

Seeing Christ Do A Great Work John 11

Introduction:

1. Most of you have probably seen a sign similar to this – “Men at Work.” I saw a funny sign that said this, and under it, it said, “Women work all the time...”
2. But did you know, God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ work too?
John 5:17, 36; 17:4
3. When Christ arrived on the scene in the town of Bethany, you could have put up a similar sign – “Christ at Work!”
 - When Jesus Christ does a work, it is something special to behold. (Read verses 38-44.)
4. This is, absolutely, an amazing story. What an incredible work; what a display of divine power.
5. You may be asking questions like “But what about today? Where is Christ today? Is Christ still work today?” And the answer is yes! Christ is in heaven, on the right hand of God, doing a great work. (Romans 8:34)
6. In this dispensation, we are not seeing the outward, physical signs and wonders that were so prevalent during Christ’s earthly ministry. But please **don’t** think Christ has stopped working and is on an eternal siesta. He is very much at work.
7. Let’s examine some verses written directly to Gentiles living in this time period by the apostle Paul. Notice a form of the word “*work*” used in the following verses: Philippians 1:6; 2:13; Colossians 1:29; Ephesians 3:20.
8. Did you know that Jesus desires to do a great work in and through you? This is undoubtedly clear.
9. If you know the Lord, divine power is working in your life. Christ desires to do amazing things in your life, ultimately changing you into His glorious image.
10. I saw another sign which said, “Work in Progress.” If you know Jesus today, this should typify your life. But how can we see Jesus Christ do a great work in and through us? And I am talking about a mighty work, a work changing us from the inside out, enabling us to become the man or woman in Christ we are capable of being.
11. There are some key principles from this text. If learned and applied to our lives, they will allow Christ to do a mighty work in and through us.

First, simply do what Christ has commanded.

1. When I was in Bible College, I would hear guys praying, especially the night before a final exam. They would ask God to miraculously and supernaturally fill their minds with the answers.
 - Guess what? God doesn’t do that. They would have been better served studying than praying for a divine miracle.
2. Another example is when, having spent their money frivolously (i.e. lotto tickets), people will pray, “Lord, I spent the money for my electric bill; please do a miracle.” You’d better get a flash light.

3. This first principle sounds extremely simple, yet it is profoundly true. Christ emphasized it many times to His disciples. John 13:17; 14:15, 21; 15:10, 14
 - Christ gave specific instructions to His disciples in regards to Israel's kingdom program. He explained Israel's place, part, and what to do to prepare for it.
4. Also, Christ has given specific instructions to the church today. From heaven, He appeared to the apostle Paul, giving him 13 books full of wisdom, commands, and specific instructions for us today. To put it simply, we must **do** what Christ has commanded. Philippians 4:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 2 Thessalonians 3:4
5. A principle found throughout Scripture is "God will not do **for** you what He expects **you** to do."
6. A great example of this is in our text. Look at verse 39: "*Take **you** away the stone.*" Like Christ's body after the crucifixion, Lazarus' body was laid in some type of man-made chamber which had a huge stone rolled in front of it (vs. 38).
7. Lazarus could not come out unless the stone was moved. Could Jesus have miraculously rolled the stone away? Absolutely!
 - We know this happened at the tomb where Christ's body was laid. Matthew 28:2
 - But in this case, a miracle was not necessary. The men that were there were capable of rolling it away.
8. It took a miracle to raise up Lazarus from the dead, but it took **willing men** to move the stone from the grave. Had Martha and the others been unwilling to move the stone, I don't believe Lazarus would have been resurrected.
 - God doesn't work miracles when we can do the work. Being spiritually lazy doesn't provoke God to work miracles on our behalf.
 - Miracles are not intended to be a substitute for hard work and responsibility.
9. What am I saying? If you want Christ to do a great work in and through you, you must apply yourself to grow spiritually. You must set aside time for prayer and Bible study. (Get in a small group, take a BI class, etc.)
 - God is not going to do these for you, nor will He force you.
 - You have to roll away the stone from your heart, allowing Christ to do a great work in and through you, changing you into His image.
10. A great example is found in 2 Corinthians 3:16, 18 (a veil over hearts).
 - Notice the human responsibility ("*turn to the Lord*"), but then Christ does by His Spirit what we can't do ourselves ("*changed*" – transformed). Having "*taken away*" (remove; cast off) the veil by turning to the Lord, it allows Christ to miraculously transform our lives.
 - When we remove the stone or veil from our hearts, by truly seeking the Lord, the Spirit of God sets us free (vs. 17). We are free to love, free to serve, free to give, free to forgive, etc. He produces the Christ-life in and through us! Galatians 2:20

In Conclusion:

1. In what areas of your life do you need God to do a great work? If we truly want to see Christ do a great work, we must have a tender heart which desires to do what Christ has commanded. Upon our obedience, He will do what we can't do! The power that works in us is the divine enablement that He promised to provide us!
2. This balance is seen in Colossians 1:28-29. Paul said, "We are preaching Christ and teaching every man." He said, "*I labor, striving according to his (Christ's) working, which works in me mightily.*"
3. Paul said, "I am laboring diligently like it all depends on me; but I am praying and depending on Christ like it all depends on Him."
4. God can do a great work in and through you! I challenge you to read His Word (Romans through Philemon) and make a note of every one of God's commands.
5. Pray to the Lord and communicate to Him that you truly desire to obey and do what He has said to do. 1 Thessalonians 2:13

Come back next week for Part 2 of this message!