“Give Us Our Daily Bread”

INTRODUCTION: From the sublime to the ridiculous…

1. Or at least: From the lofty to the crass – that’s how some people see this petition of the Lord’s Prayer.
   a. The sublime, the lofty, the spiritual…

   Pray then like this:

   “Our Father in heaven,
   hallowed be your name.
   Your kingdom come,
   your will be done,
   on earth as it is in heaven. (Matthew 6:9-10)

   b. The ridiculous, the crass, the earthly…

   Give us this day our daily bread. (Matt. 6:11)

   c. Critics often think (and say) “What a let down! We move from God’s glory, God’s Kingdom and God’s holy will to ‘our daily bread’; how ignoble, common and…even…profane!”

2. But Christians would disagree. Often accused of being too spiritual – too heavenly-minded to be any earthly good – it is the Christian who prays this way, with a clear conscience, because…
   a. Jesus prayed this way. Remember: The Lord's Prayer is Jesus’ pattern of prayer commanded to us.
   b. Jesus taught us to pray this way…

   Now Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he finished, one of his disciples said to him, “Lord, teach us to pray, as John taught his disciples.” And he said to them, “When you pray, say:

   “Father, hallowed be your name.
   Your kingdom come.
   Give us each day our daily bread,
   and forgive us our sins,
   for we ourselves forgive everyone who is indebted to us.
   And lead us not into temptation.” (Luke 11:1-4)

   c. Jesus expects us to pray this way, so does God the Father.
   i. “Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:7-11)

   ii. Note Jesus Christ’s illustration of our prayer and God’s answer: a loaf of bread and a fish

   iii. Jesus calls these things “good gifts…good things”
iv. And they represent *our daily bread*! (food!)


   a. Jesus reminds us of God’s good intention for us. We should not expect God to care less than our parents about the needs we have. The One who sees every sparrow fall to the ground and has numbered every hair on our heads frets over the relationship needs we have for food, water and clothing.

   b. Correction: God does not “fret” (worry) over anything. (sovereignty)

   c. But He is concerned to provide us with our basic provision. (providence)

4. There is a connection and a **flow of thought** in the Lord's Prayer. Here it is:

   a. Our first and primary concern in life must always be The Glory of God (“Hallowed Be Thy Name”), for when God’s name is exalted and His person is adored and worshipped, all is well in life, and good things follow for mankind.

   So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. (1 Cor. 10:31)

   b. Our second and strategic concern in life must always be The Kingdom of God (“Thy Kingdom Come”), for when the mission of Jesus Christ is central to our lives, men, women and children are converted, societies are transformed, and churches swell with those who will worship God and give Him the glory.

   For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. (Romans 14:16-19)

   c. Our third and long-term concern as converted people who are Christians, is to pursue The Will of God (“Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven”), which means we must grow in holiness, morality and godly living.

   Finally, then, brothers, we ask and urge you in the Lord Jesus, that as you received from us how you ought to walk and to please God, just as you are doing, that you do so more and more. For you know what instructions we gave you through the Lord Jesus. For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from sexual immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor, not in the passion of lust like the Gentiles who do not know God. (1 Thessalonians 4:1-5)

   d. Then the prayer turns from our priorities to our ability to perform these priorities.

      i. To pursue the will of God, we must have from God basic provision: “Give us this day our daily bread.”

      ii. To seek the Kingdom of God, we must receive, again and again, God’s pardon, and grant that same pardon to others: “Forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.”

      iii. To honor God’s name and glorify Him, we must have God’s protection from both sin and Satan: “Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.”

5. The Lord's Prayer is a **comprehensive** guide to praying. It covers the **Seven Facets** of Biblical prayer: The Seven A’s of Prayer –
6. **James I. Packer: I Want to be a Christian; p. 133.**

The Lord's Prayer requires reference to a spectrum of seven distinct activities: approaching God in adoration and trust; acknowledging his work and his worth, in praise and worship; admitting sin and seeking pardon; asking that needs be met, for ourselves and others; arguing with God for blessing, as wrestling Jacob did in Genesis 32 (God loves to be argued with); accepting from God one's own situation as he has shaped it; and adhering to God in faithfulness through thick and thin.

7. We must begin to see prayer as a dialogue with God – a spiritual but real conversation, in which we bring things before God, and He puts things before us.

8. In a very real sense, **James I. Packer** is right; the Lord's Prayer is a series of questions God sets before us whenever we sit down (or kneel down) to pray (p. 136.).

   We need to see that the Lord's Prayer is offering us model answers to the series of questions God puts to us to shape our conversation with him. Thus: “Who do you take me for and what am I to you?” (Our Father in heaven.) “That being so, what it is that you really want most?” (The hallowing of your name; the coming of your kingdom; to see your will known and done.) “So what are you asking for right now, as a means to that end?”

9. God is concerned about “our daily bread” (basic provision) but not independently from the first three concerns of this prayer.

   a. His glory, His Kingdom, His will
   b. Jesus explains this to us in the text immediately following the Lord's Prayer;
   c. Which is His commentary of the Lord's Prayer…

   “Therefore I tell you, do not be anxious about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink, nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food, and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns, and yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they? And which of you by being anxious can add a single hour to his span of life? And why are you anxious about clothing? Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin, yet I tell you, even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these. But if God so clothes the grass of the field, which today is alive and tomorrow is thrown into the oven, will he not much more clothe you, O you of little faith? Therefore do not be anxious, saying, ‘What shall we eat?’ or ‘What shall we drink?’ or ‘What shall we wear?’ For the Gentiles seek after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. (Matt. 6:25-32)

   d. Then Jesus lays down this famous principle:

   i. **But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you.** (Matthew 6:33)

   ii. First, God’s righteousness: His glory, Kingdom, will

   iii. Second, “all these things”: provision, pardon, protection

   e. Finally: an exhortation to pray and not worry

   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)
f. Followed by His great promise of good gifts and good things from God

“Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened. Or which one of you, if his son asks him for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father who is in heaven give good things to those who ask him! (Matthew 7:7-11)

10. Why is this petition so important for us?
   a. Three reasons...
   b. **First:** We live in a culture that teaches us that the world is *self-sustaining*. But it is not!
   c. **Second:** We live in a land that believes that it is *self-sufficient*. Be we are not!
   d. **Third:** We live with a worldview that tells us that each of us is *self-existent*. But I am not!

11. And **Psalm 104** will make these things abundantly clear...
   a. A long Psalm with 8 stanzas
   b. But a Psalm with really three parts
   c. Each beginning with an address to the *Lord*

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I. **OUR WORLD IS NOT SELF-ORIGINATING OR SELF-SUSTAINING**  (Psalm 104:1-23)

*Bless the LORD, O my soul!*  
*O LORD my God, you are very great!*  
*You are clothed with splendor and majesty,*  
*covering yourself with light as with a garment,*  
*stretching out the heavens like a tent.*  
*He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters;*  
*he makes the clouds his chariot;*  
*he rides on the wings of the wind;*  
*he makes his messengers winds,*  
*his ministers a flaming fire.*  
*He set the earth on its foundations,*  
*so that it should never be moved.*  
*You covered it with the deep as with a garment;*  
*the waters stood above the mountains.*  
*At your rebuke they fled;*  
*at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.*  
*The mountains rose, the valleys sank down*  
*to the place that you appointed for them.*
You set a boundary that they may not pass, 
so that they might not again cover the earth.

You make springs gush forth in the valleys; 
they flow between the hills; 
they give drink to every beast of the field; 
the wild donkeys quench their thirst. 
Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell; 
they sing among the branches. 
From your lofty abode you water the mountains; 
the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.

You cause the grass to grow for the livestock 
and plants for man to cultivate, 
that he may bring forth food from the earth 
and wine to gladden the heart of man, 
oil to make his face shine 
and bread to strengthen man's heart.

The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly, 
the cedars of Lebanon that he planted. 
In them the birds build their nests; 
the stork has her home in the fir trees. 
The high mountains are for the wild goats; 
the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.

He made the moon to mark the seasons; 
the sun knows its time for setting. 
You make darkness, and it is night, 
when all the beasts of the forest creep about. 
The young lions roar for their prey, 
seeking their food from God. 
When the sun rises, they steal away 
and lie down in their dens. 
Man goes out to his work 
and to his labor until the evening. (Psalm 104:1-23)

1. The ancients held a different view of science than we do.
   a. We call them, arrogantly, the Pre-Scientific Age.
   b. But that is not true. Science and scientific “discovery” and invention have been a part of every age of history.
   c. Illustration: In the Egypt of the Psalmists’ day, the Egyptians had air-conditioning systems cooled by underwater conduits of spring water, flushing toilets and a sewer system (i.e., indoor plumbing), great advancements in astronomy and architectural masterpieces (like the pyramids) that continue to astound us to this day.
d. The Seven Wonders of the World were all built between 2560 BC (before Abraham was alive) and 250 BC.

- The Great Pyramid of Giza (2560 BC)
- The Hanging Gardens of Babylon (c. 600 BC)
- Temple of Artemis in Ephesus (540 BC)
- The Statue of Zeus at Mount Olympus (c. 435 BC)
- The Lighthouse of Alexandria (Egypt; c. 400 BC)
- The Mausoleum in Halicarnassus (Turkey; c. 350 BC)
- The Colossus of Rhodes (the god Helios; sun god; 280 BC)

e. Each of them an architectural and scientific wonder (marvel)

2. But the ancients did not consider the universe to be a closed system. They married science to religion and believed that the gods enabled science to aid mankind.

3. This is the ancient (but true) view of the Psalmist in Psalm 104.

a. God is seen as glorious, great and the Creator of the Universe.

i. Bless the LORD, O my soul!
O LORD my God, you are very great!
You are clothed with splendor and majesty,
covering yourself with light as with a garment,
stretching out the heavens like a tent.
He lays the beams of his chambers on the waters;
he makes the clouds his chariot;
he rides on the wings of the wind;
he makes his messengers winds,
his ministers a flaming fire. (Psalm 104:1-4)

ii. Therefore: God is the Creator (Father) of Science.

b. God created the world and in so doing, He set the spheres of earth, seas and sky (and their boundaries).

i. He set the earth on its foundations,
so that it should never be moved.
You covered it with the deep as with a garment;
the waters stood above the mountains.
At your rebuke they fled;
at the sound of your thunder they took to flight.
The mountains rose, the valleys sank down
to the place that you appointed for them.
You set a boundary that they may not pass,
so that they might not again cover the earth. (Psalm 104:5-9)
ii. God is therefore the founder of three branches of science: **Geology, Oceanography, and Astronomy**

c. God then created the life-sustaining features of these three spheres of creation – water, land, sky

i. *You make springs gush forth in the valleys;*
   *they flow between the hills;*
   *they give drink to every beast of the field;*
   *the wild donkeys quench their thirst.*
   *Beside them the birds of the heavens dwell;*
   *they sing among the branches.*
   *From your lofty abode you water the mountains;*
   *the earth is satisfied with the fruit of your work.* (Psalm 104:10-13)

ii. We call this geography: the study of the physical features of the earth, and the activity of human life affected by these features.

d. God then covered the earth with food-producing vegetation that could sustain life for all creatures.

i. *You cause the grass to grow for the livestock*
   *and plants for man to cultivate,*
   *that he may bring forth food from the earth*
   *and wine to gladden the heart of man,*
   *oil to make his face shine*
   *and bread to strengthen man's heart.*

   *The trees of the LORD are watered abundantly,*
   *the cedars of Lebanon that he planted.*
   *In them the birds build their nests;*
   *the stork has her home in the fir trees.* (Psalm 104:14-17)

ii. Respectively: **Horticulture, Botany, Dendrology** and **Agriculture.**

iii. God then placed the inhabitants in all the spheres of life and creation.

1. *In them the birds build their nests;*
   *the stork has her home in the fir trees.*
   *The high mountains are for the wild goats;*
   *the rocks are a refuge for the rock badgers.*

   *He made the moon to mark the seasons;*
   *the sun knows its time for setting.*
   *You make darkness, and it is night,*
   *when all the beasts of the forest creep about.*
   *The young lions roar for their prey,*
   *seeking their food from God.*
   *When the sun rises, they steal away*
   *and lie down in their dens.*
   *Man goes out to his work*
   *and to his labor until the evening.* (Psalm 104:17-23)
2. Birds in the trees (v. 17)
3. Animals in the mountains and forests (vv. 18, 20-22)
4. The sun and moon in the heavens (v. 19)
5. Mankind on the earth and in its towns and cities (v. 23)

4. The Psalmist is a Scientific Creationist: “He lays...He sets...He caused...He made...He brings forth...”

5. Modern Science, is based upon Darwinian Evolution and Reductive Naturalism: Nature is all there is and is determined by a set of natural forces working in an impersonal and purely mechanical manner.

6. This “scientific view” (which is really not scientific at all but rather a philosophical view) leads to two conclusions –
   a. Fate: the impersonal force that renders life both inevitable and meaningless (Pessimism, Nihilism, Determinism)
   b. Scientism: the belief that man can solve all of life’s problems and answer all of life’s questions using the ingenuity of science.

7. Carl Sugan: “The universe is all there is and all there ever was!”

8. Don’t think for a moment that all this is “egg-head philosophy” for which you have no interest! Our belief that the universe is self-sustaining explains many of the things we do (or don’t do).
   a. We argue about global warming as if we could control it by government policy and industrial conservation.
   b. We talk seriously about desalinization of ocean water to alleviate draught or piping rain water to arid parts of the earth.
   c. We seriously expect to “end hunger” in our lifetime.

9. …and, spiritually, we subconsciously (but really) look to someone else other than God to provide us with what we really need.

10. Jesus Christ, and the Psalmist who sings his 104th Psalm, remind us of this truth: All we need for life is always provided by God and by no one else: earth, air, water, seasons, climate, crops, and the other basic needs of creatures.

11. Our Shorter Catechism is dead-on when it states:
    In the fourth petition, (which is, Give us this day our daily bread,) we pray, That of God’s free gift we may receive a competent portion of the good things of this life, and enjoy his blessing with them. (WSC #104)

12. But it is our Larger Catechism that expands this truth to explain “scientific life” to us –
   a. In the fourth petition, (which is, Give us this day our daily bread,) acknowledging, that in Adam, and by our own sin, we have forfeited our right to all the outward blessings of this life, and deserve to be wholly deprived of them by God, and to have them cursed to us in the use of them; and that neither they of themselves are able to sustain us, nor we to merit, or by our own
industry to procure them; but prone to desire, get, and use them unlawfully: we pray for ourselves and others, that both they and we, waiting upon the providence of God from day to day in the use of lawful means, may, of his free gift, and as to his fatherly wisdom shall seem best, enjoy a competent portion of them; and have the same continued and blessed unto us in our holy and comfortable use of them, and contentment in them; and be kept from all things that are contrary to our temporal support and comfort. (WLC #193)

b. **Key concept:** “Neither they of themselves (the things we need) are able to sustain us, nor we to merit or by our own industry to produce them...”

13. **Simply and bluntly stated:** The world we live in cannot sustain itself nor us simply by the natural laws of nature or the scientific genius of mankind. And if we “procure” any sustenance of life – food, health, wealth, jobs, homes, etc. – these things do not sustain us apart from God. *God is the Creator and Sustainer of all there is and all mankind. Without God we have no daily bread, no life, and no future!*

a. *Nevertheless I am continually with You; You have taken hold of my right hand. With Your counsel You will guide me, And afterward receive me to glory. Whom have I in heaven but You? And besides You, I desire nothing on earth. My flesh and my heart may fail, But God is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. For, behold, those who are far from You will perish; You have destroyed all those who are unfaithful to You. But as for me, the nearness of God is my good; I have made the Lord GOD my refuge, That I may tell of all Your works.* (Psalm 73:23-28 NASB)

b. *Two things I asked of You, Do not refuse me before I die: Keep deception and lies far from me, Give me neither poverty nor riches; Feed me with the food that is my portion, That I not be full and deny You and say, “Who is the LORD?” Or that I not be in want and steal, And profane the name of my God.* (Proverbs. 30:7-9 NASB)

c. If we forget God and do not ask for our daily bread, then when we have an abundance we forget God. (the rich)

d. Or, when we are in need and face scarcity, we will turn to desperate and sinful ways to survive, and profane (dishonor) the name of God. (the poor)

14. **You must begin every day by reminding yourself that we do not live in a self-sustaining world. We need God for every breath, every need, of every day.**
II. OUR AMERICA IS NOT SELF-SUFFICIENT

O LORD, how manifold are your works!
In wisdom have you made them all;
the earth is full of your creatures.
Here is the sea, great and wide,
which teems with creatures innumerable,
living things both small and great.
There go the ships,
and Leviathan, which you formed to play in it.

These all look to you,
to give them their food in due season.
When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things.
When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust.
When you send forth your Spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground. (Psalm 104:24-30)

1. The Psalmist tells us three very important things in this stanza of his hymn: Every creature (man and beast) looks to God for…

a. First: Food (provision) to keep them alive each day…

These all look to you,
to give them their food in due season.
When you give it to them, they gather it up;
when you open your hand, they are filled with good things. (Psalm 104:27-28)

b. Second: The Breath of Life to survive each day…

When you hide your face, they are dismayed;
when you take away their breath, they die
and return to their dust. (Psalm 104:29)

c. Third: The Holy Spirit to renew, refresh and restore them each day…

When you send forth your Spirit, they are created,
and you renew the face of the ground. (Psalm 104:30)

d. Life…breath…death…healing and renewal – all from God’s Hand

i. “...when you open your hand, they are filled with good things...” (v. 28)

ii. You open your hand;
you satisfy the desire of every living thing. (Psalm 145:16)

iii. Who has spoken and it came to pass,
unless the Lord has commanded it?
Is it not from the mouth of the Most High
that good and bad come? (Lamentations 3:37-38)
2. Jesus and the Psalmist are telling us: “You are not self-sufficient.”
   a. To pray, “Give us” we acknowledge that the world is not self-sustaining but dependent upon God for life.
   b. To pray, “Give us this day our daily bread” we acknowledge that we are not self-sufficient – even for just one day!

3. Illustration: I was in South Africa, at a Game Preserve Lodge, back in the year 2003 or 2004. The host was talking to my friend John Shane (MTW) and me, and he said, “Do you know what I love about Americans? They are invincible optimists! While other people see only problems and become paralyzed and overwhelmed by trouble, you Americans always smile, and say, ‘We can fix this. We can do this!’
   a. I felt good that evening; proud to be an American.
   b. And it’s true: America is the “land of opportunity.”
   c. We are the “can do” people.
   d. But we need to be careful: Americans are cocky, arrogant and feel self-sufficient.
   e. Rude wakening: We are not!

4. The American Dream was a myth; the American Hour has passed, and the American Spirit is now in the process of being humbled by God!
   a. You did not build your successful business. God gave you your success.
   b. You did not raise a great family. God made your children who they are (often in spite of us)!
   c. You will not provide for a care-free and sufficient retirement. God will give you what He wants you to have.
   d. You cannot fix all the problems in your life. God will be gracious to save you out of them…if you trust Him!

5. Job is the story of a very godly, successful, wise and competent man, who did all the right things rightly. His legacy to us is found in two sentences –
   And he said, “Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.” (Job 1:21)

6. My beloved friends, I have learned these life lessons the hard way, as Job did –
   a. You cannot make your child good at math so they get admitted to Duke University. You are not self-sufficient.
   b. You may plan, save and invest for the future but you cannot guarantee a “care-free” retirement. You are not self-sufficient.
   c. You can do all you should to build your marriage and family, but you can’t make your spouse love you or your children follow Christ. You are not self-sufficient.
   d. You can’t even correct your own sinful tendencies. Your sin nature can’t be “fixed.” You are not self-sufficient.
   e. But…God can do what is best for you and your loved ones because He is all-sufficient!
And God is able to make all grace abound to you, so that having all sufficiency in all things at all times, you may abound in every good work. As it is written,

“He has distributed freely, he has given to the poor; his righteousness endures forever.”

He who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will supply and multiply your seed for sowing and increase the harvest of your righteousness. (2 Corinthians 9:8-10)

7. All you can do is this: Remain humble, be obedient, rely upon God for all things, and be grateful. And pray this prayer: “Give us this day our daily bread.” Then renounce – daily – all your notions of American self-sufficiency!

Such is the confidence that we have through Christ toward God. Not that we are sufficient in ourselves to claim anything as coming from us, but our sufficiency is from God. (2 Cor. 3:4-5)

III. OUR LIVES ARE NOT SELF-EXISTENT (Psalm 104:31-35)

May the glory of the Lord endure forever;
may the Lord rejoice in his works,
who looks on the earth and it trembles,
who touches the mountains and they smoke!
I will sing to the Lord as long as I live;
I will sing praise to my God while I have being.
May my meditation be pleasing to him,
for I rejoice in the Lord.
Let sinners be consumed from the earth,
and let the wicked be no more!
Bless the Lord, O my soul!
Praise the Lord! (Psalm 104:31-35)

1. The Psalmist addresses the Lord a third and last time in this final stanza. And he does so in praise.

2. But I want you to notice something very subtle and very profound in these final five verses: He identifies himself as part of something much larger, much more important and much more glorious than merely himself. He identifies himself with...

   a. God’s glory (v. 31)
   b. The earth and God’s works in it (vv. 31-32)
   c. The ultimate destiny of mankind: sinners and saints (vv. 33-35)
   d. He acknowledges that he is not self-existing but part of a greater whole.

3. Jesus Christ does the same thing with two little words: “us...our”

   a. Give us this day our daily bread
   b. This is a corporate prayer for provision and prosperity.
   c. We are connected to each other whether we like it or not!
4. Our future is tied to that of our family, our church, our nation, and all of mankind.

   a. His massive treatise on the *Three Formulae*
   b. *We pray for all God’s children who, together with us, address God as our Father, and we thus pray for the entire church of God, as if we say: “Thy children – Thy church is defenseless. They are neither able nor willing to govern their own affairs nor to make ends meet with either legitimate or illegitimate means. Such is the practice of the world which has as its objective to harm Thy children and church as much as possible. Therefore, care Thou for them and provide food and raiment for them, so that they may be able to live, and that the world may see that Thou art their God and Father who protects and cares for them.”* Their love, and thus also their compassion, goes yet beyond that. The godly pray for all men who have been created in identical fashion as we were, and share the same existence with us.
   c. **American Individualism cannot honestly pray this prayer.**

6. We Americans are incredibly individualistic, living under the illusion of our own *self-existence* – me…myself…mine.
   a. My *right* to express my sexuality anyway I please without regard for what’s good for others.
   b. My *needs* that must be met regardless of whether or not these needs hurt others.
   c. My *demands* made upon pastors, politicians and parents without consideration for the things other men expect from these institutions of church, state and family.
   d. My *privileges* exercised without a thought of my responsibilities to others.

7. **Our self-existing individualism is what is destroying American society, the American Church and the American family.**

8. We have changed this prayer into an unauthorized version: “*Give me today my rights, my needs, my demands, my privileges…or else!*”

9. **Know this:** Everything you ask God to give you affects me, other people, and the society around you; eventually the whole world!

10. We have become the children of Cain…
    a. *Then the LORD said to Cain, “Where is Abel your brother?”* He said, “I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?” (Genesis 4:9)
    b. Answer: You certainly are.
    c. For we are dealing with our daily bread.

11. How can you and I ask God to…
    a. Save the lives of our children while *abortion* takes place in our city?
    b. Help our kids in school while *high school dropouts* are all around us?
    c. Give us what we need for our homes while thousands of *the children of the homeless* live under our bridges and in our alleyways?
d. Worry about the safety of our daughters when **human trafficking** is booming in America?

e. Ask God to preserve our American way of life, when we, all former immigrants, ignore the **aliens** in Matthews and Mint Hill?

f. Fret about retirement when we neglect the **elderly** – even in our own families?

g. Ask God for forgiveness of sin while we forget the needs of **prisoners** in our local jails?

12. These folks, as well as we and our children, have a stake in what Jesus calls “**our** daily bread”…our common needs.

13. The Lord’s Prayer reminds us that we are not a nation of **self-existing** individuals, but a people of mutually dependent souls.

14. We cannot **isolate** our lives from others or **insulate** our souls from human suffering.

**CONCLUSION:**  I do not intend to be “non-pastoral.  I know (I share in) the things that burden you most…

1. The needs of the elderly…
   a. The loneliness of widowhood or singleness late in life
   b. The estrangement or neglect of kids and grandchildren
   c. The loss of purchasing power of a fixed and meager pension (Social Security)
   d. The rapid decline of health: “Aging” (aka: dying)
   e. The imminent reality of death at the door!

2. The needs of those in mid-life…
   a. Your marriage and family never became what you dreamed of
   b. Your freedom of the “empty nest” has been filled with aging parents
   c. Your jobs are unfulfilling and your careers never materialized as hoped for
   d. Your retirement has been plundered by the Crash of 2008
   e. You’re beginning to “age,” and it is unpleasant

3. The needs of those who are young…
   a. You’d love to be loved and find a spouse
   b. You need a job and a livelihood in a dead economy
   c. You’d like children but fear what kind of world they’d be born into
   d. You are fearful of what the future holds for your little family
   e. If you’re married, you’re experiencing this reality: the things you criticized your parents for are now manifesting themselves in your marriage; you and your spouse are in need of help

4. Jesus Christ answers us this way, “**when you pray, say…give us this day our daily bread.**”
   a. Forsake any idea of **self-sustaining** world
b. Renounce all your efforts at self-sufficiency

c. Repent of self-existing independence

d. …and become part of the “us”, and share the “our” of God’s daily provision.

5. If you are **not** a Christian, you really have no right to pray this prayer until you join the “us” of the Family of God (church) and give yourself to “our” Savior Jesus Christ – then God the Father becomes your Father in heaven, you’ve become part of His Kingdom come, and His will is your mission. And then the daily bread He offers can be yours along with all of us.

6. Do not worry; **pray.** Do not pray alone; pray **together.** Do not try to meet your own needs; ask God as Jesus directs: “Give us this day our daily bread.”

7. **Matthew Henry:** *A Method of Prayer;* pp. 147-148.

> Thou O God, who hath appointed us to seek first the Kingdom of God and righteousness thereof, hast promised that if we do so, other things shall be added unto us: and therefore having prayed for the sanctifying of thy name, the coming of thy kingdom, and the doing of thy will, we next pray, Father in heaven, give us this day, and day by day, our daily bread. Remove far from us vanity and lies; give us neither poverty nor riches; feed us with food convenient for us, lest we be full and deny thee, and say, Who is the Lord? Or lest we be poor and steal, and take the name of our God in vain. Lord, we ask not for dainties, for they are deceitful meat; nor do we pray that we may fare sumptuously every day, for we would not in our life time receive our good things; but we pray for that bread which is necessary to strengthen man’s heart.

> …this we ask, in the name of the Bread of Life Himself, Jesus our Savior and Lord…

> -Amen