



This article is written by Pastor Tom Eckstein of Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown. "His Word is Truth" will appear in this paper every 3rd Monday.

His Word Is Truth!



In last month's article we examined the introduction to The Lord's Prayer: **"Our Father in Heaven."** We learned that there is only One God. He has revealed Himself to us by His Word, which we now have in Holy Scripture. The One God is Father, Son and Holy Spirit (see Matthew 3:16-17 and 28:19). Only those whom the Holy Spirit has given faith in Jesus can pray *"Our Father."* In John 14:6 we see that Jesus Himself said: **"No one comes to the Father except through me."** Therefore, there is a

connection between the introduction to The Lord's Prayer and the 1st Commandment: **"You shall have no other gods besides Me."**

Today we will focus on the first petition of The Lord's Prayer from Matthew 6:9b, which reads: **"Holy be Your Name."** In his Small Catechism Martin Luther gives the following explanation of Jesus' words: **"God's Name is certainly holy in itself, but we pray in this petition that it may be kept holy among us also."** Luther here teaches us that God does not need our prayers to help Him be holy. Instead, Jesus teaches us to pray *"Holy be Your Name"* so that we will learn to regard God's Name as holy. We need to pray these words because our sinful natures do NOT respect God's Name!

Of course, this leads to the question: *"How is God's Name kept holy?"* Martin Luther gives this answer: **"God's Name is kept holy when the**

Word of God is taught in its truth and purity, and we, as the children of God, also lead holy lives according to it. Help us to do this, dear Father in heaven! But anyone who teaches or lives contrary to God's Word profanes the Name of God among us. Protect us from this, heavenly Father!"

Simply put, we regard God's Name as holy when we believe His Word, teach it faithfully and live in obedience to God's Word. However, when we doubt God's Word, teach contrary to it and live in rebellion against it, we thereby dishonor God's Name. In fact, this first petition of The Lord's Prayer is in harmony with the 2nd Commandment: **"You shall not misuse the Name of the Lord your God."**

In Jeremiah chapter 23 we read these words of God: **"I have heard what the prophets say who prophesy lies in my Name... They think the dreams they tell one another will make my people forget**

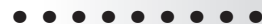
my Name... I am against the prophets who wag their own tongues and yet declare, 'The Lord declares.'" Here we see that we dishonor God's Name when we claim to speak for Him and yet teach and live in ways that are in conflict with His revealed Word, which we have in Holy Scripture.

As sinners, we are all guilty of dishonoring God's Name in word and deed. The Good News is that we can repent of this sin and call on the Name of the Lord and know that He will save us. *God wants all to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the Truth* (see 1st Timothy 2:4). In Romans 10:13 the Apostle Paul quotes from the Prophet Joel: **"Everyone who calls on the Name of the Lord will be saved."** In Acts 4:12 the Apostle Peter says the following about Jesus: **"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other Name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved."** The Holy Spirit works through Holy Baptism (see

Acts 2:38-39 and Titus 3:5) and the preaching of God's Word (see Romans 10:14-15 and Ephesians 1:13-14) to give us repentance and faith in Jesus, by whose Name we are saved.

In Philippians 2:5-11 we see that even though Jesus was *"in very nature God"* He chose to serve us sinners. Jesus humbled Himself and willingly died on the cross in our place of damnation (see Philippians 2:8 and Colossians 1:21-22). Jesus received the punishment we deserve for all the times we dishonor God's Name. This same Jesus also conquered death for us (see Philippians 2:9-11 and 1st Thessalonians 4:14) so that we might look forward to the resurrection of the body and eternal life with God in the New Creation where we will praise His Holy Name forever! The Apostle Paul writes: **"...at the Name of Jesus every knee should bow ... and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."**

The original Greek word for "Lord" is "kurios" which translates the Old Testament Holy Name for God – "Yahweh," which means "I Am that I Am." In John 8:58 Jesus says: **"Before Abraham was born, I Am!"** This same Jesus teaches us to pray: **"Holy be Your Name."** God's Name is holy in itself, but we pray these words so that, by God's grace, His Name will be holy among us also.



Please read the next "His Word is Truth" on Monday, April 21st! Pastor Eckstein will continue his series on The Lord's Prayer with the following petition: "Your Kingdom Come."

For more resources about Christian teaching and issues, go to Concordia Lutheran's web page: www.concordiajt.org

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