

GIVE US THIS DAY OUR DAILY BREAD

Abba, Father, I ask for what I need physically to remain alive today. I recognize it is all a gift from Your hand. I also ask You for the spiritual bread I need to do Your will today. I am absolutely dependent on You. You abundantly pour out Your gifts to me, yet it is easy to take them for granted.

Take a few moments and step back to truly remember where your daily bread comes from—the very hand of God. Pray the following:

O God, thank you for the earth, the sky and the hard work of many people that enables me to enjoy the gift of this bread (food).

FORGIVE US OUR TRESPASSES (DEBTS)

Lord, I have not loved You with my whole heart, mind, soul and strength. Erase every failure of duty I owe to You and others. I agree with Origen when he wrote: “Suffice it is to say that is impossible while in this life to be without debt at any hour of night or day.” Wipe the slate of my sins clean today. Help me not be like the Pharisee in Lk. 18 who was confident in his own righteousness and looked down on everybody else. Rather, like the tax collector, I too humbly pray, “God, have mercy on me, a sinner.”
One of the great gifts from the Eastern Church to help us pray is called the Jesus prayer. Take a few moments and, slowly and reflectively, one word at a time, pray back to God: Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

AS WE FORGIVE THOSE WHO TRESPASS (HAVE DEBTS) AGAINST US

Abba, Father, You have forgiven me of my debts of sin to You that are enormous. You have done so completely and totally - wiping the slate clean. Nonetheless, I struggle to forgive others. I am like the servant in Jesus' parable who, after having been forgiven of His enormous debt, grabs and begins to choke a fellow servant who owes him a very tiny debt (Matt. 18:28). Lord, grant me a more profound, life-changing experience of Your mercy. Teach me to grieve my losses where needed. Break the deeply entrenched chains of sin inside me that want to get even. Grant me discernment on any next steps You have for me. But most importantly, do a miracle within me by the Holy Spirit, so I might be able to extend mercy and bless _____ (fill in names).

AND LEAD US NOT INTO TEMPTATION

Father, You know I can't stand up under much pressure. I agree with your vote of “no confidence” in my ability. I am no match against the evil one without You. Lord, I desperately need You! Strengthen me with your power and grace. I realize that You are bringing events and experiences into my life in order to shape and develop my faith in You, and that it often revolves around forgiving others! Yet the evil one seeks to cut me off in my relationship with You.

Prayer of Preparation

1. Consider the interactions and activities in front of you.
2. Remember: You are in an intense spiritual battle with the evil one who seeks to lead you away from God.
3. Remember: God will not let you be tempted beyond what you are able (1 Cor. 10:13).
4. Pray: “Abba, Father, I am absolutely dependent on You for power so I don't give in to temptations. Rather, help me grow and mature in the challenges I will face today. Amen.”

BUT DELIVER US FROM EVIL (“THE EVIL ONE”)

The great dragon was hurled down— that ancient serpent called the devil, or Satan, who leads the whole earth astray...He is filled with fury because He knows his time is short...then the dragon was enraged...and went off to make war against the rest of her offspring — those who obey God's commandments and hold to the testimony of Jesus (Rev. 12:9,12,17).

Lord, You are right in that I do have a powerful demonic enemy seeking to lure me into a pit and dominate me. Snatch me from the evil one! Rescue me (us) from Satan's desire to destroy my (our) faith. Help me discern the temptations of Satan coming at me. Teach me to wait on You when tempted in the wilderness, like Jesus. I place my confidence in You, Father, to care for me today. What You say is true: *The One who is in me is greater than the one who is in the world (1 Jn. 4:4).* So I affirm with King David: *“I will not fear the tens of thousands drawn up against me on every side” (Ps. 4:4).* You are good and Your love endures forever.

Note: Many of us learned to pray the Lord's Prayer with the doxology at the end— “For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.” This is not found in the Lord's Prayer as taught by Jesus but it would have been very unusual for a Jewish prayer to have ended without a doxology. It is fine to add this to the prayer but, remember, Jesus ends this prayer on a surprisingly sober note about spiritual warfare.

New Life Fellowship

Daily Office

April 2, 2007

The Lord's Prayer

Matt. 6:9-13

GUIDELINES:

- ◆ An Office is a time to stop, slow down, center, and pause to be with Jesus. We stop intentionally to be with Jesus at regular times each day, so that we are aware and attentive to His presence, even amidst our activity.
- ◆ The Lord's Prayer is a masterpiece from the infinite mind of God Himself. It has rightly been called one of the greatest gifts of Jesus to us. The Lord's Prayer provides a model, a blueprint, an outline to help us balance the essential elements of prayer and cultivate our relationship with God.
- ◆ Pay attention to how God wants you to pace your time around this rich prayer. When you are alone, if God leads you to pause at a certain phrase, feel free to meditate on the phrase. Less can be more. God comes to each one of us differently.
- ◆ You may want to structure your time in such a way that you do only one part in the morning, one part in the afternoon, and one part in the evening. Or, you may pray the entire prayer at each of your Offices throughout the day. Or, you may even decide to spend ten minutes on each phrase. There is no right way.

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OUR

Thank you, Lord, that You are not simply “My” Father but “Our” Father. Thank you that I am part of a worldwide family that is international, intercultural, interracial, intergenerational, interdenominational and includes all genuine believers who have known You throughout history. Lord, help me to be loving towards everyone in this big family of which I am a part. Bless your church around the world.

Prayerfully reflect on the radical nature of what we believe about our God and the richness of our salvation in Christ as expressed below in the Nicene Creed. The Nicene Creed has defined orthodox Christian faith for over 1600 years for Christians around the world. It outlines the boundaries of Christian belief and provides us with a measure for the proper reading of Scripture.

We believe in one God,

the Father, the Almighty,
maker of heaven and earth,
of all that is, seen and unseen.

We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ,

the only Son of God,
eternally begotten of the Father,
God from God, Light from Light,
true God from true God, begotten, not
made, of one being with the Father.
Through Him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

He came down from heaven:
by the power of the Holy Spirit
He became incarnate from the Virgin Mary,
and was made man.

For our sake he was crucified under
Pontius Pilate;

He suffered death and was buried.

On the third day He rose again
in accordance with the Scriptures;

He ascended into heaven and is seated at
the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the
living and the dead, and His kingdom will
have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord,

the giver of life, who proceeds from the Father
and the Son. With the Father and the Son
He is worshipped and glorified. He has
spoken through the Prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness
of sins. We look for the resurrection of the dead,
and the life of the world to come. AMEN.

Note: “One holy catholic and apostolic church” - catholic
means universal (not the Roman Catholic Church). It refers to the reality that the church of Jesus exists around the world and not simply in our one local church.

FATHER WHO ART IN HEAVEN

*For you did not receive a spirit that makes you a slave
again to fear, but you received the spirit of sonship. By
him we cry, “Abba, Father” (Rom. 8:17). God sent His
Son... that we might receive the full rights of sons (Gal.
4:6-7).*

Jesus, I pause now to ponder the miracle that, in
Your name, I can approach the eternal, infinite God
of the universe as “Abba (Daddy), Father.” I am in
awe, Jesus, that You would give to me Your price-
less relationship with the Father. Thank you for
adopting me, Lord, for giving me a new core identity
as “Abba’s child.” Your love is beyond human com-
prehension. Make right all my false ideas of You, so
that now, I fall freely into Your arms. I receive Your
infinite love that spurs You to run to me, throw Your
arms around me and kiss me (Lk. 15:20-21). Help
me to not fear and to let go of my anxieties and sim-
ply be at home with You, Abba.

HALLOWED BE THY NAME

The greatest need of the world is for people to know
You, God, as You really are- that Your Name be
central, not mine. Father, reveal Your glory as
Abba, that You are close to every human being and
truly worthy of our trust. Do this first in me and then
in those around me. Jesus, You came to reveal
God’s name as “Abba”, cutting through our many
wrong perceptions of God. May God’s real identity
be known. May the whole world (my family, work-
place, church, city, nation, world) have an experi-
ence of Your infinite love and generosity as Abba!
And may Your love enable us to trust You—for the
good as well as the bad, the successes as well as
the failures, the joys and the sorrows. I surrender to
You my fears, and I listen to Your voice that whis-
pers to me: “All is well, and all will be well.” May all
the world do the same.

THY KINGDOM COME

Lord, may Your kingdom come, not mine, nor
anyone else’s. And may it come first in me and
then to those around me. I open up every area
of my life to Your rule and activity. Father, help
me see the mustard seeds of Your kingdom all
around me. Teach me to wait patiently for You.
Help me, and those around me, not to be
discouraged by small beginnings or disheart-
ened because Your work seems hidden. Give
me eyes to see. May Your kingdom come and
radically uproot evil- first in me and then in my
family, neighbors, church, workplace, city, the
governing officials of our country, and in the
world.

THY WILL BE DONE (ON EARTH AS IT IS IN HEAVEN)

Lord, may Your will be done, not mine. And
may Your will come first in me and then to
those around me. You know how easy it is for
me to live and forget about Your will or desires.
Help me, Lord, not to run away from Your will
like Jonah. Grant me courage to faithfully sur-
render to You. Help me listen to You.

As Thomas Merton prayed: My Lord God, I
have no idea where I am going, I do not see
the road ahead of me, I cannot know for certain
where it will end. Nor do I really know myself,
and the fact that I think I am following Your will
does not mean that I am actually doing so. But
I believe that the desire to please You does in
fact please You. And I hope I have that desire
in all that I am doing. I hope that I will never do
anything apart from that desire. And I know
that if I do this, You will lead me by the right
road, though I may know nothing about it.
Therefore I trust You always though I may
seem to be lost and in the shadow of death. I
will not fear, for You are ever with me, and You
will never leave me to face my perils alone.

(Thoughts in Solitude, 81)