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## Greater Works Than These...

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*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* (John 14:12). This verse has puzzled many believers because Jesus did not say exactly what these greater works would be. The greater works that the believers would do after Jesus' ascension and after the Holy Spirit has come are certainly not any of the works that Jesus did while He was with His disciples. The greater works are works that Jesus did not do. So then, from this passage we can classify the works of God into two categories: first, there are the works which Jesus did on earth with His disciples which we shall also be able to do; and second, there are the greater works which He did not do while on earth with His disciples that we shall be able to do through the help and power of the Holy Spirit. Perhaps we would do well to first consider what these greater works are not!

**1. Healings.** All who believe in Jesus have the authority to do miracles of healing as Jesus did. Since Jesus did them while on earth, they cannot be included in the greater works. These works of healing included: healings from blindness, from leprosy, from diseases of the blood, from diseases of the ear and the tongue, from infectious diseases, and from crippling and paralyzing conditions in the body caused by birth, disease, accident or sin. They also included the raising from the dead (Matt. 11:5) and whatever other diseases there were among the children of Israel (Matt. 12:15). Jesus was also *...healing all kinds of sickness and all kinds of disease among the people* (Matt. 4:23). So then, dear friend, any healing of any disease is not part of the greater works category. These greater works do not include healing of bodily infirmities. The greater works would come after He had gone to His Father. Further, notice that even though Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, His disciples were not. His disciples did miracles of healing without having the Holy Spirit because Jesus *...gave them power and authority over all demons, and to cure diseases. He sent them to preach the kingdom of God and to heal the sick* (Luke 9:1-2). Miracles of healing are wonderful and anyone who has ever been healed from a painful or disabling affliction appreciates the tremendous blessing of divine healing.

Hallelujah! But remember, healings are clearly not part of the greater works that shall be done!

**2. Casting out demons (exorcisms).** Jesus' twelve disciples were able to cast out demons when they were sent out two by two (Mark 6:13). They were able to do this even though they were not yet filled with the Holy Spirit, their hearts were yet hardened and they often quarreled among themselves about which one of them was the greatest (Mark 9:34; Luke 9:46 & 22:24). Again, casting out demons and devils cannot be part of the greater works that shall be done.

**3. Other miracles which defy natural laws.** First notice that bodily healings and exorcisms may be classified as miracles defying natural laws, but there are also other miracles pertaining to the body, the soul and nature. All natural laws are an expression of God's faithfulness. The fact that objects always fall down is a sign of God's reliability and mercy. God has created an orderly universe with principles that can be utilized to build things and His faithfulness provides benefits allowing science and industry to develop tools, machines and gadgets that make life easier. Yet, the same God who created and sustains this orderly universe also has power to deviate from His laws at any time He chooses to do so for your benefit and for His glory. This is what happened when Jesus changed water into wine, fed thousands with five loaves and two fishes, walked on water and stilled the storms. There is scant evidence that the disciples did any miracles defying natural law prior to Pentecost. After Pentecost, several miracles happened because of prayer and because of God's power: *so that they brought the sick out into the streets... that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might fall on some of them... and they were all healed* (Acts 5:15-16); and *Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them* (Acts 19:11-12). Although these happenings are miraculous, they are not part of the greater works that shall be done.

Healings, exorcisms and other miracles were some of the works that Jesus did while He was preaching about the kingdom of God. These are some of the works that His followers would do and He also told them that they would do *...greater works than these*. The greater works have to be something else: *...Eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor have entered into the heart of man the things which God has prepared for those who love Him* (1 Cor. 2:9). When you see or hear about faith healers causing people to throw their crutches away, you are

not seeing or hearing about the greater works of God; when you see people delivered from devils, you are not seeing greater works of God or when you see sudden, miraculous changes in the weather, you cannot classify them as greater works of God because they were commonplace with Jesus and His disciples. What then comprises the greater works?

### **Greater Works**

Perhaps the greatest clue you have anywhere as to what Jesus considered the *...greater works than these* which you shall do after He went to His Father is found in His high priestly prayer in John 17. The **primary work**, the **greatest work** that you can do as a believer and that the church should be doing is: *that they all may be one, as You, Father, are in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me... I in them, and You in Me; that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that You have sent Me, and have loved them as You have loved Me* (John 17:21-23). Jesus desires that you and the church be in one accord. Before His crucifixion, Jesus healed people, cast out demons and performed miracles as He preached. He was not able to bring His followers to oneness because the Holy Spirit had not yet been given. He told His followers that they would do *...greater works than these*. They would accomplish what He could not accomplish: *Now I am no longer in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to You. Holy Father, keep through Your name those whom You have given me, that they may be one as We are. While I was with them in the world, I kept them in Your name...* (John 17:11-12). These scriptures are proclaiming that the cry of Jesus was *that they may be one as We are*. Are you able to perceive that He is talking as one who has already left the world? As He was preparing to leave the earth, He was praying for oneness *that the world may believe*. Dear ones, whatever work is required to help people to get to oneness, that is the greater work.

On the day of Pentecost, Jesus' prayer was answered for the first time: *When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place* (Acts 2:1) This was the first-fruit of the greater works! The disciples came to oneness, the power fell and the world began to believe. Thousands were immediately saved, sanctified and prepared for heaven. The power, the love and the presence of God was so great that material things lost all significance to the new believers. They sold all they had and gave away all that they received so that this greater work would never stop. Healings, exorcisms and other miracles can make life on earth more pleasant, but they are not able to bring

the body of believers to oneness. Multitudes were healed by Jesus during His three years in Israel, but many of them eventually forsook Him and then had Him crucified. It was **oneness** that caused the Holy Spirit to be poured out on the disciples on the day of Pentecost. The greater work of God is not for a cripple to walk again, but for that cripple to walk with God! The greater work of a church is that all her believers *...speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment* (1 Cor. 1:10). This is the focus of Jesus' high priestly prayer. This is what Jesus is ever living to make intercession for even now. Seek sanctification and become one with your brothers and sisters in Christ and then you will become part of the glorious church because you are doing the greater works.

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