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# **Give Us This Day**

**#1332-A**

**Series: Prayer: God's "Secret" Weapon**

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# Give Us This Day

*King of kings, Lord of lords, Creator, Sustainer, Shepherd, Friend, Coming One, Just One, Tender One, we worship You.*

*Thou didst speak and the worlds came into being. Thou who even today but clears Thy throat and the heavens tremble, Thou who one day will come in power and great glory, we worship You. Thou who dost know our every hurt, who dost collect our tears in a bottle, who knows the very hairs of our head, who takes note of every sparrow that falls, we worship You.*

*And as we come together into Thy presence this morning to talk about the holy subject of prayer, we feel so inadequate. And we come recognizing so fully how little we understand, and yet how wonderful what we understand seems to be.*

*We pray, Father, for those in our midst this morning, who have undergone, even this week, times of trauma, discouragement, and fear. For those in our midst with the constancy of pain, for those who have constant difficulties with their family or their children, for those who are struggling simply to make it in the marketplace of life, we pray.*

*And our prayer is that as this day unfolds before us, they will sense Your presence. We pray that the God of all comfort who comforts us in all our sorrow and all of our trials will literally make Himself known, and that they might receive and appropriate the comfort that is theirs.*

*And now, Father, as we continue this look at the subject of prayer, may You be our teacher.*

*In Jesus name,*

*Amen.*

What a principle! It's a principle so profound, and yet so simple. It's a principle that literally sets us free as Christians. But it's a principle we so seldom apply because it's totally at odds with the natural mind, and it so confirms the mind of God. On the one hand, it takes an incredible load off of our minds on the day-to-day walk with God in the marketplace of life, and in our homes, and with our families, and in our ministries. But on the other hand,

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it removes from many of us the thing we enjoy the most, those mind games we play that allow us to worry about the future and to picture the worst thing that could happen where we zero in on it and play it out in the theater of our minds.

The principle is the principle of living one day at a time. It's an enigma to many. And to those of you with certain temperaments and certain spiritual gifts, it's much harder for you than it is for some of us phlegmatics, perhaps. But nevertheless, it is God's prescription for a successful Christian life. And if God has prescribed it, He will prescribe for you the grace you need to make it happen, one day at a time. What a relief! Think about it. One day at a time. Now that principle has two applications. The first has to do with the subject of prayer and what we're to pray about, what we are to ask God for. The other has to do with the issue of anxiety, and what we are to trust God for. Both are found in Matthew, chapter 6, and both have to do with experiencing the Spirit-controlled life.

We're continuing, this morning, our look at the subject of prayer. This perhaps is one of my favorite subjects of the whole issue, and God has to remind me again and again and again. I would like to teach it every week so I could be reminded every week, but I'm not sure you would put up with that. But this is a crucial issue. We're getting down to some of the practical things in prayer now, and some of us are going to have to make some decisions as to whether or not we're going to specifically obey some scriptural commands where prayer is concerned. God gives us a lot of latitude as to when to pray, how to pray, even why to pray. But He does give us some specific commandments, and if we follow those commandments, they will multiply our effectiveness. We're going to begin, this morning, looking at the first of those.

We've been looking at Matthew, chapter 6. I trust many of you remember that, and Jesus began by teaching us how not to pray. And then He followed that by teaching us how to approach the Father as we approach Him in prayer; and now He begins the process that we've all been waiting for, teaching us how to pray and what to pray about. Matthew, chapter 6, is a passage you don't need to read because you have it memorized.

After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.

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Give us this day our daily bread.

(Matthew 6:9-11)

Seven words, that's all there are in verse 11. But in those seven words, there are four principles—principles, when properly applied, which can literally change our lives—the way we pray, the way we think, the way we live. Let's take them one at a time:

### 1- "Give" (the principle of total dependence).

It literally means when you approach God in prayer, you approach the throne of God in an attitude of need and dependence. In other words, when you go to God you remember, that unless He provides, you have nothing. Unless He meets your needs, your needs will go unmet. This isn't a "gimme" theology, because in a few minutes we'll see what it is we're asking Him for. Nor is it a "give to me because I deserve it" theology. It is wrapped in a mantle of grace. God gives because He loves. He desires that we ask because it glorifies His name. But the word "give" implies something different. The word "give" implies a gift, something totally undeserved. And it's important that you understand that when you realize what this passage is asking. In John 10:27, we begin our look at that word "give".

My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

(John 10:27-29)

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

(John 1:12)

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

(John 3:16)

God *gives* eternal life. God *gave* us His only Son. The Father *gave* us to the Son. God *gives* us the power to become His sons. Free gifts. The Sovereign hand of an omniscient, omnipotent God simply gives us those things. So when you ask God to "give us this day our daily bread", you're asking Him to open His storehouse of grace and provide something that we do not deserve out of His treasury of love. We don't demand it because we deserve it—we ask

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God to give us something He's already promised us, that He wants to give us. And if we ask in humility, then we're on good ground.

"Give us." "Apart from You, Father, I have nothing." That's what you're saying. "God, please meet my needs today in Jesus. We do not so much as deserve the breath we breathe, but Lord, You have granted to us life as a gift. So, as You promised, give...". That's principle number one. How you approach Him, asking Him to give is the second.

2- "Give us...our" (the principle of the oneness of the body of Christ).

Once again we go back to the principle of the oneness in the body of Christ. Jesus reminds us that our concerns are not confined to our own needs. Our needs are but a little teeny part of what the needs are of the whole body of Christ. When we're praying, all we think about is us, and our world may expand to our family, even to people in our church. The truth of the matter is the "us" stands for the body of Christ—the whole body of Christ. It is the body of Christ in Indonesia, the body of Christ in China, the body of Christ in Rwanda, the body of Christ in Bosnia, the body of Christ in Russia, Romania, Hungary, Finland, Scotland, and Nigeria. It is the body of Christ in that city in Florida where a hurricane left thousands homeless. It is the body of Christ in that area of California where forest fires gutted hundreds of homes. When you pray "give us... our", that's what you mean—all of the body of Christ. And that's the way our prayers should always begin. Now I'm going to ask you to take a look at your prayer list; I pray that you have one. Take a look at it and ask yourself these questions:

1) Do I pray daily (key word) for believers in distant lands where poverty, disease, starvation, and political upheavals are threatening their very lives? If not, why not, and who's going to?

2) Do I pray daily for believers in countries where being a Christian is still a crime? Or where persecution has driven the church underground? I know the fall of the Iron Curtain has freed many believers to worship in the open again. But conversely, Muslim nations around the world are tightening their grip on anything that even closely resembles Christianity. And there's still the Red Chinas and the Cubas of this world, where being a Christian is still considered rebellion to a communist regime.

3) Ask yourself, do I pray regularly for missionaries and missions organizations who are struggling around the world to

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take the good news to people who never heard it? Do I pray daily for the missionaries my own church supports? You say, "Daily? Give me a break!" No, I didn't say daily, God said daily. You say, "Why?" Because you pray for your own needs daily, don't you? And because Jesus said to pray every day for the needs of the whole body.

Several things will happen when you do:

- Your problems will be seen in the light of the greater problems of those around the world. There are people who are suffering in ways we'll never experience.
- Your concept of the body of Christ will grow.
- You will become acquainted with the missionaries who are pleading for your prayers as much as your support.
- You probably will end up giving more and going more because that's what prayer does. It sensitizes your spirit so that you are willing to give of yourself to those you pray for.

So the "give us...our" part of the prayer is like a wide-angle lens that God puts on the camera of life. He wants us to see more than the little world we live in. He wants us to journey on the wings of prayer to distant lands, to the ghettos, to the hospitals of this world, a world that encompasses all believers everywhere. If you don't have a prayer list that takes you around the world, then you are not praying the way Jesus told us to pray. Think about it. "Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day..." What? "Our daily bread". That brings us to principle number three. That's the concept we looked at as this lesson began, and this is the key to the study this morning.

3- Give us this day (the principle of living and asking one day at a time).

It's perhaps the most freeing concept in all scripture. It's God's solution to our presumption, and it's God's solution to our anxiety. He knows the problems we face. He knows we're likely to borrow from tomorrow. If we're proud, we borrow presumptuously and we say to the Lord, "Tomorrow things are going to be at least as good as they are today and, by the way, Lord, You owe me this and this and this". If we are depressed or discouraged, we borrow anxiety. We imagine the worst. You say, "I can't imagine anybody doing that!" And we allow Satan to fill our minds with negative fears and

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frustrating worries about what tomorrow holds. And God knew we couldn't handle either problem. So in eternity past, He came up with this neat solution.

It's the principle of days. He decided to carve life up into neat little twenty-four-hour packages, and He said to us they'll never vary. The seasons will change right on schedule, and life's seasons will change. You'll go from being a youth, to a teen, to an adult, to a senior citizen and in some of our cases, to a senior senior citizen. But no day will ever have one second more or one second less than twenty-four hours. That's why you can schedule things on into the next century. That's why you can tell someone, "I'll meet you tomorrow at 7:30". Tomorrow will begin at 12:01. It always has, it always will. The sun will go down, the sun will come up. Day will be followed by night; night will be followed by day. It always has, it always will, until Jesus comes.

As we mentioned so many times before, it's an incredible message of God's faithfulness. Go to Lamentations 3:22. I hope many of you've memorized it, and I hope all who haven't will. It says,

It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness.

(Lamentations 3:22,23)

New every morning. Every time the sun comes up, God renews His covenant, reaffirms His faithfulness, and demonstrates His mercy. Every morning. Every twenty-four hours night falls; it always has. The sun comes up; it always will. And every time it does, God is reminding us He designed life in these workable segments so we can grasp His love and appropriate His mercy.

It happened at the very beginning, you remember, in Genesis,

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.

And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness.

And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day.

(Genesis 1:1-5)



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Now why did God do that? Well, one reason is (and we'll look at four or five this morning), that God divided the light from the darkness to remind us of an upcoming conflict between darkness and light. You say, "How do you know that?" John chapter 1 tells us,

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world.

He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not.

He came unto his own, and his own received him not.

But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:

(John 1:1-12)

So God divided light from darkness because man was going to sin, and darkness would invade the kingdom of light. But God had a plan. The Word would one day be made flesh. God would come to Earth, and His name would be the Light of the World. The darkness would try to overtake the Light, but it would be unable to. Ultimately, the Light (Jesus) would overtake the darkness and establish His kingdom, first in the hearts of man. Then one day His kingdom would come and there would be no more night at all, because the glory of the Light would have extinguished the darkness once and for all.

So then, God divided night from day for these reasons:

- Reason number one is so we would have a fresh way to

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receive His mercy, which endures forever.

- Secondly, so that He could illustrate the spiritual battle going on in the heavenlies between darkness and light.
- Thirdly, because there needed to be regimented times for man to rest from his labors and times for him to work.
- Fourthly, He wanted to demonstrate, by dividing these days into weeks, what the Sabbath rest of God was all about.

### 4- Give us this day (our daily bread).

Man is still unable to grasp, without God's help, His incredible mercy, the reality of spiritual warfare, the need to work and the need to rest, and the need for the Sabbath rest, without some kind of starting and stopping place. Man still needed to understand what the life of faith was all about. He needed to understand that he couldn't borrow trouble from the future. He needed to understand that worry would become the cardinal stumbling block, the cardinal absence of trust in the Christian life. I know none of you worry. And none of you worry that you're worriers, do you? And you're worried that I'm teaching on this, aren't you? Jesus said in Matthew 6:31-34, "Take no thought..." some of us can go that far pretty well, can't we?

Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek:) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow: for the morrow shall take thought for the things of itself. Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof. Matthew 6:31-34)

The New American Standard translates it this way and it's a great memory verse.

Therefore do not be anxious for tomorrow; for tomorrow will care for itself. {Each} day has enough trouble of its own.

(Matthew 6:34 NAS)

Amen? How many agree with that statement? "Each day has enough trouble of its own". So you can't separate Matthew 6:11 from Matthew 6:34. They're part and parcel of the same principle. One deals with God's provision, one with God's sovereignty, but they're

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intertwined. So we're to pray daily because we have daily needs, and we're to focus on one day's needs and one day's problems, because that's the scope of time God designed us to focus on. That way we can appropriate God's mercies, which are new every morning; we can confess our sins and reestablish our fellowship, if we have not done so. We can place the total weight of our trust in Him for a period of time we have the capacity to trust Him for.

Now, let me liken it to the headlights on your car. You get in your car at night, and you're leaving the church or you're leaving the mall or you're leaving work, and you would really like to be able to see your house, but you can't. You live too far away. So the only thing you can do is start the car, turn on the headlights, and head in the direction of your home. Now you have two choices: you can sit in the parking lot, turn on the lights, and wait till you can see the house. It won't be a long wait (unless you have a Die-Hard battery). Or, you can drive by faith. You trust your headlights as far as they shine, and sure enough, when you get to the end of that beam of light, they are shining just a little farther, and a little farther, and a little farther. So long as you don't take any wrong turns, you turn into the driveway, and the headlights say you're home.

Now that's what the Spirit-controlled life is all about. God's light shines just far enough for us to see one day at a time. Now it's true, both experience and God's promises give us glimpses of the journey, and His word gives us a clear picture of the last leg of the journey. But we can't see the future; we can only see the Light. So long as we follow that Light, one day at a time, we'll make it home without any need for fear, any need for anxiety. But if we begin to fret about, "Oh, gosh, I bet there's a train up ahead and I'm going to have to slow down". Or, "Golly, I bet there's a red light and it may be stuck." Or, "There's a chug hole I hit once before and, golly, let me think about that chug hole." We'll get frustrated, anxious, and fearful unless like the headlights on the car lets us see those things, and we're able to concentrate on the road in front of us, we trust the Light to guide us through our day. And, Beloved, the length of the road is one day. No more. No less. Now you remember that principle every time you get in the car at night and turn on your headlights, and you thank God that He's divided life so beautifully into segments where we can see the light.

Now He's given us some clear reasons and a clear picture of it. And I want us to remind ourselves of the picture found in

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Exodus, chapter 16. The children of Israel needed food; they were hungry. And God, in eternity past, had designed exactly what they needed in His precious, heavenly bakery. It was called “manna”. Now, mind you, it wasn’t what they wanted, but it was what they needed. And mind you, they complained. They wanted more variety, more flexibility, more choice, and most of all, they wanted larger quantities so that they didn’t have to go get it every day. But God knew better. He knew that if they were to remain dependent and not be anxious about whether or not what they had would last, He would have to design the stuff so the shelf life was only 24 hours. And only on the Sabbath day could they gather for two days, to teach them about the Sabbath rest. Otherwise, anything they tried to gather in advance would go bad.

And Moses and Aaron said unto all the children of Israel, At even, then ye shall know that the LORD hath brought you out from the land of Egypt:

And in the morning, then ye shall see the glory of the LORD; for that he heareth your murmurings against the LORD: and what are we, that ye murmur against us?

And Moses said, This shall be, when the LORD shall give you in the evening flesh to eat, and in the morning bread to the full; for that the LORD heareth your murmurings which ye murmur against him: and what are we? your murmurings are not against us, but against the LORD. (Exodus 16:6-8)

And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground.

And when the children of Israel saw it, they said one to another, It is manna: for they wist not what it was. And Moses said unto them, This is the bread which the LORD hath given you to eat.

And the children of Israel did so, and gathered, some more, some less. (Exodus 16:14,15,17)

And Moses said, Let no man leave of it till the morning.

Notwithstanding they hearkened not unto Moses; but some of them left of it until the morning, and it bred worms, and stank: and Moses was wroth with them.

And they gathered it every morning, every man according to his eating: and when the sun waxed hot, it melted.

(Exodus 16:19-21)

Now, man was no different then than he is today. They tried to

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store it up, save it, or leave it until the next day. It didn't work. It still doesn't. The principle was that God provided bread daily. Now we're going to see what bread is in a minute. But His provision is daily. You can't get next week's in advance. You can't save up yesterday's bread so you won't have to trust Him for another day. He designed the bread principle to teach us about living one day at a time.

Then Jesus came and He said:

...It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone [physical], but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

(Matthew 4:4)

And he took bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me.

(Luke 22:19)

Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

(John 6:31-35)

So now the principle comes full cycle. Jesus is the Bread of Life. He (and He alone) can feed the hungry soul of man. But He will do it one day at a time. And He still expects us to come daily and ask of Him and feed on Him and rest in Him for that day's needs and that day's supply.

So what are you asking God for when you ask Him to give us our daily bread? Two things:

- You're saying, "Dear Lord, will You meet the physical needs of the body of Christ for this one day, in the manner in which would best cause Your kingdom to come and Your will to be done on Earth as it is in heaven".
- Secondly, "Dear God, would You give us the spiritual sustenance (the bread come down from heaven), so that we will be able to trust You for one day, knowing that the future

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needs will be met one day at a time as well”.

That is what we are asking God to do when we ask Him to “give us...” That’s what you’re asking Him to do. You’re asking Him to meet the needs of the whole body of Christ for one day physically, and you’re asking Him to provide food enough to sustain us and clothe us and protect us for one day. Now, you can ask for more. You can ask for a new Cadillac, you can ask for a new television set, you can ask for a year supply of Big Macs if you’d like. You have that right. And He may or may not give it to you.

But you can be assured that if you ask Him, He will give you what He promised you. Now, what He promised you is not necessarily steak and potatoes. It’s not necessarily pizza or tacos. It may be. But it will be what you need to keep your focus on the Bread come down from heaven, even Jesus Christ. That’s the only way His Kingdom can come, and His will be done on Earth as it is in heaven. Now you don’t know what will happen tomorrow, and if you start complaining that you don’t know what will happen tomorrow, and worrying that you don’t know what will happen tomorrow, you actually remove yourself from His perfect will, and you sin by disobeying His commandment to live one day at a time. And the reason is simple. Matthew 6:34 says, “Each day has enough trouble of its own.” Amen. And God knows our capacity to trust Him isn’t sufficient for us to peer out beyond that expanse of time, so He made it clear.

Now, does that mean you don’t plan for the future? Oh, of course not. But it does mean you don’t presume on the future. And secondly, it does mean you never worry about the future. In order to assure that, you trust Him with the future, and you pray about it and you think about it and you focus on the twenty-four hours immediately before you.

Now let’s try to make that practical. What we’ve talked about this morning brings to light three principles every one of us needs to apply.

### PRAY CONSISTENTLY FOR THE WHOLE BODY OF CHRIST.

That means that we must be aware of their needs, concerned about who is hurting and what their needs are. And our eyes are to be focused on those whose needs are greater than ours. And rather than badgering God to give us more things to make us more secure, we ought to be asking God how can we take what we have

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and meet the needs of those whose daily needs are greater than ours, or whose storehouse of supplies seems less than ours. And, Beloved, if you look at the world today, you'll have no problem finding people in both categories.

It means our prayer list ought to be as long as the world is broad and as unselfish as Jesus was. He gave His life a ransom for many. He laid aside His robes of righteousness and donned the cloak of a slave in order to meet the needs of the most common of men. And He did it for us. So we must pray daily for those whose lives have touched ours, for those whose ministries we support, for those who are reaching out in the recesses of the world where we cannot go. We must develop a prayer list and include all of the missionaries our church supports, and beyond.

This morning on the table in the back, I have left two things. There are copies of the church's missionary prayer booklet. It's about a year old, but it's fairly current, and there are pictures of and prayer requests for and an explanation of the ministry of every one of the missionaries we support. There's not enough for everybody, but if you would like one you can take those. But there are enough for everybody of a list of all the missionaries, front and back, and their addresses, that we support or participate in the ministries, so you can pray for them, and pray for them daily. And you can write to them and let them know you're praying for them. I would just plead with you to take one of these with you and to have your family become involved in praying regularly.

Learn to pray for those in the body of Christ around the world who are in the midst of warfare—physical warfare and spiritual warfare. Otherwise, when you say, "Give us this day our daily bread," what you're really saying is, "Lord, I don't care about those other guys, what are You going to do for me today?" That would break His heart.

### LEARN TO FOCUS ON THE DAY AT HAND.

This is the key to this whole study. Isn't it incredible how deceitful Satan is? I mean, he causes us to focus on things we can't control, and things beyond tomorrow. He's successfully taken us out of the Sabbath rest and caused us to be anxious and sin. God may not send you that check you wanted so that the future would be guaranteed. He may want you to ask Him for an amount sufficient for this day's needs. God may not remove that pain and He may not guarantee that He ever will, but He can give you the

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grace for today and the peace to rejoice in it. You say, “Hey, wait a minute, that means I’ll have to ask Him again tomorrow!” Now, you’re beginning to get it. You see, tomorrow you ask again for enough grace or enough healing or enough strength for that day’s trouble. You say, “But doesn’t that get old?” Not to God. See, that’s why the manna only lasted a day. It would have been easier for God to dump a warehouse somewhere, at least a week at a time. He wouldn’t have had to have this daily delivery service operating, and He wouldn’t have had to listen to so much complaining. But He knew what they needed to keep their eyes on Him.

So, Beloved, you ask for one day’s daily bread. Now, what’s bread? Bread is the basic sustaining factor in life. It isn’t fancy. It isn’t tasty necessarily, although some of it is. It may not seem to offer any variety, but if God provides it, it’s a blessing. And should He give you more (and He usually does), it’s simply a matter of grace; so you ask Him for your daily bread.

### NEVER FORGET THAT EVERYTHING WE HAVE IS A GIFT, AND A GIFT IS UNDESERVED AND UNEARNED.

I think the great missing factor, the great missing link in most of our prayer lives is a really grateful heart. We’ve got a lot of “Dear God, please gimme’s”. Most of us don’t have nearly as many “Oh God, thank You for’s”. And I really want to tell you this morning, that I believe one reason we’re to pray one day at a time, is because we have such short memories. We pray for long-term blessings and we forget when they come that we ever prayed for them.

But if we pray one day at a time and we stop and thank God one day at a time, we’re constantly in an attitude of gratitude. You say, “How can I pray for my own needs?” Well, why don’t you start by praying for scriptural character qualities? Ask God to give you enough sensitivity for one day. Maybe you can never grasp that you would ever become sensitive. So why don’t you ask God to make you sensitive or tenderhearted for one day. And then at the end of that day, stop and thank Him that He did. You know He did, because you prayed in accordance with His will. You say, “Well, I was unaware of it”. Maybe you’re so insensitive that you don’t know when you’re sensitive. That’s okay. Tomorrow, you pray again, and you ask Him to let you know when He answers, okay? Meanwhile, thank Him anyway. Maybe you missed it, but God kept His word.

Pray for the capacity to love the unlovable, just for one day. You can trust Him for that long, can’t you? Maybe you say, “I’ll never



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change, I've always had this problem loving people that just didn't appeal to me". Say, "Okay, Lord, I can trust You for one day. Give us this day the capacity to love the unlovable", and then watch Him do it. Somebody will come into your life that you just couldn't relate to before and something inside of you suddenly pours out and you realize there's a love in you that you never thought you would have. You trusted Him for one day. And at the end of that day stop and say, "Lord, I don't know where that came from, except it came from You, and You know, that was kind of neat. Let's do that again tomorrow". The truth of the matter is, you can trust Him for that long, ask Him for that long, and ask Him for things you're supposed to have. You're not sure you're supposed to get that job. You're not exactly positive you're supposed to get a check in the mail, or supposed to get your car fixed on time, but you are sure that you're supposed to be tender-hearted and compassionate. Pray for the joy of the Lord. Pray for the peace that passes understanding.

Meditate on Philippians 4:6-8. Now that verse has prerequisites, so as you pray for one day, you have a responsibility for that one day, and you can believe Him for that one day, and be obedient. What do you have to do? Three things that passage says:

Stop worrying. If you want the peace of God that passes all understanding for this 24-hour period, you've got to quit worrying. "Me?" You. Stop it. The minute you begin to worry, you substitute fear for faith, and you quench the Spirit.

In every situation, instead, you must pray. Secondly, He says, in every situation you would normally worry—when the Worry Syndrome starts to kick in, instead, you pray. That means you stop and tell God about it.

You must stop and give thanks. And thirdly, it says "with thanksgiving". Before anything else happens, you thank Him for who He is, and that He answered every single time. And then it works. You say, "I can never believe that I will be free from worry". Okay, do you believe that God can keep His word and you can be faithful for one day? "Well, okay." Take Him at His word. Give us this day a spirit of peace.

Pray for a deeper understanding of the Scriptures. Pray for the ability to make Godly choices, for the mind of Christ to give you a servant heart. "How do I pray for others?" The same way. And you pray that God would meet their needs, both physically and spiritually, for that one day, that He'd give them grace to endure

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and grace to overcome. You say, “Wait a minute, that means I’ll have to pray for them again tomorrow!” Exactly. And the day after. You say, “But I’ll be praying all day long!” Exactly. That’s what’s called “praying without ceasing”. It doesn’t mean you pray instead of working, but you can often pray as you work, or as you drive to work, or as you wait for your next customer, your next patient, your next instruction.

You can pray while you wash dishes, you can pray as you vacuum, you can pray as you wait in line. You can pray as you change diapers, you can pray as you walk, or run, or jog. You can take five minutes longer in the secret place. Or ten. Or twenty. You can rotate the people you pray for, certainly, but don’t sell yourself short by limiting your prayer list to the number of people who will fit into a predesignated time span. Your whole day is your prayer time. And the whole world is your prayer list. And an incredible, wonderful God is your supplier. And what He wants to supply is one day’s needs, for both kinds of bread: the kind you get at the local grocery store, and the kind God sends from His heavenly supermarket of grace. Both kinds are important, and the purpose of both and the timing of both are so that “His kingdom can come and His will be done on earth as it is in heaven.”

Take a deep breath with me this morning and relax. And say to yourself, “You know, I’m tired of worrying, tired of being uptight, tired of being fretful, tired of being fearful. I don’t know what the future holds. When I listen to the news, or I listen to my doctor, or I read something that came in the mail, I can’t help but be afraid. But when I look at the word of God, He wraps His loving arms around me, and He says, “Look, I’ve divided life into segments called days, and all I’ve asked you to do is trust Me for twenty-four hours. Will you do that?” You can take that deep breath again and say, “Sure, Lord, I’ll do that.”

Now what about you? Are you praying around the world? Or just around your world? Are you praying for the needs of those in Christ who have less of this world’s goods than you do? Or are you badgering God to give you more? Are you praying so intensely for those who have less that your heart yearns to give some of what you have to answer the prayer? Or are you expecting God to find it somewhere else so it won’t bother you?

Are you focusing on the day at hand, or worrying about the things you cannot control that may never come to pass? Don’t you

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wish you had a penny for everything in life you've worried over that never even came to pass? Are you remembering to thank God at the end of it each day for His answers? Or are you wanting manna for a whole week so you don't have to come to the cafeteria of life so often?

Beloved, God loves you. He loves you so much, that way back in eternity past, He designed life to be lived one day at a time, and He designed prayer accordingly. He taught us to pray for one day's needs for the whole world, for today. Tomorrow's a new day. His compassions fail not. They are new every morning. He will renew His love and His commitment tomorrow. But, dear God, can we do any less?

One day at a time. What a relief! It removes fear, presumption, and anxiety, and it gives us the focus of heaven while we live on earth. It's a principle that allows our hearts to seek His best, while remaining at rest for a period of time we can trust Him for. It makes so much sense, but then, it ought to. Because this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you. And now, by His grace, let's go out and put it into practice.

*Our Father and our God,*

*We struggle so, we fret so, about the future, and You've told us we would. And You've told us we shouldn't. You've told us today has enough problems of its own. You've told us not to be anxious ever about the future. Not to fret, "Am I going to have enough clothes to wear, am I going to have a place to live, am I going to have this, am I going to have that". You've told us not to be fearful or anxious of things we cannot see. You've told us not only to trust You for one day, but to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread".*

*Meet our physical needs as You promised, and give us the bread come down from heaven to satisfy the hunger in our hearts for today. Tomorrow, Lord, we'll be back; we'll be looking for manna again. And sure enough, it'll be there. Your compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is Thy faithfulness.*

*And now, heavenly Father, as we go our way, we pray that we might not lose the importance of this principle, but that Your spirit might call it to our remembrance every time we start to be anxious, and borrow from the future. Teach us to pray, teach us to live one day at a time.*

*In Jesus' name, Amen.*

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### Focus on Application

1- Begin compiling a prayer list that includes the whole world, in particular, the whole body of Christ. Include the names of all the missionaries you support or your church supports. Include the people whose names you do not know who live in lands under oppression or under severe economic strife or engaged in war, either physical or spiritual. Pray for the soldiers around the world who are in Christ that they might be testimonies of His grace in the midst of the conflicts they are in. Pray for pastors of other churches as well your own.

2- Begin praying for one day's needs and one day's grace at a time. Don't just think about it. Do it. Ask God to reveal the miracle of manna; the principle of partaking daily of God's provisions, not presuming upon His grace for the day to follow.

3- Expand your prayer time to include the whole day. Make prayer that which occupies you and consumes you whenever your mind is free to think. Make prayer a continual, unending conversation with God that begins when you awaken and does not stop until you close your eyes at night to sleep. Meditate through the Scriptures as you pray. Meditate on Matthew 6:31-35 and Matthew 6:11 this week. Ask God to make those passages real to you. Ask Him to open your eyes that you may experience the wonder of His word in your life. And don't forget to thank Him each day for each day's provisions.

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