

John 16:23

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing. Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.

Analysis

And in that day ye shall ask me nothing (καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἐρωτήσετε οὐδέν/kai en ekeinē tē hēmera eme ouk erōtēsete ouden)—"that day" refers to post-resurrection/Pentecost era when the Spirit illuminates truth. The verb ἐρωτάω (erōtaō) means to question, request explanation. They won't need to ask Jesus for clarification because the Spirit will teach them (John 14:26, 16:13).

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you (ἀμήν ἀμήν λέγω ὑμῖν, ὅτι ὅσα ἂν αἰτήσητε τὸν Πατέρα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δώσει ὑμῖν/amēn amēn legō hymin, hoti hosa an aitēsēte ton Patera en tō onomati mou dōsei hymin)—the double ἀμήν (amēn) emphasizes this solemn promise. Αἰτέω (aiteō) means to ask, petition, request—different verb from verse 23a.

In my name (ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου/en tō onomati mou)—not a magical formula but praying according to Christ's character, authority, and will. To pray "in Jesus's name" means praying as His representatives, seeking His purposes, aligned with His priorities. The promise δώσει (dōsei, "He will give") is categorical—but conditional on asking according to Christ's nature and redemptive mission (1 John 5:14-15).

Historical Context

Before Pentecost, disciples prayed Jewish prayers but didn't yet understand Christ-mediated access to the Father. Post-resurrection, everything changed. The torn temple veil (Matthew 27:51) symbolized direct access through Christ's blood (Hebrews 10:19-22). At Pentecost, the Spirit indwelt believers, enabling prayer "in the Spirit" (Ephesians 6:18, Jude 20). Early church prayer meetings (Acts 1:14, 4:24-31, 12:5) demonstrated this new access—bold petitions addressed to the Father through Christ's name. Church history records countless answers to prayer offered in Jesus's name, validating this promise across cultures and centuries.

Related Passages

Ephesians 2:8 — Salvation by grace through faith

John 3:16 — God's love and salvation

Hebrews 11:1 — Definition of faith

James 2:17 — Faith and works

Study Questions

1. What does it mean to pray 'in Jesus's name'—and how is this different from merely appending His name to requests?
2. How does the promise that the Father 'will give' whatever we ask in Christ's name relate to prayers that seem unanswered?
3. What role does the Spirit's illumination play in praying according to God's will and Christ's character?

Interlinear Text

καὶ ἐν ἐκείνῃ τῇ ἡμέρᾳ ἐμὲ οὐκ ἐρωτήσετε οὐδέν
And in that ^{G3588} **day** **me** **ye shall** **ask** **nothing**
G2532 G1722 G1565 G2250 G1691 G3756 G2065 G3762

ἀμὴν ἀμὴν λέγω ὑμῖν ὅτι ὅσα ἂν αἰτήσητε τὸν
Verily Verily I say ^{G3754} **it you** **Whatsoever** ^{G302} **ye shall ask** ^{G3588}
G281 G281 G3004 G5213 G3745 G154

πατέρα ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου δώσει ὑμῖν
the Father in ^{G3588} **name** **my** **he will give** **it you**
G3962 G1722 G3686 G3450 G1325 G5213

Additional Cross-References

John 15:7 (Parallel theme): If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you.

Matthew 21:22 (Parallel theme): And all things, whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.

Isaiah 65:24 (Parallel theme): And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear.

Matthew 7:7 (Parallel theme): Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:

John 16:26 (Parallel theme): At that day ye shall ask in my name: and I say not unto you, that I will pray the Father for you:

John 14:20 (Parallel theme): At that day ye shall know that I am in my Father, and ye in me, and I in you.

Ephesians 2:18 (Parallel theme): For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

1 John 2:1 (Parallel theme): My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous:

John 14:5 (Parallel theme): Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

John 16:19 (Parallel theme): Now Jesus knew that they were desirous to ask him, and said unto them, Do ye enquire among yourselves of that I said, A little while, and ye shall not see me: and again, a little while, and ye shall see me?

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