

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)

#02-0870

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IT REMAINS ALONE

Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit. (John 12.24 NASB)

In issue #02-0869 May 12, 2008, I shared my experience of watching a little speck of lint fall to the ground and how the Lord spoke to my heart in near audible words: **“Unless a grain of wheat falls into the ground and dies, it cannot bear fruit.”** It was like a surreal moment to me as I watched this tiny dark piece of fabric slowly and quietly fall to the floor. It was as if time had been suspended for me as I was caught up in the moment. The Lord knows how to impress us with His thoughts, and that day He most surely gave me an indelible impression of His heart on the matter of dying in order to bear fruit.

Although the spirit of God did not quote the entire verse to me at that moment, two phrases actually were impressed upon my heart and in my mind. The first one, and the one taken up in this issue, is **it remains alone**. The second one is **if it dies**, which is taken up in a subsequent issue.

As I considered the phrase **it remains alone**, I was reminded of an article I recently read about what could be called a seed bank. A mountainside near the village of Longyearbyen, Norway is the home of the **Svalbard Global Seed Vault**, which opened in February 2008. Its location is on a remote island on Norway’s Svalbard archipelago about 1,000 kilometers (620 miles) from the North Pole. The area is engulfed in total darkness four months out of the year, and its average winter temperature is -12° C (10° F). This seed vault is described as the “doomsday” seed bank because it will be used to germinate upwards of 3 million different varieties of plants in the event of a worldwide catastrophe. In other words, if through a major catastrophic event, such as nuclear war, an asteroid strike, or climate change, some or all of the world’s crops are totally wiped out, seed stored in this vault could be used to restore the lost crops. As you can imagine, this vault is considered by the so-called “green movement” as a necessity if mankind is to survive the hypothetical (often, hysterical) threat of “global warming” or climate change that many fear is coming and will cause catastrophic consequences to man’s earth and mankind itself. Actually, I believe warming is a good thing and may be a blessing during the renaissance of the oncoming eon (age). The vault has been designed with one entrance, protected by dual blast-proof security doors with airlocks that open into a tunnel that leads to storage rooms about 119 meters (390 feet) into the mountain. The storage temperature will be between -20 and 10° C (-4 and 14° F). Seed will be wrapped in foil and sealed in boxes for preservation. The boxes are called “black boxes,” because they will not be opened when they arrive for storage; they will only be opened in the event there are no other sources for the seed.

To add to this discussion, we need to understand what a seed is. Seed is what produces a plant that in turn produces more seed, often through flowers or fruit. If the seed is never placed in the environment necessary for the particular variety or species of seed to germinate, then it will not produce a crop. It must be planted in an environment suitable for its germination, the process by which the seed’s embryo begins to grow until it bursts forth from the often thick outer shell or the “seed coat.” In other words, all the ingredients for life are contained within the embryo, protected by the seed coat. If one looks at a seed, it looks dead; it doesn’t move or do anything, let alone grow. From what I have read, the metabolic process within a seed is so slow that biochemical tests have a difficult time detecting signs of any life. In fact, if the embryo in some seed does not begin to

germinate within a certain length of time, then it will die. Some species of seeds need to germinate within weeks or they will die, and others can survive up to 100's or even 1,000's of years.

Well, this is far more information than one needs to understand my point, but I found the subject fascinating on three levels: first, the ingenuity of mankind; second, the extent to which mankind will go to survive, which seems more prevalent amongst those who do not believe in Jesus and have no understanding of the coming kingdom of Christ; and third, the illustrations taken from the natural world by the Lord Jesus to illustrate the principles of God. Jesus often taught His disciples the principles of God through illustrations drawn from the natural world. If anyone ever knew the inner workings of nature, surely the Creator of all knew as He walked amongst His creation.

So, you might ask: What is the point? The point is rather simple: millions of seed will be stored all alone, incapable of producing fruit so long as they remain wrapped in foil stored in black boxes. They have no life in this suspended or dormant condition, and as long as they remain so, they will remain alone. The genetic material within the seed will not germinate into its kind.

The Son of God came to this earth as one of a kind. There were not many of His kind; only one. There is only who walked this earth in perfect righteousness. If it had been possible to completely annihilate Him, then there would never have been any fruit borne of His likeness, in the likeness of His righteousness. But praise God; the grave could not hold Him and His seed is bringing forth an entirely new creation, a new man, in His image, in accord with the nature of His seed. The Righteous One will justify or make righteous the many. Isaiah tells us: **By His knowledge the Righteous One, My Servant, will justify the many, as He will bear their iniquities** (Isaiah 53.11 NASB).

But who are the many that will be justified or made righteous? Adding to Isaiah's word, Paul gives us the answer: **For if by the transgression of the one the many died, much more did the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abound to the many. ... So then as through one transgression there resulted condemnation to all men, even so through one act of righteousness there resulted justification of life to all men. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the One the many will be made righteous** (Romans 5.15, 18-19 NASB).

To understand what Paul wrote, it is best to think of it like an equation that has the first Adam, the first man, plus all mankind dead, and the last Adam, the Second Man, plus all mankind alive. The first Adam and the last Adam stand alone from all mankind in that they represent their one kind of seed. The first Adam's seed leads to death for all due to his one transgression; the last Adam's seed leads to life for all due to His one act of righteousness. Thus, *the many* refers to all mankind that comes forth from these two seeds. The good news is that in the Second Man, all mankind will be made righteous, not all at the same time, but all eventually, for our Savior, God, **wills that all mankind be saved and come into the realization of the truth** (1 Timothy 2.4 CV).

Consequently, if Jesus had remained alone and not gone into death for the many (all mankind), then the many would have remained in the grips of death. Thank God; He did not remain alone. He is not in some cold storage hidden away in the mountains of Norway. He has ascended back to His Father and now sits at His right hand waiting to usher in a new eon in which righteousness dwells and in which the first harvest of His fruit will come into glory, having been conformed to His image and likeness. The first harvest is the harvest when many sons are led into glory. Other harvests will follow in the oncoming eons until all mankind has been borne of His seed as promised to Abraham.

Now the Scripture having foreseen that God justifies [or, declares righteous] the nations by faith, proclaimed the Gospel beforehand to Abraham, [saying], "All the nations will be blessed in you" [Gen 12:3] (Galatians 3.8 ALT). The grain of wheat fell into the ground, died, and now lives. He is not alone, for His seed will bear the fruit of the many, that is, all mankind. What a Seed!