

John 14 – Very great and precious promises. (4) Greater works than these. (refs for Bible study 11/10/18).

*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.* v12

This verse is one of the more startling utterances of Jesus. It has been misunderstood and misapplied by some, and neglected by others. We will endeavour to unpack its meaning by way of some questions:

**How certain is it?** *'Most assuredly, I say to you'* It's absolutely certain! We have here a solemn promise from Jesus.

**Who is this for?** *'he who believes in me'* For all believers. Not for some super-spiritual elite, nor for some supposed charismatic leader, but for all who put their trust in Jesus Christ.

**What did Jesus promise?** Two parts to this promise. Part one is amazing. Part two is even more astonishing!

- *'the works that I do he will do also'* He will do the works I've done. When we think of 'works' we might imagine amazing and impressive miracles, but not necessarily so. An inaccurate translation of v11 (should be 'works' not 'miracles') might lead us to the wrong conclusion. Jesus's works included not just the remarkable and obvious works, but deeds of humility and service, 13v14-15, and acts of selfless love, 13v34!
- *'and greater works than these he will do'* He will do greater the works than I've done. Those who claim to be healers use this verse to justify their ministries. But the evidence doesn't stack up. Does 'greater works' really mean feeding 50 thousand instead of 5? walking on air instead of water? raising not just 2 or 3 from the dead but whole graveyards? Look not to the physical realm but the spiritual! The conversion of a sinner is a far greater work than raising the dead! An inward change, producing eternal life (the one who is raised from the dead must die again). Compare 5v20-24 where 'greater works than these', v20, is conversion, v21b, v24b. Now relatively few were converted during Jesus' ministry which was in a tiny geographical area. But there were 1000's soon after, spreading rapidly across the world. That was his plan, 10v16, 12v32, and we have a part in it, Mt.28v19-20.

**How is this to be?** *'because I go to my Father.'* It is possible because Jesus is now at the Father's right hand. From there he sends the Holy Spirit. And it is in that place of great power and glory that he prays for us.

**And us?** This promise should thrill and energise us. Do we believe it? Do we use this promise in our praying? Don't hanker after 'lesser things' like raising the dead, Lk.16v27-31, but pray for sinners to be converted!