

## Rooted - Part 10

### “Dirty Feet, Doormats, and Disciples”

Colossians 3:15 - 4:1

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Colossians 3:15-16 NKJV

*“And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to which also you were called in one body; and be thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord.”*

All these ways are avenues that this Word can begin to fill us up, and it's not like we have to go and *make* all these things happen, but Scripture says we just have to let these things happen. We have to *let* the peace of Christ rule in our hearts. He's already given it to us. Jesus said, *“My peace I leave you. My peace I give to you, and I don't give peace like the world gives. I give it from heaven. I give it in a way that it will abide with you and rule and govern your life if you let it.”* How much effort do we spend trying to find peace? Jesus said, *“Peace has already found you. You just have to let it rule.”*

That word “rule” means *to let it rule like an umpire in an athletic game - to let it have governing authority over our heart, our life, and our decisions.* We have to let peace rule like a referee where we say, *“All right, the peace of God gets decision-making, governing authority over how I'm going to feel, how I'm going to think, and how I'm going to live every moment of every day. I have to let his peace govern me.”* But, often we let *other* things govern our hearts, like Fox News, social media, or the latest conflict in our household. Jesus said, *“I left you my peace. I gave it to you. Now let it rule in your hearts. I left you my Word, and if you'll let this Word dwell in you richly, you can begin to live life like never before. You're going to create the conditions where that new garment fits you.”*

When his peace rules in our heart and his Word dwells in us richly, it's like having a new outfit that fits like a glove, and that new nature - *that new garment* - fits us *perfectly* and we can begin to live out what Christ died to give us. But, we have to learn how to *“keep our clothes on.”* We've been given this beautiful new garment and this new nature, but sometimes we look around and think, *“Oh, I'm naked. Where'd it go?”* Because we didn't keep our clothes on - his peace isn't ruling in us - his Word's not dwelling in us *richly*. And that garment just popped off of us like something that didn't fit, because there were things driving it off of us and out of us. We have to let it before we can live it. Let him rule. Let him reign. And then we'll begin to be able to live it out.

Colossians 3:17 NKJV

*"And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus [as a representative of Jesus], giving thanks to God the Father through Him."*

When everything we do and say is done knowing we're representing the King of Kings, that's when we'll begin to live it out. This is the goal for each of us. But he's about to tell us what this looks like in practical reality for our lives. This is where "the rubber meets the road" - the nitty-gritty of what it looks like to live out our new nature in Christ.

Colossians 3:18-19 NKJV

*"Wives, submit to your own husbands, as is fitting in the Lord. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them."*

Notice it doesn't say, "Hey, submit to them in sin." or, "Submit to them in ways that don't honor the Lord." The Message translation adds, "submitting to them in ways that honor the Master. Husbands, love your wives and do not be bitter toward them - even though you might have every reason or excuse to be. Go all out in love for your wives, and don't take advantage of them, even though you could."

Colossians 3:20-21 NKJV

*"Children, obey your parents in all things, for this is well pleasing to the Lord. Fathers, do not provoke your children, lest they become discouraged." [The Message says, "Don't come down too hard on your children or you will crush their spirits." ]*

Verse 22, *"Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eye-service, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God."*

"Bondservants" is the Greek word *dulos*, which can also mean laborer, skilled worker, or servant, or employees in the modern sense. In the Bible, a bondservant was somebody who had incurred a financial debt and agreed to serve the lender, until eventually the debt was paid off and their debt was erased. Scripture says the people in that situation were to obey in all things their masters "in sincerity of heart fearing and honoring God."

Whatever we do, we're to do it as unto him, not to people, "Knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance, for you serve the Lord Christ. But he who does wrong will be repaid for what he has done, and there is no partiality." Another translation says, "The sullen servant who does shoddy work will be held responsible." Being a follower of Jesus doesn't cover up bad work. Notice it doesn't say "in all circumstances." It says in all things, meaning in every area and in every category. In every possible place, we should say, "I'm going to obey and work, not half-heartedly, but like I'm doing it for Jesus himself."

All of this is very domestically-centered. It hits right in the home - husbands, wives, children, parents, fathers, bosses, and employees. But, we might say, *"You don't understand my situation. If you knew my wife, you would understand Jesus didn't really mean do that for her."* Or, *"If you knew my husband and how crazy he is, then you would understand. Yeah, Jesus in general wants people to do that. But but not me. If you knew my parents - if you knew this crazy boss that I have, he has been tap dancing on my reserve nerve for some time now and I've about had it. This can't mean me. I'm an exception."*

The tone of these verses implies the expectation of tension and difficulty on the other side of the relationship - of a lack of *help* from the other side - misunderstanding and even rejection from the other side. Even in the context of that misunderstanding, conflict, and rejection, he says, *"Get in there - love, submit, serve, obey in all things, in all ways that are fitting and honoring to the Lord in every way you possibly can. Get in there anyway."*

1Peter 2:18

*"Servants, be submissive to your masters with all fear of God, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the harsh."*

This doesn't just apply when they're being nice to us, or only when we're treated fairly, but also when they're harsh, unfair, mean, and cruel. Does Jesus still want us to do this *then*? Yes, he does! Relationships were not neater, cleaner, easier, or less broken in Paul's day or in Jesus' day. Jesus knows exactly what he's asking, and what he's requiring of us here. All of the world's problems revolve around people and people's relationships with one another. We think that if there were no more people in this equation, everything would be perfect - our life would be perfect.

But, from brothers and sisters spitting to world wars and everything in-between, it's all centered around conflict between people and relationships. The crazy thing about Christianity is, it claims to be the only solution to having something to *fix* that. The only way to truly address what drives the rest of the world crazy lives in *us* because of this new nature in Christ. If we will begin to re-orient our perspective on what we're here to do and how we're to do it, we will begin to unleash a power from heaven that the world has no idea about - and it all starts at *home*.

This means that a lack of a godly relational circumstance in our life or the lack of reciprocation on the other side in a relationship at home does not give us an excuse to take our "clothes" off, in the sense of our new garment. We're supposed to *wear* it. Just because the other side doesn't give in doesn't mean we stop. In fact, that means we go harder according to what he's telling us here. It doesn't take long to realize that nagging, nitpicking, arguing, fighting, shaming, shouting, standoffs - waiting for an apology, demanding to be heard, and demanding to be understood - all those things don't work, and yet we constantly *revert* to those things.

So, we're thinking to ourself, *"Oh, great. Jesus' plan for me is to be a doormat. That's my call in the Lord. I'm a holy doormat for other people to walk on to get their dirt and junk on and wipe their feet on me because I love Jesus. Therefore, I'm a doormat. Is that what he's saying? Then, because I'm a doormat, then when I get around you, I treat you like a doormat, so I wipe my feet on you - and the next thing you know, we become dueling doormats."* When this is the way we live, we become broken, tattered, dirty, resentful and bitter and we believe this Christian life doesn't work.

A "doormat" passively sits there and gets used. It just sits back and waits to get wiped on, dumped on, and dirtied-up by all the people in the relationships in our life. Some Christians have this picture of what Jesus intends for us, and that's why we think *submission* is the sword - why we think *obedience* and all of these other commands are the worst idea ever, because this is our picture of what we think he means by them. But Jesus didn't call us to be *doormats* - he called us to be *disciples*.

One way or another we're all going to deal with dirty feet in this world. People's dirty feet, their junk, and their stuff are going to end up in our proximity and will probably get wiped all over us unless we begin to engage things Jesus' way. We're going to deal with dirty feet whether we like it or not, but, we don't have to passively sit back and say, *"Well, in order to serve the Lord, I just have to get wiped on and dumped on."* Jesus, however, dealt with dirty feet a different way.

At the last supper, Jesus had his guys in the upper room and they were celebrating the Passover together. He's got everybody there - Judas, who had already set Jesus up for betrayal; Peter who Jesus knows is going to deny him three times and curse his name later that night; and all the other guys who he knows are about to run like cockroaches when the going gets tough. Jesus gets those guys together in a room but he *doesn't* say, *"Guys, I'm your doormat. Wipe your feet on me."* No, what does he do? He grabs a bowl with some water. Then he took off his main garment of authority and who he was, and he put on a *new* garment - the garment of a *servant* - he wrapped himself in it, and he grabbed a towel and a basin.

He doesn't wait for their dirty feet to get wiped on him. He goes to their dirty feet. He says, *"Give me your feet. Give me your dirt. Give me your stuff. I have something to give you, and I'm going to wipe it off for you. I'm going to serve you. I'm going to clean you. I'm going to love you with the garment of a servant."* After he had done all this, Peter tried to resist him, saying, you can't do this for *me*. And Jesus said, *"If I don't do this for you, you have no part with me. Because this is what we do in my kingdom. This is what leadership looks like in the kingdom of God. This is what love looks like in my kingdom. It doesn't look like a doormat. It looks like actively getting in there and serving and wiping clean, not just waiting to get wiped on."*

John 13:12-17 NIV

*"When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. 'Do you understand what I have done for you?' he asked them. You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.'"*

If we let his peace rule in our heart, and his Word dwell in us richly, then we can put on that same garment and do as Jesus did with those in our orbit and our household, where we live, work, and play, at home with our family and say, *"Give me your dirty feet. I'm going to wash them instead. I'm going to serve you. I'm going to bless you. I'm going to love you in ways that go far beyond what you deserve."* Because it's not about what we deserve. It's about what *he's* done. It's about his grace.

Mark 10:45 NIV

*"For even the Son of Man, Jesus, did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many."*

Philippians 2:5-9 NLT

*"You must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. Though he was God, he did not think of equality with God as something to cling to. Instead, he gave up his divine privileges; he took the humble position of a slave (doulos) and was born as a human being. When he appeared in human form, he humbled himself in obedience to God and died a criminal's death on a cross. Therefore, God elevated him to the place of highest honor."*

We must have the same attitude that Christ Jesus had. He says, *"You've got to have the same attitude if you're going to walk with Me. You're not submitting to people, you're submitting to Me. You're not obeying people, you're obeying Me. You're not loving and giving to them. You're doing it for Me."* Jesus didn't posture or manipulate or flaunt his authority and identity to ease his life, but he never lost his authority and he never lost his identity. Pilate threatened Jesus one time and he said, *"You know what? I could have you crucified. Don't you realize that?"* And what did Jesus say to him? He said, *"You would have no power over me unless it was given to you by my father in heaven."*

And it's that same attitude. It's that same heart and the garment we wear in Christ - the ability to go into situations that are unfair and unmerited and undeserved, and say, *"I'm not doing this because I have to. I'm doing this because I choose to in the name of Jesus Christ and by his power and his grace and his authority and for his honor and I will bless and I will serve and I will wash, not just wait to get wiped on."*

God delights in power and impact that originates from a position of seeming weakness. When we aren't in worldly authority, it makes room for him to bring the authority of heaven through us. When we don't demand our rights, the authority of heaven can rest on us and work through us, but only when we give up our privileges, just like Jesus did. There's power in love expressed through active service, not passively waiting to get wiped on. What would happen in our marriage, family, kids, parents, boss, or our employees if we took that attitude and that approach?

This is what it's like to walk with Jesus as we carry a power, a grace, love and authority, forgiveness and mercy that's so tasty if we'll just share it with somebody who doesn't deserve it - starting at home. The number one arena where we have the opportunity to most potently experience the presence and the power of God in our life is within our own household. *Why?* Because our own household is also where the greatest opportunity for us to get hurt and offended is. It's the number one place where destruction can happen unless somebody puts on the garment of a servant and changes the dynamic of the situation.

We can put on this garment today and say, *"No more doormat today. I'm a disciple and I bring him, not me anymore."* That's what changes households. That's what changes the world. That's what brings Jesus to people. Let's put on the robe of a servant - wear the new nature - stop digging up grave clothes because we got treated in some kind of way. Put on his clothes and bring them Jesus, starting at home. The only way that the worldly cycle of sin, selfishness, and self-righteousness is ever going to be disrupted, it's not by shouting, it's by *servicing ...and it starts at home*.

## **Prayer**

*Father, thank You for Your Word. We can't do this on our own. We can only do this by Your grace and by Your Spirit alive on the inside of us - clothing us on the outside - filling us and baptizing us in Your Spirit and power. Lord, forgive us for wearing the wrong garment, for having the wrong attitude about this, for when we have approached these things the wrong way. Lord, we want to wear Your uniform. We want to serve and to bless like You did, Jesus. Would you give us the strength and the grace and the power to do it? God, we pray that You would give us the creative thoughts and ideas of how we work this out in every relationship that we have. Lord, that we would begin with a holy, heavenly stamina to begin to approach our marriages, our kids, and our work in a way like we never have before. God, we love You and honor You, and pray all this in the name of Jesus. Amen*