

Monday Morning Rewind –April 12, 2010

Good morning! Are you prepared to hallow God's name this week? On Sabbath, we continued our series on the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6, by focusing on the phrase, "Hallowed by Thy name," or "Holy is Your name" (Matt. 6:9).

The fact that Jesus first establishes our relationship to God as child to father and then follows this with a reminder that "our Father" is holy, has incredible implications. First, it means that this God whom we are to address warmly and intimately as "Father" is holy and therefore due the highest respect. It's been said that "the familiarity of love must not forget the reverence due to holiness." **The privilege of calling God "Father" does not give us the right to treat Him as common or ordinary.** When we follow "Our Father" with "Holy is Your name," it reminds us that God is not coming down to our level, but rather that He's bringing us up to His! He is not common or ordinary and as His sons and daughters, neither are we.

The word "Holy" (hágios) means "**set apart, sanctified, consecrated.**" It has a common root, hág-, with hagnós meaning "chaste, pure." Its fundamental idea is separation, consecration, **devotion to the service of Deity**, sharing in God's purity and abstaining from earth's defilement.

Pure, clean, ceremonially or morally clean, including the idea of deserved respect, reverence.

Fundamentally, "holy" means God is not like you or me! Jesus puts God's holiness at the beginning of prayer so that we don't fall into the trap of being too casual with God. The more casual we are with Him, the more we put Him on our level, so that we begin to value our opinions, ways, and thoughts above, or on par with, His commands, ways, and thoughts. (Rewind to Isa. 55:8, 9; Psalm 50:21; and Rom. 11:34-36 for confirmation that we are not God's equal.)

What does it mean to "hallow" God's name?

1. To hallow God's name is to honor and reverence His character, because His name defines His character. Rewind to Exodus 34:5-7. God's name means something. There are approximately 600 names, titles, and descriptions of God in Scripture. Each reveals Who He is and is a promise of what He will be for us. It's not as if the name of God were not holy already, but that we might recognize and honor it as such. [See Psalm 111:9.]

2. To hallow God's name is to humble ourselves before it. God's holiness should result in our humbleness. "Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped" Ex. 34:8. Humility is always the response of exposure to holiness. And maybe this explains our difficulty with humility—we're not regularly being exposed to holiness, even in our prayer life.

One of the reasons we are uncomfortable with holiness is that we don't like anything that makes us feel small. In our desire for higher self-esteem and to never, under any circumstance, feel inadequate or insufficient, we dismiss humility and by extension holiness, so that we are adequate in all things. But some things are designed to make us feel humble. We are all humbled before the cross of Calvary. We cannot look into the face of Christ and claim to be His equal. In the face of that holy sacrifice, "...**every mouth** [must] be silenced and the whole world held accountable to God." Romans 3:19

3. To hallow God's name is to not take His name in vain. God's name is holy. It is sacred. It is not to be brought down to the low level of crude jokes and swearing. God is above sinners and sin. He is "other." His name is to be revered.

The 3rd commandment not only forbids using God's name in common swearing, but also using the name of God in a light and careless manner, without regard to its profound significance. **Our lives should be lived in such a way that others cannot profane the name of God without the greatest discomfort—not because you chastise them, but because your godliness convicts them.**

4. To hallow God's name is to live in accordance with that name. Taylor Bunch writes: "To hallow His name means that the person who prays the prayer should be a revelation of God's character, a reflection of His image."

The one that you belong to is the one you behave like. If we are simply the sons and daughters of man, then we will behave like mere men, after the pattern of this world with its warped values and situational, self-indulgent morals. Our behavior will be "natural" to the first birth, which is the birth into sin. But, if we are sons and daughters of God, which is evidenced by the fact that we call Him "our Father," then we are to look like and behave like Him. We have been set apart as a people special and unique unto God used for His purposes, not the common purposes of the world. (See 1 Peter 2:9, 10.) We are not the devil's beer can or ash tray.

We who belong to God are to hallow His name in the way we live. Yes, it affects how we eat, who we enter into relationships with, the way we dress, our choices of entertainment, substances we put into our bodies and what we do with those bodies. "A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, and a people belonging to God" have an uncommon purpose in this world. Have you found that special purpose yet for yourself? Are you pursuing it with all your heart? There is only way to do this—"in Christ." *In Christ* is our hope. *In Christ* is our holiness. I am dead in trespasses and sin, but "Even so *in Christ* shall all be made alive" (1 Cor. 15:22). *In Christ* I am a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

As you walk and talk with your "Father in heaven" today, I urge you to join yourself to Christ and then, and only then, will you be able to hallow His name.—Pastor Randy

p.s. Join us this Wednesday night, 7:00, at Fresh Encounter as we dig deeper into the holiness of God.

p.s.s. Plan now to enjoy a Spirit-filled evening with the Nampa Seventh-day Adventist Church choir as they present the original musical drama, "Would You Believe?" Saturday, May 15 at 4:00 p.m. This true-to-life original drama (never seen in Idaho) identifies the real-life struggles, challenges, temptations and victories of two born-again Christians on the road to the Kingdom. Several Kuna members, including yours truly, are featured in this presentation that will be a treat for the whole family! Ask me for free tickets as seating will be limited. You won't want to miss this one-of-kind gospel presentation.

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2 Chron. 7:14

"The need is great. The key is prayer. The time is now."