

## *The Mustard Seed Advent, 17-Dec-2012*

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12-17-2012

### *Home Again*

Dear Brethren,

Vinnette and I travelled to Edmonton Canada this past weekend for our retreat. We missed the opportunity to be with you in phone study on Friday and we look forward to our next Friday-evening phone study on 28-Dec-2012. Instead, we personally studied, Friday and Saturday in that wintry north-western city in Canada; we also had personal counseling sessions on Sabbath evening and afterwards on Sunday morning. The Lord deployed us most effectively. Sunday afternoon we boarded our flight on schedule at 4:30 PM, EST, and arrived home at 11:30 PM, EST. The flight was almost flawless.

While in Edmonton, after the trepidation and anxiety of anticipation which gripped many in the group was abated, we heeded the Lord's counsel and example by exposing our proverbial feet, a metaphor which in reality merely means the removal of our figurative shoes and socks. By now all should understand that they represent the things that hid our feet, things that hide our proverbial walk or missteps through life. All unveiled their innermost sins and reproaches—not for the purpose of garnering forgiveness from me—but to meet the Lord's *John-13* criterion for upper-room discipleship. Having fully exposed ourselves, not hiding the stains of our characters of the past, we all felt cleansed and joyous that we can heed the Lord's new commandment. Yet, there may be more needed in this Jacobian, name-changing experience.

Only the fervent disciples, those who have proven themselves and have met the Lord's definition of the people who truly love Him, the Commandment keepers, participated in this very solemn occasion. Many tears as well as sympathetic embraces were exchanged. All, for the very first time revealed the innermost and highly guarded "shames" of their lives. After so doing, all expressed relief and peace. This process, being a unique, Christo-historical custom—one installed by the *mustard seed*—will allow the world to know that we are different, that we are His disciples by the special love that He has commissioned from us to extend to each other. Immediately after the original feet-washing incident, Christ said to the twelve, "**A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another**" —John 13: 34, 35. 'Love one another as He loves,' hmm—how does the Lord love His disciples? This the *mustard seed* has now answered affording us, for the first time in history, to comply with this mandate: The Lord loves us, each of His disciples, from the perspective of full knowledge. While knowing us better than do all other people in our lives know us, He knows all of our sins and reproaches. Therefore, to heed this commission—a thing different from church membership, from worldly decorum, from merely Davidic association—the commandment-keeping disciples must expose all the tarnishing and painful missteps and misdeeds of their lives, they must expose their proverbial feet.

After the service, the Sabbath closed and we enjoyed an open fellowship by informally dining with the children and friends of the message. I trust that all joy in this wonderful hour in which we live.

Sincerely,

Derek