

Our Father who Gives

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 07 August 2022

Preacher: Rev Donald M Macleod

[0 : 00] We turn to God's Word. We have two readings again this evening following on our series looking at the Lord's Prayer. So our first reading is in John 6, the same chapter we had this morning.

John 6. We can read from verse 30 of the chapter. John 6 and verse 30. I can read down to verse 59.

John 6 and verse 30. Of course, later on then reading in Matthew 6. John 6 verse 30. Let's hear again the Word of God.

Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven, but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven.

For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world. Then said they unto him, Lord, evermore give us this bread.

[1 : 20] And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life. He that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

But I say unto you, that ye also have seen me, and believe not. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out.

For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me. But of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life. That will raise him up at the last day.

The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which come down from heaven. And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?

[2 : 27] How is it then that he saith, I come down from heaven? Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves. No man can come to me except the Father which hath sent me.

Draw him, and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall all be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me.

Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God. He hath seen the Father. Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof and not die.

I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever. And the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

[3 : 36] The Jews therefore strove among themselves, saying, How can this man give us his flesh to eat? Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, except ye eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.

Whoso eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life. And I will raise him up at the last day. For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed.

He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father. So he that eateth me, even he shall live by me.

This is the bread which came down from heaven, not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead. He that eateth of this bread shall live forever.

These things said he in the synagogue, as he taught in Capernaum. So on to the end of chapter 6. Now reading again, this time in Matthew.

[4 : 43] Matthew 6. Matthew chapter 6. Just reading again the words we have of the Lord's prayer. Matthew 6 and verse 9.

Amen.

Amen. Amen. We give praise to God again for his holy and his perfect word. Let's again sing to God's praise.

This time singing from Psalm 8. Psalm 8. Psalm 8.

We can sing verses 1 down to verse 5 of the psalm. How excellent in all the earth, Lord our Lord is thy name, Who hath thy glory far advanced above the starry frame, From infant's and from suckling's mouth, Thou didst strength ordain, For thy foe's cause, That so thy might'st, The avenging foe restrain.

[6 : 11] Psalm 8. Verse 1 to 5. Verse 1 to 5. To God's praise. Come on. How in the psalmist's and from all the Kranken's finger, PADALOS SWE euros Is On I was caught that stone that was the avenging holy sin.

When I look up unto the heavens which thy Lord be art in, unto the earth, unto the stars which my hand by thee are in, then say, I promise of thee, remember this I thee.

For what the Son of Man has so kind with him to see, for the earth and the Lord has, and the heavenly angels sing, with glory and with dignity, my crown is ours to serve.

Let's turn back to Matthew chapter 6. Matthew 6. And carrying on our series this evening. I think our faces have been here the last few weeks, but just for any new faces, we're looking in our evening services at the Lord's Prayer, and we're just following through section by section, and we're here pretty much halfway through this evening at verse 11.

Just a quick summary again. As we said last week, this is a prayer of course in its own right, that Jesus gave this prayer for us to pray, but we see, as we said in verse 9, that there's more to this prayer than simply a one-off prayer.

[9 : 58] Verse 9 tells us and indeed instructs us that this prayer is for use as a framework. As we think through this prayer, we should think of our own prayers and try and follow the flow of this prayer.

So last week we saw the very weighty and heavy and well beyond us subject of the will of God.

In verse 10, we saw thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. This week we find ourselves in verse 10, in verse 11, sorry, and we find ourselves in verse 11, and we see that we're now dealing with things which we're perhaps a wee bit more familiar with.

We wrestled and worked through God's will last week. Well now in verse 11, we pray quite simply, give us this day our daily bread.

Like all other prayers, like every prayer I'm sure we pray day by day, dear Christian, that the Lord's prayer is no different, and the framework Jesus gives us to pray is no different.

[11 : 05] Your prayers and my prayers are a mixture of the heavenly, a mixture of, we could say the big, but also the small. We might pray for the salvation of our loved ones, and the next minute pray for our car to make it to the next service, or so, and pray for that noise we hear in the boiler.

Our prayers are a mixture, aren't they, of the big, but also the normal. We pray that we'd have, the physical parts of life would go well for us, the daily parts of our life would work.

We wouldn't be Christians if we didn't pray for the small things, the normal things, the simple things. And from our singings this evening, we've been reminded again and again, that God cares, as it were, not just the grand things.

God doesn't just care for his creation as a whole. He doesn't just care for the big, glorious things he does. No, God cares for the small things.

God cares for the intimate, intricate parts of our lives. God cares for the daily goings on, from Monday to Monday, Sunday to Sunday, week in, week out.

[12 : 23] He cares for our lives. And we see that when we come to verse 11 this evening. We pray this very simple prayer.

As we come to look at verse 11, we have to acknowledge two things. We saw in our reading, we read in John 6, word of Christ being the bread of life, and the connection to the manna, in the Old Testament, back to Exodus 16.

But we come to pray verse 11. We see something quite wonderful. But in one sense, yes, this verse brings our mind to Jesus as, as the true bread of life.

And we'll cover that as we go on through this verse. But quite simply, verse 11, we have to take it for what it says. We have to take it at face value.

This is Christ instructing his disciples, instructing us as people, as Christians, we must be happy and willing and ready to pray for the normal, the normal stuff of life, the daily things, the daily living.

[13 : 36] That God cares for that. That God cares, yes, for our spiritual sustenance, as we heard this morning. But also, we saw this morning, God also cares for the literal sustenance.

He cares we have bread and food in our cupboards. He cares for us as we go about our lives day by day. And we'll see that as we go on through this verse.

And really just taking this verse as it comes for us, as we did with our first few verses, our first few sections of this prayer, and really looking at it as an overview. We won't cover half of what we could cover in this verse.

But please take this verse home with you as it were and think through yourself this evening and this week the various many ways and styles you could pray this, the various many ways you could incorporate this verse into your prayer lives.

So first of all, it's taking the first word we have here, give. Give us this day our daily bread. Give. Often, when we go to Scripture, we find some perhaps challenging terms or complicated terms, we often find some help or some further depth given to us when we go to the original languages.

[15 : 00] Now, we have in almost every, not almost every, but in many of our modern translations, the most common used translations that we use, we can trust the words we have in front of us.

They are good translations. So, we don't go to the Greek or Hebrew to find some hidden meaning. We're not cultists like that. But we often go to it to find a bit of nuance, a bit of help for us.

And that works sometimes. But when we go to verse 11 in the Greek and look for what this word give means, if we think this word comes across a bit too rude, how can I say to God, give me anything?

I wouldn't dare pray, God, give. Well, when we go to the Greek for this verse, we find no help whatsoever. If nothing, if anything, this verse is somewhat toned down for us in English.

The reality is this verse of the word used there is other words, could have been used, our savoury could have used other words, no, he uses a very specific word here.

[16 : 04] The Greek also uses the same word that is quite simply give. well, that's a brave thing. Who prays to God, give me anything?

Strikes us perhaps as quite rude at first. Strikes perhaps quite honestly at the heart of how we view our prayers. So if we read verse 11, we think, well that's a bit too rude.

I could never say to God, give me anything. It perhaps tells us more about how we view prayer or need how we view God more than how we actually view this verse.

Because if we came first of all to a God who is distant and who is uncaring, a God who made creation, who made the universe, who set things into motion and then who just left us to our own devices, a God who is far off and who is cold, then yes, to that God we wouldn't dare say give.

We wouldn't dare say to a cold, callous, far off, uncaring God, you would never pray give. But to who are we praying?

[17 : 22] Who do the Christians pray to as we pray through the Lord's Prayer? It takes us back to our first week together. It takes us back to verse 9. Who are we praying to? Our Father.

Christian, when we pray to God, here's a reminder. When we pray for the daily things and stuff, the daily goings-on of life, the small things, we pray, Lord, please give.

We're not praying to a far-off, uncaring God who is somehow aloof, who is somehow above, above caring for us. No. We are praying to one who is Father.

Our Father. We are praying to a Father who is willing to provide. We said, when we looked to originals for help, the Greek word is more strong than English can give us.

The tone of that give is very immediate. It's very, even more rude, to be fair, it's very clear. It's give. The emphasis is in the word itself.

[18 : 34] It's almost give with an exclamation mark for us in English straight after it. But more interestingly, the word used here for give, it's the same tone, the same word we would see in what situation?

There's no great guess here. Going back to verse 9, in what situation would we see the same word, the same tone, the same urgency being used? It's a child talking to a parent.

It's a child talking to a father. A child talking to a loving father. To the original hearers, to the disciples, to those at this time, this word is quite clearly showing them or telling them.

When we pray to God, we ask something of God, we're doing it as a child asking a loving father. Of course, we know what else and children can sometimes ask questions and can demand things in a wrong way, but that's not the sense here.

This is a genuine loving interaction where a child is asking a parent for something that they cannot get themselves, they cannot do themselves. Our Father in heaven, give us.

[19 : 54] Please, give us. Father, please, is the sense of our first word here. This is the cry of a child who is asking for something that only a parent can do for them.

Dear brother, dear sister, and there are many here who are much older in the faith here, and you have known this throughout your whole walk with the Lord and the many years you've perhaps walked with them. The Lord, instead of being angry, instead of being somehow wrathful against open and honest prayer, the Lord blesses.

He blesses his people as we come to him honestly and openly. Why? Because when we strip away the layers of pretense and the layers of trying to word things well, perhaps, the reality is our God, he knows the words before we even say them.

He knows the thoughts, the prayers before we pray them. He knows what it is we're about to ask for. It's not somehow with respect a surprise to him as we say, Lord give dot dot dot.

He knows exactly what it is. So when we pray Lord give, if we do it genuinely as a father would to a child, Lord please give. So we then make a request, a petition to God, understanding he is holy, understanding that his answer may not be our answer we're looking for.

[21 : 25] All that aside, as we genuinely come to him and say Lord, please give. He cares. He cares enough to actually hear our prayers.

Dear Christian, there is no issue in being direct and being honest with your God as you pray to him. Christ gives us that here in verse 11. Because your God, dear Christian, he is a father who knows you, who knows what you're praying for before you even open your mouth.

He knows what is lacking perhaps in your current situation, we'll see that more later on. He cares for the spiritual and for the physical. He cares for the wider things but also the practical parts of your life.

As you say your prayer this evening, this afternoon, tomorrow morning, as you pray to the Father, give. He knows how you pray that. And you pray as a child of praying to a loving Father.

give. Give. Then we see again this reminder that we are praying what? We're praying together. Give us, we've seen this before, and we won't dwell too much on this, but we've seen before that when we pray together, we are praying, even as you go home just now, even just now perhaps in your minds as you may offer a prayer to God just now.

[22 : 56] And sometimes we often do in church, or when you go home and in the quietness of your own heart, you pray on the drive home, you pray this evening. You are, in one sense, very much on your own praying, but as you pray to the Lord, you are joining in the prayers of his people.

We never really pray on our own, do we? We said this before, we covered this before length, but we never really pray on our own. And here's a reminder that the Lord's prayer is always here in the plural.

Give us this day our daily bread. In this verse, the reality of us being together as brothers and sisters, praying together and serving together, it has more impact, doesn't it?

As we pray for our daily bread, as we pray for our daily sustenance, as we pray that God will keep us this new day and this new week, we might think, well, actually, literally, my cupboards are full, the bank's okay, the job situation, the money situation is fine, so why do I have to pray?

Why do I have to pray, Lord, give us or give me this day my daily bread? Well, if it was give me, then that makes sense, perhaps. But no, the prayer is give us two reasons.

[24 : 16] First of all, it reminds the Christian, it reminds us that although your cupboards might be full, literally, although you might have enough money to your name just now, although your situation might be quite comfortable, there are brothers and sisters, perhaps even the pew next to you, brothers and sisters next door, brothers and sisters across the island just now, across our nation, across the world, who are not in the same situation you are, and who are waiting for the Lord to give them their daily provision, their daily sustenance, who are praying this prayer very, very closely, who are praying this prayer looking for real physical results and answer from God, who are looking to God for their daily food, their daily provisions.

As we pray, give us this daily bread, as we pray, we remember the church as a whole, those who are well off spiritually, those who are lacking spiritually, those who are well off physically, those who are lacking physically, those who have and those who have not.

As we pray this prayer together, we come alongside one another, as a church family. Those who pray, give us this day of daily bread, those who pray this with full cupboards, pray alongside those with empty, or with emptying cupboards, as it were.

We pray this also to remind us, perhaps even in our times of blessing, where God is blessing us, our gifts, the blessings he gives us is truly a blessing from him.

Because we're comfortable just now that need not and it may not continue, it reminds us to be thankful for God's provision to us at this moment in time. We pray tomorrow morning, give us this day of daily bread, we might pray that from the comfort of our home, but we don't know what a day holds, a week holds, a month holds, a year holds.

[26 : 20] In a month's time, in a year's time, we might pray that same prayer, our home might be gone, our comfort might be gone, our cupboards might be empty, and so on and so on. We pray this prayer giving praise to God that he keeps his people in material wealth and in absence of that wealth.

In terms of spiritual wealth, in terms of spiritual dryness, God provides for his people. There's not time, and indeed this is perhaps not even the place this evening for us to go on at length, but we've all heard of the accounts, haven't we?

We'll see this more later on. We all have heard the stories and remember the stories and perhaps some here in your own lives. Times when there was real, real, I say word carefully, but poverty, poverty in our islands, when there wasn't much money, at times there was no money, when there wasn't much food, at times there was no food.

As our brother, today at lunch and in the home at lunchtime, we were talking about this, and I'll probably get this mixed up, the quote that we were quoting was that when the people were spiritually full, often the cupboards were empty, but now the cupboards are full, we find ourselves spiritually empty, or when the churches were full, the cupboards are empty, but now the churches are empty and the cupboards are full.

In a sense, that's not far wrong, is it? We live in a day to day where our cupboards are full, even those of us who are less well-off, that we still find ourselves most of the time in a better position than those who came before us, and grandparents, and their parents, people who live through times of real poverty.

[28 : 10] And there were times, times, even since this place was built, there's people, dear, beloved brothers and sisters, who sat in these pews, and who sat in these pews knowing fine well that they had nothing at home to eat, or little at home to eat.

They had no idea of how they would feed themselves for the coming week, but they were here praising their Lord, relying on him, trusting in and on him.

Our forefathers, those who had gone before us, they prayed verse 11, and they knew this prayer well. For them, it wasn't just a spiritual thing.

For them, it was a practical thing. They knew and they saw that God cared about them. He cared about the small things, the small people.

He cared about their empty cupboards. And we've all heard the accounts, haven't we? We've all heard the stories of those beloved Christians. Christians, praying for food, praying for provision, and God providing for them what they needed again and again.

[29 : 16] Again, if you have time this evening, go and read Exodus 16 and see the account of manna, of God providing the manna, and see of God's goodness and God's patience and God's kindness as he gives his people exactly what they need.

at times, not what they want, but always what we need. Give us. We pray this together.

We come together with full cupboards and empty cupboards, with full hearts and empty hearts. We pray this as one church family. Lord, give us today our daily bread.

Today, our daily. Give us this day our daily. Why is this repeated? If you take out any of these two words, leave one in, it still works.

Give us our daily bread works just as well, grammatically speaking, doesn't it? Give us our daily bread. That works. It makes sense. Give us this day our bread.

[30 : 23] That works. That makes sense. So we say, why is it give us this day, or give us literally today, our daily bread? You think, well, what's going on here?

Why the repetition? Again, every time we see repetition in scripture, it is there for a reason. From the Old Testament right to the New, when God speaks, when God repeats himself, it is there for a very clear reason.

We've seen that in our reading where Jesus says verily, verily, or Amen, Amen. That repetition is there to stop us in our tracks and to listen carefully what's being said. And the same here, give us today our daily bread.

The same word is being used here twice. Why? Because God knows us. And he knows that very quickly, as Christians, we're always looking ahead.

Saying this to myself, and true for ourselves as Christians, we're never truly satisfied with what God is giving us in the here and now. Again, when you look back to Exodus 16, what happens?

[31 : 35] I'll carry on in reading. What happens again and again, not just for bread, what happens again and again as God has rescued his people, leads his people, provides for his people, as God feeds his people day after day, what happens?

Okay for a while. Okay for a while. And all of a sudden his people begin to what? To moan, to grumble, to get bored, to get tired, to fuss and to argue, to moan against God.

They got bored of the manna. They got bored of bread from heaven. So he gave them quail. Then they get bored of that. They moan about that. And God keeps supplying them with food.

Dear Christian, we think that. We think, how could they complain against God who is giving them miraculous food every morning? How can they be so silly? How can they be so short-sighted?

And then we stop for a second. We think to ourselves this past week. Think, how thankful have we really been? How many times have we thanked God this week?

[32 : 45] We said our grace, perhaps every meal we said our grace. And perhaps some of us have said that grace with hearts truly full thankfulness every single time. But if we're being honest, how thankful have we truly been this week for God's hundreds, if not more, of his mercies and kindnesses and his goodness towards us?

If we stop to think of even the last few days, we will find instance upon instance of us just not being thankful. Which is why we are here in this verse taken right back down.

Give us this day our daily bread. As we pray that it brings our mind to right now. It helps us to be thankful. It helps us to be grateful for what God is giving us this very second.

It also is there for our good. Because Christians, how often do we worry for the future? How often do we sit and plan and panic and worry?

We worry what a day might bring, what a week might bring. And we know that that is the same for all of us. Because Christ again and again tells us what? Not to be anxious for tomorrow. Not to be anxious. Not to worry.

[33 : 58] Why? Because we worry. And in one sense of course there is nothing bad. And this verse is not saying to us in verse 11, it's not saying for a second we shouldn't plan and prepare for the future.

Of course we should. Physically and spiritually we must be ready for the future. We must make sure we have enough food in our houses and all of that. That would be silly to say otherwise. This verse is not saying don't make practical plans.

Not to save. Not to be smart of our money and our food and all that. All these things are good. As long as we honour God, these things are fine. What this verse does remind us is that we're only here for now.

We're only here for now. It's what? Going on seven. We're not guaranteed the next hour. And we hear that and we know that.

But we're really, do we really acknowledge that reality? We're not guaranteed the next hour. Not one of us here. Not one of us here. Never mind this evening.

[35 : 06] Never mind tomorrow. Never mind this brand new week. Even as I said, we're here halfway through our series. Perhaps this series ends for myself or for one of us this very evening.

Perhaps this is it. We don't know. And the fact is, we don't know. But God does. We see the reality of war and rumours of war.

We see the reality. And God sees the reality. And don't for a second think he's uncaring us the reality. We see the reality of war and rumours of war.

We see the brewing situations in Russia and Ukraine. We see the situation in China. We see what's going on. And we acknowledge these things. And we must know these things.

It's no bad thing in being informed about these things. We see our own situation of rising food costs. Fuel costs. We see and we read all of the awful predictions as to the cost even to heat our own homes this year and next year.

[36 : 21] We must see these things and read these things and plan for these things. But dear friends and dear brothers and sisters, these things we must plan for, prepare for.

Yes, we are obliged to do that. We're obliged to take care of our families and ourselves. But the worry of these things, the anxiety of these things, they belong to God.

The future is his and is his alone. The future belongs to him. As we face growing anxiety and worry about our future and our island's future, our community's future, the future of the world at large, that's a worry.

It's a burden that we're not supposed to hold. As we heard last week, God has his perfect plan. He has his perfect will. The future is his.

It is not a sin to be ready, not a sin to prepare. But the truth is, we see again and again, Christ tells us not to be anxious. Not to think what it is we might wear or eat.

[37 : 25] Now, Jesus says that. He's not being impractical. But he's telling us not to worry about these things. Not to spend our days and our hours panicking and stressing about the future.

And some of us are perhaps bigger worriers naturally than others. There are those amongst us who naturally worry about everything all the time. Those of us who are naturally quite anxious.

The truth is, the future belongs to God. We are guaranteed this for a second. We are guaranteed the breath we have during our life. The breath we take just now in our lungs.

And that's it. This ends our guarantee of life. The future belongs to God. And we must pray in our prayers. And have as part of our prayers this reminder.

We pray for just now. We pray for today. The future full cupboards, spiritually and physically, they belong to God. The future of our lives, it belongs to God.

[38 : 29] And he cares. As we said, we leave it in the hands of a God who cares for his people. Who isn't capricious. Who isn't mean-spirited.

A God who cares. As we heard this morning, the Greeks had gods who always try to catch the people out. The Romans followed the Greeks and they had the same belief in that their gods were somehow always trying to catch them out.

Trying to trick them. That is not our God. Our God cares for his people. He loves his people. And he will provide for his people.

Give us this day our daily bread. And this we bring ourselves to the conclusion. Bread. As we said at the very start, this is a prayer.

First and foremost, for literal, for actual sustenance. I say sustenance rather than bread because the word bread here might be a wee bit deceptive.

[39 : 28] The word bread, it's a good translation, but the word bread, it's not specifically speaking about dough. The word bread here is meant to be used as an overall term.

Give us this day our sustenance. The word bread here actually isn't the word bread being used in the Greek. It's a word that it's hard to put into one word.

That's why we have bread here. But it's the idea of sustenance. Give us today what we need to keep us going is the best you can possibly put together. Bread is a good translation, but the reality is the prayer here is, Lord, give us this day what we need for this day.

Our bread, our food, our drink, our fuel, the ability to heat our homes, to feed our families, the cognitive abilities to live a day, the health, the physical abilities to keep on going.

And so on and so on. Whatever it takes to keep you going from morning to evening, that's what we pray for in this prayer. This is a prayer that God will sustain us for this day.

[40 : 43] God cares for the small things of our lives, dear brothers, dear sisters. He cares for the fact that money might be tight. He cares for the worries of how we will afford us to heat our homes and so on and so on.

You alone know your own specific burdens and worries you bring before the Lord. He hears these things. He sees these things. He cares about these things. We must be careful not to over-spiritualise the likes of this verse where God cares for the empty cupboards.

It's a more modern thought and it is no way biblical. There's no way biblical the kind of modern thought we have that God only cares for the soul and that our body and our experience doesn't matter to him.

Well, that's not what we see anywhere in Scripture. It's a very Greek way of thinking, a very modern way of thinking. God gives us a physical life. That's what John writes against the Gnostics.

A different sermon for us the other day. The Gnostics taught that a part of our teaching was that only the spirit matters. Only the soul matters. And that our physical nature, our physical reality, our physical bodies didn't really matter as much to God.

- [42 : 00] Well, that's not true. God cares for the physical. He has given us bodies. And the truth is that when our end comes and we find ourselves being raised up again, brothers and sisters, we will be given our bodies.
- Albeit, yes, made perfect and resurrection bodies, but God cares for our bodies. He cares for who and for what we are. He cares for our rumbling stomachs.
- He cares for our empty cupboards. He cares for the reality of our everyday lives. As we saw this morning, Jesus had compassion on the crowd.
- He looks up and he sees the crowd in front of them, as we said. And he heals them, yes. He heals the sick. He's there giving them spiritual help and physical help.
- And then he feeds them. They wouldn't have starved. We didn't say this this morning. They wouldn't have starved. They'd have gone home hungry. But they'd have been fine.
- [43 : 04] They'd have been miserable. They'd have been hungry. They'd be starving. They wouldn't have died. They'd have been okay. Jesus could have sent them away back home and they'd be okay.
- They'd be miserable and they'd be exhausted. But they wouldn't have died. They wouldn't have perished. But Jesus cared enough for them that he fed them.
- He wanted them to leave that place with full stomachs. We had a funeral last week in Carabba. An old fisherman who passed away and Ian, Reverend McCritchie, was part of his sermon was talking about the account that we see of Jesus feeding post-resurrection.
- He's there on the shore. The disciples have cast the net out and he feeds the disciples. Jesus who's just been resurrected. Jesus in his resurrection body.
- Jesus who has conquered death on the cross. Who has fulfilled all the prophecy about him. Who is there as the triumphant risen ever living saviour of his people.
- [44 : 14] What do we see Jesus doing? He is on the shore sitting on the shore making breakfast for these fishermen. And we read that and we pass by that but in our minds let's stop and think he cared for the fact that these men have been fishing all night and they're hungry in the morning.
- That's not flippant to point that out. He cares for hungry fishermen. He cares for his people. He cares for the small things of his people's lives.
- Dear Brother and Sister he cares for the small things. He cares for the bread. He cares for your sustenance. And don't for a second be worried of taking these small prayers to him.
- Pray like this verse tells you to pray. Father please give me today whatever it is you're lacking. We say well surely we could abuse that.
- Surely we could abuse that prayer and pray for things we don't need. Well you could I guess but the truth is as any Christian here knows we do at times pray for things we shouldn't be praying for perhaps.
- [45 : 23] But very quickly if we're praying well and if we're trying to seek to strive to serve God well we will pray for things that honour him and pray in ways that glorify him.
- God prays God cares for the prayers of his people. And this prayer is we say mostly concerned as to the physical reality of his people.
- but we can't ignore the fact that this prayer is also praying for daily bread. It is again the same word we see here used as Jesus being the bread of life in that chapter we read in John.

for all our prayers of sustenance the truth is if we pray this prayer if we are seeking to pray to God that he would sustain us and he would provide for us but if we pray this prayer not knowing for ourselves the bread of life this prayer it is meaningless it is meaningless for all the material wealth and goodness in the world that God might give us for all the provision he might in his mercy provide to us if we don't know Jesus as our bread of life then all the material things it means absolutely nothing and you know that yourself you've heard it so many times and you've seen in your own life that these things come and these things go the daily provisions come and they go much like the manna we could say in Exodus God gave that manna for the day for the day that manna was where the next day new manna next day new manna what happened if he tried to collect more than he needed for that day it rotted it didn't work for them

Christ comes and calls himself the bread of life and we see that when Jesus talks in John chapter 6 your father they ate manna in the desert and they were dead they died it sustained them for a while but ultimately they died for all the sustenance and all the provision in this world dear friends you may have a good life and live a good life a successful life a life of much blessing and much money and much provision but one day it will be said of you yes they had a good life yes they had much manna but they're dead without Jesus that will be an eternal death a real death a spiritual death if you die knowing and having for yourself having ate and having tasted as we read having taste for yourself the bread of life that

[48 : 17] Jesus gives if you die in him as he tells us in John 6 because he lives we will live with him if we die having tasted of the bread of life we know our death yes we'll die physically but we will once again soon enough rise rise from the dead rise to be with our saviour in new heavens and a new earth for all the physical sustenance if we have not the spiritual sustenance of a bit of life if we do not know Jesus it all means nothing dear Christian dear brother dear sister and again you know this yourselves in your own lives I don't have to tell you this as long as you have Jesus what else do we need we say that carefully but there are brothers and sisters who I've spoken to and brothers sisters whose lives personally

I've seen and I know who've gone through times of great suffering and times of great lack who've had their lives at times completely turned upside down and torn to shreds people whose lives reflect quite a lot like poor job whose whole world seems to be crumbling around them and yes they suffer and they cry and they go through awful hardship but those who know the Lord they will always say the same thing because they have Jesus they have everything is that not our story this evening we pray each morning we will pray each night Lord thank you for what you give us Lord please in the verse of heaven once more give us please this day our daily bread our loving father give us this day all what we need to survive this day but we know that in our saviour he has given us much more than that through bread of life so all who eat of him will never die that is a christian's hope this evening the question is is that your hope for all the bread of this world for all the sustenance of this world if you die not knowing

Jesus it means nothing take and eat come and know come and eat of the bread of life which is offered to you freely and openly this very moment it is yours the bread of life has come and he has given himself to all who will come to him come take and eat come and know not only physical provision but come and know true lasting spiritual provision in your life come and know him come and serve him come and worship him let's bear our heads in a word of prayer lord help us we ask to fully understand these things as we come around reality that you're a god who cares for your people lord help us as your people here this evening never to be scared as a word never to fear to pray for practical things help us to understand that you're a god who cares for your people you're a god who cares for the daily lives of your people nothing is too small a prayer for you your god who delights to give us so abundantly so abundantly more than we'd ever begin to think or even to ask for we do pray for people this evening we pray for any here this evening who are suffering lack this week lord those who are going through hard times physically those who are going through hard times spiritually those who are suffering in various ways be with them be close to them we do again pray for any here this evening who as of yet haven't truly tasted of that bread of life that even this day even this week they would come and take and eat know what it is to be fully spiritually satisfied for all the days of their life help us as we ask as we come to sing our final item of praise to do so with joy to do so with gladness and with through singing in our hearts and in our voices praising you our living

God as God we sing in Christ's precious name for his sake amen we can conclude with that great psalm of care that great psalm of provision a psalm that is so ingrained in us psalm 23 a psalm which again we perhaps know too well at times in which when we step back and read together in psalm 23 we do see the great goodness of a saviour who is our shepherd who provides and who leads who gives us so much the Lord is my shepherd that I will not want he makes me down to lie in pastures green he leadeth me the quiet waters by my soul he doth restore again and me to walk doth make within the paths of righteousness even for his own namesake singing the whole psalm to God's praise the Lord my shepherd and the

Lord he makes me down to I and I should bring hymn he he leads h motivating the ch Ay■■ in my healing nighttietet he home he heard he reh genommen down to his Christ his Millionenilar and God of grace, where fell the path of righteousness, in Father's hope in sin.

[54 : 41] Ye though my boy and his son is, yet let thy care not live.

For thou art with me, and thy road has to be comforted.

My dear, the love of her riches, and blessings of my Lord.

My dear, the God, with me, and thy love.

O Lord, those goodness and mercy of my life shall surely follow me.

[56 : 18] I am God's love forevermore. My dwelling, they shall be.