

## The Model Prayer – Give Us This Day Our Daily Bread

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

Dr. H. Powell Dew, Jr.

June 22, 2025

Text: Matthew 14:14-21

Purpose: We are invited to bring our needs before the Lord. The most basic human need is enough bread to eat. As we pray, “*Give us this day, our daily bread*” we learn a dependence upon God and a trust in Him to meet our needs for sustenance.

An elderly lady was well-known for her faith and for her boldness in talking about it. For instance, she would stand on her front porch and shout, "PRAISE THE LORD!"



Next door to her lived an atheist who would get so angry at her proclamations he would shout, "THERE IS NO LORD!!"

Hard times set in on the elderly lady, and she prayed for God to send her some assistance. She stood on her porch and shouted, "PRAISE THE LORD. GOD, I NEED FOOD!! I AM HAVING A HARD TIME. PLEASE LORD, SEND ME SOME GROCERIES!!"

The next morning the lady went out on her porch and noted a large bag of groceries and SHE shouted, "PRAISE THE LORD!"

The neighbor jumped from behind a bush and said, "Aha! I told you there is no Lord. I bought those groceries, God didn't."

The lady started jumping up and down and clapping her hands and said, "PRAISE THE LORD!! NOT ONLY DID HE SEND ME GROCERIES, BUT HE MADE THE DEVIL PAY FOR THEM!! PRAISE THE LORD!"<sup>1</sup>

I thought that story was just the right one to begin our study on "Give us this day, our daily bread."



We are continuing our study on the Lord's Prayer as found in Matthew chapter six. As I have mentioned on several occasions, this is actually a prayer given to us by

Jesus at the request of His disciples. If we sincerely grasp what is being taught in this prayer, we can use it as a model for all of our prayers.

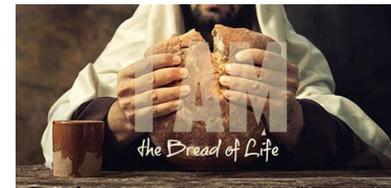
Today we come to the middle of the Model Prayer and find a distinct shift in the focus of this prayer. Up to this point, all of the prayers have been God focused. In the first three petitions you find the words "Thy," – "Thy Name," "Thy Kingdom," "Thy Will." But in the last three petitions we find the words "us" and "our." If we put God first in our thoughts and mind, we can rightly think about ourselves.<sup>2</sup>

The very first petition we come to involves something so basic and so simple, we are tempted to overlook it. This first petition comes directly after we have prayed the broad overarching prayer "*Thy will be done*" to something so

narrow and specific "*Give us this day our daily bread.*" This first petition begins to address the issues you and I confront each and every day.



Yes, we have to address the issue of food for our body. While the first three petitions seem so distant and far away, this petition for bread seems so basic – yet so essential. This petition addresses the physical necessities of life.



Throughout the centuries followers of Christ have sought to garner greater meaning from this sentence prayer. Jerome, Origen and Augustine, great theologians from the past, taught that this petition was the same bread Jesus referred to in John 6:35, "*I am the bread of life.*" They felt that to pray for material blessings was wrong. They felt the prayer was actually an extension of prayer for the "Bread of Life" to be present in the believers.

I believe this portion of the prayer should not be spiritualized away. No matter how saintly a person is, they still have to eat if they want to live. We need food for our body and bread is the most basic of foods.

Jesus understood the everyday needs of the people. I believe He understands how hard it is to make ends meet. Today people are struggling, more than ever, to make ends meet. They look at their

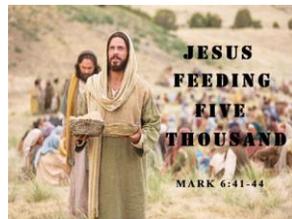


medical bills, light bill, rent or mortgage bill, gas bill, and wonder if there is enough left over for the food bill.

Here in Kinston, at Mary's Soup Kitchen, they feed about 160 people every day – 7 days a week. With summer now upon us, more of those numbers include children. More and more people are having a difficult time making their limited funds go far enough. They have decided they can get a meal there and save the rest for other items. Yes, even today, having enough food to eat is a pressing need for more and more individuals.



In many of the parables Jesus taught, they reflected poverty instead of wealth. Jesus identified a woman with two widow's mites who gave all. There is a story of a woman who had a few coins and lost one and rejoiced when it was found. Jesus' mother and father (Mary and Joseph) could only afford two young turtledoves or two pigeons when He was dedicated at the Temple when He was eight days old. I guess you could say Jesus would understand how difficult it is to go to the grocery store with our list longer than our finances can fill.



## Feeding of the Five Thousand

During Jesus' day many people followed Him to hear what He had to say as well as hoping their loved one could be healed from their illness. The passage of scripture that was read earlier shows the compassion Jesus had for the multitudes. It says, *"He saw a great multitude; and He was moved with compassion for them, and healed their sick."*

As the evening came, the disciples became concerned about how this financially poor crowd was going to be fed since it was getting late. They were out in a deserted place; there was no McDonalds or KFC nearby to feed the thousands gathered. The disciples felt the only option was to disburse the crowds and send them home. Honestly, I can identify with the disciples thinking – it is thinking of the practical and pragmatic issues related to the people gathered there. To me, it is logical to send them away so they can eat.

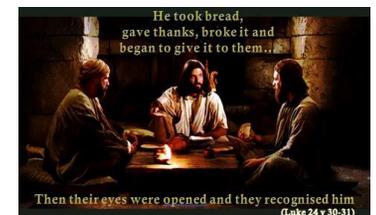
**JESUS SAID... YOU GIVE THEM  
SOMETHING TO EAT**  
...Matthew 14:16...

But Jesus was not in agreement with them. He said, *"No you don't need to send them away. You get them something to eat."*

I would have become frustrated, just as the disciples, as to the logistics of such a request. There is not enough money in the purse to feed everyone. But what they had – they brought to Jesus – five loaves of bread and two fish.

What did He do with it? – He took it – Gave thanks to God – He blessed it – He broke it – and He gave it. That act of faith on the disciple's part – along with Jesus' blessing it – multiplied it greatly – enough to feed five thousand men, not counting the women and children – with twelve baskets of leftovers! Even Jesus likes leftovers!

But that is not the only time Jesus' encounter with others centered around the topic of bread. On the road to Emmaus after His resurrection, He broke bread with the two brokenhearted believers. On the seashore of the Sea of Galilee, Jesus built a small fire and baked bread and



fish for some tired fishermen who once left their nets to follow Him. Jesus was there on that seashore, cooking them breakfast. Jesus did not give them a prayer or sermon; He met their physical need.

Maybe that is why so many Christians today that are seeking to serve the Lord are first meeting the physical needs of individuals before they meet their spiritual needs. It is hard to hear the gospel when your stomach is empty, or you have no clothes, or if you don't have a place to sleep at night. Many man hours and energy is given by the Baptist Men Disaster Relief workers in helping meet these basic physical needs when a disaster strikes.



God is concerned with our needs in life. Nothing is too small of an item for God. Jesus reminds us that our Heavenly Father cares for the birds of the field and the lilies of the valley. He feeds the birds and clothes the flowers of the field. How much more does our Heavenly

Father care for you? We can come to Him with our needs. When we petition God for our daily bread, we see every word in this petition carries great meaning.

“**Give** us this day, our daily bread.”<sup>3</sup>

When we ask God to “**Give** us bread,” we are acknowledging our dependence upon Him. I have found when a person has plenty; they are reluctant to ask anyone for anything. They would



**Give** Us This Day Our Daily Bread

rather freeze to death than ask for help in the winter. They would rather shrivel up to nothing with their pantry empty than ask for help.



Few of us in this room have truly felt the pangs of hunger. We have been a blessed people who have full pantries, stores nearby, money to purchase our basic food needs.

Maybe that is why we are not ready to ask for help. We are not a dependent people; we do not need any help – even from God. It is hard to receive from God when our hands are so full. This prayer encourages us and causes us to acknowledge dependence upon God and not to be so independent minded.

It is true we have abundance, but we are dependent upon God for our daily bread. Maybe that was what God was trying to teach the Israelites as they wandered in the desert for 40 years. God sent Manna from Heaven every morning and the people went out daily to collect this bread of heaven. They learned, albeit very slowly, that they were dependent upon God daily for their survival and sustenance.

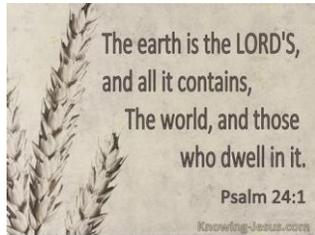
God is faithful to us today. According to a May 12, 2025 report I read this week, in our world today, there are 1,072 million metric tons of wheat



produced annually worldwide. It is estimated the world will consume 808 million metric tons. With our current world reserves of wheat, there is a 119 days' supply. If all the wheat in the world that was in production suddenly stopped, we would only have enough to last 4 months.

A similar story is also true for corn. It is estimated that the world production of corn is 1.265 billion metric tons worldwide. Our consumption is 1.274 billion metric tons. Right now, the world is consuming more corn than its producing. World reserves are estimated at 277.8 million tons which is a 79-day supply or 2.65 months. Our corn supply is getting smaller each year.<sup>4</sup>

There is enough wheat and corn available to feed the world's hungry, if we could only distribute it effectively in those areas affected by drought and famine. God continues to be faithful to us. If God stopped blessing us with rain for only a brief time, our food supply would be in grave danger. There are numerous biblical stories that reinforce famine does come and people are brought to their knees quickly due to a lack of food.



We need to see and acknowledge that what we have all belongs to the Lord. The Psalms declare *“The earth is the Lord’s and all the fullness thereof.”* (24:1) What we have comes as a gift from God. Yes we may take it and

use it without asking but we have no right to it. Even the food on our table is not ours. Its provision ultimately comes from the Lord.

There are those that have plenty and give no acknowledgment to God. God tells us that *“He makes the sun to rise on the just and unjust.”* He sends the rain on the good and evil alike. But there is a difference – those that thank God are actually receiving God’s gift and blessing. Those that take it without asking do get food, but they don’t get the blessing of God that makes us rich and adds value to

all we own. I believe it is right and proper that we stop and ask a blessing for our food before we “dig in!”

“Give **US** this day, our daily bread.”



Give **Us** This Day Our Daily Bread

The second word in this prayer – **US** – teaches us a lesson on unselfishness. The prayer does not say *“Give Me”* it says *“Give Us.”* We cannot come to God just by ourselves. We need to ask for bread for others as well. We need to be concerned about the hunger of our neighbor, our co-worker, and even our enemies.



We need to think of those that are barely making it today. If we are sincere about our faith, we must put action to our prayers. Maybe you can help meet the needs of others that are lacking. The scripture reminds us, *“Whoever has the world’s goods, and sees his brother in need, and shuts up his compassion from him, how does the love of God abide in him?”* (1 John 3:17)

If you were to turn to the Book of Acts, you will recall how the early church brought their goods together and shared them with one another. They had such a love for one another that they shared all in common. None lacked – all were fed. We need to be ready to share our bread with others that are lacking.

“Give us **this day**, our daily bread.”

This part of the prayer places a limitation on our prayer. If you look at the passage in Matthew we ask for our bread on “*this day*.” If you turn over to Luke 11,



Give Us **This Day** Our Daily Bread

you will find it says, “*Give us **day by day** our daily bread.*” In Matthew there is a sense of only focusing on today with no thought for tomorrow. In Luke there is a focus upon today with an eye for days to come. Luke’s focus is not so much as a fret or worry about tomorrow because he said “day by day.” We cannot force tomorrow to come any quicker or slower simply by our praying. Tomorrow has enough worries for itself. Focus upon today.



I guess if you look at both Luke and Matthew – we are taught to pray for the bread we will use today.

This application expands beyond the topic of bread. We are not given life – year by year – or month by month – we are only promised today! If we gave our full attention to the time between sunrise and sunset each day, our lives would be so much more at peace.

Yes, we do need to plan for our tomorrows. We need to be wise in planning our calendars and future commitments. But this prayer seems to give us the right to come to God and ask **only** for the bread we need today. As hard as this thought may seem, this prayer implies, after we have eaten

our last crust of bread today, we do not need to be afraid of tomorrow’s bread supply.

When we rise the next morning, we can ask once again for our daily supply. Do you really believe God will supply all your needs according to His riches in Glory? Or do you live as the Israelites in the desert gathering more than enough manna in one day, hoping to be able to stock pile their supply?



This is a great lesson for us. Living one day at a time. I have met many cancer patients that have echoed that theme – I am not going to worry about tomorrow. I will simply live through today – there is more than enough on today’s agenda. Really – can you live two days at a time? Can you take a month’s worth of days and live it? No – our days are parceled out one at a time.

I don’t know what burdens you are carrying. I may know some of them in your life. But we need to give our tomorrow’s bread and tomorrow’s cares to God! Live for today! Live in the present! We do not need to walk around with tomorrow’s burdens piled on top of today’s. Live day by day. Receive your bread day by day.

“Give us this day, **our** daily bread.”

Again, if we examine our sentence prayer, we find a very special word – The first part of this verse implies that what we are to receive



Give Us This Day **Our** Daily Bread

involves others around us. The word OUR implies that this bread is ours – we worked for it, we earned it, it is ours to enjoy.

The scripture teaches us way back in the Book of Genesis that bread only comes through hard work. When Adam and Eve ate from the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil, not only were they going to die, the ground also was cursed. God said to Adam,

*“Cursed is the ground for your sake; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life. Both thorns and thistles it shall bring forth for you, and you shall eat the herb of the field.*



*In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken for dust you are, and to dust you shall return.”* (Genesis 3:17-19)



Bread must be earned by us before it is properly ours. The scripture teaches us we need to work. The Apostle Paul said, *“If any will not work, neither let him eat.”* (2 Thes. 3:10) In the Old Testament there was a welfare system that allowed the poor to go out into the fields and glean the edges and the small amounts dropped behind by the field workers. Those needing food had to work – through that they were rewarded with food. In the Book of Ruth, we see that was their welfare system. Now this applies to those that are able to work. There was a system in place that helped take care

of the widows and orphans, the sick and lame. But if you were able, you worked for your bread.



This implies if you steal bread, God does not bless it. When you steal, you are stealing from God. That not only applies to bread, but also to the money we earn. Money that has been earned through unrighteous and dishonest ways is not blessed by God. God’s blessing cannot be invoked upon it by any form of prayer.

Money obtained by cheating others is not OUR money. Money obtained through gambling is not OUR money. Money obtained by selling products that destroy other people’s lives – such as illegal drugs or alcohol is not OUR money. Many Christians have been so convinced this principle is true, that they no longer invest in business opportunities where profit is made through immoral activities – even if they are legal. They have decided to put their money where their theology is. They do not invest in companies that use slave labor in other parts of the world, beer and alcohol companies, lottery companies, or movie companies that promote immoral themes.

God’s bread can be our bread with a blessing when it is earned in honest ways. We must strive to keep ourselves from being stained by the world while we earn our honest bread.

## “Give us this day, our **daily bread.**”

When we pray, as taught in Matthew, we petition God for our “**Daily Bread.**” The Greek word used in this passage is actually more difficult to get a clear meaning.



Give Us This Day Our **Daily Bread**

It is only used in

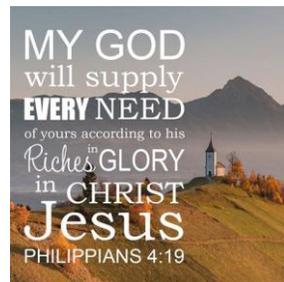
connection with this prayer in Matthew and Luke.

Alexander McClaren in his commentary<sup>5</sup> on this passage of scripture says it is best translated “*sufficient for our subsistence.*” We are to pray for enough bread to sustain us.

This translation actually challenges us to pray for what we need – enough to sustain us – not necessarily enough to meet all of our wants. We may want a three course meal with all the fancy deserts, but what we really need is enough to sustain us.

I don’t believe there is anything wrong with wanting more at times. But it would appear our in our nation, we have lived WAY beyond our sustenance levels and moved into the realm of gluttony.

The Apostle Paul said, “*My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches.*” (Philippians 4:19) This lets us know that there is an abundant supply to meet the needs that may come our way. When God acts, he supplies abundantly – often giving more than we can ever hope for and more!



It seems as if this prayer leads us to mold our thoughts away from extravagance. God’s bread should never be wasted. This past week I read a story about a man named Carlyle. One day as he was walking down the street, he saw a crust of bread lying in the street. He stooped down and brushed it off, placing it on the nearby curb. He said, “I was taught by my mother never to waste anything, especially bread. It



is the most precious gift of all God’s gifts. This crust of bread may feed a hungry dog coming by or a small sparrow.”

When Jesus fed the multitude there beside the Sea of Galilee, he ordered all the remnants be gathered together so none would be wasted – either by throwing them out or through extravagance.

This prayer, if heard by sincere hearts, seems to teach us to limit our desires and ask with confidence all that we would need for one day. Each day will be different – some days we may need a lot of bread while others we may only need a little. Each day differs with each one of us.

Some days our burdens are light while others are heavy. God knows our needs – he knows our crosses. He will supply that need if we choose to let God be our supply. Rest assured – God will not give us too little to meet that need.



Isn’t it good to know that we have a God that loves us and is concerned about us? He loves us with an everlasting love. He knows each one of us by name. God knows and

feeds the birds of the field. He knows when a sparrow falls.  
He knows and loves you far more!

We are invited to become children of God when we receive His Son Jesus Christ. Each one of us here is personally dear to God. He knows us so well that he knows the number of hairs on our head. Everyone – no matter how far they have gone from God – no matter the sin – is always welcomed back to our Heavenly Father. Our Heavenly Father knows our needs before we even ask Him.

Some people live life from moment to moment – from hand to fist. They live only for what they can eat. We are called to put God first and foremost in our life. The first three petitions call us to focus on Our Father which art in Heaven, *Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done.* When we have put God first and foremost – then we can trust our Heavenly Father to meet our need for bread.



God wants us to come to Him daily – and He will meet our need day by day.

### **Where is Bread?**<sup>6</sup>

**"Where is bread?"** the great crowd murmured--  
Thousands strong, yet all in need.

**"Where is bread?"** your people wondered,  
Faced with such a crowd to feed.

Who, Lord Jesus, could have guessed it?  
One small boy brought food to share.  
Taking what he gave, You blessed it;  
All were fed, with much to spare.

**Where is Bread?** We know their yearning;  
Every day, we wish for more.  
God, in time, we're slowly learning:  
All we own can make us poor.  
Our possessions can possess us,  
Leaving hunger deep inside.  
Christ our Bread, come now and bless us;  
At Your feast, we're satisfied.

**"Where is bread?"** the call is rising;  
Millions cry who must be fed.  
God, Your answer seems surprising:  
**"You, my Church, you give them bread."**  
Bread to fill each hungry spirit,  
Bread for hungry stomachs, too!

### **LORD**

Give us bread and help us share it.  
Richly blest, may we serve You.

### **LET US PRAY**

#### **Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Mikey's Funnies, Sept. 15, 2011 – A Praise Funny

<sup>2</sup> Outline from *God's Psychiatry* by Charles Allen

<sup>3</sup> Outline from sermon by J.R. Miller, "Our Daily Bread" 1900,

[http://www.gracegems.org/Miller/our\\_daily\\_bread.htm](http://www.gracegems.org/Miller/our_daily_bread.htm)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.usda.gov/about-usda/general-information/staff-offices/office-chief-economist/commodity-markets/wasde-report>

(accessed 6/16/2025)

<sup>5</sup> Alexander McClaren Commentary on Matthew page 271 – The Cry for Bread

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=resource\\_worship\\_hymns\\_where\\_is\\_bread](http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=resource_worship_hymns_where_is_bread) ABBOT'S LEIGH 8.7.8.7 D "God Is Here!" PH# 461, from Baylor University's *Christian Reflection* journal

