

## 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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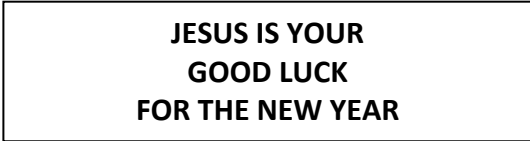
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### ***He is After Your Heart in Tumult***

On January 1, 2014, I had a dream that I was holding a rolled-up poster that I then unrolled. There was writing on it that was divided into two parts, with the lower part containing writing within a starburst. The top part of the poster read: **Jesus Is Your Good Luck For The New Year**. The bottom part of the poster that was in a starburst read: **He Is After Your Heart!**

I know this word is for me, but I pass it along, for I also believe it is for others, especially as we enter a time of tumult. In the same night, many times I heard the word for 2014: **Tumult is Coming!** I will come back to this.



**JESUS IS YOUR  
GOOD LUCK  
FOR THE NEW YEAR**



**HE  
IS AFTER  
YOUR  
HEART!**

My first reaction was quite mixed, and I wondered if this could be right or even made sense. No doubt, He is after hearts; this is a given. But, Jesus as good luck? Aren't we Christians taught that there is no such thing as good luck? It would have been more acceptable, at least to my initial way of thinking, if it read something like this: Jesus is your good for the New Year. Although a bit awkward, it has some merit, for, at least, it lines up with the psalmists: **Give thanks to the LORD, for He is good, for His lovingkindness is everlasting** [for the ages, or age-lasting] (Psalm 136:1). Or, better yet: **O taste and see that the LORD is good; how blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him!** (Psalm 34:8). We could spend a lot of time dwelling upon these two verses alone, but to consider the word *luck*, at least as we generally think of the word, as scriptural seems most untenable.

I was ready to discount the whole thing or, at least, the first part, until I looked up the definition of the word *luck*. I have learned to not be so quick to discount something just because it does not match my theology or that of the traditionalists. On more than one occasion, I believe the Lord has used the unusual to challenge me and stretch my understanding beyond the norm of the day. Often, these things are the Lord's teachable moments for me.

The most common definition of *luck* is: "the seemingly chance happening of events which affect one; fortune; lot; fate; good fortune; success, prosperity; advantage, etc." Truly, a case could be made for Jesus being our success, our prosperity, or our advantage. However, tracing the word back to its roots provides some additional meaning not commonly associated with its present-day meaning. The history of the word *luck* traces to the Middle English word *luk* or *lukke*. It also traces to an Indo-European base word *leug* that means "to bend." Thus, *luck* has the

basic sense of "what bends together," which implies "what occurs" or "what is fitting." Based on this, it seems that good luck could mean that something bends your way without any reason to do so other than by chance or, perhaps, the "odds" were in your favor.

Now, there is meaning to this word as it ties in with our Lord. Put aside the common notion that luck is all about chance events. With Jesus, nothing is by chance as if what good comes our way is by happenstance, as if based on some cosmic randomness. Jesus is our good bending together for 2014. Since He is after our hearts, He will bend our hearts toward Himself. He is going to bend us His way. He is the One who bends and shapes us into His image drawing us ever closer to His heart and mind. Jesus is our good fortune, success, and prosperity.

As I contemplated this, I was reminded of an article I wrote some years back on the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ, based on Paul's exhortation to the Corinthians: **O that ye were bearing with me a little of the folly, but ye also do bear with me: for I am zealous for you with zeal of God, for I did betroth you to one husband, a pure virgin, to present to Christ, and I fear, lest, as the serpent did beguile Eve in his subtilty, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity [G572] that is in the Christ....** (2 Corinthians 11:1-3 YLT)

In the Greek, *haplotes* [G572] is the word translated into simplicity. *Strong's Concordance* defines it as: From G573; *singleness*, that is, (subjectively) *sincerity (without dissimulation or self seeking)*, or (objectively) *generosity (copious bestowal)*: - bountifulness, liberal (-ity), simplicity, singleness. Its root word [G573] is *haplous*, which means "folded together" or "braided together (twine or braid)."

So, on one level, Paul exhorts the saints, which includes us, to be single-minded toward Christ. Do not confuse this with simple-minded, for our minds are to be actively engaged in this betrothal. This leads to a higher level that says this singleness is being folded together with the love of our life, the Lord Jesus. It is being braided together with our Love; to be folded together with Christ, not only in mind but in heart. It is a relational singleness.

Given this, *singleness* as in "folded together" and *luck* as in "what bends together" speak volumes as to our relationship with Jesus Christ. He bends us toward Himself so that we can be braided or folded together in His life. One Life, one Love, one Husband! This is all good. Is this not good luck, not as the world sees it but as the Spirit reveals it? May He reveal His heart ever more deeply to all of us this year! Do you realize that the number 14 (as in 2014) signifies *deliverance*? May we all be delivered out of double-mindedness and into single-mindedness and one heart with the Lord!

This leads to the second part and the good news of the poster dream. Again, the Lord is after your heart. As the Lord spoke to Samuel: **"God sees not as man sees, for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart"** (1 Samuel 16:7).

Tumult is God's way of getting hearts lined up with His heart. Tumult is designed to drive God's people out of the world system that has so infiltrated and held our hearts in bondage and to seek Him with our whole heart so that we will be of one heart. There is only one way, and that is to be folded and braided together with God's Son, to be bent His way.

But, why the starburst in the dream? Well, recall that the word *luck* comes from *luk* or *lukke*, which is very similar to the name *Luke*, which, in Latin, means "luminous" or "giving off light." Jesus is the Light of the world! He is our lumen, our Light for this year and beyond.

Dear people of God, the King is coming, and we are called to be His Kingdom. I know many say the Kingdom is within us, but it is only there to the degree we sanctify Christ as Lord of our heart (1 Peter 3:15). We only have the Kingdom within to the degree that Christ is within, to the degree that we are single toward Him in heart and mind, to the degree that we are bent toward Him. Fear not; through tumult, God will take full possession of the heart of His people, for Jesus is our good luck for the New Year in the midst of tumult. The Lord is our GOOD for 2014; He is our GOOD bending; our GOOD fit; our GOOD occurrence; our GOOD success; our GOOD advantage; our GOOD light; and yes, our GOOD luck! People, get ready; make straight the way of the Lord!