

## THE WORK OF CHRIST

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John 14:12-21

1. In John 13-16 we have an intimate look at what Jesus taught during His last hours with the disciples just prior to His arrest, trial, and crucifixion.
2. We saw last week that some of the things Jesus told His disciples were troubling to them and a cause for sorrow and confusion.
3. Their perspective and understanding began to change after Jesus' resurrection from the dead, and everything became clear when the Holy Spirit was given on the Day of Pentecost.
4. Jesus wanted His disciples to know that what was about to happen was not the end, but rather the beginning of a greatly expanded ministry.
5. What Jesus had begun was going to be carried on by His body, the church. Acts 1:1-3  
The first account I composed, Theophilus, about **all that Jesus began to do and teach, 2 until the day when He was taken up to heaven**, after He had by the Holy Spirit given orders to the apostles whom He had chosen.
6. Paul told the church at Ephesus that, "...God put all things in subjection under (Jesus') feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." Ephesians 1:22-23
  - a. Jesus is the head of the church, and the church constitutes the body of Christ on the earth.
  - b. That which Jesus began in His physical, earthly body would be carried on by His body, the church.
7. When we are looking for a church to attend and affiliate with the question should not be, "Where can I get my needs met?" but rather, "Where does God want to use me to accomplish the work of Christ?"
8. Paul made it clear that the church is to function like a body. Eph 4:14-16  
14 As a result, (of our spiritual growth and maturity) we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 **but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.**
9. Note with me four things that Jesus taught in the passage we are studying today related to His ongoing ministry in the world.

### I. The promise.

- A. He who believes in Me-the promise is made to all who have a genuine faith relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
- B. The works that I do shall he do also.
- C. And greater works than these shall he do; because I go to the Father.
  1. When Jesus went to the Father He sent His Spirit to indwell and empower the lives of those who believe in Him. (See note next page)

NOTE: We have a similar promise in John 7:37-39

37 Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried out, saying, "If anyone is thirsty, let him come to Me and drink. 38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture said, 'From his innermost being will flow rivers of living water.'" 39 But this He spoke of the Spirit, whom those who believed in Him were to receive; for the Spirit was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified.

**2. No longer confined to a single earthly body Jesus is now able to manifest His presence, demonstrate His power, and accomplish His work through His body, the church.**

NOTE: Think of all that the Lord is accomplishing throughout the world this very moment.

## **II. The pattern.**

A. During His earthly ministry Jesus went about doing good. Acts 10:38

B. Jesus is still going about doing good through His body, the church.

C. What good does Jesus want to accomplish?

1. The prophetic word. Isa 61:1-3

The Spirit of the Lord GOD is upon me, Because the LORD has anointed me To bring good news to the afflicted; He has sent me to bind up the brokenhearted, To proclaim liberty to captives And freedom to prisoners; 2 To proclaim the favorable year of the LORD And the day of vengeance of our God; To comfort all who mourn, 3 To grant those who mourn in Zion, Giving them a garland instead of ashes, The oil of gladness instead of mourning, The mantle of praise instead of a spirit of fainting. So they will be called oaks of righteousness, The planting of the LORD, that He may be glorified.

2. Its fulfillment. Luke 4:16-22

16 And He came to Nazareth, where He had been brought up; and as was His custom, He entered the synagogue on the Sabbath, and stood up to read. 17 And the book of the prophet Isaiah was handed to Him. And He opened the book and found the place where it was written,

18 "THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD IS UPON ME, BECAUSE HE ANOINTED ME TO PREACH THE GOSPEL TO THE POOR. HE HAS SENT ME TO PROCLAIM RELEASE TO THE CAPTIVES, AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND, TO SET FREE THOSE WHO ARE OPPRESSED, 19 TO PROCLAIM THE FAVORABLE YEAR OF THE LORD."

20 And He closed the book, gave it back to the attendant and sat down; and the eyes of all in the synagogue were fixed on Him. 21 **And He began to say to them, "Today this Scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing."**

3. What Jesus began He want to continue through you and me.

D. In John 12:26 Jesus declared, "If anyone serves Me, let him follow Me; and where I am, there shall My servant be also." **As followers of Jesus we are to be servants and not consumers of services.**

### **III. The plan.**

A. The greater work of Christ is accomplished through the combined efforts of Spirit-filled believers whose lives are characterized by believing prayer and loving obedience. 12-21

B. These believers constitute what we refer to as the universal church, but they are organized into local churches or bodies of believers.

C. The modern trend of unattached and uninvolved professing Christians is totally foreign to everything the New Testament teaches.

D. Those who persist in this attitude are outside the will of God and call the genuineness of their salvation into question. 1 John 3:14

“We know that we have passed out of death into life, because we (actively) love the brethren. He who does not (actively) love (the brethren) abides in death.”

### **IV. The purpose. “...that the Father may be glorified in the Son.”**

A. In John 17:4 Jesus prayed, “I glorified You (God the Father) on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do.”

B. Jesus continues to glorify God on the earth as He works in and through His body, the church. Matthew 5:16

“Let your light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven.”

### **APPLICATION**

1. Have you believed, and are you continuing to believe, on the Lord Jesus Christ?
2. Are you actively identified with a local body of believers?
3. Are you glorifying God the Father, through Jesus Christ the Son, in the power of the Holy Spirit by accomplishing the work God has given Jesus to do through you?