



3/22/2020

“Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread”

Scripture: Exodus 16:2-15; Matthew 6:11, 25-27; Mark 6:30-44

Lenten Series: Living the Lord’s Prayer

Fourth Sunday in Lent

Jesus tells us to pray, “Give us this day our daily bread.”. That implies that we . . .

† **Trust God to provide what is needed each day**

In the words of the prayer which Jesus has taught his followers to pray, we are perhaps reminded as they were, of the Israelites who centuries earlier had walked the wilderness desert from Egypt to Palestine, the Promised Land. They relied on God to daily provide manna from heaven to eat; with the exception that two days of manna were provided and collected on the sixth day of the week, so that they did not have to labor on the seventh, the Sabbath Day of rest.

Jesus also says that God is glad to provide for all God’s children, so let us remember to ask with thanksgiving for our daily needs.

As Matthew records (6:25-27) in the same chapter as the prayer which Jesus teaches us, Jesus also says: *“Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink; or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothes? Look at the birds of the air; they do not sow or reap or store away in barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not much more valuable than they? Can any one of you by worrying add a single hour to your life?”* (Matthew 6:25-27 NIV)

One of our Jacob’s Well Band members reposted this passage on his Facebook page during the week, I believe to address our current situation, as many people are stockpiling essentials and other items as well. As the original byline simply read . . . “Ok to prepare, but don’t worry.”

I know how difficult this is. We want to plan. We want to insure the future. We want certainty. I’m not saying those things are wrong to want for tomorrow, or to prepare for possible scenarios, but not so much that we spend today in fear and anxiousness.

“Give us this day,” Jesus tells us to pray, “our daily bread” – not tomorrow’s or next week’s; not a freezer full of food for the next two months, but essentials for this day. Thus, we rely with grateful thanks upon the goodness of God.

It might be a little ironic for me to say this, since God is still teaching me. I picked up a few things from Walmart Friday as I went to visit my brother and bring him a few things. I also picked up a couple of bags of bagels (my daily bread ☐), along with some little cinnamon cheesecakes, which I really don’t need. Well, for one reason or another, I realized when I got



home later that evening that the bag with those items didn't make it into my cart after paying for them. And I live too far from the store to bother going back for them. Hopefully, someone who needs them more than I do will enjoy them.

The scriptures remind us that **all good things come from God above**. I believe that the One who has created all things has provided enough for all on this earth, especially as our agricultural technology and distribution systems have improved. Though we may often take it for granted, it is God who provides. Though human beings may work hard to cultivate, plant, water, harvest, and prepare the bread and other food we eat, all comes from God; although I don't think God necessarily wants to take the credit for all the artificial ingredients and other chemicals we put into the food we eat. 😊

And although we may work long and hard hours to provide for ourselves and our families, we should also remember to spend quality time with them, as I know many of you do.

So, as you may be isolated at home, it's also a good time to gather around the table for food and conversation and getting closer emotionally to the ones near you. Remember to give thanks to God. We can also do this long distance, thanks to cell phones and the internet.

Further, most, if not all of us, are interdependent on one another as well.

† **We can be part of God's blessing by offering ourselves and what we have in helping to meet the needs of others.**

I remember some of the best times in my college days and early adult years. I didn't go on spring break to beaches and bashes. As some of you know, I went backpacking with several close friends, usually to the mountains of the Shenandoah National Park in Virginia. There you brought and ate just enough food for two or three days, which you could put into your pack beforehand. There were not any foods you could just gather along the trail (at least that I would know of). You usually took a canteen of water. (That was before the days of bottled water in the USA. 😊) And we had water purification tablets to treat the spring water we hoped to find along the trail. And we would often share what we brought with one another. But each one was expected to be responsible with what they had.

Even times such as these, we can consider what God has given to us, and how we can share it with others. Sometimes that is like the way Jesus was able to feed the five thousand who had followed him around the Sea of Galilee and gathered to hear him on the hillside (Mark 6:30-44). Mark tells us . . .

“At this time it was late in the day, so his disciples came to him. “This is a remote place,” they said, “and it's already very late. Send the people away so that they can go to the surrounding countryside and villages and buy themselves something to eat.”

“But he answered, “*You give them something to eat.*” They said to him, “That would take more than half a year's wages! Are we to go and spend that much on bread and give it to them to eat?” “*How many loaves do you have?*” he asked. “*Go and see.*” When they found out, they said, “Five—and two fish.” Then Jesus directed them to have all the people sit down in groups



on the green grass. So they sat down in groups of hundreds and fifties. Taking the five loaves and the two fish and looking up to heaven, he gave thanks and broke the loaves. Then he gave them to his disciples to distribute to the people. He also divided the two fish among them all. They all ate and were satisfied, and the disciples picked up twelve basketfuls of broken pieces of bread and fish.”

Over five thousand men, women and children were fed. These stories are usually referred to as the “Miracle of Loaves and Fishes.” They demonstrated that Jesus was able to multiply in marvelous ways what was offered with thanks to God.

Of course, in the current crises, we have to adapt our ways of feeding so many. And many of our local, national and world missions are doing just that. We don’t have to stop giving to the CCEA, UMCOR and others that help provide the needed daily bread for our neighbors near and far.

While we may pride ourselves on independence and self-sufficiency, most of us not wanting to need to rely or depend on others for support, there may be some times when we will still need to depend on others.

And as we have individually received, we are also part of the body of Christ in this world. We can offer ourselves with praise and thanksgiving to God in helping to meet the needs of others. And this, as I’m sure you’ve experienced, is a great blessing to yourself as well.

So, let me encourage and challenge you to do one or more intentional or random act of kindness this week. As suggested in your sermon notes, you can . . .

† Donate food to the CCEA Food Pantry - drop donations at Trinity UMC and CCEA will arrange pick up

† Give someone a gift-card for gas or groceries

† Call someone who may feel lonely or isolated

† Let someone go in front of you in the checkout line.

† Post a “Thank You” or prayer/caring note to health care professionals

† Call a parent with a child or children at home for encouragement or support

And when you pray as Jesus taught us, “Give us this day our daily bread.” may you know the blessings of our all loving and gracious God who provides our needs each day!

Amen.