

The DEFENDER - November 2016

“... defending the faith once delivered unto the saints” (Jude 3)

A monthly publication of the
IN DEFENSE OF TRUTH radio broadcast.



FROM THE DIRECTOR'S DESK: The Spirit of Jezebel

King Solomon said there's nothing new under the sun (**Ecclesiastes 1:9**). We may be almost 3000 years removed from Jezebel, evil queen of Israel, but as Jesus said in **Revelation 2:20**, the spirit of Jezebel can be found in any generation. Jezebel ranks as the most evil woman in all of scripture. Her name is often used as an example of people who completely reject God. Jezebel married into the Hebrew nation, but did not worship her husband's God. King Ahab let her in, and compromised *his* faith by building an altar to the pagan god Baal.

Compromise is a terrible thing. 2 Corinthians 6 is clear that Christians are not to be unequally yoked in any way with non-Christians. This is especially evident in marriage. And Ahab is a perfect example of why. When a believer is joined to an unbeliever it often weakens the faith and commitment of the Christian. The unbeliever has nothing to lose. Because marriage involves two people becoming one, faith may become an issue and one spouse may have to compromise beliefs for the sake of unity. Many people discount this problem only to regret it later. So don't allow emotion or passion to bind you with someone who will not be your spiritual partner. The apostle Paul asked the question in **2 Corinthians 6:15** "What harmony does Christ have with the devil?" For those who have discovered God's kingdom of light there can be no contact or compromise with the kingdom of darkness. But the women who intermarried with the Hebrew men brought their false religions with them. And no one was more determined than Jezebel to make all Israel worship *her* gods.

The precedent was actually set years before when King Solomon unequally yoked himself to hundreds of wives and mistresses. And because he couldn't say no to his lustful desires sin held sway and he ended up compromising his faith. Your faith may be strong but you also have areas of weakness, and that's where temptation usually strikes. The end result of Solomon's sin was the downfall of Israel, resulting in a divided kingdom. By the time King Ahab came along, compromise had become a way of life and Jezebel was able to have her way.

In what may be a related story, the United States of America, founded as one nation under God, is now a country divided. In the years since our Founding Fathers looked to Jehovah God as being the author and finisher of their faith, our nation's leaders have compromised that faith to the twin gods of secularism and self-gratification. Because of that, our national sins of abortion and same-sex marriage have gone from being something which was unthinkable and preposterous just a few decades ago to being perfectly normal and acceptable to many Americans today. It's clear that the spirit of Jezebel is now alive and well in our nation. The question that faces us with the election of a new president is will we continue down the path of compromise to our ultimate destruction, or will we return instead to the path of righteousness on which we started? Only God knows.

Rev. David Lewis

The Snare of Easy Believism

Part 1 – The One Path to Eternal Life

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

Can salvation come to one spiritually dead, cursed with an inbred spiritual nature enslaved and blinded by Satan (Ep. 2:1-3; 2 Cor. 4:3-4) if they “ask Jesus into their heart”? Yes, if we cite the many times Jesus and His Apostles led the spiritually dead to new life by that formula. We would only need to show the biblical record of the many times the lost lifted themselves from darkness to light. It’s just that there are none.

Satan delights in any teaching that misleads the unsaved to believe that they are reconciled to God by their own efforts or good works to be added to that which God has ordained. Satan is satisfied if a soul still remains lost and enslaved to him after “asking Jesus to come into their heart.”

God’s preordained plan is to adopt into His family the formerly “children of wrath” and “disobedience” by the power of His Word and Spirit alone (Ep. 1:4-12) and to change mortality to immortality (2 Tim. 1:9-10). This is accomplished apart from prefabricated prayers or clichéd phrases. While scripture shows Jesus comes by His spirit into the hearts of every chosen child of God, it is without man’s help or good works (John 1:12-13, 6:44, 14:6; Gal. 2:20; Col. 1:27).

When the Philippian jailer asked Paul, “What must I do to be saved?” (Acts 16:30-31), he was immediately directed away from any thought of works righteousness to simply “**BELIEVE**” – on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved and thy house.” Believing and trusting only Christ’s FINISHED work is solely by the undeserved Gift of faith alone by Grace alone (John 17:4; Ep. 2:8-10).

All unsaved, unregenerated sinners must first be “drawn” by the Father (John 6:44) to be enabled to truly trust in Jesus’ name (Acts 4:12). Now the regenerated heart is birthed with a willingness to “learn of me” (Matt. 11:29). Only Christ’s sacrifice could ransom our lost souls (Heb. 1:3; 2:9; 10:10-17; 1 Pet. 3:18; 1 John 2:12). Every adopted child of God will be found in true belief and genuine trust in Christ (John 3:16, 5:24, 11:25-26).

There is a narrative of the Child-Evangelist who noticed a certain 12-year-old that came forward week after week to get saved. When the opportunity came, the evangelist asked the 12-year-old what he had been told previously. He replied, “I was told to ask Jesus into my heart.” The evangelist inquired, “Did you?” The 12-year-old confirmed that he had but did not know if Jesus had really come. The evangelist gave him the following explanation: “Though we are all hell-deserving, rebellious sinners (Rom. 3:10-12, 23, 6:23a), God Himself came to be born of a virgin to become as one of us (John 1:14) to willingly die as the necessary perfect sacrifice in our place. He rose out of the tomb and paid our sin debt (1 Cor. 15:3-4; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Is. 53:5-6). Eternal life follows only upon man’s exercise of God’s free GIFT of grace and faith (Rom. 5:15, 17, 6:2; Ep. 2:8). Christ charged His disciples to come with childlike faith or remain in banishment from the Kingdom of God (Matt. 11:25; Luke 18:15-17; Mark 10:14-16). No enemy of

God (James 4:4) or unsaved spiritually dead sinner is regenerated (born again) by 'asking Jesus into their heart' (Rom 3:24-28; Gal. 2:16-20, Titus 3:5)."

Once the 12-year-old's name was inserted into John 3:16, he was finally able to trust Jesus and thank Him for saving him. He came forward no more. John Newton wrote, "I once was lost but now AM FOUND ... the hour I first believed." It is futile and unavailing to parrot asking Jesus to come into your heart, without understanding one's sentence to eternal condemnation (John 3:18-19, 36; 2 Pet. 2:9-10, 17) nor the Gospel of God's grace. Jesus' sacrifice alone can deliver the lost from interment in a natural rebellious spiritual state (Jer. 17:9-10. Paul wrote, "Christ died for our sins" (1 Cor. 15:1-4).

The true Gospel centers in Jesus Christ alone who left heaven to become a man (John 1:1-4, 14) to provide our redemption by serving OUR sentence, dying in our place. Now all the formerly helpless and hopeless are impelled by the Holy Spirit to recognize and exercise God's undeserved Gift of faith in Christ's work alone (John 17:4, 19:30; Heb. 4:39). Now adopted, God's children proclaim His Gospel to all the World. Christ is our King and we are His Ambassadors. His plan for man's salvation comes not from any rote prayer to, "ask Jesus to come into our heart" without full understanding of our just condemnation or of Christ's vicarious sacrifice that rescues the hopelessly dead from an eternity in Hell. Sinners must be first convinced of their imminent and eternal danger (Matt. 7:21-23, 8:12, 25:30).

Those expressing an interest in Christ's Gospel could be asked probing questions, such as: "If you were to die today, are you certain you would be in heaven?", "If you were standing before Jesus who asked, 'why should I let you into my heaven?', what would you say?", "Can you do or fail to do something to lose your salvation?"

Sometimes people are carelessly told they are saved because they made a commitment or came forward or surrendered all to Christ or asked Jesus into their heart without their ever understanding that condemned sinners are only reconciled to a Holy God by the mercy purchased by the blood of the Son of God (Heb. 9:22; Ep. 2:1-10), and all sinners can do is believe in and trust in Christ's offer.

The Bible explains how sinners are saved. Only through Christ's sacrifice is forgiveness available and only when God's ordained genuine belief is manifested. Through God's divinely appointed sacrifice of His only Son Jesus Christ, can sinners be justified (Is. 53:5-6; Heb. 2:9, 13:12; Gal. 1:4) in everything that Law-keeping or invented rituals or man's works-righteousness are powerless to do (Acts 13:38-39). All whom GOD justifies and reconciles are made so by an undeserved Gift of faith (Rom. 8:28-30). Those who pridefully insist on adding their works-righteousness to Christ's perfect sacrifice must satisfy ALL the Law's requirements (Matt. 5:48; James 2:10). Only Christ's complete and perfect sacrifice satisfied God's requirements and provided a righteous covering (Gen. 3:21; Matt. 22:11-14; Rom. 4:4-8).

Salvation is by God's MERCY apart from all human effort because work is not grace (Rom. 9:15, 11:6). No sacrifice of man can justify the guilty, and only our High Priest Jesus Christ can present us pardoned before a Holy God (Heb. 9:12-14, 28). By all the works of all men combined, "No flesh shall be justified" (Gal. 2:16). Any other teaching, any other religion that prescribes works-righteousness or ritualistic Law-keeping, is tantamount to thievery and robbery

(John 10:1, 7-10). Christ is the only DOOR to eternal life and His justified ones were given life by faith (Rom 1:17). So then it is “not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us ... justified by His grace, we should be made heirs ... of eternal life...” (Titus 3:5, 7).

It is a most serious offense before God to mislead an unjustified, unsaved sinner into a false sense of security by the implementation of unscriptural man-centered side paths of modernistic “Easy Believism” methodologies. There is an eternity of difference between “I asked Jesus into my heart” and to trust our eternal souls to God’s mercy alone. God first removes the stoney heart (Ez. 11:19) and opens it (Acts 16:14) and grants us “eyes to see and ears to hear” (Matt. 13:9-16). Only God the Son can raise the dead and redeem the lost by His own shed blood (Rom. 5:8-10; 1 Pet. 1:18-21).

The whole focus of Christ’s Gospel is completely AWAY from man’s vaunted rituals and vain repetitions (Matt. 6:17) and points rather to Christ’s exclusiveness. “No man can come to me except ... the Father DRAW him” (John 6:44) and “no man cometh unto the Father but by me” (John 14:6).

Many are honest and sincere in their evangelistic endeavors to bring the lost to Christ, and many unsaved sinners are truly convinced that their own efforts have brought them salvation. They repeated a “sinner’s prayer” or “asked Jesus into their hearts” but before long fell away proving they were unchanged “children of wrath” (Ep. 2:2-3).

We are cautioned by God’s Word to rely on nothing but what He has provided for life eternal and to abstain from man-made rites and rituals and above all to place no reliance on human good works, but to look to and lean on Christ’s finished work on Calvary alone. From cover to cover, the Bible teaches that salvation of lost men and women is solely of the Lord and depends on nothing that man has devised to “supplement” God’s grace. Sinners are simply called to be-lieve in and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ who washed our sin-stained souls with His own blood (1 John 1:7). One day He will present His Bride “arrayed in fine linen, clean and white” (Rev. 19:8).

No one can save themselves by “asking Jesus into their heart” since that possibility is not found in scripture. Each must be first taught of man’s hopeless depravity and then of God’s sovereign mercy and to avoid methods that allow false assurances to the perishing. All honor, glory and praise to our God who is at once both Author AND Finisher of our salvation (Heb. 12:2).

Keep looking up.

Main Source:

Author:

Publisher:

Seven Reasons Not to Ask Jesus into Your Heart

Dennis M. Rokser

Duluth Bible Church

218-724-5914

www.duluthbible.org

The Blessing of Thorns

By Nancy Long

1 Chron. 23:30 -- *"And to stand every morning to **thank and praise** the Lord, and likewise at even."*

Psalm 92:1 -- *"It is a good thing to **give thanks** unto the Lord, and to **sing praises** unto Thy name, O most high."*

2 Cor. 9:15 -- *"**Thanks** be unto God for His unspeakable gift."*

Eph. 5:20 -- *"**Giving thanks always** for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ."*

Col. 3:15 -- *"And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye **thankful**."*

1 Thess. 5:18 -- *"In everything **give thanks**: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you."*

I've only added a few here, but Scripture is replete, absolutely chocked full, of verses exhorting us to "**be thankful**!" Do you not think it strange that God would feel the need to admonish His people to show gratitude and "**be thankful**"? Even those of us who name the name of Christ who have been born again, are being admonished in Words from God, to **give thanks** unto the Lord continually, in **all** things, at **all** times, **forevermore**. The Lord pours out His blessings on us each and every day: sunshine, rain, food, shelter, joy unspeakable, mercies that are "*new every morning*" (Lam. 3:22-23). Why then, do we humans tend toward grumbling and complaining, only remembering the bitter things of life?

It's so easy to be happy in times of plenty, isn't it? Cheerful speech rolls off our tongues, it seems, when all is right with the world. When we're comfortable, safe and warm, it's simple to express words of appreciation, praise, and joy. What, though, about those tough times? What about those times when we really don't "**feel**" grateful? Are we to "*stand every morning and every evening and thank and praise the Lord*"? Are we to "*praise the name of God with a song, and magnify Him with thanksgiving*" (1 Chron. 23:30 and Psalm 69:30)? Are we??

Those struggling seasons **will** come, we've been warned in John 33a, and trials **will** attempt to envelop and overwhelm but clinging to the rest of that verse is what's

extremely important, *"be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."* Another promise on which we can rest and be assured, *"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee"* (Heb. 13:5b).

Trust His heart trust His timing, and perhaps we can and will, with the help of the Spirit Who resides within, be grateful even for the "thorns of life"!! Gratitude that comes from the deepest part of the heart, I believe, is the ability to see the grace of God each moment of every day, no matter what the path of life escorts in.

Sandra felt as low as the heels of her shoes as she pushed against a November gust of wind, and the flower shop door. Her life had been easy, like a spring breeze. Then in the fourth month of her second pregnancy, a minor automobile accident took that from her.

During this Thanksgiving week she would have delivered a son. She grieved over her loss. As if that weren't enough, her husband's company threatened a transfer. Then her sister, whose holiday visit she coveted, called and said she couldn't come for the holiday.

Then Sandra's friend infuriated her by suggesting her grief was a God-given path to maturity that would show her to empathize with others who suffer. " She has no idea what I'm feeling" thought Sandra with a shudder.

Thanksgiving? Thankful for what, she wondered? For a careless driver, whose truck was barely scratched when he rear-ended her? For an airbag that saved her life, but took that of her child?

"Good afternoon, can I help you?" The shop clerk's approach startled her.

"I I need an arrangement," stammered Sandra.

"For Thanksgiving? Do you want beautiful, but ordinary, or would you like to challenge the day with a customer favorite I call the Thanksgiving Special?" asked the shop clerk. "I'm convinced that flowers tell stories," she continued. "Are you looking for something that conveys 'gratitude' this Thanksgiving?"

"Not exactly!" Sandra blurted out. "In the last five months, everything that could go wrong, has gone wrong."

Sandra regretted her outburst, and was surprised when the shop clerk said, "I have the perfect arrangement for you."

Just then the shop door's small bell rang, and the shop clerk said, "Hi, Barbara let me get your order." She politely excused herself and walked toward a small work-room, then quickly reappeared, carrying an arrangement of greenery, bows, and long-stemmed thorny roses. Except the ends of the rose stems were neatly snipped there were no flowers.

"Want this in a box,?" asked the clerk.

Sandra watched for the customer's response. Was this a joke? Who would want rose stems with no flowers?! She waited for laughter, but neither woman laughed.

"Yes, please," Barbara, replied with an appreciative smile. "You'd think after three years of getting the special, I wouldn't be so moved by its significance, but I can feel it right here, all over again," she said as she gently tapped her chest. And she left with her order.

"Uh," stammered Sandra, "that lady just left with, uh she just left with no flowers!"

"Right", said the clerk, "I cut off the flowers. That's the Special. I call it the Thanksgiving Thorn's Bouquet."

"Oh, come on, you can't tell me someone is willing to pay for that!" exclaimed Sandra.

"Barbara came into the shop three years ago feeling much like you feel today," explained the clerk. "She thought she had very little to be thankful for. She had lost her father to cancer, the family business was failing, her son was into drugs, and she was facing major surgery."

"That same year, I had lost my husband," continued the clerk, "and for the first time in my life, had just spent the holidays alone. I had no children, no husband, no family nearby, and too great a debt to allow any travel."

"So what did you do?" asked Sandra.

*"I learned to be thankful for thorns," answered the clerk quietly. "I've always thanked God for the good things in my life, and never questioned the good things that happened to me, but when bad stuff hit, **did I ever ask questions!!** It took time for me to learn that dark times are important. I have always enjoyed the 'flowers' of life, but it took thorns to show me the beauty of God's comfort. You know, the Bible says*

that God comforts us when we're afflicted, and from His consolation we learn to comfort others."

Sandra sucked in her breath as she thought about the very thing her friend had tried to tell her. "I guess the truth is I don't want comfort. I've lost a baby, and I'm angry with God."

Just then someone else walked in the shop. "Hey, Phil" shouted the clerk to the balding, rotund man.

"My wife sent me in to get our usual Thanksgiving Special 12 thorny, long-stemmed stems!" laughed Phil, as the clerk handed him a tissue-wrapped arrangement from the refrigerator.

"Those are for your wife?" asked Sandra incredulously. "Do you mind me asking why she wants something that looks like that?"

"No I'm glad you asked," Phil replied. "Four years ago my wife and I nearly divorced. After forty years, we were in a real mess, but with the Lord's grace and guidance, we trudged through problem after problem. He recued our marriage. Jenny here (the clerk) told me she kept a vase of rose stems to remind her of what she learned from "thorny" times, and that was good enough for me. I took home some of those stems. My wife and I decided to label each one for a specific "problem" and give thanks for what that problem taught us."

As Phil paid the clerk, he said to Sandra, "I highly recommend the Special!"

"I don't know if I can be thankful for the thorns in my life." Sandra said. "It's all too fresh."

"Well," the clerk replied carefully, "my experience has shown me that thorns make roses more precious. We treasure God's providential care more during trouble than at any other time. Remember, it was a crown of thorns that Jesus wore so we might know His love. Don't resent the thorns."

Tears rolled down Sandra's cheeks. For the first time since the accident, she loosened her grip on resentment, "I'll take those twelve long-stemmed thorns, please," she managed to choke out.

"I hoped you would," said the clerk gently. "I'll have them ready in a minute."

"Thank you. What do I owe you?"

"Nothing. Nothing but a promise to allow God to heal your heart. The first year's arrangement is always on me." The clerk smiled and handed a card to Sandra. "I'll attach this card to your arrangement, but maybe you would like to read it first."

It read: My God, I have never thanked You for my thorns. I have thanked You a thousand times for my roses, but never once for my thorns. Teach me the glory of the cross I bear; teach me the value of my thorns. Show me that I have climbed closer to You along the path of pain. Show me that, through my tears, the colors of Your rainbow look much more brilliant."

Praise Him for your roses thank Him for your thorns!!"

(Published by E-mail Ministry ---- Author unknown)

**Remember, it was a crown of thorns that Jesus wore so we might know His love.
Don't resent the thorns!!**

Give thanks, my Defender friends give thanks!!!



What Kind of Government Do We Want?

Opinion Commentary by Kevin Bruffey

This year's presidential election makes me wonder what kind of government people want. Many in recent years are waking up to the reality that we don't live in a democracy but rather a constitutional republic. However, that's not what people seem to want. Like in years past both parties seek to mobilize their people behind the issue of the Supreme Court. At first glance, this makes sense because a key role for the president is to appoint justices when vacancies arise.

However, the fervor behind driving people to the polls based on this issue makes me wonder if there's more of a desire for an oligarchical form of government rather than a constitutional republic. To put it plainly, are we seeking to be governed by a few or many?

I've received e-mails designed to scare me into voting for a particular candidate because he will apparently appoint judges who will rule correctly on matters, which after examining Article 3 Section 2 of the Constitution, do not even fall into the Supreme Court's jurisdiction. It seems to me time would be better spent pushing for congressional candidates who will restrain the court and re-claim what falls in their jurisdiction or direct matters back to the states where they belong.

Moving towards an oligarchy should be a major concern. Further allowing the judiciary to gain strength by elevating judicial decisions to legal precedent and strictly applying them to future cases and legislation brings about a major concern the Founding Fathers had. They didn't want justices to legislate from the bench and undermine Congress. Even Alexander Hamilton, who was known for advocating a strong central government, wanted the federal judiciary's decrees to be subject to the will of the legislative and executive branches which he noted in the Federalist Papers.

When courts undermine the role of the legislature the American tradition is undermined as well. That tradition is expressed in the Declaration of Independence with the words: governments are instituted among Men, deriving their powers from the consent of the governed. With the belief that governmental powers ought to be derived from the people it's understandable why the founders sought to rest most of the governing power in the hands of the legislature which is comprised of two houses- one in which the people directly elect representatives and the other which the people elect through their state senators, or at least did until 1913. Under this approach, governing is spread out amongst many who derive their power from the broad base of citizens to better reflect the will of the people.

Congress, unlike the judiciary, is also held accountable to the people. With the House of Representatives elected every two years, people's concerns in local districts can be frequently addressed. Under the original model in which state senators elected the U.S. Senators, the Senators were held accountable by the states they represented. The people, of course, held their state senators accountable in local elections. In setting up a legislative system with two

houses at the Federal level and requiring states to have a republic form of government to enter the Union, the founders clearly saw the wisdom in Exodus 18:25 which describes Moses delegating authority by population levels as we have in our current system.

In reading Article 3 Section 2 of the Constitution I see the wisdom in creating the Supreme Court. The founders realized matters pertaining to the Federal Constitution would arise. They knew that matters regarding treaties would arise. There would also be issues among states that would require attention which the Congress was required to address as well.

However, over the past 80 years the court has extended its jurisdiction into matters it doesn't belong, including abortion, marriage, and commerce. Not only has it undermined the role of Congress but it has disregarded the 10th Amendment by removing state and local authority from an assortment of matters. The first paragraph of Section 2 stipulates that the Court shall address matters under Law and Equity arising under the Constitution pertaining to the laws of the United States or Federal Law. It's clear that the Supreme Court was designed to handle federal matters, so many cases over the years should have been handled by lower courts and not escalated to the Federal Level. Often the courts oversaw matters between individuals such as Roe v. Wade which did not fall under its jurisdictional parameters. Only when there are matters arising from groups of individuals among different states should the Supreme Court involve itself.

There's old wisdom that government is best when it's closest to the people. With the respect I've had over the years for the 10th Amendment I've been led to embrace the need for decentralized government and local control. Had the Supreme Court been limited to its original jurisdiction over the years we may have been able to realize the fruits of this model. I believe our freedoms would have been kept much more intact as well.

While we've seen consequences of the Supreme Court over-stepping its jurisdiction, there's many reasons to say that Congress and presidents over the years have as well. So, the real need isn't to seek candidates who will appoint the right people for us in government but rather ones who will restrain government for us.



VOTE!

Our mission through the broadcast of In Defense of Truth and the publication of The Defender newsletter is to earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints (Jude 3). Our vision today is just as strong as it was back in 1963 when Dr. John Dekker began this outreach. We pray that you will continue to stand with us as we hold true to God's holy Word.

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DEFENDER CONTRIBUTORS

Rev. David R. Lewis, MDiv., Director, IDOT
Robert Luthardt, Sr., Elder, CHBPC
Nancy Long, Member, CHBPC
Kevin Bruffey, Deacon, CHBPC

WRITE TO US!

Rev. David Lewis &
In Defense of Truth
2927 Cub Hill Road
Baltimore, Maryland 21234

Upcoming Events!

If you are in or around the Baltimore area, we'd love to have you join us for these upcoming events!

Adult & Children's Sunday School	10:15 AM
Sunday Morning Worship & Children's Church	11:00 AM
Tuesday Afternoon Bible Study	1:30 PM
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 PM
Friday Night Youth Group	7:00 PM
Thanksgiving Day Service (Nov. 24th)	10:00 AM