

THE LORD'S PRAYER - Part IV The Provision of Prayer

Text: Matthew 6:11

Key Word: Prayer

Key Thought: God's Provisions Contain Limitations

Before sharing on the **Provision of Prayer** I'd like to recap what we've already spoke about. We began by focussing upon the **Person of Prayer** ("*Our Father in heaven*"). We then considered our **Perception of Prayer** ("*hallowed be thy name*"). This led us to the **Power of Prayer** ("*your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven*").

Once these truths are established firmly in our heart we then have the foundation to enter the next stage of prayer. This is what I call the **Provision of Prayer**.

"The fact that our Lord placed three petitions that relate directly to God's legitimate interests *first* should sufficiently indicate to us that we must labour in prayer to promote the manifestative glory of God, to advance His kingdom, and to do His will before we are permitted to supplicate for our *own* needs."

Arthur W. Pink
"The Beatitudes and the Lord's Prayer"
p.105

Let this truth enter into your mind and spirit. It is so important to have the right approach in our petition of prayer. Once we appreciate who God is and become sensitive to His will for of lives we can safely approach Him to meet our daily needs.

Before looking at this first of four petitions, I want you to notice the proportion of these requests. Only the first one concerns our physical or bodily needs. The final three requests relate to our spiritual needs. In other words there is a 3 to 1 ratio of placing our spiritual needs above our temporal needs. Perhaps the physical need is dealt with first (like the miracle of the feeding of the 4,000 & 5,000), so the most important area of spiritual concerns can be met without hindrance.

There is always a balance with the things of God.

"our natural [well-being] is necessary [for] our spiritual well being in this world."

Matthew Henry

In Our Prayer of Provision We Need to Consider . . .

I. THE DECISIVE DEMAND

II. THE DETERMINED DURATION

III. THE DEFINED DESIRE

I. THE DECISIVE DEMAND

I have read a few books which the authors encourage their readers to become forceful in their demands before God. In others words, don't let Him go until He blesses you. They use Jacob (Genesis 32:24-30) as an example to follow. Believers are encouraged to make God do what you want Him to do. Their logic is quite simple. If God is not a respecter of persons than we can demand all the blessings He has given to others as our own.

I believe this is a very shallow, immature and dangerous way to approach God. Anyone who acts this way before God will find themselves learning an important lesson.

Dr. Larry Lea in His book/video series "*Could You Not Tarry One Hour?*" teaches that there are 4 requirements for successful praying.

1. Be in the Will of God
2. Believe that it is God's will to Prosper You
3. Be Specific
4. Be Tenacious

He brings out some very important points such as

1. Be in the Will of God
 - a. Fellowship with Jesus
 - b. Fellowship with One Another
 - c. Diligent, Balance Work Habits
 - d. Obedience in Giving

I feel when he gets to the third and fourth point (be specific and be tenacious) that a tone of arrogance is noted. It is here that we must be very careful in how we talk to God. **God is NOT telling us to make demands upon His will.** It is God who chooses to provide for our daily needs. He cares for His own. Sometimes our demands are out of order with God's will for our lives.

We must be very careful not to demand God to do our will. We must rather submit to His will even though we don't understand the steps He is having us travel.

I. THE DECISIVE DEMAND (Contd.)

** Two boys scouts whose younger brother had fallen into a shallow pond rushed home to their mother with tears in their eyes. "We were trying to give him artificial respiration," one of them sobbed, "But he keeps getting up and walking away." **

A good question to ask ourselves is what do we expect to get out of our demands to God.

** "Darling," scolded the mother, "you shouldn't always keep everything for yourself. I told you before you should let your brother play with your toys half the time." "I've been doing what you told me. I take the sled downhill and he takes it uphill." **

Bob Phillips
"The Last of the Good Clean Jokes"
p. 6

II. THE DETERMINED DURATION

This prayer goes on to say,

*"Give us **TODAY (THIS DAY)** our daily bread."*

Matthew 6:11

There have been many times that I've read a bumper sticker that says, "One Day at a Time." Kris Kristofferson wrote a song a number of years ago with that title. His words tried to depict this truth about asking for his present needs to be taken care of.

Jewish rabbis have several thoughts that depict this truth as well.

"The portion of a day in its day, because he who created the day created sustenance for the day."

"He who possesses what he can eat today, and says, 'What shall I eat tomorrow?' is a man of little faith."

II. THE DETERMINED DURATION (Contd.)

There is a balance which must be maintained in life. **It's not to say that we don't plan for tomorrow, but it is important not to become anxious about what we can or cannot see lingering in our future.**

*"So do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat? or 'What shall we drink? or 'What shall we wear?'
32. For the pagans run after these things, and your heavenly Father knows you need them.
33. But seek first his kingdom and righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.
34. Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own."*

Matthew 6:31-34

God's **Determined Duration** for us is the **Present**. He is the One who not only promises a bright and fruitful future but also a provision for the present. **He is not simply bringing us SOUL SALVATION but rather WHOLE SALVATION - including our bodies, soul (mind, emotions & will) and spirit.** God is the God of the here and now. He is also the God of the past and future.

The children of Israel were provided with manna for 40 years as they made their way through the Sinai wilderness. They were told to gather about 2 quarts per person/per day. **Yet there were time restrictions placed upon its collection.**

*"Then Moses said to them, 'No one is to keep any of it until the morning.'
20. However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them."*

Exodus 16:19,20

The only exception to the rule was found on the day before the Sabbath. On Friday they were instructed to gather twice as much manna (Exodus 16:22) and prepare it before the Sabbath (Saturday) arrived. Those who went out on the Sabbath to find some manna (Exodus 16:27) quickly recognized that God was a God of His Word. **God wanted the people to trust Him and rest upon His Word. If indeed our Lord encouraged His disciples to pray each day for daily food, then it is a pattern we should adopt for wholesome living.**

III. THE DEFINED DESIRE

" . . . our daily bread."

Matthew 6:11c

Did you know that God does place limits on the things we should desire? I remember someone trying to convince me that it was okay to smoke "grass" because *"if God didn't want us to He wouldn't have made it."* I told the young man that to me it was a very foolish perspective. After all, God also was responsible for us having cow manure. Should we smoke it as well? Talk about sweet grass, I'm sure it would give an unusual high.

The word used for *"daily"* was a very difficult word to be sure of its interpretation until a short while ago. The word had not been found in any other Greek literature until recently. Even the early church father Origen, believed that Matthew had invented the word. Yet a small papyrus fragment was found with a woman's shopping list. This word (*"epiousios"*) was next to one of the items on the list. **It was a reminder to purchase this item for the coming day.**

It is also important to understand what the word ***"bread"*** meant. Bread was a generic term used to describe the necessities and conveniences of life (Genesis 3:19; 28:20) such as food, raiment, and housing. It was not a term used to describe the riches and dainties of life but rather the things which were wholesome and needful. **It was used to describe the basics of life.**

In combining this fact together with the Scriptural use we come to an understanding of praying,

"Give me the essential things I need for this coming day."

This does not mean that God won't give us blessings over and above the bare necessities of life. He often does! Our demands must be kept balanced though. Agur recorded some words that were included with the words of Solomon in the book of Proverbs which said,

" . . . give me neither poverty or riches, but give me only my daily bread.

9. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, 'Who is the LORD?' Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonour the name of my God."

Proverbs 30:8,9

III. THE DEFINED DESIRE (Contd.)

The apostle Paul gave further words of wisdom to his young friend and the early church when he wrote,

*"But godliness with contentment is great gain.
7. For we brought nothing into the world, and we
can take nothing out of it.
8. But if we have food and clothing, we will be
content with that.
9. People who want to get rich fall into temptation
and a trap and into many foolish and harmful
desires that plunge men into ruin and destruction."*

I Timothy 6:6-9

The way we gain our daily bread is through daily work. **God combines His blessing with our willingness to toil an honest day of work.** We can't expect God to do His part if we are not willing to do our part to supply for our needs. God has plenty to go around. It has never been a **problem of supply** - it is rather a **problem of distribution**. God supplies so we can share with others.

We need to approach God with the assurance that He wishes to meet our daily need for "bread." He also wants us to do our part to fulfil His will for our lives.

I need Thee, oh I need Thee
Every hour I need Thee
Oh Bless me now my Saviour
I Come to Thee

C:/My Documents/WPWin(X7)/Sermons.2018/Prayer-Lord's/matt 6_11.wpd

Date: Apr 8/18

Place: FCA

Time: 10:30 Pm

Song: Give Thanks - F

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I. THE DECISIVE DEMAND - *Genesis 32:24-30*

II. THE DETERMINED DURATION

Matthew 6:11; Matthew 6:31-34; Exodus 16:19,20; Exodus 16:22; Exodus 16:27

III. THE DEFINED DESIRE

". . . our daily bread."

Matthew 6:11c

Proverbs 30:8,9; I Timothy 6:6-9