

**Message #119 of *Scripture Beneath The Surface***  
***"Feet"***

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Hello! Thanks for being with us. Today I'd like to talk about feet. You know, like those two things at the bottom of your legs. Feet are kind of nice things to have. They take us here and take us there, and without feet we wouldn't travel around very well. But then, feet sometimes take us to places we shouldn't go. Our feet can get us into trouble when they take us into areas which are forbidden by God. Oh sure, you know what I mean. It's like when you just happen to be idling along in this life and all of a sudden you find yourself in a situation where your hands are into things they shouldn't be into, and then you look down at your feet and see that they have taken you into the muck and mire of the world. The wet mucky soil is sticking to your feet and you try to pull your feet out of the muck, but they've sunk so far in the mire that there's a suction, and when you try to pull your feet out it's a real job.

Of course, I'm sure you realize that I'm talking in symbolic form. But then, that's a common form of instruction in the Bible. The Bible uses symbolism to tell us things. Sometimes the symbolism helps us to understand the concept better, and sometimes the symbolism keeps us from understanding. The difference of whether the symbolism helps us or hinders us is whether we really want the truth of God or if we're just playing games.

When the disciples asked Jesus why he spoke in parables, he replied that his reason was so that the wise would understand, but that the wicked would not understand. God doesn't want the wicked to hear the truth, because as Jesus put it in Matthew, chapter 13, if the wicked heard the truth, then they would repent and God would have to forgive them and heal their land. But then,

he wants the righteous in heart to understand in order that they might be delivered from the deception.

Anyway, that's why I talk about the symbolism in the Bible so much. I also want the righteous to understand what the Bible is saying. I want you to see what Satan's deception is so that you can be delivered out of sin. God wants you to be delivered. But in order to understand the symbolism of scripture you're going to have to seek him with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and with all your strength. If you only seek God half-heartedly, then you won't really understand much of scripture at all.

2 Thessalonians 2:10 explains that deception is a result of not really loving God's truth in the first place. If you really love the truth, it will automatically dispel Satan's lies. But when you really don't care all that much for truth, it's easy to be deceived. You only keep from being deceived if you are careful to look closely.

It's the same thing if you were buying a used car. You know, you go down to Honest John's used car lot and old Honest John says, "Man, have I got a great car for you. It's got hardly any miles on it, and the rust is only surface rust. That puddle of oil under the engine is from another car that was parked there last week. This is a great car, never mind the cracked windshield and the bald tires."

So, if you're looking for a used car, do you just buy the first thing that comes along? Do you take whatever old Honest John said as the gospel truth? Or, do you look more closely. Do you look at the rust spots to see if it is just surface rust or maybe deeper than that? Do you look under the car to see if that puddle of oil is coming from that car's engine? Do you inspect the car closely to make sure it is really something you want, or do you just buy it because Honest John said it was the car for you? Of course, you wouldn't buy any car, without looking at it very closely. And, it's the same thing for when you're looking for truth. You have to look closely at whatever is told you, or else you might very well be deceived. Old Honest John might sound good, but as we've all seen from past experience, not every used car salesman can be trusted explicitly. If you really want to know the truth, you will look closely.

It's the same thing for the truth of God's word. If you believe the word of God is valuable, and that in the end it will cost you your whole life in order to follow that true word, you're going to make absolutely certain what the truth really is. If you don't, you might end up giving up your whole life for something that is false. Eternal life with God is a very precious commodity. And, you will exchange your whole life for it, and therefore you really do want to know the truth. However, the wicked people of this world don't have any intention of giving up their whole life for God, and therefore they don't really look closely at the word of God. To them Jesus is just a nice prophet, or maybe even the son of God, but not something that is so important as to make them give up their whole earthly life. They just spend their time going after the things of this world, and don't pay too much attention to the truth of the Bible. But, when you don't look closely, you don't see the flaws. When you just skim over the surface, you miss the fine print.

Sure, you know what fine print is. That's the print that Satan invented so that people won't know the whole truth. Sure, the truth is there for you to see, but you have to look closely.

God's word is filled with parables and allegories which symbolically describe his truth. Just try reading Revelation without trying to understand the symbolism and you will soon find yourself floundering. The Bible is full of symbolism, and God has put it there so that his people, and only his people, will understand. He has given us the symbolism of scripture to hide the truth from the wicked but to show the truth to the righteous. And the reason that the wicked can't see the truth and the righteous can is because the wicked don't really want it and the righteous people do. Therefore, God has given us his Holy Spirit in order to help us understand. The Holy Spirit makes all the difference. But whether you have the Holy Spirit or not depends on whether you are really seeking God or not. God doesn't give the Holy Spirit to the wicked. He only gives the Holy Spirit to those who receive him and his son, Jesus Christ. If you're dead serious about God, and I do mean, dead serious, then God will give you his Spirit, and his Spirit will guide you into the truth of his word.

Symbolism is not a deterrent to real Christians, it is a great help to them. When you don't understand something, and you see symbolism, it just helps you to know that you have to look more closely. It just tells you that you have to look beneath the surface a little bit. The wicked don't care that much about God's word, and when they see the symbolism, it confuses them just like it does true Christians at first. But unlike true Christians, who will seek God for the deeper understanding, the wicked people will give up and go back to the things of this world which stimulate their flesh. It is the real Christians who will go back to the word of God and begin the struggle to understand. True Christians will do this because they realize that there is great value, eternal value, in understanding the word of God.

So anyway, when you hear me talking about symbolism in scripture, it's because symbolism is the meat of God's word. We're not just talking milk of the word anymore, but when we begin to get into the word of God to a very great depth, then we can truly say that we've sunk our teeth into something solid. Hebrews 5:14 says, "But strong meat belongs to those who are of full age, even to those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil."

Strong meat is the food of Christians who have matured in the word of God. Milk is the food of babies, and also the food of weak Christians, or maybe even so-called Christians. The milk of the word of God is a very popular diet in most of today's churches. You can listen to most of the sermons that are coming out of the pulpits today and can quite easily recognize a milk sermon. Of course, milk sermons aren't all bad. New baby Christians need milk sermons. However, if that's all you're getting from your minister, and if you've been around for awhile, then I suggest you start praying and seeking God for some meat. No, I don't necessarily suggest you find another church, because most likely the next church you find will be no different. Milk seems to be the general order of the day. Meat is apparently a scarce item in today's pulpits. In fact, there is a significant call from some denominations to even discourage meat sermons. The reasoning for this is that it may push people away from the church. I have heard it preached that ministers

should only preach nice inoffensive sermons so that people will stay in the church. Yukk! Think about it. How would you like to sit down to a Big Mac that had no meat in it? A nice hot bun and a Coke? I don't think so.

But, let me get back to the symbolism I started with. The feet. Yeah. You have two feet. And your feet take you places. They can take you to solid ground where there is a good solid base for you to stand, or they can take you to the mucky, mire of the lowlands. But then, if you had feet that were designed to walk in muck, that wouldn't be so bad. If your feet were wider and flatter, like a bear's paws or a duck's webbed feet, then you wouldn't have too much trouble walking on soft spongy ground. But human feet were never meant to walk on soft spongy ground. When you leave the solid footing of the rocky soil, your feet sink into the muck, and you are in danger of getting in so far you can't pull yourself out.

Now, I think you know what I'm getting at. The muck and mire of this world is where Satan wants you to walk. He doesn't want you to walk on the solid ground of the word of God. He wants you to get stuck in his mucky mire. He doesn't want your feet planted on the solid rock of Jesus Christ, because he knows that Jesus is the word of God. That's why Jesus told us that he was the rock. He is the solid ground on which we can stand secure. When we stand on the solid rock of the Word of God, we can be certain that we will not sink into the mire and be sucked into the sea of Satan's destructive lies.

But our feet can take us into the muck and mire if we let them. And when our feet take us into these places, then our hands start getting involved with things we shouldn't be involved with. That's what the Bible is telling us when it talks about our feet. Our feet take us places, and whatever places we end up in, our hands get involved. If you have your hands into things that you shouldn't be involved in, many times it's not because Satan placed the temptation at your door, but because your feet took you to where the temptation was.

Now, look at it from this angle. In the Bible, feet represent the will, or the intent of the heart. The hands of man represent the actual involvement, but the feet demonstrate the intent. It's like when you want to fry some eggs. You can't use your hands to fix the eggs unless your feet take you to the kitchen. Your feet take you there because you want some eggs. However, if you happen to be on a diet, then you need to stay away from the kitchen. Of course, your hands will always get involved in things, both good things and bad things. But your feet need to stop taking you to places where your hands have no business being. And yes, forgiveness of sin comes from God when we repent. However, to repent means to turn away from something. You can't purposely go to something while at the same time turn away from it. In the same sense, you can't expect God to forgive you if you are actively intending to sin again. Sure, we always sin again, but the intent must be replaced with sorrow of heart. There must be a struggle against sin, otherwise you aren't really sorry for your sin. Hebrews 10:26 tells us that if we sin wilfully, there is no more forgiveness of sin. Wilful sin is the intent of the heart to go after sin rather than a wilful desire to abstain from it. In essence, your feet must be taught to stand on the solid rock

instead of running around in the muck and mire. Your hands will always get dirty from time to time, but your feet need to stay out of the mud.

That's why Jesus washed the disciples feet. Whoa! Did I lose you here? You know, Jesus washed the feet of his disciples. If you remember this portion of scripture, it says that Peter objected to Jesus washing his feet, but Jesus insisted that he must wash Peter's feet if Peter was to have a part with him in the Kingdom of God. Peter's reply was that the Lord should therefore wash not only his feet, but also his hands and head. But Jesus replied with a very interesting and important statement. He told Peter that a person only had to wash his feet, and if he just did that, then he would be completely clean.

Now think about this. Jesus said that complete cleansing takes place only by washing our feet. In this statement Jesus was giving us symbolic understanding. And this is the essence of it. If we intend to do that which is right, God forgives us of sin. If we intend to sin, then our hearts are not right with God, and God cannot yet forgive us. Jesus was telling Peter that forgiveness comes to us just by our intent to be righteous, and not because we actually accomplish that righteousness. Jesus washed the disciples' feet to show that the word of God washes us white as snow if we only get rid of the intent to sin. We all sin. But God forgives us, not because we don't sin anymore, but because we don't want to sin anymore. It is the desire not to sin that brings righteousness. Righteousness doesn't come from being good, it comes from wanting to be good.

If you want to sin, and don't want to be delivered from temptation, then it is like saying your feet are taking you down the road to a place you shouldn't be. When you get there, your hands will be getting into things that they shouldn't be getting into, and then you will have sinned against God. The miry clay, spoken of so many times in scripture, represents the ground that is unstable, and which will cause you to be trapped by Satan's lies. The lies are his impure waters that make mud out of hard soil. If your feet take you to the place of the solid rock of Jesus Christ, then this means you will have such a perfect foundation of the word of God that no impure water of Satan's lies will affect it. Water doesn't soften the solid rock, but the solid rock stays firm, which is a symbolism of scripture which means that the lies of Satan cannot pull us down when we have a sure foundation of the word of God.

Our feet were not meant to walk in muck and mire. Some animals can walk on soft spongy soil, but if you are truly the child of God, you are not like an animal that walks on soft ground. In fact, in the Bible, no clean animal had feet that were designed to walk on soft ground. It's another interesting symbolic form of scripture that helps God's people to see the importance of not straying into the pathways of Satan's lies. His lies will corrupt you. His lies are the twisted truth. And, in symbolic form, his lies are the impure waters which cause the soil to be turned from solid ground into muck and mire. The muck and mire of this earth is only meant to trap the wicked in the quicksands of earth. The story of the two men, one who built his house on the rock, and the other which built his house on the sand, is another symbolic demonstration of this principle. If we allow our feet to take us away from the solid rock, we will have no excuse for

when our hands get involved in filthiness. You can't blame Satan for tempting you beyond your control when you have placed yourself right beside him.

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There's another interesting part of scripture that deals with how our feet were designed to be used. In scripture, four legged animals are referred to as clean or unclean. Certain animals were considered clean, and these animals were to be eaten and also could be used for sacrifice to God. However, other animals were considered to be unclean, and could not be eaten or used for sacrifice. In each and every case, the feet had something to do with whether they were considered to be clean or unclean. God gave instructions for the Israelites concerning which animals were designated as clean or unclean. In order for an animal to qualify as clean, it had to include two specific things. First, the animal had to have split hooves. A cow, goat, or an antelope, for instance, has split hooves. A horse or bear doesn't have split hooves, and therefore would not qualify as being clean. Second, the animal also had to ruminate, it had to chew its cud. A cow, goat, or an antelope chews its cud, but a horse or bear doesn't.

Now, a camel chews its cud, but it doesn't have a split hoof. So it was considered to be unclean. In the alternate sense, a pig has a split hoof, but it doesn't chew its cud, so it too was considered to be unclean. However, the pig was considered to be exceptionally unclean. In fact, the Bible refers to it as an abomination in the eyes of God. And this is very interesting. In looking at the symbolic meaning of scripture we see that pigs were designed to walk on solid ground because their hooves are split. But where do they like to be? In the mud, of course. They aren't designed for the soft spongy ground. And, besides walking on ground they aren't designed for, they also lack another attribute of clean animals. They don't chew their cud.

In scripture, chewing the cud is symbolic of fully digesting God's word, trying to get the most nutrition out of it. Christians who truly love the word of God digest it very well. They ruminate on it. They bring it around again and again and ponder it. They keep thinking about it. The pig is especially filthy in God's eyes because it represents the people who were designed to walk on the solid ground of the Word of God, but who spend their time wallowing in the muck and mire of this world. In addition, they never try to thoroughly digest the word of God. They might hear it, or might read it a little, but never stop to really ponder it, to ruminate on it. These kind of people are especially hated in the eyes of God because although they were designed for righteousness, they have no heart for it. These people, in God's eyes, are the swine of the earth, always letting their feet take them where their hands have no business being.

It may seem like such a small thing to wash your feet. But having clean feet doesn't really mean just washing the mud off. It means having a true heart for God, and therefore a true desire for the righteousness of Jesus Christ, and not wanting to fall into sin. The clean feet of true Christians stand on the solid rock, not in the muck and mire of this world.