

# 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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## ***More on Healing – Transcend Upward***

I thought I was done with writing what few thoughts I have about healing but realized I never explained what prompted me to broach this subject in the first place. Frankly, I was not trying to offer some theological rationale, one way or the other, as if I could even do this in the first place, which I cannot do. I realize people argue or debate over whether healing is in the atonement or not, and the peg that all seem to hang their hats on is in Isaiah 53:4-5, repeated in Matthew 8:16-17 and 1 Peter 2:24. **By His stripes we were healed.** True, but according to Peter, the greater or more significant healing occurred in the realm of what brings on disease in the first place – *sin*. **He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed.** Truly, this is the good news and is summed up in John's proclamation: **Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.** If you had to choose between sin or disease, which would you choose? I hope the answer is sin, for is this not the very source of disease? **The wages of sin is death**, and disease is part of the death process. If we get rid of death, we get rid of sin. It's that simple. The good news is that this is, in fact, what Jesus did on the cross; again, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness.

**For the love of Christ is constraining us, judging this, that, if One died for the sake of all, consequently all died.**  
(2 Corinthians 5:14 CLV)

This is at the heart of the good news. One died for all; consequently, all died. It's not very complex. We are dead to our old self, period, and God is in the process of progressively bringing us, as believers, and all mankind (as well as all creation) into life, aionian life and, ultimately, immortal life. What brings in the confusion is the fact that God is working this all out in our present age and in the ages to come, for this is all part of **the purpose of the ages** that were made in His Son. Again, it is being worked out, and, because it is being worked out, we don't see it all falling into place just because we command it to or wish it to or scripturally work up a sweat that it must. God is sovereign, and He alone knows what's best for each and every one of us. As the old TV series was titled, Father knows best! It's all finished in Christ, but it is progressively being worked out in the ages.

What must encourage us is the FACT that God is sovereign and in His sovereignty HE HEALS! Is it really necessary to go beyond this point? If He chooses to heal, for whatever reason or no particular reason at all, except He loves us, then let us rejoice and praise God for His goodness and mercy. Let us be clear that **it is God that heals**, not man. If there is such a thing as a gift of healing, the anointing to heal comes from the anointing of the Anointed One, not from the person with the gift. Unfortunately, men get hold of things like this and begin to act and believe that they have some special ability within themselves that sets them apart from the rest, and the rest are very accommodating in this regard, especially with their wallets.

I must confess that I grow weary of much of the emphasis on healing. Some of the healing conferences are not much better than a three-ring circus with healing as one of the three acts that people are summoned to behold. The emphasis is often on the so-called gifted healer and not so much on the Lord and what He is doing or saying through the healing.

I happened to be at a Sunday meeting where the guest speaker was a young man known for the gift of healing. When it came time for the healing show to commence, the house band began blasting their music at levels that was definitely above 100 decibels, and probably much higher. People were called to line up and snake their way to the center stage for this young man and his team to pray over them and bring healing. Like sheep, people complied and a large number got in line. It was hard to tell whether anyone got healed that day.

But, this leads to what prompted me to write on this subject. I was at a healing conference that was of the more genteel variety, not loud but very calm and, frankly, normal. We went to this conference because we had never been to one before. What I noticed was that a number of people had hearing problems, and it seemed that these were the ones receiving some level of healing. Some months later, I began thinking about this and began to wonder why one particular ailment was in the forefront that day. Assuming they were legitimate healings from the Lord, I wondered if the Lord was trying to tell us something that day that transcended the individuals.

When someone is legitimately and clearly healed by the Lord, it is only normal that everyone goes into an excited state praising God for what He has done for the individual. But does anyone ever stop and inquire if there is a higher spiritual message in play with the healing, especially if a number are healed with similar ailments? I am not saying it is never done, but my sense is that it is not generally done. Why not? I think the answer lies in the fact that the church is not as spiritually minded as it should be. The church is more focused on the temporal. Paul gives us a good exhortation on transcending the temporal and reaching upward into the celestials.

**(1) Since, therefore, you folks were awakened and raised up together in the Christ** (or: If, then, you are aroused and raised with the Christ), **be constantly seeking and trying to find the upward things (or: the things being above), where the Christ is** (continuously exists being), **continuously sitting within the right** [side] (or: at the right [hand]) **of God. (2) Be constantly minding** (thinking about; setting your disposition toward) **the upward things** (or: the things above), **not the things upon the earth, (3) for you folks died, and your life has been hidden** (concealed) **within the Christ, within God.** (Colossians 3:1-3 JM-NT)

If we continually and progressively lived this way, I believe we would be more inquiring of the Lord, transcending the temporal, and the circus atmosphere surrounding healing would cease. Further, I believe there is a sickness in the church of our day, and it is called the spirit of the world.

**(12) Now we did not receive** (or: do not accept or take to ourselves; do not take control of or grasp) the spirit of the system (the world's spirit), **but to the contrary, that spirit** (Spirit) [which is] **from out of the midst of God – to the end that we can see and know the things being given to and for us in grace** (or: being graciously bestowed, and given in us) **by God, (13) which things we are also habitually speaking – not in words taught by human wisdom** (or: not taught within thoughts or ideas whose origin is human wisdom), **but rather in ones taught by spirit** (or: within ones taught whose source and origin is [the] Spirit), **habitually evaluating, deciding, combining or contrasting spiritual** [matters] **together by spiritual** [means] (or: constantly matching or comparing/contrasting things pertaining to spirit with things in spirit/[the] Spirit; progressively collectively-judging spiritual ones for spiritual [reasons]). (1 Corinthians 2:12-13 JM-NT)

Just as the sons of Israel were sick, so is the church of our day. In many respects, we are blind and deaf just as they were when Jesus came 2,000 years ago preaching the Kingdom was at hand and it was time to change their thinking. If you don't believe this, then consider the reaction the majority of God's people have against the message of God is love, love never fails, and in this love all mankind will ultimately be saved to the glory of God because the cross is an absolute success in defeating all sin and death. Jesus is the Savior of the whole world and of all creation. As the Savior, Jesus is responsible for saving all, and so He will, each in their own order.

I believe that when many are healed of deafness or even sight problems, including blindness, it is a sign from the Lord that His people are spiritually deaf or spiritually blind. **'Because you say, "I am rich, and have become wealthy, and have need of nothing," and you do not know that you are wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked'** (Revelation 3:17). Like the ancient sons of Israel, it is time for us to change our thinking as well. Otherwise, we will be no different: **You will keep on hearing, but will not understand; you will keep on seeing, but not perceive** (Matthew 13:14).

Dear people of God, as the arrival of our King approaches in this last hour, we might see much more healing from the Lord, and, if it does occur, let us not make it into a circus centered on man. Let us inquire what God is saying through these healings. It is time to change, time to transcend upward, to the upward things. Jesus is coming!