

HALLOWED BE YOUR NAME

Friday, February 13

Reading: Hebrews 4:14-16

Matthew 6:9 "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name,

'Hallowed' is an old word that is not used much today. One of the ways we still use this word is when we speak of 'hallowed ground.' I remember standing in Arlington National Cemetery outside Washington, D.C. Looking at the thousands of graves of those who served their country (and many died for it). Being there gave me a sense of respect. This was truly hallowed ground. The word literally means holy, set apart. It describes something worthy of special reverence and awe.

Too often, we stress our personal relationship with God as Father while downplaying His hallowedness or holiness. We hear people talk about God in a flippant way – "the Man Upstairs" or "the Big Guy in the Sky." I once saw a button that read, "I love JC and His Dad." These expressions fly in the face of the majesty of God. Jesus instructs us to pray "hallowed be Your name" to remind us to stand in awe in the presence of God.

The call to hallow God's name also reminds us that God is to be the center of our lives. In Numbers 2-3, we read the God-given instructions for the arrangement of the Israelite camp as they journeyed through the wilderness. The tents of the 12 tribes were the outer 'ring' of the camp forming a square. The inner ring was where Levi, the priestly tribe, arranged their tents. At the center of the camp was the Tabernacle – the place where God's presence dwelt in the pillar of fire and cloud. Whenever the Israelites looked to the center of camp, they would see the presence of God, reminding them of Who was leading, guiding, and providing for them in the wilderness.

Likewise, the Lord should be the center of our lives. We should always be looking to Him to lead, guide, and provide for us. However, unlike the Israelites who had the priests as a 'buffer' between them and God's presence in the Tabernacle, we have direct access to our holy heavenly Father. We can "approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need" (Hebrews 4:16).

When we pray "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name", we are acknowledging the loving personal relationship of our heaven Father while still recognizing the awesome greatness and majesty of our holy Lord. We need this balance to build a strong relationship and a powerful prayer life. We must come to God with a sense of awe and reverence, not fear and apprehension. We must come as a child to their loving Father who wishes only the best for His children, not with a sense of entitlement or selfishness born out of a lack of reverence for His name.

How do you think of God? How does it affect the way you pray? What might you need to change to build a stronger and more reverent relationship with Your heavenly Father?