

“Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you”

(Jn 16:23)

The most absurd thing in this world is this: on the one hand, there are so many confused people, endlessly searching for something, crying out for help in the midst of the inevitable trials of life and feeling like orphans. On the other hand, there is God, who is everyone's Father and who would like nothing better than to use his almighty power to grant his children's wishes and satisfy their needs.

It is as if emptiness and fullness were crying out for each other. Yet the two do not meet. The freedom humans have been given is able to do such damage.

But for those who acknowledge him, God never ceases to be Love.

Listen to what Jesus says:

“Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you.”

This is one of those statements, full of promise, that we find in the Gospels and that Jesus uses to teach us in various ways how to obtain what we need ...

Only God can speak in this manner. His power is unlimited, and he can bestow all graces, whether they be spiritual or material, possible or impossible.

But pay close attention: Jesus tells you how to present your request to the Father. “In my name,” he says.

If you have even a little faith, these three short words should give you confidence.

Jesus lived here among us and knows our countless needs, and he feels deep concern for us. So when we pray, he wants to be involved. It is as if he were saying to each one of us, “Go to the Father on my behalf and ask him for this and that and that other thing.” He knows that the Father cannot say “no” to him because he is his Son and he is God.

You do not go to the Father on your own behalf, but on behalf of Christ. You simply become his messenger.

There are many Christians who pray in this way who could tell you of the countless graces they have received that show that, in his fatherly love, God watches over them every day.

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At this point, perhaps, you may say to me, "I have asked over and over in the name of Christ but with no results."

That is possible. I mentioned before that there are other passages of the Gospel in which Jesus invites us to ask for what we need. In them he gives further explanations that you have probably overlooked.

He says, for instance, that we obtain what we request if we "remain" in him, and that means to remain in his will ...

It is possible that you may ask for something that doesn't coincide with God's plan for you, something he doesn't consider useful to your life here on earth or in heaven, or that he even considers harmful. How could he, your Father, grant your prayer in this case? He would be betraying you, and that he will never do.

Therefore, it might be useful for you to make an agreement with him before praying, and to say, "Father, I would like to ask you this in Jesus' name - if you think it is all right."

If the grace you are asking is in harmony with God's loving plan for you, then you will see the truth of the words:

"Whatever you ask the Father in my name he will give you."

It could also be that you ask for graces without any intention of conforming your life to what God demands. Do you think that in this case it would be fair for God to grant what you request? He doesn't want to give you only a gift; he wants to give you complete happiness, and you can possess it only if you live the commandments of God, and his words. It is not enough to think about them, or even to meditate on them; they must be lived. If you do this, you will obtain everything.

To summarize, would you like to obtain graces?

Ask for anything you want in the name of Jesus, intending, above all, to do God's will and obey his laws.

God is very happy to give us graces. Unfortunately, we don't very often give him the chance.

You can find a complete version of this month's commentary in *Words to Live By* (New City Press, 1980).