

TALKS FOR GROWING CHRISTIANS TRANSCRIPT

John 14:12-24: Jesus Gives Several Promises, Including the Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

"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. ¹³ 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. ¹⁵ "If you love Me, keep My commandments. 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. ²⁰ At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you. ²¹ He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him."

²² Judas (not Iscariot) said to Him, "Lord, how is it that You will manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?"

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. ²⁴ He who does not love Me does not keep My words; and the word which you hear is not Mine but the Father's who sent Me.

Background Notes

John 14 is part of the Upper Room Discourses. These teachings were not given to the general public, but only to the disciples. The Upper Room Discourses begin in John 13, after the foot washing and the Last Supper, and they continue right on to John 17. At the beginning of John 14, the great promise of the Lord's return for His own was given (v2-3).

In verses 12-24 we have further promises for the believer, including the promise of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In verse 18 the Lord said, "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you." Was the Lord referring here to His resurrection, or to the coming of the Holy Spirit? In view of verses 19 and 20, I think that we could say that the Lord had both of these events in mind. "A little while longer and the world will see Me no more, but you will see Me. Because I live, you will live also"(v19). In verse 19 the Lord was referring to His resurrection. Note that His resurrection is a pledge of our own resurrection. And verse 20, "At that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you." In verse 20 the Lord referred to that day when He would ascend to the Father's right hand, and the Holy Spirit would be sent. "It is the Holy Spirit that assures us of these great truths, and you will know that I am in my Father and you in Me, and I in you." So it seems that the Lord had both His resurrection and the coming of the Holy Spirit in mind when He said, "I will not leave you orphans, I will come to you"(v18).

One more background note: the "Judas" who is mentioned in verse 22 is probably the same disciple who is called "Lebbaeus" or "Thaddaeus" in Matthew 10 and Mark 3.

Doctrinal / Teaching Points

1. Every Christian is guaranteed great ministry and effective prayer.

Let's talk about the promise of "great ministry" first. Verse 12 says, "... *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.*" What did the Lord mean by this statement? The main idea seems to be "ministry that is greater in **extent.**" The Lord was not saying that because He fed 5000 people with 5 loaves and 2 fish, we should expect to feed thousands of people with 3 loaves and 1 fish! And the Lord was not saying that because He raised Lazarus from the dead, we should expect to do the same. No, the Lord was speaking primarily about the **great effects** of Christian ministries. We are to follow His ministry.

It is true that the Lord was speaking directly to His disciples, and of course they **did** perform literal miracles after the coming of the Holy Spirit. In Acts 5, when the shadow of Peter passed over those who were sick, they were healed. And in Acts 19, cloths brought from the body of Paul brought healing to many. But when the Lord said "...*he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do...*"-- by "he" the Lord meant **any** Christian, not just the disciples. The "greater works" are not physical miracles, but the work of spreading the gospel around the world under the power of the Holy Spirit. On the day of Pentecost, three thousand people came to Christ through Peter's preaching – more than in all the three years of our Lord's earthly ministry! In one TV broadcast, Billy Graham reaches more people for Christ than the Lord did in His earthly ministry.

Verse 12 applies to you and me as well. We can be involved in ministries that reach thousands of people -- not just in Israel where the Lord's ministry was confined, but also around the world! What a promise! Greater works -- greater in extent! Every Christian is guaranteed great ministry -- but -- we have to get involved! That is a prerequisite.

What about the promise of "effective prayer" in verses 13-14? "*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.*" What a promise! However, if I pray, "Lord, I pray that you will make me the wealthiest person in Chicago?" -- will the Lord answer that prayer? Probably not! What if I ask, "Lord, make me the wealthiest person in Chicago so that I can give 90% back to you?" Will the Lord answer that prayer? Probably not!

What if we forget to tack on "in Jesus name," the formulaic ending to our prayers? No – because verse 14 is **not** given as a **formula!** When we ask something "in the name of Jesus," it means we are asking for things that are **in accordance with His will!** The Lord is glorified **only** when we ask in accordance with **His** will (v13). So I guess God will be more glorified if I'm **not** the wealthiest Christian in Chicago!

Some of you might be thinking, "Well, this guarantee in verse 13-14 is not much of a promise!" On the contrary -- it's a **great promise!** Suppose I pray, "Lord, help me to love my wife more." Suppose we pray, "Lord, help us to have a more Christ-centered home," or, "Lord, help us to share Christ with our non-Christian friends." God will **certainly** answer **these** prayers -- they are in accordance with His will! Every Christian is guaranteed great ministry and effective prayer.

2. Every Christian is guaranteed great comfort and effective counsel.

This great promise, of course, refers to the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. *"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"(v16-17).*

Notice that the Holy Spirit is not "**It**," but "**He**." He is not an influence; He is a **person** -- the third person of the Trinity.

The word "helper" or "comforter" in verse 16 comes from the Greek word *parakletos*, and it means "one who comes along side to help in time of need." That help may be advice, or it may be teaching, or it may be encouragement, or it may be exhortation, or it may be comfort, or it may be strength. It may be even be defense. The same word is used in first 1 John 2:1, where the word *parakletos* is translated "advocate." An advocate is someone who speaks up for us, like the counsel for the defense in a court of law. 1 John 2:1, where our Lord is described as our advocate: *"My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous."*

All these things are involved in the Greek word *parakletos*. Whatever help you need, the Holy Spirit is one who comes along side to help in time of need. And this is guaranteed for **every** Christian! What a promise! Every Christian is guaranteed great comfort and effective counsel.

Notice in verse 17 that the guarantee of the Holy Spirit is only for the Christian, not for the world. As believers, we're different. We have an advantage, an unseen advantage -- we have **God**! Talk about confidence for the future! Notice, too, that the future tense is used in verse 17: *"the Spirit of truth.... He dwells with you and will be in you."* When the Lord spoke these words to His disciples it was before Pentecost -- it was still "Old Testament times." The Holy Spirit was present, but not **indwelling** the believer. In Old Testament times, the Spirit "came upon" various individuals at different times for different purposes, but now the Holy Spirit would be "indwelling" every believer. 1 Corinthians 6:19: *"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own?"*

And notice that verse 16 says "**forever**" --" *that He may abide with you forever.*" What a promise of assurance! Do you need assurance? Do you need encouragement? Do you need help of any kind -- any comfort, or any counsel? Because of the Holy Spirit, every Christian is guaranteed great comfort and effective counsel.

Practical Application

We can experience heaven on earth!

"He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. 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 unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him"(v22-23).

What more could we ask for from God? For the Lord Jesus to love us and manifest Himself to us (v21), and for the Father and the Son to make their home with us (v23) – why, this is heaven on earth! In fact, the word “abode” in verse 23 is the same word that is used for the “mansions” of My Father’s house that Jesus mentioned in verse 2! So you can experience heaven on earth! Now it is true, heaven is not on earth, but we can begin to experience what heaven will be like while we are here on this earth.

I’m sure some of you are saying at this point, “Dave, I believe that -- but what’s the secret to enjoying heaven on earth?” The secret is given right here: the secret is **obedience**. Notice that **obedience** is the prerequisite that is mentioned both in verse 21 and verse 23: “*He who has My commandments and **keeps** them, it is he who loves Me.... If a man love me, he will **keep** my words...*”[emphasis added]. Notice the difference, by the way. To **keep My commandments** means to keep the black and white commands of scripture, to keep His Word. That is the will of God, the will that He desires. “*Flee youthful lusts*” -- that is a **command**! Remembering the Lord through participation in the Lord’s Supper is a **command**: “*Do this in remembrance of Me.*” Obedience to His Word is the secret for coming to know what heaven on earth is all about. You can experience heaven on earth if you are obedient.

Obedience is not difficult **if you really love the Lord!** “*If you love me, keep my commandments*”(v15). If we love the Lord and keep His commandments and His Word, we can experience heaven on earth!