

## Sermon Series: 'The Lord's Prayer, Jesus' School of Prayer: Your Kingdom Come'

### The Fourth Petition: *Give us today our daily bread.*

#### Matthew 6.11 and 1 Kings 17.1-16

1. What are the two kinds of heart attitudes Australians tend to have with respect their daily needs? Which attitude do you tend to identify with?

2. Have you ever found yourself thinking:

'God, after all I have done for you, after all my service of the church and all my giving and all my cleaning living: you owe me. I'm expecting your blessing- health and a comfortable life'

If this is our thinking, what does this say about our heart attitude towards God in these moments?

3. One of the purposes of the Lord's Prayer is to offer us an order of priorities for our prayers. As one of the 20th Centuries greatest martyrs puts it:

'God's name, God's Kingdom, God's will must be the primary object of Christian prayer' (Bonhoeffer in his famous book: 'The Cost of Discipleship')

After doing this, we turn to our bodily needs. Bonhoeffer goes on:

'As long as the disciples are on earth, they should not be ashamed to pray for their bodily needs... It is **not** God's will that his creation should be despised' (Cost of Discipleship, p167).

What do find interesting about this reflection? What does this reflection, and the fourth petition in the Lord's Prayer (Matt 6.11) say about the value God puts on our bodily life in this world? How might this be different to some other faiths (eg. Buddhism)?

4. In our Scriptures there are many accounts of our great God demonstrating his supreme power over creation (eg. 1 Kings 17.1-16). Our God does even new acts of creation, like causing a jug of oil to constantly refill, a jar of flour to miraculously replenish during a drought. And this to serve a powerless outsider and God's prophet (the widow of Zarephath and Elijah).

What other accounts of God using his supreme power to provide for his people, can you remember?

5. In the fourth petition we pray to an almighty God '**Give...**'.

Clearly God has the power to answer this prayer. But how do we know he has the *just authority* to respond to us? What gives him the right to direct creation however he wants?

6. Why is it meaningful that Jesus teaches us to pray 'Give us today our daily bread' instead of 'Give me...'

What does this say about how Jesus views his people?

What implications might this have for our personal devotional life?

7. **Our daily bread.** Most of Jesus' disciples would have lived a vulnerable existence, relying on their work each day to provide means to access food for that day. Our relationship to our food sources is more sophisticated, but how are we still completely dependent on God? What can go wrong and leave even contemporary Australians wanting?

8. Finally, what gives us the greatest confidence that our God will undertake to meet the deepest needs of his children. How do we know he will provide all that is necessary for human flourishing in this time and place? (See Romans 8.31-32).

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