

MARSHALL COUNTY DEVOTIONAL PAGE

"After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name." – **Matthew 6:9**

In the Model Prayer that Jesus Christ taught His disciples, He instructed them to hallow the name of the Father – "Hallowed be Thy name." To hallow means to be sanctified, holy, or set apart. Set apart from all that is evil and wicked, and just as important, set apart from all that is common and ordinary. Why does Christ instruct His disciples to hallow the Father's name? The reason is that because God has come down to us as Father, through

His Son, there is a tendency to lose the special and uniqueness of His Person. If we are honest, the longer we live the "Christian life" we can make God our Father too common. However, as we grow in grace we should hallow the holy name of God our Father that much more. That is the reason Christ first directs His disciples to hallow the name of the Father. A name describes the kind of person one is. We would say that a name describes our personality, our character, and our reputation. Our name says a lot about us, and so it is with God.

Throughout the Bible,

God's reputation or name is on display. One example is found in Isaiah, "...there is no God else beside Me; a Just God and a Savior; there is none beside Me" (Isaiah 54:21). Here God declares that He alone is God, describing Himself as a "Just God." A judicial God who is all about justice and that He alone is the Judge. His reputation is that He will justly pronounce righteousness and execute punishment against all sin no matter how great or small. However, we also read that God is a Savior. Which means that His reputation is also that of being gracious and merciful (Exodus 33:19).

So we see that sin will not go unpunished, either the punishment of justice will fall upon the unrepentant sinner, or the sinner, looking unto God alone as one's own Savior, in repentance satisfies justice.

The name, the reputation, of God is something to be in awe about. The reason we hear little of hallowing God's name in our day is that we (even us Christians) make ourselves too big and make God too small. To hallow the Father's magnificent name and great reputation is to be so captivated by Him that one's heart bows down before our Abba-Father in rev-

erential fear, acknowledging His greatness and acknowledging our smallness - just by the presence of His holy name.

Lastly, consider, if we do not hallow the name of our Father then the opposite is taking God's name in vain. We have limited taking the name of God in vain as just slang curse words, but when we read Proverbs 30:7-9 notice that taking the name of God in vain is connected to an action and not words. May our heart-action be that of "Hallowed be Thy name."

David C. Hale, pastor
Email: insights@gmx.com

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