



TRINITY CHURCH ROCKY HILL

Bible Study – October 15, 2020

Our Father Which Art In Heaven, Hallowed Be Thy Name” (Matthew 6:9)

This phrase from The Lord’s Prayer is among the most widely known passages of Scripture, right along with the Ten Commandments, Psalm 23 and John 3:16. But in spite of it being so well-known and so often repeated, do we really know what it means, or why we are saying that God’s name should be “*hallowed*”?

What Does Hallowed Mean?

The word hallowed comes from the Old English word *halig* which in modern times has become the more familiar word holy. It is one English translation of the Greek word *hagiazō* which is most famously used in the Lord’s Prayer, but is also found in several other places throughout the New Testament. So, in saying God’s name is hallowed, we are saying that his name is holy. But, to take things a little bit deeper, what does it really mean to be holy?

What Does it Mean to be Holy?

According to Merriam Webster, to be holy is to be, “*exalted or worthy of complete devotion as one perfect in goodness and righteousness.*” There is an aspect of perfection and worthiness involved, and each time we think of God’s name as hallowed, it should bring us to consider his greatness and his majesty. It is also hard to think of the word holy without also thinking the word whole, which sounds very similar. Being holy means to be completely perfect and completely whole, in need of nothing.

Let’s take a look at some other surprising places where this unusual word is found that you may have not noticed it before.

A New Way to Think of an October Holiday

When you hear the word Halloween, does it make you think about this phrase from the Lord’s Prayer? The word Halloween comes from the same root word as hallowed, so there is certainly a connection.

Before Halloween was all about kids walking around the neighborhood to get a bag full of candy, the name had a deeper meaning, specifically related to the day that comes after it.

Halloween is the combination of the words **hallowed** and **evening**. This is because October 31st is the night before the lesser known *All Hallows Day*, or *All Saints Day* that

is celebrated on November 1st. All Saints' Day involves no candy or dressing up, so it doesn't get the same amount of press.

Just like hallowed, the word saint itself is another word that means "one who is holy." So according to the names, the real meaning of Halloween is All Saints Eve, which comes before All Saint's Day.

"Hallowed" in the Gettysburg Address

*"But, in a larger sense, we cannot dedicate, we cannot consecrate - **we cannot hallow** - this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it far above our poor power to add or detract."*

Abraham Lincoln uses the word hallowed in his Gettysburg Address to state that nothing done in the name or memory of the soldiers who fought at Gettysburg could ever match up to the sacrifices that were made by the soldiers themselves. It again relates to the 'wholeness' or 'completeness' or what they had done and tells us that their acts are worthy of our devotion and utmost respect. It also gives us an idea that in the 1860's the word was familiar enough that Lincoln knew people would understand the meaning.

Other Places the Word is Used in Scripture

Even though we only see the English word hallowed in the Lord's Prayer, the underlying Greek word is used in several places throughout Scripture. It is generally translated as 'holy' or 'sanctified.'

Be Holy as God is Holy

1 Peter 1:15-16 says *"But just as he who called you is **holy**, so be **holy** in all you do; for it is written: 'Be **holy**, because I am **holy**.'"*

In this passage Peter quotes Leviticus 11:44, and in doing so presents us with a simple yet seemingly unattainable challenge: to be holy as God is holy. It is easy to understand that God, the Almighty creator and sustainer of all things is worthy of being called holy, but how can that also apply to us? We may have good days, but there is no way we match the perfection and wholeness of God. Yet that is exactly what we are called to.

Jesus Says We Also Can be Holy

John 17:17-19 says *"**Sanctify** them by the truth; your word is truth. As you sent me into the world, I have sent them into the world. For them I **sanctify** myself, that they too may be truly **sanctified**."*

First, let's clarify the word sanctify. As you may have guessed, it comes from the same root word as hallowed, but instead of going straight from Greek to Old English, it takes a path through Latin, coming from the word *sanctus* which also means holy.

Jesus is saying that through him, we also might be truly sanctified and made holy.

Through him we may be perfect and whole. Through him we, in our fallen nature, can still be made complete. Through him we can be holy just as he is holy.

Hallowed be Thy Name

When we read the Lord's Prayer, we are reading that God's name was, is, and always will be holy. We read that his name is deserving of all the reverence and honor that we can give. The amazing next step is that through Jesus, we too may become holy just as he is holy. We can be made holy in him not because of anything that we have done or anything that we could ever do, but because of what Jesus has done and who Jesus is.