

IV. The Lord's Prayer in Biblical Perspective
"Petition #1: Honoring the Holy—The Sanctity of God"
Matthew 6
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This is the word of God. Matthew 6:5–15.

5 "And when you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites. For they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners, that they may be seen by others. Truly, I say to you, they have received their reward. **6** But when you pray, go into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who is in secret. And your Father who sees in secret will reward you. **7** "And when you pray, do not heap up empty phrases as the Gentiles do, for they think that they will be heard for their many words. **8** Do not be like them, for your Father knows what you need before you ask him. **9** Pray then like this:

"Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

10 Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

11 Give us this day our daily bread,

12 and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

13 And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*(For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever and ever,
Amen. – this is omitted in some manuscripts)*

14 For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, **15** but if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

The grass withers and the flower fades, but the Word of God abides forever. May God bless this His Word to the heart of His people.

I have had many air flights in my life but there are two that I still remember from time to time. One of them was from Dallas, Texas and the other was from Jacksonville, Florida flying to Miami. I learned from a couple of commercial airline pilots in our church that the flight I had to Miami flying over Jacksonville was known as the Triangle Pit because of all the storms that hit that area and the impact it has on planes causing terrible turbulence. I will never forget that moment I flew over Jacksonville. The plane was going up and down about a thousand feet at a time. I was watching the wing out the window bouncing up and down wondering if it was supposed to do that. The lady next to me was mumbling something I could not understand and had bribed the stewardess for double margaritas which was her way of coping with the moment. I began calling upon the Lord starting with Psalm 23 as I held tightly to the seat. I went to John 3:16 then went to the Lord's Prayer. I did the Lord's Prayer about 7 times and threw in a couple of "Now I lay me down to sleep's" and I was just doing my best to get through that moment of extreme turbulence. Now that is not the purpose of the Lord's Prayer to use it as a rabbit's foot to get one through a difficult time even though that is the way I was using it then. I was kind of inappropriately using it.

Somebody asked me one time, "What do you think the Lord's Prayer is?" I said, "I think it's a map. I think it's a crutch. I think it's a pattern and I think it's a model." The Prayer of Prayers as it became known in the early church is a map. It guides one in their private prayer life which is ninety percent of one's prayer life that then gives birth to public prayer.

It is not only a map that guides one on how to pray with adoration, confession, thanksgiving, petition, and exaltation but it is also a crutch. Periodically I have this default program in my life where I go back to "me centered" praying. I know I can pray about things concerning my life because of what it says in Philippians 4:6, "*Do not be anxious about anything, but **in everything by prayer** and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.*" Yet that is different than "me centered" praying so this Prayer of Prayers is a crutch that I go back to to remind me how to do God centered praying about the issues in my life and the issues of eternity.

It is not only a map and a crutch but it is a pattern. For example, my wife likes to sew so she will lay out a pattern and the pattern then allows her to make the dress. This Prayer of Prayers is a pattern that allows one to make Christ centered disciple prayers.

Finally this Prayer of Prayers is a model. In Briarwood Presbyterian Church there is a model of this entire facility that was designed a number of years ago yet one cannot go into that model to live and worship. That is not the purpose of a model. The purpose of a model is to guide that which is about to be built. We can use the Lord's Prayer occasionally in worship but that is not what it was designed for. It was designed to guide us as a model for how to build our prayer life from the closet out to the glory of God.

In this study we now come to the first petition. God has already done something as Jesus teaches us to pray. In Christ centered disciple making the early church set aside three things to help make disciples. When someone became a Christian they first taught them the right use of the Law of God. God's Law brings one to Jesus and then Jesus sends that one back to His Law to direct them on how to live. There is no power in the Law but it directs one on how to live for Him. It says in John 14:15, "*If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*" The second thing they taught the believer was the Apostle's Creed and the third thing was the Lord's Prayer which teaches a believer how to pray.

Jesus says, "Because you have been built to pray you have already been disciplined in prayer by the world as an unbeliever so before you put on the Prayer of Prayers you have to put off the prayers of vanity." Jesus gives two prayers of vanity. The first prayer of vanity is the prayer of the religious hypocrite. This person does not desire an audience with God but they desires an audience of men to see them praying. They take their private prayer life and they go public with it not because there is anything wrong with public prayer but their whole prayer life becomes their public prayer to be seen by men which is wrong. The second prayer of vanity is the prayer of pagan superstition where people think if they go to a certain place then God will show up or some god will show up. Some think if they say this ritual or repeat these words by heaping empty phrases that somehow that is the key to effective prayer. Jesus says, "No, here is how I want you to pray."

Then He says a very important little phrase, "PRAY, then like this..." Some may say "why the emphases like this?" The reason I say this is because we have a tendency in our old nature to become prayerless. For one to learn to pray one has to pray. In other words, one has not been faithful to the Lord if one has only put off the prayers of vanity. One has to also put on and to put on the Prayer of Prayers one has to pray! James 4:2 says, "*You do not have because you do not ask.*" So, pray! James also says in James 4:3, "*You ask and do not receive, because you ask wrongly.*" So Jesus says, "PRAY, do not be prayerless, in this way. Here is the way I want you to pray."

To recap the study on the Prayer of Prayers it was first brought out the invocation of adoration. So that when one prays the disciples prayer is actually a family a prayer. "Our Father" was a nuclear bomb Jesus dropped on them. This was revolutionary. "You may call Your God, Father" is what Jesus was saying to them. "You have been born again, You have His Spirit so you can call Him "Abba Father." Then Jesus told them that when they call Him Father remember to say "who art in heaven." This does not give one His location but it is giving one His exaltation where He is over all. It is the One who created the heavens and the earth and because of the redeeming work of His Son, the presence of the Holy Spirit, rebirth and adoption, one may call Him "Father." Now after coming into His presence with the invocation of adoration He gives six intercessions of supplication.

This study will deal with the very first one. This first petition is the governing petition in all of one's prayer life. This is not just "number one" but it is the one that governs everything. It is also about God making His name Holy. So the governing petition in prayer of a Christ centered disciple is the desire and commitment to "make Holy" the Name of the Triune God. Make Holy Your Name. So what does that mean to pray that as the very first petition? What if I were to tell you that in the next five minutes you can make a prayer and whatever you ask God He will do it but you can only ask Him one thing? What would it be? Jesus is clear. Here is what it ought to be; "Hallowed be Thy name."

In looking at this phrase the first thing is to understand the request. "Hallowed" is what is being requested. As one writer said, "Hallowed is a very archaic term." In fact wherever this word shows up in the Greek it is never translated in one's Bible that way. For instances it shows up two more times in the Book of Matthew in Matthew 23:17 and 19 and when it shows up there it is translated "make sacred." Most of the time the word "hallowed" is translated as "reverence" or "sanctified." The word "hallowed" is a verb form of a noun word that is translated as "holy." It is hard to make "holy" into a verb so the translators cannot verbify "holy." "Hagiazō" is the Greek word for "hallowed" which is the verb form of "holy." So how does one make "holy" into a verb? They will translate this one of three ways; "reverence," "make sacred" or the favorite one is "sanctified." This is the same one that is used in 1 Peter 3:15, "*but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy...*" Another translation of this is "Sanctify the Lord in your hearts." In other words, "***set apart the Lord in your heart, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you, yet do it with gentleness and respect.***"

When one teaches the Lord's Prayer to a child and they get to this part it has been heard that some children say "Halloween be thy name." Where did Halloween

come from? It came from “hallowed sacred evening” in which the saints and martyrs of the church were honored. That is why it was called “All Saints Day.” We set aside remembrance for those who have given their all for Christ and others. So the phrase is “Hallowed be Thy Name;” and the request is “make sacred,” “reverence,” and “sanctify Thy Name.”

So the second part of this phrase has to do with the part that is being made sacred and that is “Thy Name.” This can be difficult to understand when one considers how people are being named in this generation. People started naming their kids things like “sky,” “weather” and “elevation.” I think people were still on drugs when they named their kids that. Names have become ways to express the “namer” or they have become just labels. Name in the Bible means to define something and when one names something one has authority over it. So when we pray “in Jesus name” what one is saying is “God I am coming not in my authority but in the authority of Jesus” and one is also saying, “God from Your Word, led by Your Spirit, as far as I know, if Jesus were to pray about this this is the way He would pray about this.” “In Jesus name” defines something.

It says in Exodus 3:13, 14, *Then Moses said to God, “If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, ‘The God of your fathers has sent me to you,’ and they ask me, ‘What is his name?’ what shall I say to them?” 14 God said to Moses, “I AM WHO I AM.”* It did not say, “I was” or “I might be” or “I will be” but He said, “I am who I am,” which means Yahweh. Then God begins to tell us who He is by taking that word and hyphenating it everywhere He goes. There is Jehovah-Jireh meaning God will provide. There is Jehovah who is there (Jehovah-Shammah), Jehovah who heals (Jehovah-Rophe), Jehovah who sees (Jehovah-El Roi), Jehovah who redeems (Jehovah-Gaol) are to name a few. God uses His name to reveal Him so His name is identified with Him and how we deal with Him is expressed by the way we deal with His name which is why in the Law of God it teaches us how to love the Lord with all our heart, soul and mind. In the first four commandments, after the commandment “You shall have no other gods before Me” number two is “Honor My Name” through the commandment *“You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain”* (Exodus 20). When Jesus teaches us to pray He lines us up with the sanctity of God and therefore our reverence for God, “Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord our God.”

Here is a summation on this request of the sacred name of God “hallowed be thy name” and some practical takeaways will follow. Summation is what has been said but this is what is **not** being said. We are not saying, “God I am going to make You glorious. I am going to make You holy.” We do not ever add to God’s glory. We do not ever add to His honor. What we are saying is, “God we are requesting You to make Your holiness and Your glory visible to everyone everywhere.” Let me be more specific. With the integrity of this request we are not saying, “God would You let me add to Your glory?” No, we are saying, “God there is none like You. You are high and lifted up. Holy, holy, holy there is none beside Thee. Now O God I ask You to make that glorious. I ask You to make that evident. I ask You to first make it clear to me and then I ask You to make it glorious through me and then I ask You that Your glory cover the earth as the water covers the sea and all pretenders to be struck down and My God alone will receive glory, honor and praise forever and ever.” That is our request. “Make Your name glorious throughout the earth through me, to me, use me.”

So why is this first request so crucial? Here are three reasons why it is so crucial and how we can practically get our arms around it. The first takeaway is that this petition is so important to Christ-centered disciples because the first request is not me-centered, it is God-centered. The first reason this is so important is because God designed us for this purpose. This is why God made us. God did not make us *for* a purpose but God made us *on* purpose and the purpose is His glory. Everything He made is for His glory. He upholds His creation by the Word of His power so that the heavens declare the glory of God. Day after day their speech pours forth “God is glorious” “God is glorious” that we may know Him and His glory. After God has created all this for His glory He makes man in His image, male and female. He gives us and entrusts us with His creation and He says, “Now glorify Me.” This answers the question in the Westminster Confession of what is the chief end of man and that is to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. The more one enjoys Him the more one glorifies Him and the more one glorifies Him the more one enjoys Him. This is why He made us and this is why He saved us.

Why did God the Father predestine me to salvation? It is found in Ephesians 1:6, “**to the praise of his glorious grace.**” Why did the Son die on the cross for my salvation? It is found in Ephesians 1:12, “*so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be **to the praise of his glory.***” Why did the Spirit come and brought me and sealed me unto redemption? It is found in Ephesians 1:13, 14, “*we were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, **to the praise of his glory.***” Why am I His? So that I might declare that He is holy. He has rescued me from the pits of idolatry and He has made me for His glory. He has saved me for His glory. Why does He sustain me? It is for His glory so that as He brings the needs of my life to me I may rejoice in Him “*so, whether I eat or drink, or whatever I do, I do all to the glory of God*” (1 Corinthians 10:31).

Let nothing else occupy that passion in your heart. It is not sports, money, achievements or acclaim that is going to make your life. Those things are not only poor substitutes but they are blasphemous adversaries. My soul and my heart must be filled with the glory of God. Let not those things in this world rise to the level of competing for the devotion of Him. They should be there just as one more thing to use to glorify the Father.

The second reason why it is important for the Christ-centered disciple to embrace this petition is that this becomes one’s passion. This is not just about living on purpose for God but it is also about doing this because of one’s relationship with God. He is your Father and you are His child. He has given you His name and we should want it hallowed. We want it to be lifted up. In Leviticus 10 Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, had brought before God false worship. Then Leviticus 10:2, 3 says, **2 And fire came out from before the LORD and consumed them, and they died before the LORD. 3 Then Moses said to Aaron, “This is what the LORD has said, ‘Among those who are near me I will be sanctified, and before all the people I will be glorified.’”** God has brought us near to Him. He has brought us into His family therefore not only has He designed us for this but this should be our heart’s passion from our Father.

I was riding with my dad one day and he asked me, “Son when are you planning on moving from your nickname to your real name?” There are four generations of Harry Reeders and with that came a nickname “Ike.” At one time all four were living. The first

was my grandfather who was 5' 8" known as "Big Ike." Then there was my daddy who was "Ike" and I was 6' 1" known as "Little Ike" and then my son was "Ikey." I answered my daddy's question saying, "I don't know dad. I'm sure I'll try to feel my way along with that." He said, "You only got your name because your mother made me do it. She said to me, "You're junior and he's got to be the third." I wanted to give you something that would just be yours." I remember telling my dad, "Dad, you could not have given me a better name than to have yours." A couple of years ago I stood and did my father's eulogy and I got a chance to share with people all the things my dad taught me and had given to me. He taught me how to play baseball and that you do not wear striped shirts with plaid shorts. At the end of that I wanted to say one more time, "Dad thank you for entrusting your name to me." Your God has entrusted His name to you. We are even called by His Son's name, "Christian." Hallowed is our passion for Him that our heavenly Father's name will be honored.

The third reason why this request is so important to the Christ centered disciple is because this request governs all the other requests. Take a look at the six requests that are in the Lord's Prayer. The first three, (1) hallowed be your name, (2) your kingdom come, and (3) your will be done on earth as it is in heaven, are all God centered. Then come three horizontal requests, (4) give us this day our daily bread, (5) and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors, and (6) and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. So the first three petitions are God centered requests and then the last three deal with man's needs that are to be met. I would encourage you not to just see God centered (3) and man's needs (3) but to look once again at it. The first one modifies **all** the other five requests.

"Hallowed be your name!" Oh God how can that be done unless Your kingdom comes and rescues men and women from their sin. Your kingdom come for Your namesake. Oh God Thy will be done. You are King of Kings and Lord of Lords. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven for Your glory. Give us our daily bread. Why? So that I might eat and drink to the glory of God and forgive me of my sins that people will praise You for Your grace that is greater than all of our sin. Do not allow me to be led into temptation but deliver me from evil so that men and women might know this God reigns and cares for His people and You might be sanctified. This governs every request and our very lives. This is why we live so that God's name would be hallowed. If I want God's name hallowed through all the earth what does that look like in my life? If God answers this prayer in my life and God accomplishes the hallowing of His name in me, the one requesting that He would hallow His name, what would that look like in me?

Here are three suggestions on how a person as a Christ centered disciple intentionally "Hallows" the Name God. The first thing it will look like is what the Bible calls self denial. With the request "God be exalted" comes the commitment to deny oneself. No man can be His disciple unless he deny himself. In Matthew 16:24 Jesus says, "*If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.*" This is not talking about denying oneself of things. It does not say one has to give up coca cola to follow Christ. That is still self centered but that is not what we are talking about here. Self denial is not the denial of self things but it is the denial of SELF. Galatians 2:20 says, "*It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me.*" My name is not why I am here. It is God's Name that I am here, therefore may God's Name

be hallowed! I do not want to seek great things for myself but that God would do great things for His glory. Psalm 50:15 says, *“Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver you, and you shall glorify me.”* He is not just going to fix your problems but He is going to turn you into a worship statement of His glory when He delivers you.

As God answers this request we will not only intentionally exalt Him but we will intentionally deny ourselves. Who is the greatest man in the Bible according to Jesus? Jesus said in Matthew 11:11, *“Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist.”* John the Baptist said in John 3:30, *“He (Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease.”* God’s glory increases and attention to me is to decrease. There is a moment in our lives that awaits us when we move to the spiritual maturity of not living this life to make a name for ourselves. When God gives us the maturity to quit living to make a name for ourselves and start living to make His name glorious there is unbelievable joy that awaits us. It is joy that we have never known.

The second thing I as a Christ centered disciple does to “hallow” the Name God is I seek to reclaim God centered worship. I believe if God grants the church a revival 20 to 25 years from now we will look back at this era with utter embracement of what we did with worship in the Name of the worshipers, where we have made it all about us and our preferences. There are two things within a pastor’s heart that beats in terms of worship. One is that people will not come and watch worship but that they will participate in it. The second thing is for the preacher, the church, the denomination nor the worshiper to ever become the center of this assembly but only the Triune God. We have within us this “old man” that keeps wanting to pull this back and make it all about me. We then come to worship and have this tendency to become what I call this “Siskel and Eberts” where we come and watch and critique the worship. We say or think things like, “I wonder how the preacher did?” “I wonder how the choir did.” “They weren’t swaying this morning, were they?” We sit and watch the choir, the song leader, the preacher and then we go out and ask these things. There is one spectator in this worship service and it is the Living God. When we leave we do not ask “How did the preacher do?” but the question we need to ask ourselves is “How did I do?” God will be exalted.

Nadab and Abihu, the sons of Aaron, found that out when they tried to make the worship service all about them. Ananias, and his wife Sapphira in Acts 5 found that out when they lied to the Holy Spirit in worship. In Genesis 4 Cain found out when he did not bring God glory in worship. I know God is patient and God is gracious but that does not mean that we do not need to remind ourselves that by God’s grace we have been ushered into the presence of God. Hebrews 12:29 says, *“Our God is a consuming fire”* and He will be revered. He will be honored with our worship and our praise.

Do you know what is on the other side of that practically? I hesitate to say it because I do not want us to enter into God centered worship for the benefits but on the other side of it is power, the key to one’s Christian life so that when we assemble for worship and God is in our midst and being praised the when we leave we want to live a life of worship like that. Romans 12:1 says, *“Present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship.”* When we are consumed with God centered worship there will be a special experience of God’s presence in our life according to Psalm 22 where God delights to inhabit the praises of His people.

When I have got God's glory and His presence in my life then worship leads me into Christian living with power instead of impotency.

Remember Jehoshaphat in 2 Chronicles 20? It is a great war story. All the nations had gathered to destroy this little nation of Israel. Jehoshaphat sought God and got the biggest army he could but it was not even close. God put His army out there and when the army got a raid Jehoshaphat put the women and children out in front. Then Jehoshaphat called the choir and the choir got in front of the women and children. Then they began to worship God and went to the enemy but the enemy had been destroyed. God's power comes when His people worship, praise Him, lift Him up and exalt Him.

The third reason why this petition is important is because we become eager reverence and rejoice in trusting our God. When God begins to do things for His glory watch out! With eagerness we can trust Him now because this is for His glory. Now what will He do about the affairs of my life when it is all about Him, "not to us O Lord but to Thine own name give glory." What will He begin to do then? When we begin to see everything that is owned by Him and to look at His Bible as the Holy Sacred Word of God, and see His church as sanctified by the blood of Jesus Christ and His people belong to Him. When I see this world belongs to Him and His law is holy and see these things in a sacred sense then I want my ministry to be set aside for God's glory and not for my fulfillment. I want to fulfill the ministry not be fulfilled. Pour yourself out for this is God's ministry you are in. Give everything and all to Him. Why do we send missionaries out? So that the praise of our God will cover the earth like the waters cover the sea. This petition translates, transforms everything!

The third and final takeaway is that there is a little hidden treasure that has not been covered in these words, "Hallowed be Thy Name." I used to go over to the prisons in Uganda with a guy by the name of John who was 16 years old and at 16 he would preach in 6 prisons everyday. He said to me, "Preacher I always pick a different prison first because the Emans, the Muslims, find out which one I am going to and they go to the other one ahead of me. I would give anything to have a motorcycle. Then I could beat them to all 6 if I had a motorcycle." So I went home and told our missions committee and we bought him a motorcycle. We sent him a package that had a study Bible and inside the study Bible, just to find out if he was going to study were the keys to the motorcycle. He opened the study Bible and studied. He found the keys. I think that is where we are at. Here is this wonderful gift of this Prayer of Prayers and one opens it up and there is this marvelous little gift that says, "Our Father." All of sudden this prayer never becomes all about me because every time I ask I keep asking for "Our Father", our forgiveness, our daily bread.

I like the way one preacher who wrote it this way; "You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer and even once say "I." You cannot say the Lord's Prayer and even once say "my" nor can you pray the Lord's Prayer and not pray for another for when you ask for daily bread you must include your brother. For others are included in each and every plea, from the beginning of it to the end of it, it never once says "me." One does not find "I" in joy but it is found right in the middle of "sin." If I can die then God's glory, Thy name, Our Father. There is the real key. The Savior went to the cross and in John 12:27, 28 He says this, *"Now is my soul troubled. And what shall I say? 'Father, save me from this hour'? But for this purpose I have come to this hour. Father, glorify your*

name.” And He went to the cross. It was the glory of God that took Him to the cross and from that cross He saved us from our sins.

Prayer:

Father, thank you for the moments together in Your Word. Lord would you allow us not to let the familiarity of the prayer request be lost in the revolutionary intention of it in our life? Hallowed by Thy Name. To the sinner that has never come to Christ may this day say “O the glory to know that there is a Name above all Names, the Name where by I must be saved and I want to come to Jesus today.” Come now and for those who are Christians may we be liberated from making this life about our name and ask You through us make our life about Your Name. May You increase and we decrease. Then we will pray like this,

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.

Your kingdom come, your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread,
and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

(For yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.)