

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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Thoughts on 2013

As the world wraps up another year, the news outlets and the blogosphere will be summing up the events of 2013. Some will be pointing out who got it right and who got it wrong. Undoubtedly, the *doomsayers* will be beaten up a bit because the dire things they predicted did not come true. The *goodsayers* (new term created here) will be smiling with glee that things are not so bad and, in fact, are getting better. After all, just look at government statistics and how things, including the economy, are improving. Just look at the meteoric climb of the stock market. Never mind that the government is cooking the books, so to speak, and the Federal Reserve is printing *fiat* money to prop up the markets as the so-called big banks (*aka* gambling houses) continue to short gold and silver, driving prices into the ground. Oh, and let us not forget the affordable health care we are all going to get. I guess Webster will be redefining the word *affordable* to line up with reality or what we are being told is reality. We are living in a day of grand manipulation on many fronts, and it doesn't paint a very pretty picture. But, let us not forget the ideologues that go by many names. They are out there creating their own reality and living in the dream worlds they have created in their minds or hope to create if they contort about it, talk about it, write about it, think about it, or even pray about it enough. Didn't the prophets of Baal do something like this as they danced and cut their way through their reality as Elijah stood there watching and egging them on? How did that turn out for them? Not so good!

As for me, I prefer being a realist and not a doomsayer or a goodsayer or even an ideologue. But then again, we all are subject to blind spots, so I must be open to correction on this front. No doubt, Solomon hit the nail on the head, so to speak.

(9) That which has been is that which will be, and that which has been done is that which will be done. So there is nothing new under the sun. (10) Is there anything of which one might say, "See this, it is new"? Already it has existed for ages which were before us. (11) There is no remembrance of earlier things; and also of the later things which will occur, there will be for them no remembrance among those who will come later still. ... (14) I have seen all the works which have been done under the sun, and behold, all is vanity and striving after wind. (Ecclesiastes 1:9-11, 14 NASB)

Thus I considered all my activities which my hands had done and the labor which I had exerted, and behold all was vanity and striving after wind and there was no profit under the sun. (Ecclesiastes 2:11 NASB)

Furthermore, this was from a man who had it all. His kingdom was one of the greatest to ever exist on the face of the earth. He had wealth beyond measure, peace all around, trade routes that went throughout the earth, and, let us not forget, wisdom to manage this great kingdom. We'll forget about the women; this didn't have a happy ending. In spite of all this, he concluded that there is no profit under the sun; all is vanity and striving after wind. What an indictment of man's world! This is the wisdom of a realist.

So, this leads to the question: At the beginning of the year, what was my wisdom about the events of 2013? I never wrote anything about it, but my wife and friends can testify that I stated right from the start and held to it all year long that 2013 was going to be what I called *a sideways year*, meaning there would be nothing really new or dramatic. Chalk up one for me! This is not to imply that 2013 was a particularly good year, for it was not. It just wasn't the "big one" so many seemed to be expecting. To be sure, I expected some headline stoppers and was not disappointed; but in our day of instant communication and a world full of crazies and people profiting off doom, these are to be expected. Even as I read some of the big names of finance pontificating about how dire things are

and how the money tree was about to collapse any minute, I was not persuaded off my position. I must admit, however, to being tempted to watch a few video infomercials, you know the ones that say you must see this now or else you will be toast. The routine is the same: You waste thirty minutes of your time listening to someone tell you over and over again what he is about to tell you without ever telling you, only to get to the end of the presentation to be told that in order to hear what you really need to know you must part with some of your money. Sounds a lot like modern-day Laodicean preachers!

This reminds me of the Christian guy who figured out how to make a lot of money based on the bible; you know, God wants all to be rich. He has an infomercial and does the same thing. Having learned my lesson already, I think I spent all of two seconds on this one, knowing that it was only going to lead to my wallet. Have you ever noticed that these guys don't lose a thing? If you don't make money from their magic potion, they at least make money from you. I digress!

So, 2013 was like any other year, at least on the surface. There is nothing new under the sun, even if the elitists, globalists, and the uber-rich are salivating over a new world order. Got news for you; we are already living under a global order, but it is nothing new for man is still at the helm, and he is doing what he does best, messing with the lives of innocent people who just want to live in peace and security. By the way, I say, *at least on the surface*, for I do believe there are rumblings under the surface and there is much activity among the celestials over what is coming upon the world. I think I hear the deck chairs sliding down the Titanic's upper decks!

This leads to the really good news, and I won't even waste thirty minutes of your time or charge you for it. This is a freebie, and you can have it now. There is a new world order coming; it is called the **Kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ** (Revelation 11:15).

(10) Say among the nations, "The LORD reigns; indeed, the world is firmly established, it will not be moved; He will judge the peoples with equity." (11) Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice; let the sea roar, and all it contains; (12) let the field exult, and all that is in it. Then all the trees of the forest will sing for joy (13) Before the LORD, for He is coming, for He is coming to judge the earth. He will judge the world in righteousness and the peoples in His faithfulness. (Psalm 96:10-13 NASB)

Here is a bit of insight on my part. This new world order is not coming because Christians somehow get better and have all the wisdom of Solomon to run the world, and the world will finally recognize how good we are and flock to hear our wisdom and, by the way, give us all their wealth. Did you know that the wealth of the nations is coming to the church? Got news for you; the wealth of the nations has already come to the church, at least the American church. The Lord has spoken to us in our prosperity, and what have we done with it? Consider Jeremiah 22:21. I just read a statistic comparing from 2005 through 2013; in America, there are fewer people believing in God and in Jesus as the Son of God. According to the survey, only 68% (down from 72%) believe Jesus is God or the Son of God, and 65% (down from 70%) believe in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Still a majority, but a shrinking one! Of course, the Lord knows who are truly His and He has His 7,000, regardless of what the statisticians and pollsters might say.

One more thought on Christians getting better; do you honestly believe that, after 2,000 years, those of us living at this point in history have truly figured out something that our predecessors did not; that we are better and smarter and like "poof, the magic dragon" we are going to be like Christ, little gods and saviors, so that we can run the world with all this wealth thrown at our feet as we continue to occupy mortal bodies? Talk about a reality check! I got some more good news for you: Don't sweat it; there is nothing you can do to bring about the literal manifestation of the Kingdom of Christ among the nations: **the Father has fixed the times and the epochs by His own authority** (Acts 1:7). When the time is up, it is up; you can count on it.

At this point, the questions are: Why did I believe 2013 would be a sideways year? What do I see in the years ahead, especially 2014-2015? Well, you will have to wait for the next issues for my infomercials, except they will be free as always and, depending on your reading skills and alertness, take less than five minutes to read. Until then...