

John 16:24

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name: ask, and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.

Analysis

Hitherto have ye asked nothing in my name (ἕως ἄρτι οὐκ ἠτήσατε οὐδὲν ἐν τῷ ὀνόματί μου/heōs arti ouk ētēsate ouden en tō onomati mou)—ἕως ἄρτι (heōs arti) means "until now." Before the cross, resurrection, and Pentecost, disciples couldn't yet pray with full understanding of Christ's mediatorial work. The aorist tense ἠτήσατε (ētēsate) looks at their entire prayer history to this point—they've never truly prayed "in Christ's name" because they didn't yet grasp His redemptive accomplishment.

Ask, and ye shall receive (αἰτεῖτε καὶ λήμψεσθε/aiteite kai lēmpsesthe)—present imperative αἰτεῖτε (aiteite) commands continuous asking. Future middle λήμψεσθε (lēmpsesthe) promises definite reception. This isn't prosperity gospel—context determines content. Requests aligned with Christ's name (character, mission, glory) will be granted.

That your joy may be full (ἵνα ἡ χαρὰ ὑμῶν ᾗ πεπληρωμένη/hina hē chara hymōn ē peplērōmenē)—the purpose clause (ἵνα/hina) reveals God's goal: complete joy (πληρόω/plēroō, "to fill, fulfill, complete"). Answered prayer isn't primarily about getting what we want but experiencing fullness of joy in communion with God. When we pray according to His will and receive answers, our joy is maximized because we're aligned with divine purposes.

Historical Context

This inaugurates a new era of prayer. Old Testament saints prayed to God but lacked the Spirit's indwelling and Christ's finished mediation. During Jesus's earthly ministry, disciples walked with Him physically but hadn't experienced Pentecost's empowerment. After the ascension, believers gained unprecedented access: a sympathetic High Priest (Hebrews 4:14-16), the Spirit making intercession (Romans 8:26-27), and Christ's ongoing advocacy (1 John 2:1). The early church's prayer life—powerful, bold, effective (Acts 4:31, 12:5-17)—demonstrated this new-covenant reality. Church history chronicles answered prayers from Pentecost to present, validating Christ's promise across millennia.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Colossians 1:16 — All things created through Christ

Genesis 1:1 — Creation of heavens and earth

Study Questions

1. How should understanding that answered prayer's ultimate purpose is 'that your joy may be full' shape what and how you pray?
2. What does Jesus mean that disciples 'have asked nothing in my name' until this point—what changed after the resurrection and Pentecost?
3. How can you evaluate whether your prayer requests align with Christ's character and purposes (i.e., are truly 'in His name')?

Interlinear Text

ἕως	ἄρτι	οὐκ	αἰτεῖτε	οὐδὲν	ἐν	τῷ	ὀνόματί	μου·
Hitherto	G737	nothing	ask	G3762	in	G3588	name	my
G2193		G3756	G154		G1722		G3686	G3450
αἰτεῖτε	καὶ	λήψεσθε,	ἵνα	ἡ	χαρὰ	ὑμῶν	ἧ	
ask	and	ye shall receive	that	G3588	joy	your	may be	
G154	G2532	G2983	G2443		G5479	G5216	G5600	
πεπληρωμένη								
full								
G4137								

Additional Cross-References

John 15:11 (Parallel theme): These things have I spoken unto you, that my joy might remain in you, and that your joy might be full.

John 16:23 (Parallel theme): 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.

2 John 1:12 (Parallel theme): Having many things to write unto you, I would not write with paper and ink: but I trust to come unto you, and speak face to face, that our joy may be full.

Matthew 6:9 (Parallel theme): After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

John 3:29 (Parallel theme): He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.

1 Kings 18:36 (Parallel theme): And it came to pass at the time of the offering of the evening sacrifice, that Elijah the prophet came near, and said, LORD God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Israel, let it be known this day that thou art God in Israel, and that I am thy servant, and that I have done all these things at thy word.

