

From a treatise on the Lord's Prayer

by Saint Cyprian, bishop and martyr

May your name be hallowed

How merciful the Lord is to us, how kind and richly compassionate! He wished us to repeat this prayer in God's sight, to call the Lord our Father and, as Christ is God's Son, be called in turn sons of God! None of us would ever have dared to utter this name unless He Himself had allowed us to pray in this way.

And therefore, dear friends, we should bear in mind and realize that when we call God our Father we ought also to act like sons. If we are pleased to call him Father, let Him in turn be pleased to call us sons.

We should live like the temples of God we are, so that it can be seen that God lives in us. No act of ours should be unworthy of the Spirit. Now that we have begun to live in heaven and in Spirit, all our thoughts and actions should be heavenly and spiritual; for, as the Lord God Himself has said:

Those who honor me I will honor, and those who despise me shall be despised.

And the blessed Apostle wrote in his letter:

You are not your own; you were bought with a great price. So glorify and bear God in your body.

We go on to say, *May Your name be hallowed*. It is not that we think to make God holy by our prayers; rather we are asking God that His name may be made holy in us. Indeed, how could God be made holy, He who is the source of holiness?

Still, because He Himself said: *Be holy, for I am holy*, we pray and beseech Him that we who have been hallowed in baptism may persevere in what we have begun. And we pray for this every day, for we have need of daily sanctification; sinning every day, we cleanse our faults again and again by constant sanctification.

The apostle Paul instructs us in these words concerning the sanctification which God's loving kindness confers on us: *Neither the immoral, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the greedy, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God. And such indeed you were. But you have been washed, you have been sanctified, you have been justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.*

We were sanctified, he says, *in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God*. Hence we make our prayer that this sanctification may remain in us.

But further, our Lord who is also our Judge warns those who have been cured and brought back to life by Him to sin no more lest something worse happen to them.

Thus we offer constant prayers and beg night and day that this sanctification and new life which is ours by God's favor may be preserved by His protection.