

**Magnify**  
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Since this is Thanksgiving week - I'm preaching a thanksgiving message today entitled Magnify.

I am going to surprise some of you today by saying that your God is too small! How do I know your God is too small? By the way you talk and the way you live. For instance - If you ever say, "Even God can't help me with this problem" - your God is too small. Because in reality - He is all powerful and nothing is too difficult for Him!

If you live under guilt and condemnation - your God is too small! Because the truth is the God forgives all sin and there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus!

If you live in fear - your God is too small! Because the truth is that God is love and perfect love casts out all fear!

If you don't tithe because you can't afford to - your God is too small! Because in reality - God is our provider and He promised to open the windows of heaven to tithers.

If you ever think you are all alone in life, your God is too small! Because the truth is He will never leave you or forsake you!

If you ever think, "God doesn't understand" - your God is too small. Because the truth is - He knows all and understands all. Psalm 147:5 says:

*Great is our Lord and mighty in power; His understanding has no limit.*

If you don't worship God with all your heart, soul, mind and strength - your God is too small. Because the truth is that God is worthy of all praise all the time! In fact, He's worthy of some praise right now!

Another way I know when people's view of God is too small is when they pray small prayers. God wants us to pray big, faith-filled, radical prayers that touch heaven and change earth by bringing the power of heaven to earth! Too often we pray weak prayers like, "God, help me have a nice day." Really? That's your goal in life? To have a nice day? You need to pray bigger prayers! The only way you can do that is if you enlarge your view of God.

That's why my sermon is called Magnify. Magnify means to make great; to cause something to appear larger; to increase the size or importance of something. Now obviously - we cannot increase God's size or importance.

There is no way for God to actually increase because He is already infinite and without limit. Yet – the Bible teaches us to magnify God. For example, Psalm 34:1-3 says:

*I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.*

So – if God cannot be made any bigger, what can it mean when the Bible says to magnify the Lord? The word "magnify" can be used in two different senses. It can mean to make something appear bigger than it is, as with a microscope or a magnifying glass. Or it can mean to make something that may seem small or insignificant appear to be as big as it really is. This is what telescopes help us do with the stars that look so small but which are actually huge in the vast universe God created.

So there are two kinds of magnifying: microscope magnifying and telescope magnifying. Microscope magnifying makes a small thing look bigger than it is. Telescope magnifying makes a big thing look as big as it really is.

So, when the Bible says to magnify the Lord, it does not mean to make a small God look bigger than He is. It means to make a big God look as big as He really is. We are not called to be microscopes, but telescopes. There is nothing and no one superior to God. And we are called to make God's greatness look as great as it really is.

The enemy's plan is to deceive people into believing that God is smaller than He really is. The duty of the Christian is to think and act in a way that will magnify God by making Him look as great as He really is.

So, be a telescope that will enable to world to see the vastness of the glory of God! That only happens when we see God as big as He really is and when we speak of God's greatness and show God's greatness to the world!

Now the question is: How do we magnify God? How can we make God visible or more visible to those who are unsaved?

### **1. We Magnify God By Preaching His Word**

That's true of me when I preach on Sundays – but it is also true of all of us in our daily lives! We must be people of God's Word in order to see God as big as He really is and in order to magnify Him to others! God takes His Word so seriously that Psalm 138:2 says:

*I will worship toward Your holy temple, And praise Your name For Your lovingkindness and Your truth; For You have magnified Your word above all Your name.*

Why has God magnified His word above His name? Think about it. If you get a reputation for not keeping your word – we say that gives you a bad name and when people hear your name – they don't believe your word. So – God puts the emphasis on magnifying His Word. God's name is good because God keeps His word. In Jeremiah 1:12, God said:

*I am watching over My word to perform it.*

This gives boldness in believing God's Word and speaking God's Word! To magnify means to speak of the great things God has done. In fact, one of the definitions of the Greek word for magnify is, "to make great by words." To magnify means to laud, to boast, to lift up, to promote. To declare to be great and to show to be great. One definition is "to make conspicuous, or obvious." How do we do that?

## **2. We Magnify God By Our Works**

In Matthew 5:16 Jesus said:

*Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*

The word "glorify" means to esteem to be glorious and to magnify! The way we live either makes God look big or small in people's eyes!

Being a Christian does not mean we don't go through the same tough times other people do - We just go through them differently! That's one reason we should be facing the times we are in right now with:

- Faith rather than fear
- Joy rather than depression
- Hope rather than despair!

Why? Because we have a big God we want to magnify through our works!

## **3. We Magnify God By Our Witness**

You see, every Christian is a witness, whether they want to be or not. You are a walking talking living breathing advertisement for Christ.

The best argument for Christianity is Christians, when they live joy-filled, gracious, peaceful lives of integrity. Unfortunately, the strongest argument against Christianity is also Christians when they live joyless, legalistic, self-righteous, fearful lives.

So, what is your life preaching? Are people witnessing a big God in you or a small God?

Too many people are used to seeing Christians with:

- Too much grumbling and too little joy
- Too much fear and not much faith
- Too much judgment and very little mercy

People don't want any part of that! That needs to change so that we can magnify God through our witness. People need to look at us and see a big God at work in our lives!

#### **4. We Magnify God By Our Worship**

Again – this is not just a Sunday morning thing! Psalm 40:3 says:

*He has put a new song in my mouth, a song of praise to our God. Many shall see and fear (revere and worship) and put their trust in the Lord.*

When we praise God – it impacts other people!

When we praise God – it builds faith in us and other people!

People need to see us giving God the credit and the glory for the blessings in our lives! I hate it when Christians say they received something good because they got lucky! That doesn't magnify God! Instead, we should say like the Psalmist in Psalm 40:16

*Let all those who seek You rejoice and be glad in You; Let such as love Your salvation say continually, "The Lord be magnified!"*

This verse is for everyone who loves God and His salvation. We should continually say, "The Lord be magnified!" Magnifying God is not an occasional thing or something reserved for Sundays. It's an everyday of the week thing. So –

- When people say I'm lucky in life, I will refuse to give luck any credit – instead I'll magnify God for blessing me.
- When my doctor tries to take the credit for my healing, I will magnify God for being my Great Physician.
- When my financial planner tries to take credit for my financial increase, I will magnify Jehovah Jireh – my Provider!
- I don't even take any credit for myself – I will magnify the Lord my God at all times.

Now – if you have trouble praising God or worshipping God or giving to God – the place to start is with thanksgiving. Psalm 100:4 says:

*Enter His courts with thanksgiving and into His courts with praise.*

Thanksgiving is the entryway. Thanksgiving gets us in the door. Then, praise gets us into His presence. Worship is our response to His presence.

That's why ungrateful people do not worship: because thanksgiving gets us into God's presence. True worship starts with thanksgiving. Psalm 69:30 says:

*I will praise the name of God with a song, and will magnify Him with thanksgiving.*

We will never magnify God until we become thankful for who God is and what God has done! That's why we must constantly remind ourselves of what God has done for us!

I'm sure most of us have had times we feel the goodness of God so intensely that we want to leap in the air and shout and say, "O God, how could I ever doubt you after this?" And then some short time later you find yourself doing just that—doubting, discouraged, and feeling no confidence in the goodness of God. Why? Because we tend to forget the goodness of God which we have experienced. Isn't that why David said to himself in Psalm 103:1-2:

*Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless His holy name.  
Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits.*

We are called to be telescopes who magnify the greatness of God. But you can't magnify what you haven't seen. And you can't magnify what you quickly forget! That's why we should remind ourselves of the ways God has blessed us! And when we do see and do remember God's greatness – we should magnify Him with thanksgiving!

Why does thanksgiving magnify God? Because givers are greater than receivers – and God is the Giver! Because benefactors are greater than beneficiaries – and God is our Benefactor!

When we thank God – we are acknowledging His greatness and our dependence upon Him! To withhold that thanks is childish.

Think about children who are angry with each other.  
You have to make them say things like "I'm sorry" or "I forgive you."

"Bubba – tell your sister you are sorry."  
And he grudgingly mumbles "I'm sorry" without meaning it.  
"Sissy – now tell your brother you forgive him."  
And she grudgingly mumbles "I forgive you" without meaning it.

When kids are angry they also do not say, "Thank you," very easily. Why is that? One reason is because saying "thank you" is a compliment; it magnifies people by saying, "You did a good thing for me and I'm indebted to you."

But when you are angry at somebody, you hate to pay them a compliment; you want to belittle them not magnify them.

And some people do that with God. They don't magnify God because they are mad at God or they want the glory for themselves.

When we are truly grateful, we will magnify God as the source of our blessings and the Giver of all good things. But when we are not grateful for God's goodness to us, it probably means that we don't want to pay Him a compliment; we don't want to magnify Him as our benefactor.

And there is a very good reason why human beings do not want to magnify God with thanksgiving. The reason is that it detracts from their own glory, and all people by nature love their own glory more than the glory of God.

You see – there are two types of people in the world: those who love to magnify God and those who love to magnify themselves!

At the root of all ingratitude is the love of one's own greatness. Genuine gratitude admits that we are beneficiaries of an unearned gift; everything we receive is because of the grace of God! The natural man hates to think of himself in terms of neediness and insufficiency and inability. That robs him of all his glory by giving it all to God.

So, when someone loves their own glory and self-sufficiency, and hates to think of himself as sin-sick and helpless, he will never feel any genuine gratitude to God and so will never magnify God, but only himself.

Those who see themselves as little sinners see Jesus as a little Savior! The only antidote to this arrogance is to acknowledge that we are sinners who cannot save ourselves – but God is our Savior! We can do nothing of ourselves – but we can do all things through Christ! That is the attitude that magnifies God.

Until the stiffness of man's arrogant neck is broken and the hardness of his self-sufficient heart is softened, he will never be able to magnify God instead of himself.

We must understand what an all-sufficient God, who owns and controls all things, demands from us - the creatures He has made. His demand is great, but it is *not* that we be great, but that we cease to be great in our own eyes and become small that he might appear great.

We must say what John the Baptist said in John 3:30

*He must increase, but I must decrease.*

The New Living Translation says:

*He must become greater and greater, and I must become less and less.*

God demands something great from us: that we admit we are not great.

This is bad news to the arrogant, but good news to the humble who are aware of their own unrighteousness and insufficiency and are seeking God for His righteousness and all sufficiency! Remember Psalm 34:1-3:

*I will bless the Lord at all times; His praise shall continually be in my mouth. My soul shall make its boast in the Lord; the humble shall hear of it and be glad. Oh, magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together.*

So, when the world belittles God by saying that He is judgmental – we magnify the Lord by saying that He is love.

When the world belittles God by saying that He is weak – we magnify the Lord by saying that He is all powerful.

When the world belittles God by saying that He let them down – We magnify the Lord by saying that He is always faithful.

When the world belittles God by saying that He causes bad things to happen – we magnify the Lord by saying that He is good all the time!

I will bless the Lord at all times. His praise shall continually be in my mouth!

I was thinking about different times we can praise the Lord.

And I decided that anytime is the right time to Praise Him!

So, in the good times... Praise Him! In the bad times... Praise Him!

In fact, in the best of times or the worst of times... Praise Him!

In busy times and in slow times... Praise Him!

From opening time until closing time... Praise Him!

Whether you're ahead of the times or behind the times... Praise Him!

Whether time is flying by or time is standing still... Praise Him!

Whether you're working full-time, part-time or none of the time... Praise Him!

Whether you are big time or small time... Praise Him!

Whether time is running out or you've got too much time on your hands...

When you're having the time of your life... Praise Him!

When nobody will give you the time of day... Praise Him!

Even if you're been around the block a few times... Praise Him!

Even if you're doing time, serving time or living on borrowed time...

Whether time's a wastin' or the times they are a' changing... Praise Him!

Whether you're passing time, marking time or killing time... Praise Him!

Whether it's not your time yet or time has passed you by... Praise Him!

Even if nobody has no time for you... Praise Him!

You see, time keeps on slippin', slippin', slippin' into the future...

And I don't know about you, but all the way to the end of time... I'll be praising!

And in eternity – when time is no more - I'll still be praising the Lord my God forever and ever! Any time is the right time to praise! The time to magnify God is always NOW!