

**No. 3 The Lord's Prayer – making holy the name of God****Read 1 Samuel 2: 1-10**

"What's in a name?" Answer = everything (according to many dictionary explanations)! Certainly, it is important throughout the Bible. At creation, God brought all the created creatures before Adam so that he could name them. Adam gave a name to his wife. Jesus renamed Peter. Most characters in the Bible were given names which either conveyed characteristics or gratitude; they were intended to send a message, just as Hannah had when naming her first and only child Samuel. Have things changed over time? Do you know why your parents chose your name? Or, as parents, what influenced the choice of names for your children? Is it not true that when we hear the name of a stranger, we form some sort of picture of their characteristics, good or bad? How would you answer, "What's in a name"?



Of the Ten Commandments, if you were asked to say approximately what comprised the third commandment, (without opening your Bible) could you answer correctly? I could not, and I suspect I am not alone. Now look it up (Exodus 20: 7). Well, it has much in common with the first thing Jesus instructs us to pray about, "Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name." I feel the meaning of 'hallowed be your name' contains several aspects, all of which enhance a full understanding of the meaning. What does the phrase mean to you?

A challenge to us all is how we respond, when in the company of non-Christians, the name God or Jesus is used as a profanity? Would you say it was appropriate to air your concerns about such usage? How important is this? It is, after all, widely used and accepted almost everywhere. Other religions seem to be much bolder in upholding/defending the name of their god. Why are Christians so reluctant? How would you suggest we can do this lovingly?

Other religions often command their followers to always say specific words whenever the name of their god or prophet is spoken or written. For example in Islam, the name Muhammad must be followed by 'peace be upon him'. Is this why the names of Islamic gods and prophets are never used as profanity? If we think about our own use of the names God/Jesus in ordinary conversation, is there anything we say to emphasis the holiness we attribute to them? Do we need to make changes?

Another common expression is 'holier than thou', paints a negative light on being holy. Yet as Christians we seek holiness for ourselves and we hold our God to be holy, which suggests there is more than one way to understand the word, with both positive and negative meanings. What do you understand these to be?

There are many hymns and worship song which focus upon 'holy'. Why not together sing one now? (Leader – why not bring some copies of the words?)

**Prayer:** Give thanks to the Lord, call on his name; make known among the nations what he has done. Sing to him, sing praise to him; tell of all his wonderful acts. Glory in his holy name; let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice. Look to the Lord and his strength; seek his face always. (Psalm 105)