

Ask Any Thing in My Name, I'll Do It.

John 14:1-14 (vv. 12-14)

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I. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND BIBLICAL CONTEXT

A. Historical Background

1. All the Prophecies in the Old Testament were *fulfilled* in Jesus Christ. What was true in the Old Testament is still True in the New Testament. What was true about people in ancient times (their sinfulness, unfaithfulness, etc.) is still true today as it was in past generations.
2. God was revealed in Jesus Christ. *Seeing Jesus and knowing Him is seeing God and coming to know God.* God's Glory was revealed in its fulness in the Person of Jesus Christ! All the Truth that Jesus taught/preached and all the miracles He performed reveal Who God is!
3. The Coming of Jesus Christ in **the Flesh** and His three years of earthly ministry also revealed the sinfulness/wickedness of people.

B. Biblical Context

1. God, Jesus (The Word) and the Holy Spirit were present "in the beginning." They operate together as One; knowing One is knowing the other Two. Knowing Jesus is knowing God.
2. God is Truth; His Word is True, always. God's Truth endures forever!
3. God keeps His Promises as revealed in the OT as well as in the NT.
4. God is Sovereign over His creation.
5. God is trustworthy; God can be trusted in all His Truth, Promises, etc.

The fact that Jesus came in the flesh and dwelled among people simply proves what was written about Him in the Old Testament. The tragedy was that those who were supposed to *know* Him didn't *recognize* Him! Those who claimed to *know* all that was written about Him in the Old Testament didn't *recognize* Him! Those who claimed to *know* all the Truth about God neither *recognized* Jesus nor *accepted* the Truth revealed by Him! Not only the Pharisees, the Sadducees and high priests failed to *recognize* Jesus, but among those who decided to follow Jesus also failed to *recognize* God in Him! That is why in last week's lesson, we focused on what Jesus said to His disciples: **He Who Knows Me Knows the Father** (verse 7). No believer who claims to *know* Jesus can say that he or she doesn't *know* God! If you *know* Jesus, then, you do *know* God! If you truly *know* God, then, you do *know* Jesus! There is no other way! **To Know Jesus is to know God!** Hallelujah!

II. THE LESSON: ASK ANY THING IN MY NAME, I'LL DO IT.

Today, we will examine the same 14 verses, but our *focus* is on verses 12 through 14. Even though we will examine all the verses Rev. Alice covered last week, we will receive additional message. Let us examine the verses anew.

1. vv. 1-4. **Trust in God; Trust also in Me.**

Our faith journey begins in putting our **trust** in God. That is Faith 101 for the believer. Trusting God is the foundation for our faith journey. Jesus instructed His disciples to *trust* in God as well as to *trust* in Him during the time when He *knew* they were headed towards troubling times! Jesus *knew* what was ahead of Him and what awaited them in the future! **The Cross was inevitable!** Jesus *knew* about it; but His disciples didn't *know* the **why** and the **how**! They had no idea **how** Jesus would suffer and **why** He should surrender Himself to wicked people! Jesus *knew* that **He must allow** Himself to be crucified on the Cross! His disciples didn't *know* that it was His Father's will that He must die on the Cross! *That He was sent to become the **Lamb of God** so that the Scriptures will be fulfilled!* Knowing what was to come, Jesus told His disciples ahead of time saying, **"Do not let your hearts be troubled. Trust in God; trust also in Me. In My Father's house are many rooms; if it were not so, I would have told you. I am going there to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me that you also may be where I am. You know the way to the place where I am going."** These words and the promises they hold will become clearer later! But at the time, what Jesus was saying to them didn't make any sense to them. What does He mean by "I am going there to prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with Me ..."? Where does He intend to go? *The disciples' expectation was that Jesus will be with them for a long time (on this side of heaven!).* Jesus was talking about going to heaven to be with His Father! Jesus was talking about His **Ascension** and **His Second Coming**! No wonder they couldn't understand Him at the time! Their confusion and lack of understanding were expressed by both Thomas and Philip! I am sure all of us had/have our Thomas and Philip moments!

2. vv. 5-7. **I am the Way, the Truth and the Life.**

Thomas said to Him, "Lord, we don't *know* where you are going; so how can we *know* the way?" I am glad Thomas was not afraid to express his lack of understanding! I am so glad that Thomas didn't pretend that he understood and kept his mouth shut! I am so glad because Jesus responded! In His response Jesus revealed He is **"the Way and the Truth and the Life!"** One of the greatest declarations of Jesus! Because Thomas was *honest enough* to ask, because he *didn't pretend to know* all the answers, we now know that

- **Jesus is the Way and the Truth and the Life!**
- **only Jesus is the Way to the Father!**
- **the Truth about God is only found in Jesus!**
- **we now know that Jesus is the Life!**

Because Thomas didn't *pretend* to understand everything about God, Jesus said, "**No one comes to the Father except through Me. If you really knew Me, you would know My Father as well. From now on, you do know Him and have seen Him.**" Because Thomas asked, we now know it is impossible to go to the Father directly, **but only through Jesus Christ! Knowing Jesus is knowing the Father! Seeing Jesus is to see the Father!**

3. vv. 8-11. **I am in the Father and the Father is in Me.**

In response to the explanations given in response to Thomas, Philip requested that Jesus *show them* the Father (as *proof* that God is in Jesus). Now, this request reveals *the doubt* in Philip. Philip was *doubtful* about the answers that Jesus gave in response to Thomas' question "how can we know the way?" This is serious! Jesus' reaction reveals that He was *displeased* by the request of Philip: **that Jesus show them God the Father to prove what Jesus claimed is True!** Wow! That is why Jesus said to him "**How can you say, 'Show us the Father?'** Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in Me?" (vv. 9 & 10). Jesus continued by saying, "... at least **believe** on the **evidence** of the miracles themselves" (v. 11).

4. vv. 12-14. **Ask Anything in My Name, I'll Do It.**

On the outset, I must point out that verses 13 and 14 are one of the verses which have been **misunderstood** and **abused** by many Christians. These verses are misunderstood and abused because they are quoted and explained *out of context!* God's promise to "Do what we ask in His Name" depends on the person doing the "asking" having absolute faith in Jesus Christ! First of all, Jesus made it absolutely clear that we cannot ask the Father anything without having faith in Him! We cannot have any kind of relationship with the Father without having a *faithful, obedient* and *committed* relationship with Jesus. Not only the person must really *know* Jesus, but also must have *complete faith* in Him! **In other words, before we can ask anything in the Name of Jesus, we must fully understand who God is in Jesus Christ!** What God's Will and Plan is for us in Jesus Christ! We also need to be very careful about our understanding what "anything" means! Is the "anything" we are asking God to do in the Name of Jesus in line with His Word? Is the "anything" we are asking in the Name of Jesus glorifies God the Father! In other words, is the "anything" we are asking God to give us in the Name of His Son to do good with "it" or to do evil with "it?" Do we know the

God in Christ well enough to ask “anything” in His Name? The **key** to understand and interpret verses 13 and 14 clearly is by correctly understanding verse 12. So, let us examine verse 12.

“I tell you the truth, anyone who has **faith** in Me **will do what I have been doing**. He will do even greater things than these, **because I am going to the Father**” (v. 12).

1. “**Faith in Me.**” Philip expressed *doubt*. He *didn't believe* that God is in Jesus and Jesus is in God. How can anyone receive anything from God when he or she didn't believe in His Son? *It is impossible to please God without faith. It is also impossible to receive anything from God while doubting what God is able to do!* Philip *doubted* Jesus even after he witnessed all the miracles that Jesus performed through out His earthly ministry (by that time, more than two and half years have passed). That is why Jesus challenged Philip saying, “... at least **believe** on the **evidence** of the miracles themselves.”
2. “**Will do what I have been doing.**” What *things* did Jesus **do** up to that point? Everything that Jesus did was to advance God's Kingdom on Earth. Everything that Jesus did was *things* that glorified the Father! The *things* that Jesus did and said *revealed* God's Sovereignty, His Awesome Power, His Truth, Righteousness, etc. What Jesus did and taught *revealed* God the Father: His Nature, His Character, His Will and His Plan for humanity! Therefore, the “anything” that we should “ask in His Name” must be connected with all the things Jesus “has done” to glorify His Father!
3. “**Because I am going to the Father.**” Jesus was referencing what Apostles Peter, Apostle Paul, Apostle John and faithful disciples such as Barnabas, Priscilla and Aquila, etc. will do after His departure from earth. Jesus fully explained in John chapter 16 that the Holy Spirit will come after He ascends back to His Father to lead, empower, etc. His disciples to advance the Kingdom of God.

Therefore, the promise “And I will do whatever you ask in My Name ... I will do it” is given **in the context of all of the above**. We must understand that the Holy Spirit will not empower us to do *things* outside of God's Will! We must understand that the Holy Spirit will only affirm and confirm what the Word of God says! The Holy Spirit will *only* lead us into all Truth!

III. CONCLUSION

1. Just like Thomas, it is okay to ask God for clarity about what we don't understand in His Word. It is okay to let God know that we don't understand everything.
2. We must be careful about what we ask God in the Name of Jesus Christ.