

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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The Absolute Success of the Cross #1

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I find it fascinating how close some pastor-teachers come to the truth of the absolute success of the cross without arriving at its rightful conclusion in regards to the salvation of all mankind. Many will rightly declare that Adam's one sin brought all mankind into sin and that none of us have a choice in the matter, and yet, when it comes to the last Adam's one act of righteousness on the cross, very few of mankind will benefit from it because each individual has a choice in the matter and most will fail to make the right choice. Further, most, if not all, agree with Paul that love never fails (1 Corinthians 13:8), and yet, deny this truth by believing that the love of God will fail to reach the heart of everyone born of Adam's race.

How could Paul state that love never fails? He could because he knew that the love of God manifested through the cross was an absolute, 100% success in undoing what the first Adam brought upon his race. The word *absolute* is greatly misused in our day as more and more people use it for emphatic emphasis when it should not be used in such a manner. It is very common to hear people say "Absolutely," as if they are in total agreement with the matter at hand. However, the word *absolute* means "not limited; not conditional; unrestricted," "not dependent on anything else; considered without reference to anything else," and "perfect, complete, whole." Knowing what Scripture tells us about the heart of man, it is safe to say that there are very few things that come from our mouths that we could say are absolute.

Well, I have written about this subject quite a bit, especially in my book titled *The Purpose and Plan of the Eons*, in particular, Volume 1. However, I am asked periodically for a summary on the matter of the eventual (not all at once) salvation of all mankind. So, I have put together this 5-part series with scriptural proof along with some brief commentary; however, this first issue is devoted more to commentary than Scripture in order to lay a foundation for the other issues.

Now, Adam successfully caused death and sin to enter into all mankind. There is no exception for any born of Adam's race, which includes all mankind. In other words, Adam's one transgression was an absolute success in bringing death and sin unto all mankind, and those born of Adam's race have no choice in the matter. If they are born of man, they must die as man. Most every student of Scripture would have to agree that this is true. In fact, even the unbeliever would have to agree that all die, for it is an indisputable fact that all die, and we have a countless number of graves in the earth to prove it.

However, when it comes to Christ's one act of righteousness, many believers hold an entirely different view. They see Christ's one act of righteousness *potentially* leading to life for all, but not all will attain to it because it is *only possible if* one believes on his own volition (free will). In other words, mankind has a choice in the matter, and unfortunately, most will not make the choice while in mortal bodies, so they will die in their sin and be lost and rot in hell forever. By some accounts, there are perhaps upward of 50 billion humans now being tormented in hell.

Is there something odd about this reasoning? Mankind has no choice in the matter of death and sin, but now must make a choice in the matter of life. Mankind had no free will in becoming a sinner and ultimately facing death, but now has a free will to determine his destiny in heaven or hell. Does this make any sense to you? Isn't it rather strange that billions upon billions of people who had the spirit of life breathed into them made a free-will choice to die and rejected God's promise of life? Why is it that the majority (not the minority) of mankind has chosen, according to their own free will, not to go the way of life? Isn't it far more logical that if man's free will were operative in the matter of salvation, that

most of mankind would choose to live? After all, most of mankind seems to fear death. When we fear something, we generally desire to stay away from that thing. Think about it!

Consider this question: Why is Adam's one transgression more successful (in a bad sense) than Christ's one righteous act (in a good sense)? Has God ultimately failed? Is God not able to save all mankind? Did He make the ultimate sacrifice knowing that billions of His creatures, made to be perfected into His own image, are going to be cast into a fiery lake to be tortured forever and ever and ever? God is the Supreme, and all comes out of Him, through Him and for Him is all (CV). Are we to conclude that it is His will that there are exceptions to His *all*?

If it is true, then we must conclude that God will fail to achieve His purpose, and the cross was not able to undo all that Adam did. Without doubt, some will argue that it is man's failure, not God's. But this cannot be so, for if man fails to reach God's end, it is God who fails, not man. Man did not establish God's purpose; God did! Man was nowhere to be found before times eonian when God set His purpose and plan according to the counsel of His will.

Man is helpless in his sin, so why do we make man a hero in his own salvation, as if he can save himself?

Let it be shouted from the rooftops and the pulpits of every so-called "church" building that bears the name of Christ: **The death of God's Son on the cross is an absolute, unequivocal 100% success according to the counsel of God's will!**

We need to continually be reminded that it is God's will that is being worked out in the eons, not man's will, and that God will accomplish all that He wills through and for His Son. All things come forth through God. We need to stop holding to a small, impotent god created in our own image and embrace the God of *All* who will be *All* in all.

Consider these truths.

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 46.10 NASB)

According to the purpose of the One Who is operating all in accord with the counsel of His will.... (Ephesians 1.11 CV)

Because of Him and through Him and to Him [are] all [things]; to Him [be] the glory into the ages! So be it! (Romans 11.36 ALT); or **Seeing that out of Him and through Him and for Him is all: to Him be the glory for the eons! Amen!** (Romans 11.36 CV)

"[There] is not a righteous [person], not even one. [There] is not [one] understanding; there is not [one] diligently seeking after God. All turned aside, together they became unprofitable; [there] is not [one] doing kindness [or, what is right], [there] is not so much as one." [Psalm 14.1-3; 53.1-3; Ecclesiastes 7.20] (Romans 3.10-12 ALT)

And you were dead in your trespasses and sins.... (Ephesians 2.1 NASB)

Is it God's purpose to annihilate or forever torture most of mankind that was created to be in the image of the Son? Is God not going to accomplish His purpose? Do not all things come forth through Him and are to Him, that is, return to Him? If no one is a seeker of God, then how is anyone saved unless God touches their heart to believe? If we were all dead in our trespasses and sins, then how could we possibly become alive again unless someone outside of ourselves gives us life? The dead have no ability to change their condition, for they are DEAD! Unless the dead are raised from the dead by a force outside their control, they will remain dead. Throwing off the shackles of man's traditions, there is only one conclusion to be made: The cross is an absolute success in fulfilling God's purpose for all.