

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)

#02-08139

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WHO IS IN CONTROL?

Recently, I heard a statement that caught my attention. It was presented as something controversial, and it went something like this: "God doesn't always get what He wants. God is in control is Biblically inaccurate," Accompanying this statement was the thought that Christians cannot sit passively but must engage in bringing the kingdom into every sphere of life.

I had just finished writing issue #02-08134, October 29, 2008, titled *The Sovereignty of God*, when I heard this so-called controversy. Obviously, this got my attention and put my mind into overdrive. I don't mind controversies when it comes to Biblical truth. In fact, I believe that many so-called controversies that stand in the face of tradition are very close to the truth, if not the truth. At times, I have held controversial views and still do in some measure. So, what I have to say on this subject is done with the utmost respect for the one that spoke it. My motive is not to be a critic but to simply examine this statement to see if it is actually true or if there is another way to explain it. To examine this matter, let us approach it from a much higher level.

First, God is the Creator of all things, none excepted. In speaking of God's beloved Son, Paul states: **He is the image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation. For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities—all things have been created through Him and for Him. He is before all things, and in Him all things hold together** (Colossians 1.15-17 NASB). To add to this, the writer of Hebrews, most likely Paul, tells us that the eons are made through the Son (Hebrews 1.2 CV), so He is not only the Creator of the visible and invisible realms of God but also of time that runs through the visible or physical realm. Consequently, as the Creator, the Son is responsible for His creation. This could be likened to a builder constructing a house for himself and his family to live in. He builds it and once it is complete, he is responsible for the maintenance and care of the house. He doesn't just live in it and allow it to go to decay. Thus, the Creator is ultimately responsible to maintain all that He has created.

Second, as the Creator of all things, **God is the Creator of good and evil**. After all, He planted the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden. Through Isaiah, the Lord declared: **I am Yahweh, and there is none else: Former of light and Creator of darkness, Maker of good and Creator of evil. I Yahweh doeth all these** (Isaiah 45.6-7 CV/REB). I realize that this next statement is very difficult, even controversial for many, since it goes against tradition, but the Creator created the evil one, the devil, the serpent of old, as evil right from the start. As John testified, **the devil has sinned from the beginning** (1 John 3.8). Consequently, it did not start out good and fall into evil. It was created evil. For an explanation of this vital subject, I direct you to my book titled *The Purpose and Plan of the Eons*, Volume 1, Chapter 3, *The Kingdom of God the Father*.

Third, as the Creator, **He created with a purpose in mind**. He did not just fling some parts out into the universe with the thought of seeing what they would produce, as if it were some random event that He had no control over. Rather, He created with a plan in mind in order to fulfill a purpose. Paul calls this **the purpose of the eons, which He** (i.e., God the Father) **makes in Christ Jesus, our Lord** (Ephesians 3.11 CV). Paul, who knew the Hebrew Scriptures intimately, no doubt had in mind the Lord's words spoken through Isaiah: **"Remember this, and be assured; recall it to mind, you transgressors. Remember the former things long past, for I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times**

things which have not been done, saying, ‘My purpose will be established, and I will accomplish all My good pleasure’” (Isaiah 46.8-10 NASB). I strongly believe that we begin to get off track whenever we lose sight of the fact that God has a grand purpose that is in His Son and a plan to achieve this purpose. This is the basis of the sovereignty of God. I state it often, but since this is what the Lord has entrusted to me to speak forth, I will remind all that the purpose of God is to become all in all in all new.

Fourth, as the Creator, **God and His Son set the rules by which all creation operates**. We could say that these rules are God’s divine laws that establish how things are to work and the standard by which all things are to operate and be measured. This is where righteousness comes into view. Since God is spirit, the law of God is a spiritual matter, and, often, metaphorically presented as fire. Thus, Scripture speaks of the law, which is His word and His voice, as **spiritual** (Romans 7.14), **like fire** (Jeremiah 23.29), **flames of fire** (Psalm 29.7), and fiery (**a fiery law**) (Deuteronomy 33.2). Daniel saw the fiery law coming forth from the throne (Daniel 7.9-10), just as John saw it coming forth from the great white throne and forming a lake of fire or a lake of the fiery law, not an eternal lake of literal fire (Revelation 20.11-15). For more on this subject, I again refer you to my book referenced above, Volume 2, Chapter 5, *Our God Is A Consuming Fire*.

Fifth, as the Sovereign, **the Most High ruleth in the kingdom of men, and giveth it to whomsoever he will** (Daniel 4.32 ASV), **for the heavens do rule** (Daniel 4.26 ASV).

Sixth, **God is the Potter** and He makes vessels according to His plan to achieve His purpose, which must include not only good and evil vessels, but good figs and bad figs, vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor, even in His own house. Again, we are given a glimpse of this fact through Isaiah: **“Woe to the one who quarrels with his Maker—an earthenware vessel among the vessels of earth! Will the clay say to the potter, ‘What are you doing?’”** (Isaiah 45.9 NASB). Paul reminds us of this word: **Or does not the potter have a right over the clay, to make from the same lump one vessel for honorable use and another for common use?** (Romans 9.21 NASB). **Now in a large house there are not only gold and silver vessels, but also vessels of wood and of earthenware, and some to honor and some to dishonor** (2 Timothy 2.20 NASB).

Seventh, the Son must reign until **He has put all things in subjection under His feet** (1 Corinthians 15.25-27). I refer you to issue #02-08119, September 29, 2008, *Subjects The All*.

Now, let me ask: Does any of this sound like God does not or will not get what He wants, or that He will not get His way, or that He is not in control? I realize that some might respond that this is true in the end when all is said and done, but it is not always true leading up to that point, and they will have their Scriptures to support their position. Then, I must ask: How do you think God is going to achieve His purpose according to His fixed time unless His plan works without a flaw? Do you mean to tell me that He has entrusted the working out of His plan entirely to His people while they occupy flawed bodies of death, which presently only have an earnest of the spirit and cannot be fully matured until they receive spiritual, glorified bodies in the image of Christ at the first resurrection and transfiguration? If it is left up to us who occupy bodies of death in this age, I guarantee you that God’s plan will never come about. We have had 2,000 years of leavened Pentecost to do it, and we have failed. What makes anyone think another 1,000 years or so will make any difference? We need the glory of Tabernacles to come so that we will be equipped to reign with Christ and be His complement as He heads up all in heaven and on earth. The Lord knows this, and He will soon bring this to fruition as He closes out our present eon. Why? Because the Lord is in control!

In conclusion, I have avoided discussing *free will*, which I believe is a flawed concept. However, I acknowledge that this might be the basis of one arguing that God does not always get what He wants. To me, the issue is not free will or choice, but whether God’s will can and will trump man’s will.

Please see article #5, January 2008, *Being Ignorant, In Unbelief, Yet The Grace*.