

## **Prayer, From the Westminster Larger Catechism, part 4**

### **Q189: What does the preface of the Lord's Prayer teach us?**

A189: The preface of the Lord's Prayer (contained in these words, Our Father which art in heaven), teaches us, when we pray, to draw near to God with confidence of his fatherly goodness, and our interest therein; with reverence, and all other childlike dispositions, heavenly affections, and due apprehensions of his sovereign power, majesty, and gracious condescension: as also, to pray with and for others.

### **Q190: What do we pray for in the first petition?**

A190: In the first petition (which is, Hallowed be thy name), acknowledging the utter inability and indisposition that is in ourselves and all men to honor God aright, we pray, that God would by his grace enable and incline us and others to know, to acknowledge, and highly to esteem him, his titles, attributes, ordinances, Word, works, and: Whatsoever he is pleased to make himself known by; and to glorify him in thought, word, and deed: that he would prevent and remove atheism, ignorance, idolatry, profaneness, and: Whatsoever is dishonorable to him; and, by his overruling providence, direct and dispose of all things to his own glory.

In prayer, Christians must approach God, the almighty, all knowing, all powerful, most high, creator, the one true God...with reverence, adoration and awe. You must know him as he is. At the same time, you must have full assurance that he loves you more than you have, or can love anyone. He knows precisely your struggles and shortcomings, and he has given you all things through the perfect life and death of Jesus Christ. Finally, you must believe that he hears you, and that he wants to hear you. Never mind *how* he hears you, just believe as a child believes a parent. The need to know how everything works is a major stumbling block in praying. Pray for the Spirit to give you faith to believe like a child; to believe simply because God said so.

“Hallowed be thy name”, the first petition, gives us enormous information about God, and how great he must be! He could have begun this prayer in any other way, but to praise, consecrate, glorify, bless, exalt, magnify, honor, laud, proclaim, make holy, give thanks for his name...is number 1! He is certainly far and away, more glorious than we could ever imagine! Our minds are just not capable of comprehending the majesty and glory of God. Let us pray that God's first priority is our first priority, whether we comprehend and understand everything, or not.

Lord God, my Father, I want to pray to you as I should. I want to honor you as I should. I pray that through your Spirit, you will encourage me, teach me, to come before you in humble

obedience, to make my requests known to you. Give me the faith of a small child, who believes his Father without question, without having to know how everything works. Teach me to trust you entirely, to believe what you say, just because you said so. Reveal as much of your glory to me as I can comprehend, but don't allow me to shrink from my duty, simply because I don't fully understand something.

Lord, I pray that your name is hallowed in my heart, on my lips, in my family, my church and throughout all the earth. You created a beautiful world, but sin has corrupted all the people and evil runs rampant. I pray that all your children will continually glorify your name, and that you will call multitudes of sinners to belief, repentance and worship!

Teach me to know you as you are, to obey you, honor you and pray as I should. Prepare me to know the gospel of Jesus, and make me able and eager to share the good news of Jesus with the people with whom you arrange divine appointments.

Forgive me, bless me, and keep me in the way everlasting. I pray these things in the name of Jesus Christ, the way, the truth and the life. Amen.