

Title: CHRIST MAGNIFIED IN MY BODY

Text: Philippians 1:12-20 (key: v.20)

Intro: Paul out-travelled, out-preached, out-suffered, and out-prayed everyone! He was often in prison, out of prison, in weariness, painfulness, in watching often, in hunger and thirst, in fasting often, in cold, etc. The one thing that motivated him is in our text – that Christ may be magnified, NOT in his: preaching, ministry, miracles, or epistles; but Paul said that **“Christ shall be magnified IN MY BODY”**

If you read Philippians carefully, you'll find that **17X** he mentions **“joy, rejoice”** while he was in a stinking prison! No bed, no comforts, all rotten food! Yet he sent a letter of encouragement to others who should be writing letters to him. In spite of great pain and suffering in his body, Paul proved that in the greatest of suffering we can have greatest joy! **“The joy of the Lord is your strength” (Neh. 8:10).**

There are several places in scripture where Paul talks about the body – his and ours. Let us look at two passages:

1. THE BODY AS A TEMPLE OF GOD (1 Cor. 6:19)

A. A temple is a place of God. Compare the concept of temple in both OT (**1 Kgs. 8:13**) and the NT (**Acts 17:24**). We live so that God's presence in our lives is evident to everyone we encounter. We shine with the glory of God. One time Jesus spoke of the **“temple of his body”** (**John 2:19, 21**) for in that body **“dwelleth the fulness of Godhead”** (Col. 2:9 cf. **Acts 17:24, 29; Rom. 1:20**)

B. A temple is a place of worship. Our intention is to use our bodies in worship — not only in churches on Sunday morning, but also daily at home, work, school – worship is all of life! **“Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart...soul... mind...strength.”** (Mark 12:30)

C. A temple is a place of sacrifice. We must sacrifice our personal, selfish desires and dedicate the best of our time, talent and treasures to magnify God. God deserves the best!

2. THE BODY AS A LIVING SACRIFICE (Rom 12:1)

A. A living sacrifice is a presented sacrifice. To “**present**” here implies the idea of a gift and an offering – something so special and in very good condition. Under the OT, Jews were required to give their best – firstborn of their animals and firstfruit of their harvest (**Lev. 22:22; Deut. 15:21**). In **Mal. 1:6-8**, God was angry because Israel had gotten to a careless point where they were only offering animal rejects!

B. A living sacrifice is a holy sacrifice. The word “**holy**” is need not be a frightening word to Christians. To be holy means that we should offer our bodies without blemish or defect (**Jas. 1:27**). Now in its normal condition the body cannot be holy as it can be exploited by the devil, sin and our old, sinful, corrupt nature – the flesh (**Rom. 8:13**); but the body can also be led and empowered by the Holy Spirit (**Rom. 6:11-13; 8:2**). **Illust:** Gravity and jetplane thrust.

C. A living sacrifice is an acceptable sacrifice. If you were in the place of God, would you accept with pleasure what you are offering Him now with your life? Or would you be angry as He was with Israel for offering unacceptable sacrifices? Can God delight in the way that you offer yourself to Him? Can He accept the sacrifice that is being made by you after all his benefits? (**Psa. 103:2; 116:12**) The important thing is not just how you are accepted by other people, but more importantly how are you accepted by God!

Conclusion: The apostle Paul in spite of all his tremendous suffering and pain said, “None of these things hurt me.” Did he? No he did not! He said, “**none of these things move me**” (**Acts 20:24**). Our bodies are not to be ignored or neglected. In its proper use, our body is as important as the spirit and soul (**1 Thess. 5:23; 1 Cor. 6:20**). A morally clean and healthy body is an instrument for serving mankind and magnifying God. Christian, would you now start magnifying God by presenting your body as a living sacrifice holy and acceptable to Him?