

Praying Thankfully for Our Daily Bread

In the movie, *Shenandoah*, Jimmy Stewart plays a prosperous Quaker farmer during the Civil War. One night at the supper table, this widower and hard worker lets his feelings show as he asks the blessing. "Bless this food, Lord. Even though I plowed the land, I planted the seed, I irrigated the fields. I harvested the crops, I canned it, I cooked it & I served it. It took a lot of work and I did it all. But I thank you anyway because I promised my wife on her deathbed I would for the children's sake. Amen." I suppose many people feel this way some time or another, do we not?

I suggest to you that we should not pray with clenched fists but with open hands and open hearts of Thanksgiving! We are to pray with The Open Hand of Need . . . "I need thee, O I need thee, every hour I need thee - O bless me now my Savior I come to thee." We are to pray with The Open Hand of Faith . . . "All I have needed thy hand has provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord unto me." We are to pray with The Open Hand of Receptivity . . . "But drops of grief I could ne'er repay - The debt of love I owe. Here, Lord, I give myself away, tis all that I can do." We are truly helpless to receive the food we need that does not parish!

When we pray the Lord's Prayer we pray Give US our daily bread—not me, not my, not I, but WE and OURS and US. When the Prodigal separated himself from his family, he came to his father and said, "Give me my share of the estate." Such greedy self-centeredness got him in the pig pen & will get us there too! We do not pray in the Lord's prayer 'Give Me This Day What I Want.' We pray, "Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread." We must remember that we were created for community! We need only for today and we are to share with those in need.

Did you know that hunger kills somebody in the world Every 3.6 Seconds? That 10.5% of all U. S. households do not have adequate food to eat. There are 800 Million People in the world are malnourished. It would take 13 Billion Dollars A Year to End Hunger. In the U.S. & Europe alone we spend 18 billion dollars a year on pet food. What is an acceptable amount of people who should go without? We Americans have a love affair with food. Statistics tell us Americans eat 75 acres of pizza, 53 million hotdogs, 167 million eggs, 3 million gallons of ice cream, and 3,000 tons of candy A DAY!

We stuff our bodies and starve our souls. Jesus says to the hungry crowd, after feeding the five thousand, this may fill your stomach, but it will never satisfy your soul.' Cardiologist, Dean Ornish, puts it this way: "Our eat more, weigh less nation is suffering from an epidemic of spiritual heart disease. People turn to food, alcohol, and other destructive habits out of loneliness and despair."

As we prepare to celebrate another Thanksgiving I want to encourage to stop and thank God for your daily bread. Realize that you may be the answer to someone else's need for their daily bread. Donate and give to groups that are meeting the needs of our community and world. Participate in can drives like the one on November 17. Live lives of gratitude and remember who holds tomorrow and who holds your hand.

Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, after talking about the birds of the air and the lilies of the field, "Don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." I close with the beautiful words of, "His Eye Is On The Sparrow", "I don't know about tomorrow, I just live from day to day, And I don't borrow from its sunshine for its skies may turn to gray, And I don't worry about my future, for I know what Jesus said, And today He walks beside me for He knows what lies ahead. Many things about tomorrow! I don't seem to under-understand! But I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand. But I know who holds tomorrow and I know who holds my hand."