

# 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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## ***Why God Never Fails***

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In college I took a course on logic, which is often described as the science of correct reasoning, implying that there is a correct way to think or, we could say, to analyze and understand everything under the sun. In a more general way, logic is simply a way of reasoning, whether correct or incorrect. We all use logic in some fashion every day, even if it is the most basic form of it. Actually, the simplest form of logic is what is called a *sylllogism*, which is an argument or form of reasoning in which two propositions or premises are made and a logical conclusion drawn from them. A *proposition* is an expression in which the predicate affirms or denies something about the subject. For those of us who have forgotten grammar, a *predicate* is a word or words that make a statement about the subject of a clause or a sentence. For example, in the sentence "the sun is bright," the sun is the subject and the word *bright* is the predicate, for it describes something about the sun, that is, it makes a statement about the sun.

Another way to look at a syllogism is to imagine it like a formula in which A (subject) = B (predicate), and B (subject) = C (predicate); therefore, A = C.

Well, I would not be surprised if upon reading this, some might wonder what this has to do with anything spiritual. Frankly, I believe that spiritual principles can be and are meant to be understood by simple logic. I believe that God is very logical, and His creation is built upon His logic. We might agree that this makes sense, but what about us believers; are we to apply logic in trying to understand God's ways and His principles? Unfortunately, it seems to me that believers at times check their brains at the door, so to speak, and do not take the time to see if what they believe or what they have been told to be the truth is logical. Consequently, we have the concept of an eternal hell in which billions upon billions of humans created to be in the image of God, who, by the way, is love, are eternally tortured with unimaginable pain with no chance of ever getting out of this hell-hole. Oh, and let us not forget the worms that will eat at their brains endlessly. If you think that I exaggerate on this matter, then check out some Christian books and movies on the subject and see how hell is portrayed in an attempt to scare the hell out of unbelievers; pun intended.

At this point, let us apply some simple logic to Scripture based on words from John and Paul.

**The one who does not love does not know God, for God is love.** (1 John 4:8 NASB)

**We have come to know and have believed the love which God has for us. God is love, and the one who abides in love abides in God, and God abides in him.** (1 John 4:16 NASB)

**(1) If I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. (2) If I have the gift of prophecy, and know all mysteries and all knowledge; and if I have all faith, so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. (3) And if I give all my possessions to feed the poor, and if I surrender my body to be burned, but do not have love, it profits me nothing. (4) Love is patient, love is kind and is not jealous; love does not brag and is not arrogant, (5) does not act unbecomingly; it does not seek its own, is not provoked, does not take into account a wrong suffered, (6) does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth; (7) bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. (8) Love never fails; but if there are gifts of prophecy, they will be done away; if there are tongues, they will cease; if there is knowledge, it will be done away. (9) For we know in part and we prophesy in part; (10) but when the perfect comes, the partial will be done away. (11) When I was a child, I used to speak like a child, think like a child, reason like a child; when I became a man, I did away with childish things. (12) For now we see in a mirror**

**dimly, but then face to face; now I know in part, but then I will know fully just as I also have been fully known. (13) But now faith, hope, love, abide these three; but the greatest of these is love.** (1 Corinthians 13:1-13 NASB)

Now, let us apply some simple logic or syllogism. Together, John and Paul give us two premises.

**Premise #1: God is love.** *God* is the subject (A) and *love* is the predicate (B).

**Premise #2: Love never fails.** *Love* is the subject (B) and *never fails* is the predicate (C).

Only one conclusion can be drawn from these two premises: **God never fails!** (A = C)

The linkage between **God** and **never fails** is **love**, which happens to be the very essence of God. It is not merely that God loves, as a verb, which is true, but that God is love, as a noun, which is a much higher and greater truth. Another way to state this is that the very essence of God never fails. His very essence is love; consequently, God's love never fails.

So, what is love? According to Paul, love is patient and love is kind, which, as a syllogism, means that God is patient and kind. The Greek word *patient* is also translated as *longsuffering*. Peter makes it very clear that God is patient or longsuffering, and for a reason.

**The Lord isn't slow about keeping his promises, as some people think he is. In fact, God is patient, because he wants [boulomai] everyone to turn from sin and no one to be lost.** (2 Peter 3:9 CEV)

**The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing [boulomai] that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.** (2 Peter 3:9 KJV)

Why is God patient? He is patient because He wills that no one be lost or, more specifically, that all should come to repentance or change their minds. Some translations state that God wishes that none should perish, as if He has no control over the matter. This is interpretative bias. But, the Greek word *boulomai* means "to will" or "to intend." Consequently, God wills or intends that all should repent.

Now, if God never fails and God wills or intends all to come to repentance, do we think that, when all is said and done at the consummation of the eons, God's love will fail to reach every heart of everyone born of Adam's race? If His love fails to reach every heart and turn it toward Him, then God will have failed, the cross was a miserable failure, and Paul was either a liar or dreadfully deceived. But was (is) the cross a miserable failure? According to John, **we know love by this, that He** (Jesus, the Son of God) **laid down His life for us** (1 John 3:16; also John 15:13). Paul adds to this thought: **But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us** (Romans 5.8 NASB). Consequently, we could say that love is sacrificial, but was His love manifested only for us, meaning those who believe in this age? According to Paul, the answer is no: **For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died; and He died for all, so that they who live might no longer live for themselves, but for Him who died and rose again on their behalf** (2 Corinthians 5:14-15 NASB).

Jesus died for all, therefore all died. In other words, when He died, He took Adam's entire race with Him into the grave and brought the entire race into death. Why? So that He can and will give life to all! Paul confirms this in his defense of the resurrection: **For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ all will be made alive. But each in his own order...** (1 Corinthians 15:22-23 NASB).

Love bears all and endures all. Do we think that **God is love** will not bear and endure with all humanity until He has led everyone to repentance and has won their hearts to His love? No; all mankind has been ordered into groups (literally, troops), and God intends to make each troop alive in Christ, but not all at the same time. It is apparent that it will take more eons to come before God achieves the desire or will of His heart, but He will not fail, for **God never fails!** You can count on this logic.