

## **The Lord's Prayer: Our Daily Bread**

When Brother Andrew went to Scotland to be trained by WEC, he was sent out on the first of his training trips in evangelism.

He was told, "It's an exercise in trust. The rules are simple. Each student on the team is given a one-pound banknote. With that you go on a missionary tour through Scotland. You pay your own transportation, lodging, food, any advertising you want, hall rental, providing of refreshments –"

Andrew said, "All on a one-pound note?"

"Worse than that," came the reply. "When you get back to school after four weeks, you're expected to pay back the pound!"

Andrew laughed. "Sounds like we'll be passing the hat all the time."

"Oh, you're not allowed to take up collections!" he was told. "Never. You're not to mention money at your meetings. All of your needs have got to be provided without any manipulation on your part – or the experiment is a failure."

The rest of the story is a marvellous example of God's provision.

### **Matthew 6:9-13**

In this manner, therefore, pray: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen.

In this message, we go on to the next phrase that Jesus used in this pattern prayer: Give us this day our daily bread.

### **The invitation**

Bring your needs to the Father.

God expects this.

A man died and went to heaven. When he got there, he was being given a guided tour when he saw a warehouse full of thousands of boxes of different shapes and sizes.

"What are these?" he asked. "Those are the answers to the prayers you never prayed. God was ready to send them, but you never asked."

### **James 4:2-3**

... you do not have because you do not ask. You ask and do not receive, because you ask amiss, that you may spend it on your pleasures.

Listen to this: the biggest reason Christians miss out on God's provision for their lives is they don't ask.

And the second biggest reason is they ask with selfish motives.

If your 10 year old asks, "Can I have \$20?", you say, "What for?"

"I've got to get a book for school." "Okay, here's the \$20."

But if he says, "I want to buy a packet of cigarettes," my answer would now be a big, fat No!

Same question, same request, different motive.

And that makes all the difference.

So what should we be asking for?

And what did Jesus mean when He said, “Give us this day...?”

When Jesus was on earth, much like today, bread was a major part of their diet.

So He’s talking about our daily needs.

But we have more needs than the need for food.

Our needs range from physical right through to spiritual.

After all, God said, “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.”

I’m going to give you five things that I pray for regularly as I use the Lord’s Prayer as a template.

In no particular order.

### **1. Our finances**

I have found God to be absolutely faithful in looking after us.

Always.

Psalm 37:25 I have been young, and now am old; yet I have not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his descendants begging bread.

When Alli and I spent ten years officially below the poverty level, God always looked after us.

We had a dodgy old Suzuki Carry van. And when I say dodgy, I mean that it was burning two litres of oil per week.

We didn’t go around complaining; it still got us from A to B. But we had a wealthy man in our church who was at a car auction.

He told us this story later. He was sitting and watching all these cars getting sold at a rapid rate of knots.

Then he heard the Lord speak to him: buy that car for Tony and Alli. He said, “I didn’t even know if you needed a car.

And I didn’t have time to ring you or my wife because things were going too fast. So he bought us a car and we got rid of our oil-burner.

We home-schooled our children for a substantial amount of their education.

But for a few years we sent them to a private school.

We had decided to stop using a credit card for a time.

Our daughter’s school fees were due on the Thursday (the last day for a discount).

We wrote our cheque for \$638.20 and took it to the school that afternoon. We were trusting God for two things:

One, that they wouldn’t actually bank it that same afternoon, and two, that God would provide the money to cover the cheque most of which we didn’t have.

On Friday, we received some cash and some cheques. We put all our cheques and money together and counted how much we had – exactly \$638. Just 20c short.

I guess the Lord figured we could come up with the other 20 cents.

And the school banked our cheque that day.

I could tell you story after story of God’s provision.

So if you're going through a tough time right now, financially, God is interested.

Just keep in mind two things: 1) God's has his own timing.

A pastor needed \$1 million for the building they were purchasing.

The settlement date was getting closer and closer. He just kept praying. Then the day before settlement date an envelope arrived in the mail.

It was a cheque for \$1 million. He said, "Lord, why didn't you send this earlier?" The Lord said, "You didn't need it earlier."

2) Malcolm MacGregor said, "There's a substantial difference between needs and greeds."

I need a car; I don't need a Rolls.

### **Philippians 4:19**

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

## **2. Wisdom**

I remember back in the old days before the internet was invented.

For all you young people who may have heard stories about what it was like when dinosaurs roamed the earth.

Let me tell you how we used to find out things before Mr Google.

Yes, there was a time before Mr Google.

Back in those days, we had things called legs, which we used to take us to a place called the library.

Then we would scan the shelves, collect a pile of possibly useful books, sit down, go through the indexes to find page numbers, read the relevant pages.

And then we'd use something else, called a pen, to write down notes.

Then we'd hop back on our legs and go back home again.

The thing is that we take for granted the accessibility of information that's available to us through the information highway – the internet – that now exists.

But what if there were someone who was way, way smarter than Mr Google?

And who knew way, way more than Mr Google.

Well, friend, you're in luck, because there is.

We call Him God.

And He is willing to share His wisdom with us.

And the great thing is, you don't even have to buy a modem.

### **James 1:2-5**

My brethren, count it all joy when you fall into various trials, knowing that the testing of your faith produces patience. But let patience have its perfect work, that you may be perfect and complete, lacking nothing. If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask of God, who gives to all liberally and without reproach, and it will be given to him.

I want you to notice two things.

1) God invites us to ask Him for wisdom.

Because human wisdom - that's your and my natural wisdom - is very limited.

Listen to some of the dumb things that really smart people have said.

In 1899, Charles Duell, commissioner of the U.S. Patents Office announced, “Everything that can be invented, has been invented.”

Franklin D. Roosevelt predicted, when he was Assistant Secretary of the U.S. Navy, that aeroplanes would never be useful in battle against a fleet of ships.

Albert Einstein remarked in 1932, “There is not the slightest indication that nuclear energy will ever be obtainable.”

We humans are not as smart as we think we are.

But God invites us to ask Him for wisdom.

And 2) in the context of that passage of Scripture, it especially relates to tough times.

I think that right now in this global pandemic might qualify.

If you have challenges you don’t know how to handle, ask God for wisdom.

If your finances have taken a beating, ask God for wisdom.

If your family is in a mess, ask God for wisdom.

But listen, ask and expect to receive.

### **James 1:6-8**

But let him ask in faith, with no doubting, for he who doubts is like a wave of the sea driven and tossed by the wind. For let not that man suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; he is a double-minded man, unstable in all his ways.

God invites us to ask, but He expects us to ask in faith, with a full expectation that we will receive the wisdom we’ve asked for.

Daily wisdom is part of our daily bread.

Wisdom for what to say, how to behave and decisions to make.

### **3. Healing**

I want to give you three kinds of healing that God can do.

But if you want it, you have to pray for it, with faith.

### **James 5:14-16**

Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise him up. And if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven. Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The effective, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.

A number of years ago I had Chronic Fatigue Syndrome. I woke up one morning and there it was.

I went to the doctor and he told me what I had. I’d never heard of it. I said, “How long will I be off work? A few days?”

He said, “A few days! Try a few weeks, or a few months.” BTW, did you know that “the average duration of the illness ... is seven years”?

I went to church that Sunday and called for the elders of the church to pray for me. They anointed me with oil, laid hands on me and prayed for me. I was back at work by Tuesday.

Alli and I, and our family have experienced so many healings that we know God can and does miraculously intervene when there is faith.

But that’s only one kind of healing – physical healing.

Here's another:

**Psalm 41:4**

I said, "LORD, be merciful to me; heal my soul, for I have sinned against You."

Imagine that; healing for the soul.

That includes our minds and emotions.

DID, HPD, ADD, BPD, ODD, ASD, PTSD, SAD and so much more.

I get all this stuff from my psychologist wife.

It seems like we live in an age when psychological disorders are rampaging through the earth.

Or at least they're being diagnosed a lot more.

But here's the thing: God is interested, and He can and does heal people.

As He healed me from depression.

The third area of healing to pray for is marital healing.

God is interested in your marriage.

So pray.

Now there's a catch with this.

If you pray for marital healing for yourself, or for anyone else, then you'll need to pray for repentance too.

The reality is that, as flawed human beings, we very often contribute to our own marriage ill-health.

So that means there's a need for repentance in one or both partners.

Alli and I fought through our entire courtship, fought through the first five years of our marriage.

Now she's my best friend.

If you don't have that kind of relationship with your spouse, pray for repentance and healing.

If God can heal our marriage, He can heal yours.

**4. Revelation**

Listen to Paul's prayer for the Ephesian church:

**Ephesians 1:17**

that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,

He prayed for them to have a spirit of wisdom and revelation.

This spirit of revelation is in the knowledge of God.

As someone who has been a pastor for over 30 years, and in Christian leadership for over 40 years, I am convinced that most Christians settle for far less than what God is offering.

The knowledge of God is one of those things; not intellectual knowledge, but experiential.

I have a friend who, for decades, was a missionary, then a pastor, and is now retired.

After years and years of demanding ministry, he was burned out.

He heard that God was moving in another church, bought a plane ticket, and went there.

Long story short, God zapped him.

They prayed for him and he got a revelation of the love of God.

You say, ‘But didn’t he already know that God loved him?’

Of course!

But when you get hit with a revelation from God, it makes all the difference.

And for my friend, it radically changed him, reenergised him, and brought healing.

All of that happened through a fresh revelation of God’s love.

Think of the apostle Paul.

In Galatians 1:12, he says that he received the gospel by revelation, not from a human being.

And it radically changed him.

From persecutor of the church, to preacher of the gospel.

From legalistic Pharisee, to advocate of Christian freedom.

From hate-filled zealot, to apostle of love.

And all because of a revelation of Jesus Christ.

However much you think you know God, there’s far more.

And when I talk about revelation, I’m not talking about becoming a spiritual fruitloop.

I’m talking about the real deal kind of revelation.

Where God reveals Himself in a deeper way, touches you deep within and imparts something to you.

And if what you experience doesn’t make you more like Jesus, it’s not the real deal at all.

Ask for God to give you more revelation of Himself.

This is daily bread where we’re less likely to be conscious of our need.

So it’s easy not to think about it.

But let’s not settle for spiritual mediocrity.

Let’s constantly grow in our experience of God; it’s a deep spiritual need.

Imagine an entire church filled with the revelation of God.

It’s our daily bread.

## **5. The Holy Spirit**

Pray daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Let me read a couple of Scriptures to you, and you see if you notice anything.

### **Acts 2:4**

And they [the first disciples] were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

So later, Peter and John are arrested for preaching the gospel, threatened and released.

They go back to the other disciples, and this is what it says:

### **Acts 4:31**

And when they had prayed, the place where they were assembled together was shaken; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they spoke the word of God with boldness.

Did you notice that?

They were all filled with the Holy Spirit - again!

So what happened between Acts 2 and Acts 4?

The problem is that we are vessels in which the Holy Spirit dwells, but we are leaky vessels.

This is why we need to pray daily to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Ephesians 5:18**

And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

The Greek verb here (filled) is a continuous action verb, a tense we don't have in English.

So it means to keep on being filled with the Holy Spirit.

C.H. Spurgeon said, "The minister who does not earnestly pray over his work must surely be a vain and conceited man. He acts as if he thought himself sufficient of himself and therefore needed not to appeal to God."

Yet what a baseless pride to conceive that our preaching can ever be in itself so powerful that it can turn men from their sin and bring them to God without the working of the Holy Ghost.

So true, and yet, it does not just apply to preachers, but to every Christian.

We desperately need the ongoing infilling of the Holy Spirit.

So five things to pray for as part of our daily bread, our daily needs.

1) Our finances; 2) wisdom; 3) healing; 4) revelation; 5) to be filled with the Holy Spirit.