

Lord Teach Us To Pray

"Hallowed Be Your Name"

Lesson 4

INTRODUCTION:

- I. Over the centuries no names have endured more abuse than those belonging to our Heavenly Father and His Son, Jesus Christ.
 - A. It's not at all uncommon to hear their names used as a curse, or mocked in one way or another.
 1. Their names are often treated with disrespect FAR MORE than they are treated with respect or exaltation.
 2. While we cringe or voice displeasure when we hear someone taking God's name in vain, we may want to ALSO examine our OWN heart.
 3. When we show INDIFFERENCE toward God, or we show a lack of RESPECT that is due His name, then we have committed JUST as serious a sin as those who take His name in vain.
 - B. Unfortunately, the most common problem among Christians today is NOT so much showing INDIFFERENCE toward God, as it is not giving Him the RESPECT He is due.

1. When the focus of believers is on how the church is going to meet MY needs, then we clearly have a low view of God.
2. This is why so many churches center their ministries on pop-psychology, self-esteem, entertainment, and a number of other attempts to SUPPOSEDLY meet the needs of its members.
3. What these churches are offering is nothing more than a kind of PLACEBO – a sugar pill that TASTES good, but does absolutely NOTHING in the way of combating the disease of sin.

C. Therefore, it's absolutely essential that EVERY MEMBER OF THE CHURCH clearly understand we exist to bring glory to GOD.

1. When we truly KNOW and GLORIFY God, the needs of our life will be met.
2. But far too many Christians don't truly REVERE God – their actions PROVE their irreverence.
3. Instead of TREMBLING at God's Word, they TWIST His truths or POLLUTE them with all kinds of worldly philosophies.
4. Every one of us needs to be confronted with our REAL need – an understanding of God's holiness and a CLEAR understanding of our own sinfulness.

5. And the ONLY way I know how to do this is to begin with developing a HIGH view of God. We need to take God seriously and respect Him completely.
- II. With THAT in mind, NOW you can understand why prayer should ALWAYS recognize God's majestic glory and our submission to it.
- A. All our petitions, all our needs, and all our problems are subject to Him.
 1. God must have priority in EVERY aspect of our lives, and CERTAINLY when we commune with Him in prayer.
 2. Prayer should NEVER be viewed as a casual routine that gives only PASSING homage to God.
 3. Our prayers should be a profound experience that leads us to reverence, awe, appreciate, honor, and adore the HOLY name of God.

BODY:

- I. When we go back and take a closer look at the Lord's pattern for prayer in His Sermon on the Mount (**Matthew 6:9-13**), one of the first things we notice is that this prayer begins by focusing on God – as our Father in heaven, and as One Whose name is HOLY.

- A. In these opening words, the Lord clearly illustrates the fundamental DUTY of prayer – to give the Lord the PREEMINENCE in our thoughts and in our supplications.
1. Self, and all our needs – whether REAL or only PERCEIVED – must take second place.
 2. Even though God is our loving Father, who desires to meet our every need, our FIRST petition is not for OUR benefit, but for HIS.
 3. And so, the proclamation, “hallowed be YOUR name,” should be seen as a warning against praying self-seeking prayers.
 4. When Jesus gave His disciples this pattern for prayer, He wasn’t just reciting some nice words about God. Instead, Jesus INSISTED that our prayers show respect, reverence, glory, and worship for God.
- B. By focusing our thoughts on the HOLINESS of God’s name, the Lord is teaching us that God’s NAME represents the very nature of His character. In fact, in Scripture a person’s name always represented his character.
1. While God characterized David as “a man after His own heart” (**1 Samuel 13:14**), David also developed a good reputation among the people: (**1 Samuel 18:30**) *“Then the princes of the Philistines went out to war. And so it was, whenever they went out, that*

David behaved more wisely than all the servants of Saul, so that his name became highly esteemed.”

- a. The fact that his name was esteemed meant David himself was esteemed.
 - b. When we say that someone has a good name, we mean there is something about his character worthy of our praise.
2. When Moses went up on Mount Sinai to receive the commandments for the second time, we're told, **(Exodus 34:5-7)**
- "... the LORD descended in the cloud and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the LORD. And the LORD passed before him and proclaimed, 'The LORD, the LORD God, merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation.'"*
- a. Take a closer look at verses 6 and 7, and you will find a list of characteristics that are derived from the name *"The LORD, the LORD God"* – namely,, *"merciful and gracious, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, keeping*

mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.”

- b. Our love and trust of God are not based on His names or titles, but on what lies BEHIND those names – His character.
 - c. That’s why David said, “... *those who know Your name will put their trust in You.*” **(Psalm 9:10)**
3. When Christ came into the world, men – especially the disciples – had an opportunity to see God’s character in person.
- a. In His prayer in John chapter 17, Jesus said to the Father, “*I have manifested Your name to the men whom You have given Me out of the world.*” **(John 17:6)**
 - b. Jesus didn’t need to TELL His disciples about God’s name, but He DID need to reveal God’s CHARACTER to them.
 - c. **John 1:14** tells how that was accomplished: “*And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.*” **(John 1:14)**
 - d. Christ manifested God to the disciples through His own righteous life. That’s why he told Philip, “*He who has seen Me has seen the Father.*” **(John 14:9)**

4. To hallow God's name is not some meaningless phrase we're supposed to insert into a ritualistic prayer; it's our opportunity to glorify God by acknowledging the greatness and the wonder of His character.
- C. Each of the Old Testament names and titles by which God is called shows a different facet of His character and His attributes.
1. Look at all the names and titles by which He is called:
 - a. "God – The Creator"
 - b. "Possessor of heaven and earth"
 - c. "The Lord will provide"
 - d. "The Lord our banner"
 - e. "The Lord that heals"
 - f. "The Lord our peace"
 - g. "The Lord our Shepherd"
 - h. "The Lord our righteousness"
 - i. "The Lord of hosts"
 - j. "The Lord is present and near"
 - k. "The Lord Who sanctifies"
 - l. All these names speak of God's attributes, and they NOT ONLY tell us WHO He IS, but also WHAT He's LIKE.

II. Now that we understand the significance of calling God's name "Hallowed?"

What about the word "HALLOWED?"

A. It's actually an archaic English word from the Greek word *hagiazō* (ha-gee-AH-zo) – a word that means, "to make holy." Other words that come from the same Greek root are translated, "holy," "saint," "sanctify," and "sanctification."

1. Although God commands US to be holy (**1 Peter 1:16**), only God HIMSELF is actually holy.
2. Therefore, when we pray, "*hallowed be Your name*" we are proclaiming that WE acknowledge the holiness and sanctity of God.
3. To hallow God's name is to revere, honor, glorify, and obey Him as the one and only God.
4. It also reminds us of the difference between US and HIM.
 - a. Since God lives in a different sphere than we do, He is holy and undefiled, but we are sinners.
 - b. Therefore, it's only through God's gracious gift of Jesus Christ and our Lord's willingness to pay the penalty for our sin, are we even able to approach Him.

- B. But what happens if we FAIL to honor God in our prayers? Failure to give God the reverence and honor He so richly deserves can result in devastating consequences.
1. Notice what happened when even one of God's greatest servants didn't treat Him with the respect due His name:
 - a. **Numbers 20:1-13** – *In early spring the people of Israel arrived in the wilderness of Zin and camped at Kadesh. While they were there, Miriam died and was buried. There was no water for the people to drink at that place, so they rebelled against Moses and Aaron. The people blamed Moses and said, "We wish we had died in the LORD's presence with our brothers! Did you bring the LORD's people into this wilderness to die, along with all our livestock? Why did you make us leave Egypt and bring us here to this terrible place? This land has no grain, figs, grapes, or pomegranates. And there is no water to drink!" Moses and Aaron turned away from the people and went to the entrance of the Tabernacle, where they fell face down on the ground. Then the glorious presence of the LORD appeared to them, and the LORD said to Moses, "You and Aaron must take the staff and assemble the entire community. As the people*

watch, command the rock over there to pour out its water. You will get enough water from the rock to satisfy all the people and their livestock." So Moses did as he was told. He took the staff from the place where it was kept before the LORD. Then he and Aaron summoned the people to come and gather at the rock. "Listen, you rebels!" he shouted. "Must we bring you water from this rock?" Then Moses raised his hand and struck the rock twice with the staff, and water gushed out. So all the people and their livestock drank their fill. But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you did not trust me enough to demonstrate my holiness to the people of Israel, you will not lead them into the land I am giving them!" This place was known as the waters of Meribah, because it was where the people of Israel argued with the LORD, and where he demonstrated his holiness among them.

- b. Sadly, Moses dishonored God before the Israelites because he STRUCK the rock, in direct disobedience to God's command.
- c. Not only that, but Moses and Aaron drew attention to THEMSELVES by striking the rock – we can clearly see this

when Moses angrily said, "*Must **WE** bring you water from this rock?*" AND because, as God said, "*you did not trust me enough to demonstrate MY HOLINESS to the people of Israel.*"

- d. Because Moses and Aaron had disobeyed God, and had taken glory from GOD and drew attention to themselves, neither were allowed to enter the Promised Land.
2. Consider also Israel's first king, Saul, who disobeying the LORD by refusing to slay ALL the Amalekites as he had been instructed.
 - a. God told the prophet Samuel, "*I greatly regret that I have set up Saul as king, for he has turned back from following Me, and has not performed My commandments.*" **(1 Samuel 15:11)**
 - b. As a result, Samuel told Saul, "*... you have rejected the word of the LORD, and the LORD has rejected you from being king over Israel.*" **(1 Samuel 15:26)**
 3. Consider Uzzah who failed to recognize the majesty of God's holiness by daring to defy God's instructions.
 - a. God had authorized only the sons of Korath to transport the holy things of the tabernacle, and ONLY by carrying them

without touching them or else they would be struck dead.

(Numbers 4:15, 19-20)

- b. After the Philistines had captured the ark of the covenant, and David and his army drove the Philistines back and reclaimed the ark, they put the ark on an ox cart and headed back to Jerusalem.
 - c. **2 Samuel 6:6-7** – *And when they came to Nachon's threshing floor, Uzzah put out his hand to the ark of God and took hold of it, for the oxen stumbled. Then the anger of the LORD was aroused against Uzzah, and God struck him there for his error; and he died there by the ark of God.*
 - d. Uzzah dared to touch the ark because he didn't fear the Lord, nor did he have any regard for the fact that the ark was HOLY and set apart for a special purpose.
5. And then there was king Uzziah. He became proud, acted in a corrupt manner, and was unfaithful to the Lord.
- a. But when he boldly entered the temple to burn incense – something that ONLY the priests were authorized to do – God struck him with leprosy. **(2 Chronicles 26:16–23)**
 - b. Uzziah CLEARLY showed no reverence for God at all, and remained a leper to the day he died.

6. In the New Testament Ananias and his wife Sapphira lied to the Holy Spirit.
 - a. By sinning against the holiness of God in this way, they lost their lives. **(Acts 5:1–11)**
- C. The consequences of disobeying God and failing to uphold His holy character don't always come immediately. But sooner or later, those consequences will come. For example:
 1. Failure to obey God and uphold His holiness in our obedience gives the enemy an opportunity to blaspheme God. That is what Nathan told David. **(2 Samuel 12:14; cf. Ezekiel 20:39; 1 Timothy 5:14; 6:1)**
 2. Also, God's Word is dishonored. **(Titus 2:5)**
 3. Sin can disqualify us from service in the King's court. Saul is the classic illustration of that. **(1 Samuel 15:23)**
 4. We can lose our life or our well-being – remember Ananias and Sapphira? **(Acts 5:5, 10)**
 5. God's anger is invoked. Isaiah said, *Because they have rejected the law of the LORD of hosts, and despised the word of the Holy One of Israel. Therefore the anger of the LORD is aroused against His people.* **(Isaiah 5:24-25)**

6. God will keep YOU out of heaven for YOUR disobedience just as Moses and Aaron were kept out of the land of Canaan as a result of theirs. **(Numbers 20:1–12)**
- D. Having a reverential fear of the LORD is NOT an option.
1. Solomon said, “...*be zealous for the fear of the LORD all the day.*” **(Proverbs 23:17)**
 2. Jesus said, “...*fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell.*” **(Matthew 10:28)**
 3. The apostle Paul wrote, “*Bondservants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh, not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but in sincerity of heart, fearing God.*” **(Colossians 3:22)**
- E. God has always expected His people to have a proper respect of His holiness:
1. The fear of God caused Manoah to expect instant death because he had seen God. **(Judges 13:22)**
 2. When Isaiah was permitted to witness the greatness and holiness of God, he was also convinced he was doomed to die. **(Isaiah 6:5)**
 3. When he saw the greatness of God’s holiness, Job repented of all he had said. **(Job 42:5-6)**
 4. Habakkuk trembled at the voice of holy God. **(Habakkuk 3:16)**

5. The remnant of Israel feared the Lord when they heard His holy word spoken by the Prophet Haggai. **(Haggai 1:12)**
- F. During our Lord's earthly ministry, people often came face to face with His power and holiness.
1. On one occasion when the disciples were crossing the Sea of Galilee, a storm suddenly came up.
 - a. Although they were afraid of the storm, we're told, "*they feared exceedingly*" **(Mark 4:41)** when Jesus calmed the storm.
 - b. They were far more fearful of the presence and power of God than they were of the deadly storm.
 - c. In fact, Peter was so ashamed of his unbelief that he pleaded with the Lord to depart from him. **(Luke 5:8)**
 2. When Peter, James and John accompanied Jesus to the top of the Mount of Transfiguration, they were gripped with fear and fell on their faces when they heard the voice of God declare, "*This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!*" **(Matthew 17:5-6)**
 3. When John saw the magnificence of the glorified Christ in a vision, he says, "*And when I saw Him, I fell at His feet as dead.*" **(Revelation 1:17)**

4. In every one of these examples, God's holy and awesome presence produced a genuine fear in the hearts of every man.
- G. Sadly, this attitude is often missing in our lives today, and ESPECIALLY in our prayers.
1. To get it back, we need to pursue holiness in the fear of God.
This has ALWAYS been God's desire for His people.
 - a. **Leviticus 11:44** – *For I am the LORD your God. You shall therefore consecrate yourselves, and you shall be holy; for I am holy.*
 - b. Peter echoed that plea: *But as He who called you is holy, you also be holy in all your conduct, because it is written, "Be holy, for I am holy."* **(1 Peter 1:15-16)**
 - c. The challenge for us today is this: *Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.* **(2 Corinthians 7:1)**

CONCLUSION:

- I. So, how do we truly HALLOW God's name?
 - A. Hallowing God's name begins in the heart.
 1. The Apostle Peter tells us to *"sanctify Christ as Lord in your hearts."* **(1 Peter 3:15)**

B. When we sanctify Christ in our hearts we will also sanctify Him in our lives. So, let's look at some practical ways we can do just that and also make sure God is truly hallowed in our prayers.

1. First, always acknowledge God's existence.

a. The apostle Paul told the Hebrew Christians, "*He who comes to God must believe that He is.*" **(Hebrews 11:6)**

b. To those with an honest and open mind, God is self-evident. Philosopher Immanuel Kant had a lot of strange ideas about God, but he was absolutely right when he said, "The moral law within us and the starry heavens above us" drive us to God.

c. But that's not enough – we can BELIEVE God exists and still not hallow His name.

2. Know the truth about God.

a. Many people claim they believe in God, but they don't hallow His name because they don't have true knowledge of Who He is.

b. Taking the time to discover the truth about God's character and attributes is a wonderful way of demonstrating our reverence for Him

- c. On the other hand, being willfully ignorant about God, or believing and following doctrinal error clearly demonstrates irreverence.
 - d. But even knowing Him and revering Him is still not enough.
3. Be aware of God's presence.
- a. As faithful believers, we need to live every day of our lives in a continual state of awareness of God.
 - b. He might be on our thoughts right after a Sunday morning worship service, but what about later that day and throughout the week?
 - c. David said it best: *"I have set the Lord always before me."*
(Psalm 16:8)
 - d. But even this is still not enough to truly hallow God's name.
4. Live in obedience to His will.
- a. Our Father's name is MOST hallowed when we live in conformity to His will.
 - b. For Christians to live in disobedience to God is the ultimate act of taking His name in vain – claiming to be a follower of Christ, and yet living a life of disobedience and rebellion.

- c. Jesus warned, *"Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven."* **(Matthew 7:21)**
 - d. When we live a life of disobedience we lose our ability to truly revere His holy name and be a vehicle for manifesting His holiness to others.
 - e. The best way I know to successfully hallow His name is to do as Paul told the Corinthians: *...whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.* **(1 Corinthians 10:31)**
 - f. We also honor His name when we, *"Let [our] light so shine before men, that they may see [our] good works and glorify [our] Father in heaven."* **(Matthew 5:16)**
 - g. The Psalmist David summed it up best when he wrote, *Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together.* **(Psalm 34:3)**
- C. So, the next time you pray, I hope you see yourself entering the very throne room of God, a holy place, where He is to be honored.
- 1. Don't be AFRAID when you enter that time of solitude with the God of heaven, just make sure you approach the throne of God with the RESPECT that His HOLY NAME deserves.

- D. But the ULTIMATE way to glorify the HOLY NAME of GOD is to truly make Him OUR God by giving our lives to Him and to His Son and our Savior, Jesus Christ.
 - 1. Have you done that?