

ARM Prison Outreach International

"Ministers' Minute" Volume 11 Number 12

THE ANTIDOTE TO ANXIETY "Our Daily Bread" Matthew 6:11

This "MM" is the 12th of 2012 -- and the 132th email sermon overall. "Ministers' Minute" is a free service of encouragement to preachers, chaplains, donors, and Christian workers around the world. This sermon is the fourth in our current series on the Lord's Prayer. Parts 1-3 are archived at the address below. Use it as a devotional, edit it, share it, or use components of it!

May God bless your labors! -- Rod Farthing, Development Director

ARM FAST FACT

ARM's Bible course program (ABA) is sending 88 Courses per DAY to inmates in 2012!

That's 26,808 courses Jan-Oct with 32 new enrollees per day!

NOV-DEC numbers and summary for all 2012 will be out soon!

THE ANTIDOTE TO ANXIETY "Our Daily Bread" Matthew 6:11

"Give Us this day Our Daily Bread" Two stockbrokers were watching the market crash.

One said, *"I'm worried sick!"* The other said, *"I'm not worried at all! I've hired a professional worrier. I pay him to do all my worrying for me, so I don't ever worry about anything."* First guy responded, *"Great idea, but how much does one of those guys cost?"* *"\$100,000 a year!"* *"Where are you going to get that kind of money?"* Reply: *"Hey, that's **his** problem!!"*

What do you worry about most? Finances, Your job, Kids, Kids off to school, Your health, your weight, schedule? This is the age of anxiety- people are uptight about all kinds of things.

Worry has a choke hold on many of us. Worry takes lots of energy, but produces nothing! (Like a rocking chair- no progress!) Someone has reasoned that:

- 40% of all worries about the future never happen.
- 30% of your worries are about the past and things that can't be changed.

- 12% are needless worries about our health.
- 10% are petty worries, not worth worrying about.
- Only about 8% are legitimate concerns.

What is the antidote for worry? **Philippians 4:6** *Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. Don't worry, Pray!*

What do I pray? **Matthew 6:11** *Give us today our daily bread. In that one little sentence Jesus gives three keys to overcoming anxiety. Ask, Remember, and Trust -- A R T*

1. ASK GOD FOR ASSISTANCE. "Give Us"

1. Instead of worry, ask for help. We start to worry when we feel helpless and out of control, but nothing is out of God's control.

2. God really wants you to ask for the help you need. **It is NO BOTHER TO THE FATHER!**

3. Over 20 times in the NT, God says, "Ask!"

Matthew 7:7 *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

James 4:2 *You do not have, because you do not ask God.*

God wants you to JUST ASK when you have a need. He is your Father! Luke 11 tells about an un-neighborly neighbor, and an earthly father. Luke 11:5-13

5 Then he said to them, "Suppose one of you has a friend, and he goes to him at midnight and says, 'Friend, lend me three loaves of bread,

6 because a friend of mine on a journey has come to me, and I have nothing to set before him.'

7 "Then the one inside answers, 'Don't bother me. The door is already locked, and my children are with me in bed. I can't get up and give you anything.'

8 I tell you, though he will not get up and give him the bread because he is his friend, yet because of the man's boldness he will get up and give him as much as he needs.

9 "So I say to you: Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.

10 For everyone who asks receives; he who seeks finds; and to him who knocks, the door will be opened.

11 "Which of you fathers, if your son asks for a fish, will give him a snake instead?

12 Or if he asks for an egg, will give him a scorpion?

13 If you then, though you are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will your Father in heaven give the Holy Spirit to those who ask him!" (NIV)

Luke 18:1 *Then Jesus told his disciples a parable to show them that they should always pray and not give up. The Unjust Judge*

God is our source- He wants you to pray when:

... you don't know what to do- God is your source of wisdom.

... you run out of energy- God is your source of strength.

... you feel like everything is caving in- God is your source of happiness.

... you feel like giving up- God is your source of encouragement.

... you are irritated- God is your source of patience.

... you are overwhelmed with a sense of guilt- God is your salvation.

What you really need, God WANTS to provide. But that doesn't mean He'll always say "Yes."

I asked God to take away my pain. God said, No. It is not for me to take away, but for you to give it up. I asked God to make my handicapped child whole. God said, No. Her spirit was whole, her body was only temporary. I asked God to grant me patience. God said, No. Patience is a by-product of tribulations; it isn't granted, it is earned. I asked God to give me happiness. God said, No. I give you blessings. Happiness is up to you. I asked God to spare me pain. God said, No. Suffering draws you apart from worldly cares and brings you closer to me. I asked God to make my spirit grow. God said, No. You must grow on your own, but I will prune you to make you fruitful. I asked for all things that I might enjoy life. God said, No. I will give you life so that you may enjoy all things. I ask God to help me LOVE others, as much as he loves me. God said...Ahhhh, finally you have the idea.

2. REMEMBER GOD'S RESOURCES. "Bread"

Worry is a sign that we have forgotten God's resources, which are unlimited! NEED BREAD? We might pray to be able to stay away from bread so we can keep our weight in

check! But Bread represents the basic necessities of life. God is concerned about all of your needs and He is more than able to meet them! Listen to these scriptures:

Ephesians 1:7,8 *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace & that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding* **Romans 8:32** *He who did not spare his own Son, but gave him up for us all-- how will he not also, along with him, graciously give us all things?*

If God loved us enough to give His own son as a sacrifice, don't you think you can trust Him with your income, your retirement, your kids, school, problems at work, or anything else!

Not only does God love to give, He has ample resources.

Ephesians 3:20 *Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us,*

Matthew 6:32,33 *For the pagans run after all these things, and your heavenly Father knows that you need them. 33 But seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well. **Note 2 key things:***

[1] Jesus is talking about needs- not wants- IE You don't buy your kids everything they want, because kids want everything! God gives us what we need, not what we want, because He is a loving Father.

[2] Notice the condition- *seek first His kingdom. (Your kingdom, your will)* This promise is for those who are putting God first in their lives. IE Like a teenager who says, "Dad, I need some money, but I hate your guts!" Remember: ***GOD'S ABILITY IS GREATER THAN YOUR ANXIETY!***

A small congregation in the foothills of the Great Smokies built a new sanctuary on a piece of land willed them by a church member. Ten days before the new church was to open, the local building inspector informed the preacher that the parking lot was inadequate for the size of the building. Until the church doubled the size of the parking lot, they would not be able to use the new building. Unfortunately, the church, with its undersized lot, had used every inch of their land except for the mountain against which it had been built. In order to build more parking spaces, they would have to move the mountain out of the back yard. Undaunted, the preacher announced the next Sunday morning that he would meet that evening with all members who had "mountain moving faith." They would hold a prayer session asking God to remove the mountain from the back yard and to somehow provide enough money to have it paved and painted before the scheduled opening dedication service the following week. At the appointed time, 24 of the congregation's 300 members assembled for prayer. They prayed for nearly three hours. At ten o'clock the preacher said the final "Amen." "We'll open next Sunday as scheduled," he assured everyone. "God has never let us down before, and I believe He will be faithful this time too." The next morning, as he was working in his study, there

came a loud knock at this door. When he called "come in," a rough looking construction foreman appeared, removing his hard hat as he entered. "Excuse me, preacher. I'm from Acme Construction Company over in the next county. We're building a huge shopping mall. We need some fill dirt. Would you be willing to sell us a chunk of that mountain behind the church? We'll pay you for the dirt we remove and pave all the exposed area free of charge, if we can have it right away. We can't do anything else there until we get the dirt in and allow it to settle properly." The little church was dedicated the next Sunday as originally planned and there were far more members with "mountain moving faith" on opening Sunday than there had been the previous week! **Would you have shown up for that prayer meeting?** Some people say faith comes from miracles. But others know that **MIRACLES COME FROM PRAYER & FAITH!**

3. TRUST GOD'S TIMING. *This day -- today -- Daily bread-*

We need to learn to trust God's timing. This is often the most difficult step in overcoming worry! Have you ever discovered that God's timing is not the same as yours? I am always in a hurry, but God has perfect timing.

Many times, God causes us to wait for His answers to prayer. He does so for a variety of reasons. First of all, He may want us to really understand what we are asking for, to be sure we really know what we want. Many times, a delay in answering a prayer is a great blessing because we realize that what we asked for is not really what we wanted.

2nd, there is our gratefulness. If we got instant gratification for every prayer request we made, we wouldn't appreciate what we were getting. But if we have to wait for something, we are all the more grateful when it finally comes.

And 3rd, often we ask for things that God wants us to have, but at the time of our asking we are not mature enough spiritually to handle the blessings. So God makes us wait, building our character and our commitment to Him to a point that we will be wise in our use of the blessing when it comes.

Waiting requires faith. You have to trust God's timing instead of worrying. **DAILY BREAD**, not weekly, monthly, or yearly

If today, God gave us all we would need for the rest of our lives, how often do you think we would talk to Him? Daily bread makes us more aware of how dependent we are on God as our source.

The word **DAILY** is found only here in the NT. In 1947 when they discovered the Dead Sea scrolls with much of the OT they also found some fragments that contained this word- they were grocery lists with "**daily's**"- perishables that had to be purchased **daily** and couldn't be stored without refrigeration- IE Milk, Ice Cream, Popsicles

How do I get enough faith to live a **daily** lifestyle?

Romans 10:17 *Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the word of Christ.*

The Bible is God's track record that says He is trustworthy. For forty years in the wilderness, God provided for 3,000,000 on a **daily** basis with manna. Note some observations about manna:

[1] God provided it. No other source. Impossible for the Israelites to manufacture or find it.

[2] The people had to work for it. More people die of worry than work, because more people worry than work. God didn't send down hot TV dinners!

[3] It was a DAILY thing- couldn't be stored or hoarded for the future. Of course, we should be as wise as the ant and plan for the future, but you have to live today.

Psalm 68:19 *Praise be to the Lord, to God our Savior, who **daily** bears our burdens.* God will take care of your tomorrows too!

Matthew 6:34 *Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own.*

Conclusion: Ask, Remember GOD'S RESOURCES, Trust His Timing

Realize that God is your source- not your job- if one faucet shuts down, God can open another very easily. What will be the Results of Asking, Remembering, and Trusting?

1- You will have peace in spite of circumstances when you focus on God who is ultimately in control. Don't panic, pray.

2- You become more generous- you no longer have to hoard things, you can give them away and know that God will provide for you. The offering is a faith quiz- "Am I trusting God?"

Are you willing to trust God?

Listen to Jesus, YOUR Lord and Savior.

John 6:48-51 **I am the bread of life. 49 Your forefathers ate the manna in the desert, yet they died. 50 But here is the bread that comes down from heaven, which a man may eat and not die. 51 I am the living bread that came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever. This bread is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world."**

While walking through the woods one day, a man was surprised to hear a child's voice. He

followed the sound, trying in vain to understand the child's words. When He spotted a boy perched on a rock, He realized why his words had made no sense: He was repeating the alphabet.

"Why are you saying your ABC's so many times?" He asked him.

The child replied, "I'm saying my prayers."

He couldn't help but laugh. "Prayers? All I hear is the alphabet."

Patently the child explained, "Well, I don't know all the words, so I give God the letters. He knows what I'm trying to say."

I don't recommend praying that way. I DO recommend having that child like faith that God knows our needs and wants to meet them in His own time!

Give us this day our Daily Bread. Do you depend on God every day? Do you Ask... Daily... and remember His resources ... and trust Him for the timing and the answers?

ASK HIM TO HELP ... REMEMBER HIS RESOURCES ... TRUST HIS TIMING!

Remember: All "Ministers' Minutes" are archived at:

<http://www.abarc.org/Resources/Ministers%20Minutes/Ministers%20Minutes.htm>

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