

22.8.21 pm Give Us our Daily Bread

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Preacher: Reverend David MacLeod

[0 : 00] Good evening, a warm welcome to the service this evening and again a welcome to those who are visiting with us. It's good to have a couple of visitors with us again this evening and once more good to know that there are people online and we pray that God will bless us as we seek to come together in worship. The intimations have been on the screen before the service and I went over them in the morning service so I won't take time to go through them just now. We'll begin this time of worship by singing to God's praise and we'll sing from Psalm 40, Psalm 40 verses 1 to 3 in Gaelic. Psalm 40 verses 1 to 3 in Gaelic. I waited for the Lord my God and patiently did bear. At length to me he did incline my voice and cry to hear. He took me from a fearful pit and from the miry clay and on a rock. He set my feet establishing my way. He put a new song in my mouth. Our God to magnify. Many shall see it and shall fear and on the Lord rely.

These verses of Psalm 40 we sing in Gaelic to God's praise and after we've sang this psalm I'm going to ask Finlay McSween to come and lead us in prayer in Gaelic please.

Big fluifw intrabole transmits in Gaelic. Dabasim■■■ Poplar Operator Physician MemEPhe Sh
dobrs Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[3 : 17] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen. Thank you.

Thank you.

[6 : 17] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[8 : 47] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[11 : 17] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Amen.

[13 : 47] Amen.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

I will never give to you.

[16 : 46] Thank you.

I tell you.

This is how you should pray.

Amen.

Thank you.

[19 : 16] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[21 : 46] Thank you.

Thank you.

And to be.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[24 : 16] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Now we pray, help us to speak, help us to listen, help us to respond in a way that brings glory to your name.

[27 : 54] And we ask this for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, if you could have your Bibles open, please, at Matthew chapter 6.

And we're continuing our studies in the Lord's Prayer. Tonight we've reached verse 11. And we're just looking at these six words, is it?

In verse 11. Give us today our daily bread. Jesus is teaching his disciples to pray. His disciples came asking for this lesson, for this help to know how to pray.

And so Jesus is midway through this model prayer, this lesson, as he teaches them and as he teaches us to pray. So if we zoom in on this verse, verse 11, we ask the question, well, what is Jesus teaching us to do in this verse?

And it's very easy for us to see that Jesus is teaching us to ask. Teaching us to ask. He says that we are to say to our Father in heaven, give us.

[29 : 13] We're to ask. Boys and girls, nothing I'm going to say tonight is in any way complicated.

So you can try and listen in because the gift of prayer is something that we can do from when we're tiny.

And Jesus here teaches us to ask. And when I was walking down the hill from the house, I was thinking back to when I was, I don't know, probably six or seven.

And I would go visiting, especially when I would come for holidays. I would go and visit relatives.

And I was a bit of a chubby child. And when we would go visiting, I never particularly enjoyed going visiting.

But I did enjoy the biscuits. So, you know, you would go out to a house and the calioc would come out and she'd say, I'll have a cup of tea. I'm not bothered about the tea. And then she would come with biscuits.

And if you were offered a biscuit, you could take a biscuit. You could take one of the chocolate biscuits. And if you were offered a second biscuit, you'd probably get a glower.

[30 : 23] But you could take a second biscuit as well. If you were offered. But the one thing you were never allowed to do when you were in a house and you would get a huge rifle if you did is what?

What? What? Well, if you took a biscuit without being offered, you would get something awful. But if you took a, if you said, can I get another one, please?

If you asked for a biscuit after you'd finished your first chocolate biscuit, then the visitors, the people you're visiting will always say, of course you can have, you can have as many as you want. Your mother would be looking over a thing like that at you.

And you knew you were for it when you got home. And yet here, Jesus is teaching us his children to ask, to petition our Heavenly Father.

But note in this prayer, this is not the first petition. The first petition in the Lord's Prayer is that God's name would be hallowed.

[31 : 31] We're to ask that God's name would be made holy. That it wouldn't be a swear word in the playground. But there would be a holy name. And the second petition that Jesus teaches us to ask is that God's kingdom would come.

And the third petition that Jesus teaches us to ask is that God's will would be done. And so this is the fourth petition.

And I think we're taught here about priorities when we pray. We tend, because we are sinners, we tend to be selfish.

We often think about ourselves first and our comfort. But Jesus teaches us in prayer and in life to think first about God and his glory.

And then we can come to our Heavenly Father and ask for the things that we need. And so the first thing we're taught to do through this verse is to ask. And that's the first point we have this evening.

[32 : 38] We're taught to ask. And in life we're always asking for things. We have to ask for things. When I go and visit somebody, I'm asking for their time.

When we're struggling with different tasks, whether it's tasks of our homework or if it's fixing something in the house, if you're not very good at that kind of thing like me, we ask for help.

Or things never get fixed. When we're struggling to know which way to go, we ask for directions or we ask for advice. When we're sick, we ask for help, medical help from doctors and nurses.

When we're thirsty, we ask for a glass of water or we ask for a cup of tea. Asking is part of life. And Jesus encourages us to come to our Father in prayer and ask.

He says, when you pray, say, give. It's like Oliver Twist in the story. We come with our hands open. And we say, please, Father, what will you give?

[33 : 52] And God our Father, he has everything we need. So whatever we're asking for that we need, he is able to provide it. Sometimes you might go to the cash line in Tarbert, and you want to get out 20 pounds, and you put your card in, and you punch the numbers in, and the card gets spat back out.

He says, no, there's nothing in the thing. But when we come to God asking for the things that we need, he always has what we need. He's never short in his supplies.

And God our Father is teaching us through his Son that we will ask for what we need. R.C. Sproul, the commentator, says, notice that Jesus didn't teach us to pray that God would sell us our daily bread.

He didn't ask us to, he didn't teach us to pray that God would render our daily bread in exchange to us for service. Instead, in this petition, we manifestly, we openly ask God to give us something.

So the first point, boys and girls, young and old, is when we pray, we ask. We're not to be shy. We're to ask God for what we need.

[35 : 14] And it's such an easy thing to do. And yet, it's such a difficult thing to do as well. Because any three-year-old will show you how difficult it can be to ask for help.

Because when you're age three, I see them charging around at little fishes on a Tuesday, they're discovering that they're independent. At that age. And so they don't want help.

Don't want help with anything. But when they get the carton of Ribena, and they realize that they can't get the straw through, and they can't get the thing open, then eventually, after a whole lot of frustration, they have to ask.

And when they want to get their scooter out of the garage, but it's quite heavy, and the garage door is hard to open, they may take a whole lot of time, and use a whole lot of energy, and make a whole lot of noise, before eventually they say, please help me.

And when we might want to reach the light when you're age three, but you can't reach it, there may be a whole lot of chairs stacked up, and accidents, and bruises, and cuts, before eventually the child will ask for help.

[36 : 26] Now any good father, or mother, will say, when you need help, just ask me.

And our perfect heavenly father, who calls us to come humbly to him in prayer, teaches us to ask him, to give us what we need.

Jesus, later in chapter seven, the next chapter, he says, which of you, if your son asks for bread, will give him a stone?

Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a snake? If you then, says Jesus, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your father in heaven, give good gifts to those who ask him?

So the first thing, that we learn, as we think about this verse, in the Lord's Prayer, is we're to ask. God loves us to come to him, in prayer, and ask.

[37 : 36] But how are we to ask? That takes us to the second point, we're to ask, but we're to ask unselfishly. Not just thinking about me. We're to ask unselfishly.

There was that annoying song, that sometimes, I might go around in our heads, it goes way back to the 70s, the band Abba, and they had that song, Give Me, Give Me, Give Me.

And when we use the word give, very often, the word that follows, is the word me. But Jesus, as he teaches us, how to pray here, he teaches us to pray, not give me, but he teaches us to pray, give us.

This is more than self. This is us looking around at each other, and being aware, not only of our own needs, but of the needs, of the people around us, here, there, and everywhere.

And you might say, well, maybe this is just a grammar thing. I mean, Jesus is speaking to a group of people, so he's not going to say, give me, he's going to use that correct grammar, and say, give us.

[38 : 48] But I think there's more to it than that. I think Jesus is encouraging us, as he teaches us in this prayer, he's encouraging us to look around, and see the people who are around us, and see the needs of the people who are around us.

I'll give you two quotes from commentators. Hendrickson says, the needs of believers all over the world are included in this petition, for together they, we, constitute one family.

That's what we are if we're Christians. We're a family. Thomas Watson, in his book on the Lord's Prayer, said, every good Christian has a fellow feeling of the wants and miseries of others, and he prays God would extend his bounty to them.

I wonder if we look around us, even in the church tonight, do we have any knowledge of, of our respective needs?

Do we know who is struggling with grief? Do we recognize those who battle with worry? Do we have any sense of the struggles of the people around us?

[40 : 16] Because without being nosy, without being intrusive, we should. We should have, what Thomas Watson there calls, that fellow feeling.

We should have some idea of the wants and the miseries of others, and pray for each other. Give us, says Jesus.

And that was one of the, the markings of the, of the early church. There was that fellow feeling.

They were one. And people noticed they were one.

In Acts chapter 2, verse 1, it says that they were all together in one place. Acts chapter 4, verse 32, it says, all the believers were one in heart and mind.

No one claimed that they had, no one claimed that any of his possessions was his own, but they shared everything they had. They were an us.

[41 : 25] They weren't a collection of people at all who said, well, I'm me. They recognized that they were an us. And the world, as it looked in on the church, in that early stage, they, they said in that famous quote, see how they love each other.

There's a story told of a, of a gang leader, in, in San Francisco, into drugs and, and all kinds of, criminal activities in the, the sort of dark underworld.

And that city. And to cut a long story short, very dramatically, he became a Christian. And he picked up a Bible with new eyes.

He began to, to read the Bible with, with new eyes. And when he came to the, the book of Acts, and when he saw the, the New Testament church, he was thrilled by it. He loved it.

This guy had been a gangster. He'd been part of a, a dark, a cruel, a gangland. But when he, he, he read the, the, the accounts of the early church, he saw this group of people.

[42 : 36] He recognized this group of people as a kind of wholesome, tight, godly gang. So he came to church with great expectations.

But after a few weeks, he was struggling. Didn't look the same as them. Didn't have the same, same background as most of the people in the building.

And so he was struggling. And he was asked the question, what, what's the problem? And this is what he answered, and I'll quote him here. He says, I had the wrong idea of what church was going to be like.

When I joined the church, I thought it was going to be like joining a gang. You see, in the gangs, we weren't just nice to each other once a week. We were family. And he said, sadly, you know, I had the wrong idea about church.

Actually, you had the right, biblical idea about church and what it should be like. Jesus says, when you pray and when you look at each other, remember, it's us.

[43 : 45] Give us. Not give me. And I think in terms of evangelistic opportunity, this is a huge one.

Because our culture is ultra individualistic and people are craving the us. Even here, where once communities were much tighter than the archers now, there is a lack.

People are looking for the us. The togetherness, the oneness, the camaraderie, the fellowship, to use the biblical word.

You know, that's what the church looked like. When Jesus ascended into heaven. And that's what the church that he will return to claim as his bride should strive to be more like.

I've written down in my notes here, it's the difference between spiders and bees. Boys and girls, have a listen for a second. Think about spiders and bees.

[44 : 58] Think about spiders and bees for a second. What do spiders and bees make? What do spiders make? Pardon? Cobwebs.

Cobwebs, yeah. They make webs. And, um, what are the webs for? Andrew? Well, no. You're, you're going to step ahead.

What are the webs for? I'll ask you the next question. Uh, Jono? To catch flies in it.

And what do they do with the flies? Who eats them? The spider. So, the spider works to make a web that flies will get caught in so it can have its own dinner.

Dinner for me. What about bees? What do bees make? Miriam? They make honey. They buzz around, don't they, Andrew? And what do they make, Andrew?

[45 : 55] What do bees make? They make honey. And who eats the honey? Is it the bees? Ailey? Ailey? Us.

So the stuff that bees make is for us. Spiders, these creepy crawlies, they're all about me. And we're to be more bee-like.

We're to be less like spiders, more like bees. You probably won't hear that too often in a sermon.

We're to be unselfish in our thinking and in our asking.

So we're to ask, point number one. We're to ask unselfishly, point number two. The third thing is we're to ask for bread. Jesus says, give us, when you pray, say, give us today our daily bread.

bread. I think one of the dangers when we're trying to understand the Bible and what it means is that sometimes we can be so quick to think spiritually that we actually miss the real, obvious meaning.

[47 : 08] Jesus teaches us to ask for bread. So what do you think, boys and girls, let's keep you on your toes, what do you think Jesus meant when he was asking us to pray, asking for bread.

What do you think bread means? What do you think? What?

It means food, yeah. Bread. And Jesus here is teaching us, I believe, that we can come to God our Father and ask him for the most basic, ordinary things of life.

We can ask him for the things that we need. We can ask him for bread. And the word in the Greek that is translated here as bread means bread.

The stuff that we eat. Now in that culture, if we wind back the clock, they didn't have a whole lot of a range in terms of their foods.

[48 : 12] Bread was the main part of their diet. So when Jesus says, ask for bread, there's a kind of general understanding that bread represented the most basic human needs.

Food, warmth, clothing, at home. If you ever listen into the boys and girls when they're praying on a Wednesday evening before the prayer meeting, they're thanking God for all these things.

cozy bed, warm house, toys, food. And that's a good thing to do. And Jesus says, when you don't have these things, ask for them.

You can ask for them. Now today we have a wider range of foods, but we have the same physical needs.

And so Jesus is teaching us that we can come to our Father in heaven and ask him for the most mundane things. We can ask him for help with our daily bread.

[49 : 17] We can ask him for help paying the mortgage. We can ask him for help when we're struggling to know where we're going to get the money for the heating bill.

We can ask him for help when we're not sure what we're going to have for dinner. I don't think there's anyone here who, I could be wrong, but I doubt there's anyone here present or listening who doesn't have enough food in the cupboards to have dinner.

But I was thinking this week about a friend of mine. He actually spoke at the induction and somebody was asking me about him this week. His name's Donald Livingston. He was 94 actually this week past.

And he was an elder in Loch Caron where I was before. And I remember him telling me about his childhood when he was a wee boy. He lived in a place called Apple Cross or just outside of Apple Cross.

And he lost his parents when he was very, very young. So he was brought up in Apple Cross by his granny. And they were very poor, really.

[50 : 32] Nobody was very rich in these days, but they were very poor. And quite often they ran out of food. And boys and girls, himself and his siblings, they would know there was no food for tonight.

And he says he remembers really clearly that his granny would go off to what they called the room and she would pray. And what did she pray?

Well, she prayed Matthew 6, 11. Give us today our daily bread. And lo and behold, he said, at some point before dinner, the door would open and one of the local fishermen would come in with some fish that they couldn't sell.

A bag full of them. They'd have fish for dinner. Or one of the local crofters would come round with some small eggs. and they'd have eggs for dinner.

But they were actually literally praying for daily bread. And God hears these prayers that we pray for the basic things that we need.

[51 : 53] Sometimes we have this false idea that God is so far above us that he's not going to listen to our little prayers. Maybe you're worried about school tomorrow.

Maybe we're worried about our health. Maybe we're worried about who knows what. Lots of little things. And we might think, well, I can't pray because God is the God of heaven and earth. And he's not going to listen to small prayers like that.

And Jesus is saying to us here, oh, yes, he is. He's your father. And I'm teaching you, says Jesus, to ask, to ask unselfishly, to ask for bread.

Some of you will remember the Catechism, the Shorter Catechism, question 104. I'll ask a volunteer to stand up and say it. Okay, I'll read it. Number 104 of the Shorter Catechism.

What do we pray for in the fourth petition, it says. The answer, in the fourth petition, which is give us this day our daily bread, we pray that of God's free gift, we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life and enjoy his blessing with them.

[53 : 10] So we can ask for bread. We can ask for real chewing bread. We can ask for help with all these little things that trouble us in this world.

but I think there is also a spiritual meaning here. Jesus is teaching us to ask for physical bread but when we read the word bread we think about Jesus, don't we?

Bread speaks not just about our physical needs. Bread speaks to us also about our spiritual needs. So Jesus, when he's speaking about bread, he's speaking about himself.

John chapter 6, I'll just read a few verses out of that chapter, you can read it yourselves later on, but Jesus, in John 6 and at verse 32, says, I tell you the truth, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but my Father who gives you true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he who comes down from heaven and gives life to the world. It's Jesus. Sir, they said, that's the crowds, from now on give us this bread.

[54 : 27] Then Jesus declared, I am the bread of life. He who comes to me will never go hungry and he who believes in me will never be thirsty. Then again at verse 48, Jesus says, I am the bread of life.

Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. But here is the bread that comes down from heaven which a man may eat and not die. I am the living bread, says Jesus, that came down from heaven.

If anyone eats of this bread he will live forever. This bread is my flesh which I will give for the life of the world. So when we're asking for bread, for our souls, for our hearts, we're asking for Jesus.

He is the one who is able to quench the thirst in our souls. He's the one who's able to fill and satisfy that God-shaped void that's in our hearts.

And because of his body that was broken, which we remember in communion when we break the bread, and because of his blood that was shed on the cross, eternal life is promised to all who ask for him to be their saviour and their Lord.

[56 : 00] So when we ask for bread, spiritually speaking, we're asking for Jesus. And I wonder have we done that yet?

It's good to be in church. It's good to be in the place where God's word is heard. But have we asked yet that Jesus would come into our lives?

Have we asked for that living bread that comes down from heaven to satisfy our souls? Have we asked him Jesus said in Matthew 7, Ask and it will be given to you.

Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be opened to you. So ask, says Jesus.

Say, give, Father. and ask unselfishly at sake of us and ask for bread. Bread, physical bread for our stomachs, the bread of heaven, Jesus, for our souls.

[57 : 19] and the final thing is ask today. My time's gone. So I'm just going to give you the heading. When to ask?

Today. Jesus says, when you pray, say, give us today our daily bread. Don't hesitate.

Don't delay. Christian, don't become lazy. But ask today and then every day that we are given for that bread that satisfies our stomachs and for that bread of heaven that satisfies our souls.

Watson says, and I'll give him the last word, the tree of mercy will not drop its fruit unless shaken by the hand of prayer.

So let's be encouraged to seek God's mercy, to ask for that bread. Let's be encouraged to pray.

Lord God, we thank you for your word and we thank you for this lesson in prayer.

[58 : 41] We thank you that you are a God who is high above us, the God of heaven and earth and yet we thank you that you are the God who says to us, come to me and ask for what you need.

Physically, ask for what you need and spiritually, in the eternal sense, ask for the mercy, ask for the salvation, ask for the grace that you need and I will be given unto you.

So may each of us, Lord, we pray, be coming to you and seeking all that you are so willing to give to us in Christ. And we pray this in his name and for his sake.

Amen. We'll sing to conclude Mission Praise 200. Mission Praise 200 when we're reminded of the faithfulness of God, the one that we come to.

Great is thy faithfulness, O God, my Father. Great is thy faithfulness, O God, my Father.

[59 : 57] There is no shadow of turning with thee. Thou changest not, thy compassions they fail not.

As thou hast been, thou forever wilt be. Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, thy faithfulness, morning by morning, new mercies I see.

All I have needed, thy hand have provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

summer and winter and springtime and harvest, sun, moon, and stars in their courses above.

Join with all nature in manifold witness, to thy great faithfulness, mercy and love.

[61 : 31] Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see.

all I have needed, thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

Pardon for sin and a peace that endureth thine own dear presence, to cheer and to guide, strength for today and bright hope for tomorrow.

Blessings all mine with ten thousand beside. Great is thy faithfulness, great is thy faithfulness, morning by morning new mercies I see.

All I have needed, thy hand hath provided. Great is thy faithfulness, Lord, unto me.

[63 : 12] thy name, thy name, thy grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of God the Holy Spirit, be with us all, both now and forevermore. Amen.