



Links Players

Teach Us To Pray - Lesson 2: Hallowed Be Thy Name

And he said to them, when you pray, say: Father, hallowed be your name. (Luke 11: 2, ESV)

Don't embarrass the family name! If I heard it once, I heard it a million times on the way out the door during my high school and college years. For good reason too. I was up to no good.

Looking back on it, my behavior at the club was downright deplorable. I cursed! I threw clubs. I broke clubs. I gambled far beyond my means. We should stop there.

In college, my golf coach pulled me into the men's locker room after the front nine during a qualifying match and soundly rebuked me for my outbursts. I wasn't a Christian at the time, but I had a conscience. I was mortified.

Like all parents, my parents knew I was coloring outside the lines. Obviously, they loved me and were concerned for my safety. They also knew that I could bring shame on the family name. Sadly, there were more than a few occasions that I had done just that.

As I was growing up the sun was setting on the Old South. It was a bewildering time. The sixties, if nothing else, saw seismic shifts in American norms. Long held customs were being challenged and overthrown. Of course, some of these customs needed jettisoning.

On the other hand, some cultural standards were guarded with a fierce commitment to traditional mores and biblical values. Having a "good name" was at the top of that list.

If we are appropriately concerned to guard the family name, how much more should we be jealous to honor the name of the Father? Jesus begins the Lord's Prayer with, "When you pray, say: Father [in heaven], hallowed be your name."

The first two petitions in Luke (first three in Matthew) revolve around things pertaining to the Father. The last three petitions concern our personal needs—provisions, forgiveness, and triumph over evil. The order matters.

Learning to reorient our lives around the Father's name, kingdom, and will is easier said than done, but it remains the secret not only to a great prayer life; it remains the secret to a life well-lived.

Jesus is teaching us that our starting point in prayer and life is to center around hallowing his name! To hallow is to "make sacred." In scripture, God's name is shorthand for all that he is— his character as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

To "hallow his name," is to honor, revere, and adore him. In short, we are to stand in awe-struck wonder at the greatness of this Father— the Father who is "in heaven."

To build a life of prayer, the place to start is to follow the Lord's pattern of prayer. Begin with sustained adoration of this transcendent God and it won't be long before you are caught up into his presence and lost in the wonder of his love and grace.

Prayer – Father, cause your name to be revered in my life, my family's life, my church's life, my nation's life.

READING - Exodus 20:1-7; Luke 11:1-13; Hebrews 7:25.

OPENING QUESTIONS: Have you ever behaved badly on the course? Was the family name sullied? Have you gone back to those who were offended and made it right?

1. In reading **Exodus 20: 1-7**, what does God say about his name? *Hint:* the corollary of a negative command is a positive. If we are not to take his name in vain (i.e., disparage it), then what?

2. In reading **Luke 11: 2-4** or **Matthew 6: 9-13**, what sequence regarding the petitions do we discover? Does the order matter? Name the first three. Then name the second three.

3. In **Hebrews 7: 25**, what activity is Jesus involved in now? What are we encouraged to do? *Hint:* He ever lives to ____? And we are encouraged to ____?
