

☞ WWJD Series

Christlikeness... It's our goal. There's an old chorus that says, *"To be like Jesus, to be like Jesus, all I ask to be like him. All through life's journey. From earth to glory. All I ask, to be like him."* Listen to these descriptions of what it means to be Christlike... selfless, humble, kind, compassionate, forgiving, obedient and loving servants who trust God and live for righteousness. That's a tall order. But it's what we are aiming for. And we must rely on the Holy Spirit within to form us into Christ's image.

☞ The Capability of Christlikeness

John 14:11-17a

Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; or at least believe on the evidence of the miracles themselves. **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. **13** And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. **14** You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it. **15** "If you love me, you will obey what I command. **16** And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever— **17** the Spirit of truth.

☞ **Do what I have been doing** = the same work that Jesus did. Specifically, it refers to the miracles (v.11), i.e. the works of God.

Jesus describes his calling...

Luke 4:18-19

☞ "The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to **preach good news** to the poor. He has sent me to **proclaim freedom** for the prisoners and **recovery of sight** for the blind, to **release the oppressed**, **19** to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor."

Here's a brief summary of the work that Jesus did...

Matthew 4:23-24

☞ Jesus went throughout Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, **preaching** the good news of the kingdom, and **healing** every disease and sickness among the people. **24** News about him spread all over Syria, and people brought to him all who were ill with various diseases, those suffering severe pain, the demon-possessed, those having seizures, and the paralyzed, and he healed them.

In John, Jesus' works include His miracles but extend to all that He taught and did in obedience to the Father. In John 17:4, Jesus sums up His ministry when He prays, "I glorified You on the earth, having accomplished the work which You have given Me to do." So if we are doing the works that Jesus did, and even greater works, it would seem

☞ that we should be **doing miracles, depending on the Father**, and **demonstrating the Father's love and mercy**. Jesus did all these things and more.

This is not the only time that Jesus suggested that miracles were evidence of God at work...

John 10:25

The miracles I do in my Father's name speak for me

John 10:37-38

Do not believe me unless I do what my Father does. **38** But if I do it, even though you do not believe me, believe the miracles, that you may know and understand that the Father is in me, and I in the Father.

And, we see the same thing said about those early followers of Christ...

Acts 14:3

Paul and Barnabas spent considerable time there, speaking boldly for the Lord, who confirmed the message of his grace by enabling them to do miraculous signs and wonders.

Acts 5:15-16

People brought the sick into the streets and laid them on beds and mats so that at least Peter's shadow might fall on some of them as he passed by. **16** Crowds gathered also from the towns around Jerusalem, bringing their sick and those tormented by evil spirits, and all of them were healed.

Acts 19:11-12

God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, **12** so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

And, here in John 14, Jesus does not limit this idea to just his first disciples... he says, "Anyone who has faith in me."

☞ **Faith** = to think to be true; to be **persuaded** of; to credit, place **confidence** in; absolutely **to trust in God as able** to aid either in obtaining or in doing something.

Now, I'm not suggesting that believers will all have some kind of magical power to do whatever they dream up. But I do believe that healings and miracles are possible today and they are evidence of God at work.

Jesus clarifies that these things can happen when we "ask in his name." "In My name" is not a magical formula. But the prayers of believers, as Christ's representatives doing His

business, will be answered. John expanded this teaching in 1 John 5:14. He wrote, "If we ask anything according to His will... we have what we asked of Him." To ask for anything

☞ **"in his name" means to ask according to His will.**

To know God's name means to know His nature, what He is, and what He wants to do. God answers prayer in order to honor His name; therefore, prayer must be in His will.

Jesus also ties this idea to the Holy Spirit. After saying that his followers will do the same things he has been doing, he immediately says that he will give the Holy Spirit to us. The

☞ **Holy Spirit is the key to our ability** to do the same things that Jesus did.

The Holy Spirit is given two special names by Jesus: "another Comforter" and "the Spirit of truth." The Greek word translated "**Comforter**" is *parakletos* and it is used only by John. It means "**called alongside to assist.**" The Holy Spirit does not work instead of us, or in spite of us, but in us and through us. Our English word comfort comes from two Latin words meaning "with strength." We usually think of "comfort" as soothing someone, *consoling* him or her; and to some extent this is true. But true comfort strengthens us to face life bravely and keep on going. Parakletos is translated "Advocate" in 1 John 2:1. An "advocate" is one who represents you at court and stands at your side to plead your case.

☞ Paul also talks about the **power of the Holy Spirit...**

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

When I came to you, brothers, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the testimony about God. **2** For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ and him crucified. **3** I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. **4** My message and my **preaching** were not with wise and persuasive words, but with **a demonstration of the Spirit's power**, **5** so that your faith might not rest on men's wisdom, but on God's power.

He, like Jesus, doesn't seem to limit this power to just those original followers...

1 Corinthians 12:7-11

☞ Now to each one the **manifestation of the Spirit (*spiritual gifts*)** is given for the common good. **8** To one there is given through the Spirit the message of wisdom, to another the message of knowledge by means of the same Spirit, **9** to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by that one Spirit, **10** to another miraculous powers, to another prophecy, to another distinguishing between spirits, to another speaking in different kinds of tongues, and to still another the interpretation of tongues. **11** All these are the work of one and the same Spirit, and he gives them to each one, just as he determines.

The presence of the Holy Spirit was *the* key to the early church's explosive growth. He is the key to revival in our generation, too. The Holy Spirit breathes life into the Word of God and brings glory to Christ.

If we want the Holy Spirit to work in our lives, we must seek to glorify Christ, and we must make much of the Word of God. The Spirit of Truth uses the Word of truth to guide us into the will and the work of God.

☞ Church, **I want to see the power of God working today**. I can't fully explain why we don't see a lot of healings and miracles, but I definitely believe that the Scripture says these things can happen! This message today is not an exhaustive study on the power of the Holy Spirit to perform healings and miracles. And, quite frankly, I don't fully understand how these things are supposed to work. But here is one simple thought... sometimes things aren't accomplished in our life because we don't ask!

James 4:2-3

You do not have, because you do not ask God. **3** When you ask, you do not receive, because you ask with wrong motives, that you may spend what you get on your pleasures.

There you have it... sometimes, we don't receive simply because we never stopped to ask God. Other times, we don't receive because our motives are wrong. We may want a miracle so that we will look good to others, or because we just want an easier road to ☞ travel. So, we need to **check our motives...** but we need to **make sure we ask!**

James 5:14-18

☞ Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to **pray over him** and ☞ anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. **15** And the **prayer offered in faith** will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. ☞ **16** Therefore confess your sins to each other and **pray for each other** so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man is powerful and effective. **17** Elijah was a man just ☞ like us. He **prayed earnestly** that it would not rain, and it did not rain on the land for ☞ three and a half years. **18** **Again he prayed**, and the heavens gave rain, and the earth produced its crops.

☞ **WWJD**

Prayer