

***Fanning it into Flame***  
**Sunday, November 07, 2010**  
**Communion: A Celebration of Participation**

In the Gospel of John and chapters 13 through 17 Jesus reveals his heart to his apostles at the Last Supper and lays the foundation for the future that was going to be dependent on their faith, obedience, and participation. It begins with Jesus humbling himself and taking the position of a servant by washing their feet. It states that he was showing them the full extent of his love. Peter's objections were met with Jesus' reply that if he did not allow this he could have no part with Jesus. Peter responds with, "*Then, Lord, not just my feet but my hands and my head as well!*" Jesus' reply is very interesting. "*A person who has had a bath needs only to wash his feet; his whole body is clean. And you are clean, though not every one of you.*" After finishing this foot washing he tells them that they were to do the same for one another.

How was Jesus showing the full extent of his love? I believe he was revealing the essence of relationships. During this Last Supper Jesus tells them about his betrayal and death, his resurrection and future glory, their participation and bearing fruit to bring glory to him and the Father. Their faith in Jesus washed them clean of their sins even before his crucifixion in the same way that Abraham's faith had credited him with righteousness. They were clean, but needed their feet washed. Our daily walk brings us through many things that can taint who we are and puts us in need of cleansing. Jesus was showing them that he forgave them of the daily stuff of life and that they needed to do it as well. It is the basis of relationships. We need to walk in relationship with one another and humble ourselves to forgive those who trespass against us and also receive the forgiveness of others we have sinned against. Jesus said that you would know his disciples by the love they had for one another. This is truly one significant way love is expressed.

God humbled himself in the person of Christ to take human form, live a life just like us, and demonstrate what it could be like if we would allow him to live in us. His desire was that we would participate in the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3,4). That word participate here is the same word that is used for communion. We are all members of one body and partakers of one loaf. (1 Corinthians 10:16, 17). Jesus called us to do what he did: believe like him, pray like him, act like him, trust like him, and bear fruit like him. It sounds like a tall order, but only when we think that we're responsible to generate that kind of behavior. We can't generate it. He said, "*apart from me you can do nothing.*" He was not expecting us to do it on our own, but his life in us would accomplish it.

It's an amazing thing that God does not force us into relationship with him. He even steps aside and willingly releases his authority to us to accomplish his will. He is always there, yet waits to be invited to partner with us. In a sense, he is patiently waiting for us to get a clue and realize who we really are in him. It must become our goal to let the Lord be himself in our lives, both individually and corporately in church. One of the aspects of grieving the Holy Spirit is not allowing him to flow in our lives. He is longing to work in us and through us. Let's ask the Lord to forgive us of our small mindedness and fear of what people think and get on with becoming the vessels of honor he has called us to be. Let's truly commune with the Lord.