

July 25, 2010 – The Ninth Sunday after Pentecost

The Rev. Canon Bob Riegel

Luke 11:1-13

**In this sermon the preacher prayed The Lord's Prayer (new translation)
and a reader from the back read the replies.**

Our Father In Heaven.

Yes?

Please don't interrupt me. I'm praying.

Ah, but -- you called ME!

Called you? No, I didn't call you. I'm praying.

Our Father in Heaven.

There -- you did it again!

Did what?

**You called ME. You said,
"Our Father in Heaven"**

I am here. What's on your mind?

**But I didn't mean anything by it. I was, you know, just saying my prayers for the
day. I always say the Lord's Prayer. It makes me feel good, kind of like fulfilling a
duty.**

Well, all right. Go on.

Okay, Hallowed be your name . .

Hold it right there. What do you mean by that?

By what?

By "Hallowed be your name"?

**It means, it means . . good grief, I don't know what it means. How in the world
should I know? It's just a part of the prayer. By the way, what does it mean?**

It means honored, holy, wonderful.

Hey, that makes sense. I never thought about what 'hallowed' meant before.

Thanks.

Your Kingdom come, Your will be done, on earth as in Heaven.

Do you really mean that?

Sure, why not?

What are you doing about it?

**Doing? Why, nothing, I guess. I just think it would be good if you got control, control
of everything down here like you have up there. We're in a mess down here you
know.**

Yes, I know; but, have I got control of you?

Well, I spend a lot of time in church.

That isn't what I asked you. What about your bad temper?

**You've really got a problem there, you know. And then there's the way you spend
your money – so much on yourself.**

And what about all the television?

Now hold on just a minute! Stop picking on me! I'm just as good as some of the rest of those people at church!

Excuse ME. I thought you were praying for my will to be done. If that is to happen, it will have to start with the ones who are praying for it. Like you -- for example.

Oh, all right. I guess I do have some hang-ups. Now that you mention it, I could probably name some other things.

So could I.

I haven't thought about it very much until now, but I really would like to cut out some of those things. I would like to, you know, be really free.

Good.

Now we're getting somewhere. We'll work together -- You and ME. I'm proud of You.

Look, Lord, if you don't mind, I need to finish up here. This is taking a lot longer than it usually does.

Give us today our daily bread.

You may need to cut out the bread. You're overweight as it is.

Hey, wait a minute! What is this? Here I am doing my religious duty, and all of a sudden you break in and remind me of all my hang-ups.

Praying is a dangerous thing. You just might get what you ask for. Remember, you called ME -- and here I am.

It's too late to stop now. Keep praying. (. . . pause . . .)

Well, go on.

I'm scared to.

Scared? Of what?

I know what you'll say.

Try ME.

Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us.

What about Joe?

See? I knew it! I knew you would bring him up! Why, Lord, he's told lies about me, spread stories. He never paid back the money he owes me. I've sworn to get even with him!

But -- your prayer -- What about your prayer?

I didn't -- mean it.

Well, at least you're honest. But, it's quite a load carrying around all that bitterness and resentment isn't it?

Yes, but I'll feel better as soon as I get even with Joe.

I need to let him know how I feel about him.

Then I'll feel better.

No, you won't feel any better. You'll feel worse.

Revenge isn't sweet. You know how unhappy you are --

Well, I can change that.

You can? How?

Forgive Joe. Then you will know I have forgiven you. And the hate and the sin, will be Joe's problem -- not yours. You will have settled the problem as far as you are

concerned.
Oh, you know, you're right. You always are. And more than I want revenge, I want
to be right with You . . (sigh).
All right . . all right . . I forgive him.
There now! Wonderful! How do you feel?
HmMMM. Well, not bad. Not bad at all! In fact, I feel pretty great! You know, I
don't think I'll go to bed uptight tonight. I haven't been getting much rest, you
know.
Yes, I know.
But, you're not through with your prayer are you? Go on.
Oh, all right. Save us from the time of trial
and deliver us from evil.
Good! Good! I'll do that. I will be with you in times of trouble and temptation
I will save you in the final day
I am a pretty confused sinner. Do you really mean that?
I think you know, I MEAN IT.
Yeah. I know.
Okay. Go ahead. Finish your prayer.
For the kingdom, the power,
and the glory are yours
Now and forever. Amen.
Do you know what would bring me glory --
What would really make me happy?
No, but I'd like to know. I want to please you now.
I've really made a mess of things. I want to truly follow you. I can see now how great
that would be.
So, tell me . . . How do I make you happy?
YOU just did.

Edited from an Email sent by H.E. Gerhard - Original author is unknown

Don't tell God how big your storm is, tell the storm how big your God is.
Prayer does not change God, but changes the one who prays.