

The Lord's Prayer - Adult SS - Lesson 4: Daily Bread

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[0:00] So we're continuing with the Lord's Prayer. And so do you remember Jesus is teaching us two types of things here in the Lord's Prayer. He's teaching us how to pray. But in doing so he's teaching us the essentials of the Christian life. So remember in prayer we offer our desires to God. But our desires that they can be all over the place. And so Jesus is teaching us here. This is what you should desire. This is what matters in the Christian life.

And so contained just in this short prayer, it's kind of like a mini summary of Christian doctrine, of Christian teaching. It's like a mini zoo, remember, filled with different topics in the Bible. And you can kind of visit around this zoo. And Jesus, he's teaching us the essential things in the Christian life.

And so today, well, we've been going through it line by line. And today we're on give us today our daily bread. And so to begin, as usual, let's pray this together. Pray then like this.

Amen. Amen.

And so do you remember, you can see on your handouts, you can break up the Lord's Prayer into three sections. There's the address, who we pray to. Then the next two lines are petitions about God, asking things about God.

[1:50] And then petitions for us, asking things specifically about us. And today we're beginning the first of those petitions about us. We are asking God to provide something for us.

What is it? Our daily bread. What do we mean by daily bread? Daily bread here, by this, Jesus means all the necessities of life, all our needs.

So just after the Lord's Prayer in Matthew, Jesus goes on to speak about, therefore, do not be anxious, saying, what shall we eat or what shall we drink or what shall we wear?

And so Jesus has in mind when he says daily bread, not only physical bread like flour, yeast, wheat, put it in the oven. And not only that, so not only physical food, but it does include that. But he's thinking all of our needs in life, food and drink, clothing, finances, work, car troubles, health, medication, every need in our life. But that is very helpfully summed up here in the phrase daily bread.

[3:00] Because bread, particularly in those days, in Jesus' day, bread was essential to staying alive. So you could go for a while without eating meat, but you needed bread to get by daily.

Daily bread is kind of a shorthand for life, the essentials for living. And so just notice the flow of the Lord's Prayer here, because it might kind of seem jarring as we get to this.

So we go from, what have we seen so far, the heights of the transcendent heavenly gods. And his name, his glory, and his kingdom.

And from there, we now jump to a loaf of hovis from Tesco. And it seems a bit of a big jump down, doesn't it? But actually, I want to say that this is a really relevant and natural thing to say next.

Because we need bread, we need life to fulfill all these other things that we've just prayed for in the Lord's Prayer. We need life to hallow God's name.

[4:09] We need energy to do God's will. And so these petitions aren't about us, these petitions about us, aren't separate to the petitions before.

No, these petitions about us serve the petitions that have just come before. And so just seeing the order of this prayer, Jesus is already teaching us something, how all things in our lives should be ordered.

Our desires for things in this world, things like bread, food, clothing, all our needs and our worries, they are legitimate and good things to ask for.

Jesus tells us to ask for them. But we never ask for them just for their own purpose or for our own selfish reasons. But everything we ask for, everything we do in life, in fact, it is all ultimately for God. To serve him, to hallow his name, seeking his kingdom, desiring his will. And so this order, just the order alone, it shows us how all that prioritizes in our life.

[5:18] And of course, we mustn't neglect bread. It might seem like a small thing in comparison to what we've just prayed, God's kingdom and his glory.

But think about it, it's not small to us though, is it? We can't survive without our daily bread. And so what we're asking for, this is a life or death, a life or death thing that we're praying for here.

And so again, in this, Jesus is teaching us something here. He's taking us to the God part of the zoo and also to the man and creation part of the zoo.

And he's showing us something essential in the Christian life. He's teaching us our dependency on God. It's the first thing I want us to think about, our dependency on God.

So in asking for our daily bread from God, Jesus, he's teaching us something about how God and the world relate. Right?

[6:21] So we're kind of going to the part of the zoo. It's the God part and the man and creation part. And they're right next to each other. And we're seeing in this bit of the Lord's Prayer, we're seeing how they relate.

What is that connection? And so I want us to have a think about that. So break out into groups. I want you to use the Lord's Prayer and also the verses below to answer the following questions.

So A and B can relate to that big section of verses. And then go on to C and it's got a little verse under it. So have a think. The Lord's Prayer and these verses, what does it tell us about how the world relates to God, some of the essentials of life, and also how we should respond to God.

Break out into groups. I'll give you three minutes, not too long. Three minutes. Three minutes.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[7:58] Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[10:28] Thank you.

Thank you.

That's the key thing, right? God, the world, creation is dependent on God. Okay. Let's get some pictures.

Dependence. Dependence. Dependence. Do you ever wonder if it's dependance or dependant?

Dependence, yeah, yeah. And of course, we're saying creation.

So this is creation down here. All things creation. Dependent on God, right? It's that direction. We are dependent on God, not the other way around, right? Okay. Yeah. Yeah. This is key. This is key.

All creation depends on God, needs God to exist, right?

[12:11] So God doesn't just create all things and then just leaves it running like a machine on its own. No, it is dependent on God to exist every day.

And so the fact that in this prayer, Jesus teaches us, you need to ask God for your daily bread. This shows us something fundamental about the relationship between God and creation.

Daily bread teaches us we are creatures. We are creatures. We are weak. We are needy.

And so we are utterly reliant on God. We need something simple as bread to survive. And daily bread, it teaches us something about God as well, doesn't it?

If we are like this, then God is the opposite. He's totally self-sufficient. He doesn't need anything from us.

[13:22] He is totally self-sufficient. We need everything from him. And so this prayer, it kind of really just sums up all the diagrams that I just make every week, right?

Which I don't come up with. I've borrowed these off people, right? So I'm not... Anything that's wrong is because of me. Anything that's good, someone else did it. But all these diagrams I draw every week with the circles and lines, it's basically just this prayer, right?

It's summed up in this prayer. All things, our daily bread is from God alone. And so what are some of those essentials? What are some of the daily bread that we rely on God for to keep us alive?

What did some of these verses or what came to mind? Life and breath, right? Our health, right? Our life. Life and breath. Let's draw... I'll draw a person for that, right? Life, breath, health, right? Medication. The white blood cells in our bloodstream working, right?

[14 : 33] Every life and breath and everything comes from God. Anything else? Sorry.

Climate. Climate. Weather, right? You saw that in Genesis 8, right? The reason the seasons come along, the harvest come along, clouds overhead, rain, sun, water. It's all because of God, right? Let's do... I'm going to do a cloud with rain. There you go. House of rain. Anything else? What does James 4 say about...

Prosperity. Prosperity. Money. Our jobs. Let's do... That's going to be a pound coin.

A pound sign. Anyway. So, our jobs, right? So, you say, today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year and trade there and make a profit, have a job there, have a life.

[15 : 45] You do not know what tomorrow will bring. Instead, you ought to say, if the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that. Okay? Our jobs, our livelihood, our livelihood, it's all dependent on God, including where we live.

Let's do our house. Okay. So, our rent, our rent, what we see on Rightmove, what appears, our tenancy agreements, where we live, it's all dependent on God and his will.

And also, think about our livelihoods, employment. Employment comes from God, right?

And employment is a part of the means of how we get our daily bread, right? So, we're not praying, when we ask for our daily bread, we're not just praying for provision to be zapped down out of heaven. In part, we are asking also for employment as well, because it's through that that we get our daily bread, isn't it?

Now, there are other means as well. Sometimes we're gifted it, and sometimes the Lord provides it in miraculous ways. But this is a part of it. Anything else?

[17 : 07] Any other thoughts? Every good thing, right? Which could encompass all these other things, right?

But also, that's not a mess, like, just the joy in life. Not only these things, but all the good things, the joyful things, our holidays, just the rest that we get, time with people, going to the pub, going to the cinema.

Like, all these good things, that they're gifts from God. And of course, there's food as well. I did put that down, yeah. Yeah, Psalm 104. Yeah, food as well.

Right, actual bread. Let's try and draw bread. There you go. Right. Food and water, which is also related to the bigger things, like weather and farming and all these things that we're dependent on. And so, dependency on God as creatures in creation, dependency on God, it isn't just this general thing that, oh yeah, generally creation is dependent on God.

[18 : 17] It goes down into all the things. All these things in our life. Our health, the weather and crops and farming. Our jobs, employment, house, joy, food.

It's all specifically, individually, down to the details, dependent on God. And so, think about the word daily. If this is our daily bread, think about the word daily.

How often do we need God for all these things? All the time. Constant dependence. All these things that we have in our lives.

Our breakfast this morning that we ate. The clothes on our backs right now. The oxygen in our bodies. The white blood cells fighting off infection right now. It's all God's mercy and from him.

And so, we don't deserve any of this, do we? Life could and should be a lot, lot worse than it is. We know how easily things like this can just disappear and change overnight.

[19 : 23] Jobs, health, finances, all of that. But God, in his mercy, is sustaining us in our lives every moment. So, this is our daily bread we're talking about here.

And so, think about the third question. What do we end up thinking about ourselves when we forget this relationship between God and creation? What do we end up thinking about ourselves?

We attribute success to ourselves. You think we do that? Yeah. Exactly. We become self-sufficient. Which I get at the heart of sin is because we're trying to become like God.

Exactly. That is exactly right. We start thinking, there's really no lying here. It's all just me. And we become, well, we have the illusion of self-sufficiency.

We think all of this around everything I have, it's because of me, really. We did all this. I have all this in my life because of me. And so, we think we don't need God.

[20 : 27] As Louisa said, it's the great sin of self-sufficiency. It was the sin of Adam, wasn't it? Right? He took the fruit thinking that he could be like God and he could do all of this without God.

And so, it's self-sufficiency. It's the sin of pride. And it blinds us to God. When we think that there isn't a line and we kind of sever the line, although we can't ever sever the line.

And we have the illusion of that. It blinds us to God. Because we stop looking to him for our needs and we think, well, we're all sorted. We've got it fine.

And nowadays, actually, it's probably easier to fool ourselves into self-sufficiency. Because just think about it, how easy it is to kind of provide.

You go to the tap and you've just got as much water as you like there. You go to Lidl and you've got all the food there. And we're even kind of detached from the process of food and water.

[21 : 28] Right? So, we go and grab some mincemeat from Lidl. And it's easy. But we don't see all that is needed to go into that. We don't think about the farming and the water and the weather and the distribution.

All these necessities that go into it. But it's just nice and easy for us. And so, we start to fool ourselves thinking, well, I'm pretty self-sufficient here. I'm pretty good at looking after myself in this world.

But then think about the drought that we've just had this past summer. When that gets taken away, things like water, we just start to realise, well, we are very, very dependent.

And there's very little we can do about that. In fact, it's often when things are taken away and we just feel helpless. That is often God's merciful wake-up call that we are to rely on him.

C.S. Lewis once said, I might be butchering the quote. He said, pain is God's megaphone in our life.

[22 : 36] It's where he shouts to us to wake us up. And wake us up to rely on him. Realise he's the one that we can rely on. And so, how should we respond to God in all this?

The big thing is, we need to be really, really thankful to God. This, all of this is his mercy. Every single moment of your life, it's his mercy.

So, it's right, when we're going to have lunch later, it's right to give thanks before we eat, isn't it?

And so, in this prayer, in fact, just by the words, give us, right at the beginning, give us, just with those two words, Jesus is correcting our pride, shutting down our self-sufficiency, and he's getting us to acknowledge you are dependent on God.

And so, by praying just this line, give us today our daily bread, you can kind of summarise it like this. When we say give us, we are saying, Lord, I need you in my life.

I need you. You're not an option. I need you. And today, you are my help right now. When we say our daily, it's I depend on you every day.

[23 : 47] Not just kind of in the really desperate moments, every single day. And when we pray bread, we are acknowledging everything I have and everything I need, it comes from you, God.

And so, just in this little line, Jesus is teaching us something important, fundamental, essential to the Christian life. It is our utter dependency on God.

And I want us to see next how God responds when we pray like this. So, I want us to now go back to the God part of the zoo, and I want us to see what God is like.

And I want us to see God cares for us. So, let's not miss the obvious here. Okay, Jesus is teaching us these words. He's commanding us to do something here.

Jesus wants us to pray this. This isn't something low down on God's priority list. This isn't something insignificant in the Christian life.

[24 : 49] No. God wants to hear these prayers about bread, about finances, about car troubles, about that meeting next week.

He wants you to pray these things. And in doing so, the fact that God is telling us to do this, this is telling us something about what God is like.

And I want you to have a think about that. So, break out into groups again. If God wants us to pray this, what does this prayer tell us God is like toward us? And then also, use Matthew 6 to kind of see how God responds to kind of add to that answer as well.

Break out into groups. I'll give you two minutes. Two minutes. Two minutes. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

[26 : 44] Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. Okay.

Let's bring it together. So if God wants us to pray this, what does this prayer tell us God is like toward us? And think about his response as well.

[28:47] Shout out some things about God. What's God like? Like a father. A father. And what does that mean?

God is like... What's his character like? If he's like a father, he is a father. Benevolent. Benevolent. Loving. Yeah.

Protective. Protective. Cares. Yeah. Protective. His children. Attentive. He hears us.

He's... He knows our needs. He wants them. He's there. Yeah. Attentive. That sums it up. Yeah.

Anything else? He knows.

Yeah. He's not just he's attentive to when we are. He already knows. He knows deep down all our needs. Anything else?

[29:58] He gives us a clear job of Scripture, doesn't he? Go on. Well, our job is to seek first his kingdom, his righteousness. He's to go. So that's where your heart needs to be.

Mm-hmm. So he gives us a clear thing. Mm-hmm. Yeah. He's a... How do I put that? Put that in one word that I can write. Calling.

Calling. God. Yeah. He calls us. He calls. Yeah. Yeah. He's... I don't know if I try to wear it, but it can be spelled against him that he...

Not only is he... Yeah. But he's also clothing the lilies and it's amazing. Yeah. Ray. He's... Yeah.

Yeah. He inspires. Yeah.

Yeah. It's... Well, it's a generosity. He's so good and finally he's not stingy. There's also his... I guess his love is...

[30:55] His care is all-encompassing. Care is all-encompassing. Even down to the lilies.

All-encompassing.

Right? And so... It shows us what God is like. How he responds to us when we do come to him with all our needs.

He's this loving provider. He's not this detached creator. But he is intimately involved in all our lives. Even more so with his children. Yes, the lilies.

But even more to us. How much more to us? Whom he loves. And even just the fact that we are praying this. Right? The fact that we are speaking to God and asking him.

It shows he's the father who listens. And who helps. He knows how to help as well. It shows his control as well. Right? His power. He's in control of all of this.

[31:57] And he's so generous. He doesn't withhold good things. He doesn't just give us, you know, a few scraps here and there. He's so generous and good in his help. And he's able to help with whatever we need.

All the details. Weather. Our happiness. Our house. Our food. Our job. Our finances. All of it. And so just in this prayer, it just shows how good God is.

If I even got... Yeah, good. There we go. Good. Good. He's a good God. And he cares for us really well. And so we can come to God with all our needs.

Whatever worry that you are facing right now. Whatever anxiety you have about the future.

Whatever just kind of feels out of control. Although it's never out of control. It feels like that. And you just really need help.

It could be our jobs. Our finances. Our schoolwork. Problems with friends. Our health. Waiting on that diagnosis. Whatever it may be. God wants you to come to him.

[32:59] Seeking help. And he's going to help you. He's going to be there for you. And God says, I know exactly what you need. I know exactly what is good for you.

And I can give you everything that you need. I provide your daily bread. And then when we do that, we can just leave it all up to God. Because it's all from him anyway.

And so just briefly, two side notes here. I just want us to take us back to the creation and humanity part of the zoo. Because this also shows us something about ourselves.

Jesus is saying, it is good for us to enjoy this world. Bread and clothing and relationships and nature and healthy bodies.

These are things to ask for and enjoy in this world. God doesn't tell us to ask for things if they were bad. These are good things.

[33:59] We are made with physical bodies in a physical world. Not to escape it, but to enjoy this. And of course, not to indulge in it. Not to make these things greater than God.

But enjoy them as gifts from God. And another side note. Asking for our daily bread here. It does include our spiritual needs as well.

We are asking for all that we need to live here on earth. And that includes our spiritual needs. We are body and soul. And so we are asking here also, as well as the physical things.

We are asking, help us, Lord, in our Christian walk. Give me strength right now to follow you.

Strength and the grace I need for this thing up ahead.

Give us the spiritual bread of life. And so actually, in this prayer, we are also asking. We are asking for Jesus here in this prayer. He's the bread of life.

[34:56] Lord, give me more of Jesus. I need him right now. Our physical life, as well as spiritual life, it's all from God. And to finish, I just want us to have a think about how this prayer shapes us.

How this prayer should shape our contentment and our envy toward others and also our worries. So break out into groups and just have a think about that. How does this prayer shape our hearts with respect to those three areas?

Our contentment for what we have in life, our envy toward others, and our worries about the future. Go for it. Have a think. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[36:36] Thank you.

Thank you.

One more minute. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you.

[39:12] Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you.

Thank you. And a big thing.

[43:14] Thank you. You can't change.

Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Thank you. Thank you. He provides. Thank you.