

## Jesus' "Lesser Works" (Sidebar to The Physics of Heaven)

### Can "new apostles" do "greater works" than Jesus?

"Truly, truly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do, he will do also; and greater works than these he will do; because I go to the Father."

Emphasis added, Jesus, John 14:12, NASB [1]

#### Introduction

Essential to the claim being made by today's new apostles or "manifest sons of God"—that they can perform greater "signs and wonders" than Jesus did—is the promise (cited above) the Lord made to Philip and the other Disciples (John 14:12). Referring to this promise, one of the authors of *The Physics of Heaven* stated: "Jesus said that *we would do greater works than He did*, but no Christian in history has exceeded Jesus' works." [2] The apostlette then adds that doing "greater works" than Jesus "should be an everyday occurrence for us." [3]

Jesus words are foundational to claims of performing "signs and wonders" by advocates of a New Apostolic Reformation (NAR). John 14:12 serves as their validating text to be able to perform greater miracles in the 21st century than Jesus did in the 1st. Therefore, understanding what Jesus meant when He made this promise to His Disciples becomes imperative for believers today. Should we really expect to perform greater "signs and wonders" than Jesus did? At face value, Jesus seems to have said so. Thus, the context and content of what Jesus actually said must be considered.

#### Context—the Comfort of the Christ

In the Upper Room, Jesus and His Disciple/Apostles gathered to celebrate the Passover Feast. But Jesus interrupted the observance by making two ominous announcements. *First*, He told the Disciples that one from among them would betray Him. *Second*, and after identifying Judas as the betrayer (John 13:21, 26), Jesus again told His Disciples of His impending separation from them by stating, "Where I am going, you cannot come" (John 13:33; Compare John 16:5, 16-22). The prospect of Jesus' imminent departure grieved these men. Jesus was their leader. For three years they had been with the Lord. So He comforted their troubled hearts by declaring that after He went away, He would make preparations for their reunion in the Father's house (John 14:1 ff.). But the men doubted.

#### The Disciples' Doubts

One Disciple, Thomas, admitted that he neither knew *where* Jesus was going or how to find the way to Him (John 14:5-6). So Jesus explained to Thomas: "I am **the** way, and **the** truth, and **the** life; no one comes to the Father but through Me" (Emphasis added, John 14:6). The Lord then added: "If you [Thomas] had known Me, you would have known My Father also; from now on you know Him, and have seen Him" (John 14:7). Jesus' bold statement regarding His connection to the Father stimulated a demand from another Disciple.

Representing the others, Philip told Jesus that they really didn't know *who* Jesus was and that

they needed Him to show the Father to them (John 14:8). But Jesus stated that He had already revealed the Father to the Disciples (which is the point of the incarnation) by having done the Father's works their presence. In other words, to observe Jesus working was to observe the Father working. So Jesus chided Philip by first declaring and then asking: "He who has seen Me has seen the Father; how can you say, 'Show us the Father'?" (John 14:9). This forms the context of Jesus' prediction that future believers would do "greater works" than He did.

### Works Prove "the Way"

Jesus then told the Disciples that *the works* (Greek, *erga*) the Father did through Him validated *the words* (Greek, *remata*) He spoke to them. If for no other reason, Jesus exhorted the Disciples to believe He was in the Father and the Father in Him because of the "proofs" the Father worked through Him (John 14:11). The "works" certified the Father was in Jesus and vice versa. The "Father abiding in Me does His works [*erga*]," Jesus said (John 14:10). This forms the background for Jesus' "truly-truly" statement in which He said that the Disciples who believed in Him would do something "greater" (Greek, *meizona*) than what He was doing (John 14:12).

### Content—Promise to Whom?

In this extensive narrative (John 13:1-17:33), the Apostle John recorded the personal interaction between Jesus and His Disciples. All the pronominal interchanges express that the Disciples, whether as individuals or a group, are the objects of Jesus' words. [4] If the exchange of "you-pronouns" (alternating between plural—indicating Jesus was addressing the Disciples corporately—and singular referring to Philip) means anything at all, "you" must be taken to refer to the Apostles. So the "greater works" promise was addressed by Jesus to them. He said, "Truly, truly, I say **to you** [Greek plural, *humin*] . . ." (Emphasis added, John 14:12). Without violating the grammar and context of Jesus' statement, "**you**" cannot be historically construed to mean "**us**"! The Apostles were there, we weren't.

The problem for today's new apostles, who claim to possess powers to work greater "signs and wonders" than Jesus did, is that ignoring the Bible's grammatical and historical context, they hijack a promise Jesus originally made to the 1st century Disciple-Apostles and force it to apply to them twenty-one centuries later. Jesus made the promise to His chosen Apostles, not to these Johnny-come-lately(s). This whole business and phenomenon about doing greater "signs-and-wonders" than Jesus did is therefore, anachronistic hullabaloo. No contemporary Christian was there then to personally observe the works the Father performed through the Son. Therefore, Christians today are not called upon to believe in Jesus based upon seeing the live, up-close and personal works the Father was doing through Him. We just weren't there.

By way of contrast, we are called to believe in Jesus based upon the eye-witness, written and trustworthy record of the Apostles as to what Jesus did. As He would later pray, we believe "on [Jesus] through their [the Apostles'] word" (John 17:20). Like believing in the sign of His resurrection, Jesus told the Apostle Thomas about believers today, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed" (John 20:29, KJV). Unlike Thomas who was an eye-witness of Jesus' resurrection and believed, our faith rests upon *the written record* of Jesus' resurrection, not a *contemporary repetition* of it. Faith is "the conviction of things not seen" (Hebrews 11:1). This foundation for faith was the very purpose for John writing his Gospel. He

stated:

These [signs] are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through his name.

John 20:31, KJV

So the major difficulty for seeking biblical endorsement for doing “signs and wonders” from this passage is that Jesus made the promise to the original Apostles *then*, not to new apostles now.

### **Content—Promised What?**

Jesus told Philip and the rest of the original Disciple-Apostles that contingent upon their belief in Him and His return to the Father (John 14:10, 11, 12), they would be empowered to do something “greater” (Greek, *meizona*) than He did (John 14:12). He said:

Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater *works* than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. John 14:12, KJV

There is much discussion regarding the meaning of “greater *works*” (Note the italicization of works by almost all English translations.). Charismatic Christians, especially those who consider themselves to be new apostles (despite the fact they can’t prove Jesus appointed them), seize Jesus’ statement to mean that today’s Christians will perform greater miracles, signs and wonders than the Lord did (a most audacious claim). For example, they see “greater works” to mean that Christian kingdom workers, as they introduce God’s rule on earth, either do now or soon will possess supernatural power to heal the sick (stop pandemics like Ebola), raise the dead, and halt natural disasters (i.e., tsunamis, hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes, etc.). [5] They take “greater works” to mean that Christians will perform greater-in-quality miracles than Jesus did. Others interpret “greater works” to mean that since its beginning at Pentecost, Christ endowed the church to do greater-in-quantity works than He did. Though geographically limited to the inhabitants of Palestine in the first century, the Apostles expanded the Christian faith throughout the Mediterranean world with Thomas perhaps going as far eastward as India. The Disciples would perform “greater works” in extent, not content.

So the question about Jesus’ statement to His Disciples is resolved by reading either a qualitative or quantitative nuance into the meaning of the word “greater.” However, the weakness of both interpretations is that they take Jesus’ promise to apply to Christian believers then and now, to the Church in general, and not, as originally uttered by Jesus, to the original Apostles. [6]

### **Not Quantitative**

First, I question whether assigning a quantitative meaning to the word “greater” is what the Apostle meant in recording Jesus’ statement. John informed readers of his Gospel that,

Therefore **many other signs** Jesus also performed in the presence of the disciples,

which are not written in this book; but these have been written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing you may have life in His name. John 20:30-31 (emphasis added)

Again magnifying the ministry of Jesus in hyperbolic fashion, John wrote:

And there are also **many other things** which Jesus did, which if they were written in detail, I suppose that even the world itself would not contain the books that would be written. John 21:25 (emphasis added)

In light of these two statements by the Apostle John, can readers of his Gospel justifiably take Jesus' "greater works" promise to mean that numerically, Christian believers would do more works than Jesus? It does not appear that John meant so.

### **Not Qualitative**

Second, assigning a qualitative meaning to the word "greater" does not fit John's Gospel either. Earlier in his writing the Apostle noted Jesus to have said:

If I had not done among them the works **which no one else did**, they would not have sin; but now they have both seen and hated Me and My Father as well. John 15:24 (emphasis added)

Jesus was doing works that no one else was doing. John however, as he made record of His exceptional works, focused all the attention of his Gospel on Jesus! (See John 1:1-18; 1 John 1:1-4.) As the above verses indicate, and as further noted by the Apostle Peter, Jesus' miracles were extraordinary. Thus he could tell the Pentecost audience:

Ye men of Israel, hear these words; Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by **miracles** [*dunames*] and **wonders** [*teras*] and **signs** [*semeiois*], which God did by him in the midst of you, as ye yourselves also know. Peter, Acts 2:22, KJV (emphasis added)

So in evaluating the quality to the works of Jesus as recorded in the Gospels and on a scale of 1-10 (10 being the most spectacular), Jesus gets a 10! By the same measurement, the Apostles, upon noting their miracles recorded in Acts, might be awarded a 3 or a 4. Yes, to validate Jesus' person and to authenticate their message about them, Jesus' Apostles performed many attesting "signs and wonders" (Acts 2:43; See also Acts 5:12; 6:8; 14:3; 15:12; Romans 15:18-19.), but not on a par with those performed by Jesus. He was after all, "the" Son of God. As one commentator notes, "As a matter of historical fact *the apostles were to perform nothing more spectacular in their ministries than Jesus had done in his*, and so greater things obviously cannot mean 'more spectacular miracles'." [7] So we ask, "What did Jesus mean when He told the Disciple-Apostles that they would do something "greater" than He did?"

### Greater what?

*First*, it should be noted that the Greek text does not identify what “greater” the Apostles would do if they believed. The original text provides no object for the clause “and greater of these he will do” (Greek, *kai meizona touton poiесеi*). As do most other English translations, the KJV indicates the absence of an object by italicizing the English noun works. It reads: “and greater *works* than these shall he do” (John 14:12, KJV). *Today’s English Version* reads “greater *things*” while the literal translations of Young and Wuest read “greater that *these*.” By this observation I am not inferring that supplying the noun-object “works” in translation is illegitimate, but only noting the indefiniteness of the “greater” Jesus said the Disciples would do. [8]

*Second*, it should also be observed what John did not record what Jesus said. Though familiar with the words “signs” (*semeion*) [9] and “wonders” (*teras*) [10] as designators for Jesus’ miracles, John did not record Jesus told the Disciples that if they believed the Father sent Him, they would perform greater “signs” or “wonders” than He did. John could have precisely stated the content of what “greater” the Disciples would do, but He did not.

And *third*, as regards the difference between the words “signs” and “works,” one commentator distinguishes that the word “signs” serves notice to the extraordinary acts of God while the word “works” denotes His ordinary providences—that’s why they’re called “works.” [11] Normally in our society, people “work” every day, while occasionally attend a spectacular cultural or sporting event. To illustrate again, an invading and exploding meteor on earth might be called a divine “sign” (e.g., Matthew 24:29-30), but a beautiful sunset over Lake Michigan (no less one of God’s daily providences) a divine “work”; the former being extraordinary, the latter more ordinary; the former being beyond nature, the latter being beside nature. [12] So Jesus promised His Disciples that when they came to believe in Him, they would in some way do greater works than He did, not perform more stunning “signs and wonders.” So it must be asked, what did Jesus mean when He told the Disciples, “and greater of these he will do”? John’s Gospel provides an indication.

### Works = Belief

Jesus designated that belief equaled works. A crowd of people asked Jesus, “What shall we **do** (*poiomen*), so that we may **work** (*ergazomatha*) the **works** (*ta erga*) of God?” Jesus demonstrably answered their question: “This is **the work** (*to ergon*) of God, **that you believe** in Him whom He has sent” (Emphasis added, John 6:28-29). To repeat, the Lord said: ***This is the work of God: that you believe in Him whom God sent!*** Though in their thinking the crowd associated “works” with “signs” (John 6:30), Jesus clearly told the crowd that their “work” was to believe the Father sent Him, not to do “signs and wonders.” This promise falls within John’s purpose for writing his Gospel (John 20:30-31).

God did not intend for miracles to be objects of faith, but rather serve as proofs to people that the Father and the Son were united and cooperating in the work the Son was doing on earth. To see Jesus working miracles was to see the Father working miracles. Like signs on Interstate highways, the Gospel miracles were intended to direct people to the destination of believing in the Lord Jesus Christ. Unlike how many today hype them to be, miracles in Scripture must always be understood as means to an end, and not *per se*, as ends in themselves. If the

recorded miracles in the Gospels do not inspire faith in Jesus Christ, the miraculous becomes inconsequential, a dead end. Belief or faith should be focused on God's Son, not fixated on "signs." To be fixated only on signs is like traveling on a spiritual highway to nowhere, never arriving at the eternal destination of the Father's house (John 14:1-6). Hebrews states, "faith is the conviction of things not seen," and by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ (not seeing and believing in signs and wonders), people gain God's approval (Hebrews 11:1-2). It may come as a surprise to any involved in the "manifest sons of God" movement, but there is a deeper and more restful level of faith than a faith which insatiably craves seeing "signs and wonders" (Hebrews 4:1-11).

So to return to the greater-works promise Jesus made to His Disciples, what He told them was that if they overcame their doubts and questions to believe He was from the Father, their works would be greater than His in the realm of "belief" (*This is the work of God: that you believe.*). To understand what Jesus meant when He promised His Disciples that they would do greater than Him, we must look less at the miracles they performed and more to the ministry they would accomplish through prayer (John 14:13-14) and through preaching to greater crowds who when *en masse* heard the simple message of repentance toward God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, believed on the Son of God. In this regard, F.F. Bruce (1910-1990) commented that, "His [Jesus'] promise indeed came true: in the first few months after his death and resurrection many more men and women became his followers through their [the Apostles'] witness than had done so during his personal ministry in Galilee and Judea." [13] Accordingly, J.C. Ryle (1816-1900) noted:

It could not be said that the physical miracles worked by the Apostles in Acts were greater than those worked by Christ. But it is equally certain that after the day of Pentecost they did far more wonderful works by God's blessing in converting souls than our Lord did. On no occasion did Jesus convert 3,000 at one time [Acts 2:41], and a 'great company of priests' [Acts 6:7]. [14]

So how might we understand the "contemporary clamoring after "signs and wonders"?"

### **The Danger of Hying Signs**

In his letter to the Corinthians, the Apostle Paul wrote that in contrast to the Greeks who prized "wisdom" [Greek, *sophian*], "Jews ask for signs" [Greek, *semeia*] (1 Corinthians 1:22). Upon reading the Gospels, this inclination on the part of the Jews is evident. When a government official implored Jesus to heal his sick son before a crowd at Cana of Galilee, Jesus used the man's request as an occasion to chide the Jewish audience (who evidently were "egging" Him on to do a miracle). [15] Though Jesus personally addressed the man ("Jesus said to him . . ."), John records the Lord equally addressed the crowd when He said, "Unless you *people* see [Greek plural verb, *idete*] signs and wonders, you simply will not believe" (John 4:48).

### **An Adulterous Generation**

The frequency with which Jewish leaders approached Jesus (indicating their appetite to see Jesus perform miracles at their bidding) and goaded Him, "Teacher, we want to see a sign from You," needs to be noted (Matthew 12:38; See 16:1; John 6:30.). To this request, the Lord said,

“An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign; and yet no sign will be given to it but the sign of Jonah the prophet (Matthew 12:39). So based upon Jesus’ words, questions must be asked of contemporary Christians who fixatedly crave for and clamor after “signs and wonders”: may their attitude fall into the category of the generational spirit Jesus rebuked? What does an insatiable appetite to see “signs and wonders” indicate? Could it be that the cravers are, like the Jews of Jesus’ day, an “evil and adulterous generation” (perennially hard-hearted and rebellious)?

Miracle mania may indicate that seekers after the entertainments of signs are not really closer to God, but farther from Him. Jesus did say, “An evil and adulterous generation craves for a sign!” Taken at face value, Jesus’ verdict indicates that fascination with “signs and wonders” may be symptomatic of people committing spiritual harlotry (See Exodus 32:1-10.). In His Sermon on the Mount, Jesus warned of a coming judgment when the Lord would say to a “signs and wonders” crowd (who congratulated themselves as having prophesied, cast out devils and done many wonderful works in Jesus’ name), “I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity” (Matthew 7:22-23). Jesus’ warning should be taken seriously . . . very seriously, by all of us. Then there’s the fact that Scripture teaches that signs can be deceptions.

### **Supernatural “Encounters”**

Any occurrence of a miracle does not mean God originated it. There are personal principalities and powers in the universe other than God who can mimic divine signs (Ephesians 6:12). In imitating God, the enemies can, do and will perform “lying signs and wonders.” As this evil age progresses and draws to a close, Jesus warned: “False Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect,” He said (Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:22). Paul predicted that before Jesus comes to earth again, “the man of lawlessness,” even “the son of destruction,” will arise upon the world’s scene, claim to be divine, set himself up in the temple as God, and demand to be worshipped by the world all the while credentialing himself “with all power and signs and false wonders” (2 Thessalonians 2:3, 9). John, the Apostle who wrote the Apocalypse, also pictures a coming religious leader who as he bears false witness to the Anti-Christ, will enhance the whole religious scam by performing *great prophetic signs* (Revelation 13:11-18).

Because Satan is a counterfeiter, biblical Christians must live within the parameters of a balanced worldview which accepts God’s ability to work miracles while at the same time maintaining skepticism regarding Disney-World-like signs and wonders because they know demons and their sorcerers possess powers to imitate the same (Exodus 7:10-11, 20-22; 8:6-7). As regards the Bible’s warning that false prophets can perform false wonders, it’s of interest to note that while “the signs and wonders” crowd *connect* their movement to Scriptures which they think endorse their gifting to work miracles (i.e., John 14:12; 1 Corinthians 12:28), they *disconnect* from considering the Scriptures, Old and New Testament, which warn that false prophets can perform “lying” signs and wonders (See above and Deuteronomy 13:1 ff.). Biblical Christians however, ought to affirm the truth that God can do miracles (Philippians 2:27; James 5:14-15) even as they remain aware that Satan can empower his emissaries to counterfeit the same. May (questions need to be asked) inattentiveness to Scriptures warning about lying wonders indicate that miracle workers are perpetuating deception? In the cosmic reality of things, does ignorance (and ignorance means to ignore), serve as an indictment that miracles

may be sourced in sorcery, in some other power or principality than God? Can deceivers be deceived by their own devices (their miracles)? May inattention to the Bible's warning passages regarding lying wonders, whether deliberate or not, indicate that the ignorers have an agenda other than God's?

## Conclusion

After some Pharisees and Sadducees came to Jesus and asked Him to entertain them by working a miracle, He rebuked them as an "evil and adulterous generation," after which He told them no further sign would be given to them except "the sign" of the prophet Jonah (Matthew 12:38-39), which referred to the miracle of His resurrection from the dead, which He predicted would happen (John 2:19; Matthew 26:61; Mark 14:58). Jesus' resurrection from the dead was the ultimate-intervening sign God worked in the ebb and flow of life and death in human history.

One famous athlete—as he sees the aging process impacting his career—stated: "Only time is undefeated." Nevertheless, to defeat time Jesus testified that He will give eternal life to all who believe in Him (John 10:27-28; See 11:23-27.). Yes, time and death rolled through the ages until Jesus came into the world, died and rose from the dead (1 Corinthians 15:50-57). The Lord Jesus Christ certified His promise of everlasting life for believers by returning to life three days after He died (John 1:1-14; 6:40; 11:25-26; 20:1 ff.). Standing between the portals of life and death and outside of creation itself, the sign of Jesus' resurrection from the dead is the greatest sign ever to occur in human history, so much so that confessing belief in His resurrection is an essential component of the Gospel by which Christians are saved (1 Corinthians 15:3-4; Romans 10:9-10). Jesus' life, death and resurrection were truly exception!

So when they observe or hear about "signs and wonders" being performed by newly manifested "sons of God," Christians ought to be cautioned. The contemporary appetite for following after "signs and wonders" may indicate that the cravings are indicative, as Jesus said, of an "evil and adulterous generation." Seeking after other miracles distracts people from the greatest sign ever given by God to humans in history—the sign that is Jesus Christ's resurrection from the dead! Working so-called "signs and wonders" distracts interest away from *the manifested Son of God* unto *manifesting sons of God*. Attention switches off from Him and unto them. Yet Jesus' words regarding greater works were never meant to "encourage unhealthy sensationalism, or unworthy arrogance on the part of the disciples." [16]

We live in a pop-culture in which professing Christians attend church to be entertained, and church leadership gives the crowds what they want—raucous and drumming music performed in "dark sanctuaries" by "worship teams" to the accompaniment of flashing lights, rising smoke and other special effects. The rock concert is then followed by a short soothing sermon after which the crowd exits the theater with their feelings fixed, at least for a little while. So when the crowd tires of the same-o-same-o liturgy, the question becomes, what do you do for an encore? How can the leadership up the ante to keep the crowd buzzing and returning? Answer: by seeking new and greater entertainments, by doing greater "signs and wonders." No matter that the powers behind the signs might be deceptive and malevolent.

In John's Gospel at the time when He healed the blind man, Jesus told his Disciples:



We must work the works of Him who sent Me as long as it is day; **night is coming when no one can work.**" Emphasis added, John 9:4

If Jesus' works included this miracle, and the context indicates that it did, then He was telling Disciples that a day was coming when neither He nor they would perform works, let alone "greater" works. At the end of that day, Jesus indicated "works" of a miraculous type, whether performed by Him or His Apostles, would end (Hebrews 2:3-4).

God has one Son, the only-begotten, one-of-a-kind and eternally-generated Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:14). If it is believed that God has other "manifest sons," Christians must be on notice that "other sons" can promote "other gospels" or introduce "other gods" (Galatians 1:6-9). Jesus is not one Son among many other sons. No, He is utterly unique. While God does have other sons like you and me, we are adopted. Though united with the Father and the Son, we as creatures remain distinct from the Son. The Father has but one eternally existent Son who is inherent and interior to Himself, the paternal relationship of which Jesus' miracles were meant to prove. The Father sent the son into the world. No other manifested son of God will perform miracles like unto those Jesus performed. So to assign either a quantitative or qualitative meaning to the adjective "greater" is to profane (to make the sacred common) the incarnation of Jesus Christ by making His work on earth to have unexceptional. To think that the church can do, and perhaps has done, greater works than Jesus did is to distract attention away from the Christ unto humans, and such a distraction, I believe, does not please the Father.

"For the Father loves the Son, and shows Him all things that He Himself is doing; and the Father will show Him greater works than these, so that you will marvel" (John 5:20).

Though a coming miracle worker will claim to be a "Christ," he will not be. We must therefore know that,

[T]here is no limit to the greatness of Jesus Christ. He has done many other things as well, not only during these few brief years among us, but as the pre-incarnate Word through whom all things were made, as the upholding Word who sustains the life of the universe, and as the everlasting centre of all the redeeming purposes of God. He is literally infinite, and hence no conceivable library on earth of heaven can adequately or fully 'tell the story' of Jesus Christ." [17]

"Rabbi, we know that You have come from God as a teacher; for no one can do these signs that You do unless God is with him."

Nicodemus to Jesus, John 3:2

*TO BE CONTINUED . . . . .*

## Endnotes

- [1] Unless otherwise noted, Scripture quotations are taken from the *New American Standard Bible* (Anaheim, CA: Foundation Publications, 1995).
- [2] Emphasis added, Judy Franklin, Chapter 1: “The Power of the Zero-Point Field,” in Judy Franklin, Ellyn Davis and others, *The Physics of Heaven: Exploring God’s Mysteries of Sound, Light, Energy, Vibrations and Quantum Physics* (Crossville, TN: Double Portion Publishing, 2012): 2.
- [3] Ibid: 8.
- [4] Whether singular or plural, whether referring to a Disciple or the group of Disciple-Apostles, English translations employ the pronoun “you” almost two-hundred times. The narrative’s interpretation can only be construed as personal between Jesus and His Disciple(s).
- [5] Judy Franklin, “Introduction,” *The Physics of Heaven*, ix, 8.
- [6] Philip W. Comfort and Wendell C. Hawley, *Opening the Gospel of John: A Fresh Resource for Teaching and Preaching the Fourth Gospel* (Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers, Inc., 1994): 233. The authors comment: “The difficulty with interpreting this passage is that it is a promise made to an individual [to Philip], not to a collective group (such as the church).” The problem with this observation is that the “you” that prefaces the promise is plural (“Truly, truly, I say to you . . .” John 14:12). Obviously, Jesus was addressing not just Philip (as indicated by John’s use of a singular “you” in the context’s other verses, e.g. John 14:9, 10), but the entire apostolic band.
- [7] Emphasis added, Bruce Milne, *The Message of John: Here is your King!* (Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1993): 215.
- [8] In the context, the agreement between the neuter gender and plural number of the noun “works” (*erga*), the adjective “greater” (*merizona*) and demonstrative pronoun “of these” (*touton*) justifies inserting the English noun works. However, what is not stated in the context is that the Disciples, if they believed, would do greater “signs” (*semeia*) and “wonders” (*terata*) than Jesus did, even though those two nouns, like works, are also neuter in gender.
- [9] To describe Jesus’ miracles, John employs the word “sign” seventeen times.
- [10] John uses the word “wonder” once (John 4:48).
- [11] B.F. Westcott, *The Gospel According to St. John* (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1950): lxxv-lxxvi.
- [12] R.C. Trench, *Trench’s Synonyms of the New Testament* (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, Inc.): 357-361.
- [13] F.F. Bruce, *The Gospel of John: Introduction, Exposition and Notes* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1983): 300.
- [14] John Charles Ryle, *Expository Thoughts on the Gospels: St. John*. Vol. III (London, England: James Clarke & Co. Ltd., Reprinted 1969): 79
- [15] This understanding is indicated in John 4:48 by the change from Jesus’ singular address to the father of the sick son (“Jesus said to him”) to His plural statement to the onlookers (“Unless you people”).
- [16] Milne: 215.
- [17] Milne: 320-321.