

Back to the Basics

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

Fourth Petition

Give us this day our daily bread.

What does this mean? God certainly gives daily bread to everyone without our prayers, even to all evil people, but we pray in this petition that God would lead us to realize this and to receive our daily bread with thanksgiving.

What is meant by daily bread? Daily bread includes everything that has to do with the support and needs of the body, such as food, drink, clothing, shoes, house, home, land, animals, money, goods, a devout husband or wife, devout children, devout workers, devout and faithful rulers, good government, good weather, peace, health, self-control, good reputation, good friends, faithful neighbors, and the like.

We pray for our daily bread because Christ wants us to realize that our entire life depends on God; we look to God for our physical, as well as our spiritual blessings. "Bread" is more than food; it includes everything we need to live on this earth. We are totally dependent on God for everything.

We pray for our "daily" bread, so we learn to receive our blessings with thanksgiving. The blessings are given daily, so we can appreciate and give thanks for them. If God gave us all we need for our entire life at once, we would overindulge and forget that we are dependent on God, since we would have everything we need.

God provides our daily bread by making the land fruitful and giving us the ability to work for what we need. He also expects us to share with those unable to work and be the means by which He supplies their needs.

Fifth Petition

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

What does this mean? We pray in this petition that our Father in heaven would not look at our sins, or deny our prayer because of them. We are neither worthy of the things for which we pray, nor have we deserved them, but we ask that He would give them all to us by grace, for we daily sin much and surely deserve nothing but punishment. So we too will sincerely forgive and gladly do good to those who sin against us.

In this petition we recognize our sinfulness and unworthiness and that all the blessings we receive are given out of pure grace. We have neither earned nor deserved these gifts. We also acknowledge our desire to be like Christ and forgive others as He has forgiven us. This is the highest calling of a Christian.