

# The LPG

## Hallowed Father

December 13, 2020

**Welcome to where we're turning to Jesus and learning to pray the LPG way!**

**LPG stands for the Lord's Prayer Guide.** And today we're hallowing Dad's hallowed name. The LPG is a starter kit, not a word-for-word liturgy. It's a blueprint for a profoundly relational daily conversation with our Heavenly Father. And it was designed to be personalized, like a divine Hallmark card. So, let's get right to feeling guilty about praying, shall we?



**Did you pray enough this week?** If not, you're not alone. Most believers feel convicted *about* it, yet rarely make time *for* it. It's those WMDs: weapons of mass distraction. Facebook. Twitter. YouTube. Not to mention family, friends, work, and Netflix. And *then* it tends to be a few brief words on the run. And *then* **it's often mostly fairly self-centered.**

Imagine how I'd feel if I got a call from *my* kid, saying "Lord Bruce, come to the bowling alley, fix my flat tire, and bring money for McDonalds. Over." [CLICK] Was that a request or a ransom notice?

We know that prayer is right and true and the thing to do; but, it tends to kind of feel like an "intrusion" in our busy, distracted, chaotic lives. **So we settle for feeling guilty.** We're suckered by the enemy, who robs us blind. We need our hearts minds renewed and refocused on God's will. So here:

Rejoice *always*, pray without *ceasing*, in *everything* give thanks; for *this* is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. – 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 NKJ

Well that's short, sweet, and seemingly impossible to accomplish. "Pray without ceasing"? I hope prayer doesn't mean what we think it means!

**How do you typically greet Dad each day?** Overly regimented? Overly formal? Overly nonchalant? Overly detached? Overly anxious? Overly shallow? 'Cause, it's overly *something* – that's how it works down here. We're practicing righteousness while being sanctified (i.e. made holy). (1 Jn 2:29, 3:7; Heb 10:14)

And as we saw last Sunday, **our Father desires a balance of being snuggled and being fearfully revered** like the omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent Papa Hen that He is. (Mt 23:37) It's a peculiar balance; but it's what He wants, because it's what we need.

And so, before we ever start making our demands – I mean, *supplications* – we must **reinforce our relationship** with "our Father", and **reaffirm our respect** for His sovereign authority "in Heaven", and then take some time – and I mean *time* – to **hallow His holiness.**

The word “hallow” isn’t so common anymore. **To be hallowed is to be holy.** *Hallow’een* means *Holy Evening (the night before All Saints Day)*. Just think, it could’ve ended up Hallow Eve and Christmas’een. And **to hallow is to treat as holy.** So, our hallowed are hallowed as hallowed.



If our house catches fire, we grab what’s most hallowed or *cherished*. And we refer to places like Pearl Harbor as hallowed ground to *honor* those who lost their lives. Because, **to hallow is to honor by cherishing.** Fearfully revering Dad’s unlimited power, wisdom, and presence “in heaven” is very different from cherishing and honoring His absolutely absolute goodness and compassion and devotion. In Malachi, the Lord All-Powerful says:

“If then I am a father, where is My *honor*? And if I am a master, where is My *fear*? ... O priests, who despise My *name*.” [By not bringing these into balance] – Malachi 1:6 ESV

Jesus isn’t telling us to simply state the fact of our Father’s holiness – that’s the type of tedious religious rhetoric that the LPG helps us replace – but to honor and cherish the sheer holiness of Dad’s character and nature – His goodness and grace and love and mercy. King David tells us to:

Ascribe to the LORD the glory due His name; worship the LORD in the splendor of holiness. – Psalm 29:2 ESV

And give thanks at the remembrance of His holy name. – Psalm 30:4 NKJ

Oh, magnify the LORD with me, and let us exalt His name together! – Psalm 34:3 ESV

Holy and awesome is His name! – Psalm 111:9 ESV

Sing out the honor of His name; make His praise glorious. – Psalm 66:2 NKJ

O my soul, and all that is within me, bless His holy name! – Psalm 103:1 ESV

Sing praises to His name ... A father of the fatherless, – Psalm 68:4-5 NKJ

Make known His deeds among the peoples! Sing to Him ... Glory in His holy name; let the hearts of those rejoice who seek the LORD! – Psalm 105:1-3 NKJ

For our heart is glad in Him, because we trust in His holy name. – Psalm 33:21 ESV

So, **how often do you praise Him privately?** Because, something happens when we adore and exalt and cherish and honor and worship our Father in private. **All of a sudden I’m no longer the center of the universe, He is!** So don’t settle for stating the *fact* of Dad’s goodness, compassion, and devotion, honor and adore it as your most cherished treasure, and your highest created purpose! Way back in the day, Dad said to His chosen children:

You shall keep My commandments and do them: I am the LORD. And you shall not profane My holy name, that I may be sanctified ... [because] I am the LORD who sanctifies you, – Leviticus 22:31-32 ESV

Wait. What? *We* sanctify God? Yes. Sanctify and hallow are synonymous; King James uses the words “hallowed” and “hallows”. And it means to *make* holy or to *treat as* holy. And our Father must be treated as holy by those He’s making holy. Because **He can’t make us holy if we don’t see Him and treat Him as holy**. And so **to disobey during the process is to profane His good name**. When Moses and Aaron pitched a fit and disobeyed Dad in the wilderness, He said:

You did not believe in Me, to sanctify Me [KJV: to hallow Me] in the eyes of the people [NRS: to show My holiness; ESV: to uphold Me as holy] – Numbers 20:12 RSV

If you haven’t noticed, Dad takes our disbelief and distrust very personal! Because, **disobedience and distrust un-hallows our Father**. So to treat Him as holy is to trust and obey – for there’s truly no other way to be happy in Jesus, but to trust and obey. In fact:

Whoever does not believe God has made Him out to be a liar, because they have not believed the testimony God has given – 1 John 5:10 NIV

Because, **“Hallowed be Your name”** means **“trusted be Your Word”**. Ready to start renewing your mind – regarding prayer and God’s Word – so we can take back the hallowed ground we’ve surrendered to the lies of the enemy? Remember a couple weeks back, we saw how we’re warned, whenever we draw near to our father in prayer, to ...

Go near to *listen* rather than to *offer* the sacrifice of fools, [a very sobering synonym for **babbling religious rhetoric**] who do not know that they do wrong. ... God is *in heaven* and you are on earth, [we lack perspective] so let *your* words be few. – Ecclesiastes 5:1-2 NIV



Which is why Jesus told His boys to stop babbling when they pray. (Mt 6:7) And then took their traditional, formal, mechanical Amidah prayer, which had been prayed the same way, three times each weekday, for 500 years, and shockingly reduced its 1,273 words by 95% into the 66-word LPG. “Hallowed be Your name” replaces a 346 word introduction!



Imagine your kid coming home from school, telling you what they did, and want to do, and want from you. And when they’re through they walk away. Only to return to repeat the process. **We love to listen to our children ... to a point**. But, when they won’t stop talking, won’t listen for a moment, we cut ‘em off and say, **“Shh. Just listen for a minute. I want to talk to you too.”**



Jesus’ disciples tend to see prayer as mostly speaking. Yet, **Scripture teaches that prayer is mostly about listening**. Problem is, we forget how to listen. How to hear. How to open our ears. How to let our Father get a Word in edgewise. Well, the answer is found in the Bible. No surprise.

The surprise is: it *is* the Bible. **Reading God’s Word is praying. It’s listening prayer**. And **this is where our Father speaks loud and clear if we’ll pause to hear**. And, we’ll begin to rewire our desire to read and reflect on Scripture when we see it for what it actually is. We tend to see prayer as *talking*, and Bible reading as *studying*; and then **we justify not studying because it’s not relational**.

So don't let the enemy dupe you into defining rhetorical babbling as *praying*, and Bible-listening as *optional*. **It's time to renew our thinking**, and mentally move Dad's Mouth from an optional informational category, **and start to see His Word as hallowed ground** where we approach our hallowed Father to hallow His hallowed name **by listening and trusting and obeying His voice**.



"Hallowed be Your name" is a pledge to cherish, honor, *and* carry on our Father's perfectly good name. So, when that waitress brings well-done instead of medium-rare: hallowed by our Father's name? Well done. When that driver cuts you off: hallowed be our Father's name? When you're quietly cruising through the internet: hallowed be our Father's name?

He's given us His good name, and left us in charge of hallowing it, whether at home, in the office, or at a poorly umpired little league game. Back when we had those. So, **how carefully do you cherish, honor, and uphold His name?** Our Father's third commandment says:

You shall not misuse the name of the LORD your God – Deuteronomy 5:11 NIV



We're always hearing His name misused. Common cursing. Coarse joking. Crude obscenities. **Do you misuse His name?** If so, time to put *that* to an end. I cringe when people just say "Oh my god!" Not because I'm offended, but because **using His name flippantly un-hallows it, un-glorifies it, common-izes it**, which makes everyone a little less likely to cherish and honor *Him*.

Remember Isaiah's reaction when he saw *Jesus* enthroned in heaven? (Jn 12:41)

"Woe to me!" I cried. "I am ruined! For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among a people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King ... – Isaiah 6:5 NIV



In the presence of His purity, **Isaiah becomes intensely aware of the contamination of his culture and his own need for cleansing**. When I was young, I had a friend whose mom had snow white wall-to-wall carpet in their living room, with white couches and white drapes. And we didn't *dare* to go in there. That room was just *scary*.



But you see, It's only as we consistently, privately, focus on Dad's holiness (and absolute separateness from sin) that we become intensely aware of what in *us* is un-hallowing *Him*. And that's good and healthy; because, **if it's not hallowing Him, it's poisoning us**.

Trying to find fulfillment on earth without hallowing our Father in heaven is deadly. If we don't honor our creator, we'll honor something infinitely lesser and un-worthier of worship. **The purity of His love should move us to praise**. And **if not, it should move us to ask ourselves why not**.

Not to us, O LORD, not to us but to Your name be the glory, because of Your love and faithfulness. - Psalm 115:1 NIV

So, what is His hallowed name? Well, last week we read, and then re-read, Isaiah's declaration regarding our Father in heaven versus Abraham, but I left off His hallowed name.



Look down from *heaven*, and see from Your habitation, *holy* and glorious. ... Doubtless You are *our Father*, though Abraham was ignorant of us ... You, O LORD, are *our Father*; our **Redeemer from Everlasting** is Your **[holy and glorious]** name. – Isaiah 63:15-16 NKJ



**[And Jesus said to His disciples]** I have come in My *Father's name*, – John 5:43 NKJ

**[And He said to His Father]** I have made *Your name* known to them – John 17:26 NAS

And He certainly did. And *that's* how you hallow Dad's name. By making it known, by upholding it and showing it as trustworthy in the eyes of those around you.

The LORD has said, "Among those who are near Me I will be *sanctified* **[or hallowed]**, and before all the people I will be *glorified* **[or honored]**." – Leviticus 10:3 ESV

And so, you **PRAY**: "hallowed be Your name", and then **PAUSE** to ask yourself how you can best honor your cherished Father today? And then you **PERSONALIZE** it in a few words of worship from your heart to His; and then you open your heart, and His Word, and your ears, **and then discuss your trust and obedience**. And I'll assume we all have plenty to personalize on those two fronts.

**So, did you pray enough this week? Not if you did all the talking.** But begin to see praying as mostly listening, and listening as seeking, reading, pondering, and applying Dad's will in a way that hallows His holiness, and you'll find that praying *continually* is surprisingly doable.

And then, you won't just be stating a fact, you'll actually be hallowing His name.

Let's pray together:

Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And do not lead us into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one. For Yours is the kingdom and the power and the glory forever. Amen. – Matthew 6:9-13 NKJ