

The Marks of a True Believer
Message One
Hallowing the Name of God
Matt 6:5-15

- 5 And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. Verily I say unto you, They have their reward.
- 6 But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly.
- 7 But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do: for they think that they shall be heard for their much speaking.
- 8 Be not ye therefore like unto them: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of, before ye ask him.
- 9 After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.
- 10 Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.
- 11 Give us this day our daily bread.
- 12 And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
- 13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil: For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, for ever. Amen.
- 14 For if ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you:
- 15 But if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

Introduction

There is no more precious and wonderful thing in all the world as being a child of God. And, one of the greatest privileges of a child of God is the privilege of prayer. From the very beginning of His ministry to the very end, Jesus Christ Himself showed us the importance of it and His apostles continued the lessons on it as they wrote under the influence of the Holy Spirit.

This text is one of the most well known of the entire word of God, memorized by many who have little if any clue as to what was being said and taught here. The passage known as The Lord's Prayer is recited by millions as if it were some kind of magical incantation to protect people from harm or gain them some credit with heaven. It is interesting to note that Jesus introduced the prayer with an admonition against 'vain repetitions' yet that is exactly how it has been used by so many.

In these brief words, the Lord Jesus laid out for those who would and could hear Him the principles that are to be included in the prayers of true saints. Many wonderful authors have written books on this section of scripture and I know that I cannot at all add to what they have said. Yet, recently, as I was praying, I was struck again with the importance of the ideas contained here and how absolutely essential it is for those who would pray to know and

comprehend the principles contained in these few words.

Personally, I use the form of this prayer to begin when I offer my private prayers. I pray for nothing until I have covered the principles of this pattern that Jesus gave us. This has been my practice for years and the words are literally a part of me, the better part of me anyway. But as I began my daily prayers a couple of weeks ago I was struck with the realization that my understanding of what I was saying needed some further work, that I needed to deepen my comprehension of these ideas. As I have worked on that some fresh thoughts and deeper knowledge of these principles have developed in my mind and I would like to share them with you while they are fresh to me.

This will be a short series of 8 to 10 messages on the great ideas that Jesus wanted to make sure that we considered as we addressed our prayers to His Father and ours. I have titled the series, 'The Marks of a True Believer,' because I am convinced that every believer must come to grips with these ideas and that every one who truly lays hold in faith of these fundamental truths will become a True Believer, a saint of the Living God.

We first take note of the fact that Jesus instructed His disciples to address their prayers to the Father. I do not know if this was intended to be a hard and fast rule. Some have challenged that notion and caused me to consider it deeply but I have come back to the conclusion with which I began. Jesus directed us to pray to the Father and that is what I think we ought to do. Why do something else? Why address prayers to Jesus when Jesus said, "When you pray, pray like this, "Our Father..."? Why address them to the Holy Spirit who was working cooperatively with Jesus when He gave these instructions? I cannot give an answer to these questions that satisfies my mind.

But the first principle laid down is the subject of our message today, "Hallowed be Thy Name."

I wonder what the responses would be if we gathered 100 modern Christians and asked them to write a short essay on what it means to "Hallow" the Name of God and how the practice of that manifests itself in their lives. What if I were to ask this group? Where would you begin? What would you say? What does this word "Hallowed" even mean? This is not a word that we even use anymore is it?

I. The word, you may not be surprised to hear, is a derivative of the Greek word for 'holy.'

In fact, it is the adjective 'holy' but in verb form. We are called upon to 'be holy,' that is, to not sin and to always obey God's Word from the heart in true faith. But, when the word is changed into a verb form it means 'to hold as holy' or 'to treat as holy,' 'to venerate,' or 'to sanctify.' But even that doesn't help us much does it? We are still left with the question, "How do I do that?" "How does this process work?" "What does it look like to 'hallow' the name of God?"

What should be obvious to us is that this is an important thing to do, so important that Jesus placed it at the very beginning of this very short Model Prayer and clearly indicated that He

commands us to begin our prayers, every day, with this thought. But, if we do not even know what the word means nor how to obey what He is saying, we are caught in a spot, are we not?

This was the startling reality that came home to me not very long ago, “Hallowed by thy name?” You do not even now what you are saying! You are not hallowing His Name, you don’t even know how to do that!

In spite of the fact that I have been studying this passage since I was 17 years old and have spoken on it many times, I realized that I had grown dull to its’ impact and dumb to its’ full meaning. I was not ‘hallowing’ the name of God even as I said the words with a fairly advanced degree of understanding of the matter.

Here is what I have discovered in my study and thought since then.

“*To hallow God’s name* means to hold it in reverence; hence, to hold *Him* in reverence, to honor, glorify, and exalt Him. To do this, far more than a merely intellectual knowledge of the meaning of the divine names is required. Humility of spirit, gratitude of heart, earnest study of God’s works until observation changes into rapturous astonishment and worship is certainly implied... the Psalms are filled to overflowing with the idea that for those who trust in Him the Lord is the hearer of prayer, the refuge in the time of storm, the one who daily cares, who blots out transgression, and never forsakes his children, not even at the moment of death... ‘Hallowed be thy name’ means, therefore, that the one who has been brought into fellowship with this tenderly loving Father now calls upon everyone to share this experience with him, and to exalt this glorious God. This means far more than that the petitioner does his utmost to fight profanity. It has a positive content. The supplicant calls upon the entire creation and especially upon the world of men to praise his God.” (*New Testament Commentary*, William Hendriksen, Matt 6:9)

But even this does not, I believe, go far enough in unfolding to us the layers of truth and reality associated with this idea of holding the name of God as ‘holy.’

But in the historical use of the idea of ‘name’ there was a closer connection with the person that we have today. Your grandfather or great grandfather would have had a very different take on the idea of someone slandering ‘his good name’ that you might have. To slander someone’s name was to slander *him* and to slander him was to invite conflict, sometimes to the death.

In a similar manner, holding the name of God in reverence is the same idea as holding God Himself in reverence. But, again, what does that mean? How does that work?

II. The notion of Reverence is very closely related to the idea of Fear.

You will recall what the thief that was converted on the cross next to Jesus asked his friend, “***Doest thou not fear God?***” (Luke 23:40). His lack of respect for Jesus was demonstrating a lack of respect/reverence/fear for God Himself.

Let me ask you the question, Do you fear God? Do you stand in terror of Him? He Who has all power, knows absolutely everything, is perfectly Holy, hates sin, has purposed to judge it, is

angry with the wicked every day, do you fear Him?

Does it terrify you to think of Him?

Adam and Even, after they had eaten the forbidden fruit, ran and hid because they were afraid.

Abimilech, king of the Philistines, was visited by God in a vision because he had taken Sarah, Abraham's wife, and he was profoundly affected.

Gen 20:3-8

- 3 But God came to Abimelech in a dream by night, and said to him, Behold, thou art but a dead man, for the woman which thou hast taken; for she is a man's wife.
- 4 But Abimelech had not come near her: and he said, Lord, wilt thou slay also a righteous nation?
- 5 Said he not unto me, She is my sister? and she, even she herself said, He is my brother: in the integrity of my heart and innocency of my hands have I done this.
- 6 And God said unto him in a dream, Yea, I know that thou didst this in the integrity of thy heart; for I also withheld thee from sinning against me: therefore suffered I thee not to touch her.
- 7 Now therefore restore the man his wife; for he is a prophet, and he shall pray for thee, and thou shalt live: and if thou restore her not, know thou that thou shalt surely die, thou, and all that are thine.
- 8 Therefore Abimelech rose early in the morning, and called all his servants, and told all these things in their ears: ***and the men were sore afraid.***

Moses at the burning bush was struck with terror when he realized that he was speaking with God.

Ex 3:1-6

- 1 Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro his father in law, the priest of Midian: and he led the flock to the backside of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb.
- 2 And the angel of the LORD appeared unto him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush: and he looked, and, behold, the bush burned with fire, and the bush was not consumed.
- 3 And Moses said, I will now turn aside, and see this great sight, why the bush is not burnt.
- 4 And when the LORD saw that he turned aside to see, God called unto him out of the midst of the bush, and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.
- 5 And he said, Draw not nigh hither: put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground.
- 6 Moreover he said, I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. ***And Moses hid his face; for he was afraid to look upon God.***

The whole nation of Israel was terrified when God came down on Mt. Sinai and spoke with them

directly.

Ex 20:18-20

- 18 And all the people saw the thunderings, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking: and when the people saw it, they removed, and stood afar off.
- 19 And they said unto Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear: but let not God speak with us, lest we die.
- 20 And Moses said unto the people, Fear not: for God is come to prove you, and that his fear may be before your faces, that ye sin not.

And then there was old Belshazzar, the Babylonian king who thought to dishonor God by using the vessels from Solomon's temple in a drunken pagan feast.

Dan 5:3-6

- 3 Then they brought the golden vessels that were taken out of the temple of the house of God which was at Jerusalem; and the king, and his princes, his wives, and his concubines, drank in them.
- 4 They drank wine, and praised the gods of gold, and of silver, of brass, of iron, of wood, and of stone.
- 5 In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace: and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote.
- 6 Then the king's countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.

You understand what was happening, right? He had to change his clothes after this.

Do you fear God?

We believe, of course, that we have heard and understood the Word of God, have appropriately responded and are safe from His Wrath.

But, what if we are wrong?

Someone is for sure...

How terrifying is it for you to think about standing before Him and being found disapproved? "Depart from me into everlasting darkness... I never knew you!"

Those who know God have a holy terror of Him. They know what His judgment looks like and that they deserve the full force of it.

At times I am amused and at other times angered by those who seem to deal very casually with God but at the same time think they have a 'magic pass' to escape His wrath and enter freely into heaven. But no one is going to be justified on the Last Day except those who *revere* Him, those who *fear* Him enough to come clean with Him about their sins and repent of them in reality with no pretense and no falseness.

Do you truly Hallow the Name of God? Do you Fear Him?

III. **Out of this *Fear of God* there is to flow and *Awe of Him* which is also a part of this thing of *Hallowing His Name*.**

Remember that the Seraphim who stand in His Presence are continually in total amazement of Him and cover their faces before Him.

Isa 6:1-3

- 1 In the year that king Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.
- 2 Above it stood the seraphims: each one had six wings; with twain he covered his face, and with twain he covered his feet, and with twain he did fly.
- 3 And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, holy, holy, is the LORD of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory.

They are in perpetual Awe of Him because they continually see His marvelous character and works.

We are awed by many things:

- The latest discovery in space,
- The newest piece of technology,
- Views of landscapes we have never seen before,
- or,
- The beauty of some piece of art.

But, how often are we brought to speechless, mouth-dropping *awe* at the Wonders of our God?

Ps 4:3-4

- 3 But know that the LORD hath set apart him that is godly for himself: the LORD will hear when I call unto him.
- 4 Stand in awe, and sin not: commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still.

The word that David used for ‘awe’ means “to quiver with violent emotion.”

Ps 77:18

- 18 The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world: the earth trembled and shook.

Ps 33:1-8

- 1 Rejoice in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.
- 2 Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.
- 3 Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.
- 4 For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.
- 5 He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the

LORD.

6 By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

7 He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

8 Let all the earth fear the LORD: *let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.*

Ps 119:159-161

159 Consider how I love thy precepts: quicken me, O LORD, according to thy lovingkindness.

160 Thy word is true from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever.

161 Princes have persecuted me without a cause: *but my heart standeth in awe of thy word.*

We *Hallow the Name of God* when we stand in *awe* of Him, His Word and His Works, when we see them with such reality and clarity that we literally tremble with the emotions that they stir in us.

There is no Hallowing where there is no Awe.

One of the marks of a true saint is that he/she has Awe for God.

Primarily the awe that the Child of God experiences when he hallows the name of God is awe for His Goodness.

Jer 33:7-9

7 And I will cause the captivity of Judah and the captivity of Israel to return, and will build them, as at the first.

8 And I will cleanse them from all their iniquity, whereby they have sinned against me; and I will pardon all their iniquities, whereby they have sinned, and whereby they have transgressed against me.

9 And it shall be to me a name of joy, a praise and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall hear all the good that I do unto them: *and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness and for all the prosperity that I procure unto it.*
KJV

Part of the amazement is that He would even notice us at all. David expressed this thought and the writer of Hebrews quoted him.

Ps 8:4

4 What is man, that thou art mindful of him? and the son of man, that thou visitest him? Heb 2:6

We who are less than nothing have been noticed by the Great God Who has created all things. He sees us, takes notice of us, cares for us with an eternal, omnipotent blindingly brilliant love.

Rom 8:32

32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

To Hallow His Name we must think on His Power, Glory, Majesty, Love, Mercy and Condescension until we are literally, physically, shaking with Awe of Him.

What else could possibly qualify as ‘Hallow?’

IV. And, then, out of that Awe of Him should flow a Love for Him that blinds us to all other loves.

Matt 10:37-39

37 He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me: and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.

38 And he that taketh not his cross, and followeth after me, is not worthy of me.

39 He that findeth his life shall lose it: and he that loseth his life for my sake shall find it.

Luke 14:26

26 If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple.

How much should a person love God?

Mark 12:30

30 And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

Does that mean that we love no one else?

Mark 12:31

31 And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these.

This love is that which motivated the saints at Jerusalem to sell their property to provide for the widows and orphans in the church...

It was this love for God that pushed Stephen to boldly declare the truth of Christ and the sin of the elders of Israel, costing him his life, Acts 7....

This love moved Paul to carry the gospel to the Gentile world though it cost him dearly...

2 Cor 11:24-28

24 Of the Jews five times received I forty stripes save one.

25 Thrice was I beaten with rods, once was I stoned, thrice I suffered shipwreck, a night and a day I have been in the deep;

26 In journeyings often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils by mine

- own countrymen, in perils by the heathen, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils among false brethren;
- 27 In weariness and painfulness, in watchings often, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness.
- 28 Beside those things that are without, that which cometh upon me daily, the care of all the churches.
- Phil 3:8
- 8 Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ,

It was this love which carried the early martyrs to hideous deaths at the hands of emperor after emperor of Rome...

...that moved the early evangelicals to separate from the Roman church and migrate to the frontier to build new lives and then, from there, to send missionaries to evangelize Europe...

...that led Martin Luther to nail those 95 theses to the door of the Wittenburg chapel to call out the Roman Church for its errors and hypocrisies...

...that led the Moravians to engage in a 100 year prayer meeting, to carry the gospel to the New World, even to sell themselves into slavery that they might minister the Word of God to the slaves...

...that moved our Baptist forefathers to carry the gospel to the American frontier, to evangelize the Native Americans, and then to open the missionary efforts to India, Burma, and China. It was the fact that the Hallowed the Name of God that moved them in love to serve Him.

God's people Hallow His Name.

V. The Great Error of Modern so-called 'Christianity' is that the Name of God is not Hallowed.

Our worship is polluted and carnal because He is not feared.

No one trembles at His Presence because almost no one knows Him or His Word.

Our God is a Consuming Fire.

He is so Brilliantly Holy that no one can behold His face and live, even the Cherubim cover their faces before Him.

His people, His True Believers, cast themselves before Him in faith and repentance, turning aside by His grace from all of their sins and committing themselves to follow Him, obeying Him completely.

1 John 3:1-3

- 1 Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.
- 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is.
- 3 And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

Think on this when you pray, “Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name...”