

This is a reading from the Book of Acts Two, chapter one through eleven. On the day of the Pentagon, all the believers were meeting together in one place and suddenly there was a sound from heaven, like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. And then what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability. And at that time there were devout Jews from every nation living in Jerusalem. And when they heard the loud noise, everyone came running and they were bewildered to hear their own languages being spoken by the believers. They were completely amazed. How can this be? They exclaimed. These people are all from Galilee, and yet we hear them speaking in our own native languages. Here we are. This one will be some challenging ones, but going to I'm try my best Parthians. Maidens Elamites people from Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontius, the province of Asia, Frugia, Familia, Egypt and the areas of Libya around serene visitors from Rome, both Jews and converts to Judaism, Cretans and Arabs.

And we all hear people speaking in our own languages about the wonderful things God has done. The Word of the Lord.

Please stand for the reading of the Gospel.

I know my Bible is falling apart.

A reading from the Gospel of John, chapter 14, verses eight through 17. Philip said let us show Lord, show us the Father and we will be satisfied. Jesus replied have I been with you all this time, Philip, and yet you still don't know who I am? Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. So why are you asking me to show Him to you? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words I speak are not my own, but my Father who lives in me does his work through me. Just believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe because of the work you have seen me do. Tell you the truth, anyone who believes in me will do the same work I have done and even greater works, because I'm going to be with the Father. You can ask for anything in My name and I will do it so that the sun can bring Lord to the Father. Yes, ask me for anything in my name and I will do it. If you love me, obey my commandments and I will ask a Father and he will give you another advocate.

He will never leave you. He is the Holy Spirit who leads into all the truth and the Word cannot receive Him because it isn't looking for Him and doesn't recognize Him. But you know Him because he lives with you now and later will be in you the word of the Lord.

All right, well, before the baptism, our kids are going to go off the kids alive, and then you'll join us again for Elaine's baptism. So let's pray for the kids. Father, we give you thanks for all our young people. Lord, we love them and you love them. And we ask that you would protect them in this world, that they would grow strong in you, that they would learn from Your Word, that you would bless their teachers, bless their parents, and guide them into all truth in Jesus name. Amen. All right, God bless you guys. We'll see you in a little bit. Off the kids alive? Yeah. Let me grab my water. All right. And now let's pray for us. Father, we ask that you would open our hearts to Your Word. Your Holy Spirit would fill us, give us wisdom and grace. Help us to understand and to apply what you teach us that we might become more and more like Jesus, Your Son, in whose name we pray. Amen. Amen. Well, good morning. Today is is the Day of Pentecost. This is the birthday of the church. This is the day that commemorates when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the church.

But a lot of times we think that that's when the Day of Pentecost began. But actually, Pentecost was a feast that was celebrated by the Jews. It celebrated the harvest. So it was really one of the most popular feasts that the Jews took part in. And literally, pilgrims from all around the world, jews from all around the Mediterranean, would come to worship at the temple. Another thing that Pentecost symbolized was the giving of the law. And so it symbolized literally, the birth of the nation. When Moses brought down the tablets, the Ten Commandments to the people, and Israel became one nation under God, a nation who is committed to obeying the laws of God. I'm going to turn off the guitar for a second, getting a little feedback from it. So the day of Pentecost was this day that celebrated the birth of Israel as a nation. And today we're here to celebrate the birth of the church.

And Jesus prepared his disciples for this day, and he prepared them with a pretty amazing promise. He said that the Holy Spirit was going to be given and that his disciples would be led to do even greater things than he had done.

What does that mean? You ever thought about that? Really? Can we do greater things than Jesus now? What are those greater things? Well, some people say, well, they must be miracles, but how many people do you know that have changed water into wine? How many people do you know that have raised the dead? How many people do you know have spoken a word and a blind person has been given sight? How many people do you know has prayed a prayer and a person who was lame could suddenly walk. Now, I'm not saying this has never happened in the history of the Church. It has, and it does. Sometimes miracles break out at different times for different reasons. But if Jesus means that by greater works he means miracles, I'm not sure that that's true. I'm not sure people have done collectively greater miracles than Jesus has done. The one who walked on water, the one who basically was God incarnate. So what does it mean? What is this promise that Jesus gives? And it is a promise, right? You will do greater things. Let me read it to you for a moment. Very truly, I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the work I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father.

We're going to baptize Lane Marmon here in a little while. We're going to baptize him into the faith. That is a promise that Jesus has given to Lane. That Lane, if you follow me, if you believe in me, you will do even greater works than these. I'm going to show you these greater works and you're going to do them. I promise. So what in the world does it mean? Well, we always have to go into the context. This promise is given in the context of Jesus final night on earth before he's going to be crucified. And he's teaching his disciples those very important elements that he wants. He wants to get down into the very heart and soul of who they are. He talks to them about love, he talks to them about unity, he talks to them about their ministry. And in this context, he says this. And if you want to follow along, we're in John chapter 14, he begins to teach them about the trinitarian nature of God. Philip had said, Lord, show us the Father. That will be enough for us. Every Jew longed to see God and his glory. Moses had asked God to show his glory.

God had shown Moses his glory, but only as if from the backside he had passed before him. He had covered Moses face and he only let him get a glimpse of his backside, supposedly, right? And all the Jews were believing that there was coming a time when God would reveal his glory through the coming Messiah. And here Philip is saying, Show us the Father, and that will be enough for us. And Jesus said, don't you know me, Philip? Even after I've been among you such a long time? How can you say, Show us the Father? Don't you believe that I am in the Father and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you, I do not speak on my own authority. Rather, it is the Father living in me who is doing his work. He's saying, Look, Philip, to see me is to see the Father. That all the time I've been among you. You have actually seen the glory of the Father. You've seen his power. You've seen his love. You've seen how the Father forgives. You've seen how the Father heals. You've seen and heard the good news that the Father proclaims through His Son, because I and the Father are one.

He's getting them prepared for these greater works. He's saying, if you're going to follow me in these greater works, you've got to realize that I and the Father are one. And he says, Believe me when I say that I am in the Father and the Father is in me. Or at least believe on the evidence of the works themselves. What works? Have you seen the healing of people? The proclaiming of the good news, the setting free of the captives, the giving sight to the blind? Believe on the evidence of these works themselves. For very truly, I tell you, whoever believes in me will do the works I have been doing, and they will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. There's a hint right there. Jesus says, the greater works that you and I will do because we are following are because he's going to the Father. Why did Jesus go to the Father? To advocate, to intercede for us that Jesus now is at the right hand of the Father, and he's praying for us this day. He's praying for this gathering here that the Holy Spirit would be amongst us.

He's praying that you and I will grow in Christ likeness. He's praying that you and I will grow in the character of God, that we will go forth from this place and will shine the light of Christ in the world where we work, with whom we live. Jesus is interceding for us, and he's not interceding in the way

that many people think, oh, the Father is the one who judges. The Father is the one who we got to watch out for, right? The Father is the one who's ready for us to mess up. And Jesus is saying, no, no, Father. I died for them. I gave my blood for them. I've washed them clean. Don't judge them. That's not what's happening. Jesus said, if you've seen me, you've seen the Father. What did I do? I give my life willingly. I lay down my life. I call you friends. There was a touching moment here at the beginning of the service. Claire was crying because her friend is moving to Scotland. And Jesus here is surrounded by his friends, and he's telling them, I'm about to go. I'm about to go. But it's going to be good for you that I go.

You're going to grieve, you're going to weep. It's going to be hard. It's always hard when friends part, but I'm going to give you some resource. So here's what he says. I'm going to the Father. You'll do greater things because I'm going to the Father. I'll do whatever you ask in my name so that the Father may be glorified in the sun, you can actually ask for things in my name, not, I want a Mercedes, Lord, and I pray this in Jesus name, and so I'm going to get a Mercedes. No, but you're praying in the will of Jesus, in the will of the Father, and Jesus promises it's going to be done. If you pray for my gospel to go forward through the church, it will be done. If you pray for me to be glorified in this world, it will be done. If you pray for your children to know and to love the Lord, it will be done. I will work through the faith of my church. He says, if you love me, keep my commands. That is, treasure them, honor them. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate to help you and be with you forever.

The Spirit of truth. Now, that word advocate is an interesting Greek word. Greek words can often mean a bunch of things. It's the word *paracolos*. And so sometimes this is translated as the advocate. Sometimes it's translated as the counselor. Sometimes it's translated as the comforter. And comfort means to give strength. The Spirit is the one who gives us strength. The Spirit is the one who counsels us, guides us, gives us wisdom, understanding. And the Spirit is the one who advocates for us, who helps us know we're not alone in this world, that when evil comes against us, the Spirit is right there to help us fend that evil off and to choose what is good. So I'm going to give you the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him because it neither sees Him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. He's telling his disciples before the day of Pentecost, right before the pouring out of the Spirit. You already know the Spirit. How's that possible? Because you've seen the Spirit in me. You've seen the Father in me. I, the Father and the Spirit were all one.

You've seen us. You've seen how I advocate for you. The Holy Spirit is going to do that. As I go and I leave this earth, I'm pouring out the Spirit on all who believe. On Lane, as he's baptized. We're praying for the Holy Spirit to come on him in power, on those children as they're being taught, and on you, as you're worshiping God. I will not leave you as orphans. I will come to you. That's his promise. So here's the question how do we do these greater works? Jesus says this is what the greater works are. You can do these greater works because I'm going to the Father. And when I go to the Father, I'm going to pour out my Spirit and my Spirit is going to work through you again. We might be struggling with wait a minute. But still, how can we really do greater works? Let me explain it to you in a couple of ways. In John, chapter five, Jesus is having a confrontation with some who are not sure that they believe. And he says in John 5:20, the Father loves his Son and shows him all he does.

Yes, and he will show him even greater works. Uses the exact same phrase than these so that you will be amazed. For just as the Father raises the dead and gives him life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. What Jesus is referring there to is his death and his resurrection. And that for all who believe, they'll give power to become children of God. That this is the greater works that Jesus is talking about. He also said something interesting when people were asking him about John the Baptist. He said, I'll tell you the truth. No one is greater than John the Baptist. No prophet has arisen in Israel that is greater than John the Baptist. No one's greater. Do you know that John the Baptist never did a single miracle? Wait a minute. Moses parted the Red Sea, Elijah called down fire. And you're saying John the Baptist is greater. Why? Because John the Baptist was the forerunner of Christ and he was the one who had the privilege of pointing the people towards Jesus and saying, here he is. This is the Messiah. And because of that, John was considered the greatest prophet that had ever lived from the lips of Jesus.

But then Jesus said this I'll tell you the truth. The least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than John.

Lane, who's going to be baptized today, is greater than John. How can this be? Because the greater works that Jesus is referring to were only possible once Jesus had died, risen and ascended into heaven. Now every single believer, every single believer has the authority to proclaim the fullness of the glory of God, the fullness of the Gospel. That wasn't possible before. People could say a Messiah is coming, but we didn't know exactly what he would look like or what he would be like. But now we know. So Lane, when he's baptized, we'll be able to come out of that water and be able to tell anybody about Jesus. You and I can tell anybody about Jesus. We can raise our families. We can disciple ourselves. These are the greater things that Jesus was talking about. Does that include miracles? Absolutely. Paul said, eagerly desire the gifts of the Spirit, and especially the greater gifts, the gifts of prophecy. Eagerly desire them so that among the people of God, we are calling for God to do miracles, to do wondrous works.

But we're calling him to infuse everything with the greater work he does that Jesus is interceding for us as we build that garden out there, that garden which we envision is going to build community here. It's already doing that. As we're working together, I'm feeling the bonds of unity with those who I'm working with. That community garden that we're building, we also believe it's going to be something that people who are hungry and need food are going to be able to join us in the work there. And as they join us, they're going to meet Jesus. Jesus is interceding for that work. He's interceding for our kids. He's interceding for this church. He's praying for us. Church. We're called to step into the greater works and greater things that Jesus is doing. That's what he's talking about. That's what happened at the day of Pentecost when the Spirit was poured out. So what I want to encourage you is simply to have confidence. You know what the word confidence means? Con means with. And fide is faith. With faith that your faith might grow. And you might not be like, I'm just kind of like a nothing in the kingdom of God.

Remember, the least in the kingdom of God is what? Greater than John, greater than the greatest prophet that you and I would have confidence that Jesus is working in us and through us and with us. Just as surely as this wind is blowing through this place, the Holy Spirit is blowing through this church. Would you pray with me? Well, Heavenly Father, we ask that you would blow your wind into Your people, that you would fill us with Your Holy Spirit, that we would do the greater works, that our lives would be enriched and strengthened, our families would be strengthened, marriages would be healed and filled, and our workplaces would experience the light of Christ because we believe in you, and that light would shine in the neighborhoods that we live in. Lord, we ask that you would do all these things in us, that you would awaken faith, lord, wherever faith is weak or wherever faith has died, awaken faith in Your church. We love You, Lord, and we need you. We pray this in Jesus name. Well, it's time for a baptism now. Mary Kay, can you go and let them know? Don't accuse me of preaching too long.

Let's just be quiet for a moment as the kids return to us and allow the Lord to speak to you whatever he wants to speak in this time. Amen.