

The DEFENDER - August 2017

“... 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: Summer Musings

As the summer nears its end for another year, I thought I'd use this space this month to reflect on a few things that are going on around us in the world today. God has taken a stand on each of these issues, and as always, His Word of truth is final.

President Donald Trump, in consultation with his generals, decided that transgendered people have no business serving in America's armed forces. He said we could not afford the tremendous medical costs and disruption they would cause. Militarily, of course, he's right. But even more than that, God's Word justifies the decision. In spite of what surgeons are able to do to the outside of our bodies, our genetic code, found in each drop of human blood, clearly and permanently identifies our chromosomes as either XY or XX. Male and female. Or as Jesus said in **Matthew 19:4**, "Have you not read, that He which made them at the beginning made them male and female?" Do you understand that, doctor?

In another item of note, mankind once again proves that he can't improve upon God's design for His creation, which is a perfectly balanced ecosystem. Ninety years ago human wisdom decided to decimate the gray wolf population at Yellowstone National Park. What followed was a devastating domino effect. Elk and deer, left unchecked, overran vegetation, changing ecosystems and causing erosion. This led to the disappearance of rabbits, birds, and beavers, the latter of which no longer remained to build their dams with their resultant ponds. More erosion followed, chasing away grizzlies, coyotes, and eagles. Finally, in 1995, mankind reverted to God's original plan, and introduced 30 Canadian wolves into Yellowstone. And now, after more than 20 years of restoration, biological equilibrium is returning.

And finally, two black pastors in the Washington, D.C. area are suing Coca-Cola and the American Beverage Association for contributing to obesity, heart disease, high blood pressure, and diabetes among their parishioners. They say they're tired of conducting funerals for their congregants who die of those maladies, which afflict blacks at higher rates than whites. They also claim marketing campaigns deliberately deceive the black consumer. All of this may or may not be true. I'll leave that up to the courts. But what I do know to be true is that as ministers of the gospel we are called to care for peoples' spiritual welfare. My advice to the pastors in Washington, as well as everywhere else is to stick to preaching the Gospel. We're all going to die one day and it doesn't really matter how. What matters is that as shepherds it's our calling to make sure that when any of our flock does die, they know how to get to heaven. Too many Christians are concerned with the environment, social justice, and income redistribution, when instead they should be interested in the salvation of souls. For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (**Romans 3:23**). But the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord (**Romans 6:23**). Enjoy what's left of the summer!

Rev. David Lewis

True Salvation Carries a Made in Heaven Label

Part I: Finding Unlimited Contentment

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

It is not only imperative to know how lost souls are redeemed but also what misses the mark. No one is reborn righteous in God's sight by doing good works or by adding their sufferings to Christ's already perfect sacrifice. "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to **His MERCY He** saved us" (Titus 3:5). Nor are any redeemed by law-keeping, "By the deeds of the law shall **NO** flesh be justified" (Rom. 3:20; Gal. 2:16). To be justified before God's throne by law-keeping such work must be flawlessly perfect, "For whosoever shall keep the law and yet offend in one point [disobey parents, tell a lie, etc.] is guilty of **all** of the law" – (James 2:10).

What did Christ's Apostles conclude regarding new Gentile believers and law-keeping? "God, which knoweth the hearts bear them witness...put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith. Now therefore why...put a yoke upon the...disciples [new believers] which neither our fathers nor we were able to bear [none could keep it]. But...through **grace** of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved even as they" (Acts 15:7-11).

Moreover, no unconverted spiritually dead person can be regenerated spiritually by free will choice or by hit and miss efforts of works-based righteousness. Jesus taught, "No man **can come** to me expect the Father...draw him" (John 6:44) and "no one comes to the Father but by me" (John 14:6). It is first the Father's will that is the generative force that raises the spiritually dead to new life (John 1:13).

There is no validity in any system of redemption except that of Christ's sacrifice that alone breached the barrier to God's undeserved grace and mercy (Ep. 2:14-15, 18-19). No one but Christ from heaven was qualified to make atonement for those adopted out of Adam's lost descendants (Ep. 1:4-13). The Divine Son of God left heaven to be born the seed of a woman (Gen. 3:15; Is. 7:14; Gal. 4:4-7) who would heed the call to die for every believer's sins on Calvary's cross. Christ provided the one and only sacrifice when "...He entered **once** into the **Holy Place** having obtained redemption...(Heb. 9:12) by **His own blood** offered **once**." He obtained eternal redemption for every believer – forever (Heb. 10:12,14).

Christ instructed us to remember His unique sacrifice at called Communion services (1 Cor. 11:23-26) but we are also to recognize Christ's body is now in heaven and is **NOT** recreated in the elements of bread and juice. His one actual sacrifice perfected and sanctifies us now and forever.

God alone restores life to the spiritually dead (Ep. 2:1-10). Jesus Christ alone is the author [creator] and finisher [perfecter] of our faith (Heb. 12:2). The Father hath "chosen us" before He created the world as His own adopted children (Ep. 1:4-5) and thereby rescued us out of Satan's realm (Ep. 2:2-3) and control (2 Cor. 4:3-4). Now we are God's own heirs (Gal. 3:29) once He "**draws**" us to Christ (John 6:44) so that we **are** His children (John 1:12) but not by our

own will or any other earthly power but by **His will** (vs. 13) first and foremost. We are redeemed out of our inherited fallen Adamic nature...Adam brought sins' curse and death (Rom. 5:12) but Christ (second Adam) brought grace and new life (Rom. 5:20).

Justly condemned sinners have no standing to question who God chooses to adopt, "I will have mercy on whom I will...it is not of him who willeth...or runneth...who art thou that replies against God (Rom. 9:15-22). God established His grace **before creation** itself..."who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, **not** according to **OUR WORKS**, but according to His own purpose and grace...**given** us in Christ Jesus **before the world began**...(2 Tim. 1:9) ...Before the foundation of the world..."(Ep. 1:4-5). Greatest of all, the condemnation we deserve for our sins has been taken away by Christ's one sacrifice and by the gift of faith to believe it (Ep. 2:8-10; John 3:16; Rom. 8:1; Heb. 8:12).

From the scriptures' beginning to the Bible's end, there appears the depravity of man's sinfulness, "God saw the wickedness of man...the thoughts of his heart only evil" (Gen 6:5). Later Isaiah wrote, "But we are all...unclean...our righteousnesses are filthy rags..." (Is. 64:6). Still later Jeremiah preached, "ye walk everyone after the imagination of his evil heart..." (Jer. 16:12) and "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked..." (17:9).

Jesus warned that even great leaders and exalted theologians can be snared by the Devil (John 8:44) and are spiritually dead (Matt. 23:27). Mark laments, "...out of the heart of man proceeds evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders...evil things come from within and defile..." (Mark 7:21-23; Heb. 3:12; 2 Pet. 2:14, 3:17).

God alone can make us into a new creation with new life from our spiritual deadness (2 Cor. 5:17-19; Col. 2:11-15) so that we are "risen with Christ..." and our affections are on "things above" and the **peace** Christ promised (John 14:27) can "rule in your hearts" (Col. 3:1-2, 15). Now we are free from the power of the "rulers of darkness" (Ep. 6:12).

Once born again by the Spirit of God (John 3:6) we are enabled to understand and believe the gospel and "all the counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). **God** opens the heart (Acts 16:14) and the understanding (Luke 24:45) and blesses us with everlasting life (John 3:15-16, 10:27-28, 11:25-26) and never to perish and with full assurance (John 20:31; 1 John 5:13).

As believers what are we to do? One of our Lord's first commands is to "Let your light so shine before men..." and thereby "...glorify your Father in heaven" (Matt. 5:16). Christ also gave two great commandments. First, love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, soul, mind and strength and secondly, love thy neighbor as thyself (Matt. 22:37-40). Brotherly love for other true believers should be in evidence to even those outside the congregation (John 13:34-35).

Jesus demonstrated unaffected brotherly love when he washed His disciples' feet (John 13:3-15). On another occasion He declared, "whosoever will be chief among you let him be your servant" (Matt. 20:26-27). This loving care should be what those outside see us genuinely exhibiting, "...whatsoever you do, do **ALL** to the glory of God..." (1 Cor. 10:31).

What duty do we owe the Lord when the lost express a sincere desire to be saved? Paul and Silas provided a wonderful example with the plea of the Philippian jailer who asked, “What must I **DO** to be saved?” Interestingly, he was given **absolutely NOTHING** that he could do to be saved. There is no mention of a “sinner’s prayer” or “asking Jesus into your heart.” The apostles simply said, “**BELIEVE**” – on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou **SHALT BE SAVED** (Acts 16:30-31).

It is God who **draws** (John 6:44) and opens hearts (Acts 16:14) and gives His enemies (Rom. 5:6-8) the undeserved gift of faith (Ep. 2:8-9) wholly apart from man-made righteousness (2 Tim. 1:9) so that our Adamic condemnation is gone (Rom. 8:1) for **whosoever will** (John 3:16). So we believe because God adopted us when He initiated **AND** Himself became surety of our salvation (Rom. 8:14-16; Phil. 1:6).

Christ’s unadulterated gospel is the only one hundred percent faith-based teaching. All other religions and even apostate branches of Christianity involve some degree of works-righteousness. Some belief systems even ascribe deity to mankind. It is only when the Will of God makes one a joint-heir with Christ are we said to be “sons of God” (Rom. 8:17; John 1:12). The natural man receiveth **not** the things of the Spirit of God...neither can he know them...” (1 Cor. 2:14). It is God’s grace and Christ’s truth that set us free (John 1:14) not our wills (8:32;36).

God did not leave the salvation of His children in their careless hands. He made certain the outcome when He foreknew us, predestined us, called us, justified us and glorified us (Rom. 8:29-30). However much some may boast of great biblical knowledge and the immensity of their good works, none can put God in their debt. False prophets and counterfeit apostles in this century will one day hear the words of Christ, “Depart...I never knew you” (Matt. 7:23).

All truly indwelt by the Spirit of Christ (Rom. 8:9,11) revere his words, “**I AM** the resurrection and the life...he that **BELIEVETH** in me, though he were dead [Col.2:13] yet shall he live” (John 11:25).

All glory to God alone since He sent Jesus Christ who has won the victory over death and the world, the flesh and the Devil for us. As joint-heirs (Rom. 8:17) with Christ we start **our race** from the “WINNERS’ CIRCLE.”

Keep looking up.



To God Be The Glory

By Nancy Long

Psalm 103:1 – *“Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless His holy name.”*

Psalm 115:1 – *“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy, and for Thy truth’s sake.”*

Psalm 117 – *“O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him all ye people. for His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth for ever. Praise ye the Lord.”*

Psalm 146: 1-2 – *“Praise ye the Lord. Praise the Lord, O my soul. While I live will I praise the Lord: I will sing praises unto my God while I have any being.”*

Psalm 150:6 – *“Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.”*

Isaiah 48:11 – *“For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it: for how shall My name be polluted? And I will not give My glory to another.”*

Eph. 2:3-5 – *“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. But God, who is rich in mercy, for His great love, wherewith He loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved).”*

Romans 11:36 – *“For of Him, and through Him,, and to Him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.”*

Col. 1:16-17 – *“For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.”*

Rev. 4:11 – *“Thou are worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honour and power: for Thou hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created.”*

My Tribute

“How can I say thanks for the things You have done for me ---
Things so undeserved, yet You give to prove Your love for me?
The voices of a million angels could not express my gratitude –
All that I am and ever hope to be, I owe it all to Thee.

Refrain – To God be the glory, To God be the glory;
To God be the glory for the things He has done.
With His blood He has saved me; With His pow’r He has raised me;
To God be the glory for the things He has done.

Just let me live my life; Let it be pleasing, Lord, to Thee.
And should I gain any praise, Let it go to Calvary

With His blood He has saved me; With His pow’r He has raised me;
To God be the glory For the things He has done.”

Words and Music – Andrae Crouch

The theologians who wrote the Westminster Confession of Faith were given extremely deep, and I believe spiritually discerning insight, when they put this magnificent piece together. The first question to the shorter catechism being: ***“What is the chief end of man?”*** The answer: ***“The chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever.”*** The **chief** end the **main** focus the **only** purpose is to **GLORIFY** God There is **NOTHING ELSE!!!!**

Andrae Edward Crouch was marked by God’s favor with the desire and the ability to preach, and was blessed as well, with a voice and a passion for music. He became a prolific songwriter, composing about three-hundred songs, one of which, “The Blood Will Never Lose Its Power”, he wrote when he just fourteen years old.

It’s extremely easy, it seems, for us humans to achieve things in life, and then too often, sit back and take the credit (or glory) for it ourselves. We plan, we set goals, and we work hard. We adopt a “you can, if you think you can” type of approach with any given challenge, but are then likely to forget the One who gave us the ability to even have breath in our lungs in order to enjoy a brand new day! ***“And what hast***

thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou had not received it?” (1 Cor. 4:7b). We were **dead** in our sins, spiritually **dead** but God pricked our hearts, quickened our spirits, making us **alive**. It’s not about us! It’s all about Him!!!

“Just let me live my life; Let it be pleasing, Lord, to Thee. And should I gain any praise, Let it go to Calvary.” If only we were able to remember this, living our lives accordingly, allowing **Him** to govern our behavior just think of how blessed we’d be! Just think of how our walk, our testimony, could be, and would be, drawing others closer to the Savior!! Again, how blessed we would be!!!

Psalm 117 is the shortest psalm in the Bible: ***“O praise the Lord, all ye nations: praise Him, all ye people. For His merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the Lord endureth forever. Praise ye the Lord.”*** So much truth in but two short verses! If it wasn’t for God’s love, His mercy, His grace, and His faithfulness, we’d all be without hope, and lost eternally!! Cause for praise? Cause for glory? I really see no other way to thank Him!!

C.H. Spurgeon – “If you meet with a system of theology which magnifies man, flee from it as far as you can Here is a test for you to apply, and by it you may tell whether a thing is true or not. Does it glorify God? Then, accept it. If it does not, if it glorifies man --- puts human will, human ability, human merit, into the place of the mercy and the grace of God --- away with it, for it is not food fit for your souls to feed upon.”

Words are not adequate enough to express our gratitude to the Living God, the One who created everything, and the One who sustains it, but at best, we can **think, say,** and **live** a life that is pleasing to the One who gave it. God created man to glorify Him in all things. Indeed, to God all the glory belongs! **To God be the glory!!!!**



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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WRITE TO US!

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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
Outdoor Movie Night (Aug. 25th)	8:30 PM
God & Country Service with keynote speaker William Federer (Sept. 11th)	7:00 PM