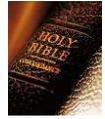


## The DEFENDER - March 2018



“. . . 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: When Will the Killing Stop?**

In response to the above question, the answer is it won’t. Killing won’t stop in America’s schools, churches, malls, or anywhere else in the world for that matter until Jesus Christ returns and puts an end to evil.

Stricter gun laws won’t make a difference. The last time I read Genesis 4, Cain didn’t use a gun to kill his brother Abel. Are we going to enact laws prohibiting the use of knives, cars and trucks, rocks, and baseball bats? The problem of course, is that people have been ignoring God’s Word for years. Since the Garden of Eden, actually. And when Moses brought the law down off of Mount Sinai, Commandment number six was unequivocal: thou shalt not kill. God’s Word is no longer taught in the public-school system, and even in many churches today where it *is* taught, it is being ignored. So it’s not hard to see that this isn’t a gun issue at all. It’s a sin issue. The people pulling the triggers or wielding knives or using trucks as weapons at these crime scenes are sick. They suffer from a type of heart disease. Their hearts are not right with God. If they had a personal relationship with the Lord through His Son Jesus Christ it’s hard to imagine them doing this. But because the bad guys will always find a way to get a weapon we will never outlaw criminal activity.

So what can we do? As Christians, we must always preach and teach the life-saving, life changing message of the Gospel. It’s only through changed hearts that we can see changed lives. In addition to that, we need to model our own behavior after Christ, living a testimony that witnesses our faith. But are there other ways to minimize the damage? Once again, I look to the Scriptures. I can’t help but notice that Jerusalem had a wall built around it for safety purposes. You know, to keep the bad guys out. I don’t think we have to go on the offensive and engage in an all-out gun battle on America’s streets to quell the violence. But let’s try a defensive tact. Start with a wall along America’s southern border (a novel idea, I know). Slow the illegal immigration to a trickle. And then, in the case of our schools, hire people with conceal/carry permits to guard the entrances. We have thousands of military veterans who are out of work, in addition to off-duty police officers who are looking to moonlight. We guard valuables in our banks and museums. Aren’t our children of enough value to us to guard as well?

And last, but not least of course, is the power of prayer. Let’s petition the throne of God to have mercy on America while we also implore the righteous to repent of their sin and turn from their evil ways. Only then can we hope for God’s blessings to continue to grace our land.

*Rev. David Lewis*

## **Answers for Our Catholic Friends – Part 3**

**By Robert Luthardt, Sr.**

A major difference exists between Protestant and Catholic theologians regarding the status of saints. Protestants do not go beyond the biblical definition of sainthood while Catholicism adds concepts from their “traditions.” The scriptural view consistently asserts that every born-again believer who credibly establishes that they love and willingly obey God and Jesus Christ is a saint. God providentially gave guidance and inspiration to certain select saints to set to paper His very words and instructed them to disseminate His commands to the whole world. These scriptures instruct us to pray directly to the Father in the name of the only mediator, Jesus Christ. No other name can or should be invoked because God is “no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34).

Essentially, the scriptural use of the word “saint” is synonymous with the word “believer” and is used for those living and those home with the Lord (Eph. 1:1, 15, 18, 2:19, 3:8,18, 4:12, 5:3, 6:18; Rom. 1:7; Acts 9:13, 32; 26:10, etc.).

Furthermore, the word “saint” was consistently used to describe whole groups of believers without distinction. Even in the church at Corinth where congregants exhibited grave spiritual defects in need of compulsory correction, Paul called them saints while acknowledging them to be carnal (I Cor. 1:2, 3:1, 6:5-8, 11, 11:22, 14:33-34).

The only mediator between God and us is plainly stated in scripture as only one person – Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. This alone explains why there are no verses of an example of anyone praying to a “saint.” Also, our worship (adoration, veneration) is commanded to be for God alone. We are often appraised of scriptures’ revelations of the times men and angels absolutely refused any hint of worship or adoration or bowing down to them. Even the Apostle Peter, alleged to be the first Pope, refused adoration (Acts 10:25-26, 14:13-18; Rev. 22:8-9).

The Apostle Paul assured his listeners that he could benefit them only while he was alive on earth. The only reasonable inference being that he could not benefit them once he had gone to heaven nor can any other departed “saint” (Phil 1:23-26).

Scripture plainly states that we may boldly “approach the throne of grace” through Christ our only mediator. All who are drawn to Christ by the Father and adopted into God’s only family as “sons” are legitimately known as saints through Christ alone who is “The Way” (John 1:12-13, 6:44, 65; Eph. 1:4-5; I Tim. 2:5; Heb. 4:16, 13:6).

Marriage of clergy is forbidden in Roman Catholicism, yet scripture allows marriage for ALL Christians. Indeed, scripture indicates that it is the preferred status for elders or bishops (I Tim. 3:2-4, 12; I Cor. 7:1-5, 9; Heb. 13:4; Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:4-6).

God used the blessing of the marital state as a perfect example of His relationship with the church and our own relationship with all believers. Every Christian is free to marry or not to marry based on what seems best in the service of God. Noteworthy is

the fact that the early centuries of Christians of the church era saw no command for celibacy by scripture or by tradition. Even Peter, allegedly the first Pope, had a wife (Matt. 8:14; I Cor. 9:5; Eph. 5:22-23; Rev. 19:7-9, 21:2, 9, 22:17).

As to what honor Mary the mother of Jesus should receive, Protestants do not go beyond scripture. Mary was a virtuous woman who was chosen by God to be the birth mother of His Eternal Son's human nature – His earthly flesh and blood (but not His eternal deity). Mary was a chaste virgin who conceived miraculously by the overshadowing of God the Holy Spirit which was prophesied in both Testaments (Isa. 7:14; Matt. 1:18-23; Luke 1:26-35, 46).

There is, however, NO scripture to encourage anyone to pray to Mary or to carved images of a woman alleged to be Mary. Indeed, this practice is a clear violation of the second commandment forbidding the production of or worship, veneration or adoration of ANY image. Some, to justify “adoration” of Mary, claim the Jesus always did everything Mary wanted. This fails in light of scriptural accounts (Ex. 20:4-5; Luke 4:8; Mark 3:31-35).

Furthermore, there is no verse in the Bible that shows anyone seeking God's or Jesus' help through Mary, for no one but Jesus is a mediator or advocate for mankind and He also should NOT be represented by an image. Since we have a very real, very alive Savior residing in heaven, we have no need to appeal to any “venerated saint” (John 14:6; I Tim. 2:5-6; I John 2:1).

Mary, being a pious person, looked to God for her own personal salvation. She herself would have (as all believers in Christ) prayed as the Savior taught: “Our Father ... hallowed be THY name ... forgive us our trespasses ...” (Luke 1:46-47; Matt. 6:9-13).

The traditions in Catholic theology that Mary was conceived without sin and later taken bodily to heaven without dying has not one verse to support such assumptions. Mary is not deity to be worshipped. Mary was born with the same fallen Adamic nature as all mankind (Luke 2:22-24; Lev. 12).

Nowhere does scripture call Mary the “Mother of God.” Mary gave birth to Jesus of Nazareth, the fully human man. She did not “create” the eternal Son of God who existed from the “foundation of the world.” “Unto us a child is BORN, unto us a SON is given.” Christ, God the Son, temporarily set aside His eternal omnipotence and glory to become the suffering, dying, sacrificial Lamb of God. He kept ALL His laws without any sin to pay the debt we owe and cannot pay (John 1:1-3, 14; Gen. 1:1; John 8:54-58, 17:1-5; Heb. 9:14).

Another contradictory concept to scripture is that Mary remained a virgin after Christ was born, which also has no verses of support in the Bible. Mary would have continued to be a proper, loving wife to Joseph as scripture commands; “be fruitful and multiply” and “leave your father and mother” and cleave to your [spouse]. She and Joseph had other children as scripture clearly records. Jesus was Mary's “first born.” Jesus' stepbrothers' names were James, Joses, Simon and Judas (not Iscariot) and at least two sisters (Matt. 1:25, 12:46, 13:55-56, 19:5-6; Mark 3:31-32, 6:3; Luke 8:19-21; John 2:12; Gal. 1:19; Eph. 5:31; Jude 1).

Some claim Christ's siblings were cousins, but NO scripture supports this and no where in scripture is anyone's siblings called "cousins." The allegation that these were Christ's "spiritual brothers" fails because at the time they were called brothers they were not believers in Jesus as the Son of God (Matt. 12:46-50; Mark 3:31-35, 6:1-3; Luke 8:19-22; John 7:5).

Truly, Mary rightly deserves honor but no more so than her cousin Elizabeth who bore John the Baptist, or any of the other godly women mentioned in scripture who served God faithfully. No one but God is to be worshipped or venerated or adored. We best honor Mary by following her advice: "Do whatever HE tells you" (John 2:5).

Another extra-biblical tradition from man's inventiveness that is unsupported by the Bible is the doctrine of Purgatory. This mythological place is supposedly where Christians atone for their own sins. This flies in the face of God's grace where souls washed "whiter than snow" by Christ's sacrifice are made "acceptable" by faith alone. Souls are not purified by a place but by a PERSON. We trust in Christ alone – we cannot expiate even a single sin (John 3:18, 36; Luke 16:19-31; Rom. 8:1; Rev. 20).

Since there is "now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus," there is no need for a Purgatory. Jesus promised to "never leave or forsake us" and the Father to "remember our sins no more" (Rom. 5:8-11, 8:1; Heb. 10:14-18; Ps. 103:12; Heb. 13:5).

The thief on the cross called Jesus "Lord" and believed Christ would rise from the dead and went by grace to Paradise and not to Purgatory. Indeed, we can KNOW that we HAVE eternal life – here and now! (Luke 23:42-43; Rom. 10:9-10, 13; I John 5:13-14).

Another unsupportable claim is that Christ's church was not founded on Christ but on Peter. Christ alone is the foundation of Christianity which Peter himself acknowledged. Jesus is the head of the "body of Christ." After Christ, there is no sovereign or autocratic ruler over the priesthood of true believers. There is no biblical support for the concept of a succession of ruler-ship in Christ's church such as "Apostolic Succession." After Christ called Peter the rock and said "the gates of hell" could not prevail against His church, He called Peter Satan. The greater Rock that stands undaunted is Jesus Christ alone who is our foundational rock and not Peter who is a sinner just like all Christians before salvation (Matt. 16:18; I Cor. 3:11; Acts 10:25-26; I Pet. 2:6-8; gal. 2:11).

God alone forgives sins through prayers of repentance in Jesus' name (Acts 2:37-38, 10:43; Luke 24:46-48; John 14:6; Rom. 5:1; I John 1:3,9).

Keep looking up.

**Main Source:** Answers to My Catholic Friends.

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# Trust in the Lord

By Nancy Long

Job -- 23:10 – *“But He knoweth the way that I take: when He hath tried me’  
I shall come forth as gold.”*

Prov. 3:5-6 – *Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine  
own understanding. In all thy ways, acknowledge Him,  
and He shall direct thy paths.”*

Jer. 29:11 – *“For I know the thought that I think toward you, saith the Lord,  
thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”*

John 16:33 – *“These things I have spoken unto you, that in Me ye might have  
peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good  
cheer, I have overcome the world.”*

Romans 8:28 – *“And we know that all things work together for good to  
them that love God, to them who are the called according  
to His purpose.”*

Heb. 13:5b – *“..... for He hath said, I will never leave thee,  
nor forsake thee.”*

There are many sources of anxiety in this life. We are assaulted on all sides ..... news about wars, terrorism, earthquakes, abductions, drug addictions, school shootings, abuses, abortions, and murders in all parts of the world. Bringing it in even closer to home, each of us as individuals is either currently facing, or will be challenged with various types of adversities and troubles. Some may be confronted with corporate or personal bankruptcy; others possibly will go through the pain of a debilitating accident, or experience heartbreak over a rebellious teenager. There may be marital issues, work related concerns, or perhaps the difficulty of standing by and watching a loved one suffer the ravages of cancer, or some other debilitating physical or mental disease.

One might wonder at these times, “Where is God in all of this?” He appears to be so very far away!! Is He even there at all, and if He is, does He really care? Can you trust Him? Is He dependable in times when you hurt so deeply you can hardly get out of bed in the morning? Do you have the assurance that He is with you in these days of extreme pain and dire distress, even though you don’t see clearly any evidence of His nearness ..... even though you do not **feel** His presence? It’s not easy to trust God in seasons of suffering. No one enjoys the pain, the grief, the actual agony that’s associated with it!

***“In the world ye shall have tribulation” (John 16:33).*** Our Lord stated this very plainly. We shouldn’t be surprised by it! We really cannot, and should not, expect peace, and perfect harmony, in this world. We believers though, are still to be encouraged! Imagine that!! We are exhorted to ***“be of good cheer”***. Whatever is pressing or threatening, our counsel is to keep our focus on the trustworthiness of God, and be assured that ***all*** will be well. Our Lord is more than sufficient (2 Cor. 12:9a)!! He has a plan and a purpose for each of His children (Jer. 29:11). He paid a tremendous price in order to bring us to Himself, and uses the circumstances He’s provided to help purify our hearts and draw us into a deeper relationship with our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!!

***“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart: wait I say, on the Lord (Psalm 27:14).***

I, for one, cannot remember a trial or a pain that the Lord didn’t miraculously recycle, and make it into gain. In His sovereignty, He always knows what’s best, and has the power to work it out for His glory, and as well, for our ultimate good (Rom. 8:28)!

It is my prayer, Defender Friends, that we not be governed by ***feelings***, but will look to the Holy Spirit to make the Scriptures come alive in our hearts, and develop our faith and trust in our sovereign Lord. May we be as confident as Job who believed, even though he wasn’t able to see or ***feel*** God, that He would bring him through his extremely stressful trial as ***“purified gold”*** (Job 23:10). Trusting God is knowing and believing ..... and clinging to His promise, ***“I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee”*** in life, nor in death, nor throughout eternity (Hebrews 13:5).

Trust in the *Lord*  
with all thine heart; and  
lean not unto thine own  
understanding.

In *all* thy ways  
acknowledge him, and  
he shall direct thy paths.

Proverbs 3:5-6

**"He who did not spare His own Son . . .  
how will He not also . . . give us all things?"  
(Romans 8:32)**

**Jesus hung on the cross for three hours, wracked with white-hot  
physical pain, crushed by the weight of guilt and shame and sin that  
was ours but became His.**

**Suddenly, the birds stopped chirping, the breeze stopped blowing,  
and everything became deathly still as darkness -  
pitch-black darkness - descended.**

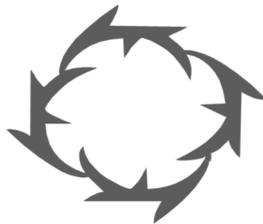
**The cries that could be heard were no longer just coming from the  
victims on the crosses, but from the bystanders as they cowered,  
then fled in panic. Even the hardened soldiers must have shuddered at  
the supernatural power and anger that  
permeated the atmosphere.**

**The eerie darkness that descended was not just nature feeling  
sorry for the Creator who was nailed to the altar of the cross. It was the  
very judgment of God for your sins and mine.**

**Your sin has been judged at the cross,  
so you can be saved from judgment.  
Are you saved?**

**-- Anne Graham Lotz**

**"What must I do to be saved?  
Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved."  
(Acts 16:30-31)**



*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
Friday Night Youth Group	7:00 PM
Good Friday Service (March 30th)	7:00 PM