

UPWARD CALL

Brethren, I do not regard myself as having laid hold of it yet; but this is my one aim: to forget everything that's behind, and to strain every nerve to go after what lies ahead. I press on toward the finish line, where the prize waiting for me is the upward call of God
IN KING JESUS.

(Philippians 3:13-14)

#10-1618

by – Stuart H. Pouliot

November 30, 2016

God's Highest Order

So also, it is written, "The first MAN, Adam, BECAME A LIVING SOUL." The last Adam became a life-giving spirit. However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural; then the spiritual. The first man is from the earth, earthy; the second man is from heaven. As is the earthy, so also are those who are earthy; and as is the heavenly, so also are those who are heavenly. Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly. Now I say this, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; nor does the perishable inherit the imperishable. (1 Corinthians 15:45-50 NASB)

One thing that became clear as a result of the US 2016 presidential election is that there are a number of people, including some of the Lord's people, who are looking back to the founding of our nation and longing that the country return to its roots to be governed as the Founding Fathers envisioned. They call themselves patriots, conservatives, and constitutionalists, as well as Christians. This group believes they have their man, actually God's man, heading to the White House and that it is God's will we return to our roots; instead of a new direction forward, we are moving toward "the old direction that God set for us in 1776." What is fascinating is that some of these same ones are in the camp of those seeking to advance the kingdom of God on earth by infiltrating the kingdom of the world (e.g., the seven-mountains teaching).

From a secular perspective, all of this is quite understandable, especially if one's entire hope rests on the governments and laws of men. But, is it understandable, even acceptable, for Christians, especially those who are so-called *kingdom-minded*, to rest their hope on this same thing, which is *man's order*, not God's order? It is as if God's people are willing to accept something that, at best, could be called *good*, rather than seek for the best.

Don't get me wrong; as I have written in an article on the *Abrahamic covenant*, I believe America is a modern-day Israelite (not Jewish) nation planted by God. Our roots are firmly established in God and this is a good thing, but we were never and are not now a perfect nation. As man's document, our constitution had flaws back then as it does today. It is not a perfect constitution nor a heavenly one; it is a document of mortal men. I believe our destiny is to be a *perfected* nation that truly brings glory to God, but this will be brought to fruition only under the leadership of the King of kings in the age to come. Placing our hope in the kingdom of this world, that is, man's order, of which the USA is part, is blind folly at best and deception at worst. Until heaven proclaims, *the kingdom of this world has become the kingdom of our Lord and of His Christ*, we are stuck in man's order and all its weaknesses and failings, as well as its strengths and successes.

The answer to the nations of this world, all of which are continuing down a path of darkness, is the kingdom of King Jesus, which will establish God's order on earth among the nations. However, this kingdom is not established, built, or advanced by men. It is a kingdom based entirely on God's divine order. As such, we inherit it and enter into it; we don't create or do anything to establish God's heavenly order. It is the *reign of the heavens*. Another way to state this is that we are to be conformed to this order, to be brought into the reign of the heavens under the full governance of God's Son, and, from a conqueror's perspective, this comes about with immortality through resurrection/transfiguration, at which point we are fully conformed to the image of Christ.

Dear brethren, there is a real danger today as some of the Lord's people are looking back and not looking forward; they are seeking for the good but not the best. Our history is in the past, but our hope is in the future, and this hope rests in the person of our Lord Jesus and God's divine order established and manifested through His life in a people conformed to His image. We need vision of God's highest order, and we need to hold to this vision in the days ahead that will lead us into the kingdom of King Jesus and the oncoming ages of His glory that will fill the earth.

What is God's highest order? To answer this, for a moment, we need to move off the ground of the nations (i.e., governments) and move onto the ground of man, for it is here that we discover the genesis of God's highest order. As the opening verses make clear, this order is discovered in the first and last Adam.

There are some that teach that God is going to restore man back to the state of Adam before the fall. Thus, Jesus' redemptive work is simply to recover the first Adam's pre-fall or unfallen state. In light of Paul's teaching, this cannot be so. God is not interested in conforming us to the image of the first Adam. No! His entire focus and plan is to conform us to the image of His Son, the last Adam, the second man. Anything else falls far short of God's glory. God has left the first order of mankind behind, and He is pressing on toward the fulfillment of the second order based entirely on the last Adam, the Son of God, our Lord Jesus.

According to Paul, the first Adam was a living soul, of the earth, earthy; and the last Adam is a life-giving spirit, of heaven, heavenly. He encourages us: *Just as we have borne the image of the earthy, we will also bear the image of the heavenly.* Another way to state this is that the first order of man is soul-based; the second order of man is spirit-based. They are two entirely different orders constituted on entirely different ground. The second order is the highest order of God, for it is the order of His beloved Son, the pattern Son of an entire new race, a new creation, bearing the image of the heavenly, which is another way of stating *of the spirit*. The second man is out of heaven, and this is why Paul encourages us *to wait for His Son from heaven* (1 Thessalonians 1:10), and *seek above where Christ is* (Colossians 3:1). Why? *For our realm is inherent in the heavens, out of which we are awaiting a Saviour also, the Lord, Jesus Christ, Who will transfigure the body of our humiliation, to conform it to the body of His glory, in accord with the operation which enables Him even to subject all to Himself* (Philippians 3:20-21). This is the bringing forth of the second order that will continue to increase in the oncoming ages.

There is no order higher than God's Son, and all things in heaven and on earth will be summed up or headed up in this order. This is our destiny and the one thing for which we are to press on toward, not looking back to the first order or anything associated with it. We are of the new creation where all things are made new. There is to be no turning back to the old order once we have set our hands to the plow to enter into this order. Seek above! Press on! Don't look back!

This highest order is not just about individual new creations in Christ but about the body of Christ, the corporate new creation of conquerors who will be raised up in His likeness as a company of people that will help lead all of creation under the headship of Christ. Today, it is called the *ecclesia* (church), which is the body of Christ. This order is New Jerusalem and spiritual Israel. The first order of Jerusalem and Israel have passed away and a new order has been brought in (Hebrews 8:13). New Jerusalem and the Israel of God are of the highest order of God. To the Galatians, Paul declared that *Jerusalem above is free; she is our mother* (Galatians 4:21-31). The present Jerusalem is of the first order and all associated with it must be cast out. God has a much higher order, and this order is in His Son and all that are in Him. John saw New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven having the glory of God and residing on a new earth suspended in a new heaven. Many focus on the physical aspects of it, but its symbolism speaks of a people who are the city, the city of the called-out ones who are now the center of the universe and the highest order of God's government and authority, and the highest order of all that God has purposed to fulfill until the consummation of the ages.

Dear saints, it cannot be stressed enough how essential it is for us in these last days to press on toward the second order, the highest order of God, and to turn from the first order. If we are in Christ, let us not try to restore or clean up all that is associated with the first order, no matter the good that might be found in it. We are not to be of the present world order. As Jesus prayed: *They are not of the world [kosmos; present orderly arrangement], even as I am not of the world* (John 17:16).

Let us pursue to enter into the fullness of God's highest order, for here we discover the best, which is none other than the Son of God, our Lord Jesus, the Anointed One who is the embodiment of the ALL NEW of God that comes forth from heaven having all the glory of God.