

Pray Like This 'Hallowed Be Your Name'

by John Piper

This sermon emphasizes the importance of prayer, focusing on intentional communication with God through asking, praising, thanking, confessing, and even complaining. It highlights the significance of praying alone, with family, in small groups, in worship services, and continuously throughout the day. The sermon delves into the biblical foundation of prayer, the privilege and joy it brings, and how it magnifies the supremacy and glory of God.

Scripture: James 5:16, 1 Thessalonians 5:17, Luke 22:40, Psalms 50:15, John 14:13, Matthew 6:9

Topics: "The Power of Prayer", "Intentional Communication with God"

Description

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Transcript

A fuller exposition of that text will follow Friday night at about 11 o'clock. At the beginning of every year we set aside a week, nine days actually, for a focus on extraordinary prayer. Every morning we have a prayer meeting, every noon we have a prayer meeting, all night on Friday and other times as well in various groups.

I preach on prayer and the aim of these focuses is to awaken in you a fresh longing to pray, a more devoted commitment to be a people of prayer, families of prayer, individuals of prayer, ministries saturated with prayer. Now my approach in this message will not be to give an exposition of that passage that I'll do more of on Friday evening, but rather to give an overarching message on what prayer is, with whom we should pray or where, and why should we pray. Those three questions are going to build a big thematic biblical presentation about prayer.

And in the last part of the message, focus on the text, Jesus' prayer, in a way that I think will give an overarching focus to all of your praying such that it has unity and depth and a magnificent scope. Let's pray. Father, in preaching on prayer, I feel the need for prayer and so I ask that you would awaken Christians to be whispering in their quiet heart prayers for the power of this message.

What a difference it would make if hundreds and hundreds of people throughout this message were sending up their heart's desire that people be saved, and that Christians be strengthened, and that worldly, carnal, professing Christians would fall in love with prayer. That families would pray, and dads would pray, and children would pray, and schools would pray, and churches would pray, and small groups would pray, and that there would be a spirit of supplication and grace poured out on us. So Lord, I ask that that would happen.

Make us, I plead with you, a church whose engine is manifestly prayer, so that every elder meeting doesn't start with a little said prayer, but a season of earnest, passionate intercession for this church. Every staff meeting, a season of pleading with the living God that we would be led, not by human wisdom, but by divine wisdom. Every family beginning and ending its days pleading, praying, praising.

What a powerful impact there would be upon the city and the world if we could do this. So for the glory of your name, I pray that you do it in Jesus' name. Amen.

What is prayer? Here's my definition. Prayer is intentionally conveying a message to God. Now, language is frustrating because of how unclear it is almost all the time when it comes to important matters.

So you should ask, why in the world do you define prayer as intentionally conveying a message to God? Why don't you just say, prayer is talking to God. What's this conveying a message intentionally? What's the deal? Just use real, ordinary language like prayer is talking to God. And here's the first reason why I tried that and rejected it.

Because it says in Romans 8.26, the Spirit helps us in our weakness, for we don't know how to pray as we ought, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groanings too deep for words. Now, I take that to mean not that He's out there somewhere groaning in heaven, but He's right here when I'm speechless and don't know what to say. And these groanings are arising from the Spirit with meaning and no words.

So I chose conveying a message, which you can do with wordless groanings. There's my first reason for groping for some language that didn't seem quite normal at first. Here's the second question you should ask me.

Why don't you just say it's then communicating with God? That'd be a little less awkward than intentionally conveying a message. Why don't you just say prayer is communicating with God? And here's the reason I tried that and rejected it. Because it sounds, when you say that, like you mean you're communicating that way and He's communicating this way, and that's prayer.

And that's not prayer. The Bible never calls God's communication to us prayer. Never.

And we get ourselves into a big muddle when we concoct phrases to that effect, like His talking to us is a kind of prayer. It isn't. And so I'm going to avoid communicating with because it's got the ambiguity about it, like this communication is going both ways, and both ways constitute prayer.

One way constitutes prayer. The other we call revelation or illumination. We don't call it God prays, or we are praying when God's talking.

Prayer is a conveying of a message to God. Now, why the word intentional? Prayer is the intentional conveying of a message to God from my heart. Why do you use the word intentional? Well, for this reason, people are conveying the messages to God all day long that they don't mean to.

Messages like, God is not important to me, or God is irrelevant to this situation, or God does not exist. These are all messages people are sending to God all day long, by the way they act, the way they talk, what they do and don't do. These messages are going up to heaven all day.

You're not important. You're not important. You're not important.

That's not prayer, unless they mean it, and they don't mean it. They're not thinking because he doesn't exist. He's not important.

They don't want to talk to him, and we don't call that unintentional message giving to God, which we can sometimes discern, and God always discerns prayer. So, I chose the words. They may be better.

You can perhaps improve on it. Prayer is intentionally conveying a message to God, which now leaves this question. So, what kind of messages count for prayer? What are we conveying? And there are five kinds of conveyances, I think.

Let me tell you what they are and encourage you to do them all. Number one, you can ask for things. Petition, we call it.

It's the most basic meaning of prayer in the Bible, and God delights in your asking. I had a grandmother who didn't believe that, and it broke our hearts. She lived with us for a couple of years, and when I tried to encourage her to pray, her comment was things like, God's got more important things to do than listen to my little request.

No, no, no, no, no, no. That's arrogance. That's not humility.

That's presuming God gets busy. God gets busy. God's never busy.

He's totally in control all the time, never at wit's end, never frustrated, always in charge, ready to take another million requests from all over the world at any moment, and the circuits never go wacko. They just handle it easy, and His glory is magnified in that. Pour it on.

Load His shoulders down if you believe they're strong. Ask and you will receive. Seek and you will find.

Knock and the door will be open, Matthew 7, 7. You're commanded to ask. Number two, praise Him. There's a conveyance of a message.

I praise you. I marvel at you. I adore you for the way you are.

Psalms 145, verse 2. Every day I will bless you and praise your name forever. Great is the Lord and greatly to be praised, and His greatness is unsearchable, so it should rise up daily out of our heart. I praise you for your greatness.

Number three, thank Him for His gifts and His acts. This is not the same as praising Him for the way He is. It's thanking Him for what He does and gives, and oh, how we should just overflow.

Get up in the morning thanking, go to bed at night thanking, all day long thanking, thanking, conveying this message of thanks. Revelation 11, 17. We give thanks to you, O Lord God Almighty, who is and who was, for you have taken your great power and begun to reign.

Number four, confess your sins. Send out messages, convey messages of I sinned and I'm sorry. Have mercy upon me and forgive me.

I am sorry. Psalm 32, 5. I acknowledged my sin to you. I did not cover my iniquity.

I said I will confess my transgressions to the Lord. You forgave the iniquity of my sin. And number five, controversial and obscure, and hence needing some clarification, you should complain to the Lord.

Psalm 142, verse 1. With my voice, I cry to the Lord. I pour out my complaint before Him. I tell my trouble before Him.

And here again, language is frustrating, isn't it? It is to me. Language frustrates me pretty much every day. So you're saying, Pastor John, it's good to have a complaining heart toward God? Is that what you're saying? Sounds like what you're saying.

Good to have a complaining heart toward God? To which I say, no, it's not good to have a complaining heart toward God. Philippians 2, 14. Do all things without grumbling or questioning.

It's not good to have a complaining heart towards God. That's a bad thing. You shouldn't have a complaining heart toward God.

You should trust God in the bitter providences and in the sweet providences. You trust Him. You shouldn't have a heart that complains to God.

Here's the problem. We do. Now what? Well, let's all be hypocrites.

This is what I'm afraid of with this, with this, with my teaching that you shouldn't have a complaining heart. You know how most, many people process that? Oh, stuff it. He means be plastic.

Be unreal. I got a complaining heart. Don't say it.

Don't say it to God. Don't say it to each other. I just got it.

And at death to Him, we just, we just look a certain way. That's what I'm afraid of. I hate that.

Jesus hates that. So here's what I'm saying. Bad to have a complaining heart, but you do it.

So now what do you do with it? Do it in front of God. That's what I'm saying. If you got it, do it in front of God.

He sees it anyway. Just be real. Say, God, I don't get it.

I don't get it. I don't like it. That's not good.

You should not question God, but if you're questioning Him here, He knows it. Say it. That's what I'm saying.

Don't add to the sin of a doubting, rebellious, questioning heart, the sin of hypocrisy. You got that now? That's hard to get, but there it is. I don't think it's good to be a complaining heart, but if you do have one, be real.

God can handle it. You find it all over the Bible, right? Get scolded. Job, classic example.

God was not happy that Job accused him of so much, and he scolded him at the end. But goodness gracious, it's in the Bible, and there it is. So there they are.

Ask for things. Praise Him for who He is. Thank Him for His gifts.

Confess your sins to Him. Complain to the Lord if your heart is complaining to the Lord. And do this all day, every day in 2008.

My pastoral plea, and this is my prayer for this message, is that we would be praying people like this all through the day. Convey your heart to God over and over. Let it be the way you begin and end everything.

Now, this requires a huge spiritual consciousness, which is what we're praying toward. Every email begins and ends with prayer. Every TV show, very important.

You start praying when you watch it. You end praying when you watch it. You may never watch it again.

Every car ride, start prayer, end prayer. I had a missionary friend, worked in Afghanistan, said if you didn't do this, you had a wreck. Every time.

Not quite that bad in America, but it's a good idea. Every phone call, start with prayer, end with prayer. I'm talking five-second prayers here.

God help me, I want to be an honor to you on this phone call. It's going to be tough. Bang, that's all.

You start it, you end it with prayer. Every conversation starts with prayer, ends with prayer. Every shower starts with prayer, ends with prayer.

Every night's rest starts with prayer, ends with prayer. Every meal starts with prayer, ends with prayer. Sometimes out loud, doesn't matter.

Everything you read starts with prayer, ends with prayer. Get on my running machine in the morning three times a week, put on some preacher from the internet, pray God guard me from error. Teach me the truth, correct me, shape me, mold me, boom, I'm into running and listening.

But not without Him, nothing's automatic here. Be in communion with God continually. My wife, Noelle, there she is, complains to me that when I call her on my cell phone, I don't hang up.

And so I put it back in my pocket with the phone on. And she's listening to all these things that are happening. And I think I discovered why, Noelle.

You can turn it off at the top here, but when you turn the machine off, the phone stays on. I didn't realize that until just yesterday. So I'll try not to make that mistake.

So I'm totally in agreement that I shouldn't leave my phone on and make my wife listen to me for the rest of what I'm doing. However, God likes it when you leave your phone on. Not a criticism, Noelle.

You ought to turn your phone off when you're calling your wife. But when you're calling God, just don't ever push the red button. Just leave it on green all the time.

You listen to everything. That's okay. Everything becomes prayer.

That would be the way to live. Pray without ceasing means leave the green button pushed all the time. Have one of these phones.

You can turn it off. It stays on. Isn't that cool? I wish my life were more like that.

That's number one. What is prayer? Here's number two. With whom should we pray? Or where should we pray? And I already gave the big answer to that.

Pray everywhere. Pray all the time. But let's be specific.

Number one, pray in your private room. Here we are at the text now. Every now and then we'll go to the text.

Matthew 6 verses 5 and 6. That little phrase, inner room, that phrase room means inner room. A place for storage, especially a place for storing treasures. You look that up in other places where it's used.

That's what you find. So let me read it. Verses 5 and 6 of Matthew 6. When you pray, you must not be like the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and at the street corners that they may be seen by others.

Truly I say to you, they have received their rewards. If you want the reward of man, you get it and that's it. Six, but when you pray, go into your room, the old King James or closet, because closets were inside.

Into your room and shut the door and pray to your Father who's in secret and your Father who sees in secret will reward you. Now this is Jesus called to you in 2008. This is not something that might happen.

He says when you pray, go to your room. Doesn't mean you have to only pray in your room. He's just expecting this to happen.

Find a place. Find a place. Most of you didn't build your house with a prayer room.

Shame on you if you built a house and have a garage and not a prayer room. Car more important than prayer. But most of us don't have houses with prayer rooms, but we can make a little place.

Was it Susanna Wesley had 16 kids? You women got the hardest problem, I know that, with little kids especially. She had this rule that when the apron went up over her head at the table, they don't say anything in the kitchen. They get whipped if they talk while the apron is over her head.

That's her room. Go into your room, put the apron over your head, and everybody is silent. Teach your kids that they can't bother mommy while she's got her apron over her head.

1975 we bought our first house up in New Brighton. Didn't have a prayer room. We'd just gotten back from studies.

First thing I did, I'm not a carpenter, but I tried and I built myself a prayer bench just the height of my elbows with my glasses. It worked in those days. I lowered the shelf where the book would lie so there would be enough distance between my eyes and the book.

Little shelf here where I keep Bible and notepads and stuff. And there it's been in my study for 34 years. That's my place.

That's my place. It's not a separate room. It's just different.

If I try to price it in front of my computer, it doesn't work. So I get up, go around to my place. You do one thing at this place.

You put your Bible in front of you and you talk to God. And you listen to God from the book and you turn it all into prayer. And I try to lead that way.

So do whatever you have to do. Number one, God is calling you in 2008 to have a place. An inner place away from everybody else.

Just alone. I'm talking with who should you pray? Nobody. That's the first answer.

Nobody. Just you in your place, under the apron, at the bench, in the garage, in the park, wherever you have your place. Number two, pray with your family.

If you have a family. If you live with a family, pray with them every day. Not just at meal times.

That's good. It's a wonderful thing in fact. Listen to these words.

1 Peter 3, 7. Husbands, live with your wives in an understanding way, showing honor to the woman as the weaker vessel, since they are heirs with you of the grace of life, so that your prayers may not be hindered. Unhindered family prayer is the barometer of whether we are living together as fellow heirs of the grace of life. Say it again.

Unhindered, free, natural family, especially husband and wife, prayer is a signal, is the barometer of whether we are living together in a knowledgeable way as fellow heirs of the grace of life. If we start treating each other other than that way, like she's not a fellow heir of grace, or I'm not a fellow heir of grace, and some symptomatic behaviors and words are creeping in that don't have that ring about it, we feel it in the prayer time. So, second place to pray is in the family.

Now guys, this is your main responsibility. I know it's hard, and seems unnatural, and you don't have to have any theological education to do it. You just have to have guts to do it, and you have to have some willingness to submit to Christ and say to your wife, let's pray.

It can be two minutes, or twenty minutes, just doing it and then letting it grow. I know there have been seasons when Noelle and I have been tense enough with each other that all we could do is we'd knelt beside each other on the bed and just say, Amen. That's it.

Had no spiritual wherewithal to do any big flourishing, you know, gather all the kids up and take them to the Lord. We're going in the same bed here, and help us. That's it.

But you've got to have a huge commitment to do that, right? Way easier. Just skip it tonight. So, that's number two.

Here's number three. Pray in small gatherings of Christians. Jesus said, if two or three agree on earth about anything they ask, it will be done for them by my Father in heaven.

For where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I among them. Two or three. I love the fact that God's hand is not shortened by the size of the prayer meeting.

Two or three move the world. You believe that? I wouldn't come to these prayer meetings. I come to five prayer meetings a week, at least, in this church.

You think I'd get up at 545, two mornings a week, and then come to all these prayer meetings if I didn't believe that? This is not comfortable. I believe that those eight, ten, twelve people shape the world. Shape the world.

Shape Pakistan, shape Bethlehem, shape the cities, shape missionaries. We will see written in heaven that those twenty-five years of Friday morning prayer meetings have shaped the world. It's written in the books in Revelation 21.

Oh, yes. Pray with gatherings of Christians. Now, I'll give you an example of what happens when you do that.

This is Acts 4.29. And now, Lord, grant to your servants to continue. This is prayer, right? Now, Lord, grant to your servants to speak the word with boldness. This was the early church pleading for boldness.

You thought they were bold by nature? They weren't. They were chicken by nature, just like we are. And they were pleading in a group in Acts 4, God, grant us to speak with boldness, because someone had just been put in jail.

They didn't need just kind of a little boldness to be, you know, at the water cooler. They needed boldness to risk jail. And when they had prayed, the place in which they were gathered was shaken, and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit, and they continued to speak the word of God with boldness.

In other words, He answered. He answered. Now, I just want to say that there are hundreds of you who don't do this.

Know this. I'm not saying you're not a Christian. That you don't regularly pray with other believers.

Have a little home thing and a little private thing, but you have just considered it to be unimportant, or at least not important enough to act on it, that you're not going to regularly pray with other Christians. And I just want to plead with you, you are cutting yourself off from extraordinary blessing. And I would like you to have it.

It's so simple. It's not a legalistic thing I'm laying on you here. It's pure hedonism.

Pure Christian hedonism. You will not enjoy the fullness of the blessing of Christ if you do not include in your bigger picture of life regular praying with other believers. There are unique outpourings of power and help and deliverance that come there that won't come elsewhere.

Number four, pray in worship services, corporate worship services. Corporate worship is mainly prayer structured around the Word. Have you ever noticed that? It's mainly prayer structured around the Word.

First, we sing, and many of our songs are directed to God. Mean them. Mean them.

Just think, oh yes, this is you. I'm saying you. I mean it, Lord.

I mean you. I'm saying this and I mean it. Mean what you sing, and when we sing about God, how great is our God, sing that before the Lord.

That's prayer too, if you're consciously doing it before the Lord. I'm saying it about you, but I'm saying it in your presence, and I don't want you to hear, because I mean it. To you, I mean it to you.

That too. And then we pray, and I pray that you would pray along. When I pray, I wish there were more amens in this church, or more mm-hmms, or more anything to let me know you're alive, and that you agree.

I mean, this is really biblical. In 1 Corinthians, it says, I don't want you to pray in tongues in public. You know why? Real simple, if you don't know what somebody's saying, you can't say amen.

That's in the Bible. If you don't know what they're saying, you can't say amen. Well, the assumption is, if you know what they're saying, and you like it, you say amen.

We're on our way. Now, I don't want you to do like some churches, say amen when I'm saying stupid things. You can say mm-hmm, and I might pause at that moment, and think what I just said.

We pray, we sing, we're silent, fill it up with prayer. There's a sermon. I said at the beginning, I hope that you pray when I'm preaching.

I pray when I'm preaching. If I get into a role where I know what I'm going to say, pretty clear, and I'm not having to look down so much, I have the middleware with all that I can be actually whispering, God, take this. God, use this right now.

Use this right now, what I'm saying. I can't do three things. I mean, it's weird to say you can do eight things at one time.

I can only do two in my head at one time. And prayer is one of them. And we read the scriptures, and of course, you should turn that into prayer.

So, all this service, all this service should be prayer. That's number four. Here's number five, the last one on this.

Pray everywhere. I've already said it. Keep the green button on all the time.

Let it be like breathing. Prayer is the saint's breath. A great person once said, Peter starting to sink.

Help, Lord. That's prayer. Help, Lord.

Man with the epileptic boy. I believe. Help my unbelief.

That's a good prayer. Pray that one a lot. I believe.

Help my unbelief. All through the day, wherever it is needed. Live in his presence.

If you stay close to the Lord, your prayers won't be foxhole prayers. Foxhole prayers. The only time you ever pray is when the bombs are going off around you.

God, help me. All the rest of the time, you're never talking to God. He's going to say, what was that? Well, not necessarily.

He loves to hear foxhole prayers, but he loves far better to have friends who get in foxholes. Comes in right beside you. Been talking to him all along.

Feels natural. Why wouldn't you talk to him now? He's going to help you. He's been helping you every minute up to the foxhole.

How sad when you only cry out in the foxhole. So, summary, what is prayer? Intentionally conveying a message to God, like asking, praising, thanking, confessing, complaining. And secondly, where should we pray? With whom? Pray privately in your own room.

Pray with your family. Pray in small gatherings of believers. Pray in worship and pray everywhere.

Now finally, why? Why? Number one, because we're told to so many times. Over and over and over again. Here's a few.

James 5.16. This is God telling us to pray. Pray for one another that you may be healed. How many sicknesses are there in the church because they don't pray for each other? That God would be willing to heal.

1 Thessalonians 5.17. Pray without ceasing. Luke 22.40. Pray that you may not enter into temptation. Luke 18.1. He told them a parable to the effect that they ought always to pray and not lose heart.

Luke 6.28. Bless those who curse you. Pray for those who abuse you. You're in a rotten situation, getting ripped off, being lied about.

Pray, pray, pray for them. Matthew 6.9. Pray like this. Our Father in heaven.

That's number one. We pray because dozens of times in the Bible we're told to pray. And God loves us.

He wouldn't tell us to do something that's bad for us. It's good for us. Number two.

We pray because it is a means to the increase of our joy. Now, you might think, well, that's what we expect you to say, but you expect me to say it because I'm a Christian hedonist. But the case is, I'm a Christian hedonist because of texts like this that blew me away 35 years ago.

John 16.24. Until now, Jesus said, you have asked nothing in my name. Ask and you will receive that your joy may be full. I mean, ask.

Ask. Because in coming to me as a needy person and depending upon me for everything you need, your joy will be fuller than if you try to get that need met another way. He wants you happy in him.

And he says, ask and your joy will be full. Number three for why we pray. Because it is simply a staggeringly awesome privilege.

It is simply a staggeringly awesome privilege. Now, you've got to think of this. We just must be blown away by this.

God runs the world with infinite wisdom. You and I never inform him of anything he doesn't already know. We never add to his wisdom.

Ever. When we pray, we do not improve upon his knowledge about what he should do next. This is really basic.

This is who God is. Romans 11.34. Who has known the mind of the Lord? Or who has been his counselor? Or who has ever given a gift to him that he should be repaid? For from him and through him and to him are all things to him be glory forever. Nobody ever counseled him.

Nobody ever gave anything to him that he didn't already own. We are never obliging God to act out of his need for us. He doesn't need us.

He doesn't need your prayer. He doesn't need anything about you. He's God.

That's the meaning of God. No needs. We have needs.

He's the need meter. And how the need meter gets glory is by hearing the prayers of the needy. And it's simply staggering that God would ordain.

Now get this. That God, the sovereign ruler of the universe, would ordain that prayers cause things. They do.

Prayer. Prayers cause things to happen that would not happen if you didn't pray. I wonder if there are any Calvinists out there squirming.

Listen to this. When James 4.2 says, you do not have because you do not ask. That does not mean you would have anyway even if you didn't ask cause I got a plan.

The verse doesn't mean the opposite of what it says. It says you have not because you ask not. That means prayer causes things to happen that wouldn't happen if you didn't pray.

This is why this is a staggeringly glorious privilege to be taken by the sovereign God of the universe who runs all things according to his infinite wisdom and fold it in to his causality. This is breathtaking. If you do not avail yourself of the privilege of bringing to pass events in the universe that would not take place if you didn't pray, you are acting like a colossal fool.

Aren't you? I'm just thinking logically here. If you are offered the privilege of engaging with God in such a way that your request could bring into being things that would not otherwise come into being, not to avail yourself of that privilege is folly of the highest or lowest order. That's why we pray.

God is beckoning us into our share in the running of the universe. Do you not know that you will judge angels? Do you know who you are, child of God? Number four, and this is the last one and the last point. Why pray? Because when you go to God in dependence upon his wisdom and power and love to do what you long for him to do according to his will, you mightily make the Father and the Son look great.

You make them look great. When you go to the Father in the name of the Son by the power of the Spirit to do what only they can do and you plead and it happens, you make them look great. So let me give you a verse, John 14, 13.

Whatever you ask in my name, this I will do that the Father may be glorified in the Son. Come to me, ask me in the name of myself to the Father and he'll do it that he in me will look glorious. That's the reason we pray.

Or here's the way Paul said it in 2 Corinthians 1. You also must help us by prayer so that many will give thanks on our behalf for the blessing granted to us through many prayers. That's a complicated sentence, but not a complicated point. Let's have lots of people pray so lots of people thank God when it happens.

God is really into getting thanks, hence he's into prayer. Here's the way the psalmist said it. Charles Spurgeon called this Robinson Crusoe's text because Robinson Crusoe in the book quotes it.

Psalm 50 verse 15, call upon me in the day of trouble and I will deliver you and you will glorify me. Can you draw it in the air? Call upon me in the day of trouble, I will deliver you and you will glorify me. Up, down, up.

He goes up, he comes down, glory goes back up. That's why we pray. We exist to spread a passion for the supremacy of God in all things for the joy of all peoples and the Bible tells us that prayer magnifies the supremacy of God.

So we pray because we're really into God's glory and God's supremacy. Let's close now with a glance at the Lord's Prayer. This is verse 9 and I'm simply making the same point that I just made only I'm making it with words that are mind boggling to a lot of people.

Only they're not mind boggling to enough because people just say these words and don't even think about what they're saying. Here's what Jesus said, Matthew 6, 9. Jesus said, pray then like this, our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name. I wish I could take you back with me to 1968, 69.

Noel and I just married December 68 and I was seeing so much. I just felt like my world was being shredded and rebuilt as I immersed myself in the Bible in those early days of school. And I said to her one time later in 69, I said, you know, you can tell when your theology is undergoing a Copernican revolution because you pray differently.

Like you suddenly wake up to what you're saying here. Jesus said, the first, preeminent, most important, all encompassing request we should make of the living God is make your name great. That's the first request of the Lord's prayer.

God, hallowed be your name, which means cause your name to be hallowed. Do something God for your name in Minneapolis. Do something for your name in this church.

Do something for your name in this family. Do something for your name in Pakistan today. Let it turn, oh God, for the hallowing of your name in that aching country.

This is our request that God be jealous for the name of God. People choke on this. Strange.

What does hallowed mean? It means sanctified. It's the word used for sanctified. It's a third person imperative.

Like Peter said on Pentecost, let them repent. This is modestly and mildly commanding God to do something, giving him an imperative. This is a request.

We are pleading with God, hallowed your name. Make your name hallowed in the world. Make your name hallowed in this church.

Make your name hallowed in my children. What does hallowed mean? Sanctified. What does sanctified mean for a God who is infinitely holy and doesn't need any improvement? Sanctified means set apart.

Set apart like what? How do you mean? God set your name apart. It means God take your name, this holy representation of yourself and set it apart as the most precious, holy, beautiful, valuable reality in the mind of the person for whom I'm praying. Got anybody you care about? That's the first thing to pray.

All the time, all the time, number one issue in prayer is God, right now in this person I care about, so work that your name is treasured above my name. That your name is treasured above money, that your name is treasured above sex, above alcohol, above fame, above approval, above success. Make your name great in their hearts, oh God.

Be jealous for your name in their lives. That's the overarching, deep, unifying, global thing that holds all praying together. Doesn't it? I hope it does.

I hope this holds your life together. A passion for the supremacy of God. I mean, what else could it signify when Jesus says, when you pray, say, number one, Father, make sure your name gets hallowed.

That's amazing. So that's the heart of being born again. Just gonna close here with linking it to where we've been in our born again series.

Before you're born again, you come to that statement and you either gloss over it so that you don't know what it's saying, or you hear me say what it's saying and you get bent out of shape. God's jealousy for God's name sounds selfish. Sounds like a megalomaniac.

And you take that home and you stew over it because you're the center, or your family is the center, or America is the center, or church is the center, or anything but God is absolutely central and supreme in your life. But when you're born again and the lights go open, and it may take some time for the light to go open. I'm not saying that everybody who struggles with this is not born again.

I'm saying one of the evidences of being born again is that your eyes start to open and one of the main things you see when you have new eyes as a born again person is God's supremacy in the heart of God. So that God would tell us to ask God to be jealous for the name of God. God tells us to ask God to be jealous and effective in causing his name to be hallowed.

And in 1968, that's what was happening to me. I cried afternoon after afternoon after afternoon before I married Noelle, the fall of 68, because everything was coming down in my life. Everything I thought I knew about God was coming down and out of it was growing up a massive, glorious alternative.

But now I see everywhere, like right here, hallowed be your name. God's telling us to ask God to act for the glory of God. Ask God to act for the glory of God.

Begin every email that way. Take every shower that way. Get in your car that way.

Get out of your car that way. It's a wonderful calling. A profound and wonderful calling to pray for the glory of God to fill the earth.

Father in heaven, I praise you and bless you for Christ who suffered once for sins, the righteous for the unrighteous, that he might make prayer possible. Would you grant that we would be a praying people, that we would pray alone, that we would pray in families, that we would pray in prayer meetings and clusters of

Christians, that we would pray in worship, and that we would pray desperately, confidently, everywhere.
We need you and we tell you everything.

In Jesus' name. Amen.

Video: <https://sermonindex2.b-cdn.net/V24R4TcNmsU.mp4>
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