

The Lord's Prayer Part 4 (Matthew 6:11)  
"Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread"

Sermon Text: "Give us this day our daily bread" - Matthew 6:11

**WCF #193 - "What do we pray for in the fourth petition?"**

Answer: "In the fourth petition, (which is, Give us this day our daily bread,) acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all outward blessings of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit, or by our own industry to procure them; but prone to desire, get, and use them unlawfully: we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may, of His free gift, and as to His fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy a competent portion of them; and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort".

**Introduction to Petition #4:**

- a. We've previously covered the first three petitions which all pertain to the honoring of God's glory as chief among the petitions.
- b. This model establishes the necessity of prioritizing the glory of God 1<sup>st</sup> in all things, followed up with the needs and desires of man.
- c. This is not our default setting as fallen creatures with wills contrary to the will of God.
- d. Man's sinful nature makes it so he always desires his own needs be met first without consideration for the glory of God.
- e. This is evident in the way we frequently rush into prayer with our own supplications first on our lips without concern for first glorifying the one to whom we're bringing those petitions. We are blessed to have a model

where God has made His own mind clear on what he desires from us in prayer.

- f. God's own glory is what He holds most dear.

"I am the LORD; that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to carved idols" – Isaiah 42:8

- g. Thomas Watson says that "God's glory is worth more than the salvation of all men's souls".

### **1. What Does It Mean That Men Have Forfeited All Outward Blessings in This Life?**

- a. It means that because we violated the terms of the covenant that God made with man in the garden, we deserve the curses of that covenant and not its blessings.

"And to Adam He said, because you have listened to the voice of your wife and have eaten of the tree I have commanded you, 'you shall not eat of it,' cursed is the ground because of you; in pain you shall eat of it all the days of your life; thorns and thistles it shall bring forth 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, for out of it you were taken; for you are dust, and to dust you shall return."  
– Genesis 3:17

- b. Covenants always come with either blessings or curses. When a man fails to uphold his end of the covenant, he deserves only its subsequent curses. We see this exhibited when the very earth turned on man's easiness of living and became hostile to him.
- c. The only reason food was to be had at all was because Christ was already involved as the mediator in some capacity and grace was bestowed unto Adam and Eve.

- d. They wore the skins of the first sacrifices, prepared by God Himself, and walked out of the garden alive because God showed them mercy not justice.
- e. Forfeiture of blessings, in the sense of original sin, does not mean God would give no blessings, but rather man had no ability to procure for himself anything good, neither did he have any right to a single blessing.
- f. Any good thing men have in this life by nature has to be gifted because we cannot obtain such things for ourselves. The sun is obedient to God, it doesn't shine for us. The ground grows food for the Lord, without Him it would open its mouth to swallow us whole.
- g. *(Edwards and Jonah examples)*

## **2. What Is Implied When We're Asking God to Give Us Our Daily Bread?**

- a. It firstly implies that God Himself is the benefactor of all our good things. He is the owner and the donor of every single blessing that we enjoy in this life.
- b. Every good thing we experience like food, faith, grace, wisdom, riches, peace, health, rain are blessed gifts to the Christian that come directly from the hand of God.

“Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above from the Father of lights..” – James 1:17

- c. We live on these gifts from God because our corruption by the nature of its heinousness, forfeited its rights to any blessings at the moment of the fall.
- d. In Chapter 6 of our Westminster confession, we see this spelled out succinctly in point 6.

“Every sin, both original and actual, being a transgression of the righteous law of God, and contrary thereunto, doth, in its own nature, bring guilt upon the sinner, whereby he is bound over to the wrath of God, and the curse of the law, and so made subject to death, with all miseries spiritual, temporal, and eternal.”

- e. God owes us no blessings, in fact we deserve to have them withheld from us, and yet here we have Jesus telling us, His people, we can pray for them daily.
- h. “If all be a gift, then take notice of God’s goodness. There is nothing in us that can deserve or requite God’s kindness; yet such is the sweetness of His nature, that He gives us rich provision, and feeds us with the finest of the wheat.” – Thomas Watson

### **3. What Is Meant by the Term “Daily Bread”?**

- a. The prayer for our daily bread isn’t only about literal bread, but rather any and everything that’s required to meet our daily needs. This includes the necessities of shelter, clothing, fuel, etc.... As one commentary puts it, it’s a prayer for our needs, not our greeds.
- b. No doubt this was also a reflection of the manner in which some were paid during this time period. It was common to be paid daily which as you can imagine yields itself to worries that tomorrow they might not have enough.
- c. It’s not too different from the angst that many in our own culture have living week to week, not knowing if they will be able to meet their monthly expenses.
- d. The context here would also imply that those being instructed to pray such were also asking that God preserved their ability to work as a means of procuring their daily bread.

- e. When we ask for God to give us our daily bread, we are asking that God would bestow unto us temporal things which are necessary and convenient for living but we never are to pray for those temporal things for their own sake.
- f. The purpose of temporal things must always be viewed in the light of spiritual ends. Of what good is any temporal thing in this life if it doesn't ultimately bring glory and honor to God?
- g. If we pray for health, we must pray for our health in the spirit that we desire it to serve God all the better. If we pray for an increase in finances, it should never be for the sole purpose of fulfilling our own fleshly desires but rather there should be a chief element of desiring to serve God with it in the larger capacity.
- h. The best example of this is Solomon's record of Agur's prayer in Proverbs 30.

"Remove from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, "Who is the LORD?" or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God."

- f. Here Agur is praying in the same spirit that that the Lord's prayer teaches. He prays that God keeps him from poverty not because it would disturb his level of comfort but because he is afraid that his misery in poverty might cause him to sin against God by tempting him to steal and therefore profaning His holy name.
- g. Neither does he pray for riches because he fears that if he has too much he might no longer consider the Lord necessary to him and begin to stop relying on Him.
- h. Everything he prayed for had God front and center in the desires that he had for his own estate.

- i. This is exactly why God sometimes withholds from us temporal things. God knows better than us what will be a snare to our hearts and draw us away from him. In many cases we grow frustrated with what we feel is an unjustified withholding of temporal blessing, but who are we to think as much?
- j. We should always pray in a spirit that's submissive to God's will and not our own.

#### **4. The Man That Has No Need of God's Giving!**

- a. If God is the giver of all good things, then it would be a great evil to assume that because of our own skills and talents alone we have procured the blessing on our own.
- b. Deuteronomy 8:18 says that it is God that gives the power to get wealth.
- c. It is easy for men to look at their estate and bless the means they used to procure it rather than bless the God who ordained the secondary means by which they gained it.
- d. Thomas Watson says, "Though the bread is in our hand, the blessing is in God's hand, and it must be fetched out of His hand by prayer."
- e. This means in one sense that even if we had clothes, they would do no good to warm us without the blessing of God on them. Though we may have food, it would in no way nourish us unless God's blessing was upon it.
- f. In fact, temporal things in our hands without the blessing of God aren't guaranteed to remain in our care. The money we save can disappear. The barns that store our livelihood burn down. The health we enjoy can fade in a moment.

- g. Have you ever seen the state of a man who lost his retirement or even his legs? I have. It's a frightening thing to watch them grapple with their faith in that moment.
- h. All these things suggest that the wealthy man needs to pray "Give us our daily bread even more so than the man without, because the man that has everything will always be tempted to not pray it at all.

## **5. The Grateful Man Has No Temporal Idols**

- a. A man who admires his own ability to procure wealth often makes an idol of his estate and becomes very prideful. He is not grateful for what he has, why should he be, he has gained it on his own.
- b. The thing that safeguards a man from this type of pride is praying according to the model Jesus taught us. When a man asks God to "give" him his daily bread, he is acknowledging that his bread is not gained by his own strength alone.
- c. This attitude in prayer yields gratefulness for what one has because he can't help but see it as a gift.
- d. You can't make an idol out of that which you're grateful to God for giving you. How could you? Your eyes are fixated on the giver as your object of worship, not the things he has given.

## **6. What Are We Praying for When We Pray for Ourselves and Others? (pg 200)**

- a. The "us" in the fourth petition makes it clear that we are to not think of ourselves and our own needs always. The prayer doesn't suggest we pray for others but rather it commands it.

- b. The whole of the law is fulfilled in two things, love of God and love of neighbor. How else do we show God that we love Him than by pouring out our hearts in earnestness towards other saints whom He also loves?
- c. All of us can probably list examples of watching other humans move through life only concerned for their own needs. They are often inconsiderate and think nothing of inconveniencing others when it serves their own immediate desires. It can be infuriating.
- d. Thomas Watson says, "Let us pray for others as well as for ourselves. A good man benefits others as well as himself. Spiders work only for themselves, but bees for the good of others."
- e. Ephesians 6:18 says, "Praying at all times in the spirit, with all prayer and supplication for all the saints, and also for me..."
- f. The prayers of God's people are of great comfort to the godly. What a comfort it is to know that people in your own community not only pray for their own needs but yours too! This is one of the first basic acts of Christian love and charity inside of the church.

## 7. Is It Wrong to Build For the Future?

- a. The bible makes it clear that is a good thing to build up an inheritance of some sort for our children. Having more in general allows us to be more charitable and even create institutions that can glorify the Lord. But Jesus gives us this prayer for two reasons.
  - That we won't be riddled with anxiety about the future. (mana in the desert came and met their needs daily)
  - That we live each day as if it were our last. Today might be the last one we live. If we curse God because we have no stockpile for tomorrow, we will appear foolish when we



stand before him tomorrow realizing we never had a true need for it.

- b. Even if we spend a lifetime never attaining some form of greater estate than we currently possess, we have been given far more than we deserve.
- c. RC Sproul once said that if God never gave him another good thing in his life, what God had already done for him in terms of salvation was more than he could have ever hoped for.
- d. Also, from God's perspective, when He graciously sets the Christian apart for an eternity of glory, what's 100 years in poverty amount to anyway? Our God is a God who likes to keep the best wine for last.

#### 8. Let Us Enjoy What God Has Gifted!

- a. Never apologize to anyone for the temporal gifts God has given you to enjoy on this side of sanctification but enjoy them only through the lens of seeking to glorify God with all of it.
- b. Pray this prayer daily that you never forget the hand from which it came to you.
- c. If you need more, then pray for it, but examine yourself to make sure God is front and center in your mind and not secret pride and lusts of the flesh.
- d. Be content with daily bread. The man who isn't content with what God gives him is in danger of condemnation.

