

## ***WILL YOU DO HIS WORK?***

John 6:24-35 (pp. 1656-1657) Text vs. 28-29 *“Then they asked him, ‘What must we do to do the works God requires?’ Jesus answered, ‘The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.’”*

Our text this morning, is part of a larger conversation Jesus had with the crowd following His miraculous feeding of the five thousand we learned about last week. When Jesus spoke this profound truth to them about having a relationship with God, their question was, *“What must we do to do the works God requires?”* Essentially, they were asking about the path to righteousness. The way to please God. And that’s a question that echoes to today! You may have wondered what God expects from you? It was the same with those people. And Jesus’ response was surprising. Instead of listing a set of rules, rituals, and extravagant deeds, He simply said, *“The work of God is this: to believe in the One He has sent.”* He didn’t rebuke His audience for getting *“free bread.”* Bread does not last. He offered to give them free bread, forever! But it was a different kind of “bread.” They thought Jesus was encouraging them to do work that would please God enough they would earn eternal life. That’s why they asked, *“What must we do to do the works God requires?”*

Their question reflected their inaccurate interpretation and application of Old Testament Law. They thought the Law of Moses spelled out what God required of them. So, by keeping that Law, they could earn God’s favor. They were wrong! Faith in Jesus is the work God desires! Notice, Jesus didn’t say, *“The work of God is to perform miracles.”* Or *“The work of God is to build beautiful temples.”* No! The work of God is about belief. Having an active faith in Jesus. You see, belief isn’t inactive. It’s active! Belief is the choice you make to surrender your doubts, your fears, and your self-reliance to accept Jesus as your Lord and Savior. Jesus took belief in God beyond Legalism. Legalism is when you attempt to secure righteousness in God’s sight by doing good works.

Thomas R. Schreiner, an Associate Dean in the School of Theology at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary in Louisville, KY said, “Legalists believe they can earn, or get God’s approval, by performing the requirements of the Law of Moses. A legalist believes their good works and obedience to God affects their salvation. It focuses on God’s laws more than a relationship with God. It’s keeping laws without a truly submitted heart. And legalism adds human rules to divine laws to treat human rules as divine.” Jesus shifted the focus away from all legalistic works. It’s not about having a religious checkoff list. It’s about having a heart that’s been transformed by faith. It’s about having your actions flow from your belief. Because when you trust Jesus, your life will naturally reflect His love, His compassion, and His grace.

And when Jesus was speaking to His disciples during the Last Supper, He knew His time on Earth was drawing to a close. He wanted to prepare them for what lay ahead. Thomas, one of the disciples asked Jesus how they could know the way to where He was going? (John 14:5) Jesus responded with a statement about His identity: *“I am the way and the truth and the life.”* Now, let’s break that down. *“I am the way.”* Jesus was not merely *showing* the way. He *was* the way. The path to God. The bridge between humanity and the Father. *“I am the truth.”* Jesus is supreme truth in a world filled with confusion and deception. He is God’s character, purpose, and salvation. Then He said, *“I am the bread of life.”*

He was pointing out that just as physical bread maintains your body, He will provide spiritual food for your soul and for eternal life. By believing in Him, you will find fulfillment, nourishment, and purpose. It’s a powerful image! It invites you to seek a deeper relationship with Jesus as the source of eternal life. Having faith in Him, you receive a spiritual life that goes beyond physical existence. Then He followed that up with an explosive claim. He didn’t say, *“I am one of the ways.”* Or *“I am one of the truths.”* No, He absolutely declared that *“No one comes to the Father, except through Me!”* Jesus is the only way to God. That’s pretty clear!

And if Jesus truly is who He claimed to be, then how do you respond to Him? What matters is, if Jesus is the *only* way to God, your relationship with God hinges on your relationship with Jesus. And it’s not just about knowing facts about Him. It’s about knowing Jesus personally! And when Jesus invites you to have an intimate relationship with God, He is being the Way, the Truth, and the Life. And He will transform you. He will shape your thinking. He will improve your character that distinguishes you from someone else. It’s the blend of your characteristics and features that form your personality. Influence how you think, feel, and behave. Character can be described as something that gives a person a distinctive identity.

In literature and drama, a character is a person portrayed in a story. A character, with a set of qualities crafted by the author or playwright. The word character came from the Greek word that meant a stamping tool, indicating an enduring imprint that one's character can leave on the world. It's a concept as complex as it is fascinating. Character reflects the depth and range of human nature and the many ways you can express your individuality.

Remember, John 6:28 isn't just a theological concept. It's an invitation. An invitation to have a personal relationship with Jesus. And when you believe, you become a partner in the work of God—the work of transformation. The work of redemption. That's where God offers salvation and a renewed life through the sacrifice and resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is not just about personal salvation. It's about the restoration of the world. Bringing order out of chaos. Resolving conflicts. Restoring relationships. And working to have fairness in the world.

You've been invited to participate in God's redemptive plan and become an example of Christ's redeeming power. This transforming journey is a continuous process. When your life is supported with divine purposes, it reflects the transforming power of redemption in every part of your being. The idea of a life being in tune with Divine Purposes is deeply spiritual. It says there's a greater design behind life. And you have a role to play in it. You need to find your purpose in life. You need to live in such a way that it blends with the broader, Divine, Plan of God. And that can give you comfort and guarantee your eternal destiny. It'll motivate you! Jesus was not merely a historical figure. He's your living Savior! He's your sense of belonging.

And because your life is important, and your life is part of a larger plan, the words of Jesus in John 14:12–14 bear directly on your life. What those words say is, that if you believe in Jesus and carry on with His work, in some wonderful way, you will do something that's greater than the works of Jesus. So, whatever Jesus had in mind, He defined them here. And they all point to Jesus which helps you believe in Him. You witness to Jesus and His words that will lead people to faith. That's what His works do. And He's saying that's what all believers' works do. *"Whoever believes in me will do the works I do"* — the works that point people to faith.

That's what your purpose in life is, if you are a believer in Jesus. Put your works, your life on display showing the trustworthiness of Jesus. It should be like a giant billboard out along I-75! So, at least you can say with confidence, that in John 14:12a, Jesus meant that all believers will be so united with Jesus that they will carry on His work through His power and do the kinds of things that will "bear witness" to Jesus. Your works of love and your message of your life in union with Christ, will point people to the glory of the risen Son of God. And you will be the means for their forgiveness on the basis of the finished work of Christ. (John 20:23) You will be pointing people to Jesus. And through Jesus, to God. And *"Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."* (John 14:13–14) Only on one condition: *"in My name."* Verse 13: *"Whatever you ask in My name, I will do it."* Verse 14: *"If you ask Me anything in My name, I will do it."*

So, what did Jesus mean? Jesus would say. *I gave you the Holy Spirit. I gave you the power of the crucified and risen Christ. And I now promise you that you can ask for anything in My name for this mission. It's for the glory of my Father. "In my name!" It's for Him. Not you! Because by My divine worth and My unlimited payment on the cross, put every request though My Name.* And every prayer will be answered. Maybe not always in line with the immediate desires or expectations of the one praying. Answers may include 'Yes', 'No'. Or 'Wait', and 'I have something better for you'. That reflects the belief that a Divine response is associated with a greater wisdom and understanding of what is ultimately good for you in His broader plan. And the answer to prayer may come simply in the form of your having inner peace. Having the strength to endure challenges. Or face an unexpected turn of events that will lead to a solution.

The experience of prayer and its answers are profoundly personal. *You will have everything you need to do the works that I do. And even greater works.* As you seek to carry on His work in the world, let your light shine. Live in love. And in the name of the crucified and risen Christ. Ask Him for whatever you need, and He will give it to you. Because *'The work of God is this: believe in the One God has sent.'* AMEN