

Hallowed Be Thy Name

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[0 : 00] Well, if we could, this evening, with the Lord's help and the Lord's enabling, if we could turn back to that portion of Scripture that we read, the Gospel according to Matthew chapter 6.

And if we just read again at verse 9, we'll read the Lord's Prayer together. Jesus says, Give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

But particularly the words, Hallowed be thy name. Hallowed be thy name. You know, during those three months of lockdown, one of the things which many people missed, apart from seeing family and friends, one of the things people missed was getting a haircut.

I missed getting a haircut. And you know, with nothing open for the duration of lockdown, our homes not only became classrooms and canteens and even churches, our homes also became barbers.

[1 : 22] With many of us attempting to perform a DIY haircut. And you know, having to improvise during lockdown, it has given me a new respect, not only for teachers, but also for barbers.

Because cutting hair is very tricky. And from experience, I've now had to step aside and give Alison the role, but from experience, one wrong move, and you've made a mess of it.

But you know, there's one man who had such a respect for his barber that he wrote him a little book. In the 16th century, the German reformer Martin Luther, who was, as you know, he was in many ways the spark that ignited the European Reformation.

And yet Luther, Luther loved his barber. And he loved his barber so much so that he was on first name terms with his barber. He was called Peter the Barber.

But when Peter the Barber asked Luther how to pray, Luther responded by writing him a little book called A Simple Way to Pray for Master Peter the Barber.

[2 : 29] And Luther's little book, which you can easily find online to read, in his little book for Peter the Barber, Luther gives instructions on how to pray using the Lord's Prayer, the Ten Commandments, and the Apostles' Creed.

But because he was not only a customer, but also a friend of Peter the Barber, Luther wanted to share his experience of how to pray. And Luther begins his book by saying, I will tell you as best as I can what I do personally when I pray.

It's a good thing, says Luther, to let prayer be the first business of the morning and the last at night. Guard yourself carefully against those false deluding ideas which tell you, wait a little while, I will pray in an hour.

First I must attend to this or to that. Such thought, says Luther, gets you away from prayer into other affairs which so hold your attention and involve you that nothing comes of prayer for that day.

It may well be that you have some tasks which are as good as prayer or better than prayer, especially in an emergency. But the proverb is true. He who works faithfully prays twice.

[3 : 48] He who works faithfully prays twice. And you know, it's a brilliant little book which I would encourage you to read. It's called A Simple Way to Pray for Master Peter the Barber.

And in Luther's little book, as well as in our shorter catechism, we're told that the opening words of the Lord's Prayer, Our Father which art in heaven, And those opening words, they are called the preface to the Lord's Prayer.

Which, as we saw last week, they teach us that we're to come to God as little children. We're to pray to our Father through God the Son by the enabling of the Holy Spirit.

But then following the preface in the Lord's Prayer, there are six petitions in the Lord's Prayer. With the first two petitions focusing upon God's glory, and then the last four petitions focusing upon

God's grace.

And so as a whole, the Lord's Prayer is all about God's glory and God's grace. The Lord's Prayer is all about God's glory and God's grace. But the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, which we're considering this evening, is the petition, Hallowed be thy name.

[5 : 04] And these words teach us that when we pray, we're to glorify God's nature and glorify God's name. When we pray, we're to glorify God's nature and we're to glorify God's name.

And there are two headings this evening. Glorify God's nature and glorify God's name. So first of all, glorify God's nature.

Glorify God's nature. Glorify God's nature. Now as you know, and as you were probably taught from a young age, the first question in the shorter catechism, it asks, what is the chief end of man? And as you know, man's chief end is to glorify God and to enjoy him forever. Therefore, our chief end in life, the reason we exist, the purpose for which we have been created in the image and likeness of God, is to glorify our God.

Because as image bearers of God, we're to reflect the image of God in our lives. We're to reflect it back to God. But you know, the question arises then, how can we glorify God's nature?

[6 : 18] How can we add anything to God? How can we glorify a God who is already altogether glorious? And this is where theologians, they differentiate between the glory of God and glorifying God.

The glory of God and glorifying God. And they say that the glory of God is God's intrinsic glory. But when we glorify God, that's God's ascribed glory.

So the glory of God is God's intrinsic glory. But when we glorify God, that's God's ascribed glory. And the glory of God, God's intrinsic glory, is the sum and substance of all that God is.

Because he's altogether glorious. There's nothing that we as finite sinners can do or say to add to God's intrinsic glory.

Because he's already fully and completely glorious. He's altogether glorious. And as a glorious God, he has many attributes.

[7 : 26] He has the attribute of holiness, righteousness, omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence. He has the attribute of grace, mercy, peace.

He has the attribute of love and joy and patience and kindness and goodness and faithfulness and self-control. He has the attribute of wrath and judgment.

And my friend, all that God is constitutes his intrinsic glory. And so when we ask what is God's intrinsic glory, we're really asking what is God?

What is God? Because God is altogether glorious. And you know, in the 17th century, when the Westminster Assembly, when they gathered together to compile the confession of faith and suitable questions for the larger and shorter catechisms, they had great difficulty with the shorter catechism question.

Question four, what is God? What is God? Because how can you describe God? How do you describe God's beauty and majesty and the radiance of his glory?

[8 : 42] How do you describe a God who is altogether glorious? But when the Westminster Assembly, when they couldn't provide an answer to that question, they did what we should all do when we need guidance and direction.

They prayed. And when one particular young man was asked to stand and lead the assembly in prayer, it said that he prayed and said in the course of his prayer, God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

And as you know, that's the answer which we've come to love and to learn from the shorter catechism. What is God? What is God's nature? What is God's intrinsic glory? God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

My friend, that's who our God is. He's altogether glorious. But as we said, we've been created to glorify God. Because our chief end, the reason we exist is to ascribe glory to God.

And we can glorify God. We can ascribe glory to God by praising, preaching, practicing and praying God's word.

[10 : 07] Because as image bearers, as those who have been created in the image and likeness of God, you know, we're to be like mirrors.

We're to reflect the image of God in our lives and we're to reflect it back to God. My friend, we glorify God. We ascribe glory to God when we reflect the image of God in our lives back to God. Because, you know, what glorifies God most? What glorifies God most but himself? Because there's no one, there's no other God, there's no other person in this world who is altogether glorious like our great God.

Therefore, as image bearers of God, our chief end, our purpose in life, the meaning for our existence in this world is to reflect the image of God in our lives and to reflect it back to God. But how do we do that? What tool do we have in our possession that enables us to reflect God's glory back to God? Well, we have the word of God.

[11 : 25] Because it's in God's word that God has revealed his glory. It's in God's word that God has made himself known to us in the person of Jesus Christ.

The Son of the Scripture affirms to us that we have seen his glory. The glory is of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.

And we have seen it. We have seen the light of the knowledge of the glory of God. And we have seen it in the face of Jesus Christ. Therefore, as image bearers, we glorify God and we ascribe glory to God by reflecting God's glory back to God using his word.

My friend, we glorify God. We ascribe glory to God by praising, preaching, practicing and praying God's word. Therefore, we're to praise God using God's word.

We're to sing back to God what God has given to us in his word. In our praise and worship of God, we're to reflect as mirrors, we're to reflect God's word back to God.

[12 : 43] But more than that, we're to preach about God using God's word. We're not to use the philosophies and ideologies of men.

We're not to draw our understanding of God from society or their standards. No, we're to preach about God from God's word. Because it's his word that reveals and reflects his nature and his character.

In fact, the word of God is like God himself. Because if God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth, then God's word is certainly inspired, inerrant and infallible.

God's word is immutable. It's unchangeable. It's full of wisdom. It's powerful. It's holy. It's just. It's good. It's truth. My friend, the word of God is like God himself.

Therefore, as Paul says, we're to preach the word and proclaim the word. Because the word of God is the power of God unto salvation. But, you know, we not only glorify God and ascribe glory to God by praising and preaching God's word.

[14 : 00] We also practice being image bearers of God by using God's word. As you know, God's word is his special revelation to us.

It's his special revelation to us as image bearers of God. And God's word has been given to us not only to reveal God's nature and God's character in the person of Christ, but also so that we seek to practice being image bearers by using God's word.

In other words, we're to put into practice all the information that we receive from God's word. The information in this book must become application in our lives.

The information must become application because God's word is the instruction manual for us as image bearers. It tells us how God's image in our lives, which has been marred and messed up by our sin, it tells us how that sin can be forgiven and how our image in God can be repaired and restored through the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Therefore, the information in this book must become application in our lives. We're not only to be hearers of God's word, we're to be doers also.

[15 : 22] Because it's by using the word of God that the Bible reminds us that the Holy Spirit, he so works in our experience to change our hearts and to transform our lives, that we are enabled more and more to die unto sin and live unto righteousness.

And so we not only glorify God and ascribe glory to God by praising, preaching and practicing God's word in our lives, but as Jesus teaches us here in the Lord's Prayer, we glorify God and we ascribe glory to God by praying God's word.

Therefore, we're not only to sing God's word back to God, we're also to pray God's word back to God. We're to pray back to God what God has given to us in his revealed word.

We're to reflect God's word back to God in our prayers. And, you know, we touched on this on Wednesday evening at the Bible study. You know, it's good for us to familiarise and memorise verses in Scripture.

It's good for us to memorise the Psalms. It's good for us to memorise maybe even passages in the Bible and maybe even well-known verses. So that when we pray, we are praying the very word and will of God back to God.

[16:47] You know, my friend, we're to memorise parts of Scripture so that we pray the very word and will of God back to God. You know, this is something Martin Luther taught his barber in that little book, A Simple Way to Pray for Master Peter the Barber.

Because Luther said, He says, Luther taught his barber to make sure that he fills his mouth with God's word before he speaks to God.

And, you know, we would do well to follow Luther's example and instruction.

That we read God's word and then we respond in prayer. We read God's word and then we respond in prayer. Because, you know, is it not better for God to speak first?

Is it not better to listen to what God has to say before God has to listen to what we have to say?

And, you know, listening to God first is what gives us perspective.

[18:35] Because when it comes to prayer, we need to have the right perspective. Of course, there are times when we pray throughout the day and we are facing different situations and different circumstances in our lives.

And we pray then. But what we're thinking of here particularly is when we come aside for a time in our closet, we should let God speak first.

We should read God's word and then respond in prayer. Because it's God's word that gives us perspective. And that's what Jesus is teaching us in the first petition of the Lord's Prayer.

That when it comes to prayer, we need to have the right perspective. Because our first petition in prayer, it must not be a petition to gratify our greed, but a petition to glorify our God.

My friend, when it comes to prayer, our first petition in prayer must not be a petition to gratify our greed, but a petition to glorify our God.

[19:42] My friend, the focus of our prayers should not be our wants, but God's worship. Because as image bearers, as those who have been created in the image and likeness of God, we're to be like mirrors.

We're to reflect the image of God in our lives back to God. And we're to do it using his word. We're to glorify God's nature. We're to ascribe glory to God's nature by praising, preaching, practicing, and praying God's word.

And so the first petition of the Lord's Prayer is, Hallowed be thy name. And it teaches us that when we pray, we're to glorify God's nature.

But then secondly, when we pray, we're to glorify God's name. Glorify God's name.

Hallowed be thy name. I'm sure that we're all familiar with the phrase, what's in a name? What's in a name? And it's true that there's a lot to be said about a name, especially because names have meaning.

[20:52] And this is particularly true of the names in the Bible. And, you know, what we often see in the Bible is that someone's name reveals their nature. Someone's name reveals their nature.

The name Adam, as you know, it means man because Adam was the first man whom God created. The name Eve means mother of living because it was through Eve that life would come into this world.

The name Abraham means father of many nations because it was through Abraham and the seed of Abraham that all the nations of the earth would be blessed. The name Peter means rock because it would be through his confession of faith.

It would be upon that rock, his confession, that Jesus would build his church and the gates of hell would not prevail against it. And as you know, the name of Jesus, it means saviour or salvation because as the angel said to Joseph, call his name Jesus for he shall save his people from their sins.

And so in the Bible, someone's name reveals their nature. Someone's name reveals their nature. And the same can be said about God. His name reveals his nature.

[22:09] And as we've said, God's nature is his character. God's nature is who God is. And as we said, God is altogether glorious. God is a spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being,

wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth.

But what we're seeing here is that God's name reveals his nature. And as we've discovered, there's no one like God because he's different and distinct.

He's sacred, set apart and special. There's no one like God because all the other gods of this world are but dumb idols.

And for that reason, because God's nature is different and distinct, we're to treat God's name as different and distinct. Because God's nature is sacred, set apart and special, we're to treat God's name as sacred, set apart and special.

We're to hallow God's name. We're to hallow God's name. Now, we don't use the word hallow or hallowed very often because in many ways it's an archaic word.

[23 : 24] I suppose the only time we would hear the word hallowed, apart from hearing the Lord's Prayer, is when football fans, they refer to the stadium of their favourite team, they call it hallowed ground.

But of course, no football stadium is hallowed ground. And no football team or player is hallowed because the word hallowed means holy.

And there's only one who is holy and that is God. He is holy. He is different and distinct. He is sacred, set apart and special. Therefore, my friend, we glorify God's nature by glorifying God's name.

We hallow God's nature by hallowing God's name. But, you know, in the same token, we rob God of his glory by taking God's name in vain.

Because to take God's name in vain is to abuse God's name. And to abuse God's name is to abuse God's nature. The two go hand in hand.

[24 : 33] To abuse God's name is to abuse God's nature. And I don't know about you, but whenever someone, whenever I hear someone take God's name in vain, it hurts me.

And it goes straight through me. It cuts me to the heart. Whenever someone says, oh my God, or Jesus Christ, it goes straight through me. And, you know, I've often wondered, why is that the case? But, you know, by studying the Lord's Prayer, we've come to see, as we saw last week, that when Jesus taught us to pray the Lord's Prayer, he was teaching us as a family.

He was showing us that the Lord's Prayer is a family prayer. The Lord's Prayer is a family prayer because, as we said, God is our Father. Jesus is our elder brother.

The Church is our mother. And all the Christians throughout this world, every Christian throughout this world, is our brother and sister in Christ. And so when God's name is taken in vain, when God's name and nature receives abuse, it hurts us.

[25 : 40] It goes straight through us. It cuts us to the heart. Not because Christianity is some strange sect or cult, but because when you're a Christian, you're part of a family.

When you're a Christian, you're part of this wonderful family, this worldwide family. And when someone takes God's name in vain and they speak abusively or aggressively or arrogantly about our Heavenly Father or Jesus, our elder brother, when they speak like that, it hurts.

It hurts us. You know, think about the reaction you would have if someone said something offensive about your spouse or something about your children or even something about your parents.

It would hurt you. It would go straight through you. It would cut you to the heart. But this is God we're speaking about. This is the God of this world, the God who is altogether glorious.

This is God we're speaking about. This is our Heavenly Father. It's speaking about Jesus, our elder brother, our Saviour. And to take his name in vain is to abusively or arrogantly or aggressively use his name.

[26 : 52] That robs God of his glory. It robs God of his glory. Which is why the first petition of the Lord's Prayer is that God's nature and God's name would be hallowed.

That it would be regarded as holy, as different and distinct, as sacred, set apart, and special in our sight, but also in the sight of others.

But you know the truth is, my friend, far too often, we are guilty of hallowing our greed instead of hallowing our God.

Far too often, we are guilty of hallowing our greed instead of hallowing our God. Because day after day, our hearts hallow our greeds, gains, and gets instead of hallowing our God.

You know, one commentator, he said, in the day-to-day trenches of life, there's no such thing as atheism. There's no such thing as not worshipping. Because everyone worships something.

[28 : 02] Everyone hallows something. If you hallow money, he says, and if you hallow things, then you'll never feel that you have enough. If you hallow your body and your beauty, then you'll always feel ugly.

If you hallow power, then you'll always feel weak and afraid. If you hallow your intellect, then you'll always feel stupid or a fraud. It's not that these things are evil or sinful in themselves, he says, it's that we hallow them without thinking.

They are our default settings, he says, they're the kind of things we slip into day after day after day. They're the kinds of things our heart hallows, and yet they're hollow.

They're the kind of things our heart hallows, and yet they're hollow. And that's why the first petition of the Lord's Prayer is, hallowed be thy name.

Because it's teaching us that day after day, we need to fix our focus and set our heart upon what is hallowed, what is holy.

[29 : 13] We need to glorify God's nature. We need to glorify God's nature by glorifying God's name. We need to glorify God's nature by glorifying God's name.

And you know, that was the example Jesus gave to us to imitate and emulate in our lives. Because Jesus not only glorified God's name in prayer, he also glorified God's name in practice.

You'll remember that as Jesus approached the cross in John chapter 12, it was the cross upon which he would give his life as a ransom for many. But as he approached the cross, Jesus prayed, Father, glorify thy name.

Father, glorify thy name. And that's the example Jesus is giving to us here. And the Lord's Prayer is not only something we should pray, it's something we should practice.

The Lord's Prayer is not only something we should pray, it's something we should practice. We should seek to glorify God's name in prayer, and glorify God's name in practice.

[30 : 22] But you know, how do we do that? How do we glorify God's name in prayer, and glorify God's name in practice? How do we do that? And with this, I'll close, because it was Sinclair Ferguson who said, the Lord's Prayer is obviously a pattern for praying.

But one of the ways in which we can use it to help us is to think of it as a pattern for living. So that we learn to live in the presence of God.

We learn to live in the presence of God. And it was the other reformer, John Calvin, he coined the Latin phrase, Coram Deo, living in the presence of God.

Coram Deo, living in the presence of God. Because Calvin, Calvin believed that as children of God, we should live every day of our life.

We should live it in the presence of God, under the authority of God, to the glory of God. Therefore, whatever we're doing, and wherever we're doing it, we're to be conscious of the fact that we are doing it in the presence of God.

[31 : 34] So, whether we are sinning or serving the Lord Jesus Christ, we are doing it in the presence of God. And you know, what we can often be so guilty of is actually compartmentalizing our lives.

Where we put our Christianity into this little box that we only bring it out at certain times of the day or on the Lord's Day itself. But you know, the Lord's Prayer teaches us that we're to glorify God's name in prayer and we're to glorify God's name in practice.

We're to hallow God's name in prayer and we're to hallow God's name in practice. We're to practice the presence of God in our lives. We're to live Coram Deo, as Calvin put it.

We're to live every day of our lives. We're to live these days in the presence of God, under the authority of God, to the glory of God.

We're to live every day in the presence of God. Coram Deo. We're to live every day of our lives in the presence of God. You know, is that not what Paul said?

[32 : 43] Whether you eat or whether you drink or whatever you're doing, do it all to the glory of God. My friend, that's what it means to hallow God's name.

That's what's required in the first petition of the Lord's Prayer. We're to glorify God's nature. We're to ascribe glory to God and we're to glorify God's name.

We're to glorify God's nature and glorify God's name. So hallowed be thy name.

Well, may the Lord bless these thoughts to us. Let us pray. Our Father in heaven, enable us day by day to see thy name as holy, that we are not worthy even to take thy name upon our lips.

But we thank thee, Lord, and we praise thee, that we are able to call upon thy name, that we have access to thy throne, that we have this wonderful privilege and even coming boldly to the throne of grace.

[33 : 54] And that we're able to call upon thy name because we pray in the name of Jesus, in his precious name, a name that, as Paul reminds us, is above every other name.

And that it will be at his name that every knee will bow. Oh, Father, we pray that thou wouldst forgive us. Forgive us for the times where we rush into thy presence.

Forgive us, Lord, for the occasions where we forget that our God is holy. Help us, Lord, to have that godly fear, to have that reverence, to come knowing that thou art our Father, but to come reverently, knowing that thou art a God whose name is holy, that thou art the one who is altogether glorious.

Help us then, we pray, to glorify thy nature and to glorify thy name in our lives. Go before us then, we pray. Bless us in the week that lies ahead.

A week, Lord, as we are reminded every week. A week that is unknown to us, but known to thee. And for that reason, we commit and we commend ourselves into thy care and keeping, that thou wouldst keep our going out and our coming in from this time forth and even forevermore.

[35 : 09] Do us good, we pray, for Jesus' sake. Amen. Well, we shall bring our service to a conclusion this evening by singing to God's praise in Psalm 103.

Psalm 103, and we're singing in the Scottish Psalter version, and we're singing from the beginning down to the verse marked five. Psalm 103, it's a psalm that reminds us that our God is a gracious God.

But particularly the opening verses, they also remind us that God's name is holy. We're to bless God's name, but we're to remember that God's name is holy.

Psalm 103, from the beginning. O thou my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name to magnify and bless. Bless, O my soul, the Lord thy God, and not forgetful be of all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

We'll sing down to the verse marked five of Psalm 103, to God's praise. O thou my soul, bless God the Lord, and all that in me is, be stirred up his holy name, to magnify and bless.

[36 : 51] Let's go my shoulder, Lord thy God, and not forgetful be.

Oh, all his gracious benefits he hath bestowed on thee.

O find and embrace his true love, O graciously forgive.

O graciously Tasman small church Who thy sews for whiten any provision for die upon thee.

We will sing water, o ■■■■-oo, In thy life, the love, to death, miss love, O time, Who dearly loving kindness, God, and tender mercies come, Who with the blood and soft good things doth satisfy thy love, So God, King, our sin, He will change, Renew it is thy youth.