

Our God Provides!
Matthew 6:9-13

We need to know the principles in the Lord's Prayer so we'll know how to pray. The first principle is really the most important, "Our Father." We can come right into the throne room of the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords and say, "Father, I need you." We can go right into the presence of God. That's what changes us: being in the presence of God through His Son Jesus Christ who made a way, and now we're part of His family. We're His children. If you're a Christ follower, you can go right to Him at any time. The door is always open. He's never too busy for you.

Some people struggle with praying to our Father and really seeing that He cares about us and wants to meet our needs, is that we tend to put the face of an imperfect earthly father over the face of our heavenly Father, and we all tend to do this because it's kind of hard for us to grasp. God is our Father who loves us and cares for us so much.

If you had an earthly father who abandoned you as a kid, you'll probably tend to think of God as someone who's powerful, but when you get into a tight spot, He's going to abandon you. You can't count on Him. You never know if He's going to show up or not, and so you'll really struggle trying to trust Him.

Maybe you had a father that was a great provider for you, but He had a tough time connecting emotionally with you. Then you might think of God as someone who can provide. He's strong, but He really doesn't care about the details of your life. We all tend to put the face of an imperfect father over the face of our perfect heavenly Father. Maybe you had a dad who was a really good dad, but you still are looking for something that you don't know what it is, but it's the perfect heavenly Father because we all have the father void because there's no such thing as a perfect earthly father. We want to fill that father void that God created in us that can only be filled by the perfect heavenly Father and a deep connection with Him.

I think it's so important for us to understand what our perfect heavenly Father is like because we have so many misconceptions about God and it keeps us from praying and going to Him and asking Him to bring heaven to earth. Jesus shared with us a perfect picture of the perfect heavenly Father.

Do you have any needs?

"Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed by Thy name. Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." Matthew 6:9-13

Prayer is the heart speaking to God, and a child communing with his father. This part of the prayer tells us that God is going to meet our needs. Jesus was not saying the only thing that we could pray for was bread. He used that to be an illustration of any need that we have.

The Bible says in Philippians 4:19, "My God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus."

There is a definite priority that should be established.

Number one, "Hallowed be Thy name." Number two, "Thy kingdom come." Number three, "Thy will be done."

Thy name, Thy kingdom, Thy will.

After that, our bread, our debts, our protection.

What is "daily bread" for? To give us strength.

Why should God give you strength unless your strength is going to be used for His glory, for His kingdom, His will, and His work?

"Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and His righteousness; and all these things shall be added to you." Matthew 6:33

"Honor thy Lord with thy substances and with the first fruits of your increase, and your barns will be filled with plenty, and thy presses burst out with new wine." Proverbs 3:9

1. A Daily Provision That Ought To Be Enjoyed

Prayer is about relaying.

"Give us this day our daily bread." Matthew 6:11

God wants to meet our needs, and there is a daily provision to be enjoyed. When God gives you bread, He wants you to eat it and enjoy it because it's good, and it's good for you.

Look at the redundant phrase *"this day our daily bread."* Jesus is making the point that we must daily depend on God for our provision. He wants us to depend on Him to provide every day. God knew that if they did not look to Him for provision, then they would look for provision from some other source. When you look for provision from some other source, you will be disappointed.

God designed us to eat daily. He didn't design us to eat weekly or monthly. God didn't give us daily bread so we'd ignore him except once a year. He designed us to need daily bread so we would have to talk to Him every day. God wants to have a relationship with His children. God wants to see and talk to His children every day.

When Jesus says *"daily bread"* He was referring to Exodus 16:4-8 when God provided for the children of Israel in the wilderness for 40 years.

"Then the LORD said to Moses, 'I will rain down bread from heaven for you. The people are to go out each day and gather enough for that day. In this way I will test them and see whether they will follow my instructions. On the sixth day they are to prepare what they bring in, and that is to be twice as much as they gather on the other days.' So Moses and Aaron said to all the Israelites, 'In the evening you will know that it was the LORD who brought you out of Egypt, and in the morning you will see the glory of the LORD, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we, that you should grumble against us?' Moses also said, 'You will know that it was the LORD when he gives you meat to eat in the evening and all the bread you want in the morning, because he has heard your grumbling against him. Who are we? You are not grumbling against us, but against the LORD.'" Exodus 16:4-8

"When the Israelites saw it, they said to each other, 'What is it?' For they did not know what it was. Moses said to them, 'It is the bread the LORD has given you to eat. This is what the LORD has commanded: Everyone is to gather as much as they need. Take an omer for each person you have in your tent.'" Exodus 16:15-16

"The Israelites did as they were told; some gathered much, some little. And when they measured it by the omer, 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. Then Moses said to them, 'No one is to keep any of it until morning.' However, some of them paid no attention to Moses; they kept part of it until morning, but it was full of maggots and began to smell. So Moses was angry with them." Exodus 16:17-20

God is asking us to pray for our daily needs. That means I'm not to worry about what I'm going to have to eat tomorrow if I've got something to eat today. God was saying, "You pray for your needs, and I will meet them."

"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." Proverbs 30:8

The world preaches a prosperity gospel and some reach a poverty gospel and Jesus teaches a provision gospel. The Father provides for our needs, but He wants us to ask Him. When we ask God for our needs, and when we do it daily, it keeps us dependent upon God.

"Our ancestors ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written: 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.' Jesus said to them, 'Very truly I tell you, it is not Moses who has given you the bread from heaven, but it is my Father who gives you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is the bread that comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.' 'Sir,' they said, 'always give us this bread.' Then Jesus declared, 'I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty.'" John 6:31-35

The Bible says if I have food and clothes, I'm to be content. But how many people do you know that are content with food and clothes?

We think we've got to have a lot of bread in the bank and, if we don't have a lot of bread in the bank, we're not going to enjoy the bread that we have to eat today.

- Worry is needless.

"Therefore I say unto you, don't worry about your life, what you shall eat, or what you shall drink; nor for your body, what you shall put on. Is not the life more than meat, and the body than clothing?" Matthew 6:25

Jesus answered, "It is written: 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that comes from the mouth of God.'" Matthew 4:4

"Be careful to follow every command I am giving you today, so that you may live and increase and may enter and possess the land the Lord promised on oath to your ancestors. Remember how the Lord your God led you all the way in the wilderness these forty years, to humble and test you in order to know what was in your heart, whether or not you would keep his commands. He humbled you, causing you to hunger and then feeding you with manna, which neither you nor your ancestors had known, to teach you that man does not live on bread alone but on every word that comes from the mouth of the Lord. Your clothes did not wear out and your feet did not swell during these forty years. Know then in your heart that as a man disciplines his son, so the Lord your God disciplines you. Observe the commands of the Lord your God, walking in obedience to him and revering him. For the Lord your God is bringing you into a good land—a land with brooks, streams, and deep springs gushing out into the valleys and hills; a land with wheat and barley, vines and fig trees, pomegranates, olive oil and honey; a land where bread will not be scarce and you will lack nothing; a land where the rocks are iron and you can dig copper out of the hills. When you have eaten and are satisfied, praise the Lord your God for the good land he has given you. Be careful that you do not forget the Lord your God, failing to observe his commands, his laws and his decrees that I am giving you this day. Otherwise, when you eat and are satisfied, when you build fine houses and settle down, and when your herds and flocks grow large and your silver and gold increase and all you have is multiplied, then your heart will become proud and you will forget the Lord your God, who brought you out of Egypt, out of the land of slavery. He led you through the vast and dreadful wilderness, that thirsty and waterless land, with its venomous snakes and scorpions. He brought you water out of hard rock. He gave you manna to eat in the wilderness,

something your ancestors had never known, to humble and test you so that in the end it might go well with you. You may say to yourself, "My power and the strength of my hands have produced this wealth for me." But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth, and so confirms his covenant, which he swore to your ancestors, as it is today. If you ever forget the Lord your God and follow other gods and worship and bow down to them, I testify against you today that you will surely be destroyed. Like the nations the Lord destroyed before you, so you will be destroyed for not obeying the Lord your God." Deuteronomy 8:1-20

- Worry is senseless.

"Behold the fowls of the air: for they sow not, neither do they reap, nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are ye not much better than they?" Matthew 6:26

Jesus said that for you to worry about tomorrow's bread is senseless. It doesn't make sense. What farmer would feed his chickens and starve his children?

- Worry is useless.

"And which of you by taking thought can add one cubit to His stature?" Matthew 6:27

No basketball player who wants to be seven feet tall, can grow to seven feet tall by worrying about it. You can't do it. Worry is useless! It doesn't do any good.

- Worry is useless.

"And why take ye thought for raiment? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow; they don't toil, neither do they spin: And yet I say unto you, That even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Matthew 6:28-29

God causes the flowers to come up out of the ground. Worry is a slander against God. Worry says, "God cares, but He's not able to do anything." Faith says, "You care, and You're able." Worry says, "God, this one's too big for You." Worry and faith are the opposite.

Many of us are just enduring today to get to tomorrow. And others of us are enduring today worrying about tomorrow. Sleeplessness is often a sign that we are worried that there will not be manna on the ground for us to meet our needs.

"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 6:34

God has a divine ecology, a balance of problems and strength. God wants you to have enough trouble to keep you leaning on Him, to keep you dependent upon Him, to keep you from being self-sufficient where you say, "I don't need God."

God knows how much trouble you need, and God gives you some trouble every day. When He gives you that trouble, He also gives you strength every day so you can be victorious. God gives you trouble, and then He balances out on this side with strength.

The word "evil" here doesn't mean "sin," it means "difficulty." God gives us sufficient strength to meet that difficulty.

"As your days are, so shall your strength be." Deuteronomy 33:25

I have trouble today, but I have strength today. When I have trouble tomorrow, I'll have strength tomorrow. God never gives me tomorrow's strength for today's problems.

I am not supposed to worry about tomorrow because I've got enough to take care of today. I have all that I need to meet today's needs, but I don't have enough to meet tomorrow needs. What happens when I go into tomorrow early, I get tomorrow's problems and bring tomorrow's problems into today. It all gets out of balance, and I'm trying to use today's strength on tomorrow's problems.

Worry doesn't take the sorrow out of tomorrow. It takes the strength out of today. Trust God to give you this day your daily bread. The Bible's not against planning. The Bible says, "*Go to the ant, thou sluggard, consider her ways and be wise.*" Proverbs 6:6-8

The ant gathers her food in the summertime for the wintertime. When God gives you sunshine and rain, God gives you a garden, and God makes you fruitful for Him. Would you rather live in a bakery or have a warehouse full of bread? Our father owns the bakery, and He is a good baker.

Don't let tomorrow take the joy out of today. Having food and clothes, be content and learn to pray and seek the Lord and say, "Dear Lord, give me today my daily bread, my daily bread." Yes, I'll plan for tomorrow, but I refuse to worry about tomorrow. I'm going to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness.

Jesus taught us to pray for bread that we might recognize who is the source of all things. The Bible says that "*It is God Who giveth us richly all things to enjoy.*" 1 Timothy 6:17

2. A Divine Forgiveness That Needs To Be Exercised

Prayer is about releasing.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." Matthew 6:12

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, do we really want God to answer the part where we pray to forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors? Do I really want God to forgive me like I forgive others? We all want to receive forgiveness, but when it comes to forgiving, it is different. Forgiveness is so difficult for us to give.

"For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you: But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses." Matthew 6:14-15

The Greek word for debts is used here and in Matthew 18. The other times it is a word that means "a loan that can be repaid, manageable debt." The word here means "a debt that is justly and legally due that can't be repaid, bankruptcy debt." The word for forgiveness means you release them.

Sometimes when you can't give forgiveness it's because we can't receive forgiveness. We have a problem giving forgiveness is because we can't forgive ourselves. You can't make others earn your forgiveness.

On the surface there is no logical reason for me to forgive someone who has hurt me. The Bible tells me why I should forgive.

Colossians 3:13 tells us plainly, "*... forgive as the Lord forgave you.*" Colossians 3:13

Forgiveness is not a suggestion. If you want to follow Christ, you have to forgive. It's a command. Not only does Christ command it, but my survival demands it. Researchers tell us the most unhealthy emotions you can

ever have are resentment and bitterness. We think that when we hold on to our hurt we're getting back at the person who hurt us. In reality, we're just hurting ourselves. I need to forgive because my future requires it. I must forgive because I'm going to need forgiveness in my future.

Forgiveness is not about performance. Nobody deserves to be forgiven. You can't earn forgiveness. That's why it's not natural, it's supernatural. It's natural for me to hold onto hurt, to get bitter and resentful when someone wrongs me. It's supernatural for me to forgive.

Forgiveness is not saying, "I'll forgive you if you do these things." Forgiveness is totally underserved. No one can ever earn forgiveness. It's not based on performance.

Forgiveness is not about pretending that you weren't really hurt. It's not about pretending that it's no big deal. It's not about making light of the offense. It's not saying, "Hey, don't worry about it. It's no big deal. I forgive you," when it was a big deal. No, forgiveness is not a shallow thing. Forgiveness is diving deep. You have to dive deep into honesty to forgive and say, "What you did hurt me deeply. It wounded me deeply, but I choose to forgive you by God's Power." Forgiveness is not pretending like everything is okay in the relationship after you have been hurt. I have to release my bitterness. Never hold in bitterness.

In Ephesians 4:26. *"Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold."* He's saying never carry anger over more than a 24-hour period. If you take anger into a second day, anger changes. It changes into bitterness, and you start sinking into this ocean of bitterness, and the pressure gets greater and greater until finally it crushes you.

Forgiveness begins the healing process. This happened in David's life in Psalm 32:5 *"Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord' - and you forgave the guilt of my sin."* Psalm 32:5

Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, how many times should we forgive our brother when they sin against us? Seven times?" Peter thought Christ was going to pat him on the back and say, "Peter, you're so spiritual. It's amazing. You should be teaching me. Seven times, that's great." What did Jesus say? 70 times seven.

"Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, 'Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?' Jesus answered, 'I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times.'" Matthew 18:21-22

"Lamech said to his wives, 'Adah and Zillah, listen to me; wives of Lamech, hear my words. I have killed a man for wounding me, a young man for injuring me. If Cain is avenged seven times, then Lamech seventy-seven times.'" Genesis 4:23-24

"... Do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you." Luke 6:27

"See to it that no one comes short of the grace of God; that no root of bitterness springing up causes trouble, and by it many be defiled." Hebrews 12:15

Jesus is the greatest example of forgiveness because with one of His last breaths on the cross He prayed, *"Father, forgive them, for they don't know what they are doing."* Luke 23:34

We don't really understand the depth of forgiveness that Christ has given us unless we can forgive other people. If I can understand a little bit of how much Christ has forgiven me, it's a whole lot easier to forgive others who have hurt me. I'll never have to forgive anyone more than Christ has already forgiven me.

"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Psalm 32:1

The phrase “whose sin is covered” is the word “Kasaa,” and it means “to cover up.” It's a picture of the Old Testament and how the people would bring their sacrifices to God and their sacrifices would cover up their sins so that God could forgive them of their sins. God is holy and perfect. He can't tolerate sin so they would bring their sacrifices to God and repent, and God would cover up their sins.

Until you forgive, you'll never see Christ's face and what He wants to do in your life. You'll never see the vision that He has for you. You'll never experience the blessings He wants to pour out on you. Bitterness blocks blessing.

3. A Diverse Protection That Needs To Be Experienced

“And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.” Matthew 6:13

The first word of this verses is “*And.*” This word ties this request in with our requests for bread, for forgiveness, and for grace to forgive others.

Prayer is about resting in God for His protection. In the greatest battles of life, we need to learn to rest in Him for this is the secret of our victory. This statement presupposes the leadership of the Lord in our lives. Our Heavenly Father is a sovereign God. He controls all of life, and He leads His dear children along. God won't mislead us.

The Lord is telling us to pray, *“Please do not lead us into a trial which will present a temptation stronger than our power to resist it.”* When I pray as I should, I am calling on my Heavenly Father. I am praising Him, seeking His will, and confessing my dependence upon Him for every need of life.

When I pray, *“Forgive my debts,”* I am looking back to the past. When I pray, *“Give me this day my daily bread,”* I am looking to the present. But, when I pray *“Lead me not into temptation,”* I am looking to the future.

“When tempted, no one should say, ‘God is tempting me.’ For God cannot be tempted by evil, nor does he tempt anyone; but each person is tempted when they are dragged away by their own evil desire and enticed. Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death.” James 1:13-15

The word “*enticed*” comes from a word that means “*to bait.*” When we are tempted, the old man is baiting the new man to go back to the old way of life. When the devil knows what tempts our flesh, he will see to it that those things are constantly placed before us, in the hopes that we will sin and disgrace the name of the Lord. God doesn't tempt us. God can't tempt us.

The need for us to pray for the Lord's protection from temptation is so great because we are so prone to failure. We have already discovered that our drive for sin, our hunger for sin, and our capacity for sin dwells within our own heart. Temptation is merely an outgrowth of who we are by nature, and that is why it is so often so hard for us to resist.

“No temptation has overtaken you except what is common to mankind. And God is faithful; he will not let you be tempted beyond what you can bear. But when you are tempted, he will also provide a way out so that you can endure it.” 1 Corinthians 10:13

Our Lord has given us some precious promises that serve to strengthen us in the midst of our temptations and guarantees us the victory over them all if we yield to His will and not to the temptation!

“But the Lord stood at my side and gave me strength, so that through me the message might be fully proclaimed

and all the Gentiles might hear it. And I was delivered from the lion's mouth. The Lord will rescue me from every evil attack and will bring me safely to his heavenly kingdom. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen." 2 Timothy 4:17-18

"The Lord knows how to rescue the godly from trials and to hold the unrighteous for punishment on the day of judgment." 2 Peter 2:9

When I don't know how to get out of temptation or get deliverance, He does, and my part is to pray. Pray everyday for deliverance. If I don't pray, I get in trouble.

"Order my steps in Your word; let no sin rule over me, direct me." Psalm 119:133

Victory is ours in the battle with temptation! We are challenged to pray about our need in this battle, and we are to trust the Lord to deliver us in the hour of temptation. He will do His part.

"Watch and pray so that you will not fall into temptation. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." Matthew 26:41

"My prayer is not that you take them out of the world but that you protect them from the evil one." John 17:15