

## Leader's Guide – March 1: Hallowed Be Your Name

1. To hallow is to regard something or someone as more significant than everything or everyone else. Hallowing is a function of our human nature to fill up the feeling of hollowness in our hearts. What are some of the symptoms that manifest in our lives when we have hallowed too much of things or when we have hallowed too little of things?

*We become absolutely frustrated, disillusioned, outraged, and hopeless when our godlike expectations are not met by someone, by something, by circumstances, or by what we had hoped and dreamt. We will burn out. We will become people who are bitter, angry, and critical. We can also become people who are irresponsible, casual, lazy, and uncaring. We open ourselves up to enormous disappointment when we hallow too much of things. We will become socially derelict and hurtful when we hallow too little of things.*

2. St. Augustine prayed these famous words, "You have made us for Yourself, O Lord, and our heart is restless until it rests in You." How could anyone come to experience the "heart-rest" that St. Augustine described in his prayer?

*Only through ongoing belief, trust, love, and obedience of Jesus Christ can a person experience the final heart-rest that we all long for. This is not a one-time event in a person's life but an ongoing process, discipline, and journey. It will take time, practice, learning, being with people, and taking steps of faith to venture further into the heart-rest that is found inside the heart and centre of God's Being. Just as we have practices to keep the fire of romance in our marriages, to maintain our relationships with family and friends, to keep our bodies healthy and strong, so it is with our spiritual lives in Jesus Christ.*

3. Thomas Chalmers observed that there are two methods we could displace the inordinate lust for vain carnality from our hearts. First, to discipline and train our hearts to become disaffected by the lure of worldly things. Or second, to replace our old affections with a new one. While we can discipline our bodies and appetites through religious practices, how can we fan the flames of our deepest and often dormant affections for God?

*We cultivate affections for God through habits of liturgy, aesthetics, missions, and spirituality. Desires and affections are further developed by patterns and habits; and habits and patterns become more enjoyable and life-giving when desires and affections are cultivated. It is a positive feedback loop. At first, going out on the first few dates with someone you are interested in can feel exciting. Then the feelings of romance dwindle the more familiar the person becomes in your life. To cultivate romance, you need to go out on more dates again with more intentionality and effort; and that is usually worth it. That is a very simplistic analogy for how we also cultivate our love for God -- through the regular pattern of worship, spiritual disciplines, prayer, community, service, generosity, singing, fasting, etc.*

4. Grammatically, hallowed be Your Name is rendered in the imperative mood. That is, hallowing God's Name is a command, exhortation, and an invitation from Jesus. He taught us to pray this not because God needs His Name to be hallowed, but for our need

to hallow God's Name--for our sakes. How can we as Christians and as a community cultivate a missional approach towards the hallowing of God's Name in our city?

*Loving God means loving others so that they may in turn come to love God as well. We love others as an end in itself regardless of whether or not they become worshippers of Jesus Christ. We must love God for who He is. We must also love people for who they are. We hope and pray that loving people will make them into worshippers of God. We want to become people whose lives hallow things properly and hallow God ultimately. And we pray that when others see how our lives are as Christians -- not to say that our lives will be perfect and stress-free and pain-free -- then others will become curious and wonder about Jesus Christ. While we can have others see how we live our Christian lives, let us also go to them and tell them about the Gospel.*