

“Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread”
(Matthew 6:11)

I. Introduction.

A. Orientation.

1. The Lord’s Prayer is a great advantage/blessing.
 - a. Given by the Master, the expert on prayer.
 - b. Shows us what is closest to the heart of God.
 - c. Shows us how to pray to be heard.
 - d. Books have been written on prayer, but this is the perfect summary/model.
 - e. If we memorize it, meditate on it, it will teach us much.
 - f. It will especially be fruitful if we follow it in our prayers.

2. Last week, we considered the third thing we are to pray for: “Your will be done.”
 - a. In it we pray that we, and all men, would obey the Lord.
 - (i) That we would hear His will and understand it: we need to pray for the Lord to raise up missionaries, ministers, teachers, to proclaim and teach it.
 - (ii) That His Spirit would be poured out so that we might desire and submit to it.
 - (iii) That by His Spirit we would set our hearts to do it.

 - b. We also pray that we would submit to His Providential will.
 - (i) We need to be content with where He has put us, how He has gifted us, how He has chosen to use us.
 - (ii) We need to be content with the situation He has placed us in, the trials and temptations He has subjected us to.
 - (iii) Everything that has happened has been a part of His plan: to criticize it is to criticize the Lord.
 - (iv) We need to be able to say with the hymn writer, “Whatever my God ordains is right.”
 - (v) No matter what it is, the Lord promises to work it together for our good, if we love Him.

 - c. And we need to submit to these things as the angels do in heaven.
 - (i) They are willing to do whatever their Master commands.
 - (ii) They are willing to submit to whatever He chooses to use them for.
 - (iii) When we pray this petition, we are asking that the Lord would give us the same kind of heart.

B. Preview.

1. This evening, we move to the next petition: Give us this day our daily bread.
 - a. Having put God’s glory first, we may move on to our own particular needs.
 - b. They basically fall into three categories:
 - (i) Give us this day our daily bread: Prayer for daily provision.
 - (ii) Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors: Prayer for forgiveness and the heart to forgive others.

- (iii) Do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from evil: Prayer for deliverance from temptation and evil.
 - (iv) Everything we need is included in these petitions.
 - (v) We don't need to pray for more, but we must not pray for less.
2. Tonight, we'll see that when we pray we should ask that God would provide for our daily needs: both physical and spiritual.
- a. We need to pray for daily physical needs – of food, covering and shelter – though the Lord seems to provide them anyway.
 - (i) That the Lord would bless them to nourish us.
 - (ii) That we would be able to enjoy these things with His blessing.
 - b. We need to pray for our daily spiritual needs.

II. Sermon.

- A. First, we need to pray for our daily physical needs, though God seems to provide them anyway.
1. Why? Why should we pray for our daily needs since God has promised to give us whatever we need?
 - a. First prayer is His means: prayer looks to God and faith receives the promise.
 - b. Second, the Lord gives us these things through prayer so that we won't take His goodness for granted.
 2. Remember, God doesn't owe us this goodness, especially since our rebellion against Him.
 - a. When God created the world, He created a world in which our needs would be fully provided.
 - (i) He filled His world with fertile plants, fruitful trees, everything necessary to sustain man.
 - (ii) Man could freely eat of all of the trees, with the exception of only one.
 - (iii) He provided these things purely of His goodness.
 - (a) Adam and Eve did not deserve/did nothing to earn them.
 - (b) But it pleased God, not only to create man, but also to take care of him, as a Father takes care of His children.
 - (c) Children don't earn this care; parents give it freely out of love.
 - (d) This is what God did.
 - b. If they didn't deserve these things before they sinned, how much less after?
 - (i) God blessed man and his ability to harvest the earth's resources.
 - (ii) But when he sinned, things changed. The Lord said to Adam, "Because you have listened to the voice of your wife, and have eaten from the tree about which I commanded you, saying, 'You shall not eat from it'; Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall grow for you; and you shall eat the plants of the field; by the sweat of your face you shall eat bread, till you return to the ground, because from it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return" (Gen. 3:17-19).

- (iii) Things became much harder for Adam.
 - (iv) But they didn't become impossible. God could have just as easily withdrawn all of His food and provision from man and from all of His creatures for man's sin, but He didn't.
 - (v) God is good. That is His nature.
 - (a) He still provides for everyone and everything all they have.
 - (b) The psalmist writes, "He sends forth springs in the valleys; they flow between the mountains; they give drink to every beast of the field; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; they lift up *their* voices among the branches. He waters the mountains from His upper chambers; the earth is satisfied with the fruit of His works. He causes the grass to grow for the cattle, and vegetation for the labor of man, so that he may bring forth food from the earth, and wine which makes man's heart glad, so that he may make *his* face glisten with oil, and food which sustains man's heart" (104:10-15).
 - (c) He even gives to His enemies things they obviously don't deserve.
 - (vi) No one deserves this kindness from God.
 - (a) We didn't deserve it to start with.
 - (b) We forfeited this goodness when we rebelled against Him in Adam.
 - (c) We continued that rebellion every day before coming to Christ.
 - (d) We still sin after having come.
 - (e) And yet, God still provides for us.
3. Because He is good, should we not ask, should we not pray?
- a. There are places in this world where the Lord has chosen to withhold His goodness, not entirely, but substantially.
 - (i) There are places in the world, such as in India, Africa, China, and in the former Soviet Union and its satellites where people starve to death every day.
 - (ii) Their sins have so offended and provoked God that He has substantially withheld His goodness from them. This is the legacy their leaders have left for them.
 - (iii) Remember what Paul says, that even though God reveals His goodness throughout His creation, He also reveals His wrath against sin. He writes, "For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who suppress the truth in unrighteousness. . . For even though they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened." (Rom. 1:18, 21).
 - (iv) This verse literally means that God pours out His wrath on mankind continually, for their rejection of Him as their God. They know He exists and that He provides for them, but they are unthankful.
 - (v) And so God, in His judgment, removes His goodness in some measure, and allows them to suffer more of what they already deserve because of their sins.
 - b. In America, we enjoy God's goodness to a greater degree. But we mustn't allow this prosperity to deceive us into thinking that, as a whole, we are pleasing to God.

- (i) We mustn't allow ourselves to think that we, as a nation, don't deserve this same judgment.
 - (ii) We have fallen into the same sins as these other nations, and worse:
 - (a) Many in our country are atheists.
 - (b) Many are involved in false and idolatrous religions.
 - (c) Many are immoral, addicted to drugs, guilty of homosexuality and lesbianism.
 - (d) As a nation, we are guilty of the murder of untold thousands of unborn children.
 - (iii) The only reason why God continues His goodness to us is because there are still many of His people here.
 - (iv) But their number is growing smaller, as our nation goes deeper into sin.
 - (v) We need to pray for revival.
- c. We should never take God's goodness for granted, but recognize what it is that God is doing for us, thank Him whole-heartedly and pray that He would continue His mercies.
- (i) The fact that these sins are still increasing and that God has brought judgments upon us in the last several years through terrorist attacks, should remind us that God is taking our sins seriously, even if we don't.
 - (ii) God might take remove His mercies if we do not continue to humble ourselves and pray.
 - (iii) Whenever He brings judgment on a wicked nation, the righteous are also affected to some extent.
4. We should ask not only that He would give us these things, but also that He would sustain us through them.
- a. It's one thing to have food, it's another for that food to do us any good.
 - b. When we are sick, our bodies can't use the food the way they need to. There are some diseases that keep our bodies from receiving the nourishment they need.
 - c. Since we are praying that the Lord would sustain us by meeting our needs, we also need to recognize this as a request that the Lord would sustain our health.
 - (i) Here's where our physical well-being fits into the Lord's prayer: we may pray for our own and one another's health.
 - (ii) But let's not forget that this is one need among many.
5. And Jesus tells us that we must look to God for these mercies every day.
- a. He tells us to pray, "Give us *this day* our *daily* bread."
 - b. This is not something we pray each month or year.
 - c. Jesus wants us to rely on God daily to supply our needs.
 - d. The problem is if we have too much, or desire too much, we might forget how much we depend on God for that bread and turn from Him.
 - (i) Agur, one of the authors of the Proverbs, writes, "Give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is my portion, lest I be full and deny *Thee* and say, 'Who is the Lord?' Or lest I be in want and steal, and profane the name of my God" (Prov. 30:8-9).

(ii) Jesus warns us that greed can lead to apostasy. He said to the multitudes who were following Him, “Beware, and be on your guard against every form of greed; for not *even* when one has an abundance does his life consist of his possessions.’ And He told them a parable, saying, ‘The land of a certain rich man was very productive. And he began reasoning to himself, saying, “What shall I do, since I have no place to store my crops?” And he said, “This is what I will do: I will tear down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, ‘Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years *to come*; take your ease, eat, drink *and* be merry.’” But God said to him, “You fool! This *very* night your soul is required of you; and *now* who will own what you have prepared?” So is the man who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God” (Luke 12:15-21).

e. We are to learn from this that we must rely on God daily to feed us and never to lose our sense of dependence upon Him.

II. And this brings us to the second thing I want us to see from this petition, and that is that we should pray not only for our physical bread, but also for our spiritual bread.

A. Look at the Lord’s Prayer as a whole: It certainly focuses more on our spiritual needs than physical.

1. We are to pray that God’s name would be revered, that His kingdom would come with power, and that His commandments would be carried out by all men perfectly on this earth.
2. After this petition, He will tell us to pray for the forgiveness of our sins, for the ability to forgive others, to keep us from temptation and to deliver us from evil.
3. Food, clothing and shelter are important. We need them to live here. But spiritual food is necessary for the things of eternity and are more important.

B. This should be the burden of what we pray for.

1. Certainly, we saw this under the first three petitions.
 - a. God’s name won’t be revered as it should apart from the Holy Spirit.
 - b. His kingdom won’t advance without His ministry.
 - c. His will won’t be done apart from His work.
2. So when we pray for physical bread, we should also pray for spiritual bread.
 - a. We should pray for the ministry of the Spirit.
 - b. We should pray for the fullness of the Spirit.
 - c. We should pray that God would make our meat and drink to do the will of the Father, as it was Jesus’ (John 4:34).
 - d. We should also pray that the Lord would prepare us to come to the Table next Lord’s Day, not merely to receive bread and wine, but the help of God’s Spirit. Amen.