

# The real bread

## Give us this day our daily bread (Matthew 6:11 English Standard Version)

Matthew, in his gospel account, places 'The Lord's Prayer', in the context of the sermon on the mount. That discourse was, of course, delivered to an Old Covenant audience. It is unlikely, therefore, that the future spiritual import of the message was understood by many present.

Consider, for example, 'Give us this day our daily bread.' For the disciples that request would be seen as asking for a daily essential - food. And while there is nothing wrong with requesting help for such necessities, those living under the New Covenant can make this appeal with a far greater meaning in mind.

Let's recall Christ's pointed remarks from John 6.

Here, the feeding of the 5000 is recounted. That meal consisted of physical items – fishes and loaves. Later, Jesus used the event to make a significant spiritual point.

Breaking into the story we read “Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness; as it is written, 'He gave them bread from heaven to eat.’” Jesus then said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you the bread from heaven, but my Father gives you the true bread from heaven." (John 6:31-32 ESV).

Then notice verse 34. “They said to him, "Sir, give us this bread always." Sounds a bit like Matthew 6:11, doesn't it?

Jesus' responded. "I am the bread of life; whoever comes to me shall not hunger, and whoever believes in me shall never thirst." (Verse 35). In answering the request for bread, Jesus points out that He is the real bread – the real source of nourishment. But He explains more, “Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and they died. This is the bread that comes down from heaven, so that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever." (verses 48 – 51).

Anyone who eats physical bread will eventually die – no matter how much is consumed. But Jesus says if we partake of Him, then eternal life is assured.

That's the ultimate outcome but, as the prayer suggests, we still require that bread each day. We need the life of Jesus Christ within us. And that happens through the Holy Spirit - sent to believers after Jesus' death.

When we pray for 'daily bread' we are asking for the direction, the help, the empowerment of God's Spirit to lead us through the events of that day. Of course, how we respond to that leading is up to us. But we can seek the way to conduct ourselves by requesting the life of Jesus Christ – the true bread - to be present within us.