

# The Promise of Greater Works and Answered Prayer

John 14:12-14

John 14:12–14 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> “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. <sup>13</sup> And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

## Introduction:

## Review

**John 14:1–11** (NKJV)

### ***Christ Comforts His Disciples***

**14** “Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me. <sup>2</sup> In My Father’s house are many mansions; if *it were* not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there* you

may be also. <sup>4</sup> And where I go you know, and the way you know.”

### ***Christ Answers Thomas***

<sup>5</sup> Thomas said to Him, “Lord, we do not know where You are going, and how can we know the way?”

<sup>6</sup> Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.

<sup>7</sup> “If you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.”

### ***Christ Answers Philip***

<sup>8</sup> Philip said to Him, “Lord, show us the Father, and it is sufficient for us.”

<sup>9</sup> Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you so long, and yet you have not known Me, Philip? He who has seen Me has seen the Father; so how can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? <sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

<sup>11</sup> Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father

in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

## Lesson

This section of scripture has some of the most amazing and astonishing, and incomprehensible promises in all of scripture. On the eve of the death of Christ, he gives his some the greatest words in all a the Bible. Just listen to a few of them.

### John 14:1–31 (NKJV)

2 In My Father's house are many mansions; if *it were not so*, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and receive you to Myself; that where I am, *there you may be also*.

<sup>12</sup> “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.

<sup>13</sup> 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.

16 And I will pray the Father, and He will give you another Helper, that He may abide with you forever —17 the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees Him nor knows Him; but you know Him, for He dwells with you and will be in you. 18 I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you.

19 “A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also.

21 And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

23 Jesus answered and said to him, “If anyone loves Me, he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our home with him.

26 But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

27 Peace I leave with you, My peace I give to you; not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.

Three of the promises that we will cover today are some of the most misunderstood and misrepresented and misinterpreted scriptures in all of the Bible. With the massive growth of the Charismatic and Neo-Pentecostal, New Apostolic Reformation.

False Teacher Kenneth Copeland states “Are you ready to experience miracles? Would you like to see them in your life and ministry? If you believe in Jesus, that is possible! Jesus promised it would happen when He said, “I tell you the truth, anyone who believes in Me will do the same works I have done, and even greater works, because I am going to be with the Father” (John 14:12).

Miracles and the working of miracles are part of living a Spirit-filled, Spirit-directed life. If you are willing to be used by God in this way and obedient to follow the Holy Spirit’s leading, then miracles are not only possible, but probable!

It’s important for you to understand the foundation for miracles if you are going to operate in them. Three foundational truths about miracles that will help you do greater works than Jesus are: 1) they are available by resurrection power; 2) they are

available to every believer; and 3) you should ask for them in the Name of Jesus.”

Want to Do 'Greater Works' Than Jesus?  
April 13, 2017

For charismatic authors who believe in the continuation of the apostolic gifts, the answer is simple. In his book *Authentic Fire*, Michael Brown explains it this way:

Jesus gave a universal promise in John 14:12 that implies that all believers can ask God to demonstrate His healing and miracle-working power through them, since the statement in John 14:12 is programmatic, as Jesus said: “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.” How is this not universal in scope, given that the identical Greek phrase *ho pisteuon eis eme*, whoever believes in Me, is always universal in application in John? (See John 6:35; 7:38; 11:25; 12:44, 46.) And while we can debate exactly what Jesus intended by the “greater works,” it is difficult to escape from the conclusion that whoever believes in the Son will also perform miraculous signs, based on: 1) the immediate context (14:9-11, with the emphasis on miracles as the works done by Jesus); 2) the

universality of the language used; and 3) the assurance which follows, guaranteeing the efficacy of prayer to the Father in Jesus' name. . . .

This promise cannot be limited to the apostle based on the language of "whoever believes in Me," nor can it [*sic*] limited to non-supernatural acts of service. The reverse is actually true. **[2]**

Writing for *Charisma Magazine*, charismatic author Larry Sparks makes the same assertion that Christ's words to His disciples are "a powerful blanket statement" for all believers, throughout church history.

*Whoever* means *whoever*. This is beyond the 12 apostles and the 72 called-out ones in Luke 10.

*Whoever* spans all generations. *Whoever* invites us, in the 21st century, to once again contend for an outpouring of supernatural power in our midst.

**[3]**

Bill Johnson, pastor of Bethel Church in Redding, California, (one of the most influential charismatic churches in the world) and instructor at the Bethel School of Supernatural Ministry, teaches a similar interpretation of the "greater works." In his book *When Heaven Invades Earth*, he writes, "The miraculous is a large part of the plan of God for this

world. And it is to come through the Church.” [4] Johnson teaches that in His incarnation, Christ emptied Himself of all divine attributes, and in His humanity is the model for our lives.

Jesus became the model for all who would embrace the invitation to invade the impossible in His name. He performed *miracles, wonders, and signs*, as a man in right relationship to God . . . not as God. If He performed miracles because He was God, then they would be unattainable for us. But if He did them as a man, I am responsible to pursue His lifestyle. [5]

Through that lens of Christ’s humanity, Johnson understands John 14:12 as a challenge to surpass His miraculous works.

Jesus’ prophecy of us doing greater works than He did has stirred the Church to look for some abstract meaning to this very simple statement. Many theologians seek to honor the works of Jesus as unattainable, which is religion, fathered by unbelief. It does not impress God to ignore what He promised under the guise of honoring the work of Jesus on the earth. Jesus’ statement is not that hard to understand. *Greater* means “greater.” And the *works* he referred to are signs and wonders. It



will not be a disservice to Him to have a generation obey Him, and go beyond His own *high-water mark*. He showed us what one person could do who has the Spirit without measure. What could millions do? That was His point, and it became His prophecy. **[6]**

Also there is an extreme just the lack of diligence among evangelical and charismatics alike in handling the scripture.

Add to this the desire of the sinner for comfort and material blessing and the cultures constant feeding of this appetite, these have little chance to be truly understood.

On the other hand

These are astounding verses and promises that are given to all believers

(1) All of us who believe in Jesus will carry on with his work. (2) In some wonderful way, we will all do something greater than the works of Jesus. (3) And as a means to that end will have access in prayer to Jesus today so that everything we need we can ask for and receive it.

The Three Promises are

1. The Promise of the Same Works
2. The Promise of Greater Works
3. The Promise of Answered Prayer

## I. The Promise of the Same Works

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.

*The New King James Version*, (1982) (Jn 14:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

12 Αμην αμην λεγω υμιν ο  
 ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΝ εις εμε τα εργα α εγω  
 ΠΟΙΩ κακεινος ποιησει και  
 μειζονα τουτων ΠΟΙΗΣΕΙ ΟΤΙ ΕΓΩ  
 ΠΡΟΣ ΤΟΝ ΠΑΤΕΡΑ ΜΟΥ ΠΟΡΕΥΟΜΑΙ

“Most assuredly” - a very important statement

## Αμην αμην

he who believes in Me,

Ο ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΝ ΕΙΣ ΕΜΕ Pres. Act Participle

4100 pisteúō (from 4102 /pístis, "faith," derived from 3982 /peíthō, "persuade, be persuaded") – believe (affirm, have confidence); used of persuading oneself (= human believing) and with the sacred significance of being persuaded by the Lord (= faith-believing). Only the context indicates whether 4100 /pisteúō ("believe") is self-serving (without sacred meaning), or the believing that leads to/proceeds from God's inbirthing of faith.

### **John 3:16–18 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that **whoever believes PAPt** in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

<sup>18</sup> **He who believes PAPt** in Him is not condemned; but **he who does not believe PAPt** is condemned already, because **he has not believed PfAI** in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

### John 3:36 (NASB95)

36 “**He who believes PAPt** in the Son has eternal life; but **he who does not obey PAPt** the Son will not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him.”

**John 5:24 (NKJV)**

<sup>24</sup> “Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who hears PAPt** My word and **believes PAPt** in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

**1 John 5:1** (NKJV)

**5 Whoever believes PAPt** that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and **everyone who loves PAPt** Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him.

So to be clear, these promises are only for true believers. This is key to understanding the text  
In fact

κακεινος

**12** Αμην αμην λεγω υμιν ο

**ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΝ** εις εμε τα εργα α εγω

**ΠΟΙΩ** κακεινος

Emphatic pronoun ἐκεινος [*ekeinos*], “that one also.”

Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Jn 14:12). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

“It’s a promise to all believers. This is astonishing. So there is no exclusion here if you are a Christian. You shouldn’t think: oh this is for pastors, or veteran Christians, or highly spiritual, mature Christians, or professional Christians, or missionaries, or elders, or evangelists, or highly gifted Christians. No. The text says, “whoever believes in me.” Believers, pure and simple, will do the works I do.” John Piper

Also should be clear that this is Not religious professors. Not those who associate with Christianity but do not follow Christ. And in fact we will see that only the true, genuine believer would have a desire for the true fulfillment of the promises listed here. For those that are not genuine, they will not have a desire for the proper interpretation and application of these verses.

**12** “Most assuredly, I say to you, **he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also;**

“Jesus promises all believers will do his works. It’s not yet a promise that we will do greater works, just Jesus’s works. Verse 12a: “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do.”

When many read this, they immediately think that will do the same miracles Jesus did. That all believers to be true believer will do these same miracles signs and wonders.

Now we create problems for ourselves by thinking of Jesus' most amazing miracles. At this point in the Gospel of John

- Jesus has turned water into wine (John 2:1–11).
- He has read the mind of the woman of Samaria (John 4:18).
- He has healed the official's son (John 4:46–54).
- He had healed the man crippled for 38 years (John 5:1–9).
- He had fed 5,000/ 25000 people with five loaves and two fish (John 5: 1–14).
- He had walked on water (John 6:19).
- He had healed a man born blind (John 9:1–7).

And he had raised Lazarus from the dead after four days in the grave (John 11:43–44).

What did Jesus mean when he said, “Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do.” Did Jesus mean that every Christian would do all these? Or that every Christian would do one or two of these? And if you don't, you don't believe?

That's not likely in view of the fact that in the New Testament letters where miracles are mentioned they are a gift that some Christians have and not others.

For example, in **1 Corinthians 12** Paul says,

To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. For to one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom . . . to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles . . . Do all work miracles? Do all possess gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues?

**(1 Corinthians 12:7–10, 29–30)**

Well, if Jesus doesn't mean that all believers will do miracles like his, what does he mean when he says, "Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do"?"

APRIL 21, 2012

Doing the Works of Jesus and Greater Works Resource by John Piper Modal Scripture: John 14:12–14 Topic: The Life of Christ

To know what this means we need first to understand what is meant by 'the works' of Jesus. This expression is used repeatedly in connection with Jesus' ministry, and denotes

**(1) evangelizing the Samaritan woman**

John 4:34 (NKJV)

<sup>34</sup> Jesus said to them, "My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work."

**(2) healing the lame man at the Pool of Bethesda;**

John 5:20–21 (NKJV)

<sup>20</sup> For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself does; and He will show Him greater works than these, that you may marvel.

<sup>21</sup> For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to *them*, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

John 7:21 (NKJV)

<sup>21</sup> Jesus answered and said to them, “I did one work, and you all marvel.

### (3) healing the man born blind

John 9:3–4 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> Jesus answered, “Neither this man nor his parents sinned, but that the works of God should be revealed in him. <sup>4</sup> I must work the works of Him who sent Me while it is day; *the* night is coming when no one can work.

### (4) Jesus’ miracles generally

John 7:3 (NKJV)

<sup>3</sup> His brothers therefore said to Him, “Depart from here and go into Judea, that Your disciples also may see the works that You are doing.

John 10:32 (NKJV)



<sup>32</sup> Jesus answered them, “Many good works I have shown you from My Father. For which of those works do you stone Me?”

John 10:33 (NKJV)

<sup>33</sup> The Jews answered Him, saying, “For a good work we do not stone You, but for blasphemy, and because You, being a Man, make Yourself God.”

### (5) Jesus' teaching

John 14:10 (NKJV)

<sup>10</sup> Do you not believe that I am in the Father, and the Father in Me? The words that I speak to you I do not speak on My own *authority*; but the Father who dwells in Me does the works.

Matthew 7:28–29 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> And so it was, when Jesus had ended these sayings, that the people were astonished at His teaching, <sup>29</sup> for He taught them as one having authority, and not as the scribes.

### (6) Jesus' entire ministry generally (5:36; 17:4).

John 17:4 (NKJV)

**4 I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.**

We could also include in his works, a sinless life.

But the works are not done for works sake. Jesus did not come to just heal a few people and walk on the sea and create some food and raise a few dead people..

He didn't come to be named in Who's who in the Jerusalem Post.

He wasn't looking for notoriety, or popularity.

He was speaking the way he spoke to become an authority and start his own Yeshua ha Meshiah University.

All the works were for a purpose,  
John 5:36 (NKJV)

**<sup>36</sup> But I have a greater witness than John's; for the works which the Father has given Me to finish—the very works that I do—bear witness of Me, that the Father has sent Me.**

John 10:25 (NKJV)

<sup>25</sup> Jesus answered them, “I told you, and you do not believe. The works that I do in My Father’s name, they bear witness of Me.

John 10:37–38 (NKJV)

<sup>37</sup> If I do not do the works of My Father, do not believe Me; <sup>38</sup> but if I do, though you do not believe Me, believe the works, that you may know and believe that the Father is in Me, and I in Him.”

John 14:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> Believe Me that I *am* in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Matthew 9:1–8 (NKJV)

**9** So He got into a boat, crossed over, and came to His own city. <sup>2</sup> Then behold, they brought to Him a paralytic lying on a bed. When Jesus saw their faith, He said to the paralytic, “**Son, be of good cheer; your sins are forgiven you.**”

<sup>3</sup> And at once some of the scribes said within themselves, “This Man blasphemes!”

<sup>4</sup> But Jesus, knowing their thoughts, said, “**Why do you think evil in your hearts? <sup>5</sup> For which is easier, to say, ‘Your sins are forgiven you,’ or to say, ‘Arise and walk’? <sup>6</sup> But that you may know that the Son of Man has power on earth to forgive sins**” —then He said to the paralytic, “Arise, take up your bed,

and go to your house.”<sup>7</sup> And he arose and departed to his house.

<sup>8</sup> Now when the multitudes saw *it*, they marveled and glorified God, who had given such power to men.

So what at the works that Jesus did

**12** “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also;

So what were the works that Jesus did they are that which always pointed to the truth about who Christ is, That He is whom the Father sent and that He is God, He is the Lord, He is the Savior, He is the Soveriengn KING.

The works that he did were always relentlessly pointing the world to himself by what he said, and what he taught and what he did and how he lived.

## I. The Promise of the Same Works

## II. The Promise of Greater Works.

**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.

*The New King James Version* (1982) (Jn 14:12). Nashville: Thomas Nelson.

**12** Αμην αμην λεγω υμιν ο  
 ΠΙΣΤΕΥΩΝ εις εμε τα εργα α εγω  
 ΠΟΙΩ κακεινος ποιησει και  
 μειζονα τουτων ποιησει οτι εγω  
 προς τον πατερα μου πορευομαι

Although the Apostles did physical miracles they were not primarily what Jesus had in mind,

The disciples would indeed perform miraculous **works**, as Jesus had (cf. Acts 5:12–16; Heb. 2:3–4).

### **Acts 5:12–16 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people.

And they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. <sup>13</sup> Yet none of the rest dared join them, but the people esteemed them highly. <sup>14</sup> And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women, <sup>15</sup> so that they brought the sick out into the streets and laid *them* on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them. <sup>16</sup> Also a multitude gathered from the surrounding cities to Jerusalem, bringing sick people and those who were tormented by unclean spirits, and they were all healed.

### **Hebrews 2:3–4 (NKJV)**

<sup>3</sup> how shall we escape if we neglect so great a salvation, which at the first began to be spoken by the Lord, and was confirmed to us by those who heard *Him*, <sup>4</sup> God also bearing witness both with signs and wonders, with various miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit, according to His own will?

These Miracles would be for the same purpose as Jesus Miracles, to point the world to Christ. To authenticate the message of the apostles and to confirm the authorship of the canon of Scripture to point the world to Christ.

The apostles did not do more powerful miracles than He had. When the Lord spoke of His followers performing **greater works it was different.**

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). *John 12–21* (p. 106). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

\_\_\_\_\_ we need to recognize that the disciples would do greater works than Jesus did **because he was ‘going to the Father’ (cf. 13:1).**

**because I go to My Father.**

**(This is KEY)**

He promised that when he returned to the Father he would send the Counsellor, the Holy Spirit, to them (16:7). In the power of the Spirit they would do ‘greater things/works’.

Kruse, C. G. (2003). *John: an introduction and commentary* (Vol. 4, pp. 295–296). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

**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.**

The power to perform those greater works would only be available **because** Jesus was going **to the Father**. It was only then that He would send the Holy Spirit

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). *John 12–21* (p. 107). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

### John 7:39 (NKJV)

<sup>39</sup> But this He spoke concerning the Spirit, whom those believing in Him would receive; for the Holy Spirit was not yet *given*, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

### John 14:26 (NKJV)

<sup>26</sup> But the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My name, He will teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all things that I said to you.

### John 16:7–13 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> Nevertheless I tell you the truth. It is to your advantage that I go away; for if I do not go away, the Helper will not come to you; but if I depart, I will send Him to you. <sup>8</sup> And when He has come, He will convict the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: <sup>9</sup> of sin, because they do not believe in Me; <sup>10</sup> of righteousness, because I go to My Father and you see Me no more; <sup>11</sup> of judgment, because the ruler of this world is judged.

<sup>12</sup> “I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear *them* now. <sup>13</sup> However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all



truth; for He will not speak on His own *authority*, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.

Acts 1:8 (NKJV)

<sup>8</sup> But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.”

Christ’s promise to send the Holy Spirit offered further comfort to the disciples. Though Jesus would no longer be visibly present with them, the Spirit would provide them with all the power they needed to extend the work He had begun

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12–21](#) (p. 107). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

**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.

greater  
μειζονα

megas: great

**Original Word:** μέγας, μεγάλη, μέγα

**Part of Speech:** Adjective; Adverb, Comparative

**Transliteration:** megas

**Phonetic Spelling:** (meg'-as)

**Definition:** great

**Usage:** large, great, in the widest sense.

If the works of Jesus are his miracles, his teaching, his entire ministry, how can it be said that the works of his disciples will be greater than his? One suggestion is that after Jesus' return to the Father, and the coming of the Spirit, the works the disciples would perform in the expanding mission of the church would be quantitatively greater than his—more works performed by many disciples in many different places. However, the word translated 'greater' (*meizona*) does not mean greater in number, but greater in quality, more important or more impressive, and it is used in this way throughout the Fourth Gospel (1:50; 4:12; 5:20, 36; 8:53; 10:29; 13:16; 14:12, 28; 15:13, 20; 19:11).

John 4:12 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> Are You greater than our father Jacob, who gave us the well, and drank from it himself, as well as his sons and his livestock?"

John 8:53 (NKJV)

<sup>53</sup> Are You greater than our father Abraham, who is dead? And the prophets are dead. Who do You make Yourself out to be?”

John 10:29 (NKJV)

<sup>29</sup> My Father, who has given *them* to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch *them* out of My Father’s hand.

John 13:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> Most assuredly, I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; nor is he who is sent greater than he who sent him.

John 14:28 (NKJV)

<sup>28</sup> You have heard Me say to you, ‘I am going away and coming *back* to you.’ If you loved Me, you would rejoice because I said, ‘I am going to the Father,’ for My Father is greater than I.

John 15:13 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> Greater love has no one than this, than to lay down one’s life for his friends.

John 19:11 (NKJV)

<sup>11</sup> Jesus answered, “You could have no power at all against Me unless it had been given you from above. Therefore the one who delivered Me to you has the greater sin.”

Did Jesus mean, then, that the disciples’ works would be qualitatively greater than those he had performed? This is highly unlikely. The disciples did later heal and exorcise in Jesus’ name, Peter did pray and Dorcas was restored to life (Acts 9:36–42), and through Paul’s ministry Eutychus was restored to life (Acts 20:7–12). But they did not miraculously feed multitudes, calm storms, restore sight to those who had been born blind, or call people out of their graves when they had already been dead for four days. The disciples’ works did not reveal the Father in the same way as Jesus did in his ministry and teaching. From apostolic times until now, as far as we know, Jesus’ followers have never performed works that were qualitatively the same, let alone greater, than those of Jesus.

If the ‘greater works’ of the disciples cannot be understood as quantitatively or qualitatively greater,

what did Jesus mean by saying their works would be greater than his?

One suggestion is that the greater works of the disciples are the results of their *missionary endeavors, bringing many converts into the church.*

*We could say greater not in quality, not in quantity but in nature and scope or extent.*

\_It has also been suggested that what Jesus said about John the Baptist provides a clue: ‘I tell you the truth: Among those born of women there has not risen anyone greater than John the Baptist; yet he who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he’ (Matt. 11:11). John was the herald of the kingdom that Jesus brought in, but John himself lived, worked and died before people entered it. In terms of privileges, then, the least in the kingdom were greater than John. If we apply this to the differences between Jesus’ works and those of his disciples, we might say that the disciples’ works were greater than his because they had the privilege of testifying by word and deed to the finished work of Christ, and the fuller coming of the kingdom that it ushered in, whereas Jesus’ ministry prior to his death and resurrection only foreshadowed these things.

When the Lord spoke of His followers performing **greater works**, He was referring to the extent of the spiritual miracle of salvation. Jesus never preached outside of Palestine, yet His followers would spread the gospel throughout the world. Jesus had only a limited outreach to Gentiles (cf. Mark 7:26ff.), but the disciples (particularly Peter and later Paul) would reach the Gentile world with the gospel. The number of believers in Christ would also grow far beyond the hundreds (Acts 1:15; 1 Cor. 15:6) that were numbered during His lifetime.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [\*John 12–21\*](#) (pp. 106–107). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

**Luther, LW 24:** 78ff. is similar: “greater works because the apostles and the Christians had a wider field for their works than He did, that they brought more people to Christ than He Himself did during His earthly sojourn. Christ preached and worked miracles only in a small nook, and for just a short time.... [Jesus’ promise is the more remarkable] especially since the day of miracles is past [!]. Miracles, of course, are still the least significant works, since they are only physical and are performed for only a few people. But let us consider the true, great works of which Christ speaks here—works which are done with the power of God, which

accomplish everything, which are still performed and must be performed daily as long as the world stands. In the first place, Christians have the Gospel, Baptism, and the Sacrament [of the Supper], by means of which they convert people, snatch souls from the clutches of the devil, wrest them from hell and death, and bring them to heaven. ... In the second place, the Christians also have prayer.... So greatly can a whole country or kingdom be benefited by [the prayers of] one pious man.... Abraham [Gen 14:14] ... Lot [Gen 19:22] ... Naaman [2 Kings 5:1, the entire kingdom of Syria] ... Joseph [Gen 41:46ff., all Egypt] ... Daniel [Persia].... Isaiah defeated the hosts of the Assyrian empire singlehandedly through his prayer.”

Bruner, F. D. (2012). *The Gospel of John: A Commentary* (p. 830). Grand Rapids, MI; Cambridge, U.K.: Eerdmans.

It needs to be noted at this point that Jesus did many miracles and many great miracles that directly affected people. Some were personally healed, some were fed, some where witness to some of the greatest miracles ever. Yet the large majority of people never believed. They never were saved and never went to heaven but rather ended up in Hell with there sins unforgiven. It is also true that some of the ones that the Apostles healed and cast out demons from where never converted.

So we need to ask a very serious question. Is the greatest work one that only temporarily heals, only temporarily feeds or only temporality delivers from demons.

Or would the greatest work be that which eternally delivers from Hell and the wrath of God. Would it be the greatest work to forgive you of all your sin and make you righteous but the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Would the greater work be the saving of souls, not just in Israel, but throughout the whole world, of every tribe, nation, and tongue.

**At the very begin of Acts we see the greater works are starting.**

Acts 2:5 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> And there were dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men, from every nation under heaven.

Acts 2:40–41 (NKJV)

<sup>40</sup> And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, “Be saved from this perverse generation.”

<sup>41</sup> Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about **three thousand souls were added to them.**

Acts 2:47 (NKJV)



<sup>47</sup> praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

#### Acts 4:4 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> However, many of those who heard the word believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand.

#### Acts 5:12,14 (NKJV)

<sup>12</sup> And through the hands of the apostles many signs and wonders were done among the people.

<sup>14</sup> And believers were increasingly added to the Lord, multitudes of both men and women,

#### Acts 11:24 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> For he was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and of faith. And a great many people were added to the Lord.

#### Acts 13:48–49 (NKJV)

<sup>48</sup> Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed.

<sup>49</sup> And the word of the Lord was being spread throughout all the region.

There is no greater work than the work of salvation. No greater miracle than taking a dead, blind, hostile enemy of the Cross that is alienated from God and a hater of God and Christ, His word and righteousness and transforming him, resurrecting Him, giving him spiritual sight, reconciling him to God and making him a lover of God and Christ and His Word and Righteousness. Ephesians 2:1–7 (NKJV)

**2** And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, <sup>2</sup> in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, <sup>3</sup> among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

<sup>4</sup> But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, <sup>5</sup> even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), <sup>6</sup> and

raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus, <sup>7</sup> that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

And this is done, not once, not 100 times but millions of times every years,

This is why in heaven there is little talk about healing the body or getting a miracle but rather the saving of the soul.

Revelation 7:9–10 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> After these things I looked, and behold, a great multitude which no one could number, of all nations, tribes, peoples, and tongues, standing before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, with palm branches in their hands, <sup>10</sup> and crying out with a loud voice, saying, “Salvation *belongs* to our God who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb!”

So this verse does not teach as some have so often said that we will do more and greater physical miracles.

The miracles signs and wonders were primarily the signs of the Apostles.

## **2 Corinthians 12:12 (NKJV)**

<sup>12</sup> Truly the signs of an apostle were accomplished among you with all perseverance, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds.

There were some exceptions but they were just that....exceptions.

The Early New Testament Church experience miracles and Signs and Revelation gifts because the canon was not complete. The New Testament was being given at this time and the miracles and signs confirmed it. By the time that James is written, there is already a diminishing of the healing gifts because it says that if there are sick among you, call the elders together anointing with oil.

## **James 5:13–15 (NKJV)**

<sup>13</sup> Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. <sup>14</sup> Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. <sup>15</sup> And the prayer of

faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven.

## III. The Promise of Answered Prayer

John 14:13–14 (NKJV)

<sup>13</sup> **And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son.** <sup>14</sup> **If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.**

**13** και ο τι αν αιτησητε εν τω ονοματι μου τουτο ποιησω ινα δοξασθη ο πατηρ εν τω υιω

**14** εαν τι αιτησητε εν τω ονοματι μου εγω ποιησω

As if His pledge to send the Holy Spirit to empower them was not enough, the Lord gave the disciples another incredible pledge. During their time with Him, they had depended on Jesus to supply all their needs (cf. Luke 22:35). He had provided food for them (Luke 5:4–6; John 21:5–12), and on one

occasion even paid Peter's taxes (Matt. 17:24–27). Now He was about to leave them, and they, having left everything to follow Him (Matt. 19:27), must have wondered where their resources would come from.

Anticipating their concern, Jesus promised that even after He was gone, He would continue to supply the disciples' needs from heaven. Repeating it twice for emphasis, the Lord reassured them, **Whatever you ask in My name, that will I do ... If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it.** Prayer would bridge the gap between their needs and His abundant, limitless, undepleted resources (cf. Phil. 4:19).

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). [John 12-21](#) (p. 107). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

Philippians 4:19 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

<sup>13</sup> And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

This is repeated over and over in the gospels by Jesus

### Matthew 7:7–11 (NKJV)

“<sup>7</sup> “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>8</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened. <sup>9</sup> Or what man is there among you who, if his son asks for bread, will give him a stone? <sup>10</sup> Or if he asks for a fish, will he give him a serpent? <sup>11</sup> If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask Him!

### Matthew 21:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> **And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive.”**

### Mark 11:24 (NKJV)

<sup>24</sup> **Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.**

### John 15:7 (NKJV)

<sup>7</sup> **If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you.**

## John 15:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> 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.

## John 16:23–24 (NKJV)

<sup>23</sup> “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. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

<sup>13</sup> And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.

To **ask in Jesus’ name** does not mean to frivolously tack the words “in Jesus’ name” onto the end of a prayer. It is not a magic formula that obligates God to grant every selfish request that people make. To pray in Jesus’ name has a far more profound and serious meaning.



**First**, it means to make requests consistent with God's will and the purposes of His kingdom. In His model prayer, Jesus taught His followers to pray, This is a good example of the need to consult parallel passages before making dogmatic statements on biblical subjects.

**One must balance “whatever we ask” with**

(1) **“in My name”** (John 14:13–14; 15:7, 16; 16:23); The name of Jesus represents His character. It is another way of referring to the mind and heart of Jesus. This phrase appears often in John (cf. 14:13–14, 26; 15:16; 16:23–26). The more like Christ one is, the more likely the prayers are to be answered in the affirmative

Utley, R. J. (1999). *The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John* (Vol. Volume 4, p. 129). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

(2) **“keep on asking”** (Matt. 7:7–8; Luke 11:5–13; 18:1–8);  
Luke 11:5–10 (NKJV)

<sup>5</sup> And He said to them, **“Which of you shall have a friend, and go to him at midnight and say to him, ‘Friend, lend me three loaves; <sup>6</sup> for a friend of mine has come to me on his journey, and I have nothing**

to set before him'; <sup>7</sup> and he will answer from within and say, 'Do not trouble me; the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed; I cannot rise and give to you'? <sup>8</sup> I say to you, though he will not rise and give to him because he is his friend, yet because of his persistence he will rise and give him as many as he needs.

<sup>9</sup> "So I say to you, ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. <sup>10</sup> For everyone who asks receives, and he who seeks finds, and to him who knocks it will be opened.

(3) "two agreeing" (Matt. 18:19)

Matthew 18:19 (NKJV)

<sup>19</sup> "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven.

(4) "believing" (Matt. 21:22):

Matthew 21:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

(5) "without doubt" (Mark 11:22–24; James 1:6–7);

Mark 11:22–24 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> So Jesus answered and said to them, “Have faith in God. <sup>23</sup> For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, ‘Be removed and be cast into the sea,’ and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. <sup>24</sup> Therefore I say to you, whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*.”

James 1:6–7 (NKJV)

<sup>6</sup> But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. <sup>7</sup> For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord;

(6) “not selfishly” (James 4:2–3);

James 4:2–3 (NKJV)

<sup>2</sup> You lust and do not have. You murder and covet and cannot obtain. You fight and war. Yet you do not have because you do not ask. <sup>3</sup> You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures.

(7) “keeping His commands” (1 John 3:22);

1 John 3:22 (NKJV)

<sup>22</sup> And whatever we ask we receive from Him, because we keep His commandments and do those things that are pleasing in His sight.

Psalm 66:18 (NKJV)

<sup>18</sup> If I regard iniquity in my heart,  
The Lord will not hear.

**Isaiah 59:1–2** (NKJV)

**59** Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened,  
That it cannot save;  
Nor His ear heavy,  
That it cannot hear.

<sup>2</sup> But your iniquities have separated you from your  
God;  
And your sins have hidden *His* face from you,  
So that He will not hear.

James 5:16 (NKJV)

<sup>16</sup> Confess *your* trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

(8) “according to God’s will” (Matt. 6:10; 1 John 5:14–15).

Utey, R. J. (1999). *The Beloved Disciple’s Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John* (Vol. Volume 4, p. 129). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

Matthew 6:9–10 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> In this manner, therefore, pray:

Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.

<sup>10</sup> Your kingdom come.

Your will be done  
On earth as *it is* in heaven.

1 John 5:14–15 (NKJV)

<sup>14</sup> Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us. <sup>15</sup> And if we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we have asked of Him.

All prayer is answered, but not all prayer is effective. Prayer is a two-way relationship. The worst thing God could do is answer believers’ inappropriate prayers.

Utley, R. J. (1999). *The Beloved Disciple's Memoirs and Letters: The Gospel of John, I, II, and III John* (Vol. Volume 4, p. 130). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

**Second**, it is to acknowledge one's spiritual poverty, lack of self-sufficiency, and utter unworthiness to receive anything from God based on one's own merits (Matt. 5:3). It is to approach God based on the merits of Jesus Christ (cf. John 16:26–28) and to acknowledge one's complete dependence on Him to supply every need (Matt. 6:25–32; Phil. 4:19).

**Finally**, it is to express a sincere desire that God would be glorified in His answer. It is to align one's requests with the Father's supreme goal of glorifying the Son. When believers pray in this way, they pray in keeping with Jesus' **name**—His person, His purposes, and His preeminence.

MacArthur, J. F., Jr. (2008). *John 12–21* (pp. 107–108). Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers.

**<sup>13</sup>And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. <sup>14</sup> If you ask anything in My name, I will do *it*.**

John 13:31 (NKJV)

<sup>31</sup> So, when he had gone out, Jesus said, “**Now the Son of Man is glorified, and God is glorified in Him.**”

John 17:4–5 (NKJV)

<sup>4</sup> I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do. <sup>5</sup> And now, O Father, **glorify Me together with Yourself,** with the glory which I had with You before the world was.

Philippians 2:9–11 (NKJV)

<sup>9</sup> Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, <sup>10</sup> that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, <sup>11</sup> and *that* every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ *is* Lord, **to the glory of God the Father.**