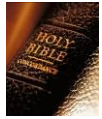


The DEFENDER— April 2025

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

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S Desk: God's Hidden Treasure

Greenland has significant deposits of rare earth elements (REEs), including graphite, lithium, and cobalt. Also dysprosium, neodymium, terbium, and praseodymium, all necessary for today's defense, infrastructure, and emerging technologies, as well as reducing global reliance on China. Three critical minerals especially abundant in Ukraine are manganese, titanium, and graphite. They are essential to economic and national security. China has over 70% of the planets REEs which gives it significant geopolitical implications, as these minerals are crucial for various technologies, including defense and clean energy,

Many governments around the world realize that having access to these precious metals would ensure not only economic freedom, but also a hegemonic balance of power that could guarantee dominance and authority for years to come. Empires are not built on offensive or defensive strategies as they were centuries ago, as much as on what hidden treasures they rest upon. Three thousand years ago, King David realized this when he said in Psalm 20:7 "Some trust in chariots and some in horses, but we will remember the name of the Lord our God," emphasizing reliance of God's power rather than military might for victory.

Men fail to understand that whatever power they think they possess was buried deep within God's creation at the time the world began. They also fail to understand that true knowledge and power goes much deeper than the earth's physical boundaries.

The true avenue to security and success is found in the eternal word of God. The words of God serve us for many purposes. In our sorrows, they are our delight. And in our difficulties, they are our guide. We derive joy from them, and discover wisdom in them. But you have to open the Book. God's word alone can bring true inner peace, the lasting impact of something that transcends time and space. It brings us into intimate contact with our Creator. But never close enough that we're not left with wanting more. And the deeper we dig into the Word, even in the midst of our new-found joy, we can't put the Book down.

God's true treasure is the true authority found in the Bible. God sets up rulers and removes them (Daniel 2:21). He also turns the hearts of rulers in whatever way He chooses (Proverbs 21:1). Nations rise and fall by the will of God, leaders come and go, and the precious metals in the ground are passed on to the next caretaker. In similar fashion, whosoever holds the eternal Word of God in his hand, is in possession of the way to eternal life. One only has to look to find it.

Just as a nation's leaders look for the motherlode which will quench their thirst for the power to keep their kingdom predominant, we who are dead in our sins have the keys to heaven planted in the Word of God, for all who have eyes to see.

Rev. David Lewis

God's Plan to Save Those He Loves

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

The Scriptures from ancient times until this very day, signals those Christians God calls to belief in the one TRUE AND LIVING GOD. Teachers of the faith in the Gospel of Jesus Christ points believers to the only belief system that can truly save souls – The Eternal Plan of an Almighty God (John 3:16; Ep. 2:8-10).

In lands where the “GOOD NEWS” of Jesus Christ has been freely and openly taught, the “elect” of God are first introduced to God the Father, then to God’s only begotten Son Jesus the Christ and to God the eternal Holy Spirit. The freedom found only in the Gospel of Jesus Christ, comes first simply into the minds of potential new Christians who are taught scriptural truths concerning the God-Man, Christ Jesus. Allowing first things to truly “BE FIRST,” the Birth of Jesus is early taught but also the death and resurrection of the Son OF GOD.

The Holy Bible is God’s spoken Word that points followers to God’s offer of ETERNAL LIFE and His Plan of bringing real saving faith found alone in history’s ancient teachings especially in the promised coming of the “SEED OF THE WOMAN” (Gen. 3:15; Luke 1:26-38). That Seed arrived 2,000 years ago in the divine fulfillment of God’s promise of mankind’s miraculous deliverer and Savior, “Jesus Christ the Righteous” (Luke 23:47; 1 John 2:1). Today, believers who die in the faith of Jesus Christ and in the plan of God’s redemption, come to faith through the loving holiness of “God My Savior” (Luke 1:46-47). Departed believers await the return of their Lord from His throne in heaven (Rev., chapters 19 and 20). The present-day church of Jesus Christ anticipates Christ’s soon to be fulfilled promises (1 Thes. 4:13-18).

All await the glory of God when He opens heaven and earth “as a scroll” (Is. 40) for He will also subdue the evil “princes of the earth” thereby allowing His adopted children to “mount up with wings as eagles” (Is. 40:31) and none will ever again say to God, “What doest Thou” (Dan. 4:35, 12:8-9, 13).

Deceivers of past history and in our own day have come forth in bold deception as false teachers, false scientists and bearers of false religious doctrines. Our God, who created man in His own image and likeness, made mankind not by the equally fake science of evolution (changes may take place “within a Species” but your cat came from the plan of God, not the same origin as your dog). God alone made man from the dust of the earth and his mate from his rib (Gen. 2:7, 21-25). Perhaps history’s greatest deception is Darwin’s failed “Tree of Life.” When truth is in “missing links” they are still plainly “missing.”

God created Adam and Eve (very real and very alive) with but one commandment which they quickly disobeyed. They rebelled against God and they and all their descendants became divorced into their lost natures of sin and death (Rom. 1:18-20, 3:23; 5:12). The sins of Adam’s race by Noah’s day, became “only sin in God’s eyes” (Gen. 6:5-7). Only Noah alone found “grace in the eyes of the Lord” (vs. 8) and justification is also by God’s grace alone (Ps. 143:2; Rom. 4:24-25, 5:16).

After the fall of Adam in the Garden, the total sinfulness in the collective heart and mind in the offspring of Adam (Ep. 2:1-3) was only “lust of the flesh” and the “nature of children under the wrath of God” (Gen. 6: 5-8). Jesus taught His disciples, “... from within (out of the heart of mankind) dwells evil thoughts and ... defiles the man ...” (Mark 7:21-23, Is. 53:6, Rom 8:7-8). Simply said, as long as anyone lives in the sins of the flesh, they remain the “enemies of God” (1 Cor. 15:55-56) and “flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God” (15:50). Moreover, Christ’s disciples heard Him tell Nicodemus that, “... except one be BORN AGAIN they will never see the Kingdom of Heaven” (John 3:3) and unless Christ’s disciples also came to God in the same simple faith and trust as that little child Christ was holding, they too would not see the Kingdom of Heaven (Matt. 18:1-5). So let us abide in faith as Jesus walked (1 John 2:6).

Now we that once walked in our ungodly trespasses and sins, our God (who is rich in mercy) BY GRACE SAVED US (Ep. 2:4-9). So Jesus told even His called 12 Apostles, “no man can come to me except the Heavenly Father ‘Draw Him’ (John 6:44, 65) because our Triune God has saved us and called us with ‘A HOLY CALLING’ not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace ...,” before the world began (Titus 3:5-7; 2 Tim. 1:9).

All who believe by the faith found in Jesus Christ alone, now stand fast in the power of the Divine Son of God. Our one true Almighty Heavenly Father tells his adopted children (Ep. 1:5-7), “I will have mercy (Rom. 9:15-16) and all who will confess their belief in God’s only begotten Son and all who come in that ‘child-like faith to trust in the trinity of God’ (Matt. 28:19) will be saved (Rom. 10:13); For whosoever shall call in faith will be saved.”

The Apostle John told all believers that “Now is the time to come and confess the name of Jesus Christ and have and receive power from God to become true Sons of God though they come NOT by the Power of Man but by the power of God-ALONE (John 1:12-13).” The Divine Son of God is the creator of the Universe and of time and eternity (John 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:1-2 etc.). Most meaningful to Christians is that Jesus called Himself our “Good Shepherd” (John 10:14, 27-28, 17:1-5) who shall give His sheep eternal life. The Scriptures by which we are each called by Jesus to “learn of me” (Matt. 11:29; 2 Tim. 3:14-17) shall bring the peace that “passes all human understanding and shall keep your hearts and minds through Jesus Christ (Col. 1:9-19).” As we learn to be kept by the Power of God and as we “think on these things,” (Phil. 4:7-8) the peace of God will be with us (vs. 9) in faith unto living salvation (1 Pet. 1:5).

The Divine Son of God gives eternal life to all who believe, never to perish. Christ healed our physical maladies but also our spiritual separation from our God of love and mercy. Now believers rejoice, giving glory due to our loving Father who “raises the dead” to life everlasting to whomsoever (Rom. 9:15-16) as also does His Son (John 5:21; Acts 13:22-23) our deliverer and our Savior.

From the most olden times the called of God came to saving faith and living belief under the unending grace of our Almighty triune God. May all learn to “search the

scriptures" (John 5:39; Acts 17:10-11) and to marvel not that Jesus said unto thee, "you must be BORN AGAIN," ... the wind blows wherever it chooses, you hear the sound of it, but cannot know from where it comes or goes – so is everyone called by God to be "BORN AGAIN" (John 3:3-15). As Moses lifted up the brass serpent in the wilderness, so Christ must be lifted up upon the Cross of Calvary and to now believe in Christ to the saving of your very own soul (John 10:27-28) for Jesus said, "the Father is in me and I in Him" (John 10:38).

The Lord Jesus Christ was very clear in telling His own disciples that "each one of you must be converted and become as that little child Christ was holding in His arms;" except you each come in the same simple living faith and complete trust of a child, even Christ's chosen twelve Apostles could not enter heaven. Being sinners, Christ still must die for them and the whole world (Rom. 5:8; Gal. 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18).

God's plan from the beginning of this present world was to save a people for Himself and Jesus said to the multitude he just fed (the 5,000), "All that the Father has given to me, I will in no way cast out ... but will raise up again at the last day." In God's Eternal Plan to save His adopted ones (Ep. 1:3-12) He chooses the "called" one at a time so "Blessed is the one God brings to faith not by our works but by His will alone for salvation (John 1:13)." Come in the spirit of genuine prayer and hold firm to Christ's promises of everlasting life, "... all things work together for good to those who 'LOVE GOD'" (Rom. 8:28) and: "Keep looking up" (Luke 21:28).

Chief Source:

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God's Plan to Save His People

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THE ABC's OF SALVATION



ADMIT:

Admit that you are a sinner and have made mistakes.



BELIEVE:

Believe that Jesus is God's only Son and He chose to die on a cross for you.



COMMIT:

Commit yourself to a life of following Jesus and serving others.

An Examination of Romans 1:5b: For Obedience To The Faith

By Joseph Burghauer

For obedience to the faith among all nations, for His Name. Romans 1:5b

The above KJV translation of our verse adds the article “the” before “faith”. The first Christians were to share the gospel message everywhere to bring about obedience to the Christian faith. “The faith” is referred to in Romans 6:17; Jude 1:3, 20 as the teaching of and about our Lord and the entire system of Christian doctrine.

The majority of more recent Bible versions, however, translate the phrase as either “the obedience that comes from faith” or “the obedience of faith”. These newer translations hold that “faith” in our verse refers to the believer’s trust in Christ rather than referring to the teachings of Christianity. From these modern translations, can we conclude that faith will result in obedience, or that faith is obedience (and in what sense is it obedience)?

If we agree that a proper translation is “the obedience that comes from faith”, we will find much support elsewhere in the Bible, such as John 14:15, 23; Ephesians 2:10; Titus 2:11-14. If we believe that the better translation is “the obedience of faith”, we would find ourselves in agreement with the more literal modern translations, and even the KJV in Romans 16:26 ends this epistle with the phrase “obedience of faith” after Paul commends the obedience of the church in Rome in 16:19. This “obedience of faith” phrase must be handled carefully to avoid serious error. Many who distort the gospel misuse this phrase as they quote it to support their teaching that our faith (belief or trust) includes our obedience to God’s law. We can refute this error by looking at Romans 3:28: “Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law”. The rest of Romans chapters 3-5 and Galatians chapter 3 clarifies this. We may also look at passages such as John 6:28-29:

Then said they unto Him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?
Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on Him
Whom He hath sent. And Acts 16:30-31: “And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what
must I do to be saved? And they said, “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou
shalt be saved, and thy house.”

It is clear from the Bible that faith alone saves and that a believer’s faith does not include obedience to the law of God, although genuine faith, as we saw above, will produce obedience. Faith is not obedience nor does it include obedience, if we define obedience as “works of the law”. Faith is trusting in the obedience of Christ in keeping the law for us.

Is there any sense in which faith may be considered to be obedience? Yes, but we must be careful how we qualify this understanding. If we return to the above verses of John 6:28-29 and Acts 16:30-31, we see that our faith or belief (although it is clearly the gift of God—Ephesians 2:8-9 – and we are not saved by our works), is something we “must do”. God gives us the gift of faith but He does not believe for us.

To avoid confusion in our understanding of “the obedience of faith”, it is helpful to distinguish between the law and the gospel. The law includes the 10 Commandments found in Exodus chapter 20 and Deuteronomy chapter 5. These 10 Commandments are summarized in Mark 12:29-31 by our Lord:

And Jesus answered him, The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength:

And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is no other commandment greater than these.

The gospel is what God has done for us to provide for our being declared righteous (justification). The gospel is given in the best known verse in the New Testament, John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." The law requires perfect obedience for justification (a condition sinners cannot meet), whereas the gospel requires Christ's perfect obedience unto death and God's choosing us, regenerating us, and giving us the gift of faith. Obedience in the Bible refers to keeping God's law, obeying the law of Christ (Galatians 6:2), or doing whatever The Triune God commands. This last category of obedience has been applied to obeying the "gospel command."

The helpful term "gospel obedience" has been given to what sinners must "do" to be saved, as in John 6:28-29 and Acts 16:30-31. They must "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ". "Gospel obedience" is belief, faith, or trust and not-working (not our own keeping of God's law), but resting and relying on Christ alone and His keeping of the law (obedient unto death -Philippians 2:8) for us. One verse that teaches "gospel disobedience" is 2 Thessalonians 1:8: "In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ." If one knows God; that is, if one comes to the Father through Christ alone, one is "obeying the gospel". I Peter 4:17 reads, "For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" In this verse, it is clear that if you are not a Christian (believer), you do not obey the gospel because you have not believed in Christ. So if you trust in Christ alone, you have "obeyed the gospel."

"The obedience of faith" may also convey the meaning that through our faith in Christ, we have the perfect obedience of Christ credited to us.

"Among all nations" in our verse expresses the truth that God loves the world; He has people not only in Israel, but also in Rome and "of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues" (Revelation 7:9).

"For His Name" conveys the truth that all we do and the "obedience to the faith among all nations" is for the glory of Christ. Colossians 3:17: "And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the Name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him."

To conclude: "The obedience of faith" is not "faith formed by love" -- love that must be added to "unformed faith" to make it saving faith. Also, obedience to the law is not part of what makes faith what it is. Faith does not justify because it obeys the law; faith justifies because it is in Christ--Who did obey the law.

"The obedience of faith" may be teaching, as the KJV translates it, the obedience to the Christian faith (teaching). It may refer to the obedience that faith (belief) produces, or it may refer to a sinner's faith in Christ as an obedient response to the gospel call. "The obedience of faith" may also refer to the fact that when His people put their faith in Christ, they have His obedience imputed (applied) to their account. It is possible that God intends all of these meanings in this wonderful verse. This "obedience of the faith" will be realized in the whole world as God will save some from all nations for the glory of the Triune God.

God's Truth

By Linda Tyson, CHBPC

God's precious truth we've come to proclaim!
To tell you that God is forever the same.
There is light in His Word when darkness surrounds.
We find hope in His truth nowhere else to be found.

You will find God's mercy and pardon for sins.
In God's word, you may find a new life to begin.
His arm of salvation reaches down to mankind.
His love and forgiveness nowhere else can you find.

Jesus came down from heaven to die on the cross
Not one of God's chosen will ever be lost!
We need God's truth in our lives each day
To guide and show us the straight and narrow way.

He will come again to take us home
And reign forever on His glorious throne.
The grass may wither and the flowers may die
But God's truth stands forever and is exalted on high!



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.

The Defender is available, free of charge, on audio CD.
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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	12:30 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 pm
Good Friday Service (April 18)	7:00 pm
Easter Service (April 20th)	11:00 am