

John 14:5-14

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[0:00] Hello. So, the sermons text today is John 14, 5 through 14, but I'm going to start with 14.

! Let not your hearts be troubled. Believe in God. Believe also in me. In my Father's house are many rooms. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and I will take you to myself, that where I am, you may be also. And you know the way to where I am going.

Thomas said to him, Lord, we do not know the way where you are going. How can we know the way? Jesus said to him, I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. If you had known me, you would have known my Father also. From now on, you do know him and have seen him. Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. Jesus said to him, have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen the Father, how can you say, show us the Father? 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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works. Believe me that I am in the Father, and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves.

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. 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. Amen. This is the word of the Lord. Heavenly Father, as Rob just prayed, pray the same thing, the same request, Lord, that these words would have an effect on the hearts of the hearers. Lord, would you speak to us this morning? We come again to another lofty message from Christ. He has many of them throughout the Gospels, and God, in order for this to be understood in our minds, and in order for this to be affected in our hearts, Lord, we need your Spirit. And so we ask for him, for you, to come and show us what you want us to learn this morning. I pray this in Christ's name. Amen. Well, good morning, church. For those that don't know, I'm one of the elders here at Shoreline, and we are so glad that you're here this morning.

I am the way, the truth, and the life. The sixth of seven of Jesus' I am statements is the one that we get to look at today. If you look at humanity from a really cynical perspective, which is quite trendy these days, actually, being cynical, it would seem that we're all just ignorantly meandering towards death, right? And doing it in a hurry, with a lot of honking and gesturing. I mean, like, what is all the commotion about, right? Like, why are we even here, and where are we going, and what are we supposed to be doing with our lives? The Bible provides the answers to questions like these, and many more of the deep questions of life. And the Bible doesn't look at life, at humanity, cynically. It looks at it realistically, like it faces the ugly facts head-on, like the ugly facts of human ignorance, and the inevitability of death. And it shows us a way out, the way out. Today's passage is massive in scope, answering big questions like the ones just posed. And it shows us that, and this is the main point for today, it shows us, that's kind of small, huh? It shows us that faith in Jesus draws us into the abundant life of the triune God, in which we experience fellowship with him, and the fruit that results. And that's a mouthful. Faith, fellowship, fruit. Those are three common words in the Christian, in Christianity. That's what this is all about. Faith in Jesus draws us into the abundant life of the triune God, in which we experience fellowship with him, and the fruit that results. So that's what we're after today. And to piece that together, Jesus is going to give his disciples a summary, a refresher, and a promise. Okay? That's where we're going today. A summary, refresher, and a promise, all driving at this theme. So here is the first thing, the summary. Thomas said to him,

[5:00] Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way? Now, I had Colleen read from verse 1, because we're in the middle of a

dialogue of a discourse here, in the upper room discourse. And I want us to remember, like we looked at last week, the disciples are disoriented, right? They're perplexed, they're confused, they're troubled. Jesus had just announced that his hour has come, his hour that he's been talking about throughout the Gospel of John, seemingly about his death. Jesus had just announced his betrayal. He had just announced his imminent departure from the disciples, right? To a place they could not follow him. And then he announced Peter's future denial. The ringleader of the disciples is going to deny Christ, right? They are confused, they're troubled. And as we saw last week, you know, verse 1, Jesus says, let not your hearts be troubled. So he moves then to speak a word of comfort to his disciples, to meet them in their troubled hearts. But I have a question. How able are you to receive comfort when you're disoriented and troubled?

Sometimes it just goes, someone tries to speak a word of comfort to us, and we just, we don't have the ears to hear it, right? Like we've got to feel for the disciples here. They're struggling to understand profound truths that Jesus is speaking as they try to make sense of these things in the troubled, perplexed, disoriented state that they're in. And like everyone that Jesus has interacted with throughout his whole ministry, the disciples are thinking on a physical, literal level a little too much when Jesus is trying, not trying, Jesus is speaking on a spiritual level.

It's like Thomas, and it's like he's looking at an actual map, and he's like, Father's house. I don't see Father's house on this map. Like if I don't know how to get to the, where the Father's house is, like how am I supposed to know the way? But Jesus doesn't roll his eyes, right? He doesn't, he doesn't dismiss Thomas's question. Or like he did with the hard-hearted Jewish leaders, he doesn't just leave and not come back. Like Jesus, all throughout this text, Jesus is patiently responding to the disciples' questions of honesty, of ignorance even. Now why does, why does Jesus forbear with his disciples' ignorance? Why does he continue teaching them even in their slowness to learn? And I think we've already seen from the Upper Room Discourse his love for the disciples, right? His love for them, he's patient with them. And also the disciples' faith. Like they have believed in Jesus, even when they don't fully understand him. They have remained, these 11 have remained loyal to him, and so Jesus forbears with him. And this really ought to encourage our own hearts when we struggle to believe what God has declared, should it not? We can go to the Lord with our questions and our doubts. We can go to him with those. We go to him on the basis of our faith in him, and he's going to patiently help us to understand.

Now, Thomas's ignorant but honest question, it sets up Jesus to drop one of the most incredible revelations of his identity contained in the Bible. Jesus said to him, I am the way and the truth and the life. No one, no one comes to the Father except through me.

What a loaded statement this is. In this one statement, Jesus essentially captures all five of the previous I am statements. This is, it's a summary statement about his identity. Jesus says, I am the way. And I want us to note here, verses four, five, and six, the priority is the way in this statement. Verse four, Jesus had said, and you know the way to where I'm going. Thomas said, we don't know the way. How can we know, how can we know the way? Jesus says, I am the way, right? So we see the repetition there. The priority is that Jesus is the way. The way to what? He had just said the way to the Father's house, the way to dwelling with the Father, being united to the Father. It kind of alludes back to Jesus's former statement in chapter 10. He said, I am the door of the sheep. If anyone enters by me, he will be saved and will go in and out and find pasture. He's the way. He's the door.

And certainly, Jesus is pointing back to another reality and that of the temple in Jerusalem, right? Where the, between the, the holy of holies and the holy place was what? A curtain, right? That divided the very presence of God, right? And people could only enter, the priest could only enter but once a year.

[10:07] And do you guys remember what happened, what will happen in, in, in the gospels when, when Jesus breathes his last breath? What happens? That curtain is torn in two, right? Torn in two. The author of Hebrews wrote that we have confidence to enter the holy places by the blood of

Jesus, by the new and living way that he opened for us through the curtain that is through his flesh. Now, Jesus says, I am the way, the way, right? He doesn't just show the way. He doesn't just guide along the way. He doesn't just lead the way, though he certainly does all of those things. Jesus himself, he himself is the way, right? He is the way. And we're going to see he is the way primarily because, especially because he is the truth and the life, the truth, right? So similar to being the way, Jesus doesn't just speak the truth.

He doesn't just reveal the truth. He doesn't just explain the truth. He does all those things, right? He himself is the truth. He is the, what is this, what does it mean? This is kind of mind-blowing, but Jesus is the self-disclosure, the self-revelation of truth, with a capital T, right? And it's because Jesus is the self-disclosure of God, and God is truth. Truth is defined by God. I mean, the prologue to John's gospel was, and the word became flesh and dwelt among us. That word, that pre-existent word, right? The divine word of God. It became flesh and dwelt among us, and we have seen his glory.

Glory is of the only Son from the Father, full of grace and truth. And John had said, no one has ever seen God. The only God who is at the Father's side, he has made him known. Do you want to know what is true? Then look at Jesus. That's true. That's truth. I am the way, the truth, the life. Similarly, Jesus doesn't just give life. He doesn't just support or foster life, though he does those things. He himself is life in his essence. He is life. He is the bread of life. We looked at it in John 6. He is the resurrection and the life. That was, we looked at that in John 11. Only, one only has life in connection with Jesus. I used a really silly analogy before about the money, right? I said, I can give you money, but if I am money, then you need me if you want money, right? Silly analogy.

Jesus is life. If you want life, then you need Jesus, right? If you want eternal spiritual life, then you need Jesus. If you want to know and possess truth, then you need Jesus. If you want to go to the Father's house and dwell and fellowship with him forever, then you need Jesus.

So, if you want eternal life with God the Father, get Jesus the Son. That's a simple way to try and state this profound truth. And we could spend hours talking about the way, the truth, and the life.

[13:32] There's so much there. But if you want eternal life with God the Father, get Jesus the Son. No one comes to the Father except through Jesus Christ, the Son of God. No one. No one. Now, what a radically exclusive religion, right? To claim that no one comes to the Father except through Jesus. To claim that there is no other way to God than through one person. I mean, someone might be sitting here thinking, well, all religions are basically the same, aren't they? They all lead to the same place in the end. Now, if that's what you're thinking, I would urge you. I would urge you to reconsider that position. Because the God of the Bible declares that there is one way to salvation. There is one way to eternal life. There is one way to heaven. And that is through faith in Jesus Christ. Who, though being in very nature God, took on human flesh and sacrificed himself on the cross to make a way for us, to be the way for us. Now, that's not a message that jives with any other religion. It is contradictory to the claims of other religions.

They don't go together. All roads do not lead to the same place. Jesus is the way to the Father. And that claim is utterly unique. And it's either true or it's not. And that's what you've got to reckon with this morning. It's either true or it's not true. You can't have it both ways. All religions are not the same. Christianity is unique. And it's true or it's not true. Maybe you're saying, well, I'm basically a good person. So God's going to let me in.

And friends, what the Bible teaches is that God allows us to enter into his presence only through Christ, right? You might be a good person in comparison to all of those around you.

The problem is that that is not the standard. The people around you are not the standard. God's holiness, that is the standard. The holiness of God, not the holiness of men, right? The standard is perfection. And there is only one person in all of human history who achieved that standard.

And that was God in the flesh. That was Jesus Christ. Now, you are not good enough. You are not good enough for God to let you in. You need the righteousness of Jesus. And he offers it to you by faith in him. So yes, Christianity, friends, it is radically exclusive. It is. Because it declares, and we

shouldn't shy away from that church, it declares that there is one way, one way through Christ. [16:29] And at the very same time, it is radically inclusive. Why? Because salvation is offered to all, to all who would believe in Jesus. Mike, you don't know how bad I've sinned.

I might not. The Christ atoning sacrifice on the cross, it perfectly satisfied the wrath of God. There is no sacrifice left to be made for sin. No sacrifice. There might be some believers in here carrying guilt and shame around for past sins. Friend, your sins have been paid for by the blood of Christ. Paid for. You don't need to bear any more guilt or shame. Our sins are fully forgiven in Jesus. Or maybe you think, Jesus could never love me. Romans 5.8 says, but God demonstrates his love for us in this, right? That while we were sinners, Christ died for us. There is no sinner outside the reach of God's almighty love in Christ. His love is boundless. It's boundless. And he proved it by dying on the cross for your sin, for my sin. If you want eternal life with God the Father, get Jesus the Son. That's the summary. So now we're going to move to the refresher. Verses 7 through 11. Jesus goes on to say, If you had known me, you would have known my Father also.

Now this should sound familiar to us. The Jews said to Jesus in chapter 8, verse 19, Jesus answered, See, in different ways, Jesus had been saying this all throughout his public ministry. And he wants the disciples to get this, to get it, right? But he goes further. He goes further with his 11 disciples than he had done in public.

[18:37] And he says this, From now on, you do know him and have seen him. You do know him and have seen him. Right? The disciples have seen Jesus.

They have come to know Jesus. And therefore, Jesus is saying, They have come to know and see the Father. Wow. So they respond, Oh, finally we understand.

Nope. Philip said to him, Lord, show us the Father, and it is enough for us. It's like, did you hear what Jesus just said?

If you saw me, if you know me, you know the Father. Lord, show us the Father. His response, representative of the 11 disciples, reveals that they still aren't picking up what Jesus is putting down, are they?

Now, we can't fault Philip for this. He means well. And he desires a good thing. Show us the Father. That's a good thing to desire, is it not?

[19:40] It's just a little misguided. Now, what is Philip asking for? What is he asking for? I think what Philip is asking for is what we refer to as the Shekinah glory, a visible manifestation of the Father, as experienced by saints in the past, right?

Like Moses. When Moses said, Lord, show me your glory, right? And the glory of God passed before Moses, right? And then the Lord declared who he was to Moses in Exodus 33.

Or maybe when the tabernacle was constructed and the glory of the Lord filled the place, which happened again. That was Exodus 40. Later on, when Solomon builds the temple and it's dedicated, the glory of the Lord fills the place with fire and smoke and thunder.

Maybe when he's talking about Isaiah, right? In Isaiah's vision of the glory of the Lord in Isaiah chapter 6, he sees the Lord sitting upon a throne high and lifted up, and the train of his robe fills the temple.

That would be awesome, right? Lord Jesus, show us the Father. That will be enough. But again, the request is misguided, and that's what Jesus exposes with what he says next.

[20:56] Jesus said to him, Have I been with you so long, and you still do not know me, Philip? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, show us the Father?

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 authority, but the Father who dwells in me does his works.

Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me, or else believe on account of the works themselves. Now again, these words should sound very, very familiar to our ears, and they should have sounded very familiar to the disciples' ears.

Now I imagine that as Jesus is speaking these words to Philip, he's sort of like slouching lower and lower in his chair like, Ah man, I think Jesus said all these things. He's like, actually let me pull out the Bible app.

Oh yeah, chapter 5. Uh oh. Chapter 6. Set him in chapter 7. Chapter 8. Wait. Ah, not so much chapter 9. No, yeah.

[21:58] Yeah, okay. Chapter 10. Maybe I shouldn't have been on my smartphone, right? Like maybe I should have been paying a little better attention here. Guys, Jesus was driving all of this home all throughout his ministry, and the point, the main point that he was driving home, and the point that he's driving home to his disciples now is this.

Seeing and knowing Jesus is seeing and knowing the Father. Seeing and knowing Jesus is seeing and knowing the Father. He wants his disciples to get this, to believe this, to believe him, right? That he is in the Father, and the Father is in him. They are one. Father and Son are one. The Father dwells, right? He says that here. The Father who dwells in me does his works. They're one. And Jesus dwells in the Father. There is an eternal, mutual indwelling that's going on between Father and Son. He wants them to get this. And he reminds them, just like he had reminded the Jews, that his words and his works testify to these things.

It's like, you guys, you've heard everything I said. You've seen everything that I've done. Believe me. It's what he's saying. See, no doubt, watching the glory of God come down in fire and smoke and thunder as in the days of old would have been incredible to witness.

[23:27] But Jesus is telling his disciples they have something better, right? In Jesus Christ, they have a far more clear revelation of God the Father than ever before.

So if the first point of the sermon left us wondering how getting Jesus could mean getting the Father, the second point answers that question because Jesus is one with the Father.

So we see then that our faith in Jesus, it joins, it unites us to him in fellowship, and therefore, it joins, it unites us to the Father in fellowship.

So by faith, we are drawn into the abundant life of the triune God. Now, two application points for this.

Like the disciples, I think that we look at the Old Testament and we think, man, having those visible manifestations of God would be so much better than this. I think that sometimes.

[24:27] And Jesus, he's correcting our perspective. We have a better revelation of God in Christ. That's what he's saying. This is better. We have Christ. This is why Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 4, 6, for God who said, let light shine out of darkness, has shown in our hearts to give, what?

The light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. Jesus has far more clearly revealed God to mankind than he had ever before been revealed, right?

It's like the Old Testament. There's this pixelated picture and Jesus brings clarity, right? I think someone in our church just got glasses recently. If you've ever had your vision corrected, you know things can be a little blurry and then all of a sudden you put the glasses on and put the context in and it's clear, right?

God's love, his grace, his mercy, his compassion, his holiness, his righteousness, all of these things are made more clear in Christ. Now we have something better.

Now on the other hand, I think there are also many who claim to love the God of the New Testament because he's a God of love, right? He's a God of grace. But I don't want to believe in the God of the Old Testament.

[25:46] He's a God of wrath. He's a God of holiness and of judgment. And I've got news for you this morning. Actually, Jesus has news for you this morning. It's the same God.

It's the same God. He's the same God. The God of the Old Testament is the God of the New Testament and vice versa, right? And you and I don't get to decide who God is or isn't.

Another big newsflash there. The immortal God. God is seated far above the opinions and the assessments of mere men. You don't decide who God is.

I don't decide who God is. I mean, if we did, why would we worship that kind of God? A God that I can decide who he is? Like, who is that? That'd be ridiculous. We have a God who is outside of our assessments and opinions, who stands alone and is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Amen? Amen? So just two things. If you're confused still, like, there are confusing things about the Old Testament and you might have hangups about like, why did he do that?

[27:00] There's some weird stuff in there. And you can't reconcile the God of the Old Testament with the God of the New Testament. First, I want to say, look at Jesus. Okay?

Jesus is the revealer of God. If you're confused about God's character in the Old Testament, look at Jesus more and more and he will help give clarity and insight to God's dealings in the Old Testament.

Okay? The second thing, though, I would love to grab coffee with you and talk about it because there is confusing stuff and it's good to talk to fellow brothers and sisters in Christ. I'm at Panera a lot, especially Wednesday and Friday morning, so feel free to show up.

But friends, seeing and knowing Jesus is seeing and knowing the Father. Okay? Faith in Jesus, it leads to fellowship with him and therefore, fellowship with the Father, it draws us into the abundant life of the triune God.

And as we're going to see next, it means we are promised some things. So that's the third thing. We had the summary, the refresher, the promise. Fellowship with Christ bears fruit.

[28:09] And the first one is greater works. Greater works. Jesus says, 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.

Hey, let that sink in. This is one of those, like, he just said what kind of moments. Jesus seems to have a lot of those, doesn't he?

We read a statement like this and I don't know about you, but I immediately start trying to, like, put my arms around it and, like, try to, like, pat it down and make it not so crazy.

Right? Like, trying to reduce the promise. Now, this is perhaps why Jesus starts, truly, truly, I say to you. Right? Like, oh, I shouldn't go over there.

It's Jesus' way of saying, hey, listen up. I've got something to say that you should listen to. So I want us to step through this promise together. Like, who, first, who is this promise for?

[29:18] Who is it for? Whoever believes in me. Right? Whoever believes in me. It's for the true disciples of Christ. That's who it's for. Now, notice, Jesus just got done in this text recapping a whole bunch of the stuff that he had said to the Jews publicly.

But this, this promise, he did not say to the Jews publicly. He is speaking right now to his 11 closest followers, okay? This promise is for genuine believers in Christ.

Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do. So what, what are the works that I do? What works did Jesus perform in his earthly ministry?

Now, I immediately think of his miracles, right? His signs. Turning water into wine. Healing the official's son. Making the lame man walk. Feeding the 5,000. Walking, on water.

Giving sight to the man born blind. Raising Lazarus from the dead. Whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do. Let that sink in for a second.

[30:30] But Jesus' works, they actually don't include just his signs. They definitely include his signs. They include the whole of his ministry. His works are everything that he did.

His preaching, his teaching, his encouraging, his rebuking, his acts of healing, his acts of mercy, his acts of love, his acts of power and humility, his total submission to the Father.

Everything that Jesus said and did is encompassed in the works that I do. So Jesus is saying that his disciples will imitate him in carrying out his mission, his ministry to the world.

So let that sink in for a second. Everything that he did, works that I do, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do.

But they won't just do the works that I do. That's not the whole promise, is it? Greater works than these will he do.

[31:40] Greater works than these. How on earth could something be greater than the works that Jesus did? Like, is there something greater than raising a dead man to life?

Is there something greater than feeding 5,000 with 5 loaves and 2 fish? Apparently so. Jesus said so. Gotta let that sink in for a minute.

Now church, there's no doubt that this verse is a bit overwhelming and confusing. Probably for a few reasons, our lack of faith being one of them. Partially because we don't like wrestling too hard in our minds with difficult things.

Partially because this is spiritual truth. truth. And only the Spirit can give insight into spiritual truth. So, when we come to a difficult text, we need to take God at his word, first of all.

We need to work to understand what it means. We need to ask for the Spirit's help. Like, help me, Spirit, to understand this text. And also, we should consult others, other believers who also have the Spirit and his help.

[32:50] But Jesus, he doesn't leave us in the dark here. Because there's one more phrase that is really important. Jesus says, greater works than these will he do because I am going to the Father.

What is going to happen when Jesus goes to the Father? Right? When Jesus dies and rises again and ascends back to the Father's right hand, what is going to happen? We're going to talk about it next week a lot more.

Jesus is going to send the Helper, the Holy Spirit, right, into the hearts of his disciples. And what happens in the book of Acts after the Holy Spirit fills the hearts of Jesus' disciples?

What happens? What's that? Preaching? That results in the conversion of thousands? Right?

That's just Acts 2. And then we see the church is united in love for one another, in love for Christ, devotion to the word and prayer and fellowship, radical generosity.

[33:53] That's what we see, right? We see the healing of the sick. We see boldness to speak before rulers. We see perseverance to endure suffering even unto death. We see the raising of the dead by Peter and Paul.

We see the renouncing of sinful practices. We see the advancement of the gospel in spite of fierce opposition throughout the whole world. These are the greater works performed by Jesus' disciples after he goes to the Father.

Friends, they are greater works because of the greater reality that now exists in this new age of Holy Spirit indwelling, right? Holy Spirit filling. Jesus' disciples now sharing in the abundant life of the triune God because of their union with him.

There's a greater reality. There are greater works because of their greater scope, right? Jesus' ministry was in Palestine and then we see explosion. We're beneficiaries of that here in North America, right?

The gospel didn't start here. It has come here through the worldwide advancement of the gospel. Greater scope. The ESV Study Bible puts it like this. They are greater because they will result in the transformation of individual lives and of whole cultures and societies.

[35:13] Greater scope. They are greater works because of the greater clarity that now accompanies the works. There was so much confusion over the works of Christ, over the signs of Christ, the teachings of Christ, but now Christ's work is finished and the mystery of the gospel has been revealed.

So the works of the saints are accompanied with clarity in what the gospel is. Greater reality. Greater scope. Greater clarity.

So see how this works then. Listen. Jesus' disciples are drawn into the triune life of God by faith and then they are animated by that divine life.

Animated, right? In connection, in fellowship with Christ, they then fulfill the same mission, the same ministry that Jesus had except in an even greater way.

Wow. This is awesome. Are you excited by this? And before we get into application, I want us to look at the next couple of verses.

[36:18] Greater works and greater access. Jesus says, 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.

Another one of those, like, he just said, what? He's going to go on to say the same thing three more times just in the upper room discourse just so you know. Now, having walked through a series on prayer, right?

Having dedicated a month to fasting and prayer, we ought to be primed to understand this promise. See, we remember from our look at the Lord's Prayer and the two analogies that followed in Luke 11, that God is not some genie, right?

He's not your genie. Obligated to fulfill any request that we make before him. The Lord's Prayer, as we saw, it aligns and calibrates our hearts and our wills to his, right?

It makes our petition centered on advancing his agenda, his name, his kingdom, his will, right?

That's what it does, not our own. And that same principle, I think it's clear enough from this text alone for three reasons.

[37:29] First of all, the context of this promise. It follows the promise right before it, which is all about Jesus' disciples carrying on the mission and the ministry of Christ in this world, right?

See, Jesus, he seems to be inviting the disciples to ask him in light of that promise of greater works than these. and more than an invitation, it would seem that asking is actually the means by which the greater works are brought about.

So, in other words, believing prayer, the prayer of faith is the soil out of which greater works than these spring forth. That's the context.

Second condition, Jesus says, whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, right? If you ask me anything, in my name, I will do it.

What does it mean to pray in Jesus' name? Is it just a thing we say at the end of our prayers? One commentator writes that praying in Jesus' name does not refer to some magic formula added to the end of a prayer.

[38:39] It means to pray in keeping with his character and concerns and indeed in union with him. The disciples through their union with Christ are taken up into his agenda.

That's condition. And third, the end goal. What is the end goal? Jesus says that the Father may be glorified in the Son.

Now this has been Jesus' primary purpose throughout his entire ministry, has it not? God? And it becomes the primary purpose of his followers.

Indeed, it's the very purpose we were created for, right? To glorify God. That's what his followers are about. But let's not lose sight of the actual promise here.

Let's not lose sight of what Jesus is actually promising. The promise is this, that if our faith-filled prayers have God's glory as the end goal, right, and they're aligned to the character and the concerns of Christ, and they're focused on fulfilling his mission and his ministry, that he will answer them.

[39:49] That's what the promise is. Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do. So if faith, if faith in Jesus is what I've been trying to say, it's drawing us into the abundant!

The abundant, divine life of God, then that means that believing prayer or prayer in Jesus' name is the disciples' means of appropriating that divine life in our daily life.

In other words, it's the disciples' greater access to God in Christ when actually made use of that is the conduit through which the believer experiences greater works than these, right?

The conduit through which we are empowered to perform greater works than these. The power is the Holy Spirit, especially next week. The prayer is the conduit through which we are empowered. So I want to ask, we're winding this thing down, what kind of works are you performing? If someone were to look at your life from a 40,000 foot perspective, would they say it's about fulfilling the mission and ministry of Christ or about advancing your own earthly goals?

[41:06] Jesus is offering us a life of spiritual abundance. He's asking us, do you want to be enveloped into the divine life of God?

Do you want to bear fruit in accordance with that fellowship? Because you can. You can. Yet we resist him, don't we?

Like we, we want to perform our works, right, for our glory rather than greater works than these for the Father's glory. Now, it doesn't necessarily mean that we will actually do different things.

It probably does. But it definitely means that the things that we do are done with an entirely different motivation and purpose, right? our motivation and purpose becomes advancing the mission of Christ for the glory of the Father.

I mean, so in practice, this could mean, church, if you're about his mission, his ministry, this could mean that God is calling you into missions, right, into foreign missions. And I pray that God raises up missionaries from within this church.

[42:22] It could also mean that God is calling you to disciple and to discipline your child with love. Like, that is also an implication of this here. That is doing greater works than these because you are loving with the love of Christ in the power of the Spirit, your child.

This could mean like starting a whole new ministry, like legacy for women, right? Advancing the gospel in that way, caring for women who have been struggling with life dominating sins. This could also mean you just care for your next door neighbor, right? sharing the gospel with them, which has made clear the heart of God. And the Spirit can change their hearts and make them come alive, raising the dead to life.

The Christian living out their union with Christ is seeking for God's life and power to be manifested in every area of life, right?

They're seeking for fruit to spring forth in connection with Christ. The fruit of the lost being saved, right? Of lives being healed, of sin habits being broken.

[43:38] The fruit of endurance through suffering, of boldness for evangelism, of believers being made more like Christ. Yes, even in marriage, all the Allens aren't there anymore.

And all of that, friends, all of that, it redounds back to God in praise. What kind of works are you performing? And I want to ask, what kind of prayers are you praying?

Like, if someone were to analyze your prayer life, specifically the things you're asking God for, what would they say are your deepest desires and longings? Like, what requests are you asking God to fulfill?

we have a promise here from Christ's own mouth that whatever we ask in His name, this He will do. So God, help us to pray greater prayers with holier desires that He might perform greater works than these. God, help us to pray more and more in Jesus' name for the glory of the Father, right, that we might increasingly experience the promise of answered prayer and actually see His kingdom come.

[44:59] What kind of prayers are you praying? I just want to challenge us to pray bigger prayers that are about God's agenda.

Like, we have the ability to share in the abundant life of God and sometimes my prayers are so small, just like the thing right in front of me or they're so temporal and not that God doesn't care about temporary things but He really cares about eternal things.

He really cares about souls. He really cares about people being overcome with His love. What kind of prayers are we praying?

And we remember that Jesus promised us in Luke 11 that if we ask for the Spirit He'll give Him to us, right? The Father loves to give good things to His children.

He loves to give the Holy Spirit to His children. We need to remember though, the fruit of fellowship with God is not the fellowship itself.

[46:18] The fruit is the byproduct, right? The fruit is what results from the fellowship that happens. Fellowship with God is the goal.

To be with God is the goal and the fruit comes when we are fellowshiping with God, right? To be drawn into the abundant life of the triune God, to share in the fellowship of the Father and the Son that they've had from the beginning of time, from before there was time.

Like, that is the delight, that is the joy of those who put their faith in Jesus, who Himself is the way and the truth and the life. So why?

Why are we even here, friends? For the glory of God, right? That's why we're here, for His glory. Where are we going? Where are we going in this life? Well, we're going to our eternal destiny, which is either separated from God eternally and His goodness, or it's sharing forever in His abundant life.

How do we get to God then? Through Jesus, who is Himself, the way, the truth, and the life. And what are we supposed to even be doing with our lives?

[47:34] Greater works than these. Greater works than these. Fulfilling the mission and the ministry of Jesus Himself in connection with Him.

What a glorious and vibrant purpose we have in Christ. What a vibrant life we are enabled to live in Christ. If we put our faith in Him this morning.

Let's go to the Lord in prayer. Father, these are lofty things and we need Your help for these to be drawn into the heart.

Your abundant life love that You've had between the Father, Son, and Spirit forever. That's something that we have access to. God, draw us in.

Draw us in closer in fellowship with You. God, thank You that You sent Christ to be the way and the truth and the life.

[48:50] what sovereign grace that You didn't just leave us groping about in the darkness, but You yourself came down and lived a life that we could never live, achieving perfect holiness, and then died the death on the cross that we should have had to be the way, to show us, to show us, to reveal to us, to be the truth, and now to be life for us if we believe in You.

And God, as Your disciples, we are enabled, empowered, in connection with Christ to carry out greater works than these. Increase our faith, O Lord. Give us faith to believe this word.

Give us perseverance and prayer to see it come about in our lives. Let it be for Your glory. We want this church, we want our lives, this church, to be for Your glory and to extend Your agenda, Your gospel, Your mission in this world.

To help us to do that, we pray. In Jesus' name, Amen.