

Scripture Focus: *Matthew 6:11; Exodus 16:1–36; Matthew 13:33; John 6:35*

Key Themes:

- Jesus invites us to bring our real needs before God.
- To pray for “daily bread” is to pray not only for ourselves but for others—our lives and success are tied to our neighbors.
- Bread points to both physical sustenance and spiritual presence—Christ as the bread of life.
- Praying for daily bread cultivates gratitude and dependence on God’s grace.

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Opening Prayer and Review

Focus 1: Bread Is Sacred

Bread is ordinary—and extraordinary. With only four ingredients it becomes life-sustaining food. Bread carries memory and meaning: grandma’s biscuits, Saturday pancakes, Krispy Kreme hot donuts. Jesus makes space for our real needs in this prayer. Asking for bread reminds us that nothing is too small for God’s care.

Reflection Question: What kind of bread triggers your memories? What does it bring to mind?

Focus 2: Bread Is Life

When hurricanes threaten, bread disappears from store shelves. Bread sustains civilization and holds communities together. To pray for bread is to remember the hungry and join our voices with them. As St. Basil reminds us, the bread spoiling in our pantries belongs to the poor. “Our bread” means we are tied to one another, not separated from one another.

Reflection Question: How does understanding that the Lord’s Prayer places us in solidarity with the poor transform the way we live?

Focus 3: Bread Is More Than Bread

Luther’s *Small Catechism* expanded “daily bread” to include food, shelter, honest leaders, faithful friends—everything needed to live well. Our list today might include health care, internet access, or a living wage. God is not too spiritual to care about our daily needs. To pray for bread is to trust that God provides for life to flourish.

Reflection Question 3: Using Luther’s expanded definition of “daily bread,” what kind of things—a living wage, Internet access, home ownership—are on our list today?

Focus 4: Bread of Heaven

Jesus says, "I am the bread of life." The word for "daily" (*epiousios*) may also mean "supersubstantial" or "tomorrow's bread." To pray this petition is to ask for more than lunch—it is to long for the bread of the kingdom, the banquet where Christ Himself is the host. The Eucharist embodies this prayer every time we gather.

Reflection Question 4: In what ways is praying to receive bread also praying to receive Christ? How does the Eucharist relate to the Lord's Prayer?

Focus 5: What Is It?

The Israelites called the manna from heaven "What is it?"—because they didn't recognize God's gift. Too often we miss God's provision because it doesn't look like what we expected. Bread may look ordinary—even like bug juice—but it is still God's gift. To pray this prayer is to learn to see God's blessings everywhere.

Reflection Question 5: What is the manna you are missing because you are looking for perfectly buttered slices of French bread? Have you ever had to ask, "What is it?" after receiving a blessing?

Focus 6: God as Giver

This petition reminds us that life is gift. "Every good and perfect gift comes from above" (James 1:17). Independence is a lie—we are utterly dependent on God. St. Francis saw the whole world as hanging upside down by the thread of God's mercy. To pray for daily bread is to confess that everything hangs by grace and to respond with thanksgiving.

Reflection Question 6: What is the connection between asking God to give us bread and giving thanks? How is thanksgiving tied directly to understanding Christian salvation?

Closing Prayer

Lord, give us this day our daily bread.
Feed our bodies and our souls.
Make us grateful for your gifts,
faithful to share with others,
and bold to find Christ, the bread of life, in all things.
Amen.

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Notes:
