

## Greater Works

### John 14:7-14/#theheartofJesus

*And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son.  
If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (John 14:13-14)*

We as Christians are paradoxes of incredible strength and weakness. We have amazing potential and also so much in our lives that undermines us. We are spiritual forces to be reckoned with, but at the same time so distinctly fragile and delicate. The Christian journey is a slow and deliberate process, full of victories and failures, joy and defeat, confidence and doubt.

In all of these paradoxes, we are Jesus' spiritual masterpieces. Paul calls us Jesus' workmanship, created in and through and by Jesus Christ. For what purpose? For good works!

In the Upper Room Discourse in John 14:7-14, Jesus proclaims the magnitude of the good works that He has called us to walk in.

### In Jesus we will perform our greatest works.

<sup>7</sup> *If you have known me, you will know my Father too. And from now on you do know him and have seen him.* <sup>8</sup> *Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father, and we will be content."* <sup>9</sup> *Jesus replied, "Have I been with you for so long, and you have not known me, Philip? The person who has seen me has seen the Father! How can you say, 'Show us the Father'?"* <sup>10</sup> *Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you, I do not speak on my own initiative, but the Father residing in me performs his miraculous deeds.* <sup>11</sup> *Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, but if you do not believe me, believe because of the miraculous deeds themselves. (John 14:7-11)*

We often think, "If only we were around during Jesus' day, all of this would be so much easier!" We think it would have been so much easier. He would have explained everything to us and told us what to do. This is a common perception, but it's wrong. This is not what the disciples experienced. Some of Jesus' closest friends betrayed and denied Him. Most people didn't understand Jesus.

Philip said, "Lord, show us the Father and we will be content." Let us see God the Father and it will be sufficient and we will be satisfied and confident in You, Jesus. Give all of us that transfiguration moment that James, Peter and John saw (Matt. 17:1-9). Moses begged God, "Show me your glory" (Ex. 33:18). But the most he was allowed to glimpse was the trailing edge of the back of God's glory.

Apostle John is the incarnation theologian and Philip's question proves that many of the disciples missed the point of the incarnation. In Jesus, the Son of God, the Father has made Himself known definitively, gloriously and visibly. Jesus is God's gracious self-disclosure (1:14, 18, 12:45). Jesus uses the classic conditional--if you had known me and you in fact know me--it's a statement of assurance.

Philip is asking very basic questions and you can sense Jesus' frustration. These are the basics that must be the foundation of their ministry into Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8). Jesus is who He says He is for two reasons: 1) He says it and if He says it, the Father says it (v. 10) and 2) Jesus also says, "If my words leave doubt, look at my works. Let my words and miracles join together and lead you to faith" (v. 11).

<sup>12</sup> *I tell you the solemn truth, the person who believes in me will perform the miraculous deeds that I am doing, and will perform greater deeds than these, because I am going to the Father. (John 14:12)*

Who is the subject of this verse? Jesus is very explicit: "the person who believes in Me." Jesus' promise is staggering—the person who believes in Jesus will perform the miraculous deeds that I am doing and actually greater deeds than these. What does this mean that believers will perform greater works than Jesus?

Does it simply mean the church will do “greater works” as far as volume and participation?	Does it mean the “greater works” are more supernatural works than what Jesus did?	Are the “greater works” tied to the Gospel and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit?
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There might be elements of all of these in the answer, but the phrase that helps us understand our greater works is the phrase: “because I am going to the Father.” As Jesus will point out in a few verses, the Advocate, the Comforter, the Spirit of Truth will come and He will be with you because He will reside with you forever (14:16-18). The Book of Acts describes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the greater works that are fulfilled in the Apostles and will be fulfilled in us.

Lehman Strauss said, “Never before were men possessed with so great an impulse to speak out for Christ. Never before had there been such a readiness and voluntary willingness to suffer for Christ. Never before had a group so large known such enthusiastic and intimate fellowship. The world was to witness a new thing. Rather than deny Jesus Christ or each other, the disciples chose to take their lives into their own hands and go forward in Christ’s name even unto death. Then commenced their witness in Jerusalem, branching out to Judea and Samaria, and in due course pushing out toward the uttermost part of the earth. And how did this new constraint come? There can be but one answer--the Holy Spirit had come to abide.”

These are the “greater works” because they will clearly proclaim the death, resurrection and exaltation of Jesus, the Savior of the world. We preach forgiveness and reconciliation from an already crucified, already risen, already glorified Jesus Christ. It’s not a promise of payment; it has been paid in full (John 19:30) and it is available to the whole world to anyone who believes (3:16, 5:24, 6:47, 20:30-31).

<sup>13</sup> And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it. (John 14:13-14)

One of the most significant changes that happens to followers of Jesus is when they discover the greatest of the great works Jesus has entrusted to us. All the great ministries, all the great changes in people’s life, all the great movements of God have come through faithful men, women, boys and girls asking Jesus to move.

At the foundation of our prayers is that the Father may be glorified through the Son. Jesus says twice here, “Whatever you ask in my name” (v. 13, 14). Why does Jesus want us to ask in His name? Asking in someone’s name is asking according to someone’s character (Exodus 3:14-15). When we pray in Jesus’ name, it means that we get to know who Jesus is, we are drawn into his life of love and grace and purpose. What are the prayers we pray in Jesus name? It’s the prayers that if Jesus were here, He too would be praying. It’s saying that He too would want this!

### **Our Greatest Works Are Greater Than Us**

What is the Great Commission? Go and make disciples of all the nations. (Matt. 28:19)

The Great Commission and our greatest works are humanly impossible. As the Psalmist says, “If the Lord doesn’t do it, we work in vain” (Psalm 127). The Great Commission is completely supernatural; heart change always is. (Ezek. 36:26, Rom 2:29)

What happens if we aren’t committed to the Great Commission? We lower our sights to attainable goals.

If we are serious about the Great Commission and these greater works that Jesus has promised us, we must be serious about Jesus’ promise of asking in His name. We have to be committed to asking Jesus for things that we can’t possibly do in our own strength.

How does the Great Commission begin and end? Jesus gives us these amazing promises as we perform our greatest works in Him:

1. All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Jesus. (Matt 28:18)
2. Jesus is with us always, to the end of the age. (Matt 28:20)