

Series: The Lord's Prayer

Sermon: Give us this day our Daily Bread . . . Trespass Against Us

Luke 11:2-13

He said to them, "When you pray, say:

 "Father, hallowed be your name,
 your kingdom come.

Give us each day our daily bread.

Forgive us our sins,
for we also forgive everyone who sins against us.
And lead us not into temptation."

5 Then Jesus said to them, "Suppose you have a friend, and you go to him at midnight and say, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread; 6 a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have no food to offer him.' 7 And suppose the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children and I are in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.' 8 I tell you, even though he will not get up and give you the bread because of friendship, yet because of your shameless audacity he will surely get up and give you as much as you need.

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you. 10 For everyone who asks receives; the one who seeks finds; and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead? 12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion? 13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!"

Proverbs 30:7-9

"Two things I ask of you, LORD, do not refuse me before I die;

Keep falsehood and lies far from me;
Give me neither poverty nor riches,
But give me only my daily bread.

Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you
And say, 'Who is the LORD?'

Or I may become poor and steal,
And so dishonor the name of my God.

Sermon

Give us today, our daily bread. For thousands of years people have been eating bread—and during those multiple millennia a wide variety of types of this staple food have developed. Just walk down the Fred Meyer bread aisle, you'll see all different types of bread. When I was growing up, you had two kinds. White bread. Wheat bread. Now, you've got choices! Sourdough is our favorite. I mention this (not to give you the "rumblies in your tumblies") but because of the next part of the prayer guidance Jesus gives us in our text for this morning. Now, the ears of the people listening as Jesus that day would have perked up at this point—and not just because they loved to eat as much as we do—but because they came from a culture that had a great deal of history when it came to depending on God for their daily bread. I mean, when Jesus said this I'm sure their

Jewish heritage gave them all a mental flashback back to the days when God delivered their ancestors from Egypt—way back when Charlton Heston led them out of bondage all the way to the Promised Land.

I'm sure you remember that story well - how the people of Israel had been protected from all ten of the plagues God sent to encourage the Pharaoh to let His people go—and how once he did set them free, God led them during the day by a cloud and at night with a pillar of fire. You remember the story of God parting the Red Sea so they could cross on dry ground and then letting the waters come back together so as to drown the pursuing Egyptian army. Now, after seeing all that—after experiencing God's provision and protection and deliverance—well—you would think these people would be willing to follow God anywhere. But—no—just like you and me they were very forgetful when it came to remembering God's great faithfulness—and soon enough we find them actually complaining to Moses. They said, "If only we had died by the Lord's hand in Egypt! There we sat around pots of meat and ate food, all the food that we wanted—but you've brought us into this desert to starve to death!" Of course, they forgot about the slavery bit. The Lord responded to their faithless complaining by saying, "I will rain down bread from Heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way, I will test them and see whether they will follow My instructions." The next morning, just as God promised, "there was a layer of dew around the camp. When the dew was gone, thin flakes like frost appeared on the ground." They called this stuff that sounds kind of like frosted flakes, "manna," and a loose translation of this Hebrew word would be, "I haven't got a clue what this stuff is but we've got to name it something."

Well, every day, for 40 years, God sent them this bread from Heaven and on the day before the Sabbath He told them to gather enough for two days—so they wouldn't have to work on that day that was to be set aside for rest and worship. If they ever gathered more than their daily needs the left overs would spoil. So, they learned to literally trust every day to provide. And He did indeed provide. God sent them their daily bread according to this plan for 40 years. Remember back in the day, when churches had cookbooks that they would sell to help the church budget? I think I saw one around here the other day. I wonder what the Israelite cookbook looked like during those days. Boiled manna, fried manna, re-fried manna, manna smoothies, sweet and sour manna, manna soup, ba-manna splits— (oh, the crowd turned!)

My point is that because of their history I'm sure when they heard Jesus tell them they should learn to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread"—they remembered that their Heavenly Father had done this day after day for 40 years as He provided for the needs of His people. And, in a sense, they still lived out this history because in those days it was customary to eat your daily bread in the morning—just as the nation of Israel had done in the days of Moses. You see—back then Jewish families usually had only two main meals: breakfast, and dinner—no lunch. Breakfast was normally a piece of flat bread cake along with a piece of cheese and maybe some dried fruit and olives. Men would leave home in the morning, heading for work, and they would eat their "daily bread breakfast" as they made their daily commute. Now, with this historical context in mind I want us to take a close look at these six words of our text—because I think they contain four very important principles of meaningful prayer.

First, they tell us that our Abba wants us to talk to Him every DAY. In this part of His prayer model, Jesus urges us to pray regularly and repeatedly. Every DAY we are to ask God for our DAILY bread. And please notice the DOUBLE emphasis on prayer being a DAILY thing. I mean, anything repeated twice in a prayer that contains only sixty-six words must be important. And it is! Jesus was emphasizing the fact that we are to pray for DAILY bread, not WEEKLY bread or MONTHLY bread—but DAILY bread. If it was edited like it should have been, it would have read, "Give us our daily bread.", or "Give us this day our bread." But day is doubled. Give us this day, our daily bread. Now—why daily? Why is it so important that we talk to our Father every single day? Can't we treat prayer like worship and just do in on what you might call a "week-to-week" plan? You know—pray every Sunday and when we finish say, "See you next week Lord. Try to take care of these next seven days for me!" I think we're supposed to remember God's faithfulness every single day. And God wants

to hear from us every single day.

Of course, this phrase “daily bread” also means so much more than food. You see, in those days many people were hired on a day to day basis. So, when they asked God for their daily bread, by inference they were asking for daily work—which would provide food to survive on a daily basis and money to buy clothing, pay the rent, etc. And Jesus’ hearers would have understood this—they would have known that He was telling them to pray for everything they needed to exist. The great reformer Martin Luther put it like this: Daily bread is , “everything necessary for the preservation of this life, including food, a healthy body, job, home, wife, and children.” Yeah, he was 500 years ago, take the language in that context. In this part of His instruction on prayer, Jesus was urging us to talk to God every DAY about every THING—every need—every burden. How many of you have a friend that you talk to like this—about literally everything? It could be your spouse or a very close friend or even a mom or dad—well, God wants us to talk to Him like that—about EVERY thing. The old hymn puts it well when it says, “What a FRIEND we have in Jesus ALL our sins and griefs to bear. What a privilege to carry EVERY THING to God in prayer!”

One famous painting of daily bread is actually a photograph, taken around 1918 in Minnesota, at the end of world war I - a time of rationing and everything in short supply. “Grace” is a photograph by Eric Enstrom. It depicts an elderly man with hands folded, saying a prayer over a table with a simple meal. In 2002, an act of the Minnesota State Legislature established it as the state photograph. The man depicted in the photograph is Charles Wilden, who earned a meager living as a peddler and lived in a sod house - a cold home in Minnesota. While the photograph conveys a sense of piety, the book seen in the photo is actually a dictionary not a Bible, and local stories about Wilden "centered more around drinking and not accomplishing very much." He sold foot-scrapers. Work was hard to find in those days! He stopped by the photographer’s house asking if he wanted to buy a footscraper, and Enstrom was just setting up a collection of photographs. He asked him to come on in and asked if he wanted to be the subject of a photograph. You knock on a door, hoping to sell a foot scraper, and seconds later, you’re in a photograph that would become famous around the world. It wasn’t planned - it wasn’t supposed to be famous. What happened to Wilden after the photograph is unknown. In 1926, he was paid \$5 by Enstrom in return for waiving his rights to the photograph; he disappeared thereafter. After the photograph became wildly popular Enstrom attempted to track Wilden down but was unsuccessful. No one knows what happened to him. In the 1940s, his daughter, Rhoda, colorized the photo by hand. This version was featured in prints produced during the 1940s onward and became the more widespread and popularly known version of the photo. You might also know this artwork, called Gratitude - produced in the ‘60’s - Over forty years later. It’s a picture of a woman also at a table doing her daily devotions. It was drawn to compliment the earlier picture and are often sold together. Grace and Gratitude.

Give us this day, our daily bread. Not only does God care about our spiritual needs, but also our bodily needs as well. Immediately after World War II the allied armies gathered up many hungry, homeless children and placed them in large camps. There the children were abundantly fed and cared for. However, at night they did not sleep well. They seemed restless and afraid. Finally, a psychologist hit on a solution. After the children were put to bed, they each received a slice of bread to hold. If they wanted more to eat, more was provided, but this particular slice was not to be eaten—it was just to hold. The slice of bread produced marvelous results. The child would go to sleep, subconsciously feeling they would have something to eat tomorrow. That assurance gave the child a calm and peaceful rest.

Too many times we are fearful that we won’t get tomorrow’s daily bread. But like manna of yesterday, it’s designed to last one day. And we trust in the one to provide for us tomorrow. Maybe that’s why Jesus tells us not to worry, for we’re freaked out about tomorrow’s providence.

A couple of weeks ago, we were out in the Gorge, walking along a waterfall path that had sweeping views of the river - the mountains in the distance. And with the autumn colors, sun on my face, slight breeze, I stood there,

thanking God that I had the privilege of standing here, in this moment, after (what's 45 years, times 365 days...), over 16,000 days of receiving my daily bread, a little change my pocket and a family walking with me on a fine fall day. Life's not perfect. I'm not rich. We have our problems. We have miles to go, before we sleep. But in that moment, it was enough. It was enough. Grace and Gratitude. Gratitude and Grace.

This is the day that the Lord hath made, let us rejoice, and be glad in it. May you find grace and gratitude in this day, and every day. It is enough. And the family of God said, AMEN.