

**Trust God With Your Abundance**

A couple of weeks ago we began this series of messages focused on trusting God. And maybe that's one of the hardest things for us to do: that is, trust God. *Trust in the LORD with all your heart...* It says in Proverbs and maybe we can trust God to give us comfort in times of pain or bereavement; then other times we may question God when we don't get what we want, when we want it. Trusting God with our whole heart really means leaning on God totally. Trust is the practical outworking of faith: when we trust God we show that our faith in Him is real.

Regardless of where you find yourself in life today, you can place your trust in God. In fact, when you trust God with all your heart you will experience:

- 1) peace in your soul,
- 2) strength for living through any storm,
- 3) abundance of spiritual blessings,
- 4) assurance of God's presence that gives confidence for living and for speaking His praises.

**Trust God With Your Abundance**

*Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, In all your ways acknowledge him, And he will direct your paths,* Prov. 3:5-6. Most of us don't think of ourselves as having material abundance and most of us don't have an abundance of spiritual blessings. Nonetheless we are blessed to live in this place at this time and we ought to give thanks to God for that. We live with security and comfort, not things to feel guilty about, but to be grateful for. Many people before us made it all possible.

The Scripture says: *In all your ways acknowledge him* – But can God be trusted with the big things in our lives like: job, house, family? Can God be trusted to meet our material needs? Can we really trust God with our financial decisions, with our money? I think that last one may be the hardest. Yet here it is plain as day: *Honor the LORD with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops; then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine,* Prov. 3:9-10. In other words, give to the Lord the first portion of your income ... that's what it's really saying.

So, does this mean we are to trust the Lord even in our "financial ways?" Well yes, it does. Reminds me of the pastor who asked a church member who was a farmer, "If you had ten chickens would you give one to the Lord's work?" The farmer readily replied, "Of course pastor, you know I would."

**“Well then, if you had ten pigs would you give one to the Lord’s work?”**

**“Yes Pastor, you know I would.”**

**The pastor continued, “If you had ten cows would you give one to the church?”**

**The farmer then replied, “Now Pastor, that’s not fair. You know how many cows I have.”**

**That’s just it isn’t it? We know how much money we have (and surely the Lord knows) ... and we think we just can’t afford to give up one more dime ... we’re not sure the Lord can be trusted with what might come at us tomorrow and we might need that dime...**

**But there’s another approach...**

### **Trust God for Your Daily Bread**

**Every Sunday we pray the Lord’s Prayer. I wonder if we fully realize what we’re praying for and how profound and transforming is this prayer when it sinks into the depths of our souls. Do we realize that this prayer can usher us into a way of living that brings the peace, strength, abundance, and the assurance that God promises? We pray for God’s will to be done, His kingdom to come, then we pray: *“Give us today our daily bread,”* Matthew 6:11.**

**At its heart, this is a prayer for food. When was the last time you actually prayed, “O God, please give me a meal?” Most of us ought to pray just the opposite, “O God, prevent me from *eating* another meal.”**

**But bread in Scripture is more than just literal bread; it’s also a symbol for all the other material needs of life. In 1529 when Martin Luther wrote his “Small Catechism” he said: “Give us today our daily bread” means everything that nourishes our body and meets its needs, such as: Food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, yard, fields, cattle, money, possessions, a devout spouse, devout children, devout employees, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, discipline, honor, good friends, faithful neighbors and other things like these. This petition is our invitation to earnestly ask God for the needs and necessities of life.**

**The fact that Jesus mentions bread teaches us that it’s just as important to pray for physical needs, even as we pray for spiritual needs like doing God’s will. That’s what it means to... *Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding, In all your ways acknowledge him, And he will direct your paths,* Prov. 3:5-6.**

**Jesus’ prayer teaches us that it is just as important to pray for our physical needs. That is because we are not simply souls or spiritual beings, but real flesh and blood humans with real physical needs. Jesus is also teaching us the importance of day-to- day, 100 percent dependence upon God for the things that we need.**

## Daily Bread Lifestyle

***"Give us today our daily bread" describes a lifestyle.***

**1. Gratitude to God for All His Blessings.** The first step comes from the very first word ***"Give us today our daily bread."*** This prayer request teaches us that everything we have comes from God. Everything: clothes, food, friendships, education, the mind we use, the words we speak, *everything* comes from God. Everything of value that you possess, including the very breath you are breathing, comes in one way or another from the hand of Almighty God.

In 1 Chronicles 29:14 David says, ***"But who am I and who are my people that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from you and we have given you only what comes from your hand."*** The animating principle of the Christian life is gratitude to God for all his blessings. Life is too short to complain about what you don't have. Each day is a gift from God.

**2. Contentment with What God has Already Provided.** The second step is in the very last word: ***"Give us today our daily bread."*** We are invited to ask for bread, not for cake; "our daily bread" not "our daily dessert." Jesus encourages us to pray for our *needs*, not for our *greeds*. True enough the way a pauper will pray this prayer will be very different from the way a prince will pray this prayer. But the principle is the same. We are to pray and ask God for what we really need, not for every wild desire that comes into our head.

***Two things I ask of you, O Lord, do not refuse me before I die: Keep falsehood and lies far from me. 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 30:7-9 ***"O God, give me whatever you think I need and I will be content."***

**3. Confidence That God Will Meet My Needs Today & Tomorrow.** You can find this principle in two words: ***"Give us today our daily bread."*** Daily bread living means believing that God will provide what you need on a day-by-day basis. (See Exodus 16 and the manna from heaven to feed the children of Israel).

Both the Old Testament and the New Testament teach that God is willing to supply our needs but only on a day to day-to-day basis. We don't like to live the way Jesus is talking about here. We don't want to live day to day. We'd rather have plenty of food stored, life insurance and pension plans. If we had our way, this prayer would read, ***"Give us this month our monthly bread."*** Or better yet, ***"Lord, give us this year our yearly bread. Just give it to us all at once and we'll be all right. Then we'll trust you."*** God does not work that way. He works by teaching his people moment-by-moment dependence upon him.

Do this mean that we shouldn't plan ahead? Not at all. You should plan ahead. That's biblical. ***You should plan ahead but you shouldn't worry ahead.*** There's a big difference. The whole point of asking for *daily* bread is to teach us

to take life one day at a time. Men and women who are in a Twelve Step program already know that. It's a basic principle for healing of the inner life: you can get better but you must take it one day at a time. You don't get better a week at a time or a month at a time. You get better one day at a time. That is a tremendous principle. Daily bread living means taking life one day at a time and being confident that God will take care of your needs day by day by day.

**4. Generosity** This principle comes from the little word "our" - "Give us today *our* daily bread." It does not say, "Give me *my* daily bread. That's a completely different prayer. You're never invited to pray for yourself alone. Every time you pray this prayer you are invited and encouraged and even commanded to pray in concert with your brothers and sisters in Christ. *We all eat from the same table.* This petition imparts a bigness, a broadness, to your prayers. It takes you out of the narrow focus of your own problems and it opens you up to see a world of needy and hurting people. When we've been given much, we have much to give.

It is a jungle out there. The world says, "Get to the top any way you can." Jesus says **"Give and it shall be given to you" Luke 6:38.** God does care for all your physical and material needs ... He cares about what you have, but He cares more about what kind of person you are becoming.

Remember when I said that when we trust God we show that our faith in Him is real? Here's an opportunity to trust God: our church budget is currently running a deficit (you can find the figures in your bulletin). If each one of us would increase our giving by \$35/month we could wipe out that deficit by Christmas. For some another \$35 won't even be noticed, for others it may mean giving up a minor luxury, some who already give a lot may wonder if they can give even this much more, and for some it may mean the first time to give to the Lord's work through this church. Yet to give is a real step of faith and maybe it comes with a little fear. We pray "Give us our daily bread," not "Give me my daily bread." God gives for us all, we're all at the same table.

I believe **God blesses with material wealth so we'll have more to give.** He wants us to know the joy of giving, the pleasure of taking part in His creative work on this earth, the beauty of participating in the lives of others for their betterment and wellbeing. We make a living by what we get, a life by what we give.

### **Confidence In God**

Life *is* uncertain. Many people already live, if not day-to-day, at least month to month when it comes to their paycheck. Many don't have enough savings when a crisis hits. You can be doing fine and then your life gets rearranged in a split second. You think you've got it all together, then boom!, an illness or accident, a job loss, a broken relationship, house or car repair, and your carefully constructed plans are thrown off course.

**Yet scripture assures us that God cares about even the trivial details of life and the things that really matter like life and death, health and sickness, and what the future holds for our loved ones. I heard about a little girl who, when asked what she had learned in Sunday School said that she had learned that “God never says ‘Oops.’” That’s a comfort because we live in an “Oops!” world. Mistakes happen all the time, often by well-meaning people. But each time is an opportunity to move us away from self-sufficiency to God-sufficiency, from self-reliance to God-reliance, from trusting in our own ability to trusting in His generosity.**

**Those who know God know that he knows even when they don’t know, and instead of giving in or giving up, they give thanks. Trust God with all your needs.**

***Trust in the LORD with all your heart... In all your ways acknowledge him... Honor the LORD with your wealth...***