

The Work Goes On

John 14:11-14

Jn 14:11 Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. 12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father. 13 And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

Most commentators begin with verse 12 but we want to begin with verse 11. Because we must understand what Jesus is referring to in verse 12.

Remember Jesus is trying to reassure His disciples because He is going to be arrested in just a few hours and within 24 hours He will be in a tomb.

He wants them to know that what He has been doing will not come to a stop once He is gone but that they will continue the work. They will not only continue the work but the work will expand dramatically under their ministry.

Now I have to say that this passage is often misused in Christian circles to say things that Jesus never intended. I think this is very important as the insert in your bulletin tells us.

But let us begin.

- I. The works that I do he will do also;
 - A. Most assuredly
 - B. And greater works than these he will do
 1. In the kingdom of nature they should work greater miracles. No miracle is little, but some to our apprehension seem greater than others. Christ had healed with the hem of his garment, but Peter with his shadow (Acts 5:15), Paul by the handkerchief that had touched him, Acts 19:12. Christ wrought miracles for two or three years in one country, but his followers wrought miracles in his name for many ages in divers countries. *Matthew Henry's Commentary on the New Testament*
 2. Yea, and you shall do greater works than I have done: not more or greater miracles: the truth of that may be justly questioned; for what miracle was ever done by the apostles greater than that of raising Lazarus? Much less do I think that it is to be understood of speaking with divers tongues. It is rather to be understood of their success carrying the gospel to the Gentiles, by which the whole world, almost, was brought to the obedience of the faith of Christ. We never read that of Christ which we read of Peter, viz. his converting three thousand at one sermon. *Poole*
 - C. I say to you, he who believes in Me

1. Faith in Jesus is always a requirement for all things spiritual.
 2. We cannot hope to access the spiritual elements without faith.
- D. Because I go to My Father.
1. The idea here is the same that He will tell them in chapter 16, that it is needful for them that He go away, because greater spiritual power and blessings will be theirs because of it.
- II. And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do,
- A. Whatever you ask
1. This tells us first of all that they are not going to accomplish these greater works on their own.
 2. These greater works will only be a result of their prayers.
 3. The way that God has guaranteed that He get the honor and glory from our works is that those works come only in response to the prayers of His people.
- B. That the Father may be glorified in the Son.
1. Jesus did all for the glory of the Father as we should do all for the glory of the Son.
 2. Jn 7:18 (NKJV) He who speaks from himself seeks his own glory; but He who seeks the glory of the One who sent Him is true, and no unrighteousness is in Him.
 3. Jn 8:50 (NKJV) And I do not seek My own glory; there is One who seeks and judges.
 4. Jn 15:7 (NKJV) If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you. 8 By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.
- C. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.
1. Jn 15:16 (NKJV) You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.
 2. Jn 16:23 (NKJV) And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you. 24 Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.
 3. 1Jn 5:14 (NKJV) Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. 15 And if we know

that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

III. I will do it.

- A. Does this mean that people today can do all the things that Jesus was able to do if they only have enough faith.
- B. Please notice that not even Paul was able to have this.
 - 1. 2 Cor 12:8 Concerning this thing I pleaded with the Lord three times that it might depart from me. 9 And He said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness." Therefore most gladly I will rather boast in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. NKJV
 - 2. 2 Tim 4:20 Erastus stayed in Corinth, but Trophimus I have left in Miletus sick. NKJV
 - 3. Phil 2:25-28 25 Yet I considered it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother, fellow worker, and fellow soldier, but your messenger and the one who ministered to my need; 26 since he was longing for you all, and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick almost unto death; but God had mercy on him, and not only on him but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow. NKJV
- C. In his book "I Don't Have Enough Faith to Be an Atheist" Norm Geisler shows that by the late middle of the first century, that the miracles that we read of in Acts were coming to an end.
 - 1. They were coming to an end because the reason they were given were coming to an end.
 - 2. They were given to authenticate the message of the miracle worker.
 - 3. But by 75 AD almost all of the New Testament was written.
 - 4. It was the finish of God's revelation to the world.
 - 5. And once John penned the book of Revelation, it was finished.
 - 6. From then on, no one authoritatively spoke except when was quoting the already written Scriptures.

God has not finished working, and He is still calling people into the job of winning people to Jesus Christ. There is really no greater work than changing a person's heart. For them to become a new creature in Christ Jesus is the greatest transformation in the world. It takes resurrection power the Bible tells us. It takes more power to heal a broken soul than to heal a broken leg.

Jesus would have you today join Him in that great work. Not so that you can be somebody, but so that Jesus will be glorified through you and the Father will be glorified through the Son.

14:12 Jesus again slowly resumed the main current of his teaching. He wanted to impress on the disciples that he was not disbanding them in anticipation of his departure but, rather, he was expecting them to continue his work and do even greater things than he had accomplished. Such an expectation seems impossible in the light of his character and power; yet, through the power of the Spirit whom Jesus sent after his ascension, there were more converts after the initial sermon of Peter at Pentecost than are recorded for Jesus during his entire career. The influence of the infant church covered the Roman world, whereas Jesus during his lifetime never traveled outside the boundaries of Palestine. Through the disciples he multiplied his ministry after his departure. The Book of Acts is a continuous record of deeds that followed the precedent Jesus had set. As the living Lord he continued in his church what he had himself begun. He expected that the church would become the instrument by which he could manifest his salvation to all people. *The Expositors Bible Commentary, New Testament*