

LD 50; Heb. 13:5-6; Matthew 4:1-4; Daily Bread I. Our Focus of Trust II. Our Daily Need

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, what is the most important meal of the day? I imagine that most of us would say that breakfast is the most important meal of the day. Our parents instilled this in us when we were kids- make sure you eat your breakfast before you go off to school. But most people in the US eat more than they should- the average intake of calories is over 3500 per day which is up 25% from 1960. But more than that, the amount of excess and waste is really sad. It is estimated that over 30% of all the overall food supply is wasted in the US each year. We live in a land and time of plenty- so it may seem a little strange that we are praying for daily bread. But having bread to eat each day is not a guarantee. As we return to the Lord's Prayer this morning, we come to the 4th petition. Give us this day our daily bread. So we consider this theme: Jesus Christ teaches us to pray for our daily bread as a reminder of our pressing need.

I. Our Focus of Trust

In our first point, we consider the focus of our trust. When we pray for our daily bread, we have to remember where we are and what we are doing. This is part of the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples. This is a disciple's prayer. The words of a child of God- the petition of the sons and daughters of the heavenly Father. Remember that this prayer is the prayer of faith. When we offer this petition we are praying as Jesus taught us- while we ask for these things in the name of Jesus and in the strength of the Spirit. This is not a selfish child demanding something- it is the humble request of faith! We offer this prayer to the Father because we believe in Jesus and we want to pray as He taught us. Prayer is a spiritual work- the Holy Spirit gives us the desire, knowledge and ability to pray. By the Spirit, our words are offered and heard. So as we have seen over the last few weeks, we are asking for God's name to be glorified, His Kingdom to come and His will to be done. These requests come from a heart of faith and are offered as a part of our spiritual response to Jesus work within us. So when it comes to this petition today, we remember that we are asking for what Jesus teaches us to ask for. We are praying for the things that Jesus tells us to pray for. We are coming to the Father as Jesus instructed- with hearts of faith! Children coming to the Father as we ask for what commands us to ask for. So this prayer of faith is really a request for what He has promised to provide. Will I not give my children good gifts- the Father says?

We note also that this petition is a request and not a demand. Over the last few weeks we have noticed- please

help us, please give us, grant us O God! In other words, You O LORD have to do this! You have to give what we ask- you have to bring your glory, your kingdom and your will to bear on this earth. So we see this week in our prayer- Lord give us what we need. In making this statement we are giving up all trust in others to provide. As the QA 125 puts it, may we withdraw our trust from all creatures and place our trust in you alone. So the prayer of faith, when it comes to asking for daily bread, starts by refusing to trust in man or my own hand. When I am in prayer I am reorienting my life and my heart- by your Spirit help me not trust in myself or in any other man for the things that I need. Now this does not mean that we cannot depend on others- in order to function in this world we have to depend on fellow man to do as they have said. But I must never trust in or look to other for my ultimate comfort and provision. Your boss is not sovereign and there are forces beyond the control of man! There are limits to what we can do and what we can control. For example, can man make the sun shine or the rain to fall? Can man cause the crops to grow? We do not know if our own work will succeed. Will my plans come to fruition? So there are very clear limits on man's ability and my own power to succeed. Added to this, there are also limits on the power of bread itself. Bread alone cannot feed us! We need God to bless the food that we eat in order for that food to truly benefit! If you remember back to the last time you were really sick, you may remember that you didn't even have the desire to eat. We take this for granted- that the food we eat will bless us. But how do we know if this food will bless or curse- it could be poison or our own bodies might reject the food we partake of! There is also another limitation on bread as well- in that we cannot and do not live on bread alone. As Jesus was tempted in Mt. 4:4- to give up the future and the spiritual in order to gain the immediate and the physical. Man does not live on bread alone Jesus said- but we do live on bread. In other words, we all have a deeper and more pressing need than just bread. Having plenty of food but no future is no way to live. A good life today that is not a redeemed life is no substitute. If we go to the grave with a full belly and a fat bank account- but remain poor towards God- what do we gain? If we gain the world but loose our soul as Jesus would say. So we have to remember that we do not live on bread alone either. No- we need God's blessing on this food for it to benefit us. And we need spiritual eyes to see both the benefit and limitation of bread. As Psalm 127 puts it, our labor without the Lord's blessing is labor in vain! God has to establish our work and our house or these will not stand. So daily work and bread have to be kept in their proper context. But this fact does not stop us from worrying. We all struggle with the fret and

care of uncertainty. Once again, this petition in our prayers is the solution to our anxiety! Your worrying- it does you no good! Inflation, interest rates, famines and floods. These are all in God's control! You cannot change them or control them. You cannot even change the color of your own hair or add an inch to your own height! Why worry about these daily needs- God knows you need them! Your heavenly Father is the fountain of everything good as James 1 puts it- the fount and source of all good. He knows your needs! He has already given you Jesus Christ His Son, will He forsake you now? Surely not! So this prayer is one of faith- help me to remember that you are God and you are good! That I am your child and you will provide!

II. Our Daily Need

Lets move on to look at this petition in its parts. Give us this day our daily bread. Note that we start this petition by recognizing our daily and reoccurring need. Give us this day our daily. Grant to us each day the food that we need for that day. In this we are to learn that we need the LORD to provide for us each day. Like the Israelite in the desert, each morning going out to gather their manna, so the Christian looks to the hand of the Father each each for that day's bread. In other words, we are to live each day a day at a time. We need not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Not that we cannot plan and prepare for the future, but there is a calling to daily look to the Lord's hand and rely on the Lord each day. In this prayer, we are also praying for the needs of God's people in a corporate sense. Give us this day OUR daily bread. This is the prayer of the church. The interest of the person praying spills over to the needs of those outside of their own home. So when we pray- give us this daily bread- we not only have in view the pantry in our home but also the needs of others in our church and community- and saints abroad as well. Some have been given plenty of bread so that those who do not have enough would be supplied by the generosity of those who have extra. Those in want have their needs supplied by the LORD through the giving of those whom God has richly blessed. This is one of the key uses of the Benevolence of the church. So that those who cannot work or who are experiencing a difficult financial situation may be supplied. We find this in the early church already- as in II Cor. 8:14- your abundance at the present time should supply their need- so that there may be fairness as Paul puts it.

The next aspect of this petition is in the fact that we are praying for bread. Note that we are not asking for our weekly or monthly steak and wine- but rather our daily bread. We are asking God to provide us for what is

necessary- give us what we need for our bodies so that we might have the strength to serve you again this day. Anything more than this daily substance is a gift and blessing. In other words, God may choose to give you a variety and bounty in His good providence, but this is not what we ask for. We are simply asking for the necessary basics- daily bread. The fact is, we may all have much more than we need- and such variety and plenty that is astounding- but this petition is bringing us back to the basics. O Lord, do give me the food that I need! Provide for my physical needs again this day.

Before we close, lets bring out some application, First of all, we have to recognize how often God has provided. We have all been so richly blessed by His hand. Compared to the rest of the world, we truly are rich and have been well provided for. This should move us to thanksgiving and generosity. Our text from Heb. 13 applies this concept of God's provision this way- keep your life free from the love of money and be content with what you have. Learning to see what God has given you- and being thankful for what He has provided- is the proper response when God gives you daily bread. Godliness with contentment is great gain as Timothy reads. There is also a great encouragement to continue trusting in the Father. The promise of God's presence and provision is the cure to our anxiety, worry and fear. Never will I leave you, never will I forsake you as Heb. 13:5 continues. The promise that God will be there and He will never forsake is exactly what our anxious hearts need to hear. So it is in this petition, that we learn to look to our Father's hand each day for our every need.

As we close, this petition of the Lord's Prayer is very earthy. So far we have prayed about God's glory, kingdom and will. But today we see that our needs are also in view in this holy prayer. We also learn that that our lives, like bread, are gifts from God. As our theme states: Jesus Christ teaches us to pray for our daily bread as a reminder of our pressing need. So may we all call upon our Father and look to His hand for all that we need each day as we continue to pray with hearts of faith!