

The Lord's Prayer – Hallowed Be Thy Name

Spilman Memorial Baptist Church, Kinston NC

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Text: Matthew 6:9-13, Isaiah 61-5

Purpose: In the Model Prayer, Jesus provides a framework in which our prayers should be modeled. It begins by acknowledging God as “Our Father” and “Hallowed is Thy Name.” Only God is Holy enough to hallow the name of God. We are sinful and in need of a Savior. Only God is Holy enough to be the perfect sacrifice to reconcile sinful humanity back to God. When we believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, we are reconciled back to God. The path back starts by acknowledging God as Father and God as Holy.

Last week we began to focus our attention on the passage of scripture known as the Lord's Prayer. This prayer was given to the disciples at their request for Jesus to teach them how to pray. We all have had the opportunity in our lives to “say our prayers” as if it is a task to be done like, “take out the trash” or “clean up your room” or “load the dishwasher.”

Growing up we teach our children to ask the blessing at the dinner table.

“God is great; God is good,
let us thank Him for our food.
By His hands, we all are fed;
give us Lord our daily bread.
Amen.”



We teach our children a night time prayer:

“Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep.
May God guard me through the night,
and wake me with the morning light. Amen.”

We teach our children to say their prayers – but do we really teach them how to pray?

Our Father Which Art in Heaven

Last week we began by examining the phrase, “Our Father, which art in Heaven.” I hope you have meditated upon that phrase this week and allowed the truth of these words be the introduction to a new way of framing your prayer life.



Our – we can claim God as Ours. You and I are united together under the umbrella of being in God’s family. We are united – not divided under the Fatherhood of God. That means you and I are brothers and sisters in Christ.

Father – a new concept to Jesus’ followers. Previously, God was seen as distant and untouchable. God was never seen as that close to us. But now we can call God our Father. Now we are invited to be sons and daughters with all the rights and privileges as children of the King of Kings.

Which art in Heaven – that place where God is eternally present and where we will live eternally. Heaven is our hope and our destination. Heaven is the redeemed of the Lord’s eternal abode. A place prepared for a prepared

people. Heaven: a perfect place for a perfect God. We are invited to be there with Him. We need to remember, this earth is not our home, we are just passing through.

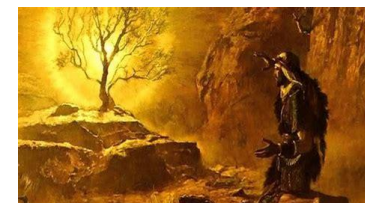
Hallowed Be Thy Name

Today we have come to examine the last part of the introductory phrase, “Hallowed Be Thy Name.” This Model Prayer lists six petitions or requests we ask of God. Before those six can even be voiced, we need to reverence or hallow the name of God.



The scripture that I read earlier was taken from Isaiah 6:1-5. It is a scene where Isaiah has been brought into the presence of God. Isaiah saw God seated on a throne with the robe filling the temple of God. There were Seraphim flying above the throne of God crying out, “*Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord of hosts; The whole earth is full of His glory!*” In the presence of such a scene, Isaiah was convicted of his sinfulness. Isaiah said, “*Woe is me, for I am undone! Because I am a man of unclean lips and dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for my eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts.*” (Isaiah 6:1-5) The Holiness of God stunned him and convicted him.

When Moses was tending sheep in the desert, he turned and saw a bush burning but not being consumed. As Moses came near to see, a voice said, “*Put off your shoes from your feet for the place where you are standing is holy ground.*” (Exodus 3:5)



In the case of Isaiah's encounter with God and Moses' conversation with God, both places were considered Holy because God was present and His presence makes it Holy. It is the very presence of God that makes a place Holy. When we come to God in prayer, we need to recognize the meeting place is also Holy. We need to fill our hearts with reverence and respect. In doing so, we allow space for God to move into our lives and hearts and enable us to reverence the Holy name of God.



Have you ever thought about the fact that you and I cannot really hallow the name of God? We are a sinful people and we live among a group of sinful people. Our righteousness is as filthy rags before a

Holy and Just God. When we come to God as a child of God, we do not make the name of God Holy. If anything, we profane it by speaking it.

In this prayer that Jesus is giving us, we are not able to hallow the name of God. It means God must do something first in us, before we are able to come to Him. The only one that can Hallow God's name is God Himself.

In the book, *"God's Psychiatry,"*¹ Charles Allen describes our Hallowing God's name in this manner. "Suppose you were an artist and you said you were going out to paint the sky. You would say that is ridiculous. Or say you were tired of blue skies and wanted to blacken them with a tar brush, you couldn't do it. All you would accomplish is to get tar all over yourself. Our best attempts at making God Holy only serve to stain the name of God." This prayer acknowledges that God and God alone is Holy. He alone

hallows His name. We come to our Father and acknowledge the Holiness of God.

When we see God as our Father and see God as Holy, our hearts will be tuned to pray, *"not my will, but Thine O Lord."*

The Holy Name of God

The primary emphasis in this phrase is on the word "name." When God gave His name to Abram, He gave something very Holy. The Jews recognize the Holiness of God's name and will not pronounce it. When they come across the name of God in the Hebrew Scriptures, instead of attempting to pronounce YHWH, they would say Adonai, which translated means Lord.



The meaning of a name in the Bible is very important. The meaning of a name was closely tied to the character of that person. The name *"Jesus"* means *"God is Salvation."* That is why the angel said to Mary and Joseph, *"For He will save His people from their sins."* (Matt. 1:21)

When Andrew brought his brother Simon the son of Jonah to Jesus, his name meant "shifting sand." Jesus said to Simon, his name would now be called Cephas, which means a stone, something strong and unshakable. (John 1:42)

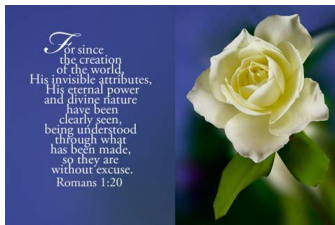
To know a person's name is to know the person. When God revealed His name to the people of Israel, God was revealing Himself to them. Job 11:7 (NKJV) says, *"Can you search out the deep things of God? Can you find out*

the limits of the Almighty?” The answer is no. Mankind only knows God as God reveals Himself to us. The scripture from Jeremiah 29:13 reminds us “And you will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.”

Ways in Which God Reveals Himself to Us



When I think about how God has revealed Himself to us, my mind first comes to His **creation**. Psalm 19:1 says, *“The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork.”* If you go outside on a clear night and get away from the city street lights you can see the mighty hand of God in the stars – **if you look**. If you travel across this great country, you will realize the handiwork of God in the Yellowstone National Park in Wyoming, the Redwood Forests of California, and the Grand Canyon in Arizona. You can see the hand of God in a telescope and in a microscope. You can see God’s touch with Saturn’s rings and in the cells in a laboratory. Isaiah 40:12 reminds us that it was God’s hand that measured out the oceans in the hollow of His hands. How great is our God?



The glory of God can be seen in the *“lilies of the field”* and in every nook and cranny of this world – **if we really look**. Romans 1:20 stands as a condemnation against those that say there is no God. *“For*

since the creation of the world His invisible attributes are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead, so that they are

without excuse, because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened.”

We are in grave danger to ignore God in such a manner. Nature and creation declare the glory of God – **if we would only look and listen**. The power of God is demonstrated time and time again and we ignore it. A tornado rips through a town, tearing down homes, barns, trees, and crops. Earthquakes rattle the earth’s mantle. Hurricane’s will pound our eastern seaboard this summer and thousands may be displaced as people are impacted by its strength and power. Volcanos around the world are erupting bringing destruction in their paths. God is declaring His presence among us – **are we listening?**

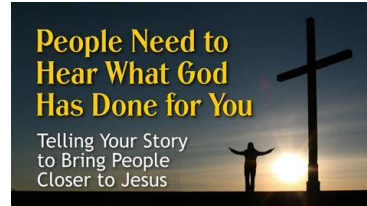
We think we are gods ourselves. Jesus tells the story of a successful rich farmer who produced more than he could store. In his own wisdom, he tore down his barns to build bigger ones to hold all of his abundance. His life was so filled with I – I – I and Me – Me – Me that he had no room for God. That night the Lord said *“Thy soul shall be required of thee this night.”* Today there is no room for God in people’s lives because they are so filled with “I.” (Luke 12:16-21)



God has revealed Himself to us, **yet do we listen?**

A second way in which God reveals Himself – his name – is through **other people**.

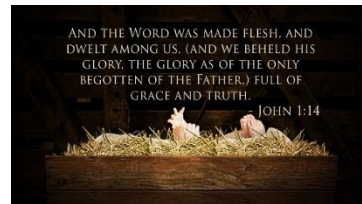
God selected Moses to reveal the Law to the people of Israel. God ordained the prophets of the Old Testament like Amos to teach us about the Justice of God, Hosea to show us the love of God, Micah to teach us God's ethical standards.



Maybe another Christian has come to you and shown you the love of Christ when you were sick, or helped you in a time of trouble, was friendly when you were lonely. Maybe someone forgave you when you treated them badly. All of these acts of kindness reveal the character of God.

We all have a better understanding of God through the love of our parents or the dedication of a friend. We learn more about God as we come together and worship the Lord corporately.

God has revealed Himself to us through others.



Yes, God does reveal Himself through creation and others. But the fullest and most complete revelation of God is **through His One and Only Son, Jesus Christ**. John 1:14 says, *“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.”*

God loved us so much that He sent Himself to redeem sinful humanity. God gave Himself to us to hallow His name for us, because we could not hallow it ourselves!

But why? Why is Jesus the only way to God? Some people I know have said and believe there is more than one way to God. Some attempt to be “good enough” to get to Heaven. But our goodness is never good enough because it is tainted by our sinfulness. Others may say that there are other sincere religions that demonstrate a sincerity of faith that surely God would accept their path as satisfactory.

But God has said Himself through the words of Jesus that *“He is the door,” “He is the shepherd of the sheep,” “there is no other way to God except through Jesus.”* Jesus is God in the flesh, reconciling the world to Himself. There is no other sacrifice righteousness enough to be acceptable to God other than Jesus since Jesus is God incarnate. There is no other more holy than God. There is none more righteous than God.

Therefore, the only sacrifice that would be holy enough or righteous enough is God Himself. The only way God could reconcile sinful humanity to Himself is by Himself. The sin against God was personal and therefore the sacrifice had to be done personally by God. Others may try to say they are the way, but Jesus is the only way because He is God Himself.

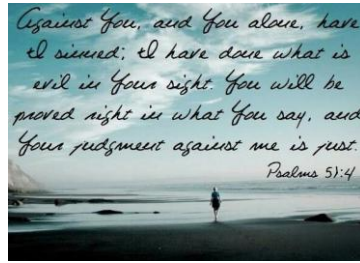


Only a Holy God could offer a Holy sacrifice to satisfy the righteousness requirements of God.

Let me back up for a moment and try and explain this better for you.

Sin – It's Personal Against God²

In Genesis when Adam was standing with God in the Garden of Eden, God said, *“for the day you eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, you shall surely die.”* (Gen. 2:17) From the day Adam and Eve sinned, we inherited a sin nature that is active and alive in all humanity. That sin nature causes us to reject God and enthrone self.



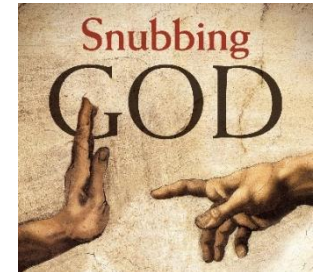
Even the most noble of people have fallen to the trap of sin. King David was Israel's greatest King. He united the Kingdom under one leader. He defeated many of God's enemies. But one day, King David yielded to the temptation of sin with Bathsheba. From that a child was conceived out of wedlock and King David was in trouble. For you see Bathsheba was married to one of David's mighty warriors, Uriah.

David conspired with his generals to send Uriah to the front of the battle and at the right time, the soldiers would back up and Uriah would die at the hands of the enemy.

Nathan the prophet confronted David of this sin publicly and David was convicted immediately. The consequences of David's sin resulted in their child dying and the kingdom being divided upon Solomon's death. In Psalm 51, David acknowledged his sin as being *“against You, and You alone have I sinned.”*

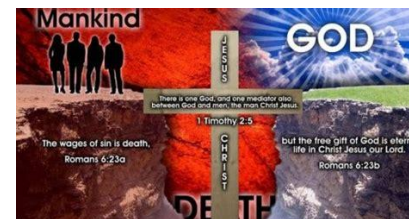
Yes, it is true, David's sin affected Bathsheba, Uriah, the unborn child, and the people of Israel – but the sin stemmed from a rejection of God. Romans 1:21-22 says, *“Because, although they knew God, they did not glorify Him as God, nor were thankful, but became futile in their thoughts, and their foolish hearts were darkened. Professing to be wise, they became fools.”*

When we reject God – that rejection becomes personal. Our sin is towards God and God alone. Yes, it may impact others, but it stems from a rejection of God.



As parents, we have all experienced our children reach a point of defiance and rejection of our authority in their life. Whether the violation was a small matter or a large matter, it was still a rejection of our position of authority. We feel personally rejected.

When we sin, our sin is a direct reflection of our lack of submission to God's authority over our lives. We reject God as our Father when we sin. We enthrone ourselves over God.



There is only one way in which this breach can be restored with God. Since we cannot bridge the gap, God must do it for us. That is why Jesus Christ came.

That is why God came to us. This is the only way God could reconcile us back to Him.

This is why God came to us as *Bethlehem's Babe*. That is why Jesus Christ allowed sinful humanity to nail Him to a tree. It was a personal debt that could only be paid personally!

Some may say, “Why all the cost? Wasn’t there another way this personal sin debt could be paid?”

- If it was simply a matter of law, God could have changed the law.
- If it was simply a matter of God needing retribution, then a substitution of another would suffice.
- If it was a matter of God being a victim, then therapy may be of value to overcome the offense.

But if sin is personal – “*against You and You alone O Lord have I sinned*” – then changing the law would not satisfy, retribution would not satisfy, therapy would not be enough – only the sacrifice of self would reconcile us back to God. God gave His One and only Son. “*That whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.*” (John 3:16)

Hallowed be the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ who is reconciling the world unto Himself. That is why salvation is a personal experience. You and God coming together personally – reconciled – forgiven – adopted – renewed – regenerated – made a new creature in Christ.

The old shackles of sin that draw us towards “*sexual immorality, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness, envy, murder, strife, deceit, evil mindedness, whispers, backbiters, haters of God, violent, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*

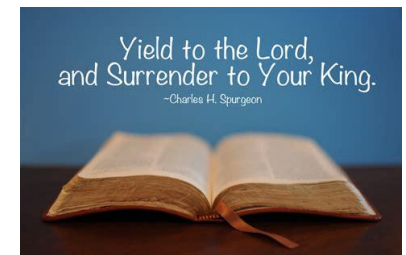
undiscerning, untrustworthy, unloving, unforgiving, unmerciful” (Romans 1:29-31) – all are removed as we receive forgiveness from our creator – sustainer – and Lord, Jesus Christ.

Your parents can’t save you; your neighbor cannot save you; you can’t even save yourself. Only by turning to Christ can you be saved.

God has revealed Himself to us through creation, through others, through His Son Jesus Christ, and maybe His Holy Spirit is speaking to you this very day – in that still small voice.

As you examine your life, have you asked God to forgive you of your sins? God sent His Son to redeem us.

When we pray, “*Our Father, which art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name*” – we hallow it by yielding our lives to the sovereignty of Father God – Our perfect Father – Holy is Thy name.



LET US PRAY

Notes

¹ *God's Psychiatry*, Charles L. Allen – The Lord's Prayer – Hallowed Be Thy Name

² Thoughts on “*It's Personal*” came from Dr. Andy Wakefield's chapel sermon at Campbell Divinity School, Aug. 23, 2011

