**THE EXPOSITION OF HOLY SCRIPTURE BY ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

**MATTHEW-032. HALLOWED BE THY NAME by ALEXANDER MACLAREN**

*"Hallowed be Thy name."*

*Matthew 6:9*

Name is character so far as revealed.

**I. What is meaning of Petition?**

Hallowed means to make holy; or to show as holy; or to regard as holy. The second of these is God's hallowing of His Name. The third is men's.

The prayer asks that God would so act as to show the holiness of His character, and that men, one and all, may see the holiness of His character. i.e.

* Hallowed by divine self-revelation.
* Hallowed by human recognition.
* Hallowed by human adoration and appropriate sentiments.
* Hallowed by human action.

**II. On what it rests:**

* On the Fatherhood of God.
* On the confidence that God wills that His Name should be known. In other words, the petition rests on the assurance of God's fatherly love, which cannot but will that His children should know their Father as He is.
* On the fact that men need the knowledge of the Name.
* On the conviction that men cannot attain it for themselves.

That Christ is the great means of His hallowing His Name.

His finished work does not render this prayer unnecessary.

I have declared Thy name, and will declare it.

That this is to be issue of all. A grand prophecy.

**III. Why put first.**

Singular, that so remote a petition should stand at beginning. We should begin not with ourselves, but with God; not with temporal wants, not even with our own spiritual ones.

We begin not with men, but with God.

It is God's glory even more than men's knowledge of Him that the petition contemplates. And though the two things coincide, which of them is foremost in our minds makes an infinite difference.

Then in regard to God, we first ask not that His law may be kept, but that His nature may be known.

The place of this petition in the prayer is explained by considerations which suggest very important thoughts for ourselves and all men.

* That true knowledge of God is the deepest and fundamental necessity for all men.
* That the knowledge will affect their whole scheme of thought and life.
* That the most important of all questions is, How does a man think of God?
* That the Inward comes before the Outward.
* That knowledge is the guide of emotions and of practical life, as set forth here in the order of petitions.

This sequence of petitions corrects many errors into which we are apt to fall.

**(a)** That religion is chiefly to give us forgiveness.

**(b)** That accurate knowledge of God and His will matters comparatively little if we have devout emotions and experiences.

**(c)** That plans for the reformation of men should begin with the exterior, leaving theological subtleties to themselves.

But this is not a theological subtlety.

Seek ye first the kingdom of God, is a maxim for social reformation as well as for individual life.

**IV. To what practical life this prayer binds us.**

Following in our estimates, aims, and practice the sequence which it prescribes. Desiring for world most of all that it may hallow the Name.

* Seeking for ourselves to hallow it.
* Seeking for ourselves that we may be the means of others doing so.

The ever-present remembrance, that the name of God is blasphemed or hallowed, that God is glorified or disgraced, by us.

That to be like His name is true way to commend it. Do you know this name?