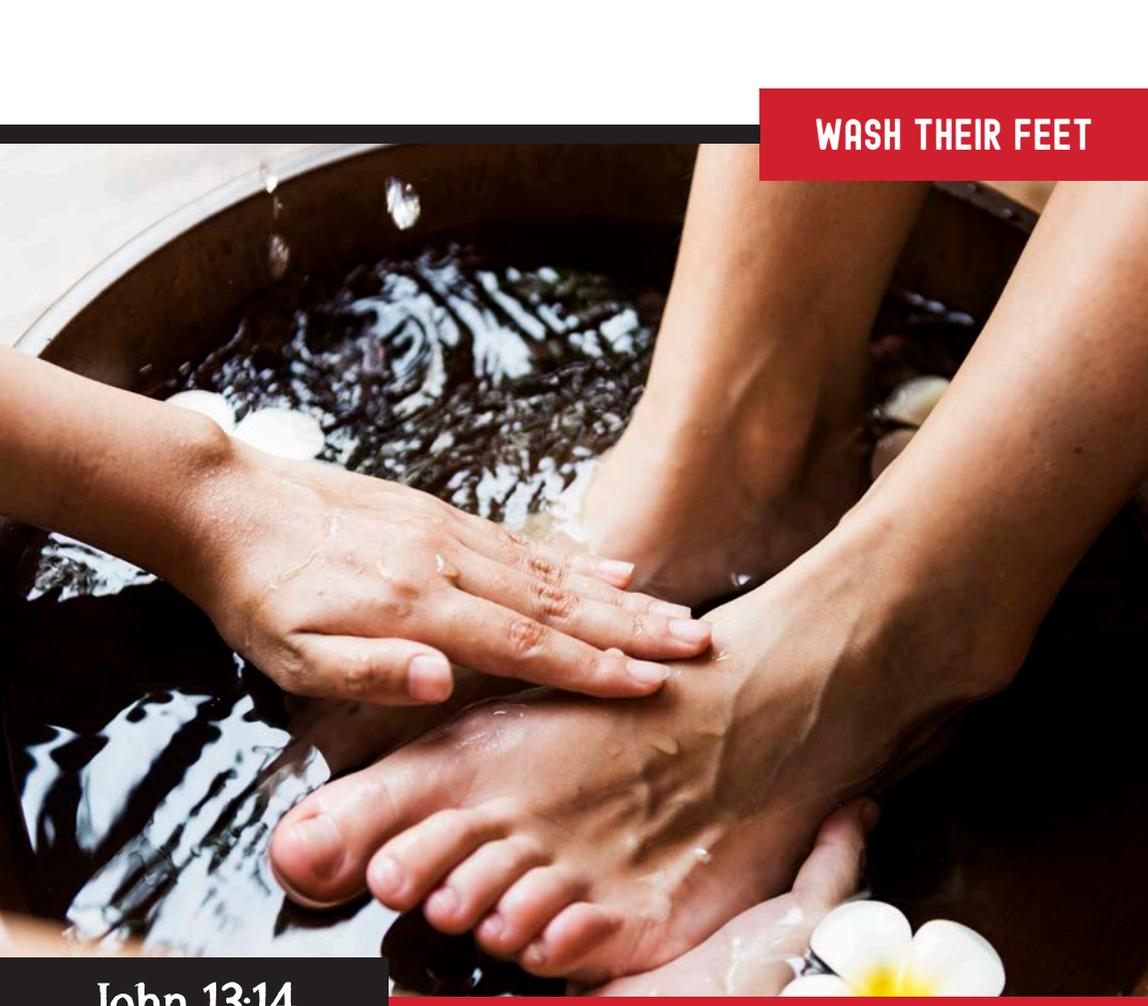


PARENTING

an uncommon topic study



UNCOMMEN



WASH THEIR FEET

John 13:14

If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet.

UNCOMMON

GRANDPARENTING MUST BE INTENTIONAL

SCRIPTURE: JOHN 13:14

I love my grandchildren! I guess most grandparents love their grandkids. God gives us this bond with them. I've analyzed this at length, and part of it has to do with getting a mini do-over. We get to be a "shadow" parent, not real parents, but right behind. Another reason is I can see me in them. I see personality traits, good or bad that they are developing that reminds me of...well me.

My oldest grandson, Tyler, is like a little Paul skipping a generation. His personality is like me in so many ways that I am fearful he will learn the lessons of life by trial and error the same way I did. But when it comes down to it, I am not his parent, and I can't parent him the way his mom and dad can. However, I can take him out for a pancake breakfast, to the driving range, play a board game or see another "Defender of the Universe" movie. We had some good times together. We talked, we played games, we traded jokes, we worshiped in church together, and we bonded.

Being a grandparent has given me a different perspective on the character of God. It's like knowing a person before they get older sort of like God knowing me before I grew up. I pray that I've been a good example to him while we have had our time together and he says, "What would grampy do?" (just kidding), but I pray more importantly that my faith in Christ and my example would lead him to say, "What would Jesus do?" In some ways they are inseparable. He has seen my character, my humor, and my faith at work. In Jesus, he knows God's character and His eternal nature. (I'm not sure what God thinks about humor.) Hopefully, the connection is there. If grampy can love him, Jesus can love him too.

For me, grandparenting must be intentional. With work, travel, church responsibilities, time with our friends and everyday life, it is easy not to take the time to care. It's easier not to pick up the phone or text and ask him out for breakfast. It is a lot easier to do nothing. After all, he has his friends, his family, and his activities at school. Why would he want to hang out with the old guy? But occasionally he does, and that time is precious.

Last year we moved out of state, and one of the hardest things in the move was to be away from Tyler. I know he is in good hands, but I won't be able to see him on a regular basis. I do pray for him, but it is intermittent. I believe firmly in prayer and its power to heal, lead, guide and protect. But it's harder now that we live over ten hours away.

A verse that comes to mind is John 13:14 – If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another's feet. Jesus was demonstrating the nature of God as a servant leader. You may question how this relates to grandparenting, but being a servant to others is essential, even to my teenage grandson, who needs some good feet washing. He may not understand now, but later he will.

QUESTION 1: What family member or co-worker would appreciate some special attention; going to a ball game or out for pizza together?

QUESTION 2: Are you living the Christian life as an example to others? What needs to change?

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Paul is a volunteer writer for Uncommen.



CHALLENGE

Make a short list of those closest to you. (e.g., spouse, children, grandchildren, close friends)
Pray for them and find ways of staying connected especially your spouse.

HUSBANDS - DADS - LEADERS

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