

## Heidelberg Catechism Q&A 125- Pray God will meet your needs to do his work

Beloved in the Lord:

The first thing you pray for in the Lord's Prayer is, "Hallowed be your name."

God's name will be hallowed when his kingdom comes.

For God's kingdom to come his will must be done - his Word must be preached and obeyed.

For God's Word to be preached and obeyed you need sustenance.

So hear about this 4<sup>th</sup> petition for sustenance.

Our headings are:

The Nature of the 4<sup>th</sup> Petition

The Necessity of the 4<sup>th</sup> Petition

Our goals are: That as God's children through Jesus Christ who desire to work for the establishment of God's kingdom and for God's name to be hallowed, you will pray God will meet your physical needs.

125 Q. WHAT DOES THE FOURTH REQUEST MEAN?

A. Give us this day our daily bread means, Do take care of all our physical needs so that we come to know that you are the only source of everything good, and that neither our work and worry nor your gifts can do us any good without your blessing. And so help us to give up our trust in creatures and to put trust in you alone.

### The Nature of the Petition

#### 1. What is this "daily bread" for which you ask?

Jesus used the common word "bread" because it was the most needful thing to the body, but his intention in the prayer is God will provide everything you need for your body. (The most important need, bread, was used to symbolize everything you need.

So you are asking God for good health, enough strength, a good job, sufficient clothing, and a place to live, etc.

#### 2. When you pray for daily bread, you are recognizing only God is able to give it to you.

James 1: 17 Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow of turning.

**a. You realize you are not self-sufficient, you don't own anything, and you don't deserve anything.** No man does!

This was the truth Nebuchadnezzar had to realize when God made him live with wild animals for 7 years. God humbled him and showed him how helpless he truly was!

**b. You only have stewardship of whatever God gives; you don't have ownership.** Remember how God gave Canaan to Israel and took it away from the Canaanites? The land didn't belong to the Canaanites. The land was God's. **Keep this in mind when you think about how rich you are!** You aren't.

**c. God wants to curb your boastfulness so you must pray.**

Psalm 104: 27 These all wait for You, **That You may give them their food in due season.** 28 What You give them they gather in; **You open Your hand, they are filled with good.** 29 You hide Your face, they are troubled; **You take away their breath, they die and return to their dust.**

**3. When you pray for your daily bread, you are recognizing God is willing to give you what you need.**

**If God provides for animals and grass, won't he provide for you who were redeemed by his Son?**

Matthew 6: 25...do not worry about your life, what you will eat or what you will drink; nor about your body, what you will put on. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? 26 "Look at the birds of the air, for they neither sow nor reap nor gather into barns; yet your heavenly Father feeds them. **Are you not of more value than they?**

**Who else could you go to if you wanted needful things?** He is your Lord!

Psalm 145: 15 The eyes of all look expectantly to You, And You give them their food in due season. 16 You open Your hand And satisfy the desire of every living thing.

**The Devil only gives you poison pills that taste good going down but will soon kill you.**

He literally uses physical drug dealers to give you things you think are good (and even feel good) but will kill you.

#### **4. When you pray for daily bread you are praying for sufficient things.**

**a. You pray for “daily bread,” not “yearly bread.”** (The word “daily” is only used here in the NT, so it is difficult to translate.) It is better to translate it as “sufficient.” So pray for sufficient amount of things you need day by day.

**b. Don’t pray to have enough to “hoard.”** Don’t say: “Lord, give me a perfect house with lots of saving so I don’t have to work anymore but I can dedicate myself to you fully!”

You have to always work, be involved with your family, and be involved in church. So hoarding is out.

**c. Pray for bread. God doesn’t promise cake.** God does not promise luxuries. A famous preacher argued because Jesus had a pillow, he was rich, and because Jesus had a money box and helped the poor, he was rich. Silly! Even the poor, like Jesus, gave. In fact, poor people give more proportionately.

**d. If you have some extras, thank God for it and enjoy it. Then be refreshed to do God’s work!**

#### **5. When you pray for daily bread you are thinking covenantally.**

**a. You don’t pray “Give *me* this day *my* daily bread,” but “Give *us* this day our daily bread.”** You pray for all God’s people, rich and poor alike. Yes, you even have to pray for the rich that God will continue to provide for them! **It is the rich who often provide jobs for the poor!** So pray for them.

**b. But this is not a prayer for communism**— that everyone will have equal amount of wealth (or poverty)- as is common in communism) by force of the civil government. To do that would be sin. 2Corinthians 8:9, Acts 4:32ff. Instead, share what you have of your own free will.

**Be generous with the poor; be generous with *your own* money.**

**c. If you are providentially poor, don’t be ashamed to receive from others.** This is what God intends.

### **The Necessity of the Petition**

#### **1. You pray for your needs because your survival depends on it.**

You need God to provide for you and **bless what you have and what you do.**

Acts 17: 25 "Nor is He worshiped with men’s hands, as though He needed anything, since He **gives to all life, breath, and all things.**

How humbling to those with higher education, higher positions, or exaggerated egos! So much for those who boast about earning their daily bread by the sweat of their brow or by their skills and smarts! They are denying God his glory. **Their ability and gifts are from God.**

If God doesn't bless your work, it will bring curses on you, not a blessing.

So pray before you go to work in the morning pray, and thank him when return home. It is his gift to you. Don't boast about the new car you bought. Be thankful for it.

**2. You pray for your needs because your service to God depends on it.**

**a. You have no means to accomplish God's task for you on earth** – tasks you must do because he is your Creator Acts 17:25- and Re-Creator (Rom 11:36). **God does not give you provisions for daily life just because he wants to be charitable.** God calls you to do his work. That is why he gives anything at all. **You are in this world for him, for his glory.**

**b. God gives to you based on your need to do his work.**

**3. You pray for God to meet your needs because God commands you to pray!**

**a. When you ask you are acknowledging God is the source of all good things.** Does God know you need things necessary for your body? Yes. **Yet he commands you to ask.**

**b. When you pray you are acknowledging he is God of the world (greatness).**

**Acts 14: 17** "Nevertheless He did not leave Himself without witness, in that He did good, **gave us rain from heaven and fruitful seasons, filling our hearts with food and gladness.**"

**c. If you don't pray, you are robbing God of his glory.** He wants you to ask for your needs and to praise him when he gives it to you.

**d. Teach your children to pray for needful things as this is what God commands.**

**4. When God answers your prayers, your faith in strengthened.**

The more you see God's sovereign hand providing for your life and duty, **the more you will trust him.**

Psalm 62: 8 Trust in Him at all times, you people; Pour out your heart before Him; God is a refuge for us. Selah 9 Surely men of low degree are a vapor, Men of high degree are a lie; If they are weighed on the scales, They are altogether lighter than vapor. 10 Do not trust in oppression, Nor vainly hope in robbery; If riches increase, Do not set your heart on them. 11 God has spoken once, Twice I have heard this: That power belongs to God.

You take what God provides in substance and strength and use them.

You go to bed and rest your head on your pillow in peace and quiet at nights.

You don't obsess about what others have or what you wished you had.

You don't get hypertension because the stock market goes down.

You don't become depressed when you don't get to marry that person you thought was the perfect person for you.

You don't whine when you don't get the job you wanted.

5. You pray for God to meet your needs because *men can't meet your needs*.

Those who hope politicians would provide for them from the womb to the tomb are denying God's provision. You should not hear someone who truly believes in God's provision say to the civil government: "I have a right to housing and food."

Listen:

Psalm 146: 3 Do not put your trust in princes, Nor in a son of man, in whom there is no help...7 Who executes justice for the oppressed, Who gives food to the hungry. The LORD gives freedom to the prisoners...9 The LORD watches over the strangers; He relieves the fatherless and widow...

The prophet Jeremiah echoed the same sentiment in an even stronger way.

Jeremiah 17: 5 Thus says the LORD: "Cursed is the man who trusts in man And makes flesh his strength, Whose heart departs from the LORD. 7 "Blessed is the man who trusts in the LORD, And whose hope is the LORD.

The writer of Hebrews puts it a positive, encouraging way. God is your helper! Man isn't!

Hebrews 13: 5 Let your conduct be without covetousness; **be content with such things as you have. For He Himself has said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."**

**6. You pray for God to meet your needs (and he does), to do his work, and you will receive your believer's reward in heaven.**

1Corinthians 15: 58 Therefore, my beloved brethren, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.

### **Conclusion:**

God wants you to pray for your daily needs. **God has the ability and willingness to meet your needs.** If you don't ask for the things you need you won't get them and you won't be properly able to fulfill your covenant responsibilities.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

**1. Acknowledge you are God's covenant child through Christ's work, and this relationship is the means by which he daily provides for you.** There is no prayer without the sacrifice of Jesus. A Hindu can't pray!

**2. Ask your God for bread, not for manna.** Manna fell from the sky, but bread comes through hard work.

**God's provision does not cancel out the work you have to do.** Don't expect to eat without working. If you don't work you mustn't eat.

**God has ordinarily ordained means for providing.**

**3. In God's providence you may be poor.** Sometimes some may work and study hard but don't have a lot. God wants some that way. He uses all kinds of people in different ways for his kingdom. But don't be lazy.

**4. If God gives you more than you need, share.** Don't hoard. The tighter you squeeze your hand, the more likely the honey will escape.

Finally, for those who are not Christians, the thing you need the most is not material things; the thing you need the most is a heart washed in the blood of the Lamb of God. Ask God today to renew you. Without that you will still be in your sins and be lost for all eternity in the terrors of hell.