

THE LORD'S PRAYER — PROVISION

Vision Sunday | Building for the Future

INTRODUCTION

Church, today is a special Sunday in the life of Light & Life. We are continuing our journey through the Lord's Prayer, but today is also Vision Sunday. We are looking with faith toward what we believe God wants to do through this church for generations to come. And I don't think it is an accident that the phrase before us today is simply this: **"Give us today our daily bread."** Before we talk about what we're building or what we're giving, Jesus reminds us where everything begins:

BIG IDEA: GOD IS OUR PROVIDER.

Ultimately, we don't put our trust in the provision. **We put our trust in the Provider.** And Jesus teaches us that in one simple prayer: **"Give us today our daily bread."**

SCRIPTURE READING — MATTHEW 6:9-13

Jesus says: **"This, then, is how you should pray: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.'"**

This is the Word of the Lord.

Over these last several weeks, Jesus has been forming us through this prayer. We began with **“Our Father.”** Relationship. Then, **“Hallowed be your name.”** Character. Last week, **“Your kingdom come, your will be done.”** Surrender. Only now does Jesus turn toward our needs: **“Give us today our daily bread.”**

Don’t miss the order. Before I get to what I need, Jesus has already reminded me who my Father is, whose name matters, whose Kingdom I’m living for, and whose will I’m surrendering to. Now Jesus teaches us to bring our needs to the Father.

The Greek word translated **“daily,”** *epiousios*, is an unusually rare word, appearing in the New Testament only here and in Luke’s account of this prayer. Its precise nuance has been debated, but the posture is unmistakable: **Jesus is teaching His disciples daily dependence upon the Father.**

Not self-sufficiency. Dependence. Because **God is our Provider.**

1. GOD PROVIDES FOR US.

Jesus begins the request with one word: **“Give.”** That means before we are achievers, **we are receivers.** James 1:17 says, **“Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father...”** Yes, you worked. Yes, you sacrificed. Yes, you saved. Biblical dependence doesn’t deny human responsibility. But underneath everything we have is grace.

Everything I have is provision before it ever becomes possession.

Psalm 24:1 says, **“The earth is the LORD’s, and everything in it.”** So biblical stewardship begins by changing the question. Not merely, **“What do I own?”** but **“What has God entrusted to me?”**

God is the Owner. We are stewards. That changes generosity. Generosity isn’t God trying to get His hands on my stuff. Generosity is me asking God what He wants me to do with what was His all along.

When David and Israel gave generously toward the temple, David prayed in 1 Chronicles 29:14, **“Everything comes from you, and we have given you only what comes from your hand.”**

We never give God something He didn’t give us first.

And that is where a biblical theology of generosity begins. I don't give because God is lacking something. I give because everything I have already came from Him. My resources aren't evidence of my ownership; they are evidence of His provision.

And if God is my Provider, then my security cannot ultimately be in what I possess. **Provision isn’t ultimately about what’s in my hand. It’s about whose hand my life is in.**

2. GOD PROVIDED BEFORE US.

Jesus says, **“Give us TODAY our DAILY bread.”** That prayer would have sounded familiar to people who knew Israel’s story. In Exodus 16, Israel is in the wilderness, unable to provide food for themselves, and every morning God provides manna.

But notice how God tells them to gather it. Exodus 16:16 says, **“Everyone is to gather as much as they need.”** Then verse 18 says,

“The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little. Everyone had gathered just as much as they needed.”

God wasn't teaching Israel excess. **He was teaching Israel enough.**

Each household gathered according to its need. A larger household gathered more. A smaller household gathered less. The measure wasn't comparison with the family next door. The question was simply, **“What has God provided for this household?”**

And that matters on a Sunday when we're talking about generosity because faithfulness will not look identical in every household. What is sacrificial for one family may not be sacrificial for another. God isn't asking us to compare our amount with somebody else's amount. He's asking us to faithfully steward what He has placed in our hands.

Israel was also told not to hoard tomorrow's manna. Why? Because tomorrow morning they would have to trust Him again.

God wasn't only providing bread. He was producing trust.

And Scripture gives us another prayer that sounds remarkably similar. Proverbs 30:8–9 says, **“Give me neither poverty nor riches, but give me only my daily bread. Otherwise, I may have too much and disown you and say, ‘Who is the LORD?’ Or I may become poor and steal, and so dishonor the name of my God.”**

What a prayer. **“Lord, don't give me so little that desperation pulls me away from You. But don't give me so much that abundance convinces me I don't need You.”**

Scripture recognizes spiritual danger on both sides. Scarcity can tempt me to distrust God. **Abundance can tempt me to forget God.**

And maybe one of the dangers of having more than we need is that eventually **God's provision begins to feel like our possession.**

Generosity reminds my heart that the Provider matters more than the provision.

Jesus says, **"Give us today our daily bread."** Proverbs says, **"Give me only my daily bread."** Israel gathered what each household needed. The posture is the same: **Father, give me what I need, and keep my heart dependent upon You.**

And church, when I look at the history of Light & Life, I see that kind of provision everywhere. For 72 years, God has provided through people who prayed, served, sacrificed, and gave because they believed God wanted to do something here that was bigger than their lifetime. When this sanctuary was being built, Beverly McClain and others took a second mortgage on their homes so they could give generously toward its construction. Their obedience isn't necessarily your obedience. Her sacrifice is not a prescription for everybody else.

But look around this room. **We're sitting in somebody else's faith.**

Somebody gave toward people they would never meet. Somebody sacrificed for salvations they would never personally witness. Somebody made room without knowing that one day **we** would be sitting here.

Psalms 145:4 says, **"One generation commends your works to another; they tell of your mighty acts."**

They didn't know our names. **But God did.**

They couldn't see us. **But God could.**

And that brings us to the Bottom Line: **WE'RE LIVING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S FAITHFULNESS. MAY MANY IN THE FUTURE LIVE IN OURS.**

3. GOD PROVIDES THROUGH US.

Now look at Matthew 6:11 again. Jesus doesn't teach us to pray, **"Give ME today MY daily bread."** He says, **"Give US today OUR daily bread."**

The whole prayer is plural: **OUR** Father. Give **US**. Forgive **US**. Lead **US**. Deliver **US**. There is no "me" or "my" in the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus is not merely forming individuals who trust God. **Jesus is forming a people who belong to one another.** And that means I cannot sincerely pray, **"Give us our daily bread,"** while remaining indifferent about whether you have bread. Now remember the manna.

Paul does something remarkable with that story. When he teaches the Corinthian church about generosity in 2 Corinthians 8:13-15, he reaches all the way back to Exodus 16 and quotes it: **"The one who gathered much did not have too much, and the one who gathered little did not have too little."**

Paul takes God's provision in the wilderness and applies it directly to generosity in the Church. In other words, manna isn't only teaching: **God provides for me.** It's teaching: **God provides for us.**

God gives us enough to trust Him—and often enough to become His provision for somebody else.

That's why Paul says in 2 Corinthians 8:14, **“At the present time your plenty will supply what they need.”**

Your plenty. Their need. God's provision.

Sometimes when you ask God to provide, He puts something in your hand. And sometimes when somebody else asks God to provide: **God puts their answer in yours.** That is biblical generosity.

And when the Holy Spirit creates the Church in Acts, we see just how far this kind of generosity can go. Acts 2:44–45 says, **“All the believers were together and had everything in common. They sold property and possessions to give to anyone who had need.”** Acts 4:34–35 goes even further. **“From time to time those who owned land or houses sold them, brought the money from the sales and put it at the apostles' feet.”**

Land. Houses. Possessions. This wasn't spare change. This was costly generosity.

What happened to these people? **Jesus changed what they valued.**

The early Church wasn't generous because Peter had developed a really effective capital campaign. They had encountered the risen Jesus. They were filled with the Holy Spirit. And suddenly possessions were no longer ultimate because **Jesus was.**

People mattered more than possessions. The Kingdom mattered more than accumulation. Eternity changed the way they looked at what they

owned. And church, this is where I want to push us today. Biblical generosity is not optional discipleship.

The amount will be different from household to household. The expression will look different. Scripture does not command every Christian to sell the same thing or give the same amount.

But a life surrendered to Jesus **cannot remain closed-handed.**

Because if everything belongs to God, and everything I have has been entrusted to me by God, then everything I have falls under the lordship of Jesus.

If Jesus is Lord, nothing I own gets to be lord. The question isn't whether you own possessions. **The question is whether your possessions own you.**

And notice something important: these believers didn't merely give out of their monthly cash flow.

They looked at their assets differently. Property. Possessions. Land. Houses. They were willing to ask, **“Could something God has entrusted to me be released for something God cares about more?”**

That's a much bigger question than, **“What can I afford to give this month?”**

The better question is: **“LORD, WHAT HAVE YOU ENTRUSTED TO ME?”**

Now Scripture protects this kind of preaching from manipulation. Second Corinthians 9:7 says, **“Each of you should give what you have**

decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver.”

So I'm not going to give you a number. I'm not going to tell you what to sell. I'm not going to try to manufacture an emotional decision. But I **am** going to ask you to put everything before Jesus.

Because: **I'm not telling you what Jesus is asking you to release. I'm asking whether Jesus has the right to ask.**

And if He does, nothing is automatically off limits. That's what lordship means. That's what stewardship means. And that's why Building for the Future is ultimately not about buildings. Buildings make room for mission—for people to be welcomed, children and students to be disciplined, people to grow and belong, leaders to be developed, our community to be served, and disciples to be sent from Long Beach to the ends of the earth. The Lord's Prayer - Provision

Buildings aren't the mission. Buildings make room for the mission.

God provides **for us**. God provided **before us**. And God provides **through us**. So our faithfulness today can become part of His provision for people tomorrow. **They couldn't see us. We can't see them. But God can.**

WHO WILL KNOW JESUS BECAUSE OF WHAT WE BUILD TODAY?

GOSPEL CONNECTION & COMMUNION — THE BREAD OF LIFE

And before we respond with what God has placed in our hands, we remember what the Father has given us.

Jesus says in John 6:35, **"I am the bread of life."** Our greatest provision has never been something. **Our greatest provision is Someone.** Jesus Christ.

Christian generosity never begins with our gift to God. It begins with God's gift to us.

At the cross, Jesus gave Himself for us. His body broken. His blood poured out. Our sins forgiven. And on the third day, He rose again. We don't give to earn God's love. We give because we have already received grace. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 11 that on the night Jesus was betrayed, He took bread, gave thanks, broke it and said, **"This is my body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of me."**

Church, receive the bread. **The body of Christ, given for you.**

Then Jesus took the cup and said, **"This cup is the new covenant in my blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of me."**

Church, receive the cup. **The blood of Christ, poured out for you.**

Jesus, before we ever gave anything to You, You gave Yourself for us. Amen.

CHALLENGE & RESPONSE — WHAT HAS GOD PUT IN YOUR HANDS?

Church, now take out your Building for the Future commitment card.

But don't start with a number. **START WITH SURRENDER.**

Acts 2 says they sold possessions. Acts 4 says some sold land and houses. Nobody told every Christian to sell the same thing. But when the Spirit moved among them, **nothing they possessed was**

untouchable. So don't only ask, **“What can I give from my paycheck?”** Ask: **“WHAT HAS GOD PUT IN MY HANDS?”**

Maybe it's the car you don't use anymore. Maybe it's the watch. Maybe it's a collection that has become valuable. Maybe it's stock. Maybe it's an investment. Maybe it's cryptocurrency. Maybe it's property. Maybe it's an asset you've never considered giving. Maybe for someone, God puts something in your mind that I could never name from this platform.

Respond to the Holy Spirit.

The goal isn't for everybody to write the same number or give the same thing. Remember the manna: different households, different needs, different amounts—but the same Provider. We're not asking for equal gifts. **We're asking for surrendered hearts and faithful obedience.**

So before you write anything, open your hands before the Lord and pray:

“Father, what have You entrusted to me?” “Is there anything I'm holding that You're asking me to release?” “What does faithfulness look like for our household?” “How do You want to provide through us?”

And whatever He says: **Be obedient.** Because: **WE'RE LIVING IN SOMEONE ELSE'S FAITHFULNESS. MAY MANY IN THE FUTURE LIVE IN OURS.**

[GIVE INSTRUCTIONS FOR RETURNING COMMITMENT CARDS.]

TRINITARIAN BLESSING

May the **Father**, who provides every good gift, teach us to trust Him with open hands. May **Jesus Christ, the Bread of Life**, who gave Himself for us, form us into people who give ourselves for others. And may the **Holy Spirit** fill us with faith and generosity, so that through our lives many may be reached, taught, mended, and sent. Go in the grace of the **Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**