

Episode #2-03 – Whatever You Shall Ask

I. The purpose of the gospel of John is to produce believers in the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the One anointed by God to be the Savior of the world, and that Jesus is the Son of God, God represented in human form.

II. We continue to consider events leading up to the Lord's death. In John 14, the Lord continues His teaching to His disciples at His last supper with them.

III. John 14:12-14. Whatever you shall ask.

A. V.12. Amen, amen = most assuredly, emphasizes the truth of His words. Those who believe will do the same works as He did, and even greater works. You and I cannot do this! Why not?

1. This was spoken not to the believer of today, but to the Lord's disciples. In Acts, we see them repeating many of the same miracles He worked. They were similar to the President's Cabinet. He was the governor, and they were His appointed leaders given His power.
2. They were able to do these works better if He returned to the Father than if He stayed with them! Isaiah 66:1. He was going to the seat of power, and from there He would have greater power to give them.
3. Did they do this? Acts 5:15-16. Maybe these miracles were even greater than the healings the Lord worked? We might argue relative greatness, but we have His word that they did do greater works than He did.

B. V.13. He tells them that whatsoever they shall ask in His name, He will do it. What did He mean by this? Can we ask whatever we want and get it? Some suggest this as a basis for prayer today. It does not take us long to learn this does not work.

Sometimes, I'm glad it does not work! But why not?

1. Again, pay attention to the pronouns! Who are "you"? In this case, the twelve disciples, minus Judas Iscariot. This is no promise to me. To take it for myself is like applying wedding vows to someone else to myself!
2. Asking "in His name" is not just asking anything as long as you say "in Jesus' name" at the end. In one's name means with his authority. This means with His permission and/or in His place!
3. What things did they have permission to ask for? The works He had done, and the greater works, of verse 12! Not the things we usually ask for.

C. V.14. A wonderful promise! But "anything" has a context: the works.

1. If you promised to buy a child "anything" while in a souvenir shop, if he went next door to a car dealership and asked for a new car, would you have to buy it for him?
2. He did not mean they could ask anything they wanted, only that they could ask for any of the mighty works they needed to do!

IV. But what about "everyone who asks receives" in Matthew 7:7-11? Hear the Bonus Audio on my website, www.knowinggodintheword.org, on "Everyone Who Asks Receives."

V. What is our basis for prayer today?

A. Will vs. May. Paul usually prays that God "may" do things, whereas the other apostles often pray that God "will" do things. Paul is our basis for prayer. We are to ask that God "may" do things, not that He "will."

B. Philippians 4:6-7. We make requests, and leave it up to God whether He grants them or not. He does not promise to fill our requests, only to give us peace which surpasses all understanding. This is enough!

VI. Conclusion: Many in our day have tried to use passages in the Bible like this to suggest that God HAS to give us what we ask for. When this doesn't work, they find ways to equivocate, like saying it was your fault because you did not have enough faith. But there is no equivocation in this passage. What Christ was saying is that the disciples had the ability to ask for the authority to do any powerful work or to receive any gift of the Spirit and it would immediately be given to them. This came to pass exactly this way in the book of Acts. This promise was never made to us, and so it is wrong to try to take it for ourselves. We should leave it where the Lord put it, and believe it. We do not get whatever we ask.