



### Looking Inwards (15 mins) *Caring For Each Other*

*Reflecting on your life at the moment, is there anything you would like to share with other members of your home group which you feel is appropriate (this is an **opportunity to share**, not something you have to do, however, 'it's the sharing that enables the caring!') for:*

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



### Looking Outwards (15 mins) *Concern For Others*

*Is there anything concerning someone in your: family; circle of friends; neighbours; or church, which you would like to share (please be careful not to pass on anything that is **confidential** or which you think the person/people concerned would not wish to be shared) for:*

Thanksgiving?

Prayer?

Encouragement?

Support in any way?



### HG55: The Lord's Prayer (3/8) *Praise: Honouring God's Name*

**Matthew 6:5-13**

### Home Group Study Notes

9<sup>th</sup> October 2011 - Pauline Woolnough



PLEASE COMPLETE AS MUCH AS YOU CAN ON THIS WORKSHEET IN PREPARATION **BEFORE** THE MEETING!

*Don't forget to take your Bible to Home Group with you, along with any previous notes and other resources which might be helpful.*



### Welcome/Ice Breaker (10 mins)

*"OMG!"* It is common everywhere, and even out of the mouths of children, for people to take the Lord's name in vain. How does this make you feel? Have you ever challenged anyone about this?



### Looking Upwards (10 mins) *Worship*

In your time of worship, you may want to sing Songs of Praise; listen to a Worship CD, as well as using Meditations; Bible Readings; Prayers ...





## Looking Upwards (40 mins) *Bible Study*

Read through the text for this study, and any references given below, alongside those in the sermon notes, then answer the following questions - you may find it helpful to read through the sermon notes as you do so. Discuss some, or all, of your answers with your Home Group.

1: How big is your God. Is your mental image of him big enough to do justice to who he actually is?

2: The idea that God is holy has implications for how we live. How are we to live? How can you bring honour to God at home, at work, at church and in the community?

3: How intent are you in honouring God's name when you worship him and, in your prayers to him?

We hallow his name when we trust in His love and faithfulness, even when life is hard. We hallow his name when we try to reflect the character and values of the Lord Jesus, and we honour Him when we tell others about Him .

### **Jesus Shows How It's Done**

If we really want the best example of what it means to hallow God's name then as always we need to look at Jesus and see how he did it because he illustrates this magnificently in John 12:27. Jesus is looking at the cross anticipating separation from God and he is scared, he says, "*Now My soul has become troubled,*" and then He says, "*and what shall I say? Father, save Me from this hour?*" (That's what we would say.) But He says..."*No it was for this very reason I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name,*" He knows what is ahead of him, the rejection, the hatred and hostility, the terrible wounds, the crucifixion, and then the ultimate pain - separation from God Himself. He would be forgiven for crying out to God and asking His Father to save him but he put himself aside and put His Father first, He trusts God and knows there is a purpose and He says, "*This is the purpose for which I came to this hour. Father, glorify Your name.*" In other words, "*Hallowed be Your name.*"

### **What is God Saying To us?**

This message today is so timely. As a church we have lots of plans for the future. We have people in place and strategies worked out, we have dreams and hopes but unless our first priority in those plans is for God to be glorified then we will not see the fruit of those plans as we would hope, and isn't it the fruit that we are always looking for rather than for God Himself?

We probably all have a picture of the ideal church, it may be one full of young people and children, it may be one with all sorts of outreach programmes, it may be one where the gifts of the Spirit are clearly evident. These are some of the things some of us may long for. Its church where God is present and his Spirit is active and facilitating, and there is nothing wrong with wanting that, but we need to make it our priority to hallow God's name. We need to ensure that the motive behind our prayers is the advancement of His Kingdom and that any answer to prayer will glorify His Name, we need to worship and seek him for all that he is and for who he is, because He is awesome, majestic, splendid, powerful, mighty and completely and utterly holy. Praise God!

### ***The Lord's Prayer***

*Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name,  
Your kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as in heaven.  
Give us today our daily bread.  
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.  
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.  
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,  
Now and forever. Amen.*

*"In the year that king Uzziah died I saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up; and his train filled the temple. Above him stood the seraphim; each had six wings: with two he covered his face, and with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. And one called to another and said: 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.' And the foundations of the thresholds shook at the voice of him who called, and the house was filled with smoke.*

I've not really given seraphim much thought I'm afraid to admit but if you asked me before this reading reminded me I probably would have said that they were the little baby faced cherubs that you often see in old paintings but I would be so far off the mark. When one of them calls out to another, not even shouts mind you, just calls out, the very foundations shake and the place fills with smoke, it sounds terrifying. They must be great, majestic, angelic beings whose voices calling out to each other might resemble something like the Red Arrows flying directly overhead.

1 Samuel 2:2, *"There is no one holy like the Lord, there is no one besides you."* God is all-powerful, he doesn't have to compete for authority, there is no one to compare with him. He is awesome in splendour and majesty and beauty and around him the seraphim's worship and honour him as they cover their faces and their feet before him. These angelic beings are in heaven, in God's presence all the time, they have never been touched by sin yet they are unable to look into His face and they do not feel worthy even to show their feet in his presence. God is utterly holy. Isaiah 40:25, *"To whom then will you compare me, that I should be like him?"*

It's a sobering thought to think that none of us here will be around in 100 years time yet God lives on, *"From everlasting to everlasting, you are God"* (Ps. 90:2). In 110 years all of us alive today will have vanished and there will be at least ten billion brand new people living on planet earth but God doesn't have a beginning or an end He always has been and always will be and he is in heaven right now seated on the throne high and lifted up, in complete control and Jesus tells us pray for his name to be hallowed. Perhaps we might have paid this line more attention if the word had been translated holy, - His name is holy.

### **We Were Made For Worship**

Jesus reminds us that there is an order to things. God is a God of order, but we so often go straight to God with our needs. We are to remember our obligations and our duty to praise and seek the Father and his glory first before making any requests, to worship and praise Him both in public and private. Worship is not an optional extra, its what we were made for. The catechism tells us that *"the chief aim of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever"* and if we don't take the opportunity to worship together or worse if we do and then simply go through the motions, lamely singing with our lips but not our hearts then we wont be fulfilling our chief aim in life. We wont be honouring his name and glorifying Him and ultimately we lose out because worship is good for our souls.

Hallowing God's Name, is not simply a case of saying or singing nice things about Him, declaring his characteristics, praying that God is awesome, majestic, omnipotent.... it is much more because we can say these things but it doesn't mean that their meaning necessarily have any effect on how we live. Words of praise without appropriate actions are just a noise to God. *"I hate all your show and pretence..... Away with your hymns of praise. They are only a noise to my ears. I will not listen to your music, no matter how lovely it is. Instead I want to see a mighty flood of justice, a river of righteous living that will never run dry.* Amos 5 21-24.

We hallow God's name when we make Him the centre of our lives, take our worship of him seriously and try to live *"in a manner worthy"* of the One who called us to Himself in faith (Ephesians 4:1; Colossians 1:10; Philippians 1:27; 1 Thessalonians 2:12).

4: Do you ever feel you have let God down by being in a situation where you have been glad that no one around knew you were a Christian?

5: I've only mentioned a few of the names that God calls himself, there are many more. Which one reveals a characteristic that you need to know and be reminded of in your life at present?

6: Prayerfully examine your life: does it reflect God's holy standards? What areas do you need God to help you develop greater holiness? Pray for each other about this.



Is there anything you most want to put into practice as a result of this study?



## HG55: The Lord's Prayer (3/8) *Praise: Honouring God's Name*

Matthew 6:5-13

### Home Group Sermon Notes

9<sup>th</sup> October 2011 - Pauline Woolnough

#### The First Petition

In the last HG study we were thinking about the very real privilege we have in being able to call God our Father. The 4 words "*Our Father in Heaven*" are a wonderful declaration of God's love for his people but Jesus reminds us right at the start of the Lord's Prayer that we need to get things in their right perspective. God is our Father but he is still God, he is awesome and majestic beyond measure and because of that his Name is to be hallowed. Intimacy with our Father is not to be taken lightly or for granted, and we must be careful not to abuse or misunderstand the privilege of intimacy. Here Jesus ensures that we guard against this because straight after he said, "*as soon as you have acknowledged that God is your loving compassionate, Father in Heaven you need to remember this, His Name is to be hallowed.*"

The Lord's prayer is a prayer of petition, and the very first thing we are instructed to ask God to do is to ensure that his name is hallowed and glorified. That is the basis and fundamental duty of all prayers. What we are doing by starting with God is making Him and his honour our priority, we are stepping aside and putting God first. We are acknowledging that he is Lord over everything and we are reminding ourselves that despite how things may look, the reality is that God is God and he deserves to be worshipped and praised. We are declaring that our chief desire is for His name to be honoured, that he is mighty, he is powerful and that he is able to do immeasurably more than we ever could dream of. The first request then in the Lord's Prayer is "*Hallowed be Your name.*"

#### The Names of God

Names are important, many parents choose names carefully looking for meanings in the names that they hope their offspring will grow into. If you know someone's name you usually know something about them. God has many names, I counted at least 180 and each of these names that God has chosen reveals something about himself that will deepen our love for him and strengthen our faith.

The most common name for God in the Old Testament comes from the Hebrew name Yahweh, spelt YHWH and is translated simply as LORD. When you see it written in capital letters you know that the Hebrew word Yahweh is behind it. The Jews thought this name was so sacred and were so concerned not to take the Lord's name in vain that they never used it. They used the word *Adonia* instead, meaning my Lord. They understood what it meant to hallow God's name because they fully understood the holiness of God. They understood that God was exalted, unreachable and untouchable and there was a constant reminder that he was hidden behind veils in the Holy of Holies, a sacred place where a High Priest could go once a year with the added fear that he might not get out again. Every detail of their lives from what they ate to how they dressed were reminders of being clean and separate from the world and were memory aids that God himself was totally separate, because He is holy.

Jesus taught us that being clean had nothing to do with what we ate or how we dressed, it was a matter of inner purity through the cleansing of the Holy Spirit. We have therefore lost the physical ritual reminders and the very real danger is that we minimise the holiness of God. J John says that "*The real difficulty for us is not the word hallow, it is the concept; the entire idea of anything being holy has largely slipped from modern Western minds.*"

The by product of this is that we can turn prayer around and tell God what we expect Him to do for us, instead of listening to what He expects from us and we can inadvertently bring him down to our level and arrive at a place where we think we have power over God.

#### God Introduces Himself

In Exodus 3:14 God makes a great statement about who he is, he says he has seen the misery of his people held in captivity and is sending Moses to the Pharaoh to bring his people out of Egypt. Moses says who shall I say sent me, in other words what is your name. God says "*I Am who I Am.*" He says his name is "*I Am I Am I Am*" which simply means "*He Is*" He is with us always, He is everywhere. He is the great unchanging one whose promises his people can trust.

We are here because all of us were conceived by two parents whereas his name "*I Am*" implies that he owes his personality and power and his very existence to no one but himself. He simply is. His name means *I exist*. God exists, He is out there somewhere. In fact he is everywhere. Not everyone believes this of course and even those of us who do believe he exists live half the time as if it wasn't true, or as if it was a truth that makes no difference to our lives at all.

Throughout the bible God uses other names for himself, a few are:

- Yahweh, (or Jehovah) meaning: "The Lord will provide" Gen 22:14
- Yahweh Shalom: "The Lord is Peace" Judges 6:24
- Yahweh Rapha: "The Lord is my Healer" Ex 15:26
- Yahweh-SABBAOTH: meaning "The Lord of Hosts" Isaiah 6:1-3 and there are other names by which we know God such as: Shepherd (Gen 49:24, Ps 23:1, Is 40:11); King (Ps 95:3); Warrior (Ex 15:3); and Rock (Ps 18:2).

These are just a few of his names but we cannot hem God in or put him into a mould because God is essentially unknowable, he is mysterious, he is the basis of everything that is, he is "*I AM*" His name is a verb, not a noun. God's name is a being word, it is a BE verb. You will never pin God down because he is never still, he is energy itself and entirely flexible, He says to us "*I will be your father. I will be your provider, if you need comfort I will be your comforter, if you are sick I will be your healer, I will fight for you and be your warrior, when you are lost I will be your shepherd and come and find you, when you need support I will be your Rock, I will be anything I want to be and everything you need me to be. My Name is Yahweh, I am in you. I am with you. I am for you. I am everything you need. I Am, I Am.*" ... and Jesus tells us to hallow his name.

#### God Is Holy

Hallow is an unfortunate word because it sounds a bit like Halloween. You never hear anyone use the word hallowed these days, it sounds old fashioned, a dark kind of word. JK Rowling obviously thought so as well as she used in the title of the last Harry Potter film the Deathly Hallows, but the word hallow actually means holy. God is holy, in fact not only is God holy, He is "*Holy, Holy, Holy.*" As far as I know scripture doesn't say God is love, love, love or merciful, merciful, merciful but Isaiah's vision of God in Isaiah 6:1-4 tells us that he is: "*Holy, Holy, Holy.*"