

## “Lord, Teach Us to Pray” IV (Matt 6:9)

**Introduction** – “*Hallowed be Thy name*” is often understood in today’s circles as though we were saying, “Your name is holy.” But watch your grammar – this is not an indicative, it is an imperative, a petition to God that He would do something. Jesus is teaching us what to command God to do.

**God’s Name** – The petition is not exactly that God would be made holy, but that His name would be. Names are revelatory, and God’s name reveals His nature, His attributes, His works, His very essence. *Yahweh* is not even pronounced by strict Israelites, but the essence of the name is “*I Am that I Am*,” denoting at the very least the self existence and eternality of God (Heb 13:8). He is the “*God of armies*” (Psalm 80) and Jesus is “*the Savior*” (God’s name saves – see Psalm 20:1). Part of God hallowing His name would be, then, to live up to what His name declares of Him. In one sense, this prayer is ‘be what Your name declares You to be’.

**To Hallow** – is to set apart, to make holy, to sanctify. This prayer is petitioning God to do what He has promised to do in Mal 1:11. But God is being petitioned, not men, to sanctify His own name. This is because we are incapable of honoring His name on our own (2 Cor 3:5). God must open our mouths and direct our praise (Psalm 51:15).

**The Prayer Affects Us** – “*Our Father...give us...forgive us...*” This is a corporate prayer for His church, for His disciples to pray. We are praying that God would make His name holy in the midst of His church. This requires that we know God (Phil 1:9-11), that we are covered by the blood of Jesus, and that we are enabled by Him to praise Him in word and deed (Phil 2:13).

**Vain Repetition** – The previous warning should surely be sounding. This prayer presumes that you are availing yourself of all the means God gives you to grow in knowledge of Him and to be conformed to Him. If “His name” encompasses His attributes and teachings, it means you are seeking to grow in your understanding of His Word. If this is the first petition in His prayer it says something about the priority to be placed here. It also assumes you want His name, and not your name, hallowed (Col 3:23). Do not mock God in your prayers and offerings (Mal 1:6-8).

**Praying Rightly** – God’s glory is to be our chief end, and so we must learn to make this our prayer and our heart’s desire. God’s glory is why the Father answers prayer (John 14:13). God’s glory is why our Father changes our hearts to rejoice in Him (Psalm 86:10-15).

**The Prayer Affects the World** – This prayer is an evangelistic and disciple-making prayer by the church upon the world. We are praying that God would –

**Enable and Incline Men to Know Him** (Psalm 67:1-2) – We are praying for His glory and honor to be known all over the earth. We are praying for the discipling of nations.

**Highly Value, Honor, Fear and Worship Him** (Psalm 67:3-7) – We are praying for all to bow down before Him in fear and reverence, and to be lifted up according to His lovingkindness in great gladness of heart.

**Prevent and Remove Whatever Dishonors Him** (2 Kings 19:15-16, Psalm 74:18, 22-23, Psalm 83:13-18) – We worship the God of armies, and we are praying that He would put down His enemies, removing atheism, idolatry, relativism, and the like, from the face of all the earth.

**Isaiah’s Vision** (Isaiah 6) – We know that God uses His worshipping church to spread the glory of His name to the ends of the earth. In our declaration of praise to God, in our singing the psalms and praying these prayers, we are an aroma of life and death, but all to the glory of God (2 Cor 2:14-16).

**The Prayer with Eschatology** – This is the first of three petitions, all modified by this later phrase, “*on earth as it is in heaven*.” This means that we are praying that He would make His name holy upon this earth as perfectly as it is ascribed in heaven. And so with regard to ourselves, we pray intensively, “*let my mouth be filled with Your praise and with Your glory all the day*.” (Psalm 71:8) For the earth, we pray extensively, knowing that all in heaven are glorifying His name perfectly (Rev 5:13), and that God has promised that by means of His gospel preached and THIS prayer of His saints He intends to answer this prayer. “*...from the rising of the sun, even to its going down, My name shall be great among the Gentiles; in every place incense shall be offered to my name, and a pure offering; for My name shall be great among the nations*.” (Mal 1:11). “*All nations whom You have made shall come and worship before You and shall glorify Your name*.” (Psalm 86:9)

This prayer is a command, not a statement of fact. This prayer is sung throughout the psalms. This prayer will be answered in full. God has instructed you to pray in this manner. It is a glorious invitation.