

# 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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## *The Essence of God - Love*

The first issue of and the word for the year was on love, so it appears that this is the theme as we close out 2016. By the way, the number 16 signifies love. See: <http://www.kingdomandglory.com/tuc/tuc653.pdf>

Jesus said: **Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and mind. This is the first and most important commandment. The second most important commandment is like this one. And it is, "Love others as much as you love yourself." All the Law of Moses and the Books of the Prophets are based on these two commandments** (Matthew 22.37-40 CEV). Other translations express verse 40 in various ways: on these two rules all the law and the prophets *are based*; the entire law and all the demands of the prophets *are based* on these two commandments; on these two commandments the whole law and the prophets *hang*; all of the law and the writings of the prophets *take their meaning* from these two commands; the whole Law of Moses and the teachings of the prophets *depend on* these two commandments; the whole of the Law and the Prophets is *summed up* in these two Commandments. James repeated the Lord's words and called these commandments *the royal law* and *the law of liberty* (James 2.8, 12). Paul said: **Let love be your only debt! If you love others, you have done all that the Law demands. No one who loves others will harm them. So love is all that the Law demands** (Romans 13.8, 10 CEV). Other translations express the last part of this verse in various ways: love is the fulfillment of the law; love makes the law complete; love is all that the law demands; the complement, then, of the law is love; law's fullness is, therefore, love.

It is clear from all angles that love is the overarching law for all of God's law. It is His *royal law* which is the *law of liberty*, meaning true freedom is found only in God's love, not only expressed toward God but also toward all of mankind. Essentially, scripture tells us that all of the law and the writings of the prophets, which pretty much sum up what we call the *Old Testament*, are summed up in love. By extension, what is true of the Old Testament has to be especially true of all the writings in the New Testament. In other words, the whole of the Bible is summed up in love; it is its foundation, its cornerstone, its capstone, and the entirety of its structure. The Son of God's LOVE is All in all, and the very essence of the Lord's Kingdom is love. After all, it is the Kingdom of the Son of God's love. Further, New Jerusalem is the capital of the Kingdom, the city of pure gold that speaks mightily of God's very essence of love; God's gold is Divine love. We could say the whole of New Jerusalem is the embodiment of *God is love*.

Love is more than a concept or something to practice. It is an essence or being. Just in case there is any doubt, consider **the definition of essence**: 1. Something that is, or exists; entity. 2. That which makes something what it is; intrinsic, **fundamental nature** (of something); **essential being**. 3. In philosophy, **the inward nature of anything, underlying its manifestation; true substance**.

In 1 John (4.8, 16), we are told twice that *God is love*, and then John elaborates on how it was and continues to be manifested. So, the very essence, intrinsic, fundamental nature of God is love. Or, stated another way, the essential being and true substance of God is love. Is there any wonder that the whole of the law and the writings of the prophets is summed up in love?

To carry this to another level, love is the very core, the very existence of life itself. Love is the very meaning of life and is at the core of all life that emanates from God. Without love, there is no true life. With love, life flourishes and exceeds all expectations. Again, *God is love*! Take God away and there is no love, no knowing what love truly is. God gave the world His Beloved Son and demonstrated the true depths of His essential love nature through the horrific death of His Son, a life laid down in love. There is no greater love than one lays down his life for another. In this case, the Son laid down His life for all of humanity and all of creation itself. Then the Father raised His Son from the

dead as the New Creation Man to prove that love leads to life and that He freely gives His life to all by His grace through the faith of His Son. This is where and how mankind finds true liberty. This is based solely on this one righteous act of love. And, now, the Father pours forth or disperses this love, this very fundamental nature, into hearts through the Holy Spirit.

This explains true love, which is the good news. Mankind may have some expression of love, but the old humanity of the first Adam is so opposite God's Son, even opposed to Him. But, the Father overlooks mankind's true nature and looks at the Son of His love and freely by grace gives and gives and gives, and He will continue to give until all of mankind and all of His creation are filled with His love, His very essence, through His Son to the end that He truly becomes All in all in newness and in love.

Those who know they are dying often have some last words they want to express to those around them. It could be thanks, regrets, philosophy, and the list probably could go on without end. But for many, their last words generally embody what is most dear to their hearts. As the Lord Jesus was about to embrace the cross for all of humanity, He prayed to His Father as recorded in John 17, which some call the *high priestly prayer*. Obviously, there is much contained in Jesus' words, but the last six verses speak to what was dearest to His heart. His desire was that the Father would put His love in those given to Him in that day and, by extension, all the believers to follow.

**"I do not ask on behalf of these alone, but for those also who believe in Me through their word; that they may all be one; even as You, Father, are in Me and I in You, that they also may be in Us, so that the world may believe that You sent Me. "The glory which You have given Me I have given to them, that they may be one, just as We are one; I in them and You in Me, that they may be perfected in unity, so that the world may know that You sent Me, and loved them, even as You have loved Me. "Father, I desire that they also, whom You have given Me, be with Me where I am, so that they may see My glory which You have given Me, for You loved Me before the foundation of the world. "O righteous Father, although the world has not known You, yet I have known You; and these have known that You sent Me; and I have made Your name known to them, and will make it known, so that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17.20-26 NASB)**

The oneness of the Body of Christ, being perfected in unity, knowing the Father who sent His Son, and glory are all connected to love, the love between the Father and Son even before the foundation of the world. Perhaps, Jesus' prayer could be restated as such: "Father, put the love that we have between us into all who believe on Me and who know that You sent Me to earth in accordance with Your plan. It is Your love that will perfect them in unity; they will be one for the world to see and know that You sent Me. Your love will manifest in glory, the glory You have given to Me. O, give them Your love and place Me in them." And, the Father did! ***Christ in you, the hope of glory!*** With this prayer, Jesus, driven by love, went straightaway to Jerusalem to face the cross.

Metaphorically speaking, He was the seed of God containing the fullness of Deity, full of life and love. In the natural realm, a seed falls into the ground but, based on its DNA, it comes out of the ground in an entirely different form. In like fashion, Jesus came from heaven to earth as God's vessel to manifest God's love to the world through the cross. As the ultimate and consummate seed of God, He went into the ground as a man born of a woman. But, Jesus bore the very essence of God in His DNA and out from this heavenly DNA came forth an entirely new life, a new race of people unlike any that had gone before, a New Creation that embodies the fullness of God's love, one that will manifest oneness and the glory of God. He rose as a New Man constituted no longer of flesh and blood but of flesh and bones energized by Spirit, and this Spirit is love. The New Man, the Second Man bearing the image of the heavenly, is the absolute manifestation and expression of God's love.

There is only one Spirit and we are called to ***love in Spirit. Love is the perfect bond of unity (oneness)***. Only through love will we be perfected in unity as one Body that manifests the glory of God. What is glory? **Glory is the pure, unhindered manifestation of the love of God expressed in oneness in and throughout every fiber and molecule of creation.** This is the meaning of God the Father being ***ALL IN ALL***.

Finally, love builds up, edifies, surpasses all knowledge, cancels out all debts, removes all stains, heals all wounds, conquers all evil, overcomes every form of death, and much more. Simply, ***love never fails***, and thus, ***the earth will be filled with the knowledge of the glory of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea***. Let us love *love*!