

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 #10-1606

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September 9, 2016

Evidence of the Enthroned Christ

He (Stephen) **perceived the glory of God, and Jesus, standing at the right hand of God, and said, "Lo! I am beholding the heavens opened up, and the Son of Mankind standing at the right hand of God."** (Acts 7:55-56 CLV)

Tell us ... what shall be the sign of Your presence, and the consummation of the age? And this gospel of the kingdom shall be proclaimed (heralded) throughout the whole inhabited) to set the evidence (testimony, witness) before all the nations; and then the end will come. (Matthew 24.3, 14 Weymouth, Numeric, Concordant)

Some fourteen times, the books of the New Testament proclaim that Jesus, as the Son of Mankind, is seated in power and glory at the right of God and His throne. In other words, Jesus as the Pattern Son of all mankind is now, this very day even, seated with His Father on His throne, meaning He is reigning on high. Jesus Himself tells those who are conquering that He is seated on His Father's throne (Revelation 3.21), and Peter declares: **Who is at God's right hand, being gone into heaven, messengers and authorities and powers being subjected to Him** (1 Peter 3.22).

The point is that Jesus is reigning with His Father, and as Paul declares: **He is seated at God's right hand among the celestials, 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 1.20-21).

Today, men seek to dominate the world. To be more precise, they seek domination over the kingdom of the world at every major level with little regard to the plight of the common man. At the heart of this is a desire for power and control to affect change according to a worldview that is best described as amoral and antichrist, and is driven, not only by a desire for absolute power and control but by **the love of money, which is the root of all sorts of evil** (1 Timothy 6.10). The elite of the world that are behind all this are not free from the love of money (1 Timothy 3.3; Hebrews 13.5). This is seen most prominently in the call for greater globalism, corporatism, and central planning of most all levels of life that directly impact globalism, either positively or negatively. Again, at its core, it is driven by an amoral, antichrist worldview of a few that seek, not the betterment of the masses, but simply to keep them under control. Unfortunately, there are those among the elite that call for the reduction of the masses, a much more onerous goal to achieve their end.

Unfortunately, one thing (not the only thing) that could stay the hand of such domination, namely, the political/governance system, has become so corrupt that it cannot nor will it stem the tide because it has become complicit, even enabling, in driving toward this world domination of power, greed, and the love of money. In the United States, eyes are beginning to be opened to the corruption of the political system and people are becoming more willing to listen to anyone who will challenge this corruption. The open question is: How long will this be allowed, will it be effective, and will it last? We need to keep in mind that whatever happens with the presidential election, the system it represents is still the kingdom of men and not the Kingdom of Christ.

Well, there are plenty of people commenting on all the above and more, so I leave this matter to them. Our concern must be directed toward setting the evidence.

First, a word about *antichrist*, which means something (men, ideas, things) has taken the place of Christ. One doesn't have to take an outward stand against Him to be of an antichrist spirit. All one has to do is place something or someone in the place reserved or designated for the true Christ. Christ may be acknowledged for being a good or

wise man, even a great prophet, but antichrist denies the place given Him by God. It comes down to this: Who has the right to sit on the throne of the world, man and his humanistic, amoral ideas or God's Son, the Lord Jesus?

This leads back to the opening verses. Scripture makes it abundantly clear the place that God's Son holds in the Kingdom of God. He is central, supreme, and preeminent and has authority over all things in heaven and on earth. For Christians, this must be an unquestionable and undeniable tenet. I would have rather stated that this *is* the tenet of *all* Christians, but given the state of affairs today, it is difficult to draw such an emphatic conclusion.

This leads to the question: Is the visible, nominal, public church of our day setting the evidence before all the nations of the good news of the Kingdom? Without doubt, the worldwide internet ministries would answer yes. After all, they are reaching most, if not all, of the habitable earth. But, what is their gospel? Is it heaven or burn? Is it blessing and prosperity? Is it faith? Is it prophecy? Is it healing? The answer is yes to these and much more. These are all emphases that may come into play as part of the good news, but they are not the core of the good news. Listening to some gospel messages played over the internet, one has to wonder how anyone ever understands the true nature of the gospel of the Kingdom. Here is the issue: that which is often called the gospel of the Kingdom is not the good news to which Jesus referred. Preaching to keep people out of hell and get them to heaven is not the good news. Actually, heaven or burn is not even the gospel of salvation; it is another gospel, as Paul would call it.

So, what is the heart of the gospel of the Kingdom? It is that Christ, whose name is Jesus and who is the Son of God and of Mankind, is seated at the right hand of God right now and He is reigning, having received all authority in heaven and on earth. He is not just an historical figure that comes alive in books, for He is not in a grave. He is the resurrected, ascended, glorified, and enthroned Christ that God has declared: **"This is My Beloved Son; hear Him."** He has conquered sin, death, the world, and the devil! And, God has set Him as King over the earth. And, as a result of all of this, He is going to deliver all of mankind into the Kingdom of God, not all at once or in this present age but all eventually in the ages to come. Why? Because He is the Savior of the world who takes away its sin! The good news is that this very One is going to return to this earth, not to destroy it but to restore it by ruling over the world in righteousness, justice, peace, and love. But the long view is not simply restoration; it is ultimately to make all things new by subjecting all things to Himself and abolishing all rule and authority and power. **For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet. The last enemy that will be abolished is death.** When He has accomplished all of this in the ages to come, He will then **hand over the Kingdom to the God and Father**, so that **God may be All in All** (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). This is the ultimate purpose of God, the good news of the Kingdom.

When Jesus was on the Mount speaking to His disciples, He responded to their question about His Presence and the end of the age. He said that this gospel of the Kingdom (not of personal salvation, per se) would be proclaimed or heralded throughout the whole habitable earth to testify or bear witness before all the nations. Of course, this verse has been used as the driving motivation for worldwide evangelism with its diversity of messages and emphases, some, not all, of which have led to and continue to lead to untold damage for the cause of Christ. But it is more than delivering messages. Actually, it is doubtful Jesus even meant to emphasize messages, as in platforms and pulpits, which are leftovers from Judaism and the old covenant. Additionally, this is not about some great revival which the flesh eventually gets hold of, nor is it about some so-called *renewal* that is more like a circus act with the Lord's people doing a lot of crazy things while claiming the supernatural is at work. No; this will be purely and solely of God. The flesh will not be allowed to touch it or claim credit for it.

In the Greek, the word for *testify* is *maturion*, which means "something evidential, i.e., evidence." To testify or to witness means to serve as evidence of. In this case, in heralding the gospel of the Kingdom, one is to set evidence of the Kingdom, implying that this is something much more than just words. The evidence is to serve as a forerunner or harbinger of what is to come, and this is what will occur with the Anointing and maturing of the conquerors that will occur at the end of this age as they begin to manifest as sons of God. Whatever the actual manifestation of the evidence looks like, it will make one thing abundantly clear to all the nations: Jesus has taken the Throne and He is King of kings and Lord of lords. His conquerors will testify to this not only in words but in action, for they know and manifest His absolute Lordship in every realm of their life for the nations to see. This is conquering. When the evidence has been set before all the nations, the resurrection and transfiguration of the conquerors will occur, along with the Presence of Jesus. This will be the commencement of the KINGDOM AGE.