

PRAYER SERIES: PRAYER IS ABOUT REQUESTING

Key Verse: Matthew 6:11

Key Thought: Lord, Teach Us How to Pray

The entire first half of The Model Prayer is focused solely on God. The prayer opens with an exclusive desire to bring honor and glory to Him and His name. He is exalted as Father. We are taught to pray for His glory, His Kingdom and His will. Everything centers, as it should, around the glory of God and His honor.

Next, we are taught to pray for ourselves. On the surface, this petition seems to be narrow and selfish, compared to the broad and unselfish attitude manifested in the first part of the prayer. In the first part of this prayer everything is spiritual. Here, everything seems to be sensual, selfish and fleshly in nature. To turn the spotlight off God and onto us seems petty, selfish and small.

Yet even this request for personal needs is intensely spiritual in nature. In truth, this petition elevates our hearts and our God! Even though we are here making requests for ourselves, the spotlight still rests squarely in the face of the Almighty. For as truly as prayer is about adoration, devotion and worship, it is also asking, dependence and needs. This morning, we are going to consider the simple sentence: “*Give us this day our daily bread.*” As we do, we are going to learn that *Prayer Is About Requesting*.

I. THE DEVOTION OF THIS PRAYER

By praying this simple prayer, I am saying that I believe in certain things. By coming to God to request the provision of the basic needs of life, I am entering into a time of profound worship.

No higher form of worship exists than for a child of God to enter into the presence of his Heavenly Father and unashamedly declare: “*I cannot make it without You! I am totally dependent upon You Lord!*”

a) I Believe in God’s Power – When I pray for God to meet my needs, I am proclaiming my faith in His power to do just that. I am telling my Father that I believe He can take care of me.

This is the Bible's testimony concerning our God –

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us.”

Ephesians 3:20

He is able and He can and will take care of His children!

If our God can create everything from nothing, then He can take care of you! If He can feed two million Israelites for 40 years in a desert, then He can take care of you. If He can do all the great things He did throughout the pages of the Word of God, then you do not need to doubt His ability to take care of you. He is able and He will see to it that your needs are met. Thank God, He is able!

b) I Believe in God's Promises – When I pray this simple prayer, I am confessing my faith in the promises God has made to His children. The Bible is very clear when it tells us that the Lord will take care of His own.

“And my God will meet all your needs according to the riches of His glory in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:19

He has promised to do it, and He will!

c) I Believe in God's Personality – When we ask God for the daily needs of life, we are not trying to twist His arm to get Him to give us things that He does not want us to have. We are not trying to overcome His reluctance to meet our needs. We are simply trusting in His provision. We are humbly acknowledging His willingness to give. Nothing honors God more than His children coming to Him in childlike faith, asking Him for what they need, believing that He loves them and that He is a generous God.

God is not a scrooge Who has to be persuaded to meet our needs. He is our Father and He delights in giving us the good things of life,

“Do not be afraid, little flock, for your Father has been pleased to give you the Kingdom.”

Luke 12:32

Look at all the great gifts God has already given; especially consider the great gift of His darling Son Jesus, **John 3:16**. He is an open-handed God who rejoices in the opportunity to give to His children. This prayer acknowledges and honors that aspect of God's personality.

II. THE DEPENDENCE OF THIS PRAYER

Not only does this prayer honor the Lord by worshiping Him as the great Giver. It also expresses the total dependence of the child of God upon the Heavenly Father. Notice what this prayer says about us and our relationship to the Heavenly Father.

a) **It Is a Prayer of Confession** – This simple statement says, “*I can't meet my own needs, but you can.*” When I pray this prayer, I am confessing my own weaknesses and limitations, and I am confessing that I believe that God is able where I am not. When I pray this prayer, I am not resting in my own ability to work and put food on my table, instead, I am acknowledging the truth that I can only work because God gives me the strength. I am expressing the truth that He is God, and I am totally dependent upon Him for all the things I need as I pass through this life day by day.

You do realize that there is no such thing as a “*self-made man*” don't you? Paul had a handle on this when he said

“But by the grace of God I am what I am,”
1 Corinthians 15:10.

If we have anything; if we are anything; it is because of the gracious working of God in our lives. I must come to the place where I am honest about who is really in control.

b) **It Is a Prayer of Confidence** – The idea of this simple prayer is this: “*Give us day by day the things that are necessary for life.*” This is not a request for God to meet needs that have not yet arisen. It is an expression of faith in God that says, “*I believe you will take care of me one day at a time.*”

Someone has said, “*Yesterday is a cancelled cheque, it has already been redeemed. Tomorrow is a promissory note, it may never be paid. Today is cash in hand, spend it wisely.*”

There is no need to pray about yesterday's needs for yesterday is forever gone. There is no need to pray for tomorrow's needs, for tomorrow may never come. I am told to pray about today and to walk in simple faith with the Lord, day by day.

Remember what Jesus said,

“Therefore, do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.”

Matthew 6:34

Far too many believers try to live on yesterday's bread. It is stale and moldy. What you need is fresh bread day by day. We need a fresh work of the Lord in our hearts and lives every day we live. We are to walk with Him on a day-by-day basis, trusting Him for all the needs of life. We need His righteousness for our sinfulness. We need His supply for our weakness. We need His patience for our haste. We need the Bread of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ, to nourish us day by day.

When you eat your daily bread remember that a kernel of wheat had to fall to the ground and die to give you that bread. As you pass through this life, never forget that Jesus Christ went to the cross and died in your place so that you might have Him as your Bread of Life, day by day. You need Him! Do not be afraid to call on Him in confidence, knowing that no one comes to the Heavenly Father's table and goes away hungry!

Once, John Wesley was asked by a friend, “Supposing, Mr. Wesley, you knew that this was to be your last night on the earth, how would you spend it?”

“Well, at four o'clock I would have some tea,” he replied “and at six o'clock I would visit Mrs. Brown in the hospital. Then at seven-thirty I would conduct mid-week service at the chapel. At nine-ten I would have my supper; at ten o'clock I would go to bed, and in the morning, I would wake up in glory!”

That is the kind of perspective concerning life I want to be true in my own life. I want God's best for today and I want to be content to leave tomorrow in His capable hands.

c) **It Is a Prayer Of Contentment** – This simple prayer says, ***“I am willing to accept the things you will send into my life today.”*** I may not always like the bread God sends my way, but I can trust Him to send me exactly what I need day by day. So, if I am called upon to eat the bread of sorrow and affliction, then He knows best. If I am allowed to feast on angel’s food and heavenly manna, then that too is His choice for me. My duty is to trust Him to do in my life exactly what needs to be done day by day.

“And we know that all things God works for the good of those who love Him, who have been called according to His purpose.”

Romans 8:28

The practice of contentment is one of the greatest challenges any believer faces in life. Yet, it is what God expects from each of us,

“But godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into the world, and we can take nothing out of it.”

1 Timothy 6:6-8

Nothing says, “I trust you Lord,” like perfect contentment on the part of His children! May the Lord help us to get there and to walk with the Lord in total dependence day by day.

Israel presents an example of praying out of a wrong motive and heart,

“In the desert they gave in to their craving; in the wilderness they put God to the test. So, he gave them what they asked for but sent a wasting disease among them.” ***Psalms 106:14-15***

This is the kind of prayer we want to avoid at all costs.

However, the prayer of Agur in ***Proverbs 30:7-8*** is a prayer you might want to adopt.

“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.”

III. THE DEPTH OF THIS PRAYER

On the surface, this simple request, “*Give us this day our daily bread,*” is a simple straight forward request. However, when you think about it, this prayer is very large in its scope.

a) **It Is a Communal Prayer** – Notice the two words “*us*” and “*our.*” This is not a prayer that can be prayed selfishly. It is not just about getting “*my*” needs met; but it is about praying for the needs of the family of God. We are challenged and commanded to have the best interests of our brothers and sisters at heart as we pass through this life and as we pray.

“Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit. Rather, in humility, value others above yourselves, not looking to your own interests but each of you to the interests of the others.”

Philippians 2:3-4

We are to pray for one another; for preachers; for teachers; for missionaries; for that single mother; for that struggling teenager; for the family that is suffering; for that sick one; for every conceivable need in the lives of others.

There have been many times when I could not pray for myself as I should have. But I am thankful that God had others praying for me during those times. The prayers of God’s children are precious and should be offered one for another freely!

One day a preacher visited a bedridden member of his congregation. "I am sorry I am late today," said a clergyman, "but I have been all round the parish." "Why," said the old woman, "that's just where I've been!" "But you cannot walk," exclaimed the astonished minister. "Ah," said the old saint, "you see, my soul isn't bedridden! So, I just go round the parish every day in prayer, while I lie here."

b) **It Is a Comprehensive Prayer** – One commentator said this phrase could be expressed this way, “*Give us this day the things sufficient for our subsistence.*” This is more than a prayer for food on our plates. This is a humble request for God to provide everything we need to make it through day by day. If we could ever get to the place where we truly trust Him for all we need, day by day, then worry would die out of our lives.

We would be in a place of contentment and peace, knowing that our heavenly Father was in perfect control of all the situations of our lives.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.”

Philippians 4:6-7

Let me quickly say that it is not wrong to pray for our needs. Some people will not pray for themselves, thinking it is fleshly and not spiritual. Jesus clearly commands us to pray for the necessities of life. Therefore, let us not be ashamed to bring every need, every matter to Him, knowing He will hear us, sustain us and supply us as we move through this world.

“Let us then approach God’s throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need. “ Hebrews 4:16

God did not save us to allow us to perish on the wild hills of sin! We are children of the King, and we have a right to approach the King for the things we need!

One sharp winter day, so runs a nursery tale, a poor woman stood at the window of a king’s conservatory, looking at a cluster of grapes, which she longed to have for her sick child. She went home to her spinning-wheel, earned half-a-crown, and offered it to the gardener for the grapes, but He waved his hand, and ordered her away.

She returned to her cottage, snatched the blanket from her bed, pawned it, and once more asked the gardener to sell her the grapes, offering him five shillings. He spoke furiously to her and was turning her out, when the princess came in, heard the man’s passion, saw the woman’s tears, and asked what was wrong. When the story was told she said, “My dear woman, you have made a mistake. My father is not a merchant, but a king; his business is not to sell but to give;” Then she plucked the cluster of grapes from the vine and dropped it into the woman’s apron.”

May the Lord help His people realize that we are to ask, and if we ask, we will receive! God is not a tight-fisted, mean-spirited, heartless dictator delighting in watching His children struggle. He is a gracious, loving, heavenly Father who delights in giving His best gifts to those who know Him!

In closing, I want to share about Robert McCheyne, a great, Scottish preacher who was mightily used by God until his death at the age of 29. He said, “***God will either give you what you ask, or something far better.***”

Samuel Chadwick said, “***The one concern of the devil is to keep Christians from praying. He fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless works and prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but trembles when we pray.***”

Let me encourage you to come to the Father and tell Him about the needs that are in your life. Never be afraid; never be ashamed; and never limit your praying to “***large matters.***” Come to Him and call on His Name, believing that He cares, that He hears and that He will answer you for His glory!

Hear once again His promises:

Jeremiah 33:3, “***Call to me, and I will answer you, and tell you great and unsearchable things, you do not know.***”

John 14:13-14, “***And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified by the Son. You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.***”

Are there some things you need to pray about today? Come to the Altar.

Place: FCA

Date: January 5, 2025

Time: 10:30am

After Service Song: In Jesus Name (God of Possible)