

## ***What Would It Take to Finally Relax?***

Matthew 6:9–13 • Exodus 16:1–5, 13–18 • John 6:32–35

In the series “Real Talk: Honest Conversations with God”

Let me ask you a question, and I want you to sit with it before you answer.

What would it take for you to feel like you had enough — enough security, enough certainty, enough control — that you could finally relax?

Maybe it’s a number in the bank account. A clean bill of health. Your kids settled. The relationship repaired. Most of us have some version of that threshold — the point at which we’d feel like we could breathe.

Here’s what I’ve noticed: that threshold tends to move. We get to the number we thought we needed, and it quietly goes up. We clear one hurdle and immediately start scanning for the next. The finally-safe feeling never quite arrives — because what we’re really trying to do is secure ourselves against an uncertain future. And you can’t actually do that.

So we keep reaching. Keep managing. Keep pretending — to ourselves and to each other — that we’re more in control than we are.

This cuts across almost every kind of person in a room like this. For some it’s financial. For some it’s health. For some it’s relational — the fear that things could fall apart, that people could leave.

For some it’s quieter — just a low-grade hum of unease, a sense that you need to stay on top of things and not let anything slip.

What all of those share is this: they are attempts to be the source of our own security. To be self-sufficient enough that we don’t have to depend on anything — or anyone — outside ourselves.

Including God.

And Jesus, who knows us better than we know ourselves, sits his disciples down and teaches them to pray. Right in the middle of the prayer — after all the cosmic language about God’s name and kingdom — he gives them this: *“Give us this day our daily bread.”*

Not yearly bread. Not enough-to-feel-secure bread. Not I-can-finally-relax bread.

Daily bread. One day at a time.

It sounds simple. But if you’ve been running the self-sufficiency script for a while, it’s quietly one of the most disorienting things Jesus ever said.

Notice where this line sits in the prayer. After God’s name, God’s kingdom, God’s will — only then do we ask for bread. That sequence matters. Ordinary need belongs in honest conversation with God. But daily bread is not a standalone survival request. It’s part of a whole reordered life.

I want to stay with the word “daily” for just a moment, because there’s something worth knowing. The word Jesus uses here only appears twice in the entire Bible — right here and in Luke’s version of the prayer. Translators have been puzzling over it ever since. Some render it “bread for today.” Some say, “bread sufficient for living.” Some simply “what we need.”

All of those are probably right. Because the word resists being pinned down to just breakfast. It’s asking for what is necessary — not stockpiled, not surplus — but what is genuinely needed to live. Strength to live. Courage to live. Wisdom, grace, the presence of God — not just survival, but real human flourishing.

We’re not praying for more than we need. We’re not praying for a stockpile. We’re praying for what is necessary for today.

And notice: it's still for today. Not the whole future secured. Jesus teaches us to ask: what do I need to live faithfully today? The prayer is not designed to eliminate vulnerability. It's designed to reorient us toward the One who meets us in it.

God has been teaching this since the wilderness. Israel is free from Egypt but not yet home — hungry, exposed, afraid. And God answers not with a lecture but with provision. Manna. Bread from heaven. Every morning, there it is.

But God gives it one day at a time. Gather enough for the day. No stockpiling. No getting ahead of it. People tried anyway. It spoiled overnight.

The manna is not just provision. It's formation. God deliberately structures the gift so it cannot be converted into self-sufficiency. You cannot use manna to stop needing God. That's the point.

Every morning, open hands. Every morning, bread. The wilderness is not a punishment. It's a school. And the lesson is not "God gives just enough to survive." The lesson is: God can be trusted — one day at a time. That turns out to be more durable than anything we can stockpile for ourselves.

In John 6, Jesus has just fed five thousand people. The crowd wants more — a permanent supply. "Our ancestors had manna. Can you do that every day?" They want the self-sufficiency problem solved once and for all.

And Jesus reframes everything. He says, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never go hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty."

The crowd wants a commodity. Jesus offers a person. Remember that word we looked at — what is necessary for living? Jesus is the answer to that

prayer at its deepest level. Beneath every ordinary hunger — for security, certainty, control, enough — there is a deeper hunger that no threshold can satisfy.

We don't just need things to work out. We need Christ. And that is exactly why this is a fitting Sunday to come to the table.

Three ways to carry this prayer into the week.

First: Notice the threshold. When you catch yourself thinking “if only I had \_\_\_\_\_, I could finally relax” — pause. Name it. Bring it to God: “I'm trying to secure myself against tomorrow. Help me trust you for today.”

Second: Ask for today's bread. Each morning: “God, what I need to live today is \_\_\_\_\_.” Not the whole situation resolved. What do you need to live faithfully today? Be specific. Jesus was.

Third: Remember it says “our.” This prayer is communal. God may use you to answer it for someone else — through a meal, a call, a gift, a hand extended at the right moment. Sometimes God gives daily bread to us. Sometimes God gives daily bread through us.

And so we come to this table.

This is not a table for people who have secured themselves — who have crossed the threshold and can finally relax. It is a table for people with open hands.

At this table you cannot stockpile. You receive what is given — bread broken, cup poured out — and it is enough. And then you come back. Week after week. Because that is the shape of the life Jesus is forming in us.

The One who taught us to pray “give us this day our daily bread” is the same One who said, “I am the bread of life.” He is not handing us a resource and stepping back. He is giving us himself.

So come with open hands. That is all the prayer asks. That is all this table asks.

Come hungry, and receive.

This is an open table — which means it belongs to Christ, not to us, and Christ’s invitation is wider than we sometimes imagine. You don’t have to be a member of this church, or a lifelong Christian, or someone who has finally gotten it together. The only thing this table requires is what the whole sermon has been asking for: open hands.

If you came in here carrying something you haven’t been able to set down — a worry, a weight, a need you haven’t known how to name — bring it with you. That’s not a reason to stay back. That’s the posture Christ invites.

Come hungry. Come honest. The bread and the cup are for you.

## **The Great Thanksgiving**

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give our thanks and praise.**

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give  
thanks to you —

*"Our Father, who art in heaven."*

***"Our Father, who art in heaven."***

You formed us in your image and breathed into us the breath of life. When  
we turned away, your love remained steadfast. You delivered us from  
captivity, made covenant to be our God, and spoke to us through the  
prophets.

*"Hallowed be your name!"*

***"Hallowed be your name!"***

And so, with your people on earth and all the company of heaven, we join  
their unending hymn:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might, heaven and earth  
are full of your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is he  
who comes in the name of the Lord. Hosanna in the highest.**

Holy are you, and blessed is your Son Jesus Christ, who came to show us  
how near you are, and to remind us that our work in the world is this:

*"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven."*

***"Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in  
heaven."***

He healed the sick, fed the hungry, and welcomed the outcast. By his suffering, death, and resurrection you gave birth to your church and made with us a new covenant by water and the Spirit.

He taught us that everything we need — for body, for soul, for this day — comes as gift from your hand.

*"Give us this day our daily bread."*

***"Give us this day our daily bread."***

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks, broke it, and said: *"Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."*

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks, and said: *"Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant, poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."*

And so, in remembrance of these mighty acts, we offer ourselves as a holy and living sacrifice, as we proclaim the mystery of faith:

**Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.**

Pour out your Holy Spirit on us gathered here, and on these gifts of bread and cup. Make them be for us the body and blood of Christ, so that we may be for the world the body of Christ, redeemed by his blood.

By your Spirit make us one with Christ, one with each other, and one in ministry to all the world — until Christ comes in final victory and we feast at the heavenly banquet.

*"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever."*

***"For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever."***

Through your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours, almighty God, now and forever. **Amen.**