**Livin’ the Life**

**Doing the Greater Works of Jesus**

**John 14:10-14**

May 11, 2019

David Taylor

These words of Jesus are both perplexing and powerful. They are at the same time difficult to understand and at the same time are some of the most inspiring and empowering words to Christians. They tell us that first, we continue the work of Jesus, secondly, they tell us that we somehow and someway carry on greater works than Jesus, and third, they tell us that prayer is the means to the resources to do these greater works. The question for each of us today is, will we take Jesus at his word? Let’s first review the context. Jesus is with his disciples preparing them for his death. They are starting to understand this and are troubled and confused. Philip wants Jesus to show them God the Father and Jesus responds that they have already seen God the Father in the words and works of Jesus (9). The Father and the Son are so united because Jesus is one with God the Father and so his words have the authority of the Father and his works are the Father’s works done through him (10). Then Jesus challenges them to believe that he is in the Father and the Father is in him or if that is not sufficient to convince them, believe the works he does because the Father does his works through Jesus (11). Jesus’ point is that his works support and validate that his words are from God the Father (20:30-31). Let’s look at 14:10-14 now.

**First**, **Ordinary** **Christians Carry on the Work of Jesus.** *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do.*  Jesus says truly, truly, when he makes an important point. He is not overstating or exaggerating. There are two observations here that I want you to see. First, *whoever believes* tells us that his promise is for all of us. This is not just for superstars or professionals but every ordinary follower of Jesus. Moms and dads, introverts and extroverts, timid and bold, immature and mature. No one is excluded but is for all who believe in Jesus. The second observation I want you to see is that all who believe in Jesus will do his works. Believing in Jesus so unites us to Jesus and his life and mission that we will do his works. Don’t think of the greater works yet, that’s not what he says, *whoever believes in me will do the works that I do*. Now think of Jesus’ works we have seen in this gospel like Jesus changing water into wine (2:1-11); reading the mail of the Samaritan woman (4:18-34); healing people (4:46-50, 5:1-9); feeding the five thousand (6:1-14); walking on water (6:19); and raising Lazarus from the dead (11:43-45).

Remember, Jesus’ works validated that his words were from God. So, God used miracles and healings to point to the validity of Jesus (10:25; 38). We see this truth in the early church, in the book of Acts the disciples preached and miracles validated the gospel and people believed. We see this throughout church history also, God can and does use miracles to validate the gospel. But does this mean that everyone should do miracles like Jesus? And if you don’t, do you not believe? I don’t think so because when Paul talks about miracles in 1 Corinthians, he says the power to do miracles are a gift given to some but not all. God gives a diversity of gifts and not all have the gift of miracles (1 Cor 12:10; 27-30). So, if not everybody is meant to perform miracles, what does Jesus mean that whoever believes in him will do the works he does? Again, Jesus’ works support and validate his words (11; see also 20:30-31). Now look at verse twelve. When we *believe*, Jesus works in us, and our works lead people to faith like his works did. So, Jesus says, let my works lead you to believe in me (11) because whoever believes in me will also do works that lead people to believe in me (12).[[1]](#footnote-1) So, when we believe in Jesus, we are united with him and his mission and he works in us so that our works, our lives, support and validate the gospel to help people believe. The significant point of doing the works of Jesus is that they point to Jesus and help people to believe in him. So, Jesus promises that all who believe in him will carry on his work by his power and do the kinds of works that point others to Jesus whether that be miracles or transformed lives.

**Second, Ordinary Christians will do Greater Works.** *Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father*. Jesus is still speaking to all of us, whoever believes in me greater works than these will he do.The issue is what are the greater works? Some say greater quantity of miracles and others say greater quality of miracles. But I don’t think so. We already saw that not everyone is expected to do miracles so that excludes many of the whoever believe. I think verse twelve gives us the answer. First, Jesus says we will do greater works because he goes to the Father. Jesus’ whole life and ministry, his words and his works, anticipated his going to the Father by way of the cross and resurrection and ascension. And after his death the disciples continue his work and do his works because he gave them His Spirit (20:21-23). His going to the cross and giving the Spirit enables all who believe to do now what disciples could not do because Jesus had not gone to the cross yet. His death paid the penalty for sin on the cross and now we carry on his work and do his works because we have the Spirit of the crucified and risen Christ who empowers us to offer forgiveness in the gospel. The Spirit empowers us to promise forgiveness through the gospel and do miracles and live transformed lives that point to Jesus. We can offer forgiveness in the gospel because Jesus went to the Father. They are greater works because they point to the glory of the risen Savior and because Jesus now works through us.

**Third**, **Jesus promises Everything we Need to do the Works of Jesus**. As we carry on the work of Jesus in this world we have a promise for everything we need to do the work of Jesus. *Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.* Prayer is the means by which we receive the resources to accomplish the work of Jesus. Jesus has one condition in prayer, to pray in Jesus’ name. To pray in Jesus’ name means that we are dependent upon Jesus having opened the way to the Father by going to the cross. His death gives us free and clear access to prayer. Secondly, praying in Jesus’ name means praying in harmony with his character. And third, praying in Jesus’ name means praying according to God’s will (1 John 5:14) and for the glory of Jesus, to make him look great.

Questions for Life Groups:

1. What is the answer to our discouragement, when things don’t go the way we want?
2. How does Jesus show us the Father?
3. What are the works of Jesus that we now do?
4. What is the purpose of the works of Jesus we now do?
5. How do our works support and validate the gospel?
6. What are the greater works of Jesus here?
7. Why are the works or greater works not primarily miracles?
8. What does praying in Jesus’ name mean?
9. How does the promise of Jesus giving everything we need to carry on his work inspire you?

matt

1. Piper, John Sermon, Doing the Works of Jesus, accessed May 7, 2019. <https://www.desiringgod.org/messages/doing-the-works-of-jesus-and-greater-works>. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)