

# 01/28/24

## Sermon #24 – Marshall Reeves

### ‘Greater Works Than These’

John 14:

11 “Believe Me that I am in the Father and the Father in Me; or else believe Me for the sake of the works themselves.

12 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I go to the Father.

13 Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it, that the Father may be glorified in the Son;

14 if you ask anything in My name, I will do it.

John 14 (Mirror)

11 The fact that the Father seems distant or invisible to you does not mean that he is absent. In Me He is very present with you. You cannot claim to know Me while you ignore Him - We are inseparable. I dare you [plural] to believe that I am in the Father and the Father in Me - if it seems far-fetched, then believe Me because of what I have done and what I am about to do. It is the Father in Me who defines Me. My works exhibit His resolve. (Jesus does not have to persuade the Father about us; He came to persuade us about the Father. There is nothing in the incarnate Word that is in conflict with who God is. John 1:1-3 “In the beginning...” If you underestimate Me, you underestimate My Father - and you underestimate you.)

12 I want you to be fully convinced about this, anyone whose belief concludes in who I am, will also do the works that I do. And because of My relocation to continue to be face to face with My Father, My works will be greatly multiplied through you; the Father is as present in you as He is in Me.

13 And whatever you desire in My name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Your sonship is endorsed in My sonship. (This is the first occurrence of the phrase, In My name. The express use of the name of Jesus therein is no specific token; the question is of the spirit and mind of him who prays it.)

14 If you ask me anything, in knowing what My name entitles you to, that will I perform.

The modern evangelical church (and I reference their teachings not to judge our brethren but to reveal their error) can only tolerate The Father in its Christian walk because He makes them uncomfortable. They have made Jesus the terminus for all things spiritual. Yet Jesus says He came to take us to His Father for He and the Father are one. As we saw in verse 11 Jesus didn't come to persuade the Father about us but us about the Father and His love for us.

In verse 23 Jesus tells us that we will encounter the Father's love being reflected from within and He and the Father will appear face-to-face to each individually and make their home there. (meno-seamless union)-Mirror

As beautiful as this might sound, it creates a great deal of anxiety and consternation among most believers for the simple fact that they don't know or trust the Father. The thought of Him through a religious lens evokes fear of judgement, and therein is the problem. Perfect love casts out fear because it involves judgement and distrust which simply cannot exist in this divine home. So why does the church fear the Father? Because we've been taught to. Jesus is the kind and loving one who has saved us from Hell while the Father, who can't stand to be in the presence of sin, is all too eager to send us there. It's this very heretical belief that has split our understanding of the Trinity by separating Father and Son. The Nicene Creed was drafted for this very purpose, to make absolutely clear that They are of one thought and one being. However, if Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin, then what does this say concerning His divinity? This is the heresy of the early church called Arianism that said Jesus was not God. He was created by God the Father, therefore less than Him, a creature not the creator.

Almighty God must also have a sacrifice as payment for sin. But why? Appeasement is what the pagan gods required. Couldn't He simply forgive? The truth is yes and that's exactly what He did. Jesus told us that He never said or did anything that the Father didn't say or do first. When Jesus said Father forgive them, He wasn't pleading with the Father to do something He wasn't inclined to do, He was simply agreeing to and repeating His Father's heartfelt desire.

This distortion of the gospel is described in an atonement theory called Penal Substitution and is spawned from the darkest recesses of man's fallen mindset. It is pervasive in the church here in the West and fundamental to their gospel. It is "another gospel" that Paul warned of. For more explanation of this, I refer you to a sermon I did last Fall called the Atonement of God.

If we believe in Him, Jesus says, and who He actually is, then we will do the works that He does and even greater. We read in the Passion Translation in Colossians 3:4 "And as Christ Himself is seen for who He really is, who you really are will also be revealed, for you are now one with Him in glory." His glory is His divine opinion of you and your inherent and intrinsic value. If this is God's belief about you, wouldn't it supersede your opinion of yourself? This is key to grasp for it emanates from love and of course He is Love. And if He is Love then God the Father and the Holy Spirit are as well. Jesus is the doorway between the Trinity and man for He tells us in

John 10:7 "Most assuredly I say to you, I Am the door of the sheep."

He never said He was the terminus but the Way. No man comes to the Father except by Me and no one comes to Me unless the Father draws him. John 6:44. They are one and with the same love and desire for humanity. They are distinct persons yet mutual, cohered (to form a unified whole), interpersonal and interpenetrated. As a result, their relationship was described by the early church as existing in a state of Perichoresis or The Great Dance. Today we could describe it with the quantum physics term of 'entanglement', meaning to occupy the same place of being yet exist there without loss of distinction. Peri means around and choresis or chorein means space. It's the source of our word for choreograph. Three in movement as One. It means rotating or going around, thus the idea of dance.

It is impossible for the Trinity to be separated. God consists of three persons. To remove one would mean that God would no longer exist. And yet most of the Protestant church has removed the Holy

Spirit (HS) and only gives lip service to the true God and Father. What they worship is a distortion of His loving person. Because there's no understanding of the Trinity, they do not comprehend that where one is, there's all three. That's why we read every week

2 Corinthians 5:19 "that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing (accounting) their trespasses to them..."

The Father was on the cross in His Son along with the HS participating with and strengthening Jesus as He suffered and entered death. Again, do we believe what God says about us? If He isn't counting our sins against us, why do we?

The Mirror 2 Corinthians 5:19

19 "Jesus did not act independently of his Father. God was present in Christ when they reconciled the total cosmos (all humanity) to themselves. Deity and humanity embraced. God's act of reconciliation takes every other conclusion out of the equation! No amount of trespasses can match God's evaluation of the human race. Redeemed friendship (covenant relationship) is now announced from within us!"

The incarnation of the Son did not separate Him from His Father as so many believe. I have a good friend, who has been a pastor virtually his whole life, argue with me about Jesus' cry from the cross in Psalm 22:1 "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" He insists that God the Father abandoned the Son on the cross because He's too holy to look upon sin. When I explained that the Trinity could never be divided, his response was that even if true, in this one case, it happened. End of discussion.

To the contrary, He brought His Father and the Holy Spirit to us in order that we would experience total immersion in the Trinity, us in Them and They in us. The infinite and eternal consciousness of God isn't measured in single rays or beams of light dispensed only to the few. All of creation is bathed in an ocean of love's consciousness. It is never a question of His presence in our lives, only our awareness of it!

Colossians 2:

9 "For in Him (Jesus Christ) dwells all the fullness of the Trinity in a body.

10 and you (we) are complete in Him." This proves that your human life is tailor made for God.

So, what does all this mean. Is it simply a historical fact that, once memorized, provides a ticket to heaven when we die? That's exactly what many of us grew up with. It's strong language but this is actual heresy toward the Gospel of Jesus Christ. It has short-changed us in participating in a life of joy and peace and this is why.

2 Corinthians 5:

16 ¶ From now on, therefore, we regard no one from a human point of view; even though we once regarded Christ from a human point of view, we regard Him thus no longer.

Romans 8:5

"For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit."

I don't judge people's spiritual integrity but to continue to know Him in the flesh as simply a historical figure is not to know Him at all. For we emulate the God we worship. Our charge then is to live a good and moral life. Even though Romans 3:28 clearly tells us that man is justified by faith apart from the law,

the church teaches to this day that Jesus was righteous because He was the only one to ever keep it. Although it's true that He did, it isn't the reason why He was the Righteous One. That's who He was from the womb. We're taught, however, in order to be righteous, we must imitate Him and when we fail, to continually ask for forgiveness in order to remain acceptable. That's why they take 1 John 1:9 as a moment-by-moment act of confessing our sins so that He will continuously forgive and cleanse us. It's all about sin and sin-consciousness. To believe this is to worship a pagan god who still demands routine sacrifice. This is Paul's meaning behind

Eph 4:17 "...You should no longer walk as the Gentiles in the futility of their minds. 18 having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them because of the hardening of their heart."

But what if the majority of the church is and has been wrong for a long time. You are not the person you thought you were for that person simply doesn't exist. What if we have all been made new and restored to His image and likeness. What if this wasn't simply a whimsical sigh of "if only it could be true for the likes of me." What would that look like? I believe Jesus is explaining this abundance of life in John 14:12. The key words to focus on are "the works that I do he will do also". Like all good grace-based believers, we tend to catch our breath when we hear the word "works" but it's not always used concerning keeping the law.

It is a deed, a labor or a doing. It means a manner of acting upon life itself. He who believes will not only do the works that I do, Jesus says, but when I've gone unto the Father and have sent the Helper, the Holy Spirit, you will do even greater (more) works than that.

Why? First of all, the words we've translated as "to" or "unto my Father" is pros, which means face-to-face with. Not only will Jesus be face-to-face with His Father but so will we for we will have been taken to the Father in Christ. As we read in vs. 20 there will come a point in each of our lives that we will know unquestionably that "I am in My Father and you in Me and I in you." The incarnation didn't just bring us face-to-face to the Father but the Father face-to-face to us. We were never intended to die and go to heaven, rather heaven would be brought to us through the incarnation. That is why Jesus proclaimed in

Luke 17:21 "Indeed, the kingdom of heaven is within you."

Wherever the Trinity is there is both heaven and eternal life. To "know" our Father and the Son whom He sent.

Secondly, the Holy Spirit knows no limitations nor bounds. Jesus describes Him (or Her) as being one exactly as Himself. The same mutuality, coherence and interpersonal penetration exists with the Spirit in the Father and the Son but with a vastly greater reach than the physical Jesus had on earth. To not acknowledge the Spirit and to assign knowing Christ solely in history means that we can only attain to Him through recorded teachings. This is the view taken by much of the church today. That is, although Christ is gone and we don't believe in the HS, the recordings He left us are the Bible and that is sufficient. But to have a spiritual life apart from The Spirit makes no sense at all. Jesus is the Creator while The Spirit is the spark or actualizer of life itself. To pursue life without He who energizes it is a fool's errand. That's why so many in the church walk in darkness and confusion. Without the enlightenment of the HS their opinion of themselves is "I am totally depraved because I'm nothing but a sinner."

Romans 5:5 "...the love of God has been poured out into our hearts by the Holy Spirit..."

This verse should read the love has been poured forth from our heart, for Paul's words echo those of Jesus in

John 7:38 "He who believes in Me as the scripture has said, 'out of his heart will flow rivers of living water.'" This also being a reference to the HS.

The works Jesus is referring to aren't to attain to something but to reveal something already within us. The deeds, efforts and doings are describing how we are to act upon life. It's not to do or be something we're not, but to reveal what we already are as one in Christ. It's no longer I but Christ in me. Christ is the Greek term for Messiah which means anointed by the pouring of oil upon. It's the blessing of the Father who pours the anointing of the Holy Spirit upon all flesh. Acts 2:17.

It's the anointing with the oil of the Spirit upon mankind.

John 14:26 "But the Helper (Paraclete, intercessor) the Holy Spirit whom the Father will send in my name will teach you."

"Whatever you ask in My name I will do."

Name indicates oneness based on descent. It's family by blood as revealed in covenant relationship. What Jesus is assuring us of is our sonship endorsed in His Sonship. Because we are in covenant with Him, whatever we desire He is certain to provide.

2 Peter 1:3 "His divine power has given to us all things that pertain to life and godliness..."

Note the past tense. We have already been given these things, now we simply believe they exist. According to Mark, Jesus makes yet another profound statement prior to the last supper.

Mark 11:24 "Therefore I say to you whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive them and you will have them."

The word receive is lambano which means to lay hold of or embrace as one's own. Have we misunderstood the straightforward words of Jesus? I think He gives us further illumination in

John 15:7 "...ask what you desire and it shall be done for you."

So, the question becomes, I've asked the Lord often for many things, and He's not answered me. More significantly I've asked that my loved one not die and yet they did. To answer this, we must accept that each person has a story being written. As painful as it may be, we have to let go of them when it is finished, no matter how brief or untimely it may seem. We will see them again. That's why Jesus raised certain ones in His walk on earth. They proved His authority over death in order to reassure us that He has justified all things by making all things right once more. The desire for restoration has been answered. If we can accept and embrace that He is life over death, then we can believe God for anything. Yet why do certain longings seem so personal?

I don't believe we're defined by our desires; rather it's our desires that define us for they are implanted in our uniqueness.

Psa. 37:4 "Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart."

Delight means to know the pleasure of union or completeness. Desires reveal who we are and make us distinctly special expressions of Christ. They are not lustful desires for those emanate from a sense of lack. Our true desires are revealed in the heart, the center of our being, that is the place where God and man dwell together.

It is here that we are actualized as to who we are. There's nothing wrong with material things in life but do they reveal our deepest selves? No, our deepest selves are most often revealed in our need for relationship. It's then that we know the comfort of His presence. We must understand that creation is contingent and that the events of our lives are not predetermined. He didn't cause the sickness that took the child or the war that took the husband or father. Man has done that collectively in our own darkness. Jesus is the light of the world and not the cause of evil. Bad things happen but not because we've done something wrong and are being punished by God. Life is never about what happens to us but how we handle the things that do. He has given us a life able to rise above adversity. Contrary to most belief, this is not an external but internal battle that has been finished. We are well equipped to handle anything in this life that comes our way because the most powerful force that exists is Agape. It indwells each and every one of us. Our comfort and strength are found in its definition provided in

1 Cor 13.

Love suffers along with us and is kind for we're never alone. It's not jealous as opposed to envious meaning it knows that I am my Beloved's and He is mine and nothing can change that for we can never be separated. It isn't arrogant, feeling better than you but righteous, made equal in love. It doesn't behave rudely, doesn't seek its own benefit. It will never force itself on you. It's not provoked nor does it keep a record of wrong suffered meaning nothing we can ever say or do will result in abandonment. Finally, it never fails! What a powerful statement. Only God can make that claim thus we see that He is Love.

This is the essence of our being, our true identity. The desires of our heart are revealed in these attributes. When our painful experiences begin to subside and the challenges tend to pass and are often forgotten, do we rationalize them away and tell ourselves that they were resolved due to luck, fortune, misfortune or even my own abilities? We tell ourselves that life is difficult and we must look out for number one because we believe we're alone. However, if you've come to know your true identity then it's because you've heard the voice who called by name and you know that this isn't true. If anything is important in this life then everything is important. God causes all things to cooperate for good for those who've come to know His love. This is the dynamic of agape love, ever moving. These things are manifest in your life in many ways as you learn the true desires of your heart.

James 1:2 says to count it all joy when we fall into various trials.

Why? It's in trials that the need to call upon Him takes place. They are the crucible that allows the dross to be skimmed from the top and the gold and silver to be revealed. They also provide experiences in which we are least likely to rationalize away God's divine hand in our lives. We learn faith and confidence in these life lessons. We come to know that love never fails for it is not a what but a who, God Himself.

Do we play a role in all this or are we simply reactive to life? Robots? Because we have choice, we are proactive by nature. Contrary to popular science fiction the future does not exist as a place that can be traveled to. It is not written until we make decisions and choices. That which will be immediately becomes the present and that is where God exists, neither future nor past but the present moment. Much is made of prophecy and its role in determining the future. Does God reveal a future that already exists or is He creating, making or doing those things that will cause resolve calamity and work to the

good. His knowledge is based on His knowing of the man He created and predicting with accuracy his behavior and its possibilities. There's an interesting account in Jeremiah 7:31 that tells us that He who is omniscient has remarkably limited His knowing to the present experience in His walk with man for it tells us:

"And they have built the high place of Topheth, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I did not command, nor did it come into my mind."

However, that which was static and unchanging was the prophecy that the Seed He would send would forever allow God and man to be one. There was never any other possibility that would change that.

From Eph 1:9-10 is the basis from which our understanding of the atonement comes. It's called the Recapitulation Theory by the early father Irenaeus.

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He set forth in Him,

10 regarding His plan of the fullness of the times, to bring all things together in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth.

We read in Matthew the story of the feeding of the 5,000. In fact, with women and children it was probably more like 15,000-20,000.

Matt 14:16 "They do not need to go away; you give them something to eat."

19 ...He took the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven He blessed and broke and gave the loaves to the disciples and the disciples to the multitudes."

As we read this closely, we have to ask ourselves what the picture actually looked like. Did Jesus place a small amount of bread into the hands of each disciple expecting them to return to Him for more each time? From the reading it's evident He gave each a broken loaf of bread with which they in turn were able to satisfy the hunger of 15,000-20,000 people. So, was the bread multiplied from the hands of Jesus or in the hands of the disciples? In the hands of man and manifested therein by God so that there is never lack. This is the co-creating ability that we have in Christ and exemplifies the desires of our hearts. It's the reason you are even here this morning, whether you know it or not. He's brought you along a path upon which He's led you for many years by dispensing His bread to you along the way. The root of the word for bread means to raise or lift up. These are the times we've rejoiced in His presence at the awareness that He has exalted us from within. We've rejoiced in His presence, for such is the kingdom of Heaven. The word also means to remove, take away, cleanse or even carry. These are the times when hope has abandoned us and we can no longer see our way, when He once more lifts the burden and cleanses from that which has caused such despair. This too is the kingdom of heaven. It's these experiences that reveal His kindness and cause us to shift our thinking about Him. As the experiences become seasons and the seasons years and decades, our thinking becomes knowing and the knowing becomes a recognition of who He is and thus who we are. It is the transformation or metanoia that eventually causes us to return to our right mind, our true self. Both rejoicing and grief are a part of this process. Just as the Father told the older brother in Luke 15 that rejoicing was necessary over the return of his younger brother, so was the pain and grief needed for him to acknowledge who he truly was.

Psalm 30:

11 "You have turned for me my mourning into dancing; You have loosed my sackcloth and girded me with gladness,"

We're not God, yet we have been given the ability to partake in divine life any and every time we desire to do so. He clearly says that He gives us the desires of our hearts. Those desires are most often satisfied by our selfless love for one another. Never be shocked as your life unfolds the many miracles that take place. They were there all along; we were just unable to see them. He never stops pouring them out upon us.

Mark 4:26 "And He said, The kingdom of heaven is as if a man should scatter seed on the ground  
27 and should sleep by night and rise by day and the seed should sprout and grow, though he himself doesn't know how."

The kingdom within holds the desires that stimulate these works. The same works we referenced in John that allow us to act upon life according to the mystery of the Seed; the mystery of Christ in you. It is to produce a quality and abundance of life by unmasking who we truly are. The root of this word for works means to energize. The kingdom in you is of such fertile ground that it cannot be resisted, whether in belief or unbelief for it is energized by Love and Love never fails. Therefore, even if you don't understand, believe Me for the sake of the works themselves. If you underestimate Me, you underestimate the Father but just as critically you underestimate you. Wake up, for they are revealing the divine life in you.

Psalm 144:3

O LORD, what is man that Thou dost regard him, or the son of man that Thou dost think of him?  
Think-give account, plait, weave thoughts, imagine together

For our thoughts have been woven into Yours and our imaginations become one. Learn to trust those thoughts as He lovingly speaks to you of who you are. For all that you truly seek you already have.

Amen