

Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

Matt. 6:11

For weeks now we have been plunging the depths of the greatest prayer that was ever prayed. And, during our study we have seen, that there is so much more to this prayer than we had ever imagined. Our text this today is the nest petition in the disciples prayer; “Give us this day our daily bread...”

As I began to study these words this week - I once again found myself asking; what do these words mean? What is Jesus trying to teach us? When we pray these words what are they suppose to do? How will these words change us? What flashed through the minds of the 12 when they heard these words for the first time?

This section of the Lord’s Prayer clearly deals with our practical needs rather spiritual ones. He dealt with our spiritual needs as he taught us to pray for forgiveness and protection from the evil one. When Jesus included the words “Give us this day our daily bread”, I believe that he was teaching us that God is concerned with our practical well-being just as he is concerned with our physical and spiritual well-being. Do we

really appreciate this today? That God cares for every part of our lives?

But it means more than that as well. In each of the gospel accounts of the loaves and fishes, the same words appear: “looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke them.” This is what we do when we pray this sentence in the Lord’s Prayer; we recognize that it is God who gives us all things.

For us to pray this prayer each day or week is a conscious acknowledgement that everything that we have comes from God. It has to be said that many of us do not like to make this acknowledgement. We live in a world where people are encouraged to get and to do things for themselves, to make something of themselves. We are respected when we have a decent car, a decent house and plenty of money, people will say that we have done well. There are few of us who would stop them and say; “this is a gift from God, I have had little to do with it.

But this prayer means more. Jesus does not tell us to pray “give me this day my daily bread.” He gives us a communal prayer. A prayer that we should be praying on behalf of everybody in the

world. There are many people who would be happy to receive a slice of bread much less a loaf. To pray this prayer in this way, we must be willing to be a part of God's answer for people like these.

Today, we could quite easily manage to live healthy lives without bread. We can eat rice, potatoes, yam, banana, yogurt; cereal...any of these would enable us to live without bread. The people in Jesus' time could not do this. Bread was apart of their basic diet. Without it would have been very difficult to live.

I mentioned a bit earlier how the world judges us by how much money we have, how big the house is, whether our children have Play station 2 and Game box. In this prayer Jesus tells us to ignore what the world thinks for he tells us to pray simply for enough to satisfy our needs, not our wants, but our needs. For some of us, our needs could include a new car every two years. If your job is in management, or a traveling officer, this would be necessary in order for you to do that job and continue being God's witness among the people he has placed you. For some it could mean a larger house. Jesus was not against going to visit people in large houses. It

was at the house of prominent Pharisee that he healed a man with dropsy.

I cannot stand here and tell you what your version of 'daily bread' is; neither can anybody else. It is between each one of us and God to work that out. But, I must warn you of the danger of going after more than your daily bread. Jesus gave that warning when he met the rich young ruler. **READ Matt. 19: 16-24.**

When we begin to set our eyes and thoughts upon more than we need we become like that rich ruler, his money and possessions were more important to him than his relationship with God. Sometimes we take more than we need and forget that there is someone who will get less. And we are then saying to God that; "he does not know what is best for me, only I can know. We are saying that we do not care if some one else has to go with out as long as I have what I want. And once we begin to do that we have only one of two choices. Repent, and that repentance will probably involve giving up the extra that we have set our eyes on. Or walk away from God taking our riches and possessions with us. The rich ruler took the second option. I hope that we will not do the same.

I think it is impossible to preach a sermon on this topic without mentioning the bread that the Israelites received from God when they were in the wilderness, so here is my mention. The book of Exodus tells us; **16:22-27. READ!** However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So, Moses was angry with them.

Each day they were there, they received one day's bread. Apart from the day before the Sabbath when they had two days supply. Obviously, some people thought that they could give themselves a day off or a morning off and keep some of God's provision for the following day. And what happened, it was full of maggots and began to smell. Could it be that our prayer life is like this at times? King David said in his psalm *"May my prayer be set before you like incense; may the lifting up of my hands be like the evening sacrifice."* But what happens when we do not pray regularly, when we say that we have prayed enough today for two days, do you not think it is possible that instead of smelling like incense, our prayers begin to smell more like that day old manna.

I have saved the most important part of this sermon until or almost the last. I want you to look at just where in the Lord's Prayer Jesus has us praying for our daily bread. **REPEAT PRAYER.**

The prayer for our daily needs comes after we have spent time in worship and adoration. If we do not spend time with God like this first in our daily prayer times, then we should not really be surprised if we begin to have problems seeing answers when we pray for our own and for others needs.

To finish, I want to read a prayer that was written by Kathy Hedge, I discovered it on the internet.

"Lord, I do not think I have ever really worried about daily bread. You have given me the abundance of bread and everything else I need. When I go to the grocery store, I get lost in all the variety, colour, and sheer numbers. I have given away boxes, a roomful of things to charity. They are things I do not need or no longer want, and still I have more than enough. You have allowed me to have things far in excess of daily bread."

Yet I am still hungry! Because I am feeding my greed and not my soul. How much is enough Lord? How much is too much? What can I live without?

Teach me contentment, Jesus. Show me a way of true delight in the things of this earth, without mad cravings to own or control. Increase my hunger for you and for the things of your spirit.

May I never desire anything - a tasty meal, a beautiful dress, even a cosy home - unless you are in the desire, helping me to be grateful and generous. Amen.

May this be our prayer today that we will desire the things that are in the will of God, knowing that he will supply all our needs according to His riches in glory.

AMEN!

LCM-PUC

10/5/2003