

# The Larger Prayer

BY CARMEN LAU

Adventists, while tending to be prideful with right belief, have fortunately incorporated foot washing as a ritual. In this way, we have a touchpoint to remind us of the primacy of orthopraxy, as well as orthodoxy. The Ordinance of Humility, as we call it, points to a different cultural context than the one in which we live. Seeing the master wash feet had not been a possibility when Jesus's followers were imagining what discipleship might bring forth.

Recently, on an Adventist Christian Fellowship (ACF) Zoom Bible Study, we pondered John 13 and the story of Jesus washing His disciples' feet. The University of Alabama at Birmingham chapter of ACF continues weekly meetings during the pandemic quarantine, joined by people from near and as far away as Arizona and even Panama. These students seek to practice an integrated Christian walk that includes learning from scripture, while preparing to participate in the world by attaining higher education.

In relation to the biblical story, my ACF friends brought up the notion that, strangely enough, vulnerability gives a sort of power. They cited researcher Brené Brown, particularly her book *Daring Greatly*, as evidence. My friends also sought to position themselves in a humble, open space, with an acknowledgment that God's mysterious ways might bring forth an unimagined outcome. Recently, there has been discussion that has pierced a prevalent numbness on the topic of racial injustice. What is the right action for Christ followers in this regard? How do humble acts transform?

It made me think that I don't really know how to transcend what I think I need when I pray. His way is the unimaginable way, that is always higher than any action imagined by contemporary cultural powers. Ednah

Cheney's words came to mind from hymn #488 in the *Seventh-day Adventist Hymnal*:

At first I prayed for light:  
Could I but see the way,  
How gladly, swiftly would I walk  
To everlasting day!  
And next I prayed for strength:  
That I might tread the road  
With firm, unfalt'ring feet, and win  
The heav'ns' serene abode.  
And then I prayed for faith:  
Could I but trust my God,  
I'd live enfolded in His peace,  
Though foes were all abroad.  
But now I pray for love:  
Deep love to God and man;  
A living love that will not fail,  
However dark His plan.  
And light and strength and faith  
Are op'ning everywhere!  
God waited patiently until  
I prayed the larger prayer.

We worship a large God. We can partake of His nature by praying a larger prayer, which will clear a path for action.



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