

Give Us Our Daily Bread

Matthew 6:33-34

March 21, 2021

We have been meditating the Lord's Prayer on Sunday mornings since the first Sunday in Lent, February 21, exactly a month ago. Last 3 Sundays, we mediated the first part of the Lord's Prayer. "Hallowed be thy name, Thy Kingdom come and Thy Will be done." By teaching these prayers, he asked us to remember God, the Creator and Savior, honoring God with sincerity and reverence and also participating with all things we do and say in God's kingdom ministry.

Now Jesus taught us to pray, "Give us this day our daily bread, forgive us our trespasses, lead us not into temptation." He now directed our attention to who we are what we need in relations with God, our Father in heaven.

Give us our daily Bread.

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Here I can see three essential teachings based on three words in this prayer. The first word is GIVE. **Give** us this day our daily bread. GIVE us our daily Bread. .

Didn't Jesus say during his sermon on the mount *"Do not worry, saying, 'What shall we eat?' or 'What shall we drink?' or 'What shall we wear?'"* ³² *For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them."* (Matthew 6:32)? Then, this is a question we have. Why did Jesus teach us to pray, "Give us our daily Bread."? It sounds paradoxical. Isn't it?

I believe the first lesson from this prayer is this: Jesus reminds us that God is the Giver of all. By teaching us to ask to GIVE, Jesus helps us to realize that no one cannot live without God, the bountiful and generous Giver. This prayer reaffirms our faith in God, the Provider. "God, we know you are the Giver and all things come from you. Give us our daily Bread." God is the Giver and We are the Receiver. It is the foundation of our faith life.

Let me share the following story I heard a long time ago at the Sunday School.

There was a king who lost appetite. Nothing brought his appetite back. One day something good happened. He had a mixed vegetable salad for lunch and liked it very much. Amazingly, his appetite was restored. So happy and glad, he called his chef to give him thanks. "Thank you, Jim for the mixed vegetable salad." But the chef said, "Lord, do not thank me. I did not do anything special. I just mixed vegetables and put them in a bowl. The guy who brought those vegetables deserves your thanks." So the king asked the truck driver, Tom to come. "Thank you, Tom for the mixed vegetables." Tom says, "No, it is not me. I just delivered them from the farm. The farmers who grew them deserves your compliment and thanks. Now the farmer came. "Thank you, Susan for those vegetables you grew." And she said, "O No. Don't thank me. I know I cannot grow vegetables without the one who gives good sunlight and rains from above" The king asked, who is the one who gives you sunlight and rains?" "It is God, our Creator." So the king gives thanks to God with his servants. God is the Giver who provides all things for us.

Bread is a must to have for our living. But "bread" in this prayer is not just a loaf of bread we must have for our body. Bread in this prayer stands for all the things we must have for this earthly life. We need not only bread to eat, but also air to breath, water to drink, sun and moon and stars in motion. We need shelters, as well. Family and friends. Neighbors and co-workers. Church and community. Society and nations are essential for our life journey in this world. God provides us all these, so that we are enabled to live this living in this world. Hallelujah!

Dependence is not a favorite word in our society. It implies weakness. We are encouraged to be independent. Aren't we? "Don't depend on anyone. You gotta be independent." Parents and teachers keep saying to us. Independence, doing things without asking support or help from others is considered as success in our society. Isn't it? But Jesus taught us that depending on God is okay, not more than okay. It is a way of life. When we say, we believe in God, we say not only God is alive and with us, but also God is the Giver to provide all things we need. I say, faith is entirely and totally depending on God, the Giver and openly and thankfully receiving God's grace and love. So we who have faith in God, join in singing, "The Lord is my Shepherd. I shall not want."

Give us our daily Bread.

Give **Us Our** daily Bread. Hear this prayer once again. Jesus did not teach us to pray, "Give me my daily Bread." No, he asked us to pray, "Give Us our daily Bread." It is a prayer that awakens us to get out of our self-centered attitude and life-style.

How many times do we say in our prayers, saying, "I, I, I and my, my, my.. " "my life, my family, my country, my people." Nothing wrong with this personal prayer. We all need God's help. But here in the Lord's prayer, Jesus asked his disciples to pay attention to people around us and particularly those in need. In need of food, water, shelters, security, freedom, etc. Jesus challenges us how often we do pay attention all those people out there.

There were a lot of people following Jesus. Many of them are poor economically. Many who Jesus welcomed with wide open heart were treated as "unclean" according to the Jewish purity laws and consequently they were ostracized and alienated from their community. The reality was economic and religious iniquities. Seeing this reality, Jesus taught his disciples to pray, "Give Us Our Daily Bread" not "Give Me My Daily Bread."

Jesus awakened them and awakens us to remember always that all the people are God's people and God has great interest in all the people and also all the people are God's children created in the image of God and we are sisters and brothers to live together in this world. Skin color, language, culture, origin of nationality, sexual orientation, level of education, etc must not keep us from living in harmony and sharing with generosity as God's children in this world. We all belong to one another and we all belong to God.

We all are shocked to hear about the incident in Atlanta, Georgia. 6 Korean American women were mercilessly killed by a gun man. We are informed that hate crime against Asian Americans and their communities has been increased since last March when the Coronavirus pandemic began in our country. We, disciples of Jesus Christ are greatly saddened by this horrible trend and strongly oppose hate crime which is evil, because we believe in God who has created all equally and beautifully and wants us to love one another and respect one another.

Lastly, Give us our daily **Bread**. The third word is BREAD.

We remember Jesus responding to the Satan when the Satan tempted him to change stones to bread, saying “Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God” (Matthew 4:1-4).

Give Us our Daily **Bread**. It is not only bread for our physical life, but also for our spiritual life. This prayer reminds us of Jesus saying in the Gospel of John: *“48 I am the bread of life. 49 Your ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which anyone may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. Whoever eats this bread will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”* (John 6:48-51)

Jesus, the bread of life, the living bread came down to satisfy and fill our hunger. This is the good news for all. The bread of life, the living bread is with us and for us. By receiving the living bread, we become one with Jesus in body, mind and spirit. We do not live this life alone any longer. My life is life with Jesus. Jesus is in my life, nurturing my mind, heart and spirit. Jesus is the way to follow, the truth that sets us free and the life that energizes my living and ministry.

What are you hungry for? Are we not hungry for reputation, recognition, fame, or fortune? Some say they are hungry for security and attention and love? When and if these hungers are not filled, we tend to fill ourselves with drugs, alcohols, sports, etc. Don't we? The Living bread has come to us to satisfy all the hungers we have. This is the good news! Let Jesus fill you with everlasting love, and you will be satisfied. Let Jesus fill you with his presence in your life, and you will stop searching false gods aimlessly.

I am glad we have been receiving and yes, we have been eating the Word of God, the living Bread every morning as God's people at Fairfield Grace. I encourage all of you to eat the living Bread every morning, and we will grow day by day healthy and strong spiritually. Taking a time with Jesus is another way of having the living Bread from heaven. During the holy and peaceful time with Jesus, we have the living bread to nurture and nourish our spirit and shall not want.

Give us our **Daily** bread. The word, "**Daily**" gets our attention.

Daily... Daily. Day by Day.

"One day at a time sweet Jesus." This is Elsie Kerekes' favorite song. And Ann Kisserberth likes it and so do I. It goes like this.

"I'm only human, I'm just a woman. Help me believe in what I could be And all that I am. Show me the stairway, I have to climb. Lord for my sake, teach me to take One day at a time.

One day at a time sweet Jesus That's all I'm asking from you. Just give me the strength To do everyday what I have to do. Yesterday's gone sweet Jesus And tomorrow may never be mine. Lord help me today, show me the way One day at a time.

"One day at a time, Give us our bread, our Father in heaven, the Giver of all the blessings." Amen. Amen.