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The Lord's Prayer the Pastor's Prayer

The First Petition

The Chief Shepherd teaches His undershepherds to pray: "Hallowed be Thy Name." Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2.

Does not this Petition express that desire which is strongest in the pastor's heart? To entertain this desire, the Lord has prepared our hearts. We thank Him for such unmerited grace.

Some expositors borrow for further extension of this and the Second Petition the phrase of the Third: "on earth as in heaven." However, it cannot be proved that our Lord intended this construction, nor is it required to furnish a satisfactory meaning.

Some expositors follow Fritsche in emphasizing σοῦ, instead of looking upon it as the enclitic σου, and hold that according to the context in the Matthew record the names of the pagan gods stand in opposition to God's name. If this is the chief sense and emphasis of the Petition, then it is weak indeed. We put equal value on each word of this Petition. The opposition to God's name exists everywhere in this world, and to the end of time this prayer must rise with ever greater power. Besides the names of the pagan gods now worshiped there are others in every field of human thought and endeavor that clamor for recognition and honor. We do not speak here of those who strive even at the price of other peoples' blood and money to glorify their own names by reddening the pages of history and of national treasuries. Nor will we mention here the hirelings in pulpits, who live by their own names and not by the Gospel. Rather let us search our own hearts to discover whether at times we allow our name to rise in opposition to God's name. No sooner are we blessed with success in whatever work has been assigned to us, than we must kneel to pray this petition with emphasis on the pronoun; for a man scrambles to grab for himself as much honor and fame as possible. It is not the pastor himself, but his old Adam, who thirsts for glory. When he notices that the sermon we preached made a good impression, that the spiritual advice we gave solved a problem, that the meeting we attended profited by our presence, that our congregation is growing rapidly against serious odds and people are beginning to respect us as being quite indispensable in midstream and even print our name: then that smug old Adam must be hurled from his heights of fancy. Our name must decrease, and God's name must increase. How earnestly, humbly, and sometimes shamefacedly must we bow to pray that God's name be glorified, not our name. And are there Christian organizations existing only to perpetuate their own name under the name of Our Father? Let us think awhile.

The name of the new man is not in opposition to God's name. When God's name is hallowed, then also the name of God's child is glorified; for His name and that of His child are connected in Christ.

We note that the plural is never applied in the Scripture to the word *name* when that word refers to God's name, though the name of God appears also in plural form. The Holy Trinity is designated by that plural form. In this Petition the word *name* is a collective term and includes every name of God. The singular stands for the fullness of God's name. Therefore we do not ask what specific name of God is to be hallowed. The one name suggested by the immediate context of both records is the dear name Father. However, Jesus did not append the name Father to the Petition, nor does He designate any specific name to the exclusion of any other name of God.

What is the name of God? In a college classroom lecture Dir. M. Luecke answered: The name of God is everything by which God is known. Dr. Schwan says in our old Synodical Catechism: God's name is "God, as He has revealed Himself to us." We read from Luther's Works (St. L.): "In der ersten Bitte heisst 'dein Name' soviel als Gottes Ehre und Lob" (VII:771). The name of God may be arranged in definite order as it pertains to God's essence (e. g., Ex. 3:14, 15), to the Trinity (e. g., Gen. 1:1), to the Persons of the Trinity (e. g., Matt. 28:19), to the attributes (e. g., Ex. 34:6; Rom. 16:27; Rev. 1:11; 2:8), and the works of God (e. g., Rom. 1:25; Job 19:25; John 16:7). Scripture speaks of the name of God as of God Himself. His name is as exalted as Himself. As man uses the name of God, he either adores or mocks God.

God is jealous of His name. He will not have it taken in vain. He glorifies it and wants man to praise and bless it, Ps. 103:1, and to adore it above all else. His wrath and anger strikes those who profane it; His mercy and blessing is upon those who hallow it. Since God is the First and the Last, the Lord's Prayer gives greatest prominence to the name of God, first and last. His name can be seen in its great splendor in each Petition that follows, for He is the King, the Ruler, the Provider, the Forgiver, the Protector, the Deliverer, the glorious Potentate. From this consideration we also learn that in the Lord's Prayer we address the Holy Trinity. At His name the godly tremble with fear, and the godly with joy.

The Christian has a personal interest in God's name. It pleases the gracious God to place His name upon His children. "They shall put My name upon the children of Israel," Num. 6:27. With all boldness and confidence Jeremiah prays to God: "I am called by Thy name, O Lord God of Hosts," Jer. 15:16. The same Prophet pleads: "Thy name is called upon us," Jer. 14:9. His name is

placed upon us by the blessing. Thus honored and exalted, we leave the service and the conference with appreciation of God's Word and rejoicing in our heart (Jer. 15:16). In trouble and distress we remind the Lord of this particular favor to us (Jer. 14:9). He cannot deny Himself. He would deny Himself by refusing the prayer of those who are called by His name. God's name has been conferred upon the pastor? Yes, the name that God bears according to His transitive attributes is the pastor's name. Yet the pastor is not proud and boastful. He adorns the name resting upon him by seeking the humility of Christ, and he remembers his unworthiness. God's name is upon us, and we are under it. It is our shield and fortress. Furthermore, God's name upon us is His image in us. His reflection reminds Him of His promises in Christ. These reflections are such Biblical names as Christians, children of God, the righteous, the godly. In bestowing His name upon weak men the all-wise God does not commit an act of indiscretion. No, it is His gracious way of glorifying His name by making us sinners and weaklings holy and strong to glorify Him. God's name is hallowed if we are justified and glorified by and in Him.

The suffix $\alpha\zeta\omega$, like the English *fy*, denotes action. $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ is a denominative verb derived from $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\omicron\varsigma$, and its meaning is to make holy, to sanctify, to consecrate, to hallow. The Father has sanctified Jesus (John 10:36), that is, He has set Him apart for His divine purpose. Jesus sanctified Himself (John 17:19), that is, He has consecrated Himself entirely to the divine will and service. A sanctified person or thing is separated from persons and things profane, dedicated, and rendered inviolable. Frequently the word $\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ appears where we might have expected $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$. But the two words are not synonyms. I would say that $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\omicron$ is the first act toward $\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\omicron$, and $\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\omicron$ is the completion of $\acute{\alpha}\gamma\iota\acute{\alpha}\zeta\epsilon\upsilon\omicron$, for $\delta\omicron\zeta\acute{\alpha}\zeta\omega$ means to magnify further and exalt that which is already sanctified or is being sanctified. Both concepts demand an active agent and a passive object, even in the reflexive.

On the last day in the Temple, Jesus prayed aloud in the presence of all: "Father, glorify Thy name." The glorification of God's sacred name was ever in the heart and mind of Jesus. The answer of the Father was the promise of repeated, continued, and intensified glorification of His name. Jesus understood. In His sacerdotal prayer He indicates (John 17:1, 4, 5, 6, 26) how the promise is being fulfilled. Jesus effected the glorification of God's name among men, in this world where His name was not known. This glorification rested entirely on the Person, word, and work of Jesus. "The name of God is holy in itself" (Luther), and in heaven its radiance and effulgence beams forth brilliant brightness. Jesus

brought it down to this earth, revealed and manifested it to sinful men, to the fallen world. Here it is being misunderstood, profaned, denied. Jesus declares it "that it may be holy among us also" (Luther). Jesus teaches us to pray for the knowledge and grace of keeping it holy and in veneration, that we may see more and more, and declare with greater zeal, its unspeakable glory. We ask in this Petition that the revelation of God in Christ Jesus may be freely acknowledged, believed, and proclaimed by us, among us, throughout the world. Then God's name is hallowed as apart from and above every name, and adored by the Church on earth, which will continue its praise in heaven above. We express this as our greatest desire. Unless the Lord causes His name to be hallowed by and among us, His glory will nevermore be known on earth, and men will perish by their ignorance of God's name. We pray in this Petition for the knowledge of our salvation in Christ.

The tense of the verb is the aorist. It indicates "a long series of actions that are treated as a whole" (Robertson). Whatever number and repetition of sacred acts may be required, they are here viewed as forming an entity, the sanctification of God's name.

Again we look to Jesus. The unalterable Commandment says: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain." Jesus not only avoided the transgression of this Commandment, but He fulfilled, in our stead, what is enjoined, namely, the hallowing of God's name by praise and prayer. The hallowing of God's name is the office of Christ. The hallowing of God's name is the pastor's profession. It is the duty of every Christian. "Gott loben, das ist unser Amt." We ask that God may cause us to avoid and hate misapplication and blasphemy of His name, and to use it according to the revelation of His will to His glory and our benefit and blessing. Our ministry, if it adheres to the Word, is always successful, because God's will is the glorification of His name.

Jesus still performs His prophetic office by the preaching of God's Word. Nor can we hallow God's name unless we are faithful in proclaiming the Word in its truth and purity. Therefore we must enter deep into doctrine. We must indoctrinate the old and young by well-prepared sermons, giving heed to content more than to form — sermons more understood than admired. Without the sound doctrine our sermons, calls, work among the aged, youth work, and other pastoral obligations will fail. Our personal shadow must never obstruct the glory of God's name. Also the administration of the Sacraments is the means of hallowing God's name. Let us never tire from the effort of serving God, that His name may be hallowed. We mention here for further thought our task of rightly dividing the Word of truth.

Jesus also defended the true doctrine and attacked and ex-

posed all false doctrine. God's name is hallowed among us by controversy of the right kind. God has made us watchmen. Ezek. 3: 17-21. We are to contend for the faith, and we are to mark them that cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine. This belongs to our lifework of keeping God's name holy among us. What responsibility! It requires self-denial, courage, patience. As long as the old Adam is not fully subdued, false doctrine will rise and exist in all congregations. Be alert, and be patient to save an erring soul. We admire Christ's patience with His disciples in their delusions (Acts 1). But let us also follow Christ in His boldness, and let us attack and run down ravening wolves who would steal our sheep. The beauty of God's name unfolds to men in Christian polemics as well as in Scriptural irenics. When theology does not apply the whole truth, or when it ventures beyond the Scripture; when it socializes without or beyond the Law and the true Gospel, it simply ceases as theology and reels into modernistic glorification of man and mind. What do you say about the following evaluations of the Lord's Prayer: "The Creed of Christ"; "The Heights of Christian Devotion"; "The Social Manifesto of Jesus." These titles are not only shallow; they are unscriptural. But they are catchy. Whom do they catch?

Why does our Synod insist on the true doctrine? Why does our Synod expose and oppose all false doctrine and dangerous tendencies? It is because God hears our prayer: "Hallowed be Thy name." How our fathers hated false doctrine! How Luther spent himself in fighting it! Dare we weaken? It is an awful accusation which the Holy Spirit directed against the proud: "The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you." The brethren may linger here to recall sad instances of inexcusable ignorance and sloppiness in doctrine and practice which at places have crept into the true visible Church and profane the name of God. (Veronica among the Stations of the Cross, and misrepresentation of Christ and Simon on the Via Dolorosa: in a Lutheran church. Denial of the Scriptural doctrine of inspiration: in a Lutheran church! Unionism: in a Lutheran church. High pressure collections: in a Lutheran church. Tolerance of the divorce evil.) God glorifies His name also by judgments against those who profane it.

False doctrine yields ungodly life. The true and pure doctrine yields a godly life. A godly life includes godly thoughts and words and deeds. Brethren, try to recall and review all the pastoral activity of yesterday, each in his own field of labor. If you can, summarize all this activity, and multiply it by the number of brethren in your conference. This may seem foolish; but it is the application of the aorist: many actions ordained by God (Eph.

2:10), viewed as one act, to accomplish the hallowing of His name. It is the reply to the question: How did the Father answer this Petition among us last Sunday? In the meantime He caused His name to be hallowed somewhere in the midst of bloody battle, somewhere by His judgments, somewhere by His grace, somewhere by a miracle, wherever He has recorded His name, in the church, in the school, in the sickroom, in the office.

God's all-glorious name from one point of view cannot be hallowed, that is, it cannot be made more holy than it is, but in our attempts to hallow it there can be progress — in greater frequency and extent, in our hearts, in our life, in our office, in the degree in which we believe, testify, live, through His mercy and grace.

We preach Jesus Christ and Him crucified. His name is The Lord Our Righteousness. God's name is hallowed among us only by the name of Jesus, which is above every other name. God's eternal wrath will strike the impenitent, loud-mouthed blasphemer who shocks us by his vain use of the precious name of Jesus Christ. His grace will bless those who adore the holy name of Jesus. For "all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which hath sent Him." John 5:23.

G. H. SMUKAL

(To be continued)

Sermon Study on Eph. 1:3-14

Eisenach Epistle for Trinity Sunday

This lesson is one of the *sedes* for the doctrine of election, or predestination. This doctrine is a doctrine for Christians, and its purpose is to strengthen the child of God in his faith and his assurance of eternal salvation. If we fear that our supply of water might run short, we go to the wellspring, and seeing the water gush forth in unabated abundance, we go home satisfied, care-free, happy. If doubts as to our final salvation, as to our endurance in faith harass us, we go with the Apostle to that inexhaustible fountain of grace which from eternity issues forth from that God in whom there is no change and who has called us by His Gospel, and drink deeply from this fountain and return to our daily work with the full assurance that there is plenteous grace for our salvation and with the firm determination by this grace to remain faithful unto the end, knowing who it is that has called us.

V. 3: "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.*"