

How to Cooperate with the Spirit in Doing Good Works

February 18, 2024 ▪ Nick Braitto

_____ **in Jesus.** (*John 15:4, 7a; 2 Timothy 3:16-17*)

_____ **your need.** (*John 15:4-5; 2 Corinthians 1:8-9*)

_____ **for God's help.** (*John 14:13-14; John 15:7, 16b; Hebrews 13:20-21. But note James 4:3*)

_____ **with faith.** (*John 15:12-14, 16; 2 Corinthians 9:8*)

John 14:12-17

¹² "Truly, truly, I say to you, whoever believes in me will also do the works that I do; and greater works than these will he do, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If you ask me anything in my name, I will do it.

¹⁵ "If you love me, you will keep my commandments. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, to be with you forever, ¹⁷ even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you. (ESV)

John 15:1-17

¹ "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinedresser. ² Every branch in me that does not bear fruit he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. ³ Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you. ⁴ Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. ⁵ I am the vine; you are the branches. Whoever abides in me and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. ⁶ If anyone does not abide in me he is thrown away like a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. ⁷ If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. ⁸ By

this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit and so prove to be my disciples. ⁹ As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. ¹⁰ If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. ¹¹ These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

¹² "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. ¹³ Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. ¹⁴ You are my friends if you do what I command you. ¹⁵ No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you. ¹⁶ You did not choose me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit and that your fruit should abide, so that whatever you ask the Father in my name, he may give it to you. ¹⁷ These things I command you, so that you will love one another. (ESV)

Personal Reflection or Group Discussion Questions

Open: What do you find difficult or enjoyable about group projects?

Read & Discuss: John 14:12-17

1. What works did Jesus do that we should expect to see His followers doing (v. 12a)? (*Consult John 14:8-11.*) How is it possible that we could do greater works than Jesus did (v. 12b)? Do you expect this to be true in your life? Why or why not?
2. Jesus speaks three times in this passage about asking for something (vv. 13, 14, 16). How do we know if a request aligns with Jesus' "name" (vv. 13-14)? Why would God value our asking for Him to do something, even things that He already desires to do? What sorts of things do you typically ask God for? Is there anything "good" you are afraid to ask God for? If so, why?
3. In verses 15-17, how does Jesus describe the presence of the Spirit in the lives of His followers? How have you experienced this in your life since becoming a follower of Jesus?

Read & Discuss: John 15:1-17

4. As you look over this passage, what does Jesus say that relates to us doing good works? How do these verses imply our need for the Holy Spirit's empowerment in our lives?
5. What are some practical ways we can "abide" in Jesus and His words (vv. 4-7, 9-10)? How would you articulate the connection between abiding in Jesus and cooperating with the Holy Spirit?
6. Jesus speaks a great deal about love throughout this passage (vv. 9-10, 12-13, 17). How would you put Jesus' description of love in verse 13 in your own words? Why might Jesus have thought it necessary to speak so often about love when speaking about abiding in Him? How should love factor into our doing good works and seeking to be a blessing to others?

Apply: What do you read in these verses that you find beautiful or amazing? What do you find challenging or convicting? How might you better cooperate with the Holy Spirit in the coming weeks?

Pray: Ask God to give our church a great dependency on and partnership with His Spirit.