

The Fruitfulness of Faith*John 14:7-14*

Introduction: It is possible for believers to settle in this life and not hope for much; not believe that God wants to use them. But the reality is that God wants each of us in the middle of important (eternal) stuff. In the passage that we are looking at today, it is clear that this is what Jesus wants for the disciples. He has told them that he is going to be leaving them. And when he leaves, he doesn't want them to just settle. He doesn't want them to just go back to their old lives and hold on until heaven. He is calling them up to a life of faith. He wants them to see that they can lead lives of fruitfulness. In fact, Jesus knows that they **MUST** live lives of fruitfulness because his only plan for extending the kingdom of God is to do it through believers - the disciples and us.

Opening Discussion: How regularly do you live with a clear sense that God wants to use you for important (eternal) stuff?

Read John 14:7-14

1. How would you summarize what Jesus is saying in verses 7-11?
2. How do you understand the truth that if one has seen Jesus he/she has seen the Father?

Brian said:

This past week as I began to meditate on this truth that in seeing Jesus, I'm seeing the Father, I found myself reading the Scriptures a bit differently. When I saw something Jesus did or an aspect of his character, I sort of said to myself, "That is what God is like." And it's true. It was a small thing, but I found it helpful in how I understand and think about God. Let me encourage you to intentionally make this connection. When you read about Jesus - something about his character or how he acts and responds - remind yourself that this is what the Father is like. When you see that Jesus never tires of meeting needs (Matt. 6:31-34), know that the Father will never tire of meeting your needs. When you read that Jesus felt compassion for the distressed and downcast (Matt. 9:36), know that God feels that same compassion. When Jesus says that he is gentle and humble in heart (Matt. 11:29), know that that is God's heart for you too. Seek to make the intentional connection that what you see in Jesus is true of God.

3. How might it help you to intentionally make this connection?
4. What is your first gut-level response to what Jesus says in verse 12?

5. How do you understand the meaning of "and greater works than these shall he do"? What clue does the phrase "because I go to the Father" provide?

6. If you were explaining the meaning of John 14:13-14 to a brand new believer, how would you explain it?

7. What does it mean to pray in Jesus' name?

8. As you look at your own prayer life in light of Jesus' prayer invitation, how well do you think you've engaged this promise? Explain.

Brian said:

Why don't we take Jesus up on his invitation? This is part of the fruitfulness of faith that God invites us into. God doesn't want any of us to settle. . .He wants us in the middle of important things. He wants our lives to count. One of the ways we can engage this kind of life is through prayer. Is it possible that God is waiting for us, for our prayers, in order that He might unleash some amazing works here in Manhattan - in our families, in our places of work and school, in our neighborhoods? Is it possible that God is holding back until we pray? Now, I know that God is sovereign and all of that, but in his sovereignty he has so ordained it that he does his works through our prayers.

9. How do you respond to this point?

10. What do you sense is the main thing God is saying to you through this study?