

Our Daily Bread

1. INTRO

- a. Maybe you are a super high capacity person, I have never felt that way
 - i. I have a long list of injuries and mistakes that point to my inability to acknowledge I am able or know how to do something properly
 - 1. First time I hurt my back when I was in 7th grade
 - 2. Tried to fix my own iPhone
 - 3. Parenting, pastoring? Just reveal inabilities
 - ii. I've never been the most athletic, the most skilled, the most competent, and on and on.
 - iii. Now, I am not putting myself down, I am happy w/ who God made me, but I don't have delusions of my awesomeness anymore
- b. What about you? Are you the kind of person who is totally aware of your needs or are you mostly under the assumption that you got this thing figured out?
 - i. In an article I read this week, about 50% of men said that despite no experience or knowledge, they are pretty sure they could land a 747 plane if they had to vs. 20% for women
 - ii. I wonder if those same 50% and 20% would say they also definitely could tell people how to parent, how to succeed in marriage, how to thrive in the workplace, how to beat health issues with sheer will, etc
- c. Well, this sermon is for both groups - those who feel like they don't have much to offer, and those who feel like - given the right circumstances - they could save Christmas like John McClane

2. *Matthew 6:9-13, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one."*

- a. **Daily?** Probably doesn't mean daily...
 - i. The Greek term "epiousios" (epi-oo-si-os) is a discussion point
 - ii. The term "epiousios" is a compound word derived from "epi" (meaning "on," "upon," or "over") and "ousia" (meaning "substance" or "being").
 - iii. It's not a very common term. You would think if it simply meant "daily" we would see it all over in other literature, but you don't
 - iv. Why then is it translated as "daily?"
 - 1. John Wycliffe, who led a team to complete the English Wycliffe Bible in the late 14th century used the word daily
 - 2. Since so many people memorized the prayer, it's basically been kept the same, largely off limits
 - v. So, what does it mean if not daily?
 - 1. Scholars debate it; Some suggest translations like "necessary" or "essentials," to convey a broader sense of dependence on God
- b. Essential bread? Necessary bread? Well, **Bread** probably doesn't mean bread...
 - i. Bread represents something broader in biblical culture

1. Bread was a staple food, not just a side dish
 2. Bread was a symbol of provision
 - a. "God gave you bread from heaven in wilderness"
 3. Bread was broken in hospitality as a sign of fellowship / sharing
 4. Bread was used in sacrifice, festivals, and religious feasts
 5. Bread was intertwined with breaking of a covenant (contracts)
- ii. Also, remember that this was an Agrarian society
1. They were entirely dependent on cycles of planting, growing, and harvesting
 2. We just buy bread at the store, but they had a whole yearly cycle connected to the creation of this cultural mainstay
 3. It wasn't just relying on God for bread, but for sun, rain, seed, safety in work, a good harvest, security from theft, and so much more!
- iii. Just as daily means more than daily, bread means more than bread!
- c. So what does 'daily bread' mean? Well, to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread," is to proclaim **your complete dependence and trust in God** for every area of life:
- i. Jesus' listening audience was dirt poor.
 1. Unlike modern economies with various safety nets, people in this context often faced greater uncertainty regarding day to day living
 2. Economic stability was fragile, and the possibility of not having enough was a real concern. (ex: Indonesian man who fell off roof)
 - ii. Think of it this way:
 1. You cannot cause your lungs to pump oxygen anymore than you can make your heart work
 2. You have no power over the weather, the stock market, or whether your neighbor's dog will attack you when you get the mail
 3. We are entirely, and completely reliant on Jesus b/c he holds all things together
 4. This shouldn't cause anxiety, but free you from it
 - iii. To pray for your daily bread is to acknowledge this reality rather than living in ignorance, arrogance, or soul-blistering anxiety, thinking it all depends on YOU
 1. **You need God. This prayer humbles you.**
 2. If I am incapable, I need to actually pray and trust in his provision
 3. If this is the case, if I am trusting in God to provide for my air, my blood, my food, my health, etc, then a lack of prayer in my life just shows that in my ignorance (or arrogance) I think I can do life without him
 4. Praying this kind of a prayer is a daily decision to intentionally remember, "I need you, God, and I have to trust you to provide."
 5. **You need to ask for God's help. This prayer humbles you.**
- d. **As rugged Americans we forget that we also need community:**

- i. Is it really necessary that every man in this room owns a chainsaw?
- ii. Are we so obsessed with rugged individualism that we despise the idea of needing someone else to help us?
- iii. Would I rather hurt my back lifting that piece of iron than asking someone for help?
 - 1. All the men silently answered “Yes” to each of these questions
- iv. Let us not forget that the prayer is plural, “Give us...”
- v. ‘OUR Daily bread’ underscores our insufficiency and challenges the individualistic nature of our culture and lives
- vi. It reminds us to be concerned not just with ourselves, but with people
- vii. Jesus breaks bread with his friends b/c he loves them. He serves them bread. He likens the bread to his body.
- viii. He tells them to think of him every time they break bread - not just during communion at church, but when they broke it in homes with one another
- ix. We need Jesus. We need one another. Life is meant to be lived together, centered around the bread of Life, Jesus Christ.
- x. **You need other people. Once again, this prayer humbles you.**
- e. So the Lord’s prayer reminds me of my frailty, my fragility, my sin, my desperation for God in all things.
 - i. **The daily bread prayer is really about surrendering to the reality of who God is and who you are, and that needs to happen daily**
 - ii. John 15 “Since apart from me you can do nothing... remain close to me.”
 - iii. C.f. Psalm 23 → and I shall not want...
- 3. But what does this look like practically to apply the truth of “Daily Bread”? We can look at Jesus’ teachings and see the impact of these truths: Luke 12:6-32
 - a. *6 “What is the price of five sparrows—two copper coins? Yet God does not forget a single one of them. 7 And the very hairs on your head are all numbered. So don’t be afraid; you are more valuable to God than a whole flock of sparrows.*
 - i. Jesus’ instruction to pray for our “daily bread” underscores the reality that not only are we desperate for God, but that **we are valuable to him.**
 - ii. He tells us to pray b/c he loves to provide for us
 - iii. If he provides for the sparrows, won’t he also provide for us?
 - b. *13 Then someone called from the crowd, “Teacher, please tell my brother to divide our father’s estate with me.” 14 Jesus replied, “Friend, who made me a judge over you to decide such things as that?” 15 Then he said, “Beware! Guard against every kind of greed. Life is not measured by how much you own.”*
 - i. The Lord’s prayer also reminds us of **what should be valuable to us**
 - ii. We live in a consumer-driven culture that thrives on creating dissatisfaction with our marketing
 - iii. If only you had... You are somehow less b/c you don’t have... You are lacking b/c you need... You need to be more like...
 - iv. The Lord’s prayer teaches us that the Lord is our shepherd and in him I have all that I need. → above all he is my true bread / surrender
 - v. Our life is not measured by how much we own or have

- vi. This frees me from the constant pursuit of more and instills a sense of fulfillment in my very soul. I can be satisfied with Jesus.
- c. *16 Then he told them a story: “A rich man had a fertile farm that produced fine crops. 17 He said to himself, ‘What should I do? I don’t have room for all my crops.’ 18 Then he said, ‘I know! I’ll tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I’ll have room enough to store all my wheat and other goods. 19 And I’ll sit back and say to myself, “My friend, you have enough stored away for years to come. Now take it easy! Eat, drink, and be merry!”” 20 “But God said to him, ‘You fool! You will die this very night. Then who will get everything you worked for?’*

21 “Yes, a person is a fool to store up earthly wealth but not have a rich relationship with God.”

- i. Dependence on stuff, instead of God, is a dead end.
- ii. **Praying for our daily bread redirects our security from our savings to our savior.**
- iii. It’s about acknowledging God as the ultimate source of fulfillment and provision / surrender
- iv. Our culture promotes self-sufficiency and the belief that material possessions can provide security and happiness, but Jesus' says that you also (and more importantly) need a rich relationship with God
- d. *22 Then, turning to his disciples, Jesus said, “That [b/c you need a rich relationship with God, b/c God knows what you need, b/c he cares for you] is why I tell you **not to worry** about everyday life—whether you have enough food to eat or enough clothes to wear. 23 For life is more than food, and your body more than clothing. 24 Look at the ravens. They don’t plant or harvest or store food in barns, for God feeds them. And you are far more valuable to him than any birds! 25 Can all your worries add a single moment to your life? 26 And if worry can’t accomplish a little thing like that, what’s the use of worrying over bigger things?*

27 “Look at the lilies and how they grow. They don’t work or make their clothing, yet Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. 28 And if God cares so wonderfully for flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you. Why do you have so little faith?

29 “And don’t be concerned about what to eat and what to drink. Don’t worry about such things. 30 These things dominate the thoughts of unbelievers all over the world, but your Father already knows your needs. 31 Seek the Kingdom of God above all else, and he will give you everything you need.

32 “So don’t be afraid, little flock. For it gives your Father great happiness to give you the Kingdom.

- e. The Daily Bread prayer reminds you to **humble yourself and seek the king and his kingdom above all else:** your job, your wealth, your savings, your life

- f. Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness for they shall be satisfied (Matt 5:6) → not true of the other things we hunger after
 - g. This is about embracing a lifestyle that values the eternal over the temporal
 - h. Consumerism tends to glamorize excess and extravagance, especially during the holidays.
 - i. Jesus encourages a humble and simple approach to life, not so that you can be a monk, but so that you can **focus on what matters** → **his kingdom, his people**
 - j. Prayerfully surrendering and acknowledge our inability reminds us that this life is fleeting, that Jesus is eternal, and that our neighbors / the people around us matter more than our stuff → and we need him to live this way / surrender
4. *John 15:1 "I am the true grapevine, and my Father is the gardener. 2 He cuts off every branch of mine that doesn't produce fruit, and he prunes the branches that do bear fruit so they will produce even more. 3 You have already been pruned and purified by the message I have given you. 4 Remain in me, and I will remain in you. For a branch cannot produce fruit if it is severed from the vine, and you cannot be fruitful unless you remain in me. 5 "Yes, I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who remain in me, and I in them, will produce much fruit. For apart from me you can do nothing.*
- a. **Summary:** Praying for our daily bread is consciously acknowledging and embracing dependence on God. It is surrender. It's recognizing Him as the provider of our daily needs and trusting in His faithfulness to, in fact, provide.
 - i. In him we live and move and have our being
 - ii. He holds all things together
 - iii. All things exist for him and through him, by his will
 - iv. Biblical surrender obliterates anxiety, stress to keep up w/ the Jones, and causes us to question what is of true value in life
 - v. It reminds us that if it is our Father's great joy to give us the kingdom, what are we really worried about? Surrender. He is your daily bread.
 - b. **Action Step:** Incorporate into your daily prayers a moment of intentional surrender, intentional acknowledgement of your need for him.
 - i. I love doing this as I pray through Psalm 23 or the Lord's prayer
 - ii. Intentionally acknowledge your dependence on him for every area of life
 - iii. Remind yourself that you are dust, grass, temporary, fading away
 - iv. Embrace an eternal perspective in your prayers so you don't buy into the lie that you are, ultimately, in charge of your own life
 - v. Do this and you choose to humble yourself and trust Him in all areas
 - vi. And when you lay it down... don't pick it up again
 - vii. Trust him with your needs; he knows them better than you anyway
 - c. Pray for the church, for their daily bread