

The Promise of Doing a Great Work for God

(John 14:12)

I read about an employee who felt he was entitled to unemployment benefits because he was “allergic to work”. The unemployment board denied the employee unemployment benefits because the company employing this worker had offered him other jobs that would be compatible with a supposed allergy problem. The worker couldn’t wiggle out of that offer, so he filed for unemployment instead, giving the reason that he was allergic to work.

Jesus was not allergic to work nor are His followers.

The Gospel of John emphasizes “work”.

In John 5:17, God worked in Creation as Genesis 2:1-3 explains.

In John 6:29, God continues to work in Salvation. Salvation is the work of God.

In John 8:39, believers work as a result of saving faith. Jesus uses Abraham as an example. In Genesis 15:6, Abraham believed God for salvation. In Hebrews 11, Abraham, as a result of saving faith, worked for God when he “obeyed”, “sojourned”, and “offered” Isaac to God.

In John 9:4, Jesus works in saving believing sinners as He did with the blind man He healed in 9:34-38.

In John 14:12, Jesus predicted that all believers could accomplish a great work for God.

This promise fits in with the purpose of John’s Gospel as stated in John 20:30-31. John wrote his Gospel so sinners would believe that Jesus is the Son of God and that believing they might have eternal life.

Key Verses: *John 20: 30-31*

1. Introduction (1:1-18) *Jesus is God and Saves.*

2. Book of Signs (2-12) *7 Miracles or examples of Jesus’ works (12:37).*

3. Farewell Sermon (13-17) *Jesus informs His disciples about the works they will do.*

4. Crucifixion and Resurrection (18-21) *which are Jesus’ greatest works.*

This promise in John 14:12 is not referring to Jesus’ Redemption work which is finished.

This promise in John 14:12 is referring to Jesus’ work of saving the lost which is not finished. In Luke 19:10, Jesus summarized His purpose for coming to earth: “For the Son of man is come to seek and to save those who are lost.”

I. In What Areas Will We Do Greater Works?

A. We will do a greater work of reaching the lost in **locations**.

1. Jesus limited Himself to the nation of Israel.

2. In Acts, the followers of Jesus took the Gospel from Jerusalem to Rome in 30 years
Homer Kent’s entitled his commentary on Acts, “*From Jerusalem to Rome.*”

3. Are you working in the location God has placed you to reach the lost?

One of our members shared with me how she is witnessing for Christ on job.

- B. We will do a greater work of reaching the lost in **time**.
 - 1. Jesus limited Himself to 3 ½ years of public ministry.
 - 2. Each of Jesus' disciples served for 30 to 40 years.
 - 3. All of Jesus' disciples have been serving for 2000 years in seeking to reach the lost.
 - 4. How much time do we invest in reaching the lost?
- C. We will do a greater work of reaching the lost in our **circumstance**.
 - 1. Jesus had one voice.
 - 2. Jesus' disciples would have 12 voices. At the end of Jesus' earthly ministry there were 120 disciples in the upper room in Jerusalem and 500 disciples in Galilee. At the end of Peter's first sermon in Acts 2 on the Day of Pentecost there were 3000 converts. At the end of Peter's second sermon in Acts 4, there were 5000 men. In fulfillment of Jesus prophecy, last Sunday evening, we baptized 11 new converts. This evening we will baptize 3 more converts.

II. How Can We Do A Great Work for God?

A. By Equipping Believers

- 1. Jesus equipped by **Modeling** for His disciples.
 - a. Jesus won Nathanael in John 1.
 - b. Jesus won Nicodemus in John 3.
 - c. Jesus won the Samaritan woman in John 4.
 - d. Jesus won the Handicapped man in John 6.
- 2. Jesus equipped by **Mentoring** His disciples for 3 1/2 years.

“People do what People see”
- 3. Jesus equipped by **Monitoring** His disciples.
 - a. Jesus did not focus on their weaknesses but their strengths.
 - b. Jesus allowed failure. Peter denied the Lord after Jesus statement in John 14:12. Jesus corrected this sin. On the Day of Pentecost God used Peter to win 3000 souls to Christ. He believed in them. After a sermon preacher Blackburn preached in another church in which God greatly blessed. Many people stood in line to speak to him. When I finally reached him, he said to me, “One day you will be a greater preacher than I am.” I was only his chauffeur but he believed in me which was a great encouragement.
- 4. Jesus equipped by **Multiplying** His disciples.

Jesus focused on a small group of 12 men not on the multitudes.

B. By Empowering Believers

Jesus told His disciples He would be able to do this “because I go unto the Father.”

- 1. We must focus on the positive in negative circumstances. The Disciples were focusing on the negative circumstances: One on them would betray Jesus. Jesus was leaving them. Their leader, Peter, would fail them. They were questioning Jesus. Peter

questions in 13:36. Thomas questions in 14:5. Philip questions in 14:8. Judas, not Iscariot, questions in 14:22. They were caught up with the immediate. Jesus was not.

2. Leroy Eims wrote a book entitled, "*Be The Leader You Were Meant To Be*". In it he wrote, "A leader is one who sees **more** than others see. He sees **farther** than others see. He sees **before** others do." That describes Jesus in John 14:12 with His 11 men. Jesus was a leader and His disciples were not, yet. In about 10 days, these men would be transformed into all Jesus said they would become.

III. Who Will Fulfill This Promise? "He that believes on Me."

- A. Through Prayer (John 14:13-14).
- B. Through Love for Christ (John 14:15).
- C. Through the Holy Spirit (John 14:16-26).

Jesus continues to work from Heaven in and through us. Some of Jesus last moments with His disciples are described in Mark 16. He appears to the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. They return to Jerusalem and tell this same group of disciples but they do not believe them. Then Jesus appears to the 11 and rebukes them and then tells them to "Go into all the world and preach the gospel." Mark 16:19 tells us that when Jesus was received up into heaven and sat on the right hand of God or as Jesus predicted in John 14:12 "I go into the my Father" that the disciples "went forth, and preached everywhere, the Lord with them, and confirming the Word with signs following."

In Acts 1:1, Luke informs us that he when wrote his first book, The Gospel of Luke, he wrote about "all that Jesus began to do and teach." Now in Acts, Luke's second book, Luke is recording all that Jesus continues to do after He sent the Holy Spirit.

What Jesus predicted in John 14:12, He fulfills in us as we pray, love Him and are empowered by Him.