

Most Christians fail to appreciate the importance of the Spirit's gift on the Day of Pentecost—it formally ushered in a new era—this era is called the New Covenant, and it came with a fuller and final revelation from God.

Thus, from the Day of Pentecost onward, the church enjoyed a heightened understanding of Christ and His mediatory work, that the OC church lacked—in fact, this revelation was so much greater, that John (1Jn.2:8), speaks of the OC as "the darkness that is passing" and the NC as "the true light that now shines"—the gift of the Spirit brought profound and radical changes.

Our Savior is only hours away from the cross, and yet, He concerns Himself with teaching His beloved disciples about the subject of prayer and their fulness of joy.

William Hendriksen—"The cross with all its agonies is just around the corner. A few more hours, and Jesus will give his life as a ransom for many. He knows what is coming. Already he sees the nails that will pierce his hands and feet. He hears, as it were, the jeers and taunts of the leaders, their hellish laughter. Yet – O love divine and beyond all comprehension! – his ardent desire is this: 'that your joy may be full.'"

- I. When is this Promise Fulfilled?
- II. What is the Substance of this Promise?
- III. What is the Ultimate Purpose of this Promise?

I. When is this Promise Fulfilled?

1. V23—"And in that day you will ask Me nothing"—here the question becomes, what "day" is our Lord referring to...
2. In answering this question, I want to first give you the answer, and then provide a few reasons behind that answer...
3. By "that day" our Savior is referring to the Day of Pentecost, as the formal beginning of the NC era or period...
4. Thus, while "that day" began on Pentecost, it has continued for the past 2 thousand years, and will continue until Christ returns...
5. And so by "that day" is meant the Day of Pentecost, wherein the Spirit was given, and which began the NC era...
6. As a result, I want to suggest, from the context, two things that happened on that Day as the result of the Spirit's coming...
7. [1] On that day the sorrow of the disciples [turned to joy, v20—"Most assuredly, I say to you that you will weep and lament, but the world will rejoice and your will be sorrowful, but your sorrow will be turned into joy..."]
8. That is, when the Spirit came, He enabled the disciples to understand why Christ left and what He accomplished...
9. Thus, the disciples sorrow over His death and departure, would be replaced by joy, when He would reveal to them the significance of these events...
10. [2] On that day the understanding of the disciples increased, v23—"And in that day you will ask Me nothing..."
11. The disciples would no longer ask Christ questions, because He would be gone, and the Spirit would give them a fuller revelation...
12. This fuller revelation, as we shall see in v24, would enable them to pray for the first time, in the name of Christ...
13. That is, they would be given a greater understanding of who Christ is as Mediator, through whom they approach God...
14. Thus, when our Savior says "in that day you will ask Me nothing" He does not mean, we will never again ask questions...

15. It simply means, that the Holy Spirit, the Anointing from God, would make clear to them all that He told them...
16. In v16 He told them He was leaving them, but would see them again, in v17 and following, they asked themselves what this meant...
17. In v23, our Savior is telling them that, on the Day of Pentecost the Spirit would come to lead them into all truth...
18. It's as if He said—Now you keep asking Me questions because you don't understand—but a day is coming when you will...
19. A Day is coming when you will be given the Spirit, who will give you a fully and completed revelation from God...
20. Thus, by "in that day" our Savior is referring to the Day of Pentecost, that ushered in the NC era, which ends with our Savior's second coming...

## II. What is the Substance of this Promise?

1. The substance of the promise concerns the Spirit's role in prayer within the NC era, with regards to a fuller revelation...
2. Because it's the ministry of the Holy Spirit to glory Christ, in giving a fuller revelation to the disciples, He gave fuller knowledge of Christ...
3. Thus, the promise is this—when the Spirit was given, He would enable the disciples to understand Christ better...
4. They would be able to approach God through prayer, with greater understanding of Christ's work as Mediator...
5. Hitherto, they have nothing in His name—that is, up to this point their understanding has been limited with regards to work of mediation...
6. They lacked the fuller understanding that they would possess, after the Spirit came and revealed fuller truth...
7. The Spirit would make clear the nature of Christ's atoning and mediating work, in a way they previously did not know...
8. From the point when the Spirit would come and issue in a NC, the apostles (and all Christians), would pray "in Christ's name"...
9. Now, before I suggest what this entails, I think it best to first provide two necessary or important clarifications...
10. [a] OT saints approached God through the merits of Christ—that is, they knew they needed a Mediator, that God would provide...
11. They knew they could not approach God in their own merits, but that, they needed atonement and mediation...
12. The problem was—their understanding as to the particulars were faulty, and thus had little understanding beyond that...
13. Even the disciples themselves, who lived with Christ for over 3 yrs, failed to understand these things properly...
14. As a result, before the Day of Pentecost, they never prayed in the full understanding of all that Christ would do...
15. [b] To pray in "Jesus' name" is more than adding the phrase "in Jesus name" at the end of our prayers—a person can pray in Christ's name and never say "in Jesus name"...
16. Now, personally I think it's good to say "in Jesus name" but surely we understand, that whatever it means, it means more than merely mimicking the words...
17. Thus, the question I want to here answer is—what exactly does our Savior mean by praying "in His name"...
18. Well, I want to suggest it means at least three things—to pray in faith of His merits, in harmony to His word, and in pursuit of His glory...
19. [1] To pray in faith of His merits or virtue—to pray in Christ's name, is to pray for the sake of Christ's merit...

20. Brethren, we don't come before God because we are worthy—we don't come before God because we are righteous...
21. We come before God because we have been cleansed by the blood, and dressed with the righteousness of Christ...
22. Dan.9:18—"O my God, incline Your ear and hear...for we do not present our supplications before You because of our righteous deeds, but because of Your great mercies..."
23. In other words, Daniel, an OC saint, knew he did not pray in his own name—he did not trust in his own merit...
24. But he prayed for the sake of God's "great mercies"—that is, as they would be found in the coming Messiah...
25. Thus, to pray "in Christ's name" is to pray in union with Christ, or in trust of His blood and His righteousness...
26. It's to stand before the Father in Christ—it's to stand before the Father in His merit, and NOT our own merit...
27. [2] To pray in harmony to His word and will—to pray in Christ's name, is to pray in harmony to His will as found in Scripture...
28. Jn.15:7—"If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you..."
29. We abide (remain) in Christ by faith, and His words abide in us by faith—we believe what His word teaches...
30. This changes our desires so that they harmonize with His—what we desire is what His word promises and commands...
31. Thus, to pray "in His name" is to pray in His will—it's to desire the very same things He desires as found in His word...
32. Perhaps I can put it this way—it's to come before the Father shaped by Christ's word—asking for what He has promised and commanded...
33. [3] To pray in pursuit of His honor and glory—to pray in Christ's name, is to pray ultimately for Christ's glory...
34. To pray in the name of Christ is to pray for the cause of Christ—it's to pray that His kingdom be advanced and His name glorified...
35. We don't come in our own name, that is, with our own agenda or for our own glory—but we seek His glory...
36. Now, here I want to say a few words about v23b—"Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you..."
37. Some Christians take this to mean, everything we ask for, as long as we say "in Jesus' name" we will receive it...
38. But if you notice—this promise is conditional—"Whatever you ask the Father IN MY NAME He will give you..."
39. He only gives us what we ask for "in Christ's name—that is, because of Christ's merits, in harmony to His word, and for His glory...
40. We have no promise to receive anything, if we fail to ask for the sake of Christ, for His glory, and in harmony to His word...
41. For example—nowhere in Scripture does God command us to buy a new Cadillac, nor does He promise one...
42. Thus, to pray for a new Cadillac in Jesus name, does not mean that God is going to hear and answer that prayer...
43. But—He does command us to be holy, and He does promise us grace to obey and walk in the commands of God...
44. Thus, when we ask God for grace to obey His word in Jesus name, we have confidence that He will answer that prayer...
45. But, before we move on to our third main-heading, let me rather briefly suggest three lessons from v23, about prayer...
46. Lesson 1—We learn about the object of prayer—"Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name..."

47. Just as the NC revelation provides further understanding about Christ, so it also provides further insight in God as Father...
48. This does not mean the OT nowhere speaks of God as Father, and that the OT saints didn't know God as Father...
49. But it is interesting to notice, that when the NT speaks of NC prayer and worship, it highlights God as our Father...
50. The OT Scriptures clearly teach us about God's love and patience, but the NT Scriptures more fully reveal Him as Father...
51. And our Savior taught His disciples, that when you pray, say—"Our Father who is heaven, hallowed by Your name..."
52. I suggest we fail to give this its proper weight—I fear many Christians take this for granted—in prayer, we ask our Father...
53. This means, we approach One who loves us and cares for us—we come before our Sovereign God and Heavenly Father...
54. For example—I was reminded of this concept last night when one of my daughters appealed to me change my mind...
55. She had earlier asked me to go somewhere tomorrow with some friends, and my original answer to her was NO...
56. But later that night she respectfully approached me a second time, and asked me again—this time I said YES...
57. The primary reason for me changing my mind was—I began to realize that what she wanted was a good thing for her...
58. And because she is my daughter and I love her greatly, I relented to her desires, and gave her permission to go...
59. Now, God obviously is not a man that He should change His mind, for He has perfect knowledge of all things...
60. But, remember what our Savior said—"If you then, being evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will *your* heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask Him (Lk.11:13)..."
61. Lesson 2—We learn about the basis of prayer—that is, the foundation of all prayer is the person and work of Christ...
62. Oh my brethren, this ought to enable us to open our mouths wide in prayer—we come in the name of Christ...
63. We don't come because we are worthy or deserving, we come because of what Christ has done and is doing on our behalf...
64. Lessons 3—We learn about the power in prayer—that is, all true prayer is the result of the Spirit's work in us...
65. As we have learned back in vv14-15, it's the work of the Spirit to glory Christ by making Him known to our hearts...
66. Thus, in prayer, the Holy Spirit makes us aware of our neediness, and He makes us aware of Christ's sufficiency...
67. It has long been said, and I think rightly, that while Christ intercedes FOR US, the Spirit intercedes IN US...
68. While Christ pleads the merits of His wounds in heaven, the Holy Spirit pleads the merits of His wounds on earth...
69. It's the Spirit who enables us to pray "in Christ's name"—it's the Spirit who shows and reveals Christ to us...
70. Eph.2:18—"For through Him (Christ) we both (Jews and Gentiles) have access by one Spirit to the Father..."

### III. What is the Ultimate Purpose of this Promise?

1. V24—"Until now you have asked nothing in My name. Ask, and you will receive, that your joy may be full..."

2. At first it may seem strange that our Savior puts as a purpose of their prayers—their joy being made full or complete...
3. But throughout this final discourse of our Savior, He rather frequently makes reference to the joy of His disciples...
4. Jn.15:11—"These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full..."
5. Jn.17:13—"But now I come to You, and these things I speak in the world, that they may have My joy fulfilled in themselves..."
6. Our Savior's words, as they would be better understood from the Day of Pentecost, were intended to give them joy...
7. One obvious goal or purpose of prayer, was to ensure their joy was full—the disciple's joy was important to our Lord...
8. Our Savior wanted His beloved disciples to have confidence in prayer, so that their joy would be made full...
9. Our Savior wanted His disciples to ask the Father in His name, so that they would receive what they asked for, so that, their joy would be full...
10. In other words—one end of prayer is our joy—one primary or fundamental purpose of believing prayer is our joy...
11. Now—at this point I want to ask the question—How can our joy be a goal or purpose of prayer, and not God's glory...
12. Well, simply put—these two go together—because we ultimately pray for God's glory, when our prayers are answered, this brings us joy...
13. Perhaps I can put it like this—our joy is increased, when our prayers are answered, and God's glory is advanced...
14. In other words—these two things, our joy and God's glory, are closely related to each other—the more God is glorified, the more we rejoice, and, the more we rejoice, the more He is glorified...
15. Jn.14:13—"And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son"  
Jn.16:24—"Ask, and will receive, that your joy may be full..."
16. Notice our Savior speaks of two ends or goals of prayer—the Father's glory in the Son, and the joy of believers...
17. How can these two both be goals, unless they are essentially related—our joy is dependant upon His glory...
18. Shorter Catechism—"What is the chief end of man? A. Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy Him forever..."
19. Thus, in closing, I want to focus upon the fact that prayer and joy are closely related—without prayer there can be little joy...
20. Generally speaking a prayerless person is a joyless person, and a prayerful person is, generally speaking, a joyful person...
21. And yet, I want to end by answering this question—what is the connection between pray and Christian joy...
22. [1] Prayer gives joy because it glorifies God—few things show our neediness and God's graciousness, like prayer...
23. Prayer is the confession of our weakness and it's also, and equally, a confession of God's sufficiency and grace...
24. Prayer brings us with empty hands to God, and yet, we don't return from prayer empty, but with full hands...
25. Thus, humble and believing prayer brings us joy, because it brings His glory—it magnifies His grace and love...
26. [2] Prayer gives joy because it brings good to others—that is, as we see God's kingdom advanced in the world...
27. We must remember brethren, when Christians pray that don't merely ask the Father for things that they need...
28. But they also ask on behalf of others—they ask on behalf of their family members, neighbors, and co-workers...

29. They ask on behalf of their pastors and fellow church members—they ask on behalf of our beloved children...
30. And thus, when they see these prayers being answered, and they see those around them walking in the TRUTH...
31. This brings great joy to their hearts—this warms their hearts as few things can—this brings them great joy (3Jn.1:4—"I have no great joy than to hear that my children walk in truth")...
32. [3] Prayer gives joy because in it we fellowship with God—prayer is not merely asking but it's also communing...
33. I fear we often overlook this—we think of prayer merely in terms of asking God for things—for ourselves and others...
34. And surely brethren, prayer is this—prayer is asking God for things, in Christ's name, promised in His word...
35. But prayer is more than this—prayer is fellowship with God—it's communion with God, through Christ, by the Spirit...
36. Prayer brings us into the special presence of our Father, and it's there that poor and needy children find joy...
37. Ps.17:11—"In Your presence is fullness of joy; at Your right hand are pleasures forevermore"—and thus, through prayer our joy is made complete...