

Text – Matthew 6:9a-10

⁹ Pray then like this:

*“Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name.”^[a]*

*¹⁰ Your kingdom come,
your will be done,^[b]
on earth as it is in heaven.*

¹¹ Give us this day our daily bread,^[c]

*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.”^[d]*

Title – The Serious Privilege of Praying for God’s Glory

Introduction

Hook

Imagine you are the captain of a boat, and you have had the joy of bring your child along for this trip.

But out of nowhere a storm hit, another boat sends a distress signal. There are people in the water who need rescuing.

Here you are trying to navigate through the storm, rescue people from drowning and keep your own boat afloat, when your child bursts into the cockpit and desperately asks for your help to fix his gaming

console and pleads with you to make some food because he is famished.

What a foolish and disconnected kid. How unaware can you be? There are some bigger things at hand than his entertainment and his comfort.

It is easy to scoff at such a silly story, but often, we are like this child when we pray. We are disconnected from the realities around us. We are often more concerned with our own comforts, our own pleasures than with what God is ultimately concerned about.

Background

Today we begin our second part of a Study on the Lord's prayer. Last week we found that Jesus is in the midst of teaching his disciples **how** to pray.

We saw that this passage of scripture was not intended to be repeated word for word in a ritualistic way, but that it formed a pattern for the disciples to follow. A template for all followers of Jesus to use. A guide which helps us to pray in a fashion which is pleasing to God.

Last week we saw some of the glories of being able to start our praying with "Our Father in Heaven". Like a child coming to a father, we can come to him in prayer with no fear of rejection and full confidence of his love and care for us.

Today we will look at the first three petitions of the prayer. These three petitions will form the outline of our study.

1. Praying for God's Honor
2. Praying for God's Kingdom
3. Praying for God's will

The one thing which is plainly obvious but convicting, is that all three of these petitions are God focused. This is significant.

Jesus is teaching his disciples to pray to prepare them for their task ahead. In the midst of persecutions, trials and suffering how are they to pray? First they are to turn their attention to God. First fixt their eyes on him. God is to be first and prominent in their prayers

This is convicting, because how often do we at best give a token lip service to God, and simply plunge into talking about our struggles, our circumstance, our difficulty?

But in these petitions there is also a great privilege. Jesus' instructions should fill us with a sense of honour. It is actually possible for us to pray to God about the things of God. It is possible for us to Pray about things which are significant and important to Him.

So these first three petitions are convicting, but also a reminder of our privilege as children of God. They are a reminder to take our privilege seriously.

Part 1 – Praying For God's Honor (600)

Exposition

Explaining that “Your Name” Refers to God himself as revealed in his works

So let us begin by looking at the first petition.

hallowed be your name.^[a]

First we will drill down to understand what this phrase means, then we will consider the serious privilege it is to be commanded to pray “hallowed be your name”.

So what does this phrase mean?

In ancient times the name of someone was much more than a way to distinguish them from someone else. Someone’s name highlighted who they were, what they were like, their Character, their reputation.

So God’s name refers to all that God has revealed about himself. His character, his attributes, his works.

For example, God is referred to as Elohim. He is the Creator God. God in the fullness of power. Creator of the heavens and the earth. Namer of all the stars. Designer of our human bodies

Or you would be familiar with the name Jehovah Jireh – The Lord provides. God provides for all the needs of his people. From the food on our table, to the means of saving us from hell, God has and will provide.

Or the name El Shaddai – God almighty. He is strong and powerful. Nothing and no one can stand against Him. He is stronger than armies, stronger than sin and the devil. Almighty over life and death. He is God almighty.

The name of the Lord should bring to mind all of his attributes and perfections. It should bring to mind the fact that He is present in all places at all times and yet he is so immense that he can hold the universe in the palm of his hand.

It should bring to mind that he is able to do all things He wills, regardless of how impossible it may seem to us. Nature obeys him. Kings and nations obey him.

Satan and demons obey him. Even death obeys him. He has absolute power and authority over all things.

The name of the Lord should bring to mind his wisdom, his grace, his faithfulness, his self-sufficiency, his consistency, and his unfailing love. And we could go on,

But I think we get the picture. The name of the Lord refers to all that God is, all He has done and stands for.

Explain Hallowed

Which brings us to thinking about “hallowed”. What does it mean to hallow something, let alone to a hallow all that God is and stands for?

Hallowed means to make holy. To set apart as distinct. Making that thing different from all other things.

Some people set apart one chopping board to only cut onions. In a sense it would be correct to say that that board is holy. It has been made distinct in regards to what gets chopped.

Here we are talking about being distinct in regards to ascribing honour, respect, trust and fear.

To hallow God’s name is for God to have his own honour, his own respect, his own glory distinct from anything else. At a minimum he is **different** from anything we might know, but at best He is better, greater, more powerful, more loving than anything you can think of or imagine.

And to be fair, when we think correctly about God, this actually happens automatically. Who is like God? Who rivals his power, his wisdom, his authority, his love. Nothing and no one. And so automatically, God is in his own category. God is hallowed.

This is automatic, if and only if we think rightly about God. Often in our sinfulness we put people or things at the same level as God and he is no longer hallowed. He is no longer set apart in our hearts and our thinking.

So to hallow God's name is to humbly and earnestly study God's word and observe and take in who God is and what he has done. To observe his majesty and power in general revelation and to observe his love, justice and grace in special revelation. And there will be a point when the observation will be transformed into awe, reverence and worship. It will change from observing facts to hallowing God's name.

Application

And so I trust you can see that Hallowing God's name is much more than not saying his name in an inappropriate way. Hallowing God's name involves the heart, the mind and the soul.

But what does it mean to pray that his name would be hallowed. How does Jesus intend us to pray when we pray "Hallowed by Your Name"? In a way the ways to pray this is endless because we will never grasp the fullness of God, but let us highlight a few points to think about when we pray under the heading of "hallowed by your name".

It expresses our desire to seek his glory.

First we can express our desire to glorify and exalt his name. Our ultimate purpose in life is to Glorify the name of the lord. This should be our greatest desire and the focus of our life. Yet, this is not always first and foremost in our thinking. So starting our prayers by expressing our desire to glorify and make his Name holy reminds us of our top priority. It enables us to

articulate our top priority even if that it is not the first thing on our mind.

It expresses our need for God in doing this

But when we pray under the heading of “hallowed by you name” we are also expressing our need for God to help us. It sounds strange but we need his help in order to bring him glory and exalt his name. And it is good and right to pray for this. We are weak, frail, often distracted, often enthralled by the wrong things. We recognise our weakness here.

It is a plea to God that he would make us fit for Glorifying him

And so we plea to God that he would make us fit to glorify him. That we would be fit to exalt his name. Here we pray that we would come to him with the right motives, the right attitudes and the right words. We know we are not adequate, we express that, and we ask Him to make us adequate, to make our words pleasing to Him, to make our attitudes pleasing to Him. We pray that he would be set apart and hallowed in our hearts and our minds.

It is a call to all creation

But this is also a pray that all of creation would hallow his name. That all humanity would see Him for who he is, in His splendour and majesty.

It is a prayer that people would come to a correct understanding of Him. It is a prayer that He would increase in greatness in the eyes of all. That their perception of Him would get closer to reality. That they too would hallow his name and exalt Him.

Ps 34:3 gives further words to this sentiment:

*Oh, magnify the Lord with me,
and let us exalt his name together!*

“let us exalt his name together”. That is what we are praying under this heading.

Much more could be said on how we can pray under the heading of “Hallowed by Your name” but, can you see the serious privilege you have to pray “hallowed by your name”? Can you see how this is both a rebuke and a privilege.

A rebuke because so often God’s glory is not even on our minds at any point in the prayer. We do not have him hallowed in our minds and so we do not pray that he would be hallowed.

But do you also see the great privilege that we can pray for something so significant, something so majestic despite our weakness and sinfulness.

But we let us move on. Having seen our first Serious Privilege, let us move to our second Serious Privilege: Praying for God’s kingdom.

Part 2 – Pray for God’s kingdom

In a way this is a natural progression from the first petition: How is God’s name exalted? One way this happens is by His kingdom being established.

It is not my intention to explore in detail how the Kingdom of God is and how it will be established on earth. Today we will simply look at three ways that God exercises his kingship on earth, Three ways that his kingdom is advanced and within the scope of those

three things we will look at what it means to Pray
“Your kingdom come”.

The three things we will look at relating to the
kingdom coming are: Conversion, Commitment and
Second Coming

Exposition (600)

Conversion

As Christians we are a stronghold behind enemy lines. We are at war against the devil and the world. We are at war against sin. One of the missions our king has given his people is to rescue those who are slaves to sin. He expects us to deploy and wage battle against sin and the ideologies of the world.

And so, under orders from the King, we preach the gospel. We proclaim his good news. We point out that the wages of sin is death. We explain that God is a righteous and holy God and that breaking his law deserves punishment. And we make it explicitly clear that the punishment will eventually be eternity in hell.

Do you realize this? Without Jesus Christ you are destined to Hell.

But God has made a way! A way to escape Hell. He has sent his son to pay the punishment in our place. He has covered our sins. He has paid the debt. The offer to be saved from hell is open to all who believe.

Do you know Jesus as your saviour? Do you trust that Jesus paid for your sins? His offer is Free. All you need to do is believe that his works saves you.

All who recognise Jesus as saviour will be saved. And those who are saved, will willingly bow the knee to

Jesus, recognising Him as lord in their lives, as king in their lives.

So, rescue missions are one way that the kingdom of God is advanced. Every time someone accepts Jesus as their Saviour the kingdom is advanced. Every time someone becomes a Christian, Jesus becomes their king and the kingdom grows.

Commitment

So conversion is one way that the Kingdom comes. Another way is by commitment. What I mean is commitment to Jesus as king.

Although we have been rescued from the power of sin, our fleshly desire still wage war with us, demanding our loyalty. So although we have pledged allegiance to Jesus as King in our conversion we have a choice to live for Jesus or to live to please ourselves.

In our commitment to serve Jesus as our king we advance the kingdom of God.

In our commitment to say no to sin and yes to godly living we advance the kingdom of God.

In our commitment to flee temptation and to discipline our hands and our hearts to the service of God, we advance the Kingdom.

Remember, Christians are an outpost behind enemy lines. We do rescue missions, but we also hold the line. Not giving away any ground to the enemy. Not giving any ground to the devil, the world or our own sinful flesh.

So, in our commitment, God's kingdom also comes.

Second Coming

The third and final thing we will consider in terms of God's kingdom coming is the fact that Jesus will return one day. He will return to reign with full authority and finish once and for all the war against the devil, the world and our flesh. The kingdom of glory is coming and we can look forward to that day with full anticipation.

The day will come when the outpost will welcome the King. At that time it will no longer be an outpost behind enemy lines, but it will become a prosperous city in the land of peace where all enemies, from within and without, have been subdued. A land where all recognise the true King and all serve him with willing and joyful hearts.

That time of peace will only come when Jesus returns.

Application

So having reminded ourselves what God's kingdom coming includes, we now need to ask ourselves the question: what does it mean to pray "Your kingdom come"? What does Jesus expect us to include under this header?

By praying for Missions, evangelism

Well first off we pray for conversions.

We pray for evangelism. We pray for missions.

We pray that God would give us the words and the courage to clearly explain the gospel to those around us. To our families, to our colleagues, and to our friends. We pray that God would do a work in their hearts and make them receptive to the Gospel. We

pray that they would come face to face with their own morality, that they would sorrow over their sin. We pray that God would give them ears to hear and eyes to see. We pray that they would turn to Christ and be saved from hell. We pray that they would trust in Christ and enjoy eternity in heaven.

But our prayers can be much broader than just for those we know personally. There are many of us who have jobs and vocations which does not allow us to dedicate as much time and energy to proclaiming the gospel to the lost as we would like, but we can pray for those who do. We can pray for those who have uprooted their lives to share the gospel. We can pray for those who face danger and peril to share the gospel. We can pray for those who have been called to the mission field. We may not be able to do these things ourselves, but we must pray for them.

In a war effort there are many roles. Not all are on the front lines. Those who man the supply lines and make sure there is food and ammunition on the front line get little to no recognition but if they do not do their bit the soldiers will die.

Jesus is saying do your bit. Pray for the kingdom to come to those around you, and pray for the kingdom to come to the lives of those who are hearing the gospel in the ends of the earth.

By praying for ourselves and others to be faithful service to our king

So that is how we can pray for the kingdom to come in terms of conversion, but how can we pray for the kingdom to come in terms of commitment? Commitment to our king?

This prayer is keenly felt by all Christians, and it is a major theme in the bible. To live worthy of the Calling you have in Christ. To live in a way that properly reflects your recognition and love for Jesus.

In a way this could be similar to the prayer of “lead us not into temptation” but here there is a specific purpose highlighting why you must reject temptation. The purpose is to advance his kingdom. To promote his kingdom. Sin has many evil consequences, but the one which is highlighted here is that sin is treason to your king!

So pray because you know you are weak

Pray that when faced with a choice to sin you would choose to obey Jesus and not your sinful desire because he is your king.

Pray that when you are faced with the choice to gossip about a church member you would hold your tongue because Jesus is your king

Pray that when you are faced with the choice to look at lustful content you would flee because Jesus is your king.

Pray that when you are faced with the choice to let the fear of man control your actions you would be courageous because Jesus is your King.

Our enemy, sin, still attacks us every single day and every single day we need to remember our loyalty to our King and so advance his kingdom.

Anticipation of the coming

Praying for the kingdom to come is very much about what is happening here and now, but as we have seen, it is also looking to the future.

We also pray with eager expectation for the coming of the lord. We pray that the lord would return soon.

We do not pray for the future with dread or fear. We pray with hope, knowing that the evils we see around us will not last.

We pray like the apostle John. Who after being shown the vision of the final days of this earth, after being shown how Jesus will come back to rule with an iron fist with justice, and how satan, death and sin will be done away with, after seeing all of these glorious things he prays with simple earnestness. In Rev 22:20 we read

²⁰ He who testifies to these things says,

“Surely I am coming soon.” Amen.

Come, Lord Jesus!

What is John’s response to Jesus’ statement that He is coming soon?

It is a heartfelt prayer, a simple prayer: “come, Lord Jesus”

And this is to be our prayer too.

In our prayer we too long for the day when Jesus will come back, when he will establish a new creation with no suffering or death, we long for the time when this earth will be ruled with perfect justice.

We too pray “come Lord Jesus”

So do you see the serious privilege you have of praying “Your kingdom come”? You are expected to take part in advancing the kingdom of God in prayer, and in prayer the possibilities of advancing the kingdom are countless and diverse.

Part 3 – Pray for God’s Will

The third and final serious privilege we will look at this morning is praying for God’s Will.

Exposition (500)

2 Wills of God

First off does it strike anyone strange to be praying for God’s will to be done? We know God is sovereign and therefore His will is always accomplished, right? And yet here Jesus is teaching us to Pray “*Your will be done*” which implies that sometimes it is not done.

One helpful thing to distinguish here is the difference between what is call the Will of Purpose and the Will of Command.

God’s Will of purpose is basically His decree. God has decreed the way things will happen and that is how they will happen. Even allowing sin is within God’s decree. The bible is very clear that nothing is outside God’s control and nothing happens outside God’s decree.

But then there is God’s will of command. We can basically think of this as God’s Laws and his principles he wants us to live by. Is it God’s will that everyone obey the 10 commandments?

Definitely.

It is his Law he wants us to live by. But does everyone obey the 10 commandments?

Definitely not.

We know that in our own lives but also in the sinfulness of the world around us. So in that sense God's will of command is not always fulfilled.

Before we look at how we can pray for God's will, let us look briefly at how God's will is done in Heaven.

God's will in heaven

Jesus qualifies this petition. Not just for God's will to be done but that it be done ***"as it is in heaven"***

In heaven God's will is done completely, heartily and immediately.

Completely in the sense that nothing is left out, it is to his standard and includes everything God has asked. Partial obedience is not obedience. Think of the Story of King Saul in 1 Sam 15 when he was asked to destroy everything which belonged to the Amalekites, but Saul thought he knew better and kept some of the spoil. This was counted as disobedience and a great sin. In heaven obedience is complete.

But it is also done heartily. No half-hearted measures or misplaced motive. Our greatest commandment is to Love God with all our heart, soul and mind. In heaven obedience is done heartily.

And in heaven God's will is done immediately. There is no delay in the obedience. No room to obey when it suits me best. Angels are pictured as waiting around the throne of God to immediately fulfil his command. On the edge of their seat, as it were, waiting for the command to be issued. In heaven God's will is done immediately.

Application

So how do we actually pray within this idea of God's will being done on earth as it is in heaven?

Pray that God's will becomes your will

First off it is a prayer of submission. A prayer that recognises that you are not master of your own life, but God is.

It is a prayer that your own will would be changed and moulded to align to the will of God. That his will would prevail, not your own. This is a prayer where you ask for his strength to obey Him completely, heartily and immediately.

In terms of His Will of command

You can pray to declare that his laws are good, wise, just, right. Our flesh and sinful desires often question if God's laws are really good for us.

So pray, his will be done by changing your heart towards his laws. He cares for you much more than you can care for yourself.

Pray for help to fulfil his will despite the flesh, the devil and the world.

And of course, pray that others would obey his will too.

Big Prayer to Make

Are you prepared to pray this prayer? Do you want your will to be governed by the Will of God?

Praying with these intentions is no small thing, but it is what it means to follow Jesus.

Even when Jesus was about to face suffering, humiliation and death He prayed that God's will be done. In Luke 22:42 Jesus says:

⁴² saying, "Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done."

When we pray this, God may ask us to do difficult things, but it is our duty, our responsibility, our privilege to obey completely, heartily and immediately.

It is our privilege to pray "Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven"

Conclusion

As we bring our study to a close, let us dwell on the serious privilege Jesus gives us when He instructs us to pray.

We can pray "Hallowed be God's Name":

- Expressing our desire to seek his glory,
- expressing our need for God to do this
- and calling to all creation to also recognise the greatness of the living God.

We can pray "thy Kingdom Come":

- Praying for the rescue of lost sinners in our city, our nation and in all nations to be saved and united to the one true king.
- Praying for ourselves to be loyal to our king in the midst of the battles against our flesh, the devil and the world.
- And praying for the anticipation of the return of our king when he will establish his kingdom of peace, righteousness and life.

We can pray “Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven” :

- Praying that our will would conform to His will.
- Praying that we would completely, heartily and immediately fulfil God’s will.

We are like the child of the captain, but we are not expected to stay in our cabin and simply play with our toys. We are expected to be a part of running the ship. We are expected to take part in his work.

We have a great privilege to be able to pray, and this privilege we must take seriously.

Let us Pray.