

P588

GRACE NOTES PROGRAM

SERIES: THE LORD'S PRAYER

TOPIC: Give us this day our daily bread - part 9

INTRO: Welcome to Grace Notes, brought to you by Sandbek Ministries. The subject of prayer has been widely studied. Perhaps it's because there's no single formula that can be used in the process. There is, however, a model given by Jesus, found in Matthew chapter 6 which contains all the essential elements for effective communication with God. Over our last eight programs, our host Barbara Sandbek has taken us through the first section, which deals with our relationship with God and the rightful acknowledgment of Who He is. On our last program we began a review of the petitioning section of the prayer, with the phrase, "Give us this day our daily bread", and concentrated on the word, 'Give'. On our program today, we'll complete our study of the entire phrase. We pray these messages will serve to enhance your prayer time as you seek to follow Jesus' example.

It may sound noble when people say they never ask God for anything for themselves, but only petition the Lord for the needs of others. But beware, this could be a prideful thing, because they're essentially saying THEY don't need or want God's help. We must never fall prey to this. God commands and expects us to make requests of Him for ourselves. In fact, Jesus said, "You have not because you ask not".

When we consider the beauty of creation, and how God manages the elements - how can we not feel secure in knowing He CAN do anything we ask of Him - and MORE! According to 1 Corinthians 2:9...

"No eye has seen, no ear has heard, no mind has conceived what God has prepared for those who love him".

This phrase, just like the previous ones, involves participation on our part. Yes, we're asking God to give to us, but shouldn't we be willing to give Him something as well out of love for Him? After all, it is a relationship we're in. What do we have that He wants? In Proverbs 23:26 the Lord says..."Give me your heart". We should devote ourselves to God, and not divide our love between Him and the world.

We need to offer ourselves to God and say, “Father, take my heart and make it what it should be; take possession of it, and set up Your throne in it”.

**** SANCTUARY ****

When Paul wrote about the Macedonia church’s liberal giving in 2 Corinthians 8:5 he said...

... they gave THEMSELVES FIRST to the Lord and then to us in keeping with God’s WILL.

These people entrusted themselves to God to provide for them and were therefore FREE to be generous to others, the way God is with us.

We need not be stingy with what we’ve been given, either. Jesus explained this giving principle in Luke 6:38. He said...

“Give, and it will be given to you. A good measure, pressed down, shaken together and running over, will be poured into your lap. For with the measure you use, it will be measured to you.”

If we give to others when they’re in need, God will see to it that others give to us in our time of need. And we’ll both receive great joy in doing so. God says in Acts 20:35 that it is more blessed to give than to receive. 2 Corinthians 9:6-7 says...

Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. Each man should give what he has decided in his heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.

The next word in the phrase is ‘us’. Philipians 2:3-4 instructs us to consider the needs of others before ourselves when we pray. Jesus, put our needs first. We should do the same by following His command to love our neighbor as ourselves and make his/her case our own. And we shouldn’t just pray about their needs – if we can do something about meeting them, do it!

Let’s continue with the next two words – ‘this day’ or ‘today’. In our affluent society, we tend to amass and even hoard material goods. This is not how we’re to live. This is best illustrated through two incidents

in the Old Testament. God provided the Israelites with food while in the desert in the form of manna, or 'heavenly bread'. It appeared daily, except for the Sabbath, which God took care of by sending a double amount the day before. They were to gather just enough to feed themselves for the day. If they hoarded it, it spoiled. If they were negligent in retrieving it, they went hungry. Another example is the prophet Elijah. When he was in hiding, God sent ravens to feed him twice a day.

But are we asking for God to drop our meals on the ground like He did in those two incidents? Hardly, though He could do that if need be. We must participate in this as well. Even the Israelites had to gather the food – it didn't fall in their laps. So, how does this equate to how we live? Asking for a job and the ability to earn a wage could be part of this request. In fact, 2 Thessalonians 3:10b says...

"If a man will not work, he shall not eat."

When we ask for bread, does it literally mean 'bread'? Yes, but it can also mean spiritual bread. If we don't eat for our physical body, we grow weak. The same is true of our soul. If we don't feed on God's Word daily, we'll grow spiritually weak.

What is spiritual bread? At the last supper, Jesus took the bread, broke it, and said, "This is my body broken for you – take and eat of it". Some of the disciples didn't understand what He meant and forsook Him, but Jesus was indicating that He is the bread of Life. He told them that man shall not live by bread alone but by every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of the Lord (Matthew 4:4). He has the life that sustains us – His words bring life.

In Jesus' sermon on the mount in Matthew 5, He said, "Blessed are they who hunger & thirst after righteousness for they will be filled (vs. 5). When a Samaritan woman Jesus met at the well asked Him where she could get water that would permanently quench her thirst, He said, "Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, but whoever drinks the water I give him will never thirst. Indeed, the water I give him will become in him a spring of water welling up to eternal life." (John 4:13-14)

Again, Jesus spoke against worrying about what you would eat, drink or wear in Matthew 6 by saying...

“Seek first the Father’s Kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Are you hungry and thirsty for God? Come to Him and be filled.

***** I THIRST *****

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