

The Rock: 10-30-2022**A year with the Master**

Title: Hallowed be you name

Scripture: Matthew 6:5-14 (focus this week on vs. 9)

(Black bible Pg. 761 ESV)

Theme:

Learning to honor God for who He is and not for what He has done.

Introduction:

As we begin our journey this week in The Lord's Prayer, I want to remind us again of Isaiah the Prophet.

Looking at his recognition of the fact that in prayer, he found himself in the throne room of God. He also understood that he had no right to be there, but that in God's love and goodness, it was and is God who makes the way.

He does so because He wants to, not because it is deserved. That is something to keep in mind as we look at what it means to "hallow" or reverence, or honor the name of the Lord.

"Hallow", it's not a word we use much today, if we use it at all. In part, it is an understanding that God is in

heaven, that He is holy and desires relationship with us, His creation.

The amazing thing I find is that He has no need of it because He is complete in Himself, and His reason for being and existing is found within Himself.

So, to understand that, and the fact that He has a deep desire to know you and have a relationship with you, will be helpful as we go forward.

Most especially for those of us who have less than stellar relationships with our earthly fathers for whatever reason.

What pleases Him the most is when we want to step into that relationship with Him through Jesus. Living and walking out His commands in this world.

-Psalms 1:1-2 (ESV)

"Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night."

Walking according to His word. In that He is pleased and by that, we are righteous. His Word. 66 books give us the full revelation of who He is -and how He came

to us (became flesh) in the man, Jesus of Nazareth.

Our Christmas text this year helps us today:

-John 1:1 (ESV)

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

That beautiful reframing of the creation story from Genesis 1 of how God brought into existence the entire universe -He spoke.

We find in His word; His perfection, His holiness, His love for us, even in our rebellion.

The Story:

This prayer of Jesus, as we learned last week, is a starting point, as much as it is a reflection of who Jesus is.

We could walk through this entire sermon on the mount and see much of this working itself out. Looking, as we have this year, at His entire ministry, we see that Jesus lived and walked this prayer out in all He did.

The beauty then is this: That no matter how much, how little, how good, or how bad you pray or think you do -this again is our starting point.

We cannot go wrong starting here. Understand that Jesus is the word and He has given this to us and starts out with a positioning of our hearts before the very throne which Isaiah found himself.

-Matthew 6:9 (ESV)

"Pray then like this: 'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name.'"

This is the solid foundation of the well-built house of prayer.

We can and will take each line - and work our way through it. Like this morning "Hallowed be your name."

Why? Because of all He has done and continues to do. This turns into a time of thanksgiving, of praise, and of "Right posturing" before God.

Quite often in prayer we start with our "laundry list" of things? While that's not wrong, Jesus doesn't start there. What He does here is very important for us:

He is grounding us and rooting us in God's goodness, His worthiness of praise, Who God is, in relation to everything and everyone else.

That helps us to focus the rest of the way correctly. Far too often, we cannot

see beyond our problems and circumstances.

That then, causes frustration, doubt, unsettledness and often times, fear. That occurs because our focus is on our issue and not on who God is in the middle of any issue we face.

God never changes, He is the same yesterday, today and forever. He is never fickle and unfocused, and the best way to keep ourselves from being that way ourselves, is to keep Him front and center as our object of affection. "Hallowed be your name."

When we look at our world and the things going on, if we focus on just that, things are hopeless.

Panic then sets in and we begin to wonder and wander, asking the question: "Where is God in all this mess?"

I'm reminded of Peter in the boat, or rather out of the boat. When we take a look at that instance in Matthew 14, we tend to slam Peter for his lack of faith, after all he sank.

But let me ask you, how many of you would have climbed over the side and onto the water? How many of them did? None!

They had been sent across the lake by Jesus because he needed to get alone to pray (key life pattern here), and now into the middle of the night, with the wind and waves working against them, Jesus decides to go to them.

They see Him coming across the water - minus a boat, because who needs a boat when you can just walk on the water? As any of us would, they panicked.

-Matthew 14:26-27 (ESV)

"But when the disciples saw him walking on the sea, they were terrified, and said, "It is a ghost!" and they cried out in fear. But immediately Jesus spoke to them, saying, "Take heart; it is I. Do not be afraid."

"It is I". The literal translation is: "I AM". Echoes of another time when that was heard in Israel's history, and that too was a bit of a bizarre moment. Moses and the burning bush come to mind here.

-Exodus 3:2-6 (ESV)

"And the angel of the Lord appeared to him in a flame of fire out of the midst of a bush. He looked, and behold, the bush was burning, yet it was not consumed. And Moses said, "I will turn aside to see this great sight, why the bush is not burned." When the Lord saw

that he turned aside to see, God called to him out of the bush, "Moses, Moses!" And he said, "Here I am." Then he said, "Do not come near; take your sandals off your feet, for the place on which you are standing is holy ground." And he said, "I am the God of your father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look at God."

Having been instructed to go back to Egypt to rescue God's people out of bondage Moses asks the question:

-Exodus 3:13-14 (ESV)

"Then Moses said to God, "If I come to the people of Israel and say to them, 'The God of your fathers has sent me to you,' and they ask me, 'What is his name?' what shall I say to them?" God said to Moses, "I am who I am." And he said, "Say this to the people of Israel: 'I am has sent me to you.'"

Peter was good, in his faith he knew Jesus was Lord. The comfort of His words of, "I am" drew him out of the boat, and he continued to be good right up until he wasn't. Brilliant observation, I know.

He began to look around at his situation and environment and realize he couldn't walk on water:

-Matthew 14:30 (ESV)

"But when he saw the wind, he was afraid, and beginning to sink he cried out, "Lord, save me."

This is a faith challenge for us here. Not to go and try and walk on water, but rather that we believe that God is God, that He can be trusted in all the circumstances in our life, and He alone is worthy of that faith and trust.

Lord, save me!

-Matthew 14:31 (ESV)

"Jesus immediately reached out his hand and took hold of him, saying to him, "O you of little faith, why did you doubt?"

Back in the boat they do what Isaiah did, they worshipped:

-Matthew 14:32-33 (ESV)

"And when they got into the boat, the wind ceased. And those in the boat worshiped him, saying, "Truly you are the Son of God."

Hallowed be your name.

If we don't start there, all of the storms of life will be too much for us to handle. God in Heaven must be first, he must be middle and last, the object of our affections, faith, and trust. Not because of what He has done, but simply because of who He is.

Oh, we will fall short, we will sink in fact. A lot more than we will want to admit. But God is still God, He is in Heaven and we are not.

Even more powerful than that, in learning to start here in our prayer, we find this Scriptural truth, that in all of this, He bows down to hear us.

Once we recognize who He is, we begin to see all that He does and continues to do for us.

-Psalms 116:1-2 (ESV)

"I love the Lord, because he has heard my voice and my pleas for mercy. Because he inclined his ear to me, therefore I will call on him as long as I live."

This was one of the songs that as a very young Christian I used to sing. It was one of our worship songs here, all those years ago and it still sticks with me.

Every time I read those two verses, I actually sing them, and I am reminded of

how good He is. Think on it, He bows down to listen to your prayer.

He is not some ethereal angry sky pilot waiting for us to make more noise and cut ourselves, like the prophets of baal.

No, He is our maker, He has created the Heavens and the Earth, and yet, He inclines His ear to the prayers of His people, of those who genuinely seek Him:

-Hebrews 11:6 (ESV)

“And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.”

He is not looking for all that showiness and bragging about what we have done, or worse, what we want and expect from Him.

Although, looking here at Psalm 116, we find that He wants to bless, but we have to first recognize, with Isaiah, Him and His holiness.

Looking forward beyond this verse in Matthew 6, we find that the Lord's prayer becomes a time of thanksgiving, of praise, and of right heart-attitude before God in Heaven, and then before each other in our day-to-day walks.

He wants to hear, He wants to answer, but there is a painful truth in here as well, and one we tend to avoid.

God does NOT hear the prayer of the mocker, of the irreverent, and the one who refuses to believe that He is real, and blesses those who genuinely seek Him out.

Hebrews 6 and our teaching from last week makes that clear. It is one of the reasons I struggle so as a pastor with the flippant, irreverent way in which some people pray.

There is no Isaiah moment of recognizing that He is holy, I am not, Woe is me. It is only there when we begin to get a sense of who God is and what He has done for us in Jesus.

It's this light hearted irreverence of "daddy, daddy, it's so cool I can talk to you, I just love being able to hang with you.

That is the outworking of how this world functions, where the only reverence that people seem to have is in their irreverence.

Not to be a stodgy old curmudgeon, but it does seem that I am getting there, but God does not function that way, as if He

is some sort of hipster cool guy in the sky.

I do not think it wrong to see the absolute breakdown in our culture as it relates to respect of authority and position. This is a direct result of our loss of reverence and understanding of God.

A whole sale rejection of Him actually, and a fundamental disbelief that He is even real.

You see, the moral collapse of any culture, the irreverence, and the lack of any sacredness beyond the self is the outworking of a culture which turns its back on God, and then on itself.

It is no surprise then that society is fighting so hard to have the right to total self-deification. I will control my life, my body and choose who lives and who dies, and what I am.

Abortion on one end, and termination of life on the other end are simple outworking's of the world wanting their will to be done here and not God's.

We should look at issues such as this in light of who God is and fight to make them unthinkable, not simply illegal. God is after the hearts of men and women, not just the laws of the land.

It is why, as Christians, life feels so unsettled. We see and feel this sense of loss and hopelessness in this world.

Forgetting who God is, causes so many things to happen. We forget not only what it means to be human, but we have lost the ability to even know what a human is.

If God is not revered / hallowed, you will always find that the drive is always toward power and control, and that never ends well.

Hallowed be your name. This is the precious gift that we have been given here. The moment we recognize this fact, we discover that He is the tender hearted, loving father who bows down, who reaches out and who blesses beyond measure, even in our suffering, in our doubt, and in our fear.

He loves you. I want to leave you with these thoughts:

First, only Israel ever called God in Heaven father. Why? Because HE gave them the divine privilege of doing so, and of being His children, His chosen.

In Jesus, we also have that same gift. Isaiah the prophet and Paul:

-Isaiah 63:16 (ESV)

"For you are our Father, though Abraham does not know us, and Israel does not acknowledge us; you, O Lord, are our Father, our Redeemer from of old is your name."

-Romans 8:15-17 (ESV)

"For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him."

In Christ, this is our confidence. He is God our Father; He is in heaven caring for us and Hallowed be His name.

So, "in our prayers, we should never forget that God is almighty and doesn't cease to be holy [even] when He stoops down to hear our heartfelt prayers."

-Swindoll's living insights Pg. 113