



# THE PRAYER CLOSET

Encouraging & Equipping Believers in Prayer

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ISSUE 1

## Hallowed Be Your Name

When Jesus Christ teaches us to pray, He instructs us to pray, "Hallowed by thy name" (**Matthew 6:9**). This is the first petition of the Model Prayer. In this first petition, Jesus shows us how to communicate with our heavenly Father. In order to seek Him, we must seek to glorify Him in all things. Our praying must first focus on the majesty, the holiness, and the greatness of our God.

### What Does It Mean To "Hallow" The Name Of God?

The name of God refers to the character of God. It stands for who He is in and of Himself. In biblical times, a person's name revealed something about that person's character. God's name is the revelation of His character and His will. It includes everything and every way that God has revealed himself to His creatures.

God's name is everything that is true about Him and everything that He has revealed about Himself. Martyn-Lloyd Jones writes, "It means God in all his attributes, God in all He is in and of Himself, and God in all that He has done and all that he is doing." It is the work of all His hands – His works in creation and providence as well as in the wonders of the salvation that comes through Jesus Christ. The name of God includes the titles attributes, ordinances, Word, works, and any way that He is pleased to make Himself known to us.

The word "hallow" means to sanctify, to set apart. It means to set apart from everything common or unholy. It is to esteem, honor, reverence, and adore as of supreme and infinite worth. It is the opposite of to profane or to make common and ordinary.

To hallow the name of God then means to treat, recognize, reverence, and glorify God as holy. It is to adore, praise, and magnify God in all the ways that He has revealed Himself. It is to treat with reverence and esteem who God is and all the ways that He has revealed Himself – His titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works. It is to give all glory and praise to Him. It is to make known how glorious, how majestic, how holy, how supreme that He is.

This does not imply that God can be made more majestic. It does not imply that God can be made more holy. God's majesty and holiness cannot be increased or enhanced. We can add nothing to His essential glory.

Yet, this petition calls for us to make known how glorious God is. We are to seek to reveal to others how majestic and holy God is. It is to honor, esteem, and cherish who God is. It is to do everything that we can to protect the name of God. It is striving to defend the name of God from abuse and profane treatment in our lives and the lives of others. God cannot be greater, but we can make Him appear greater in our lives and in the eyes of others.

## Why Does Jesus Teach Us To Pray This Way?

We are to make this request of God not for His benefit but for ours. We are not asking something for God. God has no need of our prayers for Himself. Prayer always means and can never mean anything else than our soul drinks out of the fountain of all Good. In this first petition, we are expressing our need and desire that God would be exalted in our lives. We are asking that His glory would be uppermost in our hearts and minds.

*Jesus teaches us to pray this because the great need and desire of our lives should be to glorify God in all things.* God is great and good, majestic and holy! He is worthy of all our acknowledgement, esteem, and adoration. He is worthy of our making known His greatness to others. We have come to see and know who God is. We have begun to experience that greatness and majesty that belongs only to God. Therefore, God's greatness must be uppermost in our minds and hearts. For this reason, Jesus teaches us to pray, "Hallowed be thy name."

*Second, Jesus teaches us to pray this because it is not our nature to honor God.* Unfortunately, it is our nature to honor and exalt ourselves. We are unable and unwilling to honor and exalt God. Left in our sin untouched by the saving grace of God, fallen man is hostile toward God, unwilling and unable to do what God commands and what is due His holy name (**Romans 8:6-8**). Apart from being born again, man does not want to glorify God or to make His greatness known. It is the bent and disposition of our hearts to honor and glorify ourselves – to be self-centered and self-absorbed. This is why we are taught to pray, "Hallowed be **Your** name," not "Hallowed be **my** name."

Even after we are born again, we must plead with God for the grace and power to highly esteem and glorify Him. David himself had to pray, "O LORD, open thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth thy praise" (**Psalm 51:15**). We are without strength in and of ourselves to honor God aright. We are selfish

and self-absorbed. We must continually cry out for grace and power to honor Him – to hallow His name. Jesus teaches us to pray this because we need grace and help to honor and glorify God. We cannot do it own our own – in and of ourselves. We must have His grace and power to do this.

*Jesus teaches us to pray this because we live in a fallen world that will not honor God.* The world's attitude toward God is summed up these words, "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God. They are corrupt, they have done abominable works, there is none that doeth good" (**Psalm 14:1**). We live in a fallen world that blasphemes God. We work and reside in a society where the things of God are abused, mocked, and profaned. Jesus teaches us to pray this to protect us from the overwhelming influence of the world's blasphemy and devaluating of the character and Word of our God. By teaching us to pray this way, Jesus longs to keep us from being affected by the world's ridicule and contempt. He also wants us to pray this way to stir us to stand firm in glorifying God in a world that doesn't. As much as they blaspheme and ridicule Him, we are to glorify, adore, and esteem Him.

This is why this petition is first. Jesus teaches us to pray this way because honoring God is our great need, because we cannot esteem and glorify him in our own strength, and because we live in a fallen world that will seek to lead us into blaspheming and devaluating God's name – His character, Word, title, attributes, ordinances, and works.

## How Do We Hallow God's Name?

In what ways do we hallow or sanctify the name of God? The following are some practical ways that we do this:

- ✓ *To trust in God.* The Word of God says in **Romans 4:20** that Abraham "was strong in faith, giving glory to God." Nothing honors and exalts God more than when we trust God – trusting Him for salvation and for all other things that we need. We manifest the

- greatness of God by trusting in Him. However, unbelief stains the name of God and casts doubt on His greatness.
- ✓ *To profess His name before men.* We must make known to others our belief in God and His Son Jesus Christ. We must witness before the world that we know, love, and serve the one true God and His Son Jesus Christ.
  - ✓ *To have a growing knowledge of God.* We can honor God only as we know Him. The more that we get to know God and His Word, the more we will esteem, cherish, value, and appreciate Him. We are to receive, deepen, and broaden our knowledge of God through the reading, studying, and meditating on His Word, as well as through the preaching and teaching of it. Praying hallowed be Your name is to pray for more and more knowledge of God. This prayer requires that we live in close contact with the Word of God and have a profound delight in the knowledge of His glorious name.
  - ✓ *To have a high esteem and appreciation for Him.* We hallow God's name when He is more precious to us than anything else. We are to have the highest possible conception of Him. We are to appreciate, cherish, and esteem Him above everything and everyone else.
  - ✓ *To treat God and everything connected to Him with great reverence.* God has revealed Himself in a variety of ways. He has revealed Himself through His Word, titles, attributes, ordinances (baptism and the Lord's Supper), and works. We must never speak lightly of these things nor hold a lesser view of them than the very ways God has made Himself known to us. We must always handle these things with the utmost respect and seriousness.
  - ✓ *To worship Him in spirit and truth.* It is the purity of worship that God loves more than the pomp of worship. We honor Him when we worship Him from the heart through the Word of God.
  - ✓ *To hallow His day (**Jeremiah 17:22**).* We should never think that God is honored when His day of worship is used for selfish

purposes. We are to devote ourselves to God on His day of worship. We must spend the whole day with God.

- ✓ *To obey God.* How can a son honor his father more than by obeying him? The same is true of our heavenly Father. We reveal His greatness and majesty by striving to obey His Word.
- ✓ *To praise God.* Praising God is a tangible way that we make known how great and majestic our God is. Praise honors the name of God. It spreads the reputation of His greatness, holiness, and goodness. It exalts Him in the eyes of others.
- ✓ *To grieve when His name is dishonored (**Psalm 119:136**).* When God's name is dishonored, our hearts should be broken. When His Word is defied, it should create a righteous indignation in our hearts. When we see the things of God ridiculed and slighted, it should break us. We honor God by having a holy sympathy for His name, Word, works, and ordinances.
- ✓ *To give the same honor and worship to the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.* The Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are God, equal in power and worthy of worship. We cannot expect to honor the name of God unless we worship the Son and the Spirit equal with the Father.
- ✓ *To defend the truth of the Scripture.* Much of God's glory rests in His Word. The Word of God sets forth the greatness and majesty of our God. To stand up for the truth of God's Word is to glorify God. We must earnestly contend for the faith in order to make the greatness of God known (**Jude 2**).
- ✓ *To lead as many people as possible to God through personal faith in Jesus Christ.* We make God's greatness known by pointing them to trust in His Son Jesus Christ. By prayer, by example, and by witness, we are to lead others to God through His Son Jesus Christ. This shows how great, holy, and supreme God is. Because we have come to know how great He is, we want others to know Him the same way. Our knowledge of God fuels our witness because we want others to know this great,

unique, amazing God! **A Christian isn't content to glorify God; he wants all others around him to glorify God!**

- ✓ *To live a holy life.* An unholy life dishonors the name of God, "For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written" (**Romans 2:24**). Yet, when we seek to live pure, holy lives, God is honored; His greatness and majesty are exalted. A holy life speaks louder than all the praises in the world. When holiness shines through our lives, the honor of God shines brightly to others.
- ✓ *To praise and trust God in the midst of adversity.* Nothing reveals the greatness of God more than when His child trusts Him without knowing what He is up to. When a believer goes through adversity and yet trusts and praises God, it makes the greatness and goodness of God shine for all to see. To complain and murmur is to blemish and stain God before a watching world.

These are some practical ways that we can hallow the name of God. Yet, how can we use this petition in our praying? How do we apply this petition to our praying? This petition teaches us how to pray for others and ourselves.

Praying for God's name to be hallowed means asking God to produce these things in our lives. You might consider making a prayer guide with these things. You can pray for these things to become a reality in your life. You can also use it to pray for your children and/or grandchildren. You might also use it to intercede for your church or other believers. Adore and praise God for who He is and then plead that you and others will manifest the greatness of God through these things.

## The Prayer For Removal

When we pray hallowed be Your name, we are praying that God would be glorified. We are asking that the greatness of God would be manifested. We are pleading that the knowledge of God would fill our area, our society. For us to pray for these things, we are

to pray for the removal of some things – those things that stand in the way of God being known, praised, highly esteemed, and cherished.

### Atheism

Atheism refuses to accept the existence of God. It has to be kept in mind that atheists are really "anti-theists" who are angry with Him, who suppress the truth about Him in unrighteousness. They cannot help but know that there is a God due to the witness of creation and the conscience. People try to make themselves atheists in order to escape the God Who is really there and Who they know is there. No good reason exists for not believing in God. Atheism is rebellion against God and the only cure is to repent and submit to God. We must pray that God will bring atheists to repent of their rebellion and to trust in God through His Son Jesus Christ. Plead with God to remove the atheism in your heart first. Too many believers are practical atheists – we live as though we are not continually in His presence. First, ask God to remove the atheism in your heart. Then, call on Him to remove it from your city or area.

### Ignorance

Another hindrance to God's name being hallowed is ignorance. Too many people have a variety of ideas about God. These ideas result from pop culture, tradition, various religious backgrounds, etc. They are not based on the revelation of God given in the Holy Scripture. The ignorance of God in our society is appalling and is a barrier to the name of God being hallowed. First, ask God to remove your ignorance of Him. Plead with Him to help you forsake unbiblical ideas about Him and His ways. Ask that you will grow in the knowledge of who He is – as He has revealed Himself in His Word. Then, plead that others around will come to know God as He is in His Word. Ask that your area will be filled with the true knowledge of God.

### Idolatry

Idolatry is a wicked sin. It is an insult to God. The first two commandments of the moral law

forbid it, showing God's hatred of it. It is unmistakably clear that an unrepentant idolater will never inherit the kingdom of God (**1 Corinthians 6:9**). Idolatry is the exact opposite of the name of God being hallowed. First, pray that God will help you forsake all the idols in your life. Call on Him to show you the idols that you have erected in your heart. Pray for grace to tear them from the throne of your heart and to worship God and God alone. Then, plead with God to deal with the idolatry in your area. Pray for the conversion of idolaters (**1 Thessalonians 1:9**). Ask that believers in your church will forsake any idols that they have erected in their lives.

### **Profaneness**

When I use the word profaneness, I am referring to carelessness concerning God and the things of God. It is referring to a flippant attitude toward God and His Word. It ranges from a casual attitude toward God to a mocking of Him and the things of God. It is treating lightly God, His titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, and works. Again, start with yourself. Plead that God would enable you to rid yourself of any irreverence or flippancy concerning God and the things of God. Ask Him to create with you a sober spirit concerning God and the things of God. Then, cry out to God to do this in the people around you. Pray for the removal of this profaneness that treats God in a casual, ordinary way.

In summary, to pray for God's name to be hallowed, we are to pray for the removal of anything that is displeasing and dishonoring to God in human existence. We are pray for two things:

- (1) That God would continue to sanctify us, removing from our hearts and lives anything that is displeasing to Him and that we will grow in the true knowledge of Him;
- (2) That God would remove the hindrances to His name around us being hallowed that people might see who He is, repent, and grow in the true knowledge of God.

## **Praying Through Ecclesiastes**

### **Working Things Out**

#### **Ecclesiastes 2:18-26**

In 1965, the Vogues had a hit single titled, "Five O' Clock World." One verse says:

Up every mornin' just to keep a job,  
I got to fight my way through the hustling mob,  
Sounds of the city poundin' in my brain,  
While another day goes down the drain.

These words capture the frustration and futility of working on the job. You work away day after day, but what do you have to show for all your effort? Another day working seems to be another day wasted.

Solomon felt this way. He suffered from the curse of work. One of the things that he hated most was his work (**2:18a**). Yet, many people still expect work to give them a sense of purpose in life. When a person meets someone new, the first thing that is asked is, "What do you do? What is your job?" We are defined by our work. However, according to Solomon, work is the wrong place to look for meaning in life. Solomon begins with the problem of work.

### ***The Problems With Work (2:18-23)***

As far as Solomon is concerned, there are two main problems with work. *First, in the end, someone will profit from all our hard work (2:18b)*. One day you will have to leave everything behind. It will all be gone. Your possessions might end up in good hands; then again, maybe they won't. This was part of Solomon's frustration (**2:19**).

The question "who knoweth" in **2:19** invites a negative response. The person who comes after us may be wise, but with so many fools in the world, chances are that everything you have will fall into the wrong hands. Even if the people who get what you have are wise, they still don't deserve it (**2:20-21**).

One man does the work and another man enjoys the benefits. Rather than working for your own benefit, you actually end up working for someone else. When Solomon died, he left everything to his son Rehoboam.

Unfortunately, his son was a fool and squandered what his father gave him.

This is one of the great frustrations of our existence. We all have a longing for permanence. We have a deep desire that something of ours will endure, will last. Yet, we can spend our whole lives working to gain something that we cannot keep.

*Solomon's second problem with work was not just the loss of the work's reward but the work itself.* Work is toil and trouble (**2:22-23**). Every occupation has its own unique demands. However, no matter what kind of work we do, it will always take its toll on us. Hard work can be exhausting for the soul as well as the body. It is often too much strain without much gain.

Day and night, there is no rest for the weary and the worker is always weary. From the beginning to the end, life is a weary labor with little or nothing to show for it. Work in and of itself is empty and meaningless. Solomon is driving home this point – if we try to find our significance in our work, it will only end in disappointment. If you make your life your work, it will leave you empty. That's his problem with work.

### ***The Presence Of God (2:24-25)***

Now we see the book of Ecclesiastes take a surprising turn. Without warning, Solomon says the first positive thing in the book (**2:24-25**). This is a turning point in Ecclesiastes. Solomon now has a little optimism in the midst of sheer hopelessness.

Solomon has experienced the bankruptcy of life under the sun – a life without God. Now He points to God who occupies the heavenly realm and the life of faith in Him. He is beginning to see the difference it makes to live with God instead of without Him. In **2:24** he embraces the difference that God makes. Now he says that one can find joy in eating, drinking, and working. What makes the difference? God does! God has hardly been mentioned up until this point. However, here, God's presence makes all the difference.

According to **2:25**, no one can find true joy in anything apart from God. ***Therefore, if anyone is having trouble finding enjoyment***

***in life, it must be because God is not at the center of things!*** Solomon has stopped trying to take pleasure for himself. He has started receiving it as a gracious gift. When we learn to receive the good things in life as gifts rather than taking them as entitlements, we experience true joy and offer genuine thanksgiving. We must learn to work for God and not ourselves. We must understand that the good things of our lives are the gifts of God to us.

It is easy to get caught up in our ambitions, our schedules, and our paychecks without ever considering whether our work is pleasing to God – both what we do and the way we do it. For the believer in Christ, our true Boss and ultimate Master is the Savior who gave His life for our sins. Whatever our lot happens to be, we are working for Christ and His glory. We are working under the Son and not under the sun (**Colossians 3:23-24**)!

The presence of God makes the difference when it comes to the problems of work. If we work for His glory, then He will reward our work – whether it ever is in this life. Even if it is never acknowledged in this life, He will make sure that faithful work for His glory is rewarded. At the same time, what we have done for His glory will never be forgotten. Even if who we are and what we do if forgotten by this world, He will never forget us. All the toil, strain, and weariness will not be in vain. It is recorded in the heart and mind of the eternal God.

### ***The Profit Of Pleasing God (2:26)***

In this verse, Solomon makes a clear distinction between two kinds of people. The two kinds of people are – those who are under the gracious favor of God and those who are lost in their sins. He shows those who live under God's mercy and those who persist in their sins.

Those who please God are the grateful recipients of spiritual blessings. He gives to those who live for Him wisdom, knowledge, and joy. If we live for God's pleasure, we will be richly rewarded with these spiritual blessings that God loves to give. These things help us to enjoy and make the most of life.

Yet, for the unrepentant sinner, there is no reward but only loss (**2:26b**). The sinner, the lost person, finds work and life to be a total frustration and suffers the vanity that Solomon speaks of here. Gathering and collecting dominates his life. Yet, eventually, he leaves it all behind to someone who pleases God.

Sometimes this happens in this life. The Bible reveals that the wicked Canaanites lost everything to the Israelites. Wicked Haman lost what he had gained to godly Mordecai. Yet, this doesn't always happen in this life. **Revelation 21:24** says that the wealth of the nations will be brought into the kingdom of heaven. **Matthew 5:5** says that the meek will inherit the earth. This may take place in eternity. However, the sinner who loves himself and seeks to please himself will lose all that he gathers and collects.

In the meantime, we have not only the fruit of our labor but the labor itself. We work for Christ because He has already done the work of salvation. We are now to do our daily tasks in a way that gives glory to God. Each of us works in a different way, but it is all part of the same work, which is for the glory of God.



## **Prayerwalking Your School Key Ring**

In recent months, we have seen tragic events take place in our schools. Added to this, we also see the widespread problems in our schools – bullying, drug addiction, sexual promiscuity, cheating, and the list could go on and on. All of this points to the truth that our schools are a spiritual battleground. Satan is battling and striving for the lives and souls of

our children and young people. The problems in our school systems are not coincidental. They are a revelation of the spiritual war that is taking place in our schools.

***The only way to win this war is through fervent prayer.*** We must saturate our schools with scriptural, righteous prayer. The burden of my heart is to offer help to parents, students, teachers, and any who are concerned. For this reason, we have developed the "**Prayerwalking Your School**" prayer ring. This prayer ring provides you with a wealth of Scripture prayers that you can use to pray for a school.

How can they be used? Students, parents, teachers, administrators, pastors, youth pastors, and churches – anyone who is concerned for our schools, can use them. They can aid you in offering scriptural intercession for a school. They can help you learn how to pray about this much needed prayer concern.

These prayer rings are available through The Prayer Closet for \$2.00 a prayer ring. Each prayer ring has laminated cards with a variety of Scripture prayers on them. To order them, you can contact us at **(601) 646-2295** or **prayer@prayerclosetministries.org**. You can also send your request to the mailing address on the front of this newsletter. Please consider obtaining these key rings and standing in the gap for the school or schools in your area. Prayer can and will make the difference!

## **Killing Your Prayer Life**

If you want to kill your prayer life, then do the following:

- *See prayer as a duty that you have to carry out.* Forget about the fact that prayer is the gift and privilege that God gives you through the death and resurrection of His Son.
- *Wallow in condemnation.* When you feel condemned about your prayer life or your praying, stay there. Forget that God is merciful and wants to hear from and bless

you. Forget about your Father who wants to have fellowship with you and is ready to hear from you no matter what.

- *Forget faith.* Stay away from **Hebrews 11:6**. This verse can breathe new life into your praying. Make sure you don't have anything to do with this verse of Scripture. Don't believe it and certainly don't trust it.
- *Snooze, baby, snooze!* Use your snooze button as much as possible. Don't be worried about being disciplined and getting up to spend time with God. God rewards discipline and diligence, so make sure you smack that snooze button as if it's a blood-sucking mosquito.
- *Develop a Lone Ranger mentality.* Whatever you do, don't ask anybody to pray for you or with you. Avoid accountability at all costs. Try at all costs to go it all alone in your walk with the Lord.

If you want to deaden and cripple your prayer life, just follow these simple steps! You'll notice an immediate effect!

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