

LET GOD BE MAGNIFIED!

“God’s Desire For Sacred Honor And Where It Belongs”

Psalm 70: 1-5 – Pastor Richard P. Carlson

Psalm 70 is almost a five verse summary of Psalm 69’s 36 verses. Yet as I examined the words of this psalm of David, I noted a clue to help me find God’s message in these words. First, in verse 2, I found the imprecatory prayer of David about his enemies saying, “Let them be put to shame and confusion who seek my life! Let them be turned back and brought to dishonor who delight in my hurt! That left me with the puzzling thought of David wanting dishonor for his enemies. Between whatever that dishonor is all about and what David says of God in verse 4 is a great gulf. In Psalm 70: 4, I read this prayer of David for all who seek God. He prays, “May all who seek You rejoice and be glad in you! May those who love Your salvation say evermore, “God is great!” or as the New American Standard Version translates it, “Let God Be Magnified!” The prayer of David, which he prayed to God about his enemies, was that God would bring them to dishonor. The Hebrew word for dishonor is interesting. It is **kalam**. It means to wound by taunts, and insults until a person is ashamed, confounded, blushing, hurt beyond words, reproached and in confusion.” I don’t believe the New Testament example of our Lord’s repeatedly praying as He was crucified, “Father, forgive them for they know not what they do,” that prayer makes me shudder to think of attempting to bring dishonor to anyone, including my enemies, and last of all to my Lord. This word kalam, this emboldened desire to make people ashamed, confounded, to blush, to hurt beyond words, to reproach and bring to confusion, is the root of many millions of calamities in homes, in families, in churches, in mission organizations, and even in our fifty states and in our nation.

Kalam is an emotional place it puts people at the bottom of the Grand Canyon emotionally, at the bottom of Death Valley. But two verses later, David states, “May those who seek You, Lord, rejoice and be glad in You. May those who love your salvation say evermore, “God is great! (Let God be magnified!) The Hebrew word for great or magnified must be some kind of a high, high pinnacle of sacred honor. The Hebrew word is **gadal**. Gadal means to twist or braid or make large in body, in mind, in place or in honor, to magnify, to nourish so as to grow greater, and to grow in significance and value. This great gulf between kalam and gadal is so high because gadal takes us to the heavens where Mt. Everest sits among the clouds. Well as you might guess, I have been thinking of how God wants to be magnified and whether this relates to our homes, our families, our churches, to mission organizations, and if it relates to our states and our nation. There are some

scriptural ways that God is magnified and given sacred honor that Psalm 70 has sent me on a journey looking for. The truth is, every believing family, home, church, mission organization, and every believing nation should have as our purpose to magnify our Lord Jesus Christ. Paul ended his doxology in Ephesians 3: 21 crying out in prayer and praise, “To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever, Amen. Magnifying Jesus Christ ought to be the purpose of every last born again believer. We must magnify the Lord Jesus who by His blood justified us and by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit, has made every believer a vital part, a living stone in the body of Christ. Every Christian institution should have as our purpose and desire, “Let God be magnified!” The Word of God is not silent about four major ways that we are to magnify and give sacred honor to the Lord: What are they?

WE MAGNIFY AND GIVE SACRED HONOR TO OUR LORD BY MAGNIFYING HIS FAITHFUL SERVANTS. (I.)

At first, this may stun us, surprise us, and confound us, but truthfully, God loves us to give Him honor by gadal, by twisting or braiding our honor for Him with that of His faithful servants. I read recently the words of Dr. Tom Malone, Sr., a faithful pastor of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Pontiac, Michigan. He wrote, “A fellow came to our church years ago. He then came to me and with his two big hands, clasped mine and said, “Preacher, I have heard the best preachers in America. But that is the best sermon I have ever heard!” About the next Sunday he came back and said, “You did it again!” The third time he came to this poor preacher and said, “Home run in the ninth inning won the game! You did it again!” Tom Malone went home and said to his wife, “I am going to watch that fellow. A guy who will flatter you that much—something else is coming.” Sure enough! It wasn’t long before it came. Beloved, any preacher that has been involved in pastoring knows what it is to be buttered up and then later, burned in the toaster. Flattery is a great sin. Manipulation by folk telling us how great we are so they can control us or get something they desire is a common trait in the body of Christ.

Nevertheless, the Bible teaches that God wants to share His high honor with us, to braid it together with Him to give Him even greater honor. I imagine you would like a text for that. There is a special text in Joshua 3: 7 that speaks of God even orchestrating the magnifying of His servants. Moses had died and the Lord had privately buried him. I read, “The Lord said to Joshua, “Today I will begin to magnify/exalt/sacredly honor you in the sight of all Israel, so that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with you.” What do you think God meant by these words? What Hebrew word did the Lord use? It was the same Hebrew

word—*gadal*, to twist or braid or make large in body, in mind, in place or in honor, to magnify, to nourish so as to grow greater, and to grow in significance and value. Can you believe this? God wanted to be greater by letting the Israelites know that He was not just the God of Moses who made him a great leader. No, God is the God that gives each and every one of us any greatness we ever possess. The same God who magnified Moses, who later magnified Joshua, wants to exalt other leaders of His people, to give them sacred honor so we will know of God's continual presence—as He has been with Moses and Joshua, so He will be with us.

Now think of it. Was Joshua a man who never sinned? No! Did God never rebuke Joshua? Oh yes God did. Do you remember when Joshua tore his clothes and fell to the ark of the Lord on his face after Israel was defeated at Ai? Joshua 7: 10 tells us “The Lord said to Joshua, “Get up! Why have you fallen on your face? Israel has sinned; they have transgressed my covenant that I commanded them.” Well, you may say, “That’s a one timer. God alone wants to be magnified and given sacred honor.” Wrong. Notice the inspired words of the apostle Paul. God Himself magnified the ministry of Joshua’s leadership, but under divine inspiration of the Holy Spirit, Paul lifted up His ministry and apostleship. Look at Romans 11: 13, 14. Paul wrote, “Now I am speaking to you Gentiles. Inasmuch then as I am an apostle to the Gentiles, I magnify my ministry in order somehow to make my fellow Jews jealous, and thus save some of them.” Paul’s Greek word for magnify is **doxalodzo**. That is stunning. This is a verb primarily denoting the task of magnifying, praising, extoling, glorifying, and ascribing sacred honor to God. Yet God the Holy Spirit directed Paul to magnify his own apostolic office, using a word we like to leave only for God alone. Now I know we are perhaps okay with magnifying and giving sacred honor to Moses, Joshua and Paul. But let’s stop there! Right? Wrong!

Go to Acts 5: 13! Do you remember after the terrible decision of Ananias and Sapphira to sell a piece of land, to lie about the price they sold it for, so they could lie to the Holy Spirit and keep some of the proceeds for themselves. Now who was it that Ananias and Sapphira lied to? Say it? It was Peter, the one who denied Jesus. But what did Peter say to them? To Ananias, Peter said, “Why has Satan filled your heart to lied to the Holy Spirit and to keep back for yourself part of the proceeds of the land?...You have not lied to men, but to God.” Then Ananias fell dead. To Sapphira, Peter said, “How is it that you have agreed together to test the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the feet of those who have buried your husband are at the door, and they will carry you out.” And Sapphira fell dead. Then in Acts 5: 13 we read, and it isn’t too remarkable after these events. “None of the rest dared join

them, that is, Peter and the other apostles at whose feet was placed the dishonest price for the land of Ananias and Sapphira, but the people held them in high esteem—KJV—they magnified them. This is a different Greek word—**megaluna**. This Greek word means to extol, to give sacred honor, or to make great, something we think of only giving to God. Yet God sets up the sacred honoring of His faithful servants—not perfect servants, but His faithful servants. Also go to Acts 19: 11-17.

What led to Peter and the apostles losing their lives? It was plainly that they feigned the spirituality and heart of giving that Barnabas did, a depth of spiritual character they did not possess, and God set the record straight. God would not have His sacred honor braided into a braid that included in it, Ananias and Sapphira. Why was Satan thrown out of heaven? He wanted to exalt himself as high as God. So let's set the record straight! God is highly magnified when we give sacred honor to his servants. This includes pastors for God the Holy Spirit led the writer of Hebrews 13: 7, 8, to write, "Remember your leaders, those who spoke to you the word of God, Consider the outcome of their way of life, and imitate their faith. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, and today, and forever." Notice how God the Holy Spirit braids the lifting up of under-shepherds, pastors with His forever faithfulness. This braided honor is to be extended to widows—I Timothy 5: 3, and in I Peter 2: 17, Peter says, "Honor everyone. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king/emperor/president." God is exalted and magnified when we bestow faithful honor on each other. Romans 12: 10 states we are in honor to prefer one another. I read, "Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor." So believe it beloved. God is highly magnified when we give sacred honor to His servants—that's each other. Secondly,

WE MAGNIFY AND GIVE SACRED HONOR TO OUR LORD BY MAGNIFYING HIS NAME AND HIS WORD. (II.) Beloved, in David's 138th Psalm, verse 2, we read, "I bow down toward Your holy temple and give thanks to your name for Your steadfast love and Your faithfulness, for You have exalted above all things Your name and Your word." The NASB says, "For Thou hast magnified Thy Word according to all Thy name." What Hebrew word did David use? He used the same word **gadal** he used in Psalm 70: 4. Why would God magnify His Word as high as the Name of Jesus—as we read of this in Phil. 2: 5-11? Paul tells us why in Romans 10: 17 and Peter tells us in I Peter 1: 23. Paul states in Romans 10: 17, "So faith comes by hearing, and hearing through the Word of Christ." There Paul blends the Word and Christ. Peter in I Peter 1: 23, states, "Since you have been born again, not of perishable seed, but of imperishable, through the living and abiding word of God." Beloved, it is by the

name of Jesus we are saved. It was Peter and John in Acts 4: 12 who declared, “And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved.” We are saved by the name of Jesus. God has magnified His Word for it is the instrument of cleansing us when we are born again. John 15: 3 states, “Already you are clean because of the word that I have spoken to you.” David declared in Psalm 119: 9, “Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? By taking heed according to Your word.” To exalt and magnify and sacredly honor our Lord, we must magnify His servants and above all, we must magnify His Name and His Word.

There are those who use the Name of Jesus loosely and for their own gain. Jesus even says that there are those who will confess in the judgment, that they have used Jesus’ name without truly knowing Him. We read in Matthew 7: 21-23, “Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord, will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. On that day, many will say to Me. Thirdly,

WE MAGNIFY AND GIVE SACRED HONOR TO OUR LORD BY MAGNIFYING OUR FATHERS AND OUR MOTHERS. (III.)

Over and over in Scripture, the Lord braids His fathering and parenting with fathers and mothers, and is magnified by that association with us as Dads and Moms. In the last prophetic book in the Old Testament, we read in Malachi 1: 6 the plaintive words of the Lord saying, “A son honors his father, and a servant his master. If then I am a Father, where is my honor? And if I am a Master, where is my fear/reverence?” God is a God of order and authority. Our world hates the authority of a father and a mother and the authority of God, and God, without shame, has braided His honor together with the sacred honor to be given to parents, to fathers and mothers. It is interesting to me that both in our Psalm 70: 2 and back in Psalm 35: 26, God reserves dishonor to those who delight in the hurt of David. Psalm 35: 26 states, “Let them be put to shame and disappointed altogether who rejoice at my calamity! Let them be clothed with shame and dishonor who magnify themselves against me.” From earliest days at Mt. Sinai, when God began the Ten Commandments with saying, “You shall have no other gods before Me,” do you know what commandment # 5 is? Exodus 20: 12 states, “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land that the Lord your God is giving you.”

This honoring of fathers and mothers includes grandpas and grandmas. Proverbs 17: 6 grips my heart. “Grandchildren are the crown of the aged, and the glory of children is their fathers.” This word crown in the Hebrew is one of the highest

magnifiers for grandpas. The word is **atar**. Atar means to encircle as with a crown of gold as for a king. God is saying to grandpas that grandchildren are his sacred honor—his kingly crown. When Paul wrote Timothy in II Timothy 1: 5, the Holy Spirit led Paul to exalt grandmas, as he said, “I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you as well. The book of Ruth among many other awesome teachings, exalts the place of a mother-in-law whose faith won Ruth and whose advice Ruth followed led Ruth to her husband, Boaz and she led Ruth to become part of the Godly line of Jesus. Fathers-in-law, God has shown us through the life of Moses, that even under the advice of a father-in-law, whom we have no proof that he was a believer in Jehovah, Moses listened to Jethro. Exodus 18: 24 states, “So Moses listened to the voice of his father-in-law and did all that he had counseled him.” And, before I leave fathers and mothers braiding into sacred honor as we by honoring them, honor the Lord, let me mention spiritual fathers and mothers. I Corinthians 4: 15 is one of my greatest joys as a father. I read, “For though you have countless guides in Christ, you do not have many fathers. For I became your father in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.” Fourthly and lastly,

WE MAGNIFY AND GIVE SACRED HONOR TO OUR LORD BY MAGNIFYING CHRIST IN OUR BODIES, WHETHER BY LIFE OR BY DEATH. (IV.)

This could be a message in itself. Yet, our Lord is willing to braid His sacred honor with the way we magnify Him in our bodies, in life or death. Paul declared in Philippians 1: 20, “It is my eager expectation and hope that I will not be at all ashamed, but that with full courage now as always Christ will be honored in my body, whether by life or by death.” Perhaps, God is dishonored more in this way because of how we as professing believers can mistreat and dishonor our bodies, and also ignore God’s sacred honor with what we do with our bodies as Christ’s temple. Paul tells in I Corinthians 6: 19, 20, “Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God’s.” Lastly, whether in our personal witness or whether in our witness as a church or as a mission, the greatest way we can magify the Lord is when we bring the lost to Jesus. I got home late last November 9, and saw I had a message. A man in his sixties, who used to be our Worship Leader in the church in Bloomington, Illinois, Ed Schupbach left a message. He recounted a day 40 years ago when he came to our house distraught, his marriage on the line. That night I had the joy of magnifying the Lord in my body by pointing him to Jesus. That night he was converted, and the next day Ed’s wife Leslie was saved. Ed called me to tell me that that day was the greatest day in all his life. Ed is a

pastor today and he will be till God takes him Home. But as I close, let me give you the rest of the story. It was in the summer of 1976 that I resigned at Bloomington, Illinois, not knowing where I was going. Jinny and I had put our two children, Amy and Heather down to sleep, and Ed and Leslie came to our house. We were playing table games when a call came and I answered it. I had applied to be the South Dakota State Penitentiary Chaplain. I got the job, but that night the Warden called to tell me of an Indian uprising in the prison opposing my coming unless they also got a full time medicine man. The warden asked me if I would wait for a year to resign. I had already resigned. He said there were 19 hostages in the prison, and he did not intend to give them their way. I told him I would wait for God's will, as my job I was hired to do was terminated. I didn't want to say anything when I went back into the room with Jinny, Ed and Leslie. Ed weaseled out of me that my upcoming job was terminated. Then he said he and Leslie had to go home. I protested that they just came. The two of them left, and it was that night that six families in Rock Springs, Wyoming were called to tell them I might be the Pastor they were looking for. The rest is history. You see, when we magnify the Lord in our bodies, by life or by death, God braids Himself to us and He orchestrates our future. Where was I, and where was Jinny at that time? We were living in the beginning and ending of Psalm 70. We were getting earnest with God as we had two children and didn't know where we were going. Verses one and five were our prayer. "Make haste, O God, to deliver me! O Lord, make haste to help me!...But I am poor and needy; hasten to me, O God! You are my help and my deliverer; O Lord, do not delay! That night in the summer of 1976, God acted. People had told me as in verse 3—"You blew it by resigning without a job!" They were saying the "Aha's of Psalm 70: 3. Yet, I had been magnifying the Lord in my life as had Jinny. He knew our address. Looking back now, afresh I can say in closing with David in Psalm 70: 4—"Let all who seek Thee rejoice and be glad in Thee. And let those who love Thy salvation say continually, "Let God be magnified!" Amen!