

Works

“Verily, verily I say to you, He that believes on me, the works that I do shall he also do, and greater than these shall he do”

John 14:12

Works—In Greek the word is *erga*. It is the word for energy and deeds. In classical Greek, this word was used to describe activities from professions and trades to daily accomplishments. It was a familiar and ordinary word. But John uses it in a very special way. He uses it almost exclusively as a description of the miracles of Jesus. In the other gospels, the word that is used for the miracles of Jesus is *dunamis*, a word that also means energy. But *dunamis* emphasizes “power”. John specifically avoids this word. Why?

John’s gospel focuses attention on the activity of Jesus as directed by the Father. Over and over in this gospel, Jesus says that he only does what the Father tells him to do. So, the real agent behind the works (*ergon*) of Jesus is God the Father. John expands this connection by using *erga* in the sense of “deed” rather than “energy.” The miracles of Jesus are the deeds (accomplishments) of the Father. But *erga* is the word for completely ordinary deeds of men. It is Not a word for special, spectacular miraculous deeds. It is a word for commonplace accomplishments. John is telling us that the miracles of Jesus are just the ordinary, everyday accomplishments of God. They are no big deal. John avoids *dunamis* because he wants us to see that the emphasis is not about unusual power, it is about typical, ordinary natural events. They are not ordinary to us, but they are to God. And this verse tells us that they should be entirely ordinary to believers. If we are transported into the place of Christ, we will find that the ordinary things of God happen all the time. They are just the usually daily things.

What has happened to us? When did we fall from the world of God’s ordinary events into the world where the activities of God are unusual, infrequent and miraculous? Jesus is telling us that in his world, there is nothing really amazing going on here. After all, if God can create everything that exists from nothing at all, why are we so surprised that He can heal someone or raise the dead or walk on water? Maybe, just maybe, we have a wrong perspective on the cause and effect connections of the world. Maybe we need to take that preposition, *eis* (into), a bit more seriously?

Are you ready to see God do some very ordinary things?