# Scripture and Background Information for July 7- 20
## *A Foot Short of Greatness*

Rather than providing similar, short background information each week, we have written one document to provide you with background for the next two weeks. To prepare for discussion each week**,** group members should use the **Discussion Guide** to complete the **GOD'S WORDS** and **MY WORDS** columns using the scriptures from John 13 below. You will notice that we are continuing the pattern of your discussing scripture *after* the Sunday message on that passage.

**Background for John 13**
The book of John moves fairly quickly through the birth of Jesus and his public ministry through chapters 1-12. However, the pace slows as John moves toward the crucifixion and death of Jesus. Chapter 13 begins that transition. In this clear recollection of Jesus' last discourse to His disciples, John captures Jesus' words of comfort and assurance to a group of fearful and confused followers. Jesus knew that in less that 24 hours He will be on the cross. Therefore, Jesus' last words and actions remind the disciples of his love for them and their mission before His departure.

**July 7-13: John 13:1-3.** John's words mark this change in pace and direction toward the cross in verse 1. In verse 2, though Judas was being prompted by the devil, it is important to remember that he had every opportunity to make a different decision than the one that he made. As one commentator says, "This does not exonerate Judas, because his wicked heart desired exactly what the devil desired, the death of Jesus. The devil and Judas were in one accord." In verse 3, Jesus knows that His humiliating death will result in His and God's Glory when He returns to his rightful place in heaven.

**July 14-20. John 13:14-17.** Jesus washes the disciples' feet in this crucial scene in order to show them true servant leadership. The main emphasis in verses 4-17 is this—that leadership is service and that the last is first in God's eyes. This is not a passage mandating feet-washing or baptism. Jesus commands the disciples to serve others in this manner (not necessarily by washing feet but with the same degree of service and sacrifice).

**Scriptures for the upcoming weeks:**

| | |
|---|---|
| July 21 | 1 Timothy 1:12-16 |
| July 28 | Philippians 3:2-8 |