

intro

Give us this day our daily bread [Matt. 6:11]

Subject: God's provision and prayer

Object: Pray with dependence upon God

A. When do we ask?

1. **Seek God & His provision daily: Give us this day:** Greek = request seeking an urgent response. **Luke 11** “Give us *day by day* our daily bread.”

a. **1st Cent workers** paid daily to meet basic needs, if unable to work for a few days then hardship. Daily dependence was a familiar concept

i. **Cf. our culture:** develop a sense of self-sufficiency re savings or credit

2. **Through prayer we declare dependence on God** [\*church budget]

a. Israel and manna: God provides for each day's needs + creates relationship

i. How has prayer helped you to learn to depend on God?

B. What do we ask for? What does “bread” represent?

1. **Physical and spiritual needs Give us this day our daily bread:** physical needs satisfied by the coarse barley loaves, the primary food source of the multitudes of poor. Cf. “bread” also re spiritual, needs.

a. **Jesus is the true bread of life [John 6:22-35]** Manna sustained physical life, but Jesus gives physical and spiritual life.

**Cast all your cares upon Him, for He cares for you [1 Pet 5:7]**

i. Child's request may seem small to parent, but parent cares because the request is big to the child. Same with God and us God cares about the big, the small, and all ...

2. **Power to overcome temptation [Matt.4:4]** Jesus resists tempt in the wilderness

***It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.*** Power is available through Jesus

a. Spiritual feeding from Word + prayer is essential to life as our physical feeding

3. **Presence of God [Luke 22:19]** The *breaking of bread* [communion], remembering what Christ has done for us + seeking to draw close to Him in community.

a. Purpose of prayer is life transformed through intimate communion with God

? What do you pray about? What do you care about?

**C. How do we ask? Nehemiah 1:1-11** a beautiful example, not a formula

**Context [1-4]:** Jews were suffering re broken city wall & Neh. is moved [compassion].

Wept, mourned & fasted. N was a cupbearer: lived in comfort in palace: out of sight out of mind. Compassion causes you to intercede [pray/help]. 7x in 11 verses "pray"

**Note:** You can't care about everyone's needs and can't ignore all needs

**Note:** Prayer is an effective way to mobilize God's resources

**1. Praise [5]** Praises God for who He is: great, awesome, merciful, and a God who keeps His promises [what He has done, is doing, and will do]

**2. Persevere [6] Nehemiah prayed day and night.** Prayed for 3-4 months [1:1 Chislev (Oct-Nov), 2:1 Nisan (March-Apr)]

**a. Keep asking seeking and knocking till God answers yes or no [Luke 11:5-10]**

**ii. You do not have because you do not ask [James 4:2]**

**iii. G. Mueller:** prayed 50+ yrs for friends to be saved – assumed God placed on his heart. Both came to Christ shortly after Mueller's death

**3. Humility [6-7]** N confessed the sins of the people and included himself as one who had sinned against God. N did not elevate himself above the others, but was humble

**a. We don't deserve God's provision and blessing**

i. **Lu.18** Pharisee and tax collector - be merciful

**4. Trust [8-11]** N reminded God of His promises to restore His people who repent

**a. Trust God to provide as He promised**

i. **Matt 6** re promised provision [scarcity vs. sufficiency]

ii. God did provide and the wall was rebuilt

**b. Trust God to provoke action:** N asks God's blessing as he plans

to intercede on behalf of the Jews & ask the Persian king to aid the wall rebuilding

i. Realizes God has provided more than he needs & he is responsible to use for God

i. Pray for the Lord to send forth His laborers [**Matt.9:38**] -> disciples go on 1<sup>st</sup> missionary journey [**Matt.10**]

**John 15:7** The best way to know what to ask for is to stay close to Jesus and discover His will by knowing Him and His Word. *“If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you”* As we stay close to Jesus and learn the Bible, we discover what is important to God. Our petitions are transformed to be consistent with His nature.

### **Discussion Qs**

- 1. How has prayer helped you to learn to depend on God?**
- 2. What are some of the things that you’ve been praying about lately?**
- 3. How has prayer lead you to Spirit-prompted action?**
- 4. Spend time as a group praying for God’s provision and for wisdom in regard to the resources He has provided.**