

WITHOUT JESUS WE DON'T HAVE A PRAYER  
JOHN 16:23–33 SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER APR 24, 2016

<sup>23</sup> In that day you will ask nothing of me. Truly, truly, I say to you, whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup> Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full.

<sup>25</sup> "I have said these things to you in figures of speech. The hour is coming when I will no longer speak to you in figures of speech but will tell you plainly about the Father. <sup>26</sup> In that day you will ask in my name, and I do not say to you that I will ask the Father on your behalf; <sup>27</sup> for the Father himself loves you, because you have loved me and have believed that I came from God. <sup>28</sup> I came from the Father and have come into the world, and now I am leaving the world and going to the Father."

<sup>29</sup> His disciples said, "Ah, now you are speaking plainly and not using figurative speech! <sup>30</sup> Now we know that you know all things and do not need anyone to question you; this is why we believe that you came from God." <sup>31</sup> Jesus answered them, "Do you now believe? <sup>32</sup> Behold, the hour is coming, indeed it has come, when you will be scattered, each to his own home, and will leave me alone. Yet I am not alone, for the Father is with me. <sup>33</sup> I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world."

My wife and I have enjoyed traveling to some faraway places.

Common theme and key reason is that

almost every time we have been out of country

we have been visiting a family member.

Being with that person both motivated & made trip possible

not only because they provided place for us to stay,

often because they did talking for us in foreign language.

You have probably had same kind of experience,

maybe not going to a foreign country,

but entering a new situation foreign to you,

maybe it was new job or new school or moving to new town

or going to activity where you encounter new people.

You may have done it because of or been greatly helped by

a family member or friend you already knew

who introduced you or helped you find your way.

Being with them made all the difference.

We are all going to a new place we have never been before,

the future. It is a foreign place for us,

where there is much we do not know.

but there is someone we know there: Jesus.

being with him makes all the difference.

Without him we don't have a prayer, but being with him  
gives us joy, courage and love.  
Jesus speaks words of text to disciples as they face future  
very different from what has become familiar.  
He has just finished the last supper before his death.  
He has told them he will go away, meaning his death,  
and he will come back again, meaning resurrection.  
This means after 3 years of his being physically with them  
things will be very different for them  
But his being with them will continue to make big difference  
as he explains when he talks now about prayer.

PRAYER ANSWERED IN JESUS' NAME GIVES US JOY  
JESUS' OVERCOMING TRIBULATION GIVES COURAGE  
THE FATHER WHO ANSWERS PRAYER GIVES US LOVE

PRAYER ANSWERED IN JESUS' NAME GIVES US JOY

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whatever you ask of the Father in my name, he will give it to you. <sup>24</sup>  
Until now you have asked nothing in my name. Ask, and you will  
receive, that your joy may be full.

When little children need something, all they have to do  
is ask their parents, and they will get whatever they need.  
When they get older, they may still get what they need  
from parents without them physically being there.  
In small town where I lived when first married,  
there was grocery store with blank checks at counter.  
Children could walk in, pick up groceries,  
write parents' name on check and go.  
Parents weren't even there but they got things in their name.  
Same kind of thing may still happen when students  
go to college with credit card parents pay for.  
What joy!

When Jesus was with disciples, people were constantly  
asking him for things and he often miraculously provided.  
He says, the day is coming soon when that will change.  
They won't ask him for things in that same way.  
because he is going to ascend into heaven.  
Today's reading is hinting at fact that this coming Thurs.  
is 40 days after Easter, Ascension Day.  
But they can still ask for things in prayer to God the Father,

and ask for them in his name, and so can we,  
which means it is as good as if Jesus himself is asking it.  
We are signing his name to the check.

This was a new concept for the disciples, but they got hang of it.  
After ascension, in book of Acts, they are constantly  
praying, preaching, baptizing, doing miracles  
in Jesus' name, that is, it is Jesus' power doing it.  
So, even when he is not physically there,  
they are still with Jesus.

Today's second reading, from Revelation, pictures heaven  
where everything, even light, is provided by Jesus, the lamb.

The same is true here and now.

As we step day by day into the unfamiliar future.

We are able to go there because Jesus is there for us,  
and so we will have all we need. This gives full joy.

This is good because, as Jesus knows,  
we will also encounter something else in the future.

#### JESUS' OVERCOMING TRIBULATION GIVES COURAGE

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If you are new at a school or a job, and you have  
friend or relative who shows you around, helps you out,  
you may find their friends then become your friends.  
But you may also find, without realizing it at first,  
that their enemies automatically become your enemies.

This is the other side of being with Jesus.

In verses before this Jesus uses a figure of speech.

He says when woman gives birth there is both pain & joy.

He is telling disciples that in the new things to come,  
there will be pain but there will still be joy.

As he ascends, they will remain in the world  
and in this world they will have tribulation,  
the Devil and his friends will cause trouble.

He knows this because he is experiencing it.

He shields the disciples from it when he is with them  
but they will experience it because they are with him.

He knows what will happen: In trying to get away from it,  
they will run away from him and be scattered.

This soon happens when he is arrested.

They abandon him, and we do too when fear  
stampedes us into temptation and sin.

And when this happens, we feel like he is not with us.

In v. 30, disciples say: Oh, now we understand, now we believe.

Jesus answers, "Oh, really?"

Jesus is the one who understands.

He understands how hard it is for us to believe  
when we do not see him and what he is doing for us.

But Jesus knows what he is doing for us.

He knows after his suffering & death he will rise again  
and ascend into heaven, to the right hand of the Father,  
which does not mean that he is no longer with us  
but that now instead of being with his disciples  
in one place at a time,  
he is able to be with us everywhere always.

He has overcome the world and its dark leader, the Devil,  
and all its opposition to him, and its power over us.

He has overcome world that has seeped into our own hearts  
leading us to temptation, filling with fear, shame, despair.

He forgives us, he loves us, he rescues us.

This is why, even while we live in a world full of trouble,  
we can still have peace;

even while we face fearsome things, we can have courage  
because he who with us and is greater than the world.

But there is more.

#### THE FATHER WHO ANSWERS PRAYER GIVES US LOVE

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As I mentioned before, when you are in that new place  
with a friend or family member, their friends become yours,  
In fact, Jesus says, his family becomes ours.

through faith in Jesus, his Father becomes our Father.  
If a child was at a friend's house and needed something,  
that friend might go to parents and ask for it for them.  
But as this relationship lasts, those parents may come to  
care for this new child themselves.

Jesus says that now that he has told us plainly about his Father  
and we have been born again as his own children  
through what Jesus has done for us,

It is not that he has to ask Father for each thing we need.  
but that we ourselves can as the Father in Jesus' name  
because the Father himself loves us.

Jesus is united with the Father and they are both  
of one mind toward us.

This is contrary to the non-Christian idea of God  
that he is some kind of stern and distant figure  
that has to be manipulated into doing things for us.

Jesus says he came from the Father into the world,  
they agreed on his incarnation.

He was leaving the world by his crucifixion and death,  
which was part of the Father's eternal plan.

And he was going back to the Father after  
his resurrection and ascension,  
showing Father's approval of all he has done,  
which guarantees the completion of our salvation.

We can be totally sure of both Jesus and the Father's love.

So, despite the things we don't know about the future,  
and the threatening things we do know,  
and the things we don't understand,  
and the things we only think we understand,

**PRAYER ANSWERED IN JESUS' NAME GIVES US JOY**

Even when we don't see him, he is providing for us.

**JESUS' OVERCOMING TRIBULATION GIVES COURAGE**

This sinful world is full of trouble but he has overcome  
the world and our sin by his death & resurrection

**THE FATHER WHO ANSWERS PRAYER GIVES US LOVE**

Because both Jesus and the father loves us,  
our prayers are answered every day and forever.