

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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GOD, COUNTRY, GUNS, WAR #4

“You have heard that it was said, ‘YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR and hate your enemy.’ “But I say to you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven; for He causes His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. ... Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” (Matthew 5.43-48 NASB)

As Christians, we are to fight the good fight, but this fight is not against flesh and blood but against world forces of darkness (Ephesians 6.12). We walk in the flesh, for we live in bodies of flesh, but we do not wage war according to the flesh, that is, through the physical sword and war (2 Corinthians 10.3-4). Our response to our enemies must be to love them and to pray for them, not to try to destroy them and send them to what many call **hell**. I refer those who might not understand why I take a stand against the concept of hell to my book *The Purpose and Plan of the Eons*, Volume 2, Chapter 5, *Our God is a Consuming Fire*. Further, our sword is the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God (Ephesians 6.17), the word that is sharper than any two-edged sword that has been devised by man to kill another man (Hebrews 4.12).

In the last issue, I stated that the responsibility for this warrior heart of the nation rests with Christians that have not been true to the word of God and that have taken up the wrong sword. At times, generally speaking, Christians have acted like ancient Israel demanding an eye for an eye, rather than turning the other cheek. As a nation, the US has ignored the command of God to love our enemies and has taken up the sword to destroy them. I realize that this is a hard thing to grasp. After all, are we not to defend ourselves if someone attacks us? Maybe, maybe not! Has it ever occurred to anyone that if we all fell on our faces before the Almighty God and cried out for mercy, turned from our own wicked ways, and then sought for His wisdom, we might actually discover that there is a much better way than through guns and war, or even failed and hypocritical diplomacy?

Previously, I stated that George Bush is a **warrior president** who is a reflection of the Christian church that has failed in its mission of love, especially loving its enemies. This is not an indictment on our sitting president; it is an indictment on the church of God. Leaders of nations are often a reflection of the people that elect them into office. The **militant church** of our day demanded vengeance for what happened on 9.11.01, and they got it.

Now, before anyone goes off half-cocked, so to speak, thinking that president-elect Obama will reverse this trend to the good, I offer a caution. At this point, no one knows how this man will govern, even the media that helped to get him elected. It has been reported recently that one of the first Executive Orders that he might repeal is the one that prevents foreign aid going to pay for abortions. Is not abortion applying the physical sword to kill? This murder is the worst kind, for it is against ones who cannot defend themselves. Unfortunately, the world-at-large will not concern itself over such a matter, for it is enlightened thinking to categorize abortions as merely “choice.” As Christians, are we to elect a man to high office while turning our backs on **God’s moral law**? I don’t think so! And yet, I have heard of Christians who were willing to overlook this matter because they want change and a charismatic leader that talks intelligently and makes them feel good.

Further, the president-elect is touted as one who is inclusive and who will embrace the many. But what will this look like? Will Christians be included in this, or will the name of Jesus continue to be ostracized from affairs of state? Will Christians be part of it only if they refrain from holding up the only name by which men are saved? Or worse, will the name Christian take on an entirely different

meaning that actually denies the Master? Some of those who secretly supported Obama but remained silent for fear it would hurt his chances of getting elected are now beginning to speak out. Why would they have remained silent? The answer is that their views of the world are contrary to a Christian worldview and would have attracted negative press against their candidate. The worldview of some of these people, as well as whole segments of the US population, is clearly **antichrist**, which I believe is the greatest danger we face as a nation that once considered itself Christian.

It may not be very popular to state, but this worldview seeks to replace Christ as the One seated on the throne. It places men on their own throne as they snub their noses at God's true King who is coming to rule and reign over the nations through His elect company that will be counted worthy to reign with Him, for **they overcame** (conquered) **him** (the Devil) **because of the blood of the Lamb and because of the word of their testimony, and they did not love their life even when faced with death** (Revelation 12.11 NASB). What is their testimony? **Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God!**

Let us not forget this testimony or be ashamed to declare it in the days ahead when the world initially will not want to hear it but will eventually cry out for an answer to what has happened. If I have heard the Lord correctly, you can be assured that a major crisis is coming to the world.

Now, to continue with what is on my heart, I have a serious concern for black brethren in the so-called **black church**, a term I find very polarizing and against the concept of the one body of Christ. I hear that some, perhaps many, see the election of the first black president as leading them into the promised land. Please, do not take me wrong; I realize how important it is for our black citizens to have the first black or, more accurately, multi-racial president. It truly speaks to the very heart of America as the land of opportunity for all, even though in our history this has been a nebulous goal for some. Obama's rise to power is truly a great accomplishment to be applauded.

But as Christians, there is only One who can lead us into the promised land, and that is our Joshua, the Lord Jesus. Our promised land is not a piece of real estate or even social justice; it is the emancipation from our earthly dwellings or bodies of death and the transfiguration into bodies in the image of Christ. Now, if you want to talk about being set free, this is true freedom. I find it unfortunate that so many of the Lord's people have become sidetracked with the things of this earth and are no longer seeing things with the eyes of the spirit.

It has been a long road for our fellow citizens of African descent, but may this election bring true healing to their hearts and lead them to forget the past and to press on toward the goal in Christ Jesus. May their hearts be filled with forgiveness for those they have blamed for their plight! May they be set free from the yoke that they have felt and truly be set free into the liberty of Christ! I have written a series on forgetting what lies behind; if you are interested, I refer you to issues #02-0821 (April 11, 2008) through 02-0824 (May 2, 2008).

The very real danger for African-American Christians (another term that I find polarizing within the body of Christ) is putting all their hope in a man, even a gifted man, and losing sight of the Man, the Lord Jesus Christ, our true hope and expectation. Barack Obama is a man and, just like Bush, he is subject to failure as well. I suspect that many are going to be disappointed in the days that lie ahead.

We need change, but it needs to be change that speaks to the heart of our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus. We do not need change that bolsters one man or the religion of **humanism**, which places man at the center of all things. As a nation, we need a change of heart; we need to turn from our wicked ways; we need godly leadership based on God's ways, not man's ways. We need the kingdom of Christ to take root in the nations.

We can only pray that our new president will fall on his face before the Lord, call for repentance of the nation, and openly proclaim to the world that Jesus is the true King of all the nations. Apart from the spirit of God moving on his heart, I would not hold my breath waiting for such a thing to occur. There is too much of the man and the machinery that got him to where he is today to allow for such a thing. There is simply too much at stake in the realm of the flesh of men.

But God can do it!