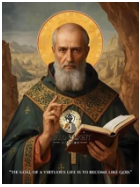


Last week we discussed **Matthew 6:10** – **“Your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.”** Meister Eckhart says: “Nothing makes a true man but the giving up of his will. The only perfect and true will comes from entering into God’s will and being without self-will.” Have you considered this this week, giving up your will in your life and focusing on God’s will? What changes have you made?

**Matthew 6:11** – **“Give us today our daily bread.”**



**Gregory of Nyssa** (ca.335-ca.394) was an early Christian bishop and saint. An early Christian theologian, he served as the bishop of Nyssa from 372 to 376 and from 378 until his death in 394. He is venerated as a saint in Eastern Orthodoxy, the Catholic Church, Oriental Orthodox Churches, Anglicanism, and Lutheranism.

**Gregory** says: “When we say to God, “Give bread,” we do not ask for delights riches, and flowery robes. We do not seek the beauty of gold, the glow of precious stones, and vessels of silver. We ask for none of these by which the soul is distracted from the divine and noble cares. We pray only for bread.” What is **Gregory** saying here? What is bread?

**Bread:** The Greek word for bread is **artos**, which refers to standard, life-sustaining bread. In the Bible, bread is one of the most significant symbols, representing spiritual nourishment, divine provision, togetherness, and the sacrificial body of Christ. Because it was an ancient daily staple, it carries profound physical and spiritual meaning throughout both testaments. What is Jesus saying?

**Gregory** goes on; “It is as if the Divine Word cries aloud to his listeners all but the following: Stop, O people, from pouring your desires into vain things. Stop adding to the causes of suffering on your own selves.” What does this mean to you?

He says, “You trade as far as India. You risk life in unknown seas and commit yourself to annual voyages to fetch products to season your food. You are not mindful of the fact that the pleasure of spices reaches no further than the palate.” What is **Gregory** saying? “Instead ask for bread to meet life’s needs. You are obligated by nature to the body only in this regard. Whatever else is contrived by the minds of pleasure seekers, it belongs to the extraneous act of sowing weeds.” What is Gregory saying about the constant seeking of pleasures in our life? And how does this effect our spiritual growth as a Christian and child of God?

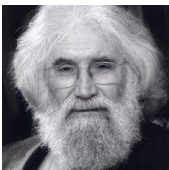
**Matthew 13:7** – **Jesus** said: **“Other seed fell among thorns, which grew up and choked the plants.”** What does this say to you?

**Matthew 13:22-23** – **Jesus** then said: **“The one who received the seed that fell among the thorns is the man who hears the word, but the worries of this life and the deceitfulness of wealth choke it, making it unfruitful.”** Are you unfruitful due to your worldly concerns?

“You are the true director of your prayer if your abundance does not come from what belongs to others; if your income is not derived from tears; if no one goes hungry because of your satiety (the physiological and psychological feeling of fullness and satisfaction that occurs after eating, effectively suppressing the desire to eat again. It determines how long you feel satisfied between meals and plays a major role in regulating your overall food intake and weight.) ...Indeed, this is the bread from God,…”

What is **Gregory** saying here about our income and satisfaction in life and how it is derived? Why is this important to a Christian?

**Gregory** goes on to say that if you acquire your income from “unjust intent”, God is not providing this for you. The “evil contriver of injustice” is your provider and it is he who here’s your prayers. Have you ever thought of Satan hearing your prayers if they are unjust? “And if you offer gifts acquired by injustice, your gift amounts to the yelp of a dog or the pay of a harlot.” What does this mean?



**Lenardo Boff** (1938 - ) is a Brazilian Catholic priest and liberation theologian. He is professor emeritus of ethics, philosophy of religion, and ecology at the Rio de Janeiro State University. His latest books are **Christianity in a Nutshell** (2013) and **Francis of Rome & Francis of Assisi** (2014).

“This bread that is jointly produced must be distributed and consumed in concert with others. Only then can we truthfully ask for our daily bread. God does not hear the prayer that asks only for my bread. A genuine relationship with God calls for maintaining a relationship with others.” What is **Boff** telling us?

**Isaiah 58:7** – “Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter-“ What does this mean?

**Job 31:17-20** – Job says: “if I have kept my bread to myself, not sharing it with the fatherless-“ **Job 31:22-23** – “then let my arm fall from the shoulder, let it be broken off at the joint. For I dreaded destruction from God, and for fear of his splendor I could not do such things.” **Job** reveals genuine understanding concerning matters of social justice. What is he telling us?

**Matthew 25:35-36** – **Jesus** said: **“For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, ... I tell you the truth, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of mine, you did for me.”** Rewards in the kingdom of heaven are given to those who serve without thought of reward. There is no hint of merit here, for God gives out of grace, not debt. If this is true, then how are we to give as children of God?



**F.B. Meyer**(1847-1929)was an English Baptist evangelist involved in inner city mission work.He wrote over 40 books:

**The Secret of Guidance:** A classic on discovering God's will and leading a spiritually empowered life.

**Christian Living:** Addresses on practical, day-to-day Christian holiness.

**The Shepherd Psalm:** A beloved, reflective exposition of Psalm 23.

**Our Daily Walk:** A popular daily devotional book.

**The Way Into the Holiest:** A deep exposition on the Epistle to the Hebrews.

“As far as you can, help to alleviate the despair and hopelessness, the misery and the sin of people, by passing on the Bread of God, the Bread of Life, the Bread of Love, the Bread of Hope, upon which you feed. Share your last crust with another. If you get a glint of light,flash it on.If you get a new truth, communicate it.If you get a baptism of the Holy Spirit, never rest until others rejoice in it too.” Meyer is telling us to use the provisions God has given us to share with others. Why is this so important in the life of a Christian?

**Matthew 4:19** – **“Come, follow me,”** Jesus said, **“and I will make you fishers of men.”** At once they (Peter and Andrew) left their nets and followed him.” What does it mean to follow Jesus? How does this corollate with having our daily bread? Go and share.