

Instruction In The Westminster Standards

The Historic Standards of Presbyterian Denominations

STUDIES IN THE WESTMINSTER SHORTER CATECHISM

Q. 101. What do we pray for in the first petition?

A. In the first petition, which is, "Hallowed be Thy name," we pray, that God would enable us, and others, to glorify Him in all that whereby He maketh Himself known, and that He would dispose all things to His own glory.

Scripture References: Ps. 67:1-3. II Thess. 3:1. Isa. 64:1, 2. Rom. 11:36. Isa. 11:9.

Questions:

1. What is meant by the word "petition" and how many are there in the Lord's Prayer?

The word "petition" simply means the desiring or asking of anything. There are six in the Lord's Prayer and we are considering the first.

2. How do we hallow the name of God?

Simply stated, it would mean to glorify His name. For example, Isa. 8:13 states, "Sanctify the Lord of hosts Himself, and let Him be your fear, and your dread." We should glorify (sanctify, hallow) Him in all ways as we walk in this world so that the world will see Him in us as much as possible.

3. How can we be certain that we shall do this?

We can be as certain as possible by endeavoring to be diligent about the attributes, ordinances, word and the works of God. It would be good for us to look back in our studies once again to our duties concerning these ways God makes Himself known to us and examine ourselves regarding them.

4. When we pray in this petition, "Hallowed be Thy name," what is the meaning of our prayer?

We are really praying for two things: 1. That God will hallow (glorify) Himself in this world; 2. That God, working through us, will enable us to glory His name in this world. The first part of this petition is accomplished as God magnifies Himself as He works out all things after His will, even those things which seem to us the opposite. The second part of this petition has been discussed in Question 3.

5. What are the things He works out after His will that are opposite from what we would expect?

A few we could mention would be the persecutions, the trials He takes us through and the times we sin and He overrules.

GLORIFYING GOD IN PRAYER

In a summary of Richard Baxter's directions on how to pray, taken from his *Christian Directory*, published in 1673, we find these words: "When you are about to pray, stir up in your souls the most earnest belief in those unseen things that your prayers refer to; and pray as if you saw them all the while—God in His glory, heaven and hell, and Jesus Christ your Mediator in the heavens."

Not long ago I noted a prayer by Richard Alleine, one of the Puritans, in which he said, "O Lord, our God, Thou high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, we know that Thou has said that Thou dost dwell with him that is of contrite and humble spirit, that Thou dost revive the heart of the contrite ones."

These two quotes then led to a study of what the Word of God says regarding intercessory prayer. Our question, after studying the first petition of the Lord's Prayer, should be: how do we prepare ourselves for real prayer as we begin by glorifying His Name? What does God's Word say about the methods that might be used to glorify His name? Let us check a few of the verses and see what we might find from them. Let us see if we can not put down some principles of how we, in prayer, may hallow His name.

1. Our prayer could well begin with Eph. 1:17 as we pray that God might give us a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him.

2. Our prayer might continue with Eph. 1:18 as we pray that the eyes of our understanding might be enlightened.

3. From here we could progress to a continuation of Eph. 1:18 as we pray that we might know the hope of His calling.

4. Our prayer could continue with Eph. 1:19 as we seek to understand, comprehend, the exceeding greatness of His power.

5. We could end this short study of how to glorify Him in prayer by turning to Eph. 3:19 and ask that we might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Certainly there are many more principles. We could turn to Eph. 3:18, Phil. 1:9, Col. 1:9, 10 and many others. The point is that we are not left without instruction in the Word of God as to how we can best glorify Him in our prayers. As we begin the Lord's Prayer with those words, "Hallowed be Thy Name," we can surely recognize that our attitude can be conditioned by some of the above principles.

Published By: THE SHIELD and SWORD, INC.

Dedicated to instruction in the Westminster Standards for use as a bulletin insert or other methods of distribution in Presbyterian churches

For information write to: The Shield and Sword, Inc., c/o Rev. L. T. Van Horn, 12270 Conway Road, St. Louis, Mo. 63141. A non-profit religious organization.

Vol. 7

No. 6

June, 1968

Price

Rev. Leonard T. Van Horn
Editor

To Churches — \$2.00 per 100
(No New Orders)

Back Copies

\$2.75 per set unbound
(inclusive to 107)

