Dear Reader,

I am new to producing reading sermons. So, if you have any suggestions as to how I might improve my format or what I include – please email me at cdanielwilson@gmail.com. **I will warn you, that I do not use short sentences**. I will endeavor to work on this over time, but I don’t naturally write that way. However, you can easily break most of my longer sentences into 2 or 3 smaller ones where I have “…” or “–“ or commas. If you do the work on making it into smaller sentences – feel free to email it to me, and I am happy to share your work with others. I do have some of these available which people have sent me. I will eventually make them available as part of the normal manuscripts.

I have left my sermon manuscript formatted the way I normally write and read my sermons. They are colourful and written in conversational English. If you are a grammar nazi – then you will be frustrated with my punctuation and phrasing. However, once you read it out loud, you will normally be able to tell what I meant to say. SERIOUSLY, READ IT OUTLOUD. You will also see that I use a good bit of bold, italics, underlining and different colours to signal what are the most important things to say, and also to make it easier for my eye to pick up my place in the middle of paragraphs. I would recommend that you keep as many of those things as possible to help you keep your place. However, you will probably want to increase the spacing between lines. I highly encourage you to commit as much of the introduction or children’s illustrations to memory as you can, so that these can be delivered to the congregation with maximum eye contact.

**Where possible, I highly recommend that you listen to the sermon as I preached it at either the Nelson website or the website of North Shore.** I recommend that because that will also help hear the places where I added or skipped over material in the manuscript, and the places where I clarified my meaning. I have edited bits and pieces which I thought most important, but I have not sought to include all the additional material that comes to me while in the pulpit. I would practically have to use a transcription service for that. However, I hope and pray that this sermon will be a blessing to you and to your congregation. To God be the Glory!

Blessings in our Lord, Pastor Daniel Wilson

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**My Suggestions for the Order of Service**

Song before the service: #22c

There in that psalm we were called to worship (*even as we sang*) but let me reiterate God’s call to his people: ***22:22-23***

*All who have the faith of Abraham are His offspring, and so God calls us to worship Him!*

Let us ask the Lord to strengthen and guide us in worship as I lead you in prayer: *O Lord, our Lord, we have prepared to worship you this morning, and we come to you as the children of your grace – Will you please be with us in our worship? Do not despise the sorrow of those who are broken/hurting… Hear our prayers and meet with us in our homes by the power of your Spirit! Unite our hearts to sing your praise! Please provide a clear video link to all those who tune in, and may we be enabled to worship you in Spirit and in Truth! We ask in Jesus’ name, Amen!*

Bro & Sis: ***Our only Hope is found in the Lord our God, the Creator & Sustainer of all Things & Savior of those who trust in Him!*** . May Grace be yours in abundance, with Mercy and Peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ***Amen.***

Let us now continue to praise & worship our Lord as we sing from **Psalm** **#144 “All Praise to the Lord” vs.1,2,4**

***We will now profess our faith using HC Q&A 26 & 28 -*** *like Last Sunday, the Words will be on the screen, and my audio will not be muted so that you can read this along with me.*

**Let us continue to worship the Lord as we sing #444 “My Faith looks up to thee”**

*Let us come before the Lord now in our time of* **Congregational Prayer**

***Readings:* Ezekiel 1 + LD 47**

*Let’s cont. to worship as we sing* **Our Song of Prep: Song #105 *B* “Unto the Lord life thankful voices” *vs.1-4***

***Sermon Text:* Matthew 6:5-15 *Sermon Title: “Yoda Prayer?!”***

***Our* song of Response*–*#191 “How Great Thou Art”**

***May God the Father*** *bless you & keep you,* ***May God the Son*** *turn His face toward you & be gracious to you,* ***May the Holy Spirit*** *lift up his countenance upon you & give you peace!* ***Amen***

***Doxology*: #117“Praise Jehovah, all ye nations”**

# Evening Sermon: “Hallowed What?!”

Text: Matthew 6:5-15 – “Hallowed be your name” Reading: LD47, Ezekiel 1,

**Introduction:** Children, Listening, Are you? Trouble understanding me do you have? Sounding Strange am I? Some of you know what I mean because you are fans of Star Wars (and the character Yoda). But Do we normally talk like that? No, Not really, eh? We don’t say the verb first in modern English. I don’t tell my children, “Clean be your room.” And if I did, they would think that I was trying to talk like Yoda! And that is why I find it so interesting that when we come to the first request of the Lord’s Prayer – we don’t put it into modern English. ***Very few of our translations do!*** Most English translations that I looked up say, “Hallowed be your name.” A Few put it into better English – something more like ***May your name be Sanctified***, or *May your name be honored as holy*. But the strange construction mingled with the familiarity of it means we have to work a little harder to understand it.

(**Review**) It has been some time since we were last in our Heidelberg series. Last time we began looking at the first phrase of the Lord’s prayer: ***OUR Father in Heaven***. We were reminded of the privilege it is to be the children of God – He is not the Father of those who are outside of Christ, but He ***IS*** the father of all those whom He has adopted in Christ. That relationship of Father/Child brings great closeness and comfort to us. Especially since God is an infinitely better Father than any earthly father. He is good to us! *And as we saw, we must never forget that God our Father is also in Heaven – which means that He deserves our greatest respect and reverence, as well as our trust!*

**Tonight, we begin exploring the extreme grandeur and holiness of our Heavenly Father, as we examine the first request of the Lord’s Prayer – Hallowed be your name.**

***We will divide our time by first exploring the meaning of this request, and then we will spend some time applying that knowledge to our daily lives.***

# First, Let’s look at the meaning of this phrase: Hallowed be your Name

Many people interpret the phrase *Hallowed be your name* as a statement of praise – and to an extent, it is… But it is not **only** a statement of praise. For example, if you were to pray through the form of the Lord’s prayer, instead of saying Hallowed be your name, you might add some other element of praise or exalt God in some way, saying something such as: *You are Holy, and righteous and worthy of praise O Lord*.

***And that isn’t wrong… but the cool thing is that this phrase “****Hallowed be your name”* ***actually means even more than that!*** You see, That phrase is *NOT* a statement of fact… IT is not the same as saying: Your name is Holy or Hallowed! The form in the Greek is a passive command, which means that THIS is actually a request. **You are asking God to DO something to His name – to Hallow it!**

The Word *Hallow* means to make holy, *so in simple English*, we are asking God to make His name Holy. Perhaps a good word to use would be sanctify – in the 28 times this Greek word is used in the NT, 26 times it is translated as sanctify/sanctified. ***So, in a sense***, we are asking God to Sanctify His Name, to set His name apart from all other names, to make His name Holy (or worthy of praise).

**But *HOW* is a name sanctified?** It isn’t like you can take a name and add flashing strobelights, and sparkling paint and say, Now that is Holy! We aren’t dealing with a physical object, so it is hard to define.

**Perhaps a negative example will help:** What effect does Hitler’s name have on people? Adolf Hitler did things which made his name so hated that while Adolf was a very popular name in Germany before and during World War II (as was its French and Italian equivalents) – NOW, practically no one names their child Adolf! ***You see, by his actions his name became hated and despised in the minds of most people…***

**God sanctifying or Hallowing His name works much the same way, *but in reverse…*** He doesn’t just say – poof, now it is holy – rather, God works in this world, and specifically in YOUR life (and in mine) to make us see Him *and His name* as Holy and worthy of praise! ***Because it is when God has acted, that we REALLY know Him as He is!***

And that is exactly what the Catechism explains: For it says, “*Hallowed be your name” means: Help us to Really Know You, to Bless, Worship, and Praise You for ALL your Works, and for all that shines forth from them: Your Almighty Power, Wisdom, Kindness, Justice, Mercy and Truth!*

This is a request for God to open your eyes to see His Holiness & Goodness! So, in our own words we would pray along these lines: ***Our Father in Heaven, Please make US to see and know you as you are … Please do this by opening our eyes to see your power and wisdom in All your Works. May we see your justice as just, your mercy as true grace, and trust only in your truth! And May this knowledge drive us to praise you more and more!***

Of course that is a lot longer than a single phrase – but an even simpler request which says the same thing could be this: *God, Please open my heart to see/know & praise you as you really are*.

**Your greater knowledge of God must then be seen/demonstrated in your response to God!** And the catechism explains this concept in the second half of HC#122: *Hallowed by thy name also means*: *Help us to direct all our living (what we think, say, and do) so that your name will never be blasphemed because of us, but always honored and praised!* **So, this is the full concept:** We are Asking God to show us His goodness and majesty through what He is doing in this world, and asking further that God would work in us to show others His Goodness and Majesty! So that we and many others might honor Him!

# So, what effect does this have upon our prayer lives? How do we apply this?

**Most Fundamentally: *We Apply it by understanding what we are to pray for…***

We are to praise God in our prayers, but more specifically, we are to pray: *acknowledging that WE need to be doing something*… God’s name is Hallowed or sanctified through the lives of His people and creation! So, you can’t just pray – Hallowed be your name and then **do** nothing different! You actually have to change the way you think and act **OR ELSE you are just being a hypocrite!**

***So what do we need to change?***

* + 1. ***We need to look for God’s Holiness/majesty (2 ways) in His Word (and in Our Lives)***

*We look for God’s Holiness/Majesty in His Word, by meditating on and soaking in passages like Ezekiel 1.* *In that passage we learn that God’s majesty is not something earthly or human!* Ezekiel was a man at the very limits of language, searching for anything in comparison, **any way** to explain what he saw revealed from heaven, ***and it was extremely hard!*** Ezekiel used phrases which showed that language was failing him= “it appeared” “like” “the form of something similar to this” … It would be like an Ancient Israelite going to downtown Auckland (or better yet, Downtown New York, London) – they wouldn’t know how to explain these “castles” higher than mountains, buildings taller than any house/tower they had ever seen, clear flat glass wouldn’t make much sense to them, cars – horseless chariots… motorcycles – metal horses that roar like lions… they would be at the limits of their language and experience to explain what they saw! *And when we look for and find God’s glory described in Scripture* ***it changes the way we see life around us*** *– because we see just how limited we are to understand God!* We wouldn’t even be able to figure out how to accurately describe God without His help – ***How are we to understand all that He is doing in this world!*** HIS WAYS are Infinitely Higher than ours!

**Therefore, (SECONDLY) this changes the way we look for God’s Holiness/Majesty in our Lives!** For we don’t look to see if God’s plan matches up to ours, but instead we are looking for How things ***might turn*** to our good and His glory. So, when we get sick, we look for ways to be a good witness to fellow patients and the doctors/nurses who care for us. We have disobedient children, and we look for ways to shepherd them to love/serve God – Just as God did for us in Christ!

It is like my father – when things would get really bad, he would relax, because he had learned that God handled the big things. *When we train ourselves to trust God, then when big or little things happen, we can respond with faith and hope in God’s power!* **We can praise Him by looking expectantly for all the good things that God might do for us!**

We need to really pray for *Open eyes to look-for and see God’s goodness/Majesty* – and to recognize that sickness, trial and loss are all a part of God’s plan – the plan that is just as indescribably good as the glimpse of heaven that Ezekiel , Isaiah and John saw!

***So, we first need to look for God’s holiness in His Word and in our Lives, then SECONDLY… we also***

* + 1. ***We need to humble ourselves before God’s Holiness***

**When we are looking for God’s greatness in His Word, and we are keeping our eyes open to see what good thing God is doing in our lives – *it HAS an effect on our attitude!*** Consider the reactions of the prophets when they saw glimpses of God or an angel or heaven… it humbled them to the dust…Isaiah cried out in fear because He wasn’t worthy… Ezekiel fell facedown unable to move until an Angel picked Him up*, many of them fell down like dead men out of the sheer shock of seeing such glorious things* – and so when we look at the wonderful ways God provides for us – little acts of protection all the way to amazing gifts and provision – we need to respond by humbling ourselves.  ***And that humility should lead us* to Praise God** for His good and perfect plan, and **to confess** our inability to understand or solve our own problems, so that we better learn **to trust and obey** God’s instructions for our lives!

**Conclusion:**

This evening we have seen that “Hallowed be your name” isn’t just some statement of praise – like: “you are holy God.” **RATHER, this phrase is a formal request** asking God to show you His goodness and majesty through what He is doing in the world … And furthermore, you are asking that God would work in YOU to Show others His Goodness and Majesty so that others will Honor/Praise Him as well! ***In that final aspect,*** we see that this isn’t an effortless request – but one that takes some hard-work on our part.

 And really, this is where the catechism is most demanding… because what causes people to dishonor God’s name? Any slight disagreement or argument which isn’t properly addressed/resolved could cause someone to blaspheme God! **If we blow-up, offend or abuse people** *who know we are a Christian*, then it is quite likely that they will blaspheme God – if not directly, then they will curse your name, and distrust Christians in the future. **I cannot tell you how many times** I have been witnessing to someone, when they responded, “Yeah, well I have met Christians before, who were self-righteous Bleepity Bleep – and I don’t want anything to do with their God…” Their ace in the hole, in the argument about God and Faith – was people like you and me who offended them and refused to be reconciled… **And what the catechism explains** is that we can’t pray – Hallowed by your name – and still refuse to change the way we live – what we think, say and do – specifically as it involves others (and especially unbelievers)…

***It is hypocritical to pray for God to be glorified and exalted…* when we *(His representatives on earth) are acting in such a way that might cause God’s name to be blasphemed.*** **INDEED, IF we live that way, then we ourselves are blaspheming God when we pray the Lord’s prayer!**

**So, WHAT should you do about it? How do you fix that problem…?** **THAT** is where the attitude of humility is so important. As believers, we dare not think we have it all figured out. We dare not rest ***only*** on **OUR** understanding of Scripture– ***NONE of us were saved to be lone rangers.*** We were all saved to be part of a community, a body – **and it is *in* the regular activities of this body/church that we learn the humility** *to deal with believers and unbelievers alike* **in way that honors God’s name**.

NOT that the church prevents you from offending others… Not at all! Sadly, you will offend one another a lot! B*ut as you learn to humble yourself before God & one another*, *you learn to show humility before unbelievers as well*. **THEN** when you have a conflict with an unbeliever & you lose it… you will also have the boldness to humbly seek forgiveness. ***It won’t always turn out rosy… but that is HOW we live our prayer – Hallowed be your Name!***

 ***And in that humble response God’s name and honor will be defended!***

**O May God grant that you and I would not merely Pray this prayer = Hallowed be your name… But may we also LIVE IT to the Glory of God! *Amen.***

***Let’s Pray:*** *Our Father in Heaven, Please make US to see and know you as you are … Please do this by opening our eyes to see your power and wisdom in All your Works. May we see your justice as just, your mercy as true grace, and rest only in your truth! And May this knowledge drive us to praise you more and more! Give us this boldness to risk the wounds of life/fellowship… that we might witness of your grace/forgiveness in our homes, work places, and community…. Amen.*