve Jesus as Lord must also grow in, especially those whom He calls to serve as leaders in a faith family.



This kind of humility approaches other people with “palms up”, graciously offering truth or help or whatever as an *option* with no compulsion for them to have to receive it. Contrast this approach with “palms down”, commanding something which offers no freedom to reject without some kind of retribution. The latter was the approach of too many American missionaries of the past 2 centuries who forced European religion and customs upon Native

American tribal peoples without room for anything of their cultural expression. The tragic result of this palms-down enforcement was the death of 90% of those same tribal peoples — the kind of crushing blow which you as one who leads must avoid at all cost.



I've written this for you men who may have missed what Jesus was demonstrating to you by washing His apostles' feet. I intercede daily for many married men whom Mike has had to leave behind in the past because they were Hardened or Mocking Fools. I've watched my husband's own sorrowing spirit feeling like he failed the wives and children of these men who spent too much time under self-serving clergy influence ignoring the essential heart motive of sacrificial love.

Please, reread this if you have to. Our Lord Jesus was showing you, O man, *what is good and what the LORD requires of you*. For you wives of such men, my heart goes out to you as I intercede on your behalf.

Sue