

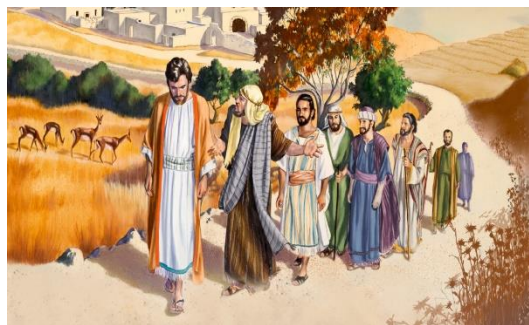
Anything for Jesus

John 14:12-14

Online Sermon:

http://www.mckeesfamily.com/?page_id=3567

Imagine what it must have been like to be a disciple and while entering Jerusalem hear the leader of your group called “The Way” predict His own death was about to occur! They who



had “left everything to follow Jesus” (Matthew 19:27) to “fish men” (4:19) would have been greatly troubled for what would they do without He who ushered in the kingdom of God

(Luke 17:20-21)? And if Rome could crucify the Messiah who had performed all those miracles, then what chance would they have to continue the ministry and not be executed as well? To comfort His disciples Jesus told them¹ to fear not for while His crucifixion and resurrection were the climax of His three-year earthly ministry it was certainly not the end but the beginning of

the kingdom of God!² Jesus explained He was about to return to the Father to prepare a place for them and upon His return He would take them there to be with Him (14:1-4).³ When Thomas questioned where this place was and how to get there⁴ Jesus reassured the apostles that He was “the way, truth and life” and as such the only means of going to the Father. (14:5-6). In the meantime, what would they ever do without their Master’s love and wisdom as their compass? Jesus reassured the apostles that “the intimacy they had enjoyed with Him” (13:36-37)⁵ during His earthly ministry was not going to end for He would send the Spirit of God Himself to live within their hearts.⁶

The Spirit would not only lead them into “deeper revelations”⁷ and a better understanding of the teachings of Jesus but would also enable them to continue to do miracles, signs, and wonders.

And if all of this were not encouraging enough Jesus promised He would do for them “anything asked in His name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son” (14:13)! Even though Jesus’ words revealed that God’s plan for His disciples was indeed glorious and therefore should have been very comforting, the disciples remained filled with doubt and fear right up until they saw the resurrected Christ and received the Holy Spirit!

¹ James Montgomery Boice, *The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1093.

² Merrill C. Tenney, “John,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: John and Acts*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 145.

³ Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 391.

⁴ Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 392.

⁵ Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 391.

⁶ Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 389.

⁷ Gary M. Burge, *John*, The NIV Application Commentary (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000), 392–393.

Lest we be too judgemental of the disciples and too lenient on ourselves we must admit that we often feel that applying the Great Commission to our culture is beyond our abilities as well! For instance, how does one convince a culture



that believes in many gods and paths to heaven, that Christ is the only way, truth, and life to come before the only God that truly exists (John 14:6)? Also, how does one convince those who only “want to hear what their itching ears want to hear” (2 Timothy 4:3) that truth is not situationally dependent and a mere fabrication of each person’s mind but is instead only contained within God’s word which is “useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness” (3:16)?

And how often do we get discouraged when we let our Light shine amongst what we hope are “fields that are ripe” (Matthew 5:15-16, 9:37) only to find out that those who are given over to their reprobate minds (Romans 1:28) have stone hearts and not only do they reject the Gospel message but persecute those who even suggest that God has the right to rule over them?

And since we are being brutally honest with ourselves then we simply must admit there are times when we ask God for help and either due to our cherished sin (Psalms 66:18), asking with wrong motives (James 4:1-3) or asking outside of His will (1 John 5:14) that we end up hearing silence or a NO to our requests and it feels like Christ has abandoned us! O how desperately Christians today need to hear and believe in the comforting words Jesus gave to His disciples! Please open your Bibles to John 14:12-13 and let’s review the incredible promise of divine help Christ provided to those are His own.

Continuing Jesus’ Works

The first thing Jesus promised the disciples was that “whoever believes in Me will do the works I have been doing” (14:12). It is not those who merely believe Jesus existed, was a great prophet, or that He died on a Roman cross that Christ’s promise of divine aid refers too but only too those who specifically believe in His atoning sacrifice (John 3:16) and have surrendered their live to Him (Romans 10:9). Such individuals become born again not of flesh and blood but of the Spirit (John 1:12-13)!⁸

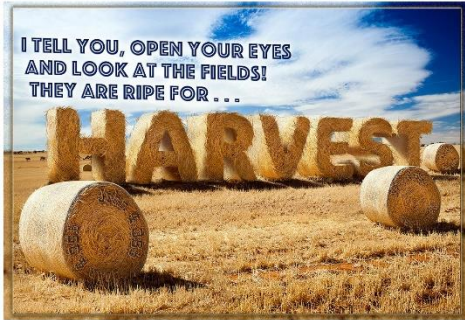
Since it is by grace we have been saved, through faith, and not works (Ephesians 2:8) this means Jesus’ help for us to do works in His kingdom is guaranteed not just for the apostles,⁹ pastors, veteran Christians, the spiritually mature, missionaries or evangelists¹⁰ alone, but for every single believer!

⁸ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1096.

⁹ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹⁰ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

Even though we have been sent out as sheep amongst the wolves (Matthew 10:16) of this “me” generation we are not to fear their persecution or the indifference of their stony hearts. After all,



those who are “God’s handiwork created in Christ Jesus” (Ephesians 2:10)¹¹ can let their light shine with the glorious expectation and promise that the ripe fields of this world will see their “good deeds and in turn give glory to God the

Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:16).¹² When others see us trying to obey Christ’s commands not as a burden but with joy (1 John 5:3)¹³ and see us genuinely loving our enemies, friends, families and all whom we meet (Matthew 5:44; John 13:15; Luke 10:25-37),¹⁴ this is when our Light shines brightest for those in the dark to see! Christ told the disciples and is telling us believers today that YES, we have what we need to continue to do the work of spreading the Good News even to this lost, Me focused generation!

Doing Greater Works than Jesus

Not only will we do the works Jesus did, but we “will do even greater works than these, because Christ is going to the Father” (14:12b)! This is a difficult verse to interpret! Jesus

certainly could not have meant that we would do works that are “qualitatively or quantitatively greater”¹⁵ than Him for who could exceed His walking on the water, commanding the storm to be still, healing the lame and sick and even raising the dead?¹⁶ Furthermore since Jesus says His promise of divine aid is for all those who believe then defining great works as being miracles would contradict Apostle Paul’s teaching that to each the manifestation of the Spirit is given so that only some could perform the miraculous (1 Corinthians 12:7-10, 29-39)?¹⁷

*It is not the physical miracles Christ performed but “spiritual works, primarily the work of regeneration that takes place when the Gospel is proclaimed in the power of God’s Holy Spirit” that Christ promises He will enable us to do!*¹⁸

Christ is not saying that everyone is going to be an evangelist but merely that the testimony of a believer pointing to the atoning sacrifice of what He did on the cross will lead to the conversion of millions¹⁹ of even the stoniest of hearts! We have the glorious news to tell the world that “He who had been crucified, buried, raised, exalted and sent in the person of the Holy Spirit,”²⁰ has not only paid once and for all the death penalty for their sin but has also paved the way through grace and faith to be adopted into God’s very own family. It is this Good News that emptied many

¹¹ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹² John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹³ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1097.

¹⁴ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹⁵ Colin G. Kruse, [John: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 296.

¹⁶ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹⁷ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

¹⁸ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1094.

¹⁹ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1095–1096.

²⁰ John Piper, [Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

of the temples of the Roman gods²¹ and in but a single day at Pentecost led to the conversion of more people than recorded during Jesus' entire earthly ministry!²² Helping the lost believe in the Good Shepherd is one of the greatest works any believer could ever do!

We Must Ask

Not only did Jesus outline belief in Him but also prayer as a prerequisite for divine aid in spreading the Good News (14:13a). Montgomery Boice rightly defines prayer as “communicating with God the Father through the Lord Jesus



Christ in the Holy Spirit.”²³ Christ told the disciples that He was going to the Father to not only prepare a place for them but also through His atonement to guarantee the believer's privilege²⁴ to boldly come to God's throne to receive grace

and mercy in their times of need (Hebrews 4:16). “Prayer is connected with personal spiritual growth and attitude.”²⁵ For instance, God does not hear the prayers when we cherish sin in

our hearts (Psalms 66:18; Isaiah 59:1-2)²⁶ and when we ask with the wrong motives (James 4:1-3) such as to receive honor and glory from others with our long, flowing words (Matthew 6:5-6).²⁷ While God is certainly interested in us asking Him to provide for our needs and that of others, the kind of prayer attached to the promise, “ask Me for anything and I will do it,” relates specifically to how the Lord's prayer beings “our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9-10).²⁸

The real treasure of prayer, Calvin stated, is not to “dig up God's treasures” for our lives²⁹ but to receive divine aid to effectively serve within His will so the light of our actions points to the glory of the Father in heaven!³⁰

Even though coming before a holy and omnipotent God³¹ can be quite intimidating and certainly humbling for us jars of clay (2 Corinthians 4:7-9), we are to do so with the assurance that the Holy Spirit will give us the right words to say (Romans 8:26-27)³² and He who is the “Lord over sin, death, hell, and the

²¹ James Montgomery Boice, [The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1095.

²² Merrill C. Tenney, “John,” in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: John and Acts*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 145.

²³ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 489.

²⁴ J. Ramsey Michaels, [John](#), Understanding the Bible Commentary Series (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2011), 268.

²⁵ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 486.

²⁶ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 488.

²⁷ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 485.

²⁸ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 487.

²⁹ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 485.

³⁰ Colin G. Kruse, [John: An Introduction and Commentary](#), vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 297–298.

³¹ James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 487.

³² James Montgomery Boice, [Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 489.

devil”³³ will enable us to conquer whatever evil we face and accomplish the divine role God assigns to us in His kingdom!

Asking in the Name of Jesus

And the final prerequisite to receiving everything we ask for is to make our requests in Jesus’ name so that the Father may be glorified in the Son (14:13b)! So, if one tacks on a “in Jesus’ name” at the end of one’s prayer does this mean these words contain the “supernatural energy” needed to receive anything we want by merely rubbing upon Christ’s version of Aladdin’s lamp?³⁴ Of course the answer is an emphatic NO! In the historic context of today’s passage, the “in My (Jesus) name” refers to asking for Divine help to continue to expand the kingdom of God!

The disciples were told to put their requests through the “filter that reflects Christ’s fame, worth, purchase, and wisdom”³⁵ and in doing so to seek first the kingdom of God (Matthew 6:33) by boldly and fervently stating, “Thy will be done.”³⁶

³³ James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1098.

³⁴ Merrill C. Tenney, “John,” in *The Expositor’s Bible Commentary: John and Acts*, ed. Frank E. Gaebelin, vol. 9 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1981), 146.

³⁵ John Piper, [*Sermons from John Piper \(2000–2014\)*](#) (Minneapolis, MN: Desiring God, 2014).

³⁶ James Montgomery Boice, [*Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology*](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 490.

³⁷ James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1101.

We are not to approach the throne of God imagining we have “some claim upon Him”³⁷ as if our filthy rags of service (Isaiah 64:6) of inconsistent church attendance, and occasionally reading of the Bible would ever be seen by a holy God as righteous acts!³⁸ If we to ask God to do things in our lives, then we simply must abide in His Son and He in us (John 15:7)³⁹ so



that our prayers might not always focus on what we want⁴⁰ but instead focus on receiving the Divine power and approval needed to serve in a manner that glorifies

God the Father through the Son! Praying in the name of Jesus is not to be done to receive something from God, then, but God getting something from us,⁴¹ i.e., faithful servanthood enabled by what Christ has done and continues to do in our lives.⁴²

Anything for Jesus

In conclusion, while it is not easy to be a light to our society with all their plethora of gods and utter rejection that absolute truth exists; we as sheep can rejoice for while the wolves are truly ravenous, they will not stop or in any way

³⁸ James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1101.

³⁹ Colin G. Kruse, [*John: An Introduction and Commentary*](#), vol. 4, Tyndale New Testament Commentaries (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2003), 298–299.

⁴⁰ James Montgomery Boice, [*Foundations of the Christian Faith: A Comprehensive & Readable Theology*](#) (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1986), 491.

⁴¹ James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1103.

⁴² James Montgomery Boice, [*The Gospel of John: An Expository Commentary*](#) (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 2005), 1101.

impeded the spreading of the Good News! We are to stand on Christ's promise that whoever believes in Him will be empowered to do the works that Christ did in a manner that glorifies God the Father in heaven. Imagine the unending opportunities of effective service in His kingdom that we have when we stand on His promise that "whatever you ask in My name I will do it for you!" Asking in Jesus' name is not some magical words by which we command the Aladdin's lamp of God's will to bend to that of ours but is the key to humbly coming before His throne of grace and boldly stating "may your will be done." Anything we ask in Jesus' name, i.e., His will, we are to ask with the assurance that our filthy rags of service will be filtered by the cross and point to the glory of our Father who is in heaven! The prerequisites of receiving Christ's incredible promise of divine aid are to merely believe in Him, to live in a manner consistent with His character and to pray not that our but His will be done in and through our lives! The Light truly shines brightest when it points away from us sinners to the One who enables us to do great things in His name because we asked to join in furthering His kingdom His way! Anything for Jesus!