

Asking for Daily Bread

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Date: 20 April 2025

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[0 : 0 0] All right, let's read together from Matthew chapter 6, verses 9 to 13, which is the Lord's prayer. So Jesus says, I love it that we've been able to talk about the resurrection, the greatest event in human history.

And then tonight we get to come back and talk about one of the most basic things of the Christian life and where the rubber meets the road, and that is how to pray. This is a passage that in Luke, his disciples had said, Lord, teach us to pray. And he gives them kind of a condensed version of what he gives us here in the Sermon on the Mount with what Corey just read. We've talked about how prayer is just hard. It's one of those things that the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak.

Even that verse that talks about the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. That was said when the disciples were told to stay awake and pray with Jesus and they fell asleep. And I'm like, that's me a lot of times when I'm trying to pray is I'm fighting off sleep. Just, I want to be here.

I want to be doing this, but it can just be hard. I can get so distracted with the things that are going on around me, whatever it is, it can just be hard. And so I think it's very fitting for us to be looking at the Sermon on the Mount, looking at this section on prayer, and even just saying, Lord, would you teach us to pray? And that's been my prayer that as we go through this, that we would be able to just be saying, Lord, as we think about prayer, as we preach about prayer, as we listen about, like teach us to pray. And so tonight we're going through one of the most basic things when it comes to prayer. Give us this day, our daily bread, verse 11. Now, what we've just been reminded of when the Lord is teaching us to pray, he starts with our father, like Corey just shared with us. That may be the most foundational thing you hear in all of the Sermon on the Mount with the thing, if you can just remember this, that God is our loving father.

It changes everything. It changes the way we think about prayer. It changes the way we think about our life. When you go to the secret place, which we talked about a couple of weeks ago, the secret place of prayer, you aren't going to sit before the judge. You aren't going to sit before that critical boss, like Corey was just talking about. We're going to meet with your heavenly father. That changes everything in the way we think about prayer. And then he says, hallowed be your name. That is actually a petition that says, Lord, we want you to make your name hallowed throughout the earth. We want you to make your name. Holy, make your name. Great. That needs to be one of the things that we're thinking about in prayer. When we come to him, God, you're the creator and sustainer of the universe. You deserve all honor, glory, and praise, not just for me, but from everyone in the earth. Hallowed be your name. It's a petition. Jesus is saying, ask that God would make his name great in all the earth. Make your name. Holy. And he says, your kingdom come, your will be done. So as I come to pray, I need to be thinking, God, I want it to be your will that is done, not my will, not anyone else's will, but yours.

[3 : 45] This is about you and your will. I want your will to be done here on earth, just like it is in heaven. And so when we come to God like that in prayer, and we start out reminding ourselves and saying to him, you are my heavenly father. I want you to make your name great. I want your will to be done on earth as it is in heaven. It shapes our prayers differently. It shapes how we hope. It shapes how our, what our expectations are, like what we think should happen, what could happen. If I, if he is our loving heavenly father, it means he cares about us deeply. He's not judging us and how we pray. And if he's also the all powerful, almighty God who deserves all glory, honor, it changes the way we think about what he can do as we pray. So that's foundational to say, our father who are in heaven, hallowed be your name, make your name great. And then we come to this most basic simple prayer in verse 11, give us this day our daily bread. Why did Jesus teach us to pray this? Why did he teach us to pray, give us this day our daily bread?

This is one of the first, it's the first of four petitions about asking God to do something for us. And it is interesting that Jesus starts with the physical needs. He could have started with the spiritual stuff, but instead he chose to start with the most basic physical need. I think one of the reasons that is just like Corey talked about this morning in the sermon that the, the leading Greek, the leading philosophies of the day, mainly by the Greeks was that the material world, including the body is either bad or at least it's unimportant. And Jesus starts with a body. He starts with our basic physical needs and says, go to God, go to your heavenly father and pray, give us this day, our daily bread.

Martin Lloyd-Jones says that Jesus starts with the physical needs because if you're worried about your basic needs, it will affect the way you view everything else. It will affect the way you approach all of your life if you're worried that your physical needs aren't going to be met. I thought that was pretty practical.

But it also emphasizes just how much God cares about everything in your life. He cares about our spiritual life so much that Jesus came and took care of our greatest need by living the life that we couldn't live, dying the death that we deserve to die. And then he defeated death for us, took our greatest need.

He took care of that. But Jesus says he also takes care of our smallest basic physical needs. Give us this day our daily bread. Now we could talk about this passage and talk about the spiritual symbolism of it.

[6 : 37] You know, it's like Jesus is the bread of life and he's the true bread from heaven. He says in John chapter six, or how man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God, which Jesus says in Matthew chapter four. But what Jesus is doing here is he's addressing our physical needs, our most basic daily physical needs of food. So he says, give us this day our daily bread.

Now, if you were a first century Jew listening to Jesus here and you hear, give us this day our daily bread, what do you think they would think about? This is crowd participation. You can actually answer this.

What do you think? Manna. Good. I heard it. Manna. Exodus chapter 16. When God has delivered the Israelites out of Egypt, they actually start grumbling about being rescued and all the problems that they're having. They're hungry.

They don't think they have enough food. And God literally sends what they would call bread from heaven. It's this wafer-like thing that actually tasted pretty good and supplied their needs. Kind of reminds me, we were listening to the two towers as we were driving around Orkney on our holiday. And they were talking about the limbus, the wafer bread of the elves, you know, and how it actually tastes pretty good and sustains them for a really long time. It's like, that was probably taken from manna.

It's like this wafer. Manna literally means, what is it? It's like, what is this substance that tastes good, that comes out of heaven? It's like the dew on the ground. They just wake up and it's there. And that was supposed to be their daily bread, what they were supposed to eat.

[8 : 16] Now, when they were given instructions on what to do about this, they were supposed to go out every morning and gather what they needed for the day. If they got too much, maybe they're thinking, this might not be here tomorrow. So I got to get enough. I'll just keep it away, save it, put it in the corner. It won't be too greedy. Just get what I need for tomorrow. I'll save it back there.

What would happen? It would breed worms and start to stink. God was teaching them, trust me, when I say, get what you need for today. I'm going to provide for today, but then also I'll do it again tomorrow. You have to learn to trust me. This is what the Jews would have thought when they heard this. Give us this day our daily bread. They're probably thinking about manna in the wilderness when God was teaching them to understand that he provides for their daily needs, their basic needs.

And just as a side note, I mentioned this, but this came about, the manna from heaven came about because they were grumbling and complaining against the Lord. And I just think it's really important for us to understand that the Lord is gracious to us. Even when our hearts aren't exactly right, he still provides for our needs. He still cares about those basic needs. Even when we get it wrong, just like Corey was sharing, a father doesn't stop loving you because you disobey.

Same thing with our God, that even though they were grumbling and complaining against him, he still provided because he was very long suffering and patient. And like the Israelites, when we hear this, give us this day our daily bread, we need to learn constant dependence on the Lord. We need to understand our neediness. It's not like that's something that we kind of conjure up. Yeah, I need to act like I'm needy. It's like, no, no, no, you are needy. This is a reminder of that. This is a reminder that you are constantly dependent upon the Lord, whether you realize it or not. So when we pray, give us this day our daily bread, it reminds us, I'm relying on you for everything I need today. It allows us to go back to him day after day. He doesn't give it to us just one time, this one lump sum that covers a long period of time, because the reality is we're just going to forget him if that were to happen. I mean, you guys know this. It's like when things are going bad, that's when we're most likely to pray.

We're most likely to reach out to God in desperation and say, I need you to do something about this. Things get better, and what happens? Our prayer life kind of slips back into that normal. Y'all know what I'm talking about? But when we're praying, give us this day our daily bread. It reminds us, I need him every single day. If he just gave it to us in one lump sum that was to last us over a long period, we would care more about the gift than the giver himself. And that would be a tragedy.

[11 : 19] We need to learn to love the provider more than the provision. And the reality is we don't like being dependent. We don't like having to ask for things. We're just creatures that hope things get brought up without us having to ask for it. We don't like feeling needy or, worse, coming across as needy. We protect against that all the time. And God says, you have to understand, in this relationship, you have to understand, we are needy. And this is a reminder to us that we need him every day.

Because we're more natural like the Israelites who want to go out and gather for more than one day. We want guarantees for tomorrow. And not in, like, God's promise to provide for us tomorrow. We want to see it, taste it, and touch it for tomorrow, right? We want that tangible evidence instead of a promise.

And the promise is more sure than anything we could put our hands on. God wants us to understand that he is the one that guarantees that we will have what we need tomorrow, not anything else. So reason number one why Jesus teaches us to pray, give us this day our daily bread, is that we are to be in constant dependence on the Father. We need to be reminded of that. He says, give us this day our daily bread.

Bread. Bread. The most basic and fundamental of needs. Our daily needs are often a source of anxiety for us.

I mean, if we think about it, most of us are not worrying and thinking a lot about finances because we're just greedy. Now, we are greedy. We've got that in us. But we're just more worried that the money's not going to be there to provide for all of our needs tomorrow, or next month, or next year, or whatever. That's why we are anxious about money. We don't think we're going to be provided for. Not just because we're greedy and want more. That is part of it. But we worry about our daily needs. It's a source of anxiety for us. And I just think it's great in Matthew. I said great. It's kind of sad, but it reminds me of me. So I think it's great. But in Matthew chapter 14, you have the feeding of the 5,000. It's 5,000 men. So a lot more people that were actually fed than 5,000. And they take up 12 basketfuls left over. And then the very next chapter in Matthew 15, they're 4,000. Same thing.

[13 : 48] He multiplies it. Feeds. They have seven basketfuls left over. And then the very next chapter, Matthew chapter 16, verse 7, Jesus mentions something about beware of the leaven of the Pharisees. And the disciples are like, oh, no. Forgot the bread. And he's like, are you really worried about bread?

Oh, he says, oh, you little faith. That's me. Like, do you not remember what I did for you just the other day? Give us this day our daily bread. Some of that is like, don't you remember that I provided for you yesterday? Why are you anxious about today? Why are you worried that you're not going to have enough? That I'm not going to provide for you? I told you I would. And I proved it yesterday and the day before and the day before that. So why are you anxious? And he's going to talk more about that in this chapter, Matthew chapter 6. But we stress about our daily needs, our daily bread, just like the disciples did. And we're just quickly to forget that the Lord will provide. That's Psalm 104, 27. The psalmist is talking about the creatures of the world, the lion, Leviathan, different sea creatures. And he says in verse 27, these all look to you to give them their food in due season. God is taking care of all the creatures of the earth. Jesus says this later in this chapter that God takes care of the sparrows, the small birds. Don't you think he's going to take care of you? Yet we're still just prone to worry, prone to anxiety, prone to think, well maybe this is the exception. Maybe next week, next month, next year is going to be the time that I do something to mess this up and God's not going to provide for me. And Jesus teaches us to pray, give us this day our daily bread so that we're reminded that our smallest needs, bread, physical needs are going to be taken care of.

So reason number two, Jesus teaches us that we are to be dependent on the Father for everything, all of our basic physical needs. He cares about even the smallest things. And we need to understand that when we are learning to pray. Now I mentioned the first century Jews, they hear this, give us this day our daily bread. They probably think about manna. But if they also know their scriptures really well, they might even think of Proverbs chapter 30 verses 8 and 9, where the writer here says, give me neither poverty nor riches, feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, who is the Lord? Or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God.

Do we pray like this where we are satisfied for the food that is needful for us? Or are we just constantly thinking about abundance? I need more. I never have enough. The first century Jew hears daily bread and they might think of this proverb that says, God, give me the food that is needful for me.

Give me what I need. Don't give me too much. Because if I get too much, I'll probably forget you. But don't give me too little. Because if I do, I'll be tempted to steal. And that will profane the name of my God. Give me just that right amount, that Goldilocks amount of not too much, not too little, but just right. Give me what I need, the food that is needful for me. Now I can remember before I was in uni and then when I was in uni, I might say something like, look, it's not that I want to be rich. I just want to be comfortable. You know what I'm talking about? Anybody ever said something like that? Like, I don't need a lot. I just want to be comfortable. And essentially what I'm saying when I said that was, I want to have enough that I don't feel like I need the Lord. I want to have enough that I don't have to worry about anything. In other words, too full. Forgetting the Lord.

[17 : 58] That is what I'm prone to do. Now, one of the things when we hear this about, Lord, give us the food that is needful for me. What if he does give us abundance? What if he prospers us? And at that point, one of the things we have to realize is that scripture teaches us about faithful stewardship.

If he has entrusted you with a lot, with abundance, that means you are to be a faithful steward. If you feel like you don't have very much at all, you don't have the abundance. I wish I was the guy that had abundance. I wish I had all of that. You are to be a faithful steward with what you've been given. It's not about how much, as much as God is going to give you what you need. And if it feels more than like what you need, one of the things that comes to my mind a lot is where Jesus was saying to whom much is given, much is required. Or the parable of the talents where the five talent and the two talent, they did the same thing. They were faithful with what the Lord gave them.

And that's what we're called to do. And so there might be some of us like, I wish I was the, the, had the abundance, the prosperous one. Then I could be really generous. And the reality is, if you're not generous where you are right now, you're probably not going to be generous if you had a lot more. Generosity doesn't just start when you have an abundance. It comes from the heart.

But when we're praying, give us this day, our daily bread. We are saying, God, give me what I need. You know what I need. I don't necessarily know what I need. I mean, sometimes we treat prayer like a genie in the bottle or like a five-year-old that had a genie in the bottle. And it's like, we're not going to ask for the right things often. We don't often know what we should ask for. And even when we get it wrong, God gives us what we need. And we just trust him with that. So we say, God, give us this day our daily bread. Daily bread. That's a space where we need to live. We're in constant dependence. We understand our neediness for the smallest, most basic necessities. Daily bread reminds us of daily needs that he cares about, that are important to him. And in fact, because he is our father in heaven, our father, he cares about these needs more than you do. He cares about your life more than you even do yourself. And like we've talked about this morning, if he did not withhold

Jesus from us, if he did not withhold Jesus from us, what in the universe would he ever withhold from us if it was for our good? Do we believe that he is a good father who wants our good? Now the resurrected Lord makes sure that our basic needs are taken care of. And if he does that, what will he not take care of? What will he not take care of? And this is where the rubber meets the road. Do we trust him? Do we trust that the one who took care of our greatest need, that's one thing, but this is just small. Those prayers that you're like, that's too small to pray for. You know what I'm talking about?

[21 : 11] It's like, man, I'm in a hurry. I really need to find a parking spot. Lord, would you give me a parking spot? Help me find a place to get here, get there. Like that feels like, oh, that's just wrong. I shouldn't pray about those things. Give us this day our daily bread says there's nothing too small that we can't bring before the Lord, that we just trust him with to say, I am needy on you for everything.

And in Edinburgh, you realize you're needy for parking, but I am needy for everything. I can trust my heavenly father. Now, I was reminded this week, there's an acquaintance I have back in Birmingham who is a minister, had four kids, actually had three kids, and then they had twins who were conjoined. And it was a really big deal. They weren't sure they were going to live, and then it looks like they're going to live, but they need to be separated. The husband and wife are separated.

One has the older kids, one's up in Philadelphia for like a year. Like they're just away from each other. Just a terribly hard time. And the Lord just does a great work. The surgery's successful.

All's going well. But, you know, there's things like having to wear braces to fix the spine. Just all these different things that are going on. But they've seen the faithfulness of the Lord. And then a couple of months ago, almost a couple of months ago, one of their older sons, who's like seven, is diagnosed with leukemia. And it's just really, really hard. And I'm kind of following them online just to kind of see how to pray for them and things like that. And while they're in and out of the hospital with him, because they can't even do the treatment sometimes because the fever's too high, he's sick, his immune system can't take it. Just all the complications that are going on. They find out that one of the daughters, the brace is not working for the spine. And it's caused her to develop a hernia. She's like two years old. They're separated again, trying to take care of there. I'm just looking and I'm like, how are they just going through all of this? How are they making it? And you will see one of the things that they say is we learn how to trust the Lord all along the way in the small things. So we knew we had to just trust him with the bigger things. And that's how we've been able to make it through it. And I went, I meant to go back and verify. I literally, I think their dog died during this time as well. I mean, it's just like, there's just nothing that seems to be. It's like, please, Lord, give them mercy. And they said, we learned to trust him with the small things so that it taught us to now trust him with the bigger things. And as it gets harder and harder, we still just learn to trust him because it started with trusting him with the small things.

Now, when Corey gave me this passage, that this was what was going to be next up to talk about, give us this day, our daily bread. It kind of stirred me inside because, you know, there are different times that different parts of the Lord's prayer just meant a lot to me. Different seasons.

[24 : 31] I can remember one season that hallowed be your name. Like I was really, really passionate about talking about that, that I learned that's not just a statement of like, hey, your name is great. It's a, it's a petition. Lord, make your name great. And I was just really passionate about that. Lord, how would be your name, make your name great in all the earth. And I want to, you know, be about missions and all these different things. And, you know, it was just a period of time where that was a very strong petition in my heart. But over the last 10 years or so, it has actually been this one that give us this day, our daily bread that has been so special to me and even taken on new meaning of just thinking about the Lord providing for all of our needs, everything that we need, even the smallest things, how much he cares. Now, we've all known suffering. Everyone in here has known a measure of suffering. But there have been some periods of time where our family has known suffering to the extent where you're in a place where you're just shocked that you're in this position.

How could we ever get to this place? How could we ever be here? You're not sure how long it's going to last, if there will ever be an end to it. You're not guaranteed that there will ever be an end to it, but you are guaranteed that he will be with you through it. And it was during this time, over a long period of time, where this prayer, give us this day our daily bread, was the prayer that would just sustain me. Because it was like, Lord, I need grace just to make it through today. And I'm not asking you for tomorrow. Tomorrow, I'll come back and ask you tomorrow.

But right now, I just need to make it through today. Would you give me the grace, the strength, the wisdom, the mercy, whatever I need, just to make it through today? And I'm going to come back tomorrow, and I'm going to ask for tomorrow. But please, give us this day our daily bread. Give us what I need to lead my family through this. Give me what I need, the wisdom to navigate this situation and make the right decisions. And the Lord used this prayer to shepherd me through the valley of the shadow of death, where it's like, I'd learned to trust him with the smallest things.

And if I can trust him with the smallest things, I know he will take care of all things. Give us this day our daily bread. He gives us the grace that we need to sustain us for the day. And he will do it again tomorrow and the next day. And that is guaranteed. We have the promise. We just have to learn to trust it. And we need to make this a part of our daily lives. We're saying, give us this day our daily bread. I want to trust you for everything, because I know I'm needy. And I know I'm dependent on you for everything. Help me to trust you. Now, if you've been here for many of these Sunday nights, and we've been talking through the Sermon on the Mount, and chapter 6, verse 8, just a few verses earlier, but a few weeks ago, Jesus says, don't be like the hypocrites when you pray, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. So some of you might be thinking, why in the world, if he knows what I need before I ask him, why is he telling me to ask him? Why would I ask him if he already knows

I need it? And what we realize is that this is how relationship with a Father goes. God loves for us to meet him in that secret place and to ask him for everything that's on our hearts.

[28 : 28] There are some times you might be thinking, like, I'm too distracted to pray. I've got so many things on my mind. That's the stuff you should be praying about, right? Like, when we're just stressed, when we're, like, so distracted, it's like, Lord, take this. Help me not to worry about it, because I know you've got it. You will provide. You will take care of me. And as we do that, as we meet with him, we start growing in that relationship with him. He's going to provide for his children, but the daily asking turns our hearts towards him so that we recognize when he answers our prayer, so that we recognize that he is there with us in the midst of whatever we're going through, and that he cares about it all. And it teaches us to love the giver even more than the gift. So that you might have a prayer like Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego that's like, Lord, deliver us from this. But even if you don't, I'm still going to praise you. Because even if he doesn't give us what we're asking for, it's because it was for our good. One of the most, the best things I've ever heard Tim Keller say that just helped me think about prayer was that, just that quote that he says where God gives us what we would have asked for had we known everything that he knows. Like if I really knew what I should be asking for, that's what I would ask for. Like God knows that, and that's how he grants our requests.

And as we come to him for daily bread with these prayers, it allows us to see that the steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, that his mercies never come to an end, that they are new every morning.

Great is your faithfulness. His mercies are new every morning. And when we're asking for daily bread, when we're going to him asking for these things, we're actually able to recognize those mercies.

We're able to recognize the things that he's doing in our life that will cause us to love him more, grow in our relationship with him, and learn to trust him more. So being forced to come to him for daily bread allows us to see his mercies, to rejoice in his faithfulness. Asking for daily bread is for our good, and it's also for his glory. We get what we need, and he gets honored for giving it to us.

And we grow in a relationship with our daddy, which is the goal, right? All right, let's pray. Father, we do thank you that we just can even come to you and call you Father. And like a perfect Father, you care about our daily needs even more than we do, so we can trust you. And God, right now, I just ask you for grace to trust you more. Our spirit is willing, but our flesh is weak, so we struggle to pray. But God, maybe just even this little verse, this small petition, give us this day our daily bread could transform our prayer lives. We are needy. Help us to remember that so that we will come to you and trust you more and trust you more and hope in you because you are our hope.

[31 : 51] We pray these things, and we ask that you would make them a reality in our lives. And we pray that in Jesus' name. Amen.