

Our Daily Bread

Luke 11:1~4, part 5

³*Give us day by day our daily bread.*

One of the greatest joys and blessings of life...is eating. How many of you enjoy eating? Man I love it! (Pretty obvious huh?) I do, I look forward to sitting down to a good meal. And listen, this is in keeping with what the scriptures say about it as well. In Ecclesiastes, a “*Study of Life*,” listen to what Solomon said about eating... (2:24, 3:13) ²⁴There is ***nothing better for a man***, than *that he should eat and drink, and that he should make his soul enjoy good in his labor. This also I saw, that it was from the hand of God.* He repeats this truth a few more times throughout his study. “*Make his soul enjoy good in his labor*” refers to the “*Satisfaction of a job well done*”. Combined with the “*Satisfaction of a good meal*,” Solomon says, and that’s a large part of what life is about. And all of it is from God... As Solomon says, “*There is nothing better for a man...*” One of the greatest joys and blessings in life...is ***eating***.

That is the subject that we find ourselves dealing with this morning, in this particular part of the prayer. ³*Give us day by day our daily bread...* This one marks a *turning point* in the way we are to pray. Up to this point, the focus has been on God and His glory. ***Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth. Thy name, Thy kingdom, and Thy will***... The focus is clearly on God, and His glory. But then beginning here in verse three, there is a shift of focus, ***from God and His glory, to man and his needs***. Notice the repetitive use of the personal pronouns, of “*us*”, “*our*”, and “*we*.” ³*Give us day by day our daily bread.* ⁴*And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us. And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.*

There is a total of eight “*personal pronouns*” used in those two statements...indicating the clear emphasis there, is on us and our needs. Thus we see that the prayer is divided into two parts. The first part is given to God and His glory, and then the second part, is given to man, and his needs. Understood, there is a very important truth in that fact alone. First of all, God is to be given *supreme place*, above everything else, above all other needs, there is the need to put Him first. Food is important, forgiveness is important, as is direction and guidance, but there is nothing more important, we have no greater need, than having God where He needs to be in our lives. **(Job 23:12) “Esteem His words more than my necessary food.”**

Having first established the supremacy of God and His glory in our lives, he now turns to “*us*” and “*our needs*”... And the first thing He addresses, is our “*Physical needs*.” The basic things we need to survive, like food and water. That is the essence of the plea, ³*Give us day by day our daily bread...* “*Bread*” not only represents food, but is symbolic of *all our physical needs*. Martin Luther said it best, “*Everything necessary for the preservation of life...is bread.*” A closer look at Matthew’s account of this plea, seems to affirm this, because there, Jesus went on to elaborate where he included all the basic necessities of life, such as food, clothing, and so forth. (We’ll look at this later...) But for now, we’ll keep it simple, and look at this in the context of food and drink.

³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*” The first thing that stands out about this plea, is the emphasis on “*daily*.” ³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*” There’s no doubt, that Jesus worded this one this way, for a specific reason. Anyone having the least bit of knowledge, of the history of the humble beginnings of the nation Israel, will quickly see the “*emphasis*” Jesus is eluding to here. When God separated unto Himself “*a people*,” back when He delivered them out of the bondage of Egypt, He led them through the wilderness for forty years. During which time, He feed and took care of them. Out in the wilderness, the barren land, if God had not provided for them, they would’ve all perished. But God took care of them. We read, that He fed them with a substance that they referred to as *manna*. Which simply means bread. But this bread was supernaturally provided for them, from heaven. But in doing so, God gave specific instructions to Moses, to tell the people that each morning He would supply this bread, and they were to go out and gather what each family needed, for that one day, and no more. With the exception of the day

before Sabbath, when they could gather two days worth, so they wouldn't have to gather on the Sabbath. But every other day, they were to only gather enough for that one day, anything more they gathered would rot, and be no good. And keep in mind; if God had not provided this bread, they would have starved to death. But each day, God provided. Day by day, God faithfully provided His children with bread...

There is no question in my mind, that Jesus worded this plea, the way He did, to remind them of the manner in which He had taken care of their forefathers. Just as they had learned to trust God, day by day, to provide the things they needed, here Jesus wants to teach His disciples to do the same. Day by day, look to the Father, trusting by faith, in Him to provide what they need for that day...³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*

Now I must say, it is nearly impossible for us to comprehend and truly appreciate this plea, that Jesus gives here, for the simple fact, of the abundance of food that we have in our day. Far from being concerned with whether or not we we'll have enough to eat today or tomorrow...our dilemma is *"WHAT"* we will eat. In our day, as far as food goes, we all have so much, that it is something we give very little thought to. While, on one hand, that's a good thing, but on the other, it has brought with it a problem. Our *"Abundance"* of food, has resulted in a *"Lacking"* in faith. What I mean is, we have lost much of our sense of our dependence on God, and have taken much for granted. Giving no consideration, no thought to God and the fact, that *"all of it"* comes at His hands. I wonder how many of us in this room, take for granted, the food we eat every day? How many of us, have given any real thought to the source of all the food we have eaten this week?

God is so good to us...and He takes such good care of us, day by day. And yet, much to often we take it all for granted. Even with all we have, we still complain...and do not give Him the honor and the thanks that He so richly deserves!

The only way for us to fully understand and appreciate this plea, it to look at this one, in light of the original audience Jesus was speaking too... Money was scarce, there was little to no jobs. There were no factories, no supermarkets, no fast food restaurants, and such. You just couldn't go out and get a job. The people Jesus was speaking to here, *"literally"* lived off of the land. They raised everything they ate, whether it was grain for bread, vegetables, or livestock. They couldn't simply run down to the local Wal-Mart, or Save-a-lot, and pick up the things they needed. They couldn't just open up the fridge or the pantry, and get something to eat (like we do). They were completely dependant on the fruitfulness of the land. If they had a bad year, they would go without eating.

And the truth is...we are no less dependant on God in our day, as they were in this day. The difference is, that we have lost sight of that fact. And at the heart of this plea, is that reminder! Each day we are to come before God, recognizing Him as the provider of all this, acknowledging Him as both the giver and sustainer of LIFE! Recognizing our need of Him, and our dependence on Him... It is still God who sends the rain; it is still God who blesses us with the sunshine needed, for things to grow. It is God who brings forth the grain in the fields, to supply food for the livestock, that they may eat and grow...and one-day, they may become food for us.

Everything that we so richly enjoy, everything we so desperately need to sustain our day-to-day lives, ultimately comes from *the hands of God*... He is the *"Provider"* of ALL things. And understood, that is at the heart of what Jesus is teaching the disciples here. ³*Give us day by day our daily bread...* is not so much a pleading with God to feed them, as much as it is **acknowledging HIM** as *the provider* of all things that sustain life!

Interestingly, even though this part of the prayer is focused on us and our needs, it is still all about Him. He is still at the heart of the prayer. For the plea, ³*Give us day by day our daily bread...* is a prayer of *"dependence"*... Like the previous pleas, it serves to put God in His proper place in our lives!

“*Our Father*” established Him in our relationship.... (Father/Children)

“*Hallowed be thy name*” establishes Him as Holy, and worthy of Honor and Reverence...

“*Thy kingdom come*” establishes Him as King, speaking of His rule and reign in our lives...

“*Thy will be done*” establishes Him as Lord of our lives....

Then here, “³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*” establishes Him as our *provider*... We simply cannot live without food. You know that, and you don’t need me to tell you that. But, you may need to be reminded of where it comes from...*the hand of God*. Every single thing you’ve ever put in your mouth came from God...*every single thing*.

I hope this helps you to understand better, why it is that we pray before every meal, giving thanks unto God for the food before us. Far more than something we should do, or a ritual that should be done, praying over our food, the offering up of thanks, should be a natural result, out of gratitude, stemming from the *awareness* that everything that is setting before us, came from *the hands of God*. My hope is, that from this day forward, that everyone of us in this room, every single time we sit down to enjoy a good meal, will be reminded, of the goodness of God, and out of gratitude for what He has supplied, give Him the praise and thanksgiving He so richly deserves! Next time you eat a hamburger, thank Him for the cow He gave life to, and feed with the grass of the field. Next time you eat a salad, thank Him for the sending His rain and His sun on the vegetables. Next time you enjoy a good bowl of soup beans and corn bread, thank Him for raising up the corn for the corn meal, and blessing the plants that bear the beans. Beloved, God is so good to us...yet sadly, more often than not, we grumble and complain, and do not give Him the thanks and honor He is so worthy of...

Having said that, as good and fitting as it is to recognize God as the provider of all things, and acknowledging that by giving Him thanks for it all...we need to understand, there’s more to this plea, than that. That is just part of it, we have yet to discuss the crucial part. Having recognized Him as the provider of all things, the next step is to TRUST Him for all things. “³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*” is a prayer of “*faith*.” It is looking to God, each day we are blessed with on this earth, to supply the things we need **for that day**. “³*Give us day by day our daily bread...*”

(*Turn to Mt. 6*) Understood, this plea is a crucial part of *living a life of faith*... For the simple fact, that *it frees us*. This is best explained, by considering what a typical life is. What does the basic, typical life of a man consist of? *Food, clothing, shelter*, etc...right? Generally speaking, doesn’t that describe what life is for most? Isn’t it typical of most, that they work all week, in order that they might provide a roof over their head, food on the table and clothes on their back. Throw in the occasional pleasure trip, and occasional luxury item, and basically you’ve described most of the people in the world...right?

But isn’t there more to life than that? That is the very question, that Jesus asked a large group of people, who had gathered to hear his “*words of life*.” Here in Matthew 6, Jesus had been teaching the people concerning how to give, how to pray...in verses 9~13, He basically gives the exact same teaching as He did there in Luke 11. Here He follows by teaching them concerning fasting, then kind of sums everything up, by explaining they need to seek those things which are above, and not here on the earth. Concluding in verse 24, by saying how you cannot serve God and Mammon...you can’t live for this world and things above at that same time. Urging them to live for God, by living for the things above. Then He gives us, one of the greatest teachings ever given to man...(Read verses 25~34) Let’s look at this a little closer...

“²⁵*Therefore I say unto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink; nor yet for your body, what ye shall put on.* (Notice...the basic, everyday necessities)...

Then the question...*Is not the life more than meat, and the body than raiment?*

Isn’t there more to life, than simply living each day to acquire those things? Somebody may say, “*Hey, I know there’s more to life than those things, but I tell you what...you can’t live without them!*” And right

you are, and lest we think that Jesus is downplaying the need of these things... **He's not!** If you read this passage carefully, you'll find that He readily acknowledges the importance of these things, and the fact that we can't live without them. His point is, that there's more to life than taking care of the needs of "This Body," there is the matter of "The Soul" of a man. "Man cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God." The material and physical things of this world, can't supply LIFE to the SOUL...it can the body, but not the soul!

Here, Jesus is trying to explain to His hearers, that Life is so much more, than living every day, striving about to provide food, clothing and such. Even though it's extremely important, and something we can't do without, it is still not what life is about! There is so much more...and to experience it, we must walk by faith. By faith, we must trust God to provide the things we need for each day, while we give ourselves to seeking after God and the things of God...the place where life is found.

To urge them to trust God for these things, Jesus uses the illustration of how God takes care of creation...

²⁶***Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns: yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are ye not much better than they?*** ²⁷***Which of you by taking thought can add one cubit unto his stature?*** ²⁸***And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they toil not, neither do they spin:*** ²⁹***And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.*** ³⁰***Wherefore, if God so clothe the grass of the field, which to day is, and to morrow is cast into the oven, shall he not much more clothe you, O ye of little faith?***

If God takes care of the birds...will He not take care of you?

If God clothes the fields with grass and beautiful flowers...will He not clothe you?

These are rhetorical questions...**absolutely!**

³¹***Therefore.....take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?***

Take no thought... This is the fifth time in seven verses, that Jesus has used that statement... *Take no thought...* or...*"Don't be concerned"*...*"Don't worry"*... The point here is simple, even though these are absolute necessities, things we cannot do without, things we cannot live without...we must not allow these to consume our minds, our thoughts. By faith, we must trust God for those things, while we give our thoughts, our concerns to seeking after Him and His things!

³¹***Therefore.....take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?*** ³²***(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek: THE LOST) for your heavenly Father knows that ye have need of all these things.*** ³³***But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.*** ³⁴***Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.***

Simply put, Jesus says, "Rather than seeking and worrying about food, drink and clothing...like unbelievers do"...Jesus says, "Focus your attention and hopes on the things of the Lord, and He will take care of all your needs!" Simply trust God to provide the things you need each day, and set your sights on things above. Don't let the troubled economy, cause you to fret and worry...but rather, trust God to provide for you, while you keep your eyes on Him! He goes on to say there, don't worry about tomorrow, just take it day by day. Look to God today, to meet the needs of today, and when tomorrow comes, you can ask Him for that day.

We are the most blessed people in the world... Let me ask you in closing...Do you fully trust that He is able to "keep that which you have committed unto Him against that day?" Do you earnestly believe, that Christ is able to deliver your soul from hell, and carry you safely into the presence of God? If so, if you trust Him with your "soul"...then trust Him with the small stuff, like providing food, water and clothing...³***Give us day by day our daily bread...***