

Fil-Am Community Church
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Connect, Part 3
What the Lord's Prayer means

“THE PRAYER OF DEPENDENCE”

I once heard the story of a genie who comes out of a lamp. Upon seeing the woman who released him from the lamp, the genie grants her one wish. And the woman asks, “Why only one? I thought there were three?” “Well, because of the recession,” the genie says. BTW, this is a true story.

So the woman thinks for a moment what she can ask the genie. “I wish there is peace in the Middle East”, she tells the genie. But she realizes that it was too local and so she changes her mind and wishes for global peace. The genie, however, says that it was a difficult wish and asks the woman for another wish. The woman gives it a thought once again and then wishes for a man who would love her, treat her kindly, someone who is not a slouch but so responsible and have all other outstanding qualities. Then, the genie says, “You win. I’ll grant you your first wish instead”.

Some things are just impossible. But the Bible says with God all things are possible. That’s why we’re going through this series about prayer. Because through prayer, we can experience the impossible becoming possible.

Some of you are in impossible situations. Like your finances are decreasing. Your health is failing. Your marriage is sinking. Your children are irritating. Your situation is impossible. All these things contribute to your feelings of anxiety.

But there is an antidote to your anxiety. That’s what we’re going to look at today. We’re in this series on “Connect! What the Lord’s Prayer Means.” We’re

looking verse by verse at the Lord's Prayer, which is the antidote to all the seven biggest problems you face in life.

We started off with "*Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.*" That's called the Prayer of Connection.

Then last week, Pastor Dave spoke about "*Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.*" That's the Prayer of Surrender.

This week we're going to look at the Prayer of Dependence, which is the third phrase in the Lord's Prayer. It's only six words, Matthew 6:11 "*Give us today our daily bread.*"

Bread obviously is the universal staple food. You can find it in every single culture. In the Philippines, it is known as Pan de Sal. Well, it is the #2 staple food next to rice. But bread may be one of the oldest foods known to mankind. It's not that hard to make. You just get some flour, some water, and add heat to it. You can find bread in every kind of culture.

Obviously, Jesus when he says we're to pray "*Give us this day our daily bread,*" he's talking about far more than just *bread*. In fact, in scripture the Bible tells us that bread represents a couple of things.

1. It represents the necessities of life.

You need water to live, you need air to live, you need sunshine to live, you need nourishment to live. It's the necessities for your physical body. The truth is God says I never create anything without providing what that creation needs. Even the little fish in the ocean God says I provide for all of them.

Psalms 104 says this "*The ocean teems with life of every kind both great and small. [Big whales, little minnows] Every one of these depend on you to give them daily food. You supply it and they gather it.*"

So bread first of all represents the necessities of life. What you need for physical life.

But there's more than that. There's a spiritual implication.

2. Bread represents God's Word.

The Bible is spiritual bread. It is spiritual food. Bread is a symbol for scripture. Jesus said, "*Man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.*" And bread represents salvation in Jesus because Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life". Anyone who comes to him will never be hungry.

Here's the point. Whatever your need is – physical, emotional, relational, spiritual – whether it is a need in your body or a need in your mind or a need in your soul or a need in your spirit, God says I will take care of that need if you will depend on me. "*Give us this day our daily bread.*"

Today we're going to look at how to depend on God to meet all of your needs.

How do I let God meet my needs that he wants to meet? I have to depend on him. The Bible says "*Blessed is the man who makes the Lord his trust.*" (Psalm 40:4 ESV) It says you'll be blessed if you trust in the Lord, if you depend on him. So, that takes faith in God. The Bible also says, "*According to your faith it will be done unto you.*"

So the way you connect to God, and that's what this series is all about, is through faith and trust in God. And how do I connect to God so that my physical, emotional, spiritual, relational, financial and every other need will be met in my life? What does it mean to depend on God?

It means three things.

1. **Depending on God means seeing God as my source.**

That's the first step. Seeing God as my source. The source of what? Literally the source of everything. Everything you see in the world and everything you can't see in the world and in the universe, God made.

He is the source of everything. Air, light, water, atoms, everything you've got. He's the source of every good thing in the universe.

There are three truths you need to remember.

First, everything is a gift from God. There is nothing that you have earned. You don't earn air. You don't earn water. You don't earn life itself. If God didn't want to give it, you wouldn't have it.

The Bible tells us in the book of James "*Every good and perfect gift is from God above.*" That's why the Lord's Prayer in this third phrase starts with the word "give." "*Give us today our daily bread.*" Why? Because it is a gift.

Two, there's nothing I need that God can't provide. He is the supplier of everything. I don't know what you're going to need all this year.

And by the way, neither do you. You don't know all you're going to need by the end of 2015. But I do know this. Whatever you need, God has the power to supply.

The Bible says this in Philippians 4:19 "*God will supply all that you ever need from his glorious resources in Christ Jesus.*" Glorious resources means as lavish as only God can lavish. God has unlimited resources. What this means is that there's nothing I need that God can't provide.

So the Bible says it's all a gift from God. There's nothing I need that God can't supply.

And here's the third thing: he's waiting on me. If you have needs in your life that are not being met, it's not God's fault. You're not waiting on God. He's waiting on you. "*You do not have because you do not ask God.*" The problem is not that God doesn't want to meet your need. The problem is you never ask him for it. God says you don't have because you don't ask. Over twenty times in the New Testament God says, "Ask me!" Jesus says, "*Ask and it shall be given. Seek and you will find. Knock and the door will be open.*" Ask, seek, knock.

That spells “ask”. He’s saying it three different ways. He says, “*Whatever you ask in my name I will do it.*”

He says “*Ask that the Father may be glorified in the Son.*” Over and over we’re told to ask. God says “I want you to look to me as the source for all your needs in life. That’s the way I designed it.”

So here’s my very blunt question: who’s your source? Or what’s your source?

No person will ever be able to meet all your needs. Your spouse can’t meet all your needs. Your best friend can’t meet all your needs. Your parents can’t meet all your needs. In fact, you’re setting yourself up for profound disappointment.

Only God can meet all your needs. And you need to look to him as the source of your supply. You don’t look to your IRA; you don’t look to your 401K. You certainly don’t look to Social Security for security. You look to God for your security. You look to him as your source. That’s what it means to depend on God. I see him as my source.

2. The second thing it means to depend on God is it means trusting him for today.

Not for next week. Not for next year. Not for next month. Just one day at a time. God says, “I’m going to make this real simple. I want you to take life in bite size pieces. Twenty-four hour increments. I want you to trust me just for today.”

Notice the Bible does not say, “Give us this day our weekly bread.” It doesn’t say, “Give us this day our monthly bread.” Or “annual bread”. It says, “*Give us TODAY our DAILY bread*”.

It’s to be daily, not monthly, annually, weekly. God says I want you to trust me one day at a time. I don’t want you worrying about the next day, next week, next month. In fact, I don’t want you worrying at all. I want you to take it one day at a time.

How do you do that? How do you trust God just for today?

There are three things that you do to trust God on a daily basis. And it just so happens that those three things are all covered in one scripture. Philippians 4:6&8 *“Don’t worry about anything; instead pray about everything...And fix your thoughts on what is true and honorable and right. Think about these things that are pure and lovely and admirable and excellent and worthy of praise.”*

In this passage he gives us the four steps to trusting God for today.

1. Worry about nothing.

Why is worry such a big deal? Why does God say “I don’t want you worrying?” You may have never realized this; worry is not just a bad habit: it’s a flat out sin. Worry is a sin. Why? Because the Bible says, *“Whatsoever is not from faith is sin.”* You don’t realize it but you’re sinning when you’re worrying. Why is that a sin? Because every time you worry you’re saying, “God, I don’t believe your promises. God, I don’t really believe you love me. God, I don’t believe you’ll meet all my needs. Father, I don’t believe that you’re going to take care of me and do all the things you promised to do.” You’re making God to be a liar. You’re accusing God of not being true to his promises. But the fact is, God is faithful. The Bible says, *“If we are unfaithful, he remains faithful, for he cannot deny who he is.”* (2 Tim. 2:13 NLT) That’s his nature.

So, don’t worry. Put everything in God’s hands. The next thing Paul says is this...

2. Pray about everything.

He says here’s the alternative: I don’t want you worrying. I want you praying. Worry about nothing, pray about everything.

Everything? Yep! Every single thing. God says here’s what you can do in life. You’ve got two choices. You can worry or you can pray. You see, every day you’re doing one or the other. Every time you worry, you’re not praying. And every time you pray you’re not worrying. So you’ve got two choices.

You can either pray or panic. Or you can worry or you can worship. You're always going to be doing one or the other in life. Talking to God about it or talking to yourself.

Many of us are worrying. When am I gonna get a new job? When am I gonna get healed? When am I gonna get a raise? When is my husband gonna be sweet to me again? I know at least one woman whose worry is like that. But I hope she's been praying. When are we ever gonna have a building?

Worry has never solved a problem. It's never solved a single problem. It's stewing without doing. It's like sitting in a rocking chair – a lot of motion but no forward action. Worry is the most useless emotion.

But prayer can change things. If you prayed as much as you worried, if you prayed about all the things you worried about you'd have a lot less to worry about. That is your alternative. He says worry about nothing. Instead, pray about everything.

Let me share with you a true story. Not a genie story. This is a true, true story. Some of you have heard this before because I told this story before.

It happened to a small congregation in Netcong, New Jersey in 1972. They built a new church on a piece of land sold to them by a church member who was retiring and moving to Florida. Ten days before the new church was to open, the local building inspector informed the pastor that the parking lot was inadequate for the size of the building. Until the church doubled the size of the parking lot, they would not be able to use the new sanctuary. Unfortunately, the church with its undersized lot had used every inch of their land except for the mountainous stretch of land which they own in the back of the building.

In order to build more parking spaces, they would have to move the mountain out of the back yard. The cost of removing this mountain would be prohibitive for the church.

The next Sunday morning, the pastor reminded the congregation of Christ's promise, "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place; and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you." (Matt. 17:20). Then he added, "If you believe that, come on Wednesday night to pray with me that God will move this mountain in the back of our church."

So, the people went to pray. The next morning the phone rang. It was the telephone company. They were planning to erect a new building just east of their land and they needed fill for a large swampy area. And they asked whether the church could sell them some dirt! The pastor said yes, of course. In about a month the phone company had hauled away 40,000 square yards of dirt, for which they paid the church \$25,400 and also leveled the ground for the required three parking lots and prepared them for paving. The church opened and was dedicated on schedule. The church is called "Grace Baptist, the Church on the Mount." Folks, as I said, this is a true story. I personally interviewed the secretary who witnessed all these events.

Let me ask you, Would you have shown up for that prayer meeting?

Some people say faith comes from miracles. But others know:

MIRACLES COME FROM FAITH!

Now, the faith that God asks us to have is not blind faith. It is faith based on the character of God. The Bible says that God is faithful and therefore, he will do what he says he will do. If we believe that, if we believe that God answers prayers, then all we need to do is follow the command of Jesus, "*If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be given you.*" (John 15:7).

So, folks, once again, let me ask you to join me and our leaders for a prayer and fasting this coming Saturday at Trailer C at CRBC. It's in your bulletin.

We start at 10 and end at 12. You can have breakfast but we will skip lunch then break the fast at 6 PM. If you have a medical condition, that's fine. You don't have to fast, but be with us in prayer.

So, worry about nothing, pray about everything, and the third thing he says in this verse is

3. Think about the right things.

Worry about nothing, pray about everything, think about the right things. Whatever you put your mind on is what's going to get you. You fill your mind with worries, you're going to be down, depressed, discouraged, defeated. You fill your mind with the right things, you're going to be lifted up, hopeful, encouraged and positive. Think about the right things.

Notice he gives us a list of things to think about. He says *“Fix your thoughts on what's true, honorable, right, what's pure and lovely and admirable, what's excellent, what's worthy of praise.”*

Where do you find things that are pure and lovely to think about? At the movies? On television? On the computer? No. I don't think so. Where are you going to find pure and lovely and honorable thoughts?

Right here in the Word of God. If you want to make it through your problems, the more you fill your mind with this book, the more you're going to be at peace. You need to read it, study it, memorize it. Buy the Bible on CD and listen to it while you drive. Any way you can get it into your life, you fill your mind, you flood your mind. You're going to base your life on the word of God not on the world.

There's a third key to depending on God. The third thing is....

3. Sharing whatever God supplies.

Trusting God, depending on God, means sharing whatever he supplies. When God gives you something he always wants you to share it with everybody else.

Everything God gives to you, he wants you to share it. Notice, it doesn't say, "Give me this day my daily bread." It says, "*Give us today our daily bread.*" We're to share it.

Why does God want you to share it? He wants you to learn to be like him. God shares everything he's got with you. God is generous. God so loved the world that he gave. You can give without loving. But you cannot love without giving. God says I want you to become like me. I want you to be loving and I want you to learn how to share.

How do you spell love? You spell love G-I-V-E. Love is all about giving. God says I want you to learn to love and love is all about sharing. "*Give us today our daily bread.*"

God wants you to learn to trust him and one of the ways you learn to trust him is by sharing. God is testing you every day of your life. One of the tests is "How much will you depend on God?"

The number one way God tests your faith, you know what it is? Money. Finances. Are you going to worry or are you going to trust me? Are you going to worry about your finances or are you going to trust me? Are you going to be stingy or are you going to share? Are you going to hold on and hoard because you're afraid you're not going to get any more? Or are you going to be open and generous with people around you who are in need? God is testing you. He wants you to learn to be like him.

The problem is the more money you've got the less you depend on God. You don't depend on God when you can just go charge it. You don't ever pray about it, you just go buy it. The problem is, sometimes we depend more on our checkbook than on God. It's why the Bible says "*It is more difficult for a rich man to get into heaven than for a camel to go through the eye of a needle.*" Why does he say that? Because money is bad? No. Not at all.

Some of the greatest saints in history were quite wealthy. Why does he say that? Because the more money you have the less you tend to depend on God. You tend to depend on your bank account.

Sometimes being poor is better. Why? Because you don't know God is all you need until God's all you got. Because when you don't have *anything*, you're dirt poor, you don't have a house, you don't have clothes, you don't have food, you're dependent on God for your daily bread. We're not at that level of dependence. Yet God says I want you to trust me and I'm testing you to see how much you'll depend on me. I'm testing you to see whether you will share what I supply to you.

Friends, I don't know where you're hurting today. You may be hurting financially already. Some of you are I know. Some of you are hurting from something way long in the past or an emotional hurt or physical hurt. You're going through a tough time right now. Regardless of what you're going through, I want to invite you to see God as your source, to trust God for today, and to share what he supplies.

How do you do that? Two things. You first accept Jesus Christ into your life. *"Jesus said 'The true bread of God is the one who comes down from heaven and he gives life to the world.' 'Sir,' they said, 'Give us this bread every day of our lives.' Jesus said, 'I am the bread of life. No one who comes to me will never be hungry again. Those who believe in me will never be thirsty.'"*

No matter how much you eat, in a few hours you get hungry again. No matter how much you drink, in a few hours you get thirsty again. Spiritually there's a hunger in your heart that only God can fill. No person or thing will ever fill that hunger in your heart. It is a hole in your heart and it's a hunger for God. You don't know it but its God you're looking for. You need him. And when you let him fill that hunger, you'll never thirst again. You'll never hunger again.

I challenge you to open your heart to Christ and then say I'm going to take these three steps. Will you do this with me during these times of difficulty? Will you say we're going to see God as our source? Not Wall Street, not my job, not anybody else. And I'm going to trust God on a daily basis. Not for monthly bread – for daily bread. And I'm going to share whatever he gives me – even if it's a little I'm going to share it. And I'm going to watch God multiply it.