

## Receiving Our Daily Bread

Matthew 6:11: "Give us this day our daily bread."

When I planned on teaching the Prayer Series, I had not considered when on the calendar this week's message dealing with "...our daily bread..." would occur. However, it does seem most appropriate that it should land on the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Therefore, on this holiday that is celebrated with a cornucopia of food, it is fitting and proper that we should be thankful for the food and all the abundant riches the Lord has bestowed upon us.

In Scripture, when our Lord fed the four thousand, He taught us to first be thankful before we ate and for what we ate: "And he took the seven loaves and the fishes, and gave thanks, and brake them, and gave to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude" (Matthew 15:36). Christ did it again in John 6:11: "And Jesus took the loaves; and when he had given thanks, he distributed to the disciples, and the disciples to them that were set down; and likewise of the fishes as much as they would." We understand that it was an ancient Hebrew custom to give thanks after one eats. Our Lord did follow that custom, but then our Lord seems to set a precedent to give thanks before we receive our bread. It is an act of faith when we believe that our needs will be met through Christ. Our Lord's act of thanksgiving for the meal stands out, because the Bible tells us that after he fed the multitude, "Howbeit there came other boats from Tiberias nigh unto the place where they did eat bread, after that the Lord had given thanks" (John 6:23).

Paul followed the same pattern in Acts 27:35: "And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all: and when he had broken it, he began to eat." In the Christian economy, thanksgiving for God's provision is an evidence of our faith.

The Lord would have never given us this command to pray for our daily bread, unless he intended to fulfill the request. We should therefore:

### 1. BE CONFIDENT OF THE LORD'S PROVISION.

Philippians 4:19: "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

Luke 12:24: "Consider the ravens: for they neither sow nor reap; which neither have storehouse nor barn; and God feedeth them: how much more are ye better than the fowls?"

Psalms 34:10: "The young lions do lack, and suffer hunger: but they that seek the LORD shall not want any good thing."

Psalms 37:25: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread."

III John 2, "Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth."

God wants to take care of you and meet your need more than you want your needs to be met.

### 2. BE CLEAR OF GREED.

Psalm 62:10: "...If riches increase, set not your heart upon them."

Proverbs 14:31: "He that oppresseth the poor reproacheth his Maker: but he that honoureth him hath mercy on the poor."

Proverbs 19:17: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the LORD; and that which he hath given will he pay him again."

Proverbs 3:9, 10: "Honour the LORD with thy substance, and with the firstfruits of all thine increase: So shall thy barns be filled with plenty, and thy presses shall burst out with new wine."

Matthew 6:24: "No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

James 4:3: "Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts."

Hebrews 13:5: "Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

In Dr. Tim Keller's book *Counterfeit Gods*, he writes, "In the 1830s, when Alexis de Tocqueville recorded his famous observations on America, he noted a 'strange melancholy that haunts the inhabitants . . . in the midst of abundance.'"

Americans believed that prosperity could quench their yearning for happiness, but such a hope was illusory, because de Tocqueville added, "the incomplete joys of this world will never satisfy [the human] heart." Luke 12:15: "And he said unto them, Take heed, and beware of covetousness: for a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth."

### 3. BE CENTERED IN THE WILL OF GOD.

I John 2:17: "And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."

Romans 12:2: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."

### 4. BE CONSCIENTIOUS IN LABOR.

Genesis 2:15: "And the LORD God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and to keep it."

Genesis 3:19: "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return."

Genesis 2:2: "And on the seventh day God ended his work which he had made; and he rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had made."

Ecclesiastes 5:12: "The sleep of a labouring man is sweet, whether he eat little or much: but the abundance of the rich will not suffer him to sleep."

In I Thessalonians 4:11 and II Thessalonians 3:10-12 we are reminded that work is woven in the warp and woof of our faith. Works do not save us, but when we are saved we work (Ephesians 2:10). The believer does not look at life as separated between the secular and the spiritual. All ground is holy ground!

Every bush is a burning bush." I Corinthians 10:31: "Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God." All our life is to please God in our work and worship, so much so, that our work is a form of worshipping God. And a benefit to our hard work is that it will also bless our fellow man. Many of our roads in Texas are called, "Farm to Market Roads." The hard working farmer brings his potatoes that he sweat over and harvested to market. The rancher brings his beef to market. The farmer trades and purchases a side of beef that the rancher worked hard to raise, slaughter and bring to market. Then in a few days both farmers are sitting down to meat and potatoes. And I didn't mean to leave out the farmer who brought his strawberries and rhubarb to market so that all three may enjoy a delicious desert after their meat and potatoes. Ecclesiastes 4:9: "Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour."

#### 5. BE CONTINUOUS IN PURSUIT.

Matthew 7:7: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you:"

Consider the story of the importunate widow found in Luke 18:1-7.

Verse 7: "And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night unto him, though he bear long with them?"

#### 6. BE COGNIZANT OF THE GREATER NEED.

Matthew 4:4: "But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." The Lord Jesus explains the need for Heavenly Manna in John 6:25-51. John 6:35: "And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst."

-Pastor Pope-