



## Condensed Milk (Matthew 6:9-13 Series)

### How to Pray, 'hallowed be...' (6:9).

**SUMMARY:** *When we pray that God's name be hallowed, we pray that God would be honored in every heart, by everyone and in everything.*

God's "name" in the Bible refers to the person he has revealed himself to be. To "hallow" his name means to know, revere, enjoy, and honor all he is. Now, if we are praying through the themes of the Lord's Prayer, we will have just spent time adoring this God and "seeing" him. The most reasonable longing that should come out of that should be for him to be hallowed by everyone and in everything.

This is the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, more important than all others, and if we are spiritually healthy, it will be the primary desire of our lives. In fact, our spiritual health is measurable by whether this is true or not. J. I. Packer is right on the mark when he writes, "Understand it and make it your own, and you have unlocked the secret of both prayer and life" (Growing in Christ, p.171). It is not our elevation but God's we should want, simply because God matters infinitely more than we do. That he be hallowed is certainly the first desire of God's heart, so it should be ours.

The Prussian philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche made it his principal theme to attack the idea of God. It is reported that he once scornfully commented, "I cannot believe in a God who wants to be praised all the time." But if it is true that perfect beauty, justice, power, and truth (among other things) should be praised than it would make no sense if God should not want himself to be praised. He is all these things and more. If we wanted that kind of honor, it would simply be repulsive vanity, but for God to want it is right and good.

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<sup>1</sup> Bible verses on honoring who God is:

Isaiah 43: 6b-7. Bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth - **7** everyone who is called by my name, whom I *created for my glory*, whom I formed and made."

Matthew 5:16. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven.

This petition is the mother of all petitions. It sets the direction of all other petitions, for God's glory is to be our goal in everything. It is the condition of all other petitions, for God will do nothing that contravenes, or fails to promote, his glory.

And it is the sanest and kindest guideline God has given us. Can you imagine a world in which every person did only what would honor God? There would be no crime or cruelty, no broken marriages and homes, no unkind words or actions, no starvation or wars, and no lack of happiness. Imagine the effect on your own life if you honored all that God is above every other consideration.

**Practice Exercise:** Write at least one sentence of prayer that expresses this theme. The verses in the footnote can help you as you reflect on them.<sup>1</sup>

1Corinthians 10: 31. So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.

1Peter 2:12. Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us.



## **Condensed Milk: Questions for...**

### **How to Pray, "hallowed be..."(6:9).**

#### **Content Questions:**

1. What stands out to you in this article and why?
2. What does God's "name" stand for in the Bible?
3. What is the natural connection between the theme, "in heaven" and the petition, "hallowed be"?
4. If our primary desire is that God be known, honored, loved and enjoyed, what does this reveal about us?
5. Many people think that God's requirement that we always praise him is unworthy of God. How would you answer that?
6. How is this first petition, if prayed and lived by ourselves and others, a real kindness?

#### **Discussion Questions:**

7. How do you feel about making this petition your first and most desired petition?
8. If God pursues his own glory in everything, how does the evil he allow, that could not happen apart from his permission, bring him glory?
9. What kind of limit does this first petition put on other things we might ask for, such as our prayers for health and wealth? How do you feel about that?

#### **Take-Home Practice:**

In the prayer journals you've been given try to journal a prayer that begins with the first three phrases of the Lord's Prayer, each day this next week.

