

Lighthouse Bible Church

March 16th, 2014

John 14: 7 – 14 *Scripture Reading: Acts 2: 22 - 28*

‘Promises to those who Believe’

Stand – Read – Pray

You remember from last time that Jesus is with His disciples on the night before His betrayal and death, and now that Judas has left to carry out his betrayal, Jesus wants to share some important truths with the remaining disciples.

He knows that their hearts have been troubled by all that has taken place so far, so He wants to encourage them to **‘not let their hearts be troubled’** because He is in absolute control of all that is taking place, no matter how out of control it seems to be.

He shared some promises with His disciples to ease their troubled hearts and we found that those promises are for us as well and can ease our troubled hearts too. He said that they needed to have a steadfast ongoing belief in Him when He leaves, just like they have an ongoing belief in God whom they have not seen.

He told them that He was leaving to go back to His Father’s house in heaven to prepare a place for them.. We got just a small glimpse last time as to what the place would be like. Then Jesus told them that **‘if He goes to prepare a place for them’** then **‘He would come again to receive them to Himself so that where He is they would be also.’**

We look at the fact that Jesus **‘will come again’** and He will come at the rapture for His children who are born again believers. He will also ‘come again’ 7 years later to rule and reign on the earth for 1000 years. We looked in scripture at both of those events and can understand why Jesus would say that as a means of comfort.

Paul used the same thing that we looked at in **1st Thessalonians 4: 14 – 18** which talks about the rapture and at the end of that passage Paul said **‘therefore comfort one another with these words’**. I am sure the words of our Lord to His disciples about His return to heaven, His preparing a place for them in heaven and returning to receive them, would have been a huge comfort to them, much like they are for us today.

Jesus finished last time by telling them that **‘He is the way, to heaven, the truth about heaven and the life, eternal in heaven.** We looked at the fact that there is no other way to get to heaven apart from Jesus and His finished work of the cross. So we want to pick it up from there in Verse 7.

Verse 7: if you had known Me, you would have known My Father also; and from now on you know Him and have seen Him.

Jesus, in this passage is about to share some more important truths to His disciples that will also encourage their troubled hearts and help them when He is gone, and these will be important and encouraging to us as well. He is going to confirm to them who He is, He is going to confirm to them the power they will receive and He is going to confirm to them the promise of answered prayer.

Jesus starts out by telling them what He has told them before, but in light of their confusion about Him being the Messiah and going to die soon, He wants to reassure them of who He is.

He says **if you had known Me you would have known My Father also and from now on you know Him and have SEEN Him.** What Jesus is saying is that He IS God, you are looking at God in human form. Jesus says ‘I am not only the way to God in heaven, I am the God of heaven’.

This is the clearest statement by Jesus Himself on who He is and He is God. Every other religion and philosophy about who Christ is must deal with this passage, as well as other in John alone, that leave no doubt about who Jesus is.

This would have been a comfort for them because Jesus told them in Verse 4 ‘you believe in God, believe also in Me .. because I am He, I will be the One who takes you to heaven and if you have any questions about God, just know that **you know Him because you know Me, you have seen Him because you see Me.**

Jesus says ‘I am One with God’ and because you have known Me and seen Me you have known and seen God because we are One. Really as far back as **John 1:1, 14** that is how Jesus has been presented. **In the beginning was the Word...**

Jesus is, in essence, saying in Verse 7 ‘If you had known Me you would have known My Father’. The implication is that they did not know Jesus fully, and they didn’t and that is obvious from the conversation that follows’. But He says **from now on** you will know Him and see Him.

Jesus is talking, in part, about what they physically see and know about Jesus now, but it is limited. But ‘from now on’, He says, they will know fully. When will that take place? After Jesus death, burial and resurrection and the indwelling of His Holy Spirit. Then they will fully know Jesus as God because the Spirit of God will point them to Jesus and who He is. But for now their understanding about Jesus is limited as we can see by Verse 8.

Verse 8: Philip said to Him ‘Lord show us the Father and it is sufficient for us. Philip says **show us indicating that they all had that same kind of ignorant lack of understanding of who Jesus is in His fullness until after His resurrection. So he says show us much like Moses in **Exodus 33: 12 – 33** wanted to see the glory of God. Or maybe like **Isaiah 40: 1 – 5** where it says **the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall set it together.****

Their lack of faith causes them to want to see rather than to believe before they could accept it. So Jesus tells them in V-9

Verse 9: 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’.

Jesus rebukes Philip, and by extension all the disciples, because the **you** is in the plural. And almost in frustration and heartbreak Jesus says ‘have I been with you so long and yet you have not known Me Philip’. I’ve been with you for 3 years and you’ve seen and heard all that I have said and done and you still have to ask that question.

By the way, I find some encouragement in that. Jesus, after 3 years, still had to deal with their lack of faith and understandable discouragement in them even asking Him that question. So when you are mentoring someone or training your children or there is a new believer close to you, it may take some time for them to come to the place of full understanding about who Christ is. The difference is, is that we have the Holy Spirit of God and He who began a good word in us as **Philippians 1: 6 says will carry it through until the day of Christ Jesus.**

Jesus tells Philip and the others **He who has seen Me has seen the Father.** What an incredible statement. You have been watching the Father for the last 3 years because you have been watching Me. Isn’t that what **Hebrews 1: 3** says that **Jesus is the express image of the Father. Colossians 1: 15 He is the image of the invisible God.** He who has seen Me, Jesus says, has seen the Father. Wow.

It is the exact same thing that Jesus said back in **John 8: 19** when they asked Him **where is the Father and Jesus said you know neither Me nor My Father. If you had known Me you would have known My Father also.** Then look what Jesus says in Verse 10.

Verse 10: do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me?

Philip and the others said to Jesus show us and Jesus says to them **believe Me**. Jesus doesn't do any miracle or sign or wonder to convince them, He just tells them to believe. He uses the word believe 4 times in just two verses and because Philip asked for a sign, Jesus gives them faith, He says just believe.

That is what the Christian life is all about, isn't it; about walking by faith and not by sight. **Hebrews 11: 6** says **but without faith it is impossible to please Him for he who comes to God must believe that He is...** As we saw before in **Hebrews 11: 1** that **faith is the substance of things hoped for the evidence of things (what) NOT seen.**

Listen, when we worship God today, we don't look for some miraculous sign or vision or supernatural revelation from God outside His word, we live by faith and follow God and Christ by faith. If Jesus wouldn't do something to reveal the Father in the time of the disciples, He certainly will not do it in our day today. Our desire ought be like that of the Apostles in **Luke 17: 5** where they said to Jesus **Lord, increase our faith.**

So Jesus tells His disciples in the middle of Verse 10 **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.**

Jesus says 'this is the basis on which I want you to believe in Me and have faith in Me; it is by what I have said because I have been speaking on behalf of the Father. We saw that back in ***John 3: 38, John 7: 16, John 8: 28, 38, 40, John 12: 49*** . Our faith is built upon the words of Jesus today, aren't they?

He says at the end of Verse 10 and **Verse 11** but the Father who dwells in Me does the works. Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me, or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

Jesus says ‘if My words were not enough for you, what about My **works**’. Philip haven’t you been watching all of the miracles I have done over the last 3 years and why I have done them and what they say about Me. Remember in **John 5: 36** where Jesus said **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**. You see Him say a similar thing in **John 10: 32 – 38**.

Jesus tells Philip ‘I don’t have to show you the Father I am God in human form and you can believe in Me because of what I have said and what I have done. So Jesus confirms to them who He is and now He tells them in Verse 12 that He is going to confirm the power they will receive from Him.

Verse 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 only way these disciples would be able to do the works that Jesus did was if Jesus **goes to the Father** and when He goes to the Father He will send the Holy Spirit to empower them in their ministry.

Keep in mind that Jesus is talking to the 11 disciples in the upper room. Much of what He shares with them can apply to us as well. The question becomes; does verse 12 apply to us as well today. Is Jesus saying that anyone who believes in Him will be able to do the works that Jesus did and even greater works.

Well, if we look at it from the standpoint that Jesus is talking about miraculous works, then He is saying that we will be able to do the same kind of miracles Jesus did and even greater ones than He did.

What miracle works had Jesus done? Changed water into wine, healed a man crippled for 38 years, fed 5000 people, walked on water, raised the dead and many many more. Does that mean **he who believes in Me** will be able to do all those things as well?

My question is; if this applies to all believers of all ages, then why have most believers never raised someone from the dead or given sight to the blind or whatever? If this were a universal authority to all believers, that would go against what Paul told the church at Corinth in **1st Corinthians 12: 27 – 30**. They don't all have the gift of miracles and the gift of healings.

Jesus has just been telling the disciples that they need to believe in Him and it would be natural to conclude in Verse 12 when He says **I say to you, he**, of you disciples, **that believe in Me then the works that I do he will do and greater works...**

Did the disciples do the same works that Jesus did? They sure did, just read the book of Acts. When they were empowered by the Holy Spirit they began to **do the works that Jesus did**. Did they do **greater** works than Jesus? Well you can't get much greater than raising someone from the dead and they certainly did that. So what did He mean by greater works.

Well, greater in the sense that they reached a far greater number of people in a far greater area than Jesus ever did. So it is probably not so much greater in the power of the type of miracles but greater in the extent of where those miracles were done. You see that in ***Acts 2: 43, Acts 5: 12 – 16***.

That is why **2nd Corinthians 12: 12** Paul identifies the **signs and wonders and mighty deeds as signs of an apostle** and not of all believers. Some Christians who claim this promise for themselves but who are unable to perform the kinds of signs and wonders that Jesus did may find they are tempted either to water down the biblical definition of a miracle or to waver in their commitment to the scriptures.” *Cripplegate 2-11-14*. Either case, that is not a good place for any believer to be in.

By the way what does James tell the church to do when someone is suffering or sick? He says in **James 5: 13 – 15** **call for the Elders and pray for them**

If we look at Verse 12 from purely the spiritual aspect and if Jesus is talking about the works being related to the spiritual works of salvation, then it certainly would apply to not only the disciples but to all believers because we still see people being saved all over the world today. Then finally, Jesus wants to comfort them through the assurance of answered prayer. Look at Verses 13 – 14

Verses 13 – 14: **and whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name I will do it.**

They are still thinking that Jesus will be leaving them and what are they going to do when it comes to their resources, their needs being met. Jesus was always there to help them and guide them and provide for them and protect them and now He’s going to be gone. So Jesus says ‘just ask and I will do it’. What a prom.

Remember in **Luke 22: 35** when Jesus said to His disciples **when I sent you without money bag, knapsack and sandals did you lack anything and they said ‘nothing’**. Jesus says ‘even though I am going to be gone, you can ask in prayer and you will have access to all that I have’. Isn’t that what Paul said in **Philippians 4: 19** **but my God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.**

Does that mean we can ask for anything we want and we'll get it? No! Notice that in both Verses 13 and Verse 14 it says whatever you ask **in My name**. Verse 14 **in My name**.

What does it mean to ask 'in Jesus name'? It doesn't mean to just add the name of Jesus at the end of a prayer and expect it to be answered. It means praying in full identification of who Christ is. His name encompasses all that He is. Listen to this; it is praying as if Christ Himself were doing the asking. You could say it this way 'dear God, I am asking for Jesus that you do this or that'. That would eliminate a lot of selfish, I want kind of prayers wouldn't it.

Praying in Jesus name means we are asking for something, not on our own merit, but on the merit of His Son. We are asking on the basis of what Christ has done for us and not on what we think we deserve, because we do not deserve anything. You could say it this way 'Father, I am asking for this and trust that you will provide it based on what Your Son has done'.

Praying in Jesus name means asking for those things that will bring glory to the Father and the Son. It is praying in the will of God because when it is answered it will bring glory to God and Christ.

And by the way, guess who answers your prayer? The end of Verse 14 says **I will do it**. Jesus is telling them 'I will be the one to answer your prayer, I will'. Jesus will be operating on our behalf when we ask according to His will, in His name and for His glory.

Our prayer ought to be; Lord help me to see You for who You are and help me to believe the fullness of who You are and Lord use me, by the power of Your Spirit, to do those works to further your kingdom and help me to pray in Your will and not my own so that You will be glorified when you answer.

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Introduction and review:

1st Thessalonians 4: 14 – 18

Verse 7:

John 1: 1, 14

Verse 8:

Exodus 33: 12 – 33, Isaiah 40: 1 – 5

Verse 9:

Philippians 1: 6, Hebrews 1: 3
Colossians 1: 15, John 8: 19

Verse 10:

Hebrews 11: 1, 6, Luke 17: 5, *John 3: 38*
John 7: 16, 8: 28, 38, 40, John 12: 49

Verse 11:

John 5: 36, *John 10: 32 – 38*

Verse 12:

1st Corinthians 12: 27 – 30, *Acts 2: 43, 5: 12-16*
2nd Corinthians 12: 12, James 5: 13 – 15

Verses 13 – 14:

Luke 22: 35, Philippians 4: 19

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