



## river west church

Prayer: Trusting God One Day at a Time

Matthew 6:9-13

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### **Putting Life in Perspective: The Practical Prayer in the Middle**

The prayer for daily bread comes right in the middle of the Lord's Prayer. There's a huge lesson in that. It's a lesson about perspective. Prayer is the place where you learn to truly re-evaluate your concerns and re-order your priorities. For instance, what is the difference between your needs and your wants? What is your primary focus each day? Are you focused on your relationship with God and your impact for God? Or are your needs (and wants) crowding out everything else and dominating your focus?

Don't misunderstand. God does care about our needs (and wants). Jesus tells us specifically to pray and ask God to provide our very practical needs in life. "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11). It is totally legitimate to bring God all your needs and desires in prayer. But the location of this request, right in the middle of the prayer rather than at the beginning, is really important. It's about putting everything in the right perspective. Jesus said that we should, "Seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness and all other things would be added to us." (Matthew 6:33). The "all other things" in Matthew 6 refers to the practical needs of our lives that we so often spend time worrying about. So it's a matter of priorities. It is in prayer that we work this out in our hearts before God. It's also about trusting God one day at a time.

### **Daily Prayer, Daily Trust**

When we started our series of sermons on prayer, we noted a really important principle: You can only live the Christian life one day at a time. You can only trust God one day at a time.

This is why we have focused on praying every day. I'm encouraging you to think in 24 hour periods as you pray. But this isn't my idea, it comes from Jesus! "Give us this day our daily bread." (Matthew 6:11). That's His teaching on prayer. It goes right along with, "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." (Matthew 6:34).

Jesus is teaching us to live out our Christian faith one day at a time. This can only happen through prayer. We need to trust God every single day. We need to pray every day. We need to "stay current" with God! Any day that we do not pray is a day that we are probably trying to live by our own strength and ability rather than His. We may be falling into the trap of prideful independence, thinking that we can figure it all out and take care of ourselves; we will take care of our own needs and only call on God if things get totally out of control. Or, we may fall into another trap, instead of living in pride, we may live in fear or anxiety. We worry that things won't work out. We worry that we will not have our needs met. We worry about all the details of life. Both of these traps are two sides of the same coin, a failure to come to God every day and trust Him with the needs and concerns of our daily life. This is why Paul teaches us, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. <sup>7</sup> And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." (Philippians 4:6-7).

### **God and You - TODAY**

If you focus too much on tomorrow, you will miss God in your life today. If you worry too much about all the details, needs and wants of your life, you will miss the opportunity to experience God and be used by Him today. Do you realize that God is with you right this minute? Do you know that God is caring for you every single day? Do you recognize that you can walk with God and be used by God TODAY? Don't miss that. Day by day, that is the way we trust God. Talk to God today. Tell Him you trust Him. Tell Him your needs (and wants). But then leave all that with Him and be free. Be free to enjoy your relationship with God. Be free to serve God and His kingdom purpose. Be free to be used by God every day. That is what Jesus is teaching us in prayer. Let's do it!