

THE UPWARD CALL

*Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet;
but one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and reaching forward to what lies ahead,
I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God*

IN CHRIST JESUS.

(Philippians 3.13-14 NASB)

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THAT GOD MAY BE ALL IN ALL #5

Now, whenever all may be subjected to Him, then the Son Himself also shall be subjected to Him Who subjects all to Him, that God may be *All in all*. (1 Corinthians 15.28 CV)

The last issue presented some Scripture to support the thought that if God is to be *All in all*, then all mankind must be saved. It is a rather sad commentary that so much of Christian teaching in our day emphasizes that multitudes (perhaps billions) of people created to be in the image and likeness of Elohim are destined for a place of eternal torture and torment called *hell*. If this were true, which I believe that Scripture proves it is not, then the death of the Son of God on the cross is a miserable failure, for, when all is said and done, Christ's death and resurrection is unable to save all mankind. It is amazing that, almost without exception, Christians believe that Adam's one sin brought death and its consequence, sin, into the entire human race, and yet, the one act of righteousness on the part of God Himself is unable to save all mankind.

Paul the apostle clearly lays out the fact of the absolute success of the sacrificial death and, I must add, the resurrection of the Second Man, the One Man, Jesus Christ. Today, people use the word *absolute* so loosely that its meaning has been greatly watered down, if not lost. So often, the word is used to describe things that are anything but absolute. But I use it in its real sense, which is "perfect, complete," "not mixed; pure," or "not limited."

Now, let us look further at Scripture, starting with Paul's epistle to the Romans.

But the free gift is not like the transgression. For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. (Romans 5.15 NASB)

So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. (Romans 5.18 NASB)

I realize that there are other verses intermingled within these two verses that some would use to argue that this only applies to those who, of their own free will, make a choice for Christ. As I have written in my book on the purpose and plan of the eons (see Volume 1, chapter 5), I believe the concept of free will is a horribly flawed concept that is short on logic. But just because Paul makes references to those who believe in this eon or age, it does not follow that these references throw out or somehow cancel out ones that speak of all mankind or all men or the many.

Now, in Romans 5.15, Paul contrasts two men; the first man, Adam, and the Second Man, the last Adam, Christ, (1 Corinthians 15.45, 47). Through the transgression of the first Adam, the many died.

Many must be defined as the entire human race, for all mankind born of Adam's race are destined to die a physical death. The only exception is those who believe and are alive and remain when He comes the second time (1 Thessalonians 4.17). Besides, Paul treats the first Adam and the last Adam as if both are separate from the many; so it is the one (the first and the last Adam) plus the many, which is the rest of mankind. I like to look at the truth unveiled by Paul as if it were an equation. The

first Adam and the many equals all mankind equals death; the last Adam and the many equals all mankind equals life. As an equation, it looks like this:

First Adam + the many = all mankind = death

Last Adam + the many = all mankind = life

Thus, the one transgression of the first Adam brought death and sin to all mankind, without exception. As Paul reminds us, **none are righteous** (Romans 3.10); **all have fallen short of the glory of God**, or have missed the mark of God (Romans 3.23); **the wages of sin is death** (Romans 6.23). We could say that this condemnation was forced upon all mankind, without exception. No one born of Adam's race is excluded from this death sentence and, to my knowledge, no one has ever been exempted. Everyone has a destiny with physical death, and this is why our hope is the redemption of our body (Romans 8.23). But the good news is that God has countered the condemnation of all resulting from the one transgression with a free gift, the gift by the grace of the One Man who died for the sin of the world and overcame sin and death for all mankind. Paul describes it as abounding to the many. The equation could be presented in a slightly different manner from above.

First Adam + one transgression = death for all mankind

Last Adam + one act of righteousness = life for all mankind

Notice that the one act of righteousness resulted in justification of life to all men. Here we find Paul does not use the word *many* but instead inserts *all men*, which again defines the meaning of *the many*. All men are condemned by the one transgression and all men are justified by the one act of righteousness. Consequently, whereas the first Adam brought all men into condemnation, the last Adam brought all men justified before God; that is, all are made just in the sight of God so that they will not remain under the sentence of death forever but instead will be brought into the sentence of life, not all at the same time but all **eventually**.

I realize that "a sentence of life" is not a scriptural term per se, but it surely describes the salvation or redemption of all mankind through the death and resurrection of God's only begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. Think about it! In the first Adam, God sentenced all to death, but now in the last Adam, God has sentenced all to life. Life is the destiny of all mankind, which has no choice in the matter, just as the many had no choice in coming under a death sentence. This is God's plan through His Son to bring about His purpose of being **All in all**.

Does this not excite your heart? Does this not excite you to see the absolute success and greatness of the cross of Calvary? Does the love of God not fill your heart with love for all mankind?

The amazing thing to me is how many of God's people flat out reject such love; they reject that God, who is described as love (1 John 4.8, 16), is willing and, I might add, is capable of winning the hearts of all mankind, not all at the same time, but all eventually. Does love ever fail? Paul tells us that love never fails (1 Corinthians 13.8). God is love! How can this love fail? Did the Son's death on the cross fail? Is God so impotent that He cannot accomplish His purpose for mankind? If He is, then He is not truly God of His entire creation. Please, I beg of you to take this whole matter to the Lord and ask Him to speak to your heart, through His word and by His spirit, and reveal if it is true.

In closing this issue, I must remind all again that there is only one way to come into this glorious place of justification to life, and that is through believing on Jesus and the work He finished on the cross. Also, this does not mean that God will not judge all mankind. Most assuredly, the word of God is clear that He will judge, but judgment is always based on corrective and restorative love.

For this, all of us will be eternally grateful.