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Series: Just What We Need
Message: Kingdom Living

Transcribed Message
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Matthew 6:10

I am quite certain that most of you many of you have heard of a man named Johan George Ferdinand Mueller. Most of you know him as George Mueller perhaps. George Mueller was a man of extraordinary faith and prayer. If you know his story, you know that he ran an orphanage in England and over the course of his life he served over 10,000 orphans. As you can also imagine, the needs were extraordinary. He prayed often for the meeting of those needs. Here is one account that is somewhat familiar but it's good to hear again God's supply of this man's need and for these children. "The morning we woke up, all the plates and the cups and the bowls on the table were empty. There was no food in the larder and no money to buy food. The children were standing and waiting for their morning meal when Mueller said, 'Children, you know we must be in time for school.' Then lifting up his hands he prayed, 'Dear Father, we thank you for what you are going to give us to eat.' There was a knock at the door. The baker stood there and said. 'Mr. Mueller. I couldn't sleep last night. Somehow I felt you didn't have bread for breakfast this morning and the Lord wanted me to give you some. So I got up at 2 AM and I baked some fresh bread and I have brought it to you.' Mr. Mueller thanked him and no sooner had he left and there was a second knock at the door. It was the milkman. He announced that his milk cart had broken down near the orphanage and he would like to give the cans of milk to the children so he could move his wagon and have it repaired."

Let me ask you this. Do you think trust in God's daily provision of food is an extraordinary expectation or is it basic Christianity 101? Let's see if we can find the answer in what Jesus says in what we refer to as the Lord's prayer. We look this morning at the 6th chapter again in verse 11. If you've been here for the last few weeks, you might be getting concerned and think these people only do one verse a week. How

is it that we're ever going to get through anything here? That is not true. there have been occasions where we've done as many as two verses on a Sunday. No. It's just that there's so much in each one of these verses. By the way, there's about 31,106 verses in the Bible. It would only take us 598 years if we went verse by verse one at a time. But since we don't live in the age of Methuselah, we better go ahead and take a little bit faster pace. Here's what we want to see this morning. Praying daily for God to supply our need is not so much about getting stuff. It is certainly that. We're asking God for specific things, but I think far more than that it is the ability for us to see the great sufficiency of God and for us to put our dependence on Him.

So quickly, a review again this morning of the Lord's prayer. It starts in my mind that we can use the word "invitation". It is not necessarily written in that specific way, other than when Jesus was asked, he said to the disciples pray like this. He started off and said "our Father". We come to our Father because we come in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. That is our invitation into God's family. That's our means into this family that we belong to. Once we're in the family, we have this unhindered access and Jesus said to call Him "Abba", to call Him "Father". We have this standing invitation to come.

The second thing I think we've seen is this matter of adoration. We've looked at the fact that we're in the presence of the King, our Father. He is the one that we are personally related to and we're in this family relationship. It is also a transcendent God that we're calling out to. it is our Father who is in heaven. We want the fame of His name to be great. We want it to grow. We want it to expand, to increase. We want with the psalmist to be able to declare that there is nobody like our God. He is unique and no one like Him.

Lastly, I see that there is transformation. There's transformation in that we're praying we want Your kingdom to come. We want Your will to be done. In effect, we're asking that God would align our lives with His. We're asking that God would align our lives with His will, with His purposes. We want to be able to show to the world that He's our Father. How is it that the world knows that God is our father? Jesus answered that very clearly and specifically in Matthew 5:16. Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works and glorify your Father who is in heaven. If that

transformation is not happening, then the world has no idea that God is our Father. They have no way of looking at our life and seeing any difference between us and somebody else and concluding that we want His name to be great. We want His fame to increase and grow. So here it is, this matter of coming into His presence because we're invited to always do so, to come in the spirit and heart of adoration and allow that to transform us so that the world actually sees our Father. As we said last week, we're trying to make the invisible visible. That is really what's going on. We want the invisible to become visible. The reality of this prayer in our life.

We now transition from this focus on God to now we're focusing on our daily lives. In this 11th verse, it's one day at a time. What is before us here? One day at a time. We are to pray for God to provide first of all what it is that we need. We're to pray for God to provide what we need. What are we asking for? Again, we look at the 11th verse and it seems pretty clear, doesn't it? Give us this day our daily bread. We're asking for God to provide for bread. Now that seems about as obvious as it could be, but not so fast, my friends, because there are a lot of answers given to what do we understand this word "bread" to mean. As you pull a few commentaries off the shelf, it's kind of interesting to see how this is answered.

One suggested that Jesus had in view of the Eucharist, the Lord's Supper and the bread that is broken and shared which is to represent His body. Another kind of went in a similar direction and said we aren't exactly sure but it's an indication of the spiritual food that sustains us. Someone else made that a little more concrete and said it's the Word of God. The Word of God we know is to be like bread to us. Somebody else that it was eschatological manna. I would use that occasionally if I was you. I mean you could really throw some people off if you said have you asked God for your eschatological manna for today. I don't know what that means. I don't know what he indicated by that, but that was one suggestion. Somebody said no, Jesus is the bread of life. He said that in John 6. I'm the bread of life. Why do you suppose that you have all of these various answers given to what seems at first read to be pretty obvious? Give us this day our daily bread. What is it that as people are engaged in this prayer would cause them to go and think of other things? Not that any of those are bad, but why would they want to do that? I think actually it's somewhat understandable because what

have we been doing to this point? What has been the focus of this prayer? To this point the focus of the Lord's prayer has been on God. It's been on God. It's been on His glory. It's been on His name. It's been on His fame. It's been on His program, on His character, on His will, on His plan. We have this glorious beginning to the Lord's prayer in which the focus is very much on this transcendent God who is not like any other. And then we're supposed to go from the glory of heaven to asking about groceries? It can't be that mundane, can it? It can't be that earthy. That just doesn't fit with what seems to be transpiring here in the minds of some as they have tried to figure out what it is that Jesus is telling us.

Yet I think the context would be very comfortable with us simply saying this is just as we would read it. Give us this day our daily bread. Every culture has a basic sustenance, a basic sustaining food. In many cultures it is bread. I'd personally like to be a part of that culture. I think I would do well in Italy and if the bread is kind of a daily thing I would enjoy that. For many countries of the world it's rice. For others it is beans. As I read my Bible in the millennium, I think it's ice cream. I mean, there's lots of possibilities here. But why can't it be just what Jesus seems to be indicating? Give us today physical food, bread for our bodies. I think when you get to the end of the chapter, and we'll get there trust me at some point, Jesus helps us with that because He says you don't need to worry about what you going to eat it. You don't need to worry about what you're going to wear. You don't need to worry about the daily things. Why not? Because God has got that for you. He is going to take care of you. Here is a picture to me of our father's care. Paul didn't have any trouble in 1 Corinthians 10:31 stepping into the very world of the mundane and the daily and say whatever you do, whether you're eating or whether you're drinking, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God. Sometimes the Bible is to be understood just exactly as it reads.

I think though it would be unnecessary to limit what Jesus says here just to physical bread. I think we can expand this and I think we can say that it is anything that we need to live. What Jesus really has in view here for us is surely our Father's concern for us is more than just food. He's concerned that we have food to eat for the daily provision. It would also include the clothes we wear, a place to live, shelter for ourselves and for our family, health, a job, transportation. I think you can put into the idea of that

word any practical personal material need. Jesus says just as we noted at the end of verse 6 that He is concerned about all of those things. After all, doesn't Paul say in Philippians 4 that my God shall supply all of your needs according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Doesn't James tell us in the 1st chapter that every gift is from above. Every good and every perfect gift comes down from above from the Father of lights with whom there is no variable. So everything that we receive that falls into that physical practical day-to-day living God is concerned about. Jesus speaks to all of those things here. Whatever you need to sustain life, you pray for that.

Last month when Bonnie and I went up to Omaha for commencement at Grace, we were 100 miles out of town coming back on Sunday morning. Bonnie looked for her wallet and it wasn't there. You know that feeling of dread that comes when you reach for your wallet and what you expect to have right before you is not there. Your mind begins to go to a thousand different places, doesn't it? She's trying to work back and think where did I last remember having that billfold? She did the best she could and thinking back she knew where she thought she had it last. It was a bit of a mystery. So we called Mary and asked her to look for the billfold in their house. We searched the vehicle thinking maybe it fallen out somewhere. It was nowhere to be found. We even made a call to a merchant that was open that Sunday morning and asked if they had found the billfold. So we did the only thing we could. We prayed. Bonnie really doesn't want to go to the driver office and get another license and go get another Social Security card and get another this and another that another one of these. I don't know, Bonnie, didn't you have like \$300 or \$400 in cash that time in your billfold? We get home. No sign. No indication. Then Bonnie gets a personal message on social media from somebody in Omaha saying hey I've got your wallet here and it appears everything is in it and what do you want me to do? Well, we had Mary go get it and mail it back to us. What is that? That is give us this day our daily bread. That is part of God's care for His children. There's a need in our life. There's something that we are calling out to God to do on our behalf.

Here's the thing. He says it's about what we need. My God shall supply, Paul says in Philippians 4, all your needs according to His riches in glory. All of your necessities I think is the way we could see that. Jesus said pray that God would give

you your daily bread, not your daily cake. What is it that you need? What are the necessities of life? Not the luxuries, but what are the necessities that we need? Here's the problem for us though. Living as we do in a world of affluence, we get those mixed up sometimes. We forget what it is that we need by way of necessity and we get used to the luxuries. Sometimes we aren't altogether clear on the difference between the two. I can't think of a better illustration of this than the televangelist within the last week who asked his supporters to send in a mere \$54 million so that he could buy a new Falcon 7X personal jet to fly around and share the gospel. I'll let you decide, but he wanted it in cash so he could pay for it up front. He did say that he would give up one of his other jets or one of his other planes if they did provide. Is that a necessity or is that a luxury? Maybe that has to be answered within the human heart. Jesus says pray to your Father that He would give you your daily bread.

Let me ask you this. What is it that keeps us from asking? Here is a straightforward invitation to bring to your heavenly Father the basic needs of life and ask Him to provide. What is it that keeps us from asking? I think it's very easy to live as if we can provide these things for ourselves. Remember the account in Exodus when the Lord was providing for the children of Israel literally their daily bread, the manna. He told them it's going to be out there every morning. Go get what you need for the day. Don't get what you need for tomorrow. Get what you need for the day. And, by the way, when it comes to the Sabbath, get what you need a little bit extra on Friday because it'll carry over and will provide for you on the Sabbath as well. Don't collect extra because if you do, it's going to spoil. In Deuteronomy 8:3 Moses wrote, "We don't live by bread alone but by every word out of the mouth of God." Clearly God's message and intent to His children in that occurrence was this very truth. It was this matter of dependency on God. It was a matter of realizing that every day it is God that you're waiting on and trusting to meet these needs. It is His desire that our eyes are on the primary source of these things and not the secondary. If you're like me, you easily move your eyes off of the primary source in which James says every good and perfect gift comes down from above. I move myself into that place and I give credit to the secondary cause, which is whatever I may be doing to make that happen. We're warned about that. We do go to work. We do all that we can to earn a wage. We are the ones who are encouraged to

work hard and we buy bread. We provide for our needs and we do many things in this chain as the secondary cause. We may not say it but the attitude that we often adopt is though we are the primary givers of these things, the primary source. Very often our attitude and our life is one of self-sufficiency and self-confidence. Jesus wants us to see that it is our Father who is giving our daily bread. The Bible actually doesn't say God helps those who help themselves, even though we heard that a couple of weeks ago right here on this platform in that Christian cliché game. But we do know that when God closes the door, he does open a window. No, that doesn't have anything to do with this, I just like that phrase. No, God doesn't help those who help themselves. God is the giver. We are the recipients. Pray that God would provide what you need.

Secondly, pray for God to provide when we need it. When do we need it? According to Jesus, we need it every day. Pray every day for God to provide. Daily, regularly, repeatedly, continuously. This word "daily" in verse 11 is a Greek word that is used only two times in all of the New Testament. It is used only once in the Lord's prayer in Matthew's Gospel and in Luke's Gospel. It's not found anywhere else in the New Testament. There's been a lot of discussion about what exactly this word means. Oftentimes, one of the ways we build an understanding of these different words and vocabulary in Scripture is to see how they're used in different contexts in different places. In this case, there were none. In fact, there weren't even any indications of this word being used in secular Greek literature. It kind of confounded people for a while. What are we exactly to be understanding as to what's going on here? And then in 1925, an archaeologist uncovered some kind of a fragment. This word was used on that fragment and it was almost as if it was a grocery list type of thing and the person had written what they needed every day. They used this word. It gave us a very clear into the idea that this is something that every day we need to sustain our life.

I think as you look at this, the lessons that Jesus wants us to pull out is twofold. We are to live as God intends us to live, and that is one day at a time. We are to live one day at a time. The challenge for us, I suppose in some respects, may be greater. I don't know. You look over the generations and centuries of time and look back at Exodus. What did those people do? Some of them went and collected more. Why did they do that? Why did they collect more than they needed for the day? Because they

weren't living one day at a time. They were trying to look ahead and grab a little bit for the next day. They weren't living with the mindset of trusting God to meet their needs for daily bread. We do that too. In Jesus's Day, this must have struck with those people with a little bit more force because many of them did live from day to do. They would go to work, get paid, and then go get food to eat. They didn't have a pantry stockpiled with canned goods. They didn't have a freezer loaded with food that would carry on for an indefinite period of time. They didn't even have any way of preserving food because they didn't have preservatives to keep anything from spoiling. Here God says pray every day for what you need.

Why in the world do you and I pray every day for our daily needs when we have food for not just today, we have food for the rest of the week already? We have food in some cases for the month in our pantry. Some of you are survivalists. You have food for years. By the way, would you slip your hand up so we can see who you are? And yet that's what Jesus says to us, doesn't He? He says pray every day. What is that? It is a daily reminder of the brevity and frailty of life. That's why Jesus says to us pray. Pray every day that God will supply your need for that day because life is short and frail. In James Chapter 4, listen to Verse 13: "Come now, you who say, 'Today or tomorrow we will go into such and such a town and spend a year there and trade and make a profit' – yet you do not know what tomorrow will bring. What is your life? For you are a mist that appears for a little time and then vanishes. Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we will live and do this or that.' As it is, you boast in your arrogance. All such boasting is evil. So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin." The truth is we can only live one day at a time. We can't live in tomorrow. We may not even get tomorrow. We can only live in today. So we pray this prayer. Every day when we pray this prayer, it reminds us of the brevity and frailty of life, and reminds us of the truthworthiness of God.

Now look at the last thing. Pray for God to provide for ourselves and for others. As you read that 11th verse, give us this day our daily bread, what are we confronted with yet again? We're confronted again with plural pronouns. Give us our daily bread. I want you to see two things. There is certainly personal responsibility. There's personal responsibility. The Scriptures teach that in all aspects. Paul Instructed Timothy that one

of the obligations that every one of us has is to provide for those within our family, within our immediate family. The one who does not provide, he said, is worse than an unbeliever. Our first responsibility is to those within our own family and that is clear. The Scriptures intend for us to take that one. Work is one of the ways that we do that. One of the ways that God meets that need. That's why Paul says in 2Thessalonians 3:10, If you don't work, you don't eat. There's a connection n there. There is a personal responsibility there. Probably a greater danger in a group like this this morning is not indolence and laziness. Probably a greater danger is a drivenness to get more and more. Here's the balance of that. There's the balance of personal responsibility.

Then I want you to see there's personal generosity. And I am not alone. All the way through this prayer, we have been reminded that we're not alone, that this is a family life experience that we share together. And here it comes to us again. Give us our daily bread. I'm not just asking for myself. I'm also asking for others as well. There is an underlying understanding of generosity and sharing. The Biblical worldview is just so unique from the world that we live in. A Biblical worldview at so many different points sets us apart and makes us different and distinct from the way the world thinks and the way we would naturally think. Paul actually says in Ephesians 4 verse 28 that one of the reasons that we work is so we might have to share with those who are in need. When you get up and go to work tomorrow, Paul says in Ephesians 4:28, one of the reasons that you do that is that God will bless you through that work so that you can then not just have for yourself, but that you will have a means by which you can share with others. I think that's what's in view here. Clearly, Jesus warns the goal of life is not to collect all of this stuff for ourselves. The goal of life is not to build a big barn and when you need a bigger barn, you go and build a bigger one. The goal in life is not to start off with a mini-storage unit and then when that one gets full to go and get another one. We are by nature going against that flow and we're sharing with those who had a need.

Martin Luther had an interesting take on this part of the prayer. He saw a social and civic aspect to our Lord praying in this way in terms of this sharing idea and this collective concern for each other and this sense of generosity. He said as you're praying this prayer, what you're really praying for your culture, your society, your community is that you're praying that there will be a good job. You're really praying that there will be

adequate compensation to workers. You're really praying for good working conditions. You're praying for social justice in ways that it needs to be evidence for the society to flourish and function. I just thought it was in a neat way to think beyond ourselves to realize that God does want to use us to be a blessing to others. As we pray, our Father give us this day our daily bread, we pray that because we have needs and we pray that even more importantly because it shows to us and it underscore to us the great sufficiency of our God and of our dependency upon Him.

What do we take away? Give us this day our daily bread. Look at that little short statement of our Lord. It seems to me if we would pray this prayer as Jesus has instructed daily, there would be some very specific outcomes. I'd suggest three. I think there would be a growing spirit of gratitude. We would be that much more grateful. This prayer keeps us from a sense of spiritual amnesia, thinking that we're really the ones that are doing it, that we can do this apart from God, that we can supply our needs irrespective of our dependency upon Him. It keeps putting us back on the right perspective, the primary source of blessing. Remember what the writer of Proverbs said in the 30th chapter and verse 7: "Two things I ask of you; deny them not to be before I die: Remove far from me falsehood and lying; give me neither poverty nor riches; feed me with the food that is needful for me, lest I be full and deny you and say, 'Who is the Lord?' or lest I be poor and steal and profane the name of my God." He just wanted to be in that sweet spot of gratitude to God for what He was providing. Paul says in Colossians 2:6 we should be abounding in thanksgiving.

I think secondly we would be more content. We would be more content. 1 Timothy 6:8 says "But if we have food and clothing, with these we will be content." That is the great missing virtue in our society. It is any sense of contentment. There is a constant push for more and more, and for bigger and bigger, and for better and better. Yet Jesus brings us back and He says we need to push against greed and covetousness and this unending desire to feel that you always need something more. Here it is. Just give me, Father, what I need for today, my daily bread.

Thirdly, it's trusting. It's reminding us to live by faith. It reminds us to live one day at a time. We're trusting God to meet our need. Isaac Singer said, "I only pray when I'm in trouble, but I'm in trouble all the time. So I pray all the time." That's the heart of it. I'm

trusting God all of the time. I'm in need all of the time, and God is there to meet and provide for that need. My friends, I am so grateful this morning that our gracious God cares about the practical, mundane, earthly things of our lives. He has promised to provide according to our need. I'm even more thankful that He is interested and concerned for my spiritual needs. He's made provision for that as well. My need for forgiveness, my need for someone to break into my life and free me from my sinfulness, my selfishness, my self-centeredness, my inability to do anything that pleases God that would gain me any kind of eternal merit or grace. God has provided the answer in the person of His Son, Jesus. That's the basis of the invitation into this prayer. This is a family prayer for those who have put their faith and trust in Christ, for those who have been adopted into God's family because they believed that Jesus was the Son of God. When He came and died on the cross, He did so for you and for me. When we simply believe that that was enough, God says He gives to us the gift of eternal life.

Let's pray. Father God, we thank You for Jesus. We thank You for His life. We thank You for His words. We thank You for His love. We thank You for His sacrifice and Lord, that has opened up to us our relationship with You that is eternal in nature, that will last forever. We're so thankful for that. Lord, in this life you have said we will have trouble, but you have also said that you are the God who will meet and supply all our needs according to the riches in glory in Christ Jesus. Thank You for that. We're grateful for Your grace and mercy. In Jesus's name, amen.