

*Monday Adoration: May 19, 2008*  
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## The Lord's Prayer (2)

Preamble: We reflected last week on the beginning of the *Lord's Prayer* 'Our Father in Heaven.' Many of us were amazed at the depth and richness of this most basic Christian prayer. Today, we shall continue our reflection on the *Lord's Prayer*.

Matthew 6:9: Hallowed be your Name

The Jerusalem Bible says, 'may your name be held holy.' The Greek word *hagios* means holy. But the basic meaning of *hagios* is something that is separate or different from others. A person who is *hagios* is someone who is separate or different from others. So it is with the temple which is *hagios* because it is separated or different from all other temples. God's day is *hagios* because it is separated or different from all other days. In the Christian life, to sanctify means to make holy; it means to set apart for God. Therefore, when we pray 'Hallowed by your name,' it means that God's name is not only holy but should be treated separately or differently from other names.

The second commandment forbids us to use God's name in vain: "You shall not misuse the name of Yahweh your God, for Yahweh will not leave unpunished anyone who misuses his name" (Ex 20:7). God's name is holy and thus should not be used anyhow. Psalm 8:1 says, 'How great is your name O Lord our God through all the earth.' Psalm 20:7: 'Some call on chariots, some on horses, but we on the name of Yahweh our God.' In Isaiah's vision in the temple, he saw Lord seated on high with the seraphs shouting, "Holy, holy, holy is Yahweh Sabaoth. His glory fills the whole earth" (Is 6:3). When we pray *Hallowed by your Name*, it is a call to reverence God. We pray that we are able to give the reverence that truly belongs to God. It means to worship, adore, and praise God. It means to bless God's name, to live for His name and to worship Him as His nature and character deserve. According to William Barclay *Hallowed be your Name* means, "Enable us to give thee the unique place which thy nature and character deserve and demand" (**The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 1, p. 206**).

It should be noted that it is not through our prayers that God's name will be holy. No. God is holy and holy is His name. But when we pray *Hallowed by your Name*, we are asking that God's holiness will shine on us. When we pray the 'Our Father,' we must do so with utmost reverence because we are addressing God who is holy. By acknowledging God's holiness and reverence to His holy name, we dispose ourselves to the path of holiness too. After all, scripture tells us, 'Be holy, for I, Yahweh your God, am holy' (Lev 19:2). God did not tell us to try to be holy but instead to be holy.

Matthew 6:10: "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

There are two parts to this text. First is praying for God's kingdom to come and second, for God's will to be done. The mission of Jesus Christ was to inaugurate the kingdom of God. The kingdom of God is characteristic of the NT. It was the central message of Jesus Christ. Jesus began his public ministry by announcing that the kingdom of God is close at hand (Mk 1:14).

There is a continuum of the past, present, and future with regard to the kingdom of God. Jesus spoke of the kingdom in the past (Lk 13:28; Mt 8:11), in the present (Lk 17:21), and in the future as he taught us to pray for the coming of the kingdom. Therefore, when we pray 'Your kingdom come,' we are asking that the kingdom of God be made present for us in the same way as we ask that His name be holy for us. The kingdom of God already existed but it was made present to us by Jesus Christ through his ministry, passion, death and resurrection. Jesus Christ brought the kingdom of God through His incarnation and through His paschal mystery. William Barclay defines the kingdom of God thus: "The kingdom of God is a society upon earth where God's will is perfectly done as it is in heaven" (**The Gospel of Matthew, Vol. 1, p. 211**).

The kingdom is in the past, present, and future. But in the Lord's Prayer, 'Your kingdom come,' refers to the final coming of the reign of God in the second coming of Christ when Jesus Christ will return the whole world and the created order to God. We do not know that day. But we experience the kingdom of God in our daily Christian lives.

"Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven."

To belong to the kingdom of God means to do God's will. Here we pray that God will accomplish what He wills for us and that we will be able to do what God wills. This is an aspect of the Christian life where most of us have difficulty. We find it hard to pray for God's will to be done in our lives. The truth is that God's will, will always be for our good and will always bring us peace though sometimes it entails trials and suffering.

Jesus is our example and model of obedience to God's will. For Jesus, His food was to do the will of the One who sent him (Jn 4:34). The Letter to the Hebrews tells us that although he was Son, Jesus learnt obedience through suffering (Heb 5:8). Our Lord practiced at the Garden of Gethsemane, what he taught His disciples in the 'Our Father,' namely, "Thy will be done" (Mt 6:10). Our Lord prayed: "Father, if you are willing, take this cup away from me. Nevertheless, let your will be done, not mine" (Lk 22:42). Obedience and surrender to God's will in our lives enable us to be like Christ and to be with Christ by surrendering to God's will in our lives. We should strive to submit to God's will, not out of bitterness, defeat, powerlessness, helplessness, but out of love.

There are various ways of discerning God's will in our lives. First is through prayer. It was through prayer that Jesus discerned and submitted to God's will at the Garden of Gethsemane. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, "By prayer we can discern 'what is the will of God' and obtain the endurance to do it. Jesus teaches us that one enters the kingdom of heaven not only by speaking words, but by doing 'The will of my Father in heaven'" (**CCC #2826**). Second, one needs to take time off and go to a deserted place in order to devote time to prayer so as to discern the will of God. Third, the events of life bring out clearly to us the will of God. The belief that God has a purpose in whatever happens to me and through it I will discover God's will for me. Fourth is through spiritual direction; we need guidance in discerning God's will for us.

**Conclusion:** My dear friends, we commit ourselves to God's will in the *Lord's Prayer*. There is no need to resist God's will. Instead, let us strive that through our prayers, we will submit to God's will in obedience and love. We are in God's hands and God will take care of us in all circumstances. And so let us pray, *Our Father.....!*