

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)

#04-1096

Selective Thoughts on Today

August 18, 2010

On antichrists. [Please see issue #04-1085, August 7, 2010, *Antichrist*]

In a narrow sense, antichrists refer to the apparent Jews who say they are Jews but lie because they deny the Father and the Son, Christ Jesus (1 John 2:22; Revelation 2:9; 3:9). Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father; the one who confesses the Son has the Father also (1 John 2:23). In our day, this applies not only to the apparent Jews, many of whom have great influence in entertainment, finance, business, and government, but also to non-Jew secularists who are determined to wipe out the name of Jesus from every aspect of public life. In the name of “separation of church and state” and “freedom of religion,” they attempt to separate and bind the true ecclesia of God that holds to the name of Jesus, the King of the nations. They are trying to separate the rightful heir of the nations from the nations; the only One who can truly set the people free. The good news is this: They lose! God wins!

In a broader sense, **every spirit that does not confess Jesus is not from God; this is the spirit of antichrist** (1 John 4:3). However, in its broadest sense, antichrist refers to anything or anyone that usurps the throne that belongs to Jesus Christ. “Antichrist” means “in the place of Christ,” and all who seek to do this are antichrists and all who support this usurpation are under a “spirit of antichrist.” The spirit of antichrist usurps Christ as the King of the nations.

On government and collective salvation.

Today, there are so many examples of the hypocrisy, arrogance, and corruption of our current political system that, frankly, I have stopped trying to keep up with all of it.

Recently, the gamut runs from a single Federal judge overturning a state constitutional amendment, approved by 7 million voters, that defines marriage as between a man and woman, to an administration that ignores the will of the people on every front, whether it is healthcare, financial reform, or border security. Add to this an administration that believes it can circumvent the Congress and rule through the fiat of executive power and regulation; a congressman who states the Federal government can do anything it wants and arrogantly responds to his constituents; a recently appointed Supreme Court justice whose latest opinion revealed that during her confirmation hearings, she lied about her view on one matter, and no one seems to care, for it was expected all along; an elite class that wants to foment racism for political advantage; one type of media that, for the most part, is out to lunch, and **another type of media that is offering so many opinions that it homogenizes fact with fiction, lies with truth, opinion with logic**—and we have a formula for disaster.

I venture to say that anyone with a sense of what is going on in our country has to be concerned. Again, our nation is being driven by the spirit of antichrist. Mind you, I am not calling any one individual *the* antichrist, for there are many antichrists. I am speaking in a much broader sense of a spirit that is driving men in our day. One way the spirit of antichrist is being manifested is with our Federal government and its leaders that are setting themselves up as **collective god** to rule over the people.

For example, our current president continues to greatly expand government control over virtually every aspect of the American life and to push government as the best and only solution for the people. He is attempting to make **government our god**, so that we depend on it for life itself, as if it can meet our every need and want. He speaks of his salvation being dependent on collective salvation: **“My individual salvation is not going to come about without a collective salvation for the country.”** I don’t pretend to understand this theology, but it might give insight into why the president seems to be deaf to the will of the people. After all, if he sees his mission is to save, then, perhaps, he thinks he is the only one who knows how to do it. Some say it is black liberation theology, which means

it deals with freeing the oppressed from the oppressors, which in turn deals with social justice. Regardless of its meaning, I sense that collective salvation is driven by a spirit of antichrist, for **it removes the Savior from His throne and places man and his collectivism on the throne. It is in the place of Christ.** Christians who believe in this sort of salvation better read their Bible, pleading with the Spirit of God to show them how antichrist their thinking truly is.

On today's church.

But where is the church in our day? As I drive around our area, I take note of signs posted on church marques. Lately, I read: "How will you spend eternity? Smoking or non-smoking?" Aside from its error, what kind of good news is that? Or, "Heaven – The Perfect Climate." Catchy; but what message is being sent to the world with such silliness? What about the church that recently staged a fight on its property and called the police to see how they would respond? Need I say anything about such lawlessness or, perhaps, stupidity? What about the churches that are preaching that God is about to supercharge their mortal bodies with all sorts of supernatural power so that they can transform the world of mortals? I have a better idea. **Why don't we repent and return to the Lord, seeking to be more like Him so that we can truly reveal His character to a world that needs it? While we are at it, let us love His appearing and long for immortality, for only when we are transformed will we be able to transform the world.** It seems that much of what we call the church in our day is short on true spiritual vision and long on the spirit of the world.

What about the many Christians who have entered into the political battle to "take back" America? They are seeking a political solution to a spiritual problem of a Laodicean-minded church (Revelation 3:14-22). The Pharisees tried something similar, and consider what happened to them.

Or, what about the many Christians who continue to tout God and guns and see most all war as right and just, as if God wants Christians to continually take up the physical sword? Are we any better than the Jewish zealots who sought to take the kingdom by force (Matthew 11:12) as the very King of Judah stood in their midst ready to deliver them into His kingdom? Where are the peacemakers? Need we be reminded: **Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God** (Matthew 5:9). Given the fact that the next great event is the first resurrection and transfiguration, at which time the conquering sons of God will be manifested through the experience of Tabernacles, especially on the great day, the eighth day (John 7:37-39), don't you think we Christians should be peacemakers? The King of the nations is standing at the door, and He will soon step through it to begin His reign over the nations of this earth through the manifested sons of God. Let us wake up!

Or, what about Christians who are arming themselves for fear of riots in the street? Don't you know, if you fight by the sword you will die by the sword?

Then Jesus said to him, "Put your sword back into its place; for all those who take up the sword shall perish by the sword." (Matthew 26:52 NASB)

(9) If anyone has an ear, let him hear. (10) If anyone is destined for captivity, to captivity he goes; if anyone kills with the sword, with the sword he must be killed. Here is the perseverance and the faith of the saints. (Revelation 13:9-10 NASB)

Undoubtedly, Jeremiah the prophet, who was in Jerusalem when it was about to be taken captive by the Babylonians, would have a few choice words for us if he were alive today. In His mercy, the Lord set before Judah the way of life and the way of death. They had a choice; come under the yoke of iron by being deported to the land of the Babylonians and live and even thrive, or remain in Jerusalem and Judah and die (Jeremiah 21:8-10). What was the problem? The Lord declared to them: **"Because you have forgotten Me and trusted in falsehood** (Jeremiah 13:25 NASB).

Are we so sure that we haven't fallen into the same trap and trusted in falsehood? I have written about how Americans are tied to a political system with cords of falsehood. See issues #02-08125, September 30, 2008; #02-08132, October 23, 2008; and #04-1026, March 10, 2010. Spiritually speaking, I believe that the cords of falsehood have been cut in heaven, but the result has not been manifested on earth. May it come soon!