



LEGACY INSTITUTE

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Dear Fellow-Workers,

The Passover is just around the corner! So I thought I should try to get a letter off to all of you before Gloria and I travel across the border into Burma for the spring Holy Days. Then communications will become very difficult.

I have been studying the New Testament Passover in the Scriptures. I have found some very interesting things that we may not have noticed before.

The Passover evening – before His crucifixion the next day – Jesus performed a very important act – an act that is incorporated in every Church of God Passover since that night. We find this outlined in **John 13:3-5**.

This important part of the New Testament Passover we call the “Foot Washing Ceremony”. We do the foot washing FIRST – even before taking the symbols of the unleavened bread and the wine.

Why is this part of the Passover so significant? Most of us understand it as an act of humility. We understand that, as Christians, we are to be humble in our relationships with one another. And, yes, that is important to the symbolic meaning of the foot washing ceremony. But is there more than only one meaning? Are we missing something?

Jesus explained WHY He washed each and every one of the disciples’ feet in **JOHN 13:12-20**. Traditionally, foot washing was an act in the Middle East that took place whenever one entered the home of another. People wore open sandals (and still do), so their feet got dusty and dirty. The homeowner usually ordered the washing of the guest’s feet as the **FIRST ACT OF RECEIVING** the guest into his home. Usually, the foot washing was done by a servant. The act of washing a guest’s feet was an **IMPORTANT PART OF ACCEPTING** the visitor into the home and **SHOWING HOSPITALITY AND RESPECT**. By washing the feet, you were symbolically receiving this person into your home and **INTO FELLOWSHIP WITH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY AND OTHER GUESTS**. **NOT** washing a guest’s feet showed just the opposite.

Here are some examples of foot washing in the Bible:

GEN 18:4 When the Eternal God came to judge Sodom with 2 angels, Abraham quickly received them into his camp at the Oaks of Mamre by providing water to wash their feet. He then served them food.

1 SAM 25:38-41 When David sent his men to bring him Abigail as his wife, she indicated she was willing to be his wife and bond-slave by saying she would be *David's maid to wash the feet of his servants*.

Now let's look at an opposite attitude in **LUKE 7:36-50**: Why Simon the Pharisee invited Jesus into his home and then why Jesus' feet were NOT washed – is not stated in the Bible. Was it perhaps that Jesus was not of the same sect as the Pharisees and therefore – NOT considered a brother? This is not clear. BUT, Jesus did bring up this obvious breach of hospitality and protocol by comparing it to the woman's show of deep respect, gratitude and worship. In verse 44 - Jesus turned to the woman and said to Simon:

“See you this woman? I entered into your house, YOU GAVE ME NO WATER FOR MY FEET: but SHE HAS WASHED MY FEET with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head.”...

Washing feet at Passover demonstrates a very important character trait of a Godly Leader: HUMILITY. Jesus told His disciples that, if He – their LORD and TEACHER – was willing to kneel down and wash their feet, then they should wash one another's feet. In other words, if the LEADER and CHIEF was willing to HUMBLE Himself and wash the feet of His SERVANTS as an act of respect and fellowship, then they should do the same to each other. This example of Jesus' humility is made even more vivid because He was going to die the following day by one of the most cruel and humiliating forms of execution possible under the Roman system – crucifixion.

Someone who is unwilling to wash the feet of another – is REJECTING that person as deserving his acceptance, respect and fellowship.

People who take the Passover together must be reconciled together and willing to accept one another in a spirit of fellowship (**MATT 5: 23-24**). Jesus said that IF I DO IT – THEN YOU MUST DO IT! (**John 13:15**)

We are to follow Jesus' example of leadership. How can we be Jesus disciple if we are unwilling to reconcile to our brothers and sisters in Christ? The obvious answer is that, if we are unwilling to forgive and reconcile, we cannot be Jesus' disciple. We must all carry the cross of self-sacrifice and humility if we want to be His disciples. A Christian must be a student (disciple) of Jesus. If someone calls himself a Christian – but is unwilling to LEARN from Jesus and do what He says, then he is NOT A TRUE CHRISTIAN! **MATT 10:38-42**.

Something Jesus said in Matt 10, he repeats in connection with the foot washing as related in John 13. Jesus said, **“He who receives you – receives Me, and he who receives Me – receives Him who sent Me.”** (Verse 40). Going forward to the Passover foot washing in John 13, John

quotes Jesus as saying, “Truly, truly, I say to you, he who receives whomever I send – receives Me, and he who receives Me – receives Him who sent Me.” (Verse 20)

By washing the disciples’ feet, Jesus was symbolically ACCEPTING and RECEIVING them into HIS fellowship – HIS brotherhood; JUST as the act of washing guests’ feet accepted and received them into one’s home and fellowship.

To further support this understanding of the meaning of foot washing – let’s look at what Jesus told His disciples to do if they were rejected (not received and not accepted) – in their evangelistic travels. In **MATT 10:14** Jesus told them to *“shake off the dust of your feet”* against them if they were rejected. Why? Because the disciples’ feet were STILL DIRTY! They had not been ACCEPTED and RECEIVED by the act of foot washing!

“...he who receives whomsoever I send – receives Me.”

If we are unwilling to wash someone’s feet at Passover, we are unwilling to accept them into our brotherhood and fellowship. It is very simple and clear.

Being baptized and placed into the Body of Christ (the Church of God) is very serious. It is serious because you must now take relationships very seriously. You now have a serious relationship with Jesus and God Our Father. But you also have a serious relationship with others that God has chosen and called into His Family.

Foot washing is symbolic of that important relationship with God the Father; with Jesus our Elder Brother – and with one another. God takes it seriously. Jesus takes it seriously. And so should we.

Now we come to a very important question: *What would happen if someone showed up to take the Passover with you and your congregation – and, what if he/she WAS NOT of your particular Church of God fellowship? Would the deacons BAR THE DOORS? Would this person be escorted from the room? Or, if allowed to stay, would you wash this person’s feet?*

This is an important question to ask of ALL the various COG groups who will be keeping the 14th Nissan Passover. What if this person ALSO is a servant of Jesus, just not one belonging to your fellowship? What if this person has ALSO been chosen by Our Lord and sent out to do His Will? Can anyone in good conscience turn that person away, and NOT wash that person’s feet? Everyone who reads this letter should think carefully on these things, because ...

“...he who receives whomsoever I send – receives Me.”

First Graduation of Legacy Institute *International Leadership Training Center*

The very first graduation commencement exercise of Legacy Institute International Leadership Training Center was a wonderful success! Five students graduated with a Diploma in Liberal Arts on February 22, 2004. Two of the graduates are from the Karen tribe and three are from the Kachin tribal peoples in Burma.

After my opening remarks and the commencement address, instrumental performances were given by individual students on guitar or keyboard. The remarkable thing was that all the performers read music as they played their instruments. How did they learn to read music and play an instrument? Most learned at Legacy School!

Then four choral numbers were performed by the Legacy Choral, directed by Daniel Miller, one of our volunteer teachers from USA. The numbers were: *I Sing the Mighty Power of God, Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee, It Won't Be Long Now and Journey of Faith.*

Also each of the 5 graduates gave an 8 minute graduation speech (in English) about what they felt were the important things they had learned at Legacy School. After that, Certificates of Merit were awarded. They were: *Valedictorian, Leadership, Excellence in Music, Spirit of Excellence and Academic Improvement.* Finally we held the *Presentation of Diplomas.*

65 relatives and special guests were in attendance. After photographs were taken, all ate a buffet meal together with a special donated performance by the "Amazing Dr. Penguin."

Each graduate will now begin his or her "Give Back Year". Each will serve as a volunteer teacher helping to educate others less fortunate. One graduate will help teach the Karen children and also Thai at Legacy School next academic year.

The last 2 years have been tough. But we have been successful. The first of Legacy's graduates will go out into the world and pass along what we have taught them. Two years is not enough, I know! But Gloria and I, along with our volunteer teachers, have been working diligently to instill in them the principles of God's True Way of Life. The rest is up to Him.

The Gospel of the Kingdom of God is not just for us. What God has given, we have an Heavenly command by Jesus Our Lord Himself to pass on to others. At Legacy School, all students learn about the coming Kingdom of God and what it will mean to the world. Some get it – and maybe some do not. We cannot make them all have ears to hear and a heart that is led, somehow, by the Holy Spirit of God. But that doesn't change the mandate given to ALL followers of Jesus. He commanded, "GO OUT - PREACH – BAPTIZE – TEACH." (*Matthew 28*)

The mustard seed is one of the smallest seeds. You can barely see it! But Jesus said that it can grow to become one of the largest plants in the field. Also, the Bible tells us in Zech. 4:10, that we should not despise the day of small things. Legacy Institute is just such a "small thing". When we started the school, we really had no money to begin and did not know where we should have the school. We had no teachers. We just knew that, if it was His Will, things would work

out, and they did! Now the blood, sweat and tears of the last two years at Legacy Institute Leadership Training Center are beginning to yield fruit. It is fruit that glorifies God because He is the one doing it!

This year we begin another academic year again in June. We need more volunteer teachers. We need teachers who can instruct music, computers, English, organic agriculture, health and hygiene (or all of the above!) We need people willing to forego some of the luxuries of the West in order to give to others. And we need people instilled with the desire to serve God and do His Will. Anyone willing to tackle this challenge will have to sacrifice. They will pay their own plane tickets and must commit to one academic year (10 months) with room and board furnished – but no pay. All interested parties please contact the address at the top of this newsletter.

Purchase of Land for Legacy School

God has blessed us with an opportunity to purchase the land we currently call the “Farm”. This property is ideal for the building of the Legacy Institute ILTC. It has about one acre of property; a large house with 4 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms with lots of living space; and an outside building with a kitchen. It is also advantageous because the land sits directly at a small stream which we can use for irrigation all year around.

We currently lease property for the school and farm and our leases will be up next year. This means that the owners could raise the rent as they wish, or even ask us to leave and rent to another; or sell the property at any time. If we are going to develop a permanent school – we need a permanent location.

Originally the person we thought was the owner, in fact, was not. He was asking an exorbitant price for the land and we knew that purchasing it was out of the question. But we prayed and asked God that if He wanted us to have a permanent location – then He would have to provide it.

Recently we found out that the land is in foreclosure and the man we thought was the owner really was only a broker! So, we asked a lawyer to find and contact the real owner for us. He turned out to be an agriculture professor at the Agricultural University in Bangkok and was very favorable of the purchase of the property for a charitable foundation. He was willing to help us get the land for much less than we originally thought!

The bottom line is – we now have an opportunity to purchase the “farm” for our school. We will need to pay a significant amount as a “down” to cover all the back interest and taxes that haven’t been paid for over 10 years. Then the bank is willing to give us a loan for the property at a modest interest rate.

This is a real answer to prayer as we thought we might have to move to another location and start all over again! God is very kind by providing this opportunity. Please pray that God will also provide the down-payment and other fees which are needed to complete this purchase.

Leon and Gloria's May Trip to Europe and USA

Gloria and I will be on an extended trip to Europe and the USA in May. We have been invited to attend the International Ministerial Congress (IMC) of the Church of God (7th Day), which will be held in Warsaw, Poland at the end of April. This will give us a chance to do some "bridge building" with a fellow COG organization as well as other Church of God organizations in Europe. Then we are headed to the US to visit family and as many of all of you as we can. Our US itinerary follows:

May 6-14	Ohio Area
May 15	Knoxville, Tenn.
May 16-17	St. Louis Area
May 19-28	Dallas, Texas
May 29-30	Minneapolis, Minn.
June 2	San Francisco Area
June 3-7	San Diego and Los Angeles Areas
June 8	Return to Bangkok

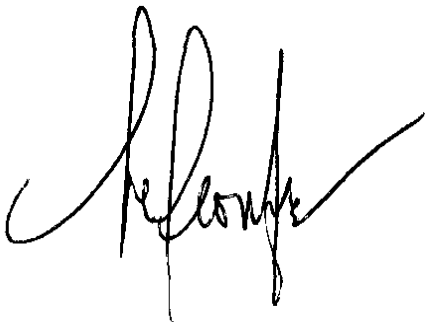
If you want to learn where we will be scheduled to speak, please contact as follows:

Anita Showers at	330.852.2709 or	email: mshowers@wilkshire.net .
Herb Vierra at	626 357 2588 or	email: accmo@verizon.net .

We are preparing an exciting PowerPoint slide presentation of what Legacy Institute is doing in Asia, which we hope to present in every area we visit. Hope to see you there!

May God grant you all a safe and spiritually rejuvenating Passover and Days of Unleavened Bread.

In Jesus' Service,



WHAT IS LEGACY INSTITUTE?

LEGACY INSTITUTE is a private, non-profit, charitable foundation and is not affiliated with any human church organization. Legacy Institute seeks to serve and help mankind in the spirit and example of our Lord Jesus Christ. His instructions were to freely give. This means without discrimination and without prejudice. Your donations to Legacy Institute are tax deductible in the USA.

Leon Sexton

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