

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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"Just the Facts, Ma'am"

A detective series aired on television during the 1950s called *Dragnet* with Jack Webb starring as Sergeant Joe Friday. One of Sgt. Friday's classic lines was "**All we want are the facts, ma'am.**" Over time, this phrase became a common expression used by Americans, only it was usually shortened to "**just the facts, ma'am.**" So, in our everyday communications, when we want to cut through all the dialogue and get to the heart of a matter, we say "just the facts." A similar expression is "cut to the chase."

Now, most of us would have to agree that we are living in a day of communication overload. Unless we live in total isolation, we are bombarded with information that is transmitted through a vast array of media, most of which comes to us almost instantaneously through electronic media with the Internet at the top of list. All of this is so obvious that it seems foolish to even make the point.

But, what about communication overload within what we could call the Christian world; is it any different? Hardly! In fact, the only difference is that we identify our communications with the name of Jesus. However, one thing is for sure, there is no lack of material out in cyber world that is labeled *Christian*. It runs from A to Z and is marketed much like the rest of the world markets its material, only we have the added hype of claiming it to be of God. Now, it is an entirely different matter whether it is good Christian material or not, or whether it is truly inspired by the Spirit of the Lord or not.

It makes me wonder, are we trying to make John's word into a prophecy? **Jesus did many other things. If they were all written in books, I don't suppose there would be room enough in the whole world for all the books** (John 21:25 CEV). Are we trying to fill the world with Christian books and related material? Of course, I don't think John would have said it this way if he had known that a thing called the *computer* was to be invented by man nearly 2,000 years later.

This is my take on what is transpiring in the Christian world of our day. We are building our own **Tower of Babel** in a day in which we are under Babylonian captivity. The world is building this tower and the Christian world is doing its part in this massive building project that is reaching toward heaven. It is one project and much of which is called *Christian* has joined forces with the world, rather than being in the world but not of it. We know what happened when Nimrod and company attempted to build the first tower, and we can be assured that our modern-day version of the tower is going to suffer the same demise, lest we make for ourselves a name and nothing we purpose to do will be impossible for us (Genesis 11:4). God the Almighty is getting ready to pull down this tower, and it is time to come out of her My people (Revelation 18:4).

Babel signifies confusion and much confusion exists within the Christian world today. Just make a cursory attempt to study all the various views held on any one single Christian topic and you will see what I am saying. If you are any sort of a logical thinker, you will end up with your head spinning in a sea of confusion. You will be grappling to find the life preserver called *truth*. Where is the truth in all this?

Well, what does this have to do with Sgt. Joe Friday and *just the facts*? In this day, all the hype and all the marketing of a brand name (Jesus) and all the confusion associated with it need to be stripped away, and we need to return to just the facts or, another way of stating it, just the truth. When all is stripped away, there is only one thing standing, and it is not a thing, it is the person of our Lord Jesus who is the Truth! We need to return to just the facts about Jesus and what He has done and what He is doing and what He is going to do. It is time to return to our foundation which is Christ Jesus Himself.

When I feel the pressures of this world, both seen and unseen, pressing in on me, I often return to the facts and declare them to myself. Here are some of *just the facts*.

(22) "... Jesus the Nazarene ... (23) 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. (24) "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)

And the hostile princes and rulers He shook off from Himself, and boldly displayed them as His conquests, when by the Cross He triumphed over them. (Colossians 2:15 WNT)

(6) "But as for Me, I have installed My King upon Zion, My holy mountain." (7) "I will surely tell of the decree of the LORD: He said to Me, 'You are My Son, today I have begotten You. (8) 'Ask of Me, and I will surely give the nations as Your inheritance, and the very ends of the earth as Your possession. (Psalm 2:6-8 NASB)

(19) These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might (20) which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, (21) far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. (Ephesians 1:19-21 NASB)

(21) ... Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, (22) who is at God's right hand, having gone into Heaven, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him. (1 Peter 3:21-22 WNT)

(19) For it was the Father's good pleasure for all the fullness to dwell in Him, (20) and through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven. (Colossians 1:19-20 NASB)

"I have sworn by Myself, The word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance." (Isaiah 45:23 NASB)

(10) ... At the name of Jesus "every knee should bow," of heavenly ones, and earthly ones, and ones under the earth, (11) and "every tongue should confess" that Jesus Christ is "Lord," to the glory of God the Father. *Isa. 45:23* (Philippians 2:10-11 LITV)

These few verses are merely a drop in the vast sea of facts (truths) about Jesus. You are encouraged to search scripture and add to them. Babylon is falling, and we need to come out of all the confusion and hold to *just the facts*!