

HOW CHRIST IS MAGNIFIED IN HIS SAINTS

By Keith Greer

“According to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain.” {Philippians 1:20,21} Paul was not reluctant in his quest to live for Christ. He lived in a strait between two desires – to go and be with the Lord, or to continue his life of service. He did not fear death; he was committed to his Lord. This should be the case with every one of us who wears the name of Christ? How can we as Christians magnify Christ in our bodies? First, let’s define the word magnify: “to make larger in size; to make something appear to be very great; to glorify and praise.”

Magnify His Obedient Spirit. “Then He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was subject to them, but His mother kept all these things in her heart. And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.” {Luke 2:51,52} During His life on earth, Jesus demonstrated His obedient spirit. He came to do His Father’s will: “Jesus said to them, ‘My food is to do the will of Him who sent Me, and to finish His work.’” {John 4:34} His work would not be finished until He died on the cross for the sins of the world. “Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him.” {Hebrews 5:8,9} The cross magnified His obedient spirit: “And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient to the point of death, even the death of the cross.” {Philippians 2:8} This being the case, when He prayed in the garden to His Father, prior to His death He could say without reservation, “I have glorified You on the earth. I have finished the work which You have given Me to do.” {John 17:4}

We magnify His obedient spirit in our lives by being willing to follow His commands, no matter what trials and tribulations we have to endure, no matter what obstacles and stumbling blocks the devil places in our paths. “Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.” {James 1:12} “In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ.” {1 Peter 1:6,7}

Magnify His Prayerful Spirit. “Now it came to pass in those days that He went out to the mountain to pray, and continued all night in prayer to God.” {Luke 6:12} At some of the most difficult times in His life on earth, our Savior went to God in prayer. He prayed at His baptism {Luke 3:21}. He often prayed while His disciples were with Him {Luke 9:18-28}. He prayed in Gethsemane, on the cross, and for His disciples prior to His arrest and crucifixion {John 17}. He taught His disciples to pray {Matthew 9:9-13; Luke 11:1ff}.

Are you exercising your special blessing of prayer? “Pray without ceasing.” {1 Thessalonians 5:17}. “Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with

thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God." {Philippians 4:6} Is your life characterized by prayer? How often do you speak with your Father? When one prays, he shows confidence and trust in God's power and ability. Christians who do not pray are weak and often struggle in their service to Him. They fail to trust Him.

So many other things could be said in how God's children can magnify His name before others. We live in a world that is lost in sin and spiritual darkness. One of the duties God gave His children was to influence those around them. Why? Hopefully to present to the world a better way to live and the means to a more purposeful and fulfilling life. What do others see about Christ as they observe our everyday lives? Dear reader, are you magnifying Christ in your body? ***