

# 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)

TUC #07-1304

by – Stuart H. Pouliot

January 6, 2013

## ***Stripping Away the Religious Façade #2***

In the last issue, it was mentioned that the Lord is stripping the façade off the religious church and exposing her heart that the Lord is after and will get to His glory. One of the definitions of the word **façade** is "**the front part of anything: often used figuratively, with implications of an imposing appearance concealing something inferior.**" This is the intended meaning used in this issue. It implies that there is an appearance to the at-large church that conceals something inferior, something that does not answer to the heart of God. It is a façade that has the appearance of being spiritual and doing many great spiritual things for God, and yet, it is simply a mask for religion; it is a religious façade.

The term *at-large church* is purposely used to differentiate it from the church that Christ is building. There is a difference, if not a great divide, between the two. Another way to differentiate the two is one is the visible organized, denominated, institutional church with buildings, names, ministries, departments, etc, and the other is simply an organic body of believers being built up in love with only one name over them and one Man among them. This is not to imply that the organic body does not and cannot exist within the organized, institutional church. Obviously, it can and, when it does, to use a phrase from Frank Bartleman, it is **the church within the church** or, we could say, the remnant church within the at-large church.

Click on the tab for "Oldies" to read past issues along this line.

### ***What is the true church?***

It is born-from-above believers in living union with the risen Lord.

It is not a religious institution, a special set-apart organization that is called the *Church* and that does many religious things for God. This is how the world so often views it, but this is because this is how the at-large church often presents itself to the world. Men have expended great energy and resources building an institutional church based on a systematic theology or emphasis or program or ministry and with a name or label on it that differentiates it from all other institutional churches. Over time, the institution protects and defends itself and ceases to be in union with the risen Lord, if it was ever in union in the first place.

John was given a picture of the condition of the last-days church. It is called the Harlot Church, Mystery Babylon that thinks it is rich and in need of nothing but is impoverished, blind, and naked. This harlot is about to be taken through the fiery judgment of God, and all that are a part of it must come out of it if they are to avoid the fire of its judgment.

Where two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, meaning they are in living union with Christ, there Christ is in their midst. But let us not overlook the great fact that this Christ is the risen Lord who has overcome sin and death and the world and the devil. This Christ is within every born-from-above believer; it is **Christ in you, the hope of glory**. This is all so simple and fundamental and yet so profound.

Do you realize that heaven and earth are united in Christ? Heaven and earth are one in Christ. As Stephen was about to be stoned, he saw the Son of Man standing in glory in heaven. Stephen was full of the Holy Spirit, which is the Spirit of Christ. For all of us who believe, **God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts** (Galatians 4:6). **The Lord is the Spirit** (2 Corinthians 3:17). The risen Christ is in heaven and He is in our hearts, meaning we

are seated with Christ in the heavenlies (Ephesians 2:6) and heaven is in our hearts. We are in resurrection union with the Son of Man; all that He is and has is ours and **we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved (loves) us** (Romans 8:37). We are an embodiment of heaven on earth in the Son of Man, and the power of His resurrection life is available to us and in us. This is truly good news.

Well, much more could be said about the church, but this is not the point at hand. The point is that God is going to strip away the façade of this religious church system and bring it through the fire of His judgment to purge it from all its outward form and man-centered activity. Although some activity might be well-meaning, nevertheless, it misses the mark as it does not answer to the heart of God and the character of the true church out of heaven. Only that which is in union with the risen Lord will remain when the fire of His judgment has completed its purging and cleansing work.

Regarding the November election, when the results came in, I was somewhat elated over the outcome, much to the chagrin of others around me, for it meant that God is dealing with the church just as much as He is dealing with the nation. In other words, He is judging both, perhaps in different ways, yet judgment nonetheless. My sensing is that the church is too proud and arrogant and, frankly, the notion of becoming militant is misplaced. We need brokenness that leads to true humility and repentance, and only God knows how to get us there.

Dear people of God, fiery trials or judgments that upset the religious pride of the church are essential, especially as the end of this age nears. As the righteous Judge, God must cleanse His own people, even as He judges the nations. The fire of His word is going forth! It is for our good!

What is the purpose of God's judgment? Is it for destruction or annihilation? No! It is for purification. His judgments are often called fiery trials and He brings these upon His people and nations with a glorious purpose in mind. He is after hearts that have been purified so that they can and will maintain union with the risen Lord in all the fullness that this entails. It is so the true church of conquerors will rise up and come forward to take the glory of the Lord to the nations. It is so heaven can truly come to earth, not only in a people but also be manifested among and in the nations of the world. It is so His Son will be exalted among the nations. It is so **the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the sea** (Habakkuk 2:14).

It is time for the Lord's people to stop trying to do things for God and for themselves in the name of the Lord and start being. It is not about doing; it is about being Christ in the world. It is time to seek the council of the Lord and to come into union with Him so that we personally hear His voice and stop listening to the many "pulpit" voices; and out from this, we live His life, not our life or the organized life of an institution. It is about being Christ, being His life in this earth, being His aroma wherever we go, being His voice, being His love, being His grace and mercy, being His righteousness. Out of this being comes the works of God in doing the will of God.

**"I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by [the] faith in [of] the Son of God, who loved [loves] me and gave Himself up for me."** (Galatians 2:20 NASB [DNT])

**(15) But when God, who had set me apart even from my mother's womb and called me through His grace, was pleased (16) to reveal His Son in me so that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood, (17) nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus.** (Galatians 1:15-17 NASB)

**(3) For you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. (4) When Christ, who is our life, is revealed, then you also will be revealed with Him in glory.** (Colossians 3:3-4 NASB)

Has God revealed His Son in you? Then, let Him BE in you and BE out from you! If we truly come into this place in a living, vibrant way, I believe we will discover that it is not time to fight by raising our voices in protest; it is time to lay down our lives in love. **Love never fails!**