

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

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Genesis 8:20-22

Noah gives thanks and the Lord promises seedtime and harvest as long as the world endures!

Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and, taking some of all the clean animals and clean birds, he sacrificed burnt offerings on it. The LORD smelled the pleasing aroma and said in His heart: “Never again will I curse the ground because of man, even though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood. And never again will I destroy all living creatures, as I have done. As long as the earth endures, seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night will never cease.”

Deuteronomy 8:6-11

Be thankful for this land the Lord has given us.

Observe the commands of the LORD your God, walking in His ways and revering Him. For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land – a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the LORD your God for the good land

He has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God, failing to observe His commands, His laws and His decrees that I am giving you this day.

Psalm 145:15-21

The Lord provides for all our needs. Let us praise Him!

The eyes of all look to You, and You give them their food at the proper time. You open Your hand and satisfy the desires of every living thing. The LORD is righteous in all His ways and loving toward all He has made. The LORD is near to all who call on Him, to all who call on Him in truth. He fulfills the desires of those who fear Him; He hears their cry and saves them. The LORD watches over all who love Him, but all the wicked He will destroy. My mouth will speak in praise of the LORD. Let every creature praise His holy name for ever and ever.

Luke 12:16-21

God provides for us bountifully. But let's make sure that our earthly blessings don't overshadow the matters of faith!

And He told them this parable: “The ground of a certain rich man produced a good crop. He thought to himself, 'What shall I do? I have no place to store my crops.' Then he said, 'This is what I'll do. I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I'll say to myself, “You have plenty of good things laid up for many years. Take life easy; eat, drink and be merry.’ But God said to him, 'You fool! This very night your life will be demanded from you. Then who will get what you have prepared for yourself?' This is how it will be with anyone who stores up things for himself but is not rich toward God.”

Sermon Text; Matthew 6:11

Give us this day our daily bread.

Tomorrow we are going to feast. We are going to spend time with family and friends. We are going to have fun. And, we are going to enjoy the wonderful abundance the Lord gave us.

Tonight we look at being thankful for everything the Lord has given us. We are going to use a simple, little, Bible verse that you have said countless times. It is taken from The Lord's Prayer. It is known as *The Fourth Petition of The Lord's Prayer*. It says:

Give us this day our daily bread.

Our catechism asks the question:

“What does this mean?”

It gives this answer.

“God certainly gives daily bread without our prayer, even to all of the wicked. But we pray in this petition that He would lead us to acknowledge this, and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.”

These are your words, Heavenly Father. Lead us in the way of truth.
Your Word is truth.

Amen

I went to Walmart to get a loaf of bread for an illustration today. My conscience got the best of me, and I decided I was not going to buy the cheapest loaf of bread. (*I am into the reading of ingredients, so I looked at the ingredients, because I wanted to buy a loaf of bread that I could eat after-wards, and I would feel good about eating it.*)

Tonight we pray:

“Give us this day our daily bread.”

When God 'puts a loaf of bread (*like the one I'm holding*) on our table', what are the 'ingredients' that God puts into that loaf of bread? What goes into God getting that 'loaf of bread on our table'?

We have to look further than just the little ingredients that are on the back of this loaf of bread. For example, in order for God to 'get this loaf of bread on our table', we have to go way back to the fact that God created the seeds. He sent the sun, and He sent the rain. He created the land.

There was the farm, and the farmer. There was the tractor. There was the guy who made the tractor. There was the combine that combined. There were the grain bins that stored the grain, along with the people who worked in the grain bins.

There was the miller who milled the grain, and the mill that milled the grain.

There was the bakery that baked the bread, and the baker who baked the bread.

There was a truck driver who drove the truck. And, there was the truck maker that made the truck.

There was the grocer that sold the bread. There was the grocery store that had the bread.

There was the job I had to have so I could make money to buy the bread.

There was an economy that made all of this happen. There was a government that had to help run the economy. There was a government that had to print the money. There was a government that had to keep us safe, so that in safety we can go, and buy our daily bread.

Just think of the 'ingredients' it took just for God to get this 'loaf of bread on our table'! And so, when we pray:

“Give us this day our daily bread”,

we acknowledge everything God does to take care of our daily

needs. In fact, our Catechism goes on with this little question;
What is meant by daily bread?

It gives this answer.

“Daily bread includes everything needed for this life, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, fields, cattle, money, goods, spouse and children, faithful workers and rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, order, honor, true friends, good neighbors, and the like.”

Tonight we acknowledge all of those things come from the hand of God.

We say, ***“Give us this day our daily bread”***, every single day. And, every single day God provides those things for us.

When Jesus first said this prayer, ***“Give us this day our daily bread”***, I would assume most of His hearers, (*because they were Jewish*) immediately went back in their minds to when the LORD provided The Children Israel daily manna every single day. When they got up, there was manna on the ground. God told them to gather just enough for the day. And, if they gathered more than they needed, the next morning it would be rotten. So, every day they got up, and God provided their daily bread.

We understand from this prayer, ***“Give us this day our daily bread”***, all we need for this life comes from the Lord, and every day He takes care of us, day by day. And so, we trust He is going to take care of us.

We go to the explanation, ***“Give us this day our daily bread.”***

What does this mean?

“God certainly gives daily bread without our prayer, even all of the wicked, but, we pray in this petition He would lead us to acknowledge this...”

Then comes the next part.

“...to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.”

Now, I want to talk about **thanksgiving**. I am going to use a ladder

to illustrate that.

First, I am going to talk about the opposite of thanksgiving. I ran across this very intriguing, little statement from Martin Luther the other day. Here is the intriguing statement he made.

“Imagine you are going to become an unbeliever. You are going to climb a ladder, and when you get to the top rung of the ladder you become an unbeliever.”

Then he asked, *“What rung of the ladder would lead you to the point where finally, when you get to the top of the ladder, you are an unbeliever?”*

He said, *“The first rung of the ladder that leads to unbelief is ingratitude.”*

In other words,

ingratitude leads toward unbelief.

What he was saying is ingratitude is a spiritually dangerous place for us to be.

So, I am going to climb up this ladder, and be in a little bit of a dangerous place, here. Hold your breath, as I climb up this first rung! Maybe you are a little uncomfortable watching me do that, but I want you to realize ingratitude is a dangerous place for us to be.

Let us talk a little bit about **ingratitude**. Let us imagine you did something really nice for somebody. Maybe you gave them a wonderful gift of money, and it was a little hard for you to give that much money. Or, you spent a 'ton of time' making something really special for them. Maybe it was a meal, or something else. Or, you sacrificed something you would have loved to do, so you could take care of someone's needs.

So, you give something to somebody, and they enjoy it. They liked the food you made for them. They liked the money you gave them. They enjoyed the gift that was given, but they don't say anything. How does that make you feel? You know, there is something communicated unconsciously, when somebody does not say, *“Thank*

you”.

Here is what is getting communicated. *“I don't see you.” “I don't recognize what you did.” “I don't recognize the sacrifice you made.” “I don't recognize the kindness that came from your heart.” “I don't recognize the need to show you that you are important to me, and I owe you some thanks.”*

It does not feel good, when that is communicated to us, when somebody does not thank us.

Now, we think about all of the things we just talked about that God has given to us. We benefit from them. We enjoy them. We love our cars, our house, our clothes, and our food. Those are all gifts we get from God. We certainly are thankful for the gifts, but, but, do we look at The Giver? Are we grateful to The Giver? Or, do we have hearts of ingratitude that to God say, *“I don't recognize this came from You.” “I am not thankful.” “I don't care.” “I don't acknowledge this from You.”*

Let me tell you why that is so dangerous. I am going to read something from the book of Deuteronomy. This is going to describe pretty much the situation we are in. God is promising to the Children of Israel that when they go into Israel, and take possession of the land they are going to, they will have a wonderful life of abundance. *(All of us here, compared to the rest of the world, we have a wonderful life of abundance.)* So, here is what it says.

“For the LORD your God is bringing you into a good land - a land with streams and pools of water, with springs flowing in the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron, and you can dig copper out of the hills.”

So, all of those blessings! And then he says,

**“When you have eaten and are satisfied,
praise the LORD your God for the good land**

He has given you.”

In other words, be thankful for all that stuff God has given you.

It says,

“Be careful,

be careful that you do not forget the LORD your God...”

“...when you eat and are full, and you build beautiful houses to live in, and your herds and flocks grow large, and your silver and gold multiply, and everything else you have increases, be careful that your heart doesn't become proud, and you forget the LORD your God, who brought you out of a land of Egypt and out of a place of slavery. He led you through the great, terrible wilderness with its poisonous snakes and scorpions; a thirsty land where there was no water. He brought water out of the flint rock for you. He fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers had not known. You may say to yourself, 'My power and my own ability have gained this wealth for me'. But remember, the LORD your God gives you the power to gain wealth.”

So, what is the point of this? Here is the danger of ingratitude.

Ingratitude is, *“I have forgotten The Giver.”*

Then it goes on, and says,

“When you forget the LORD...”

Then, you go on to the next step. (*I am not going up the next step on the ladder, though!*) He says

“...then you become proud.”

Not only do you forget God, but then the next step is, *“I don't need God. This is all from my own hand.”*

So, I want to make sure we 'step down off any ladder of ingratitude' that we may be in.

I want to look at what really is a **grateful heart**? A grateful heart is not so much looking at the things we receive, but it is looking at The Giver who gave us what we have.

Let me give you a little example. Let's say one of the grownups here gave me a Tootsie Pop. I would probably thank you for that, even though I would not think it was that big of a deal. But, one day I was standing out in the lobby on a Sunday morning. A little guy came through the entryway. He was this little guy, who was wearing a little backpack. I could tell he was looking for me, and he made a beeline right for me, with that little backpack. He walked up to me, and said, *"Hi Pastor!"*

And I said, *"Hi!"*

Then, he said, *"I have something for you."* He took his little backpack off, unzipped it, and reached in to it.

I wondered, *"What does he have in his backpack?"*

He pulled out this little Tootsie Pop, and said, *"Here. This is for YOU!"*

I thought, *"Awww. What a sweet, little heart. He wants to let his old pastor know he cares about him."*

I tell you, I had a heart of gratitude, because of his heart for me.

Maybe you have heard this sermon illustration. It was going around about thirty years ago. It is a pretty deep sermon illustration, just to help you think about the heart of God towards you.

There was a man who had a job as an operator of a draw bridge for a railroad. There was a river, and then there was a railroad track that went over the river. So, this man's job was to raise the drawbridge, if there was a boat coming, so the railroad tracks would not block the boat. If there was a train coming, he was to lower the drawbridge, so the train could make it over the train tracks. So then, he would throw a lever to make that happen.

One day he had raised the drawbridge, and a ship went through. He knew there was a train coming down the tracks, and it was coming pretty fast. It had hundreds of people on it. He knew, *"Now I need to throw the lever, so that track makes it down in time for when the train gets here."*

That day, he had brought his little son to work with him. He was just about to throw the lever, when he looked around for his son. But, he did not see him. He frantically started looking for him, before he threw the lever. Finally, he could see his little son. Below the train tracks there were gears that controlled the mechanism that drops the drawbridge. His little son had gotten into those gears, and was playing in those gears.

Now, this dad had to make a decision. The decision was, *“There is no way my son is going to hear me. So, do I not push the lever and hundreds of people rush to their deaths, or do I push the lever and sacrifice my own son?”*

He knew his son was a believer in Jesus. He did not know about the people on that train, the hundreds of people on the train. And so, in a split moment, he yelled at the top of his lungs, *“Son, I love you!”* And then, he threw the lever. He sacrificed his own son. The train tracks went down, and the train went over. He watched as the people on the train were reading their papers, or looking out the window. They did not even know, they had no idea what he had done for them.

**God certainly gives daily bread without our prayers,
even to all of the wicked.**

Think about what God has done for the whole world. You know that little illustration I gave is nothing compared to the love God had for the entire world. We were 'racing on a train track' for eternal destruction in Hell. God, in His great mercy, sacrificed His own dear Son, and had His own dear Son pay the ultimate price to wash away all of our sins. Even when people do not acknowledge that awesome, loving heart of God, God is such a God of love that He even continues to give to even the ungodly food, clothes, and daily bread!

So, how much more grateful are we, who are Christians, who know the heart of The Giver, the heart of the One who has given us all of

this stuff? We understand, *“I don't deserve a bit of it. I am not worthy of any of it, but He gives it to me all by mercy and grace.”* All the more reason for us, as we look at these gifts, to have hearts of absolute gratitude to God for everything He has given us. And even if all that God were to give us was just 'a little Tootsie Pop', and that was all we got from Him, our hearts, knowing The Giver, knowing He has given us His own Son, would cause us to fall down on our knees and say,

**“Bless the Lord, O my soul,
and forget not all His benefits.
Amen”**

Now, may the peace of God, which passes all understanding, keep our hearts, and our minds in Christ Jesus, our Lord.

Amen