



This Sunday morning we continued our series with Jesus in the upper room, looking at John 14v8-14. We learnt that in light of Jesus' departure we are to fix our eyes on Jesus.

1 – look at Jesus and see God himself (v8-11)

Dissatisfied, perhaps, with what Jesus had said in v1-7, Philip asked Jesus to show them the Father (v8). It's a good, godly desire to want to see God more clearly, but Philip's question showed a misunderstanding and a wrong motivation.

- the misunderstanding: Philip had failed to realise that in having seen Jesus, he had *already seen* the Father (v9). God's people now had God revealed to them not just in a vision or a word, but in person. What could be better?! The Son is "in" the Father and the Father is "in" the Son (v10). Jesus' words and works are the Father's testimony to him (v10-11).
- the (wrong) motivation: Feeling nervous and scared, Philip longed for assurance. He longed to see "a bit more" God. Jesus' answer to Philip? Realise what you already have.

2 – look to Jesus and continue his great works (v12-14)

Jesus announces that those who believe in him will do the works he has been doing, but also "even greater things than these" (v12). While some think that this statement is untrue, that "greater" means "more", or that this only applies to the apostles, the text seems to suggest that this is a promise for all believers. This is because Jesus is "going to the Father" (v12) and so a whole new era of salvation history will dawn in which Christ will work on earth *through his people*.

These "greater things" will happen:

1. through prayer ("whatever you ask", v12, 14)
2. in accordance with Jesus' will ("in my name", v13)
3. for the glory of the Father through the Son (v13)

But what about unanswered prayers that seem to be in-line with God's will (eg. for suffering to be lifted, for friends and family to be saved)? This is a tricky topic, but it is worth noting that the limiting factor is never Christ's power, nor is it our earnestness. The limiting factor must be our very limited knowledge of God's will. Although we know his revealed will (eg. his moral will, his desire for all people to be saved), we don't know his sovereign will (eg. which individuals he will choose to save, why he allows suffering).

But neither our caveats and our qualifications, nor the prayers we may have prayed that God hasn't answered as we hoped, should strip this promise of its power and its preciousness.

Here are a few questions you might want to use with your group...

1. How were the disciples feeling as chapter 14 began? Why?
→ In what ways does our situation resonate with theirs?
2. What do you make of Philip's request in v8?
→ In what ways was it a good thing to ask for?
→ In what ways did it show that Philip hadn't fully understood what had been revealed?
→ What do you think was the motivation behind it?
3. What do you make of Jesus' response to Philip's request?
4. What do you think it means that the Son is "in" the Father and that the Father is "in" the Son?
5. How is it that, as post-Pentecost believers, we can do "even greater things" than Jesus' earthly works?
→ How do we feel as we meditate upon this?
→ What impact does it have upon our attitude to prayer?
6. What about unanswered prayer?