

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)

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Testimony of Jesus

In the Greek text of scripture, the word *maturia* (G3141) means "evidence given" and is translated in English as *record, report, testimony, or witness*. Another way to state this is *set the evidence*. The day is coming when the evidence of the enthroned King Jesus will be set for all the nations to see. Along these lines, through John the apostle, we discover the expressions *the testimony of God* and the *testimony of Jesus*. All things start with God, so this is where we need to start.

For this is the testimony of God, that He has testified concerning His Son. He who is believing in the Son of God has the testimony in himself; he who is not believing God has made Him a liar, for he has not believed in the testimony which God has testified concerning His Son. And this is the testimony, that God gives us life eonian, and this life is in His Son. He who has the Son has the life; he who has not the Son of God has not the life. (1 John 5:9-12 CLV)

God's testimony is His Son. The one and only thing for which He wants to set the evidence for the world to see and to know is His Son. God testifies that He gives those rescued out of Adam's race *life eonian* (*aiionian*, age-during, age-abiding life) in His Son. There is no other life to the Father but the life of His Son, and He freely gives this life to those who have been freely given *the* faith of the Son to believe in Him. This life is not eternal life, as many would have us believe, but life in the ages (eons, *aiions*) to come. It is the victorious life in the body of Christ that is the complement of Christ the head of His body as He sums up or heads up all things in heaven and on earth until all things are new and death is abolished.

So, this is God's testimony about His Son, but what about Jesus' testimony? For this answer, we must consider John's Patmos *Revelation*. After hearing of the wedding dinner of the Lambkin and seeing the one speaking to him, John fell at the feet of the angel (messenger). To this, the angel said: *Do not do that; I am a fellow servant of yours and your brethren who hold the testimony of Jesus; worship God. For the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy.* (Revelation 19:10).

John's natural reaction was to fall down before the angel as a sign of reverence or adoration, which is what the word *worship* means. Rightfully, the angel directed John back to God who alone is to be worshipped. Note—the angel joined the testimony of Jesus with worshipping God, meaning Jesus came to testify of His Father. His testimony was continually about His Father. *I have come in My Father's name* (John 5:43). *I and the Father who sent Me* (John 8:16). *I speak of the things I have seen with My Father* (John 8:38). Jesus glorified His Father on earth and manifested His name to the ones given to Him (John 17:4, 6). Further, Jesus Himself testified that an hour was coming and now is when all true *worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and truth* (John 4:23). So, on one level, the testimony of Jesus is engrossed in glorifying and revealing the Father and His will. However, the angel did not stop here but rather presented a second level that identifies the testimony of Jesus with the spirit of prophecy.

The entirety of John's Patmos vision is prophecy and is properly titled *The Revelation* (or *Unveiling*) of *Jesus Christ*. In other words, at the very core of John's vision is Christ, the Son of God who is *the word of God, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and the faithful and true witness*. The whole of *Revelation* and, in

fact, the whole of all God-inspired scripture sets the evidence of God's Son. If prophecy, even that which speaks of times and events, does not reveal Jesus and set the evidence of who and what He is, then it is not prophecy from God. We could say that the testimony of Jesus is the very heart of all prophecy. As Peter wrote: *But know this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture is a matter of one's own interpretation, for no prophecy was ever made by an act of human will, but men moved by the Holy Spirit spoke from God* (2 Peter 1:20-21). As one translation states this, *the prophets did not think these things up on their own, but they were guided by the Spirit of God* (CEV).

What is the testimony of Jesus? There is one proof at the beginning of John's vision that goes right to the heart of His testimony, which is the first of the three times that John fell at the feet of someone. In Revelation 19:10 and 22:8, John fell at the feet of an angel as a sign of worship, which he was told not to do. Each time, John was told to worship God. But the first time, there was someone altogether different that caused him to fall as a dead man.

When I saw Him, I fell at His feet like a dead man. And He placed His right hand on me, saying, "Do not be afraid; I am the first [Alpha, A] and the last [Omega, Z], and the living One; and I was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore [ages of the ages], and I have the keys of death and of Hades [unseen]. (Revelation 1:17-18 NASB [added])

The One "who is and who was and who is to come, the Almighty" (Revelation 1:8) was standing before John who, in that instant, could not contain himself in the presence of the one he had beheld in the flesh and upon whose breast he had leaned, knowing Jesus loved him.

Herein lies the full depth of the testimony of Jesus. We don't have to make it doctrinally complex or systematize it. *Jesus' testimony is LIFE!* His LIFE that encompasses, encapsulates, and envelopes ALL THINGS! His LIFE is comprehensive, for it extends from A to Z, meaning ALL THINGS.

The great enemy of Adam's race is death in all its outward and subtle forms. But the good news is that the one who was dead is now alive. He has defeated death and taken hold of its key. At the consummation of the ages, the last enemy of the old creation will be abolished—all to the glory of God. As Paul wrote: *The last enemy that will be abolished is death* (1 Corinthians 15:26). Today, all around us and even within us is corruption. We have not put off our corruption; this comes with the presence of our Lord whom we wait for from heaven *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 3:21).

A day is coming when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall come to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy victory? O death, where is thy sting? The sting of death is sin; and the power of sin is the law. This is the testimony of Paul: *But thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ* (1 Corinthians 15:54-57).

This goes along with the complete, overwhelming victory we have in the one who loves us. We are more than conquerors because Jesus is the victor and He is the life. He lives; we live. He is victorious; we are victorious. We will be incorruptible because He is beyond death.

This is the testimony of Jesus. I AM the LIFE!