



Grain

“Give us each day our daily bread. And forgive us our sins, for we ourselves forgive everyone indebted to us...”
Luke 11:3-4

Field

“...For when you mention and pray for daily bread, you pray for everything that is necessary in order to have and enjoy daily bread and, on the other hand, against everything which interferes with it. Therefore, you must open wide and extend your thoughts not only to the oven or the flour-bin but to the distant field and the entire land, which bears and brings to us daily bread and every sort of sustenance...”

Therefore, it would be very proper to place in the coat-of-arms of every pious prince a loaf of bread instead of a lion, or a wreath of rue, or to stamp it upon the coin, to remind both them and their subjects that by their office we have protection and peace, and that without them we could not eat and retain our daily bread...” —Dr. Martin Luther

Thoughts

In response to Jesus’ mentoring on how to pray, Martin Luther said let’s put a loaf of bread rather than the emblem of a lion in a prince’s coat of arms. Where would we display loaves of bread today to remind us of what leadership is about? What would be proper in the 21st century? How about seeing beyond our partisan politics to find common ground in treating people like human beings? Let’s embrace our differences rather than tell United States citizens who are not white to get out of this country and go home. Racism has been bursting out of hidden coded language into public speech, cheered, and then denied by those who formed the words. We know that racism, coded and blatant, is one of several root causes of poverty.

Luther recognized that asking for daily bread in the Lord’s prayer was about requesting that our physical and spiritual needs be taken care of, while envisioning the same for our neighbor. He took the prayer with him into the market place and courts where he advocated for people vulnerable to being cheated, to the halls of princes to request peace, and to the common chest where the church tried to impact systemic change for the most impoverished. Saying the Lord’s prayer was an exercise in knowing to whom you belonged and who else did as well.

This is how to pray – rest in God to be spiritually nourished; remember the face of your neighbor and let that be the source of how you engage in the world. Pray like this, so that our words silent or spoken are more than a sentiment dismissed in jeering remarks about “thoughts and prayers.” Pray as a way of being, in which we allow the grace of God to make us resistant to lies about who we and others are. But know forgiveness. We will be imperfect as we extend our thoughts to the distant field. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

Cindy