

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)

#03-0935

Kingdom Business & Strategies

March 11, 2009

Today, it seems that some Christian groups speak a lot about “doing kingdom business” and establishing “kingdom strategies.” Undoubtedly, the meaning of these terms varies among the groups that use them. To some, it is all about taking the gospel to the nations and getting people saved. To others, it is all about building something for God that is related to their particular ministry and emphasis. And, perhaps for others, it is all about living a full, meaningful and joyful life, taking advantage of all that the world has to offer but doing so in a Christian way, as they perceive the way to be. However, regardless of the differences of meaning, all seek for an outward manifestation of the kingdom of God during our present evil age (Galatians 1:4). Of course, some seek for the more supernatural manifestations, such as miracles, signs, wonders, and healings.

This leads to some important questions: On what basis are Christians doing kingdom business and developing kingdom strategies? What principles (rules of the road, so to speak) are applied in conducting kingdom business and developing strategies? I realize that the words *business* and *strategies*, in the Christian context, refer to doing anything for the Lord and are not restricted to commerce, although some do use them in this respect. At any rate, regardless of the end point being sought, the question at hand pertains to the how, not so much the what.

At the outset, let me be clear that I do not like either word being used in the context of doing the will of God, which is really what the kingdom means. See issue #03-0915, February 23, 2009, *The Kingdom: The Realm of the Will of God*. I believe the use of the terms alone *could* reflect on the source of the principles upon which one operates. The source could be from Babylon or, if you prefer, from the world that lies in the power of evil. The world develops strategies, but those led of the spirit of God do the will of God. We don't need strategies, for God has already developed His strategy, and He is Jesus, the Son of God. We need to align ourselves with God's purpose and plan in His Son.

It seems that much of the kingdom business and strategies of our day are based on Babylonian laws or principles and not on kingdom of God laws or principles.

As I have stated many times, it is imperative that we understand the law by which the kingdom of Christ operates and, most definitely, will operate in the eon (age) that is very near. If you don't like the word *law*, then substitute it with the word *principle, commandment, or rules*. If you don't like any of these words, then think of it as anything that the Lord Jesus tells us to do according to His word or by His spirit.

Regardless of which word suits one the best, the fact of the matter is that we need to learn the principles (laws, commandments, rules) by which the kingdom of God operates, especially in the next eon when the kingdom of Christ begins to be manifested on earth as Christ and His conquerors begin to rule and reign over the nations. This is why, under the new covenant, God declares: **I will put My laws into their minds, and I will write them on their hearts** (Hebrews 8:10). The ecclesia, which is the body of Christ and the complement of Christ, must know the laws by which the kingdom operates in order to reign with Christ, judge the world, and teach the inhabitants of the world righteousness.

The writing of these laws on hearts is to occur in some measure while believers live in bodies of death and humiliation, but it will come into full measure with the manifestation of the sons of God, when the conquerors are glorified with immortal, celestial, and spiritual bodies in the likeness of Christ. In that glorious day, the conquerors will truly know the Lord and know what is pleasing to Him without referring to a book, even the Bible.

Until that glorious day, we must seek to know and apply God's divine law in whatever measure we can, no matter how imperfect or incomplete our understanding might be at this point. Further, we must not pick and choose which of God's laws we apply; instead, we must strive to spiritually understand them and apply them under the guidance of the spirit of God. This is doing kingdom business, for those who persist in using the phrase. All else is lawlessness. For now, we all see in a mirror dimly and know in part, but the day is coming when we will be in glory and know in full. Praise God!

Unfortunately, I get the impression that many Christians really do not see the need to spend time searching out this matter. In some respects, it is not an easy road, for it takes time to search the entire word of God and study it. However, I suspect the reason is because the law has become almost like a curse word among many pastors and preachers as they proclaim we are under grace, not the law. This is true in reference to our justification by faith, but what about after we are saved? After all, the Lord Jesus tells us:

“If you love Me, you will keep My commandments [laws].” (John 14:15 NASB)

“He who has My commandments [laws] and keeps them is the one who loves Me; and he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will disclose Myself to him.” (John 14:21 NASB)

“If you keep My commandments [laws], you will abide in My love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments [laws] and abide in His love.” (John 15:10 NASB)

Being obedient to the law does not mean that we become legalists like the Pharisees. Quite the contrary; it means that we are lovers. Lovers obey! Lovers are law-abiding citizens of the kingdom.

I must confess that I was in the company of the “all grace no law” believers for many years until I repented and began to realize that much of what I held as truth either did not go far enough or was simply wrong. It is time for us to wake up and truly seek the kingdom so that we understand what it means and to prepare our hearts and minds to enter the coming kingdom of our Lord. This is why I am writing an open-ended series titled *The Kingdom of Our Lord*. Some of what I glean from Scripture may not be very glamorous or appealing to those who are seeking after signs and wonders, and devising all sorts of “kingdom strategies” to accomplish supposedly great things for God or their own ministry, but isn't it better to be prepared for the glory to come, even if it means sacrifice and suffering?

Don't you think that if we are going to do God's business (however one defines it), then we must follow His laws or, for those who struggle with the word *law*, rules? Paul reminded Timothy that **if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully** [or, according to the rules] (2 Timothy 2:5 [NASB]). The word *lawfully* comes from the Greek word *nomos*, which is most often translated *law*.

So I ask those who talk about kingdom business and kingdom strategies, even building and advancing the kingdom: Are you applying God's divine law, or are you taking the ways of the world to do something for God? There is a big difference. God's way results in glory; Babylon's way results in dust and ashes. Think about it!

The challenge that we all face in this day is realizing that we have been under Babylonian captivity all of our lives; consequently, we have been trained to think like Babylonians. The result is that we have adopted Babylonian ways and ascribed them to God. I am not being critical of anyone in this regard, for we all have been blinded to this reality. Actually, I believe it is the Lord's doing as He has brought judgment on the church-at-large for throwing out His law, which makes the church lawless. Fortunately, the Lord has been opening the blind eyes of some of His people so that they can help others to see as well. We all need to buy eyesalve from the Lord so that we can see with spiritual eyes, and not the carnal eyes of Babylon.

Let us not develop business models and strategies for God, for He has laid it all out very clearly in His Son. Let us align our hearts with His purpose and plan in Christ, for this is the best strategy in all creation. I have good news for you: the greatest phase of God's plan is about to be unveiled as the Son of God comes out of heaven to manifest Himself in the sons of glory. Look up!