

(Basics) 57. Praying for Our Material Needs

by Zac Poonen

Putting God first in our life and prioritizing His will over personal needs is essential for spiritual growth and answered prayer.

Duration: 12:39

Scripture: Matthew 6:7-11, Matthew 6:13, Matthew 6:24, Matthew 6:33, Philippians 4:19

Topics: "Prayer Life", "Gods Provision"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker emphasizes the importance of putting God first in our lives and prayers. He highlights that we should not prioritize our business, studies, family, or possessions above God. The speaker then discusses the Lord's Prayer and points out that it does not contain any self-centered words like 'I' or 'me.' Instead, it focuses on seeking God's kingdom, will, and provision for ourselves and others. The speaker concludes by encouraging believers to put God first and trust Him to intervene and help them overcome their problems.

Transcript

We want to look today at the secret of how we can get our prayers answered by God. And if you listen carefully and learn from the way Jesus taught us to pray, it can change your life. We were looking in our last study about putting God first in our life and in our prayers.

Once we have done that, you know, in Matthew 6, verse 9, 10 and 11, Jesus spoke about praying our Father who art in heaven. The number one burden and request and longing of my heart is that your name will be hallowed. And the number two longing and burden and request that I have in my heart is that your kingdom will come.

And the number three desire and longing and request in my heart is, Lord, that your will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Do you think many believers really mean that? I mean, a lot of believers pray this prayer like a parrot from childhood. But they have never stopped to think what are they saying.

They are making the very same mistakes that Jesus said right at the beginning. Don't pray as hypocrites and don't pray with meaningless repetition. But once we understand right what Jesus was trying to emphasize here, we'll discover that if you really begin to pray like this, you'll become a spiritual man.

You'll really be spiritual. Think if your primary desire in your life is that God's name should be glorified and that His kingdom should come on earth and His will should be done. And that is the uppermost thing in your life.

Not whether you make money or whether your backache is healed or any such thing. Those things are there, but they are secondary. Can you imagine what it'll do to your life if you begin to pray in this way all the time? Putting God's interests first and foremost.

It'll change your life completely. You'll become another man, another woman. Instead of being occupied with all the other problems of earth primarily.

Now once we have put God first, and the reason why Jesus told us to put God first is because many of those other problems will never get solved if we don't put God first. You may get rid of one set of problems and get another set of problems. Because God's not first in your life.

But once you put God first in your life, I'm not saying you won't have problems, but I'm saying that God will intervene and make you triumphant in the midst of those problems. The Bible says many are the afflictions of the righteous. Psalm 34, verse 19.

Many are the problems which righteous people face, but the Lord delivers from all of them. That's the difference. Worldly people also face problems, but they don't have anyone to deliver them.

We have a Father in heaven. So learn to put God first in your life, in everything. Don't put your business first, don't put your studies first, don't put your children first or your wife or husband or home or property or anything.

Put God first and see the difference it will make in your life. Then you'll become a real disciple. Once you have done that, then Jesus taught us to pray, give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our debts as we've forgiven others, lead us not into temptation, deliver us from evil.

Notice one word or let's say two words that are never found in this prayer. I and me. We could add another one, my.

I, me, my. These three words which are so common in our language. I. I'm a very, very important person.

It's one of the most important words in the English language. I. Me. My.

It's not even mentioned in this prayer even once. After we have sought God, God's name and God's kingdom and God's will first, after we've put God first in our life, the next thing the Lord wants to teach us is don't think selfishly only of yourself, but think of your fellow believers. The father has got many children.

Are you hungry? Do you need food? Yes, certainly pray that God will give you your daily bread, but don't forget there are others of God's children also who are hungry. You're not the only one. Pray for them too.

And if you've got an abundance of food, don't forget those other children of God who don't have it. So, he said, when you pray, say, give us this day our daily bread. When you pray for forgiveness, say, forgive us our sins.

When you pray for deliverance, say, deliver us from evil. So, we find that the Lord was trying to deliver people not only from self-centeredness in the sense that God is not the center of their life, but also from

this self-centeredness where we don't think of other people around us at all. And he taught us to pray, give us, forgive us and deliver us.

So, in this prayer about prayer for daily bread, Jesus wasn't asking us to pray that we would have bread for a whole year or any such thing. But Lord, if you will give me just enough for today, that's fine. Now, I'm not saying therefore you shouldn't have food for tomorrow or money for tomorrow or savings or any such thing.

That's not the point here at all. You can have savings for your need in the future or whatever it's like. There's nothing wrong with that.

But you should be happy and satisfied if God has given you just enough for today. That's the point. That means if God has given you only food enough for today, well, praise the Lord.

Thank you Lord for today and you'll take care of tomorrow. But if you can, plan for tomorrow, go right ahead. There's nothing wrong with that.

But be thankful for what is provided and ask God for the provision of our immediate needs. Lord, give us this day our daily bread. And Jesus did not teach us there to pray for luxury.

He's not asking for our daily ice cream or daily cake or any such thing. It's just daily bread. Just that simple, a simple meal to keep my body and soul together, to keep me in health.

That's all Lord. And just give me enough for today. That's fine.

There's no covetousness here. Jesus taught us to pray for material things when we are praying for our necessity, not for luxury. We don't find anywhere in the New Testament any encouragement to pray to God for luxury.

But we do find here in this prayer which the Lord Himself taught. He's encouraging us to pray for necessity. Yes, it is true that your Heavenly Father knows what you need even before you ask Him.

Doesn't the Father know that we need daily bread? He certainly does. Then why doesn't He give it without our asking? The reason is because He wants to have communication with us. And He wants us to have the joy and the privilege of answered prayer when you get your daily bread.

That's why even before we eat our meals as Christians, we always bow our head and pray and thank God for the food. And I hope all of you do that. I hope in your homes you don't rush into your meal without bowing your head first and praying and thanking God for the food.

Now, it's not in order to make the food taste better or any such thing that we do that. We do it as an expression of gratitude and thereby acknowledging that it is God who has provided it. Now there are atheists and godless people in the world who dig into their meal without thanking anybody.

Well, let them go their way. But we acknowledge that it is God who has given it. God has opened our eyes to see that.

Those atheists are blind. They don't know who has provided their food. So we pray to God not to inform Him about our need because He already knows that, but to express our dependence upon Him even for our material necessity.

Now, this also teaches us that there's nothing wrong in praying for any material thing which we need. It may be clothing. If you need clothing, you can pray for it.

It may be a house that you need to live in. You can pray for it. For educational facilities for your children.

You can pray for it because you want them also to learn to earn their daily bread. Well, they cannot earn their daily bread in most countries unless they have a decent education. So there's nothing wrong in praying for the education of our children as well.

So, all these things come in that little prayer. Give us this day our daily bread. Lord, provide us with what is necessary for our life on this earth.

Now, it's very interesting to see that this prayer for daily bread comes immediately after Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. So, when we put the two requests side by side next to each other, we find it's something like this. Thy will be done.

Lord, my longing is that your will will be done on earth as it is done in heaven. Now, in order to do that will of yours on earth, please give me my daily bread so that I can have strength to do it. So, you see, the reason why we ask God for material things is so that we can do His will and not our own.

That's why it's very important first to pray, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, and then to come to our material needs. And the trouble with a lot of Christians, of course, is that they only pray for their material needs, and there's no connection between that and doing the will of God in their life on earth. And so we see here the request for material needs comes there, and there's nothing wrong with it.

Some people think that we shouldn't pray to God for any material things, that it's wrong to pray for material things. We only pray for spiritual things. It's not true.

It sounds very holy, but it's contrary to the teaching of Jesus who taught us before even the prayer for forgiveness of sins and deliverance from evil to pray for our bodily needs. So let's never think that this body was created by Satan. It was created by God.

And when we put God first in our life, it's perfectly proper to ask God to provide all our material needs. Not luxury, but necessity. The Word of God says, My God shall supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.

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