

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 #3

April 15, 2009

This series is about why I see the cross of Christ as an absolute success in the eventual salvation of all mankind. In the remaining issues, I offer some scriptural proof along with some brief commentary.

“Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know—this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him up again, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power.” (Acts 2.22-24 NASB)

It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all. (1 Timothy 1.15 NASB)

For while we were still helpless, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. (Romans 5.6-8 NASB)

Christ came to save sinners, not to condemn them to an eternal torture chamber. Notice that He saved while all were yet sinners.

But He turned and rebuked them, [and said, “You do not know what kind of spirit you are of; for the Son of Man did not come to destroy men’s lives, but to save them.”] (Luke 9.55-56 NASB)

Many teach that Christ will destroy many (most) lives by casting them into an eternal oven called hell. Of course, this is countered by the same ones that it is man who placed himself there, not God. But let us be reminded that **all things** are worked out according to the counsel of **God’s will**. Are we to exclude the eternal destiny of man from God’s counsel? Hardly! Christ came to save, not to destroy.

Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget none of His benefits; Who pardons all your iniquities, Who heals all your diseases.... (Psalm 103.2-3 NASB)

O Israel, hope in the LORD; For with the LORD there is lovingkindness, And with Him is abundant redemption. And He will redeem Israel from all his iniquities. (Psalm 130.7-8 NASB)

Surely our griefs He Himself bore, and our sorrows He carried; yet we ourselves esteemed Him stricken, Smitten of God, and afflicted. But He was pierced through for our transgressions, He was crushed for our iniquities; the chastening for our well-being fell upon Him, and by His scourging we are healed. All of us like sheep have gone astray, each of us has turned to his own way; but the LORD has caused the iniquity of us all to fall on Him. (Isaiah 53.4-6 NASB)

For I will be merciful to their iniquities, and their sins will I remember no more. (Hebrews 8.12 ASV)

Under the new covenant, God remembers sin no more. Whose sin will He retain?

“All was given up to Me by My Father, and no one knows who the Son is except the Father, and who the Father is except the Son, and whomsoever the Son may be intending to unveil Him.” (Luke 10.22 CV)

And this is the will of him that has sent me, that of all that he has given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up in the last day. (John 6.39 DNT)

“And I, if I should be exalted out of the earth, shall be drawing all to Myself.” (John 12.32 CV)

“And I, if I am lifted up from the earth [death on the cross], I will draw [or, drag] all to Myself.” (John 12.32 ALT)

All has been given to the Son; the Son will lose nothing; and the Son shall draw all to Himself. Can Scripture make it any clearer? This is love!

The Son of God will gather all in heaven and on earth to Himself. He is like a magnet that will draw everything to Himself. He is like the mother hen that broods over her chicks. As He brooded over Jerusalem, so will He brood over all (see Matthew 23.37). All will come under the shelter of His wings, forever kept in the love of the Son.

Was Christ exalted, which refers to the manner of His death? Of course He was. Then what are we to conclude? There is only one conclusion; He will draw **all** to Himself. It does not say that He will draw all at the same time, but He will draw all eventually. It also does not state that He will draw only all mankind. It states that He will draw all, which is an all-encompassing drawing that has to include **all** of mankind, **all** of the messengers, and **all** of God’s creation. Nothing is left out of this drawing. It is universal!

Further, the Greek word for *draw* literally means “to drag,” as if Jesus literally will drag all unto Himself.

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 1.16-17 NASB)

God, after He spoke long ago to the fathers in the prophets in many portions and in many ways, in these last days has spoken to us in His Son, whom He appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the world. (Hebrews 1.1-2 NASB)

If Christ holds all things together, then He also must be holding the unbelieving sinner together as well. How can one single person be excluded from the One who holds all things together? Either in Christ all things hold together or they do not. There is no room for exclusions, omissions, or deletions in all things.

Further, all things are created in Christ, and He is the heir of all things. What are we to exclude from this all?

And He is the radiance of His glory and the exact representation of His nature, and upholds all things by the word of His power. When He had made purification of sins, He sat down at the right hand of the Majesty on high.... (Hebrews 1.3 NASB)

Christ upholds all things by the word of His power. **ALL THINGS!**