



a study on
PRAYER



Yes, No & Maybe

1. The people sitting near me talk about more trivial things than I do.
2. I'm pretty good at providing all of the necessities of life that I need.
3. I get irritated when a needy person talks to me.
4. Most people don't ask God for the small stuff, because they don't want to bother Him.
5. When Jesus referred to himself as "the bread of life," he wasn't referring to your physical need for bread, he was referring to your spiritual needs.

Dig Deeper

› **READ Matthew 6:11** (NIV)
"Give us today our daily bread."

› **11a Give us today our daily** - [dos hēmn sēmeron...hēmōn ton epiousion - δος ἡμιν σημερον...ἡμῶν τον ἐπιουσιον] The word "daily" has been the source of a great controversy. The problem stems from the fact that this is the only occurrence of the word in all of Greek literature. It was found once in a nonliterary source on a papyrus fragment that contained a grocery list where it seemed to indicate the requirements of the day, though the meaning is not crystal-clear. Linguists today tell us the word can mean either "today's bread" or "tomorrow's bread," though many prefer the latter. So the Lord's Prayer probably literally reads, "Give us this day our bread for tomorrow," as the margins of the Revised Standard Version and New English Bible have it.

• What opinion do you think most people have? 1) Pray to God about all of the nitty-gritty things in your life; or 2) Only talk with God about the vital things of life.

• Are we supposed to depend on God for what we eat daily? What level of dependence or independence do you think God wants us to pray for here?

Dig Deeper... Continued

» **11b Bread** - [ton arton - τον ἄρτον] The basic meaning of “Give us today our daily [or tomorrow’s] bread” is that we are to pray for our physical needs. The early church fathers rejected this plain meaning and spiritualized the bread to mean the bread of Communion. Jerome called this bread, in his translation of the Bible, Panem nostrum supersubstantialem or super-substantial bread—bread that is more than physical. The main reason he did this was because it just did not seem right after the first three upward petitions for God’s glory to immediately switch to something so crass as asking for our material well-being. The first part of the prayer is completely selfless and now to pray for bread seemed so selfish and materialistic.

- Is it selfish to ask God for your physical needs?

« Jesus is counseling his followers to pray for necessities, not luxuries, and for what is needed now, not a great store for many days to come. By confining the petition to present needs Jesus teaches a day-by-day dependence on God.

- How do we see God’s character through his model of prayer here?

« “Give us today our daily bread” is an invitation to come to God with requests that others might call small. One of the precious realities of our Christian life is that God cares for the simple, ordinary, day-to-day things of life. Jesus taught us that even supposedly trivial matters are important to God. Our Lord took babies in his arms and loved them and blessed them when his disciples wanted to send them away. He bestowed his special love upon the seemingly worthless existences of those who were ignored and looked down on—the lepers, the lame, the mentally ill. God cares whether his people are warm, well-fed, and well-housed.

- Why do you think Jesus commands us to pray “give **us**,” and not “give **me**.”?

• What does it tell you about God’s character that he is so concerned about the trivial things of life?



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My Prayer...

1. What are the “daily” things of my life that I’ve avoided praying about?
2. What trivial things have I been keeping to myself, instead of giving to God?
3. What new aspect of God’s character does He want me to know?