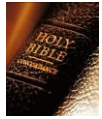


The DEFENDER— July 2025

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

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FROM THE DIRECTOR'S Desk: HAPPY BIRTHDAY, AMERICA

In case you've ever wondered if the Lord had His people in the right place at the right time, you don't have to look very far. God's fingerprints are everywhere. All you have to do is look. Christians know that events in our lives have nothing to do with luck or coincidence. They are everyday examples of God's wonderful Providence.

In theological terms, Providence is defined as the continual care which God exercises over the universe which He has created. This includes preservation and government. In the power and wisdom and goodness of God, as declared in scripture, we have the promise of constant divine care over all parts of His creation.

The Christian faith and character of the men who designed this Republic formed its government under the providence and protection of God and the principles of the Christian religion. They declared Christianity to be fundamental to the well being of society and government. The Declaration of Independence contained a solemn appeal to the “Supreme Judge of the World” and expressed a “firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence.”

But the author of the Declaration, Thomas Jefferson, may have put it best when he said “God, who gave us life, gave us liberty. And can the liberties of a nation be thought secure when we have removed their only firm basis, a conviction in the minds of the people that these liberties are a gift of God? That they are not be violated but with His wrath? Indeed, I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that His justice cannot sleep forever.”

The world is not our friend. But God is. We live in very uncertain times right now. But it's all going according to God's schedule. So who do we look to for answers? Abide in His will. Trust and obey. To live effectively, we must keep our eyes on Jesus. We stumble when we look away. Only in Him do we find true peace. Ask God to give you the desires that He has for you, and you'll find that peace which surpasses all human understanding (Philippians 4:7). Time is growing short, for us as individuals and perhaps as a nation. Stay firmly on the road of endless hope, sharing the gospel and watching His great plan of redemption, as well as our part in it as it unfolds. It will go according to His will. I pray, that for the sake of the righteous in our land, that God would continue to be merciful, and save us from ourselves. Just as we individuals have an expiration date, so does America. Tomorrow's promised to no one, but let's pray that God hears the fervent prayers of the righteous and answers with an abundance of tomorrows whereby we may praise Him.

Rev. David R. Lewis

America's Christian Heritage

Part III – God Blesses a Praying Nation

By Robert Luthardt, Sr.

“Righteousness exalteth a nation: but sin is a reproach to any people” (Proverbs 14:34). The only opinion that is worth following and that really matters is God's. His words are of the “good seed” of any peoples' wisdom and understanding (Matt. 13:23).

The Bible points to only ONE “chosen nation” and people, and these are the natural blood descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These descendants from Abraham were appointed by God to be governed by theocratic rule; first under Moses and then Joshua in the wilderness; then by Judges until they demanded a king during the judgeship of Samuel. God granted their request but warned through Samuel, how oppressive human kings would be due to all mankind's inherited depraved nature (1 Sam. 8:1-22; Ep. 2:23). Absolute power corrupts absolutely: always did, always will. Even so, God heard the prayers of His chosen people in times of national distress and answered by raising up types of the coming Deliverer, Joseph, Moses, David, and others.

Later, when certain captives from Jerusalem, who were exiled to Babylon, were required to worship Nebuchadnezzar's golden image (a sin against God) several refused. For that they were threatened with death (Dan. 3:1-7). They engaged in a God-honoring use of peaceful civil disobedience (8-12). The furious King cast Daniel's friends into a fiery furnace (13-25). God then miraculously saved them by sending “one like the Son of man” to protect them (26-30). Still later, Daniel was similarly delivered from death in a lion's den (Dan. 6:7-10).

Centuries later the Sanhedrin ordered Peter and John to cease preaching about Jesus Christ and Peter announced, “We must obey God rather than men” (Acts 5:29). They too realized that God's opinion and command is that which matters most.

This truth applies even when rulers claim to be in obedience to God as when “Bloody Mary” in 16th Century England had Christians burned alive. In “Foxes Book of Martyrs” innocents received torture and death mostly from those “professing” allegiance to Christ Jesus; it was another Jesus (2 Cor. 11:4).

In this time of darkness in England (16th & 17th centuries) many were already desirous of a refuge where freedom of worship and benevolent, enlightened leadership might exist. Christians know they are commanded to obey rulers even under minor sufferings (excessive taxation, etc.- Mark 12:15-17). They also know that God raises up kings (Ps. 75:7; Dan. 2:21) turning their hearts to His will AND that His will is that rulers are to be a terror to the evil, NOT to the good (Rom. 13:3-4). God hears the prayers of His oppressed children – a singular consolation.

Faithfully following God's truth in scripture was the main element of the genius exhibited by the Settlers and Founders of America's unequalled Constitutional form of government. It is apparent that the Lord's seed fell on good ground in America (Mark 4:20).

Our Founders were also educated in their own English history and knew the pitfalls of autocratic rule. John Adams, our second President said, “Any man holding unchecked political power is a ravenous bird of prey.” Executive, legislative, and judicial power must each be contained and balanced by other governmental powers for freedom to endure.

Both the Bible and historical accounts show that some autocrats had tried to force Christians to disobey God’s commands. When Pagan Rome ruled an Empire, they were sometimes satisfied with insincere outward shows of obedience. Citizens could worship any god, even Jesus, provided they ALSO worshipped Caesar (Christians could not); those who refused were punished and many lost their lives. God has at times raised up evil men (Rom. 9:17; Ex. 9: 16) but their willful sins and responsibility is theirs. God is eternally, perfectly holy – He cannot sin (Ex. 9:13-16; Rom. 9:17-18; Gen. 45:4-8, 50:20; John 19:11; Acts 2:22-23; Rom. 13:1-5).

Our loving merciful Father hears our prayers and also raises up benevolent leaders, and this He did throughout America’s settling and Founding periods. In time, there came one man particularly well suited to lead. He was a well-taught fervent Christian raised by God to be the Father of the American Nation – George Washington. His father, Augustine, was a moderately wealthy landowner and elder in the Anglican Church. George Washington’s two elder brothers (from Augustine’s first marriage to Jane Butler) had both received superior private school education in England and became George’s tutors (he was primarily home schooled). He was even more blessed by his mother (Augustine’s second wife) Mary Ball. Mary was a woman of uncommon wisdom, kindness, and unwavering virtue and when necessary her word was law.

Upon Augustine’s death (George was only eleven), he became the male authority figure to his five younger siblings. This and the fact that he was unusually tall (six foot, four inches as an adult) contributed to his future leadership roles for his nation.

Many instances in his life molded him for greatness but only a few can be mentioned. As a young officer over an American militia unit that was attached to Gen. Braddock’s British unit, they fell into an ambush by French and Indian enemies. Every British officer was killed or wounded and nearly half the soldiers. Washington had several horses shot out from under him, had four bullet holes in his coat, and the testimony of the enemy Indian Chief was that the “Great Spirit” was with Washington since he had pointedly instructed his braves to concentrate their fire on him. The Chief, not a Christian, knew God protected Washington.

Later, during the War for Independence, Washington and his whole army were trapped by vastly superior British forces on Brooklyn Heights in New York. At his back was the water of the inlet. The sun was about to set, so the British decided to have their victory and celebration the next day – a common maneuver in that era in military conflicts.

God, who “governs in the affairs of men,” just then rolled in a dense fog. Washington seized this providential blessing and had his men work in almost miraculous silence, crossing the inlet on barges, rafts, small boats, and canoes. His troops worked all night, crossing and re-crossing with ALL men, materials, horses, and weaponry. Sometime after daybreak, the fog lifted, and the British saw their certain victory and their quarry vanished.

Some believe the exceptionalism of the United States of America is rooted in the many similar past providential blessings and acts of God on our behalf. If so, it is another reason to glorify our

Creator – the Lord Jesus Christ (John 1:1-3; Ep. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Heb. 1:1-2).

Even God's providential acts, before any English had come to America, prepared the way. In the 1500's, Spain launched a huge Armada to invade England, and deal death and destruction to Queen Elizabeth and the nation. Besides the Queen, the Puritans and dissenters from Papal authority were particularly slated for extermination. This savagery was sanctioned by the Pope and the King of Spain. No apology has ever been given.

Providence sent a storm so devastating upon that Armada that Spanish ships, men, and materials, were scattered in the English Channel and the North Sea. Not one of the thousands of Spanish soldiers set foot on English soil. Had God not spared the Puritans, their grandchildren would not have come to America.

During our colonial period (when England and France were at war) France lost Nova Scotia to Britain. Seeking revenge, France outfitted a large Armada to sail to America intent on setting fire to every English town and village from New England to Georgia. America had no professional Army or Navy to stop them.

This Armada was besieged by storms even in France and when finally, at sea, worse storms arose. Meantime, Americans were daily gathering in prayer asking God to prevent their slaughter. The French vessels were hit with even more violent storms and several went down. Others were filled with sickened men and many were buried every day at sea. Soon after making shore, the Admiral died, and the Vice Admiral committed suicide. They sailed home never having fired a shot.

The "starving time" at Jamestown and their decision to return to England was only halted when on the very day of their departure, a ship commanded by Lord De la Warr (later Delaware) appeared with new settlers, food, and supplies. The Colony was saved. The colonists, looking back declared, "God's providential intervention kept us a colony."

It was the success of Jamestown that encouraged a small group of separated (2 Cor. 6:13-17) Puritan Christians to set sail for Virginia. Yet another providential storm from God drove their ship north to Plymouth, Mass. In spite of fabrications of "radical revisionist historians," the Pilgrims and Puritans were a literate people, some university educated. They committed themselves to a "purer" form of Reformation Christianity derived from their Geneva Bibles and knew of God's "perfect law of liberty" (Luke 4:18; Rom. 8:21; James 1:25, 2:12).

These persecuted Christians populated the "New World." Both their trust in God and His Word set the tone for "One nation under God, indivisible with liberty and justice for all." Their Christian spirit and faithfulness were unfolded in the Mayflower Compact, the Declaration of Independence, the thirteen Colonial Charters, the State Constitutions, and finally in the Constitution of the United States of America.

Our country is worth fighting for, dying for, and certainly worth praying for. God Bless America. Keep looking up (Luke 21:28).



**An Examination of 1 Corinthians 15:3b: “How That Christ
Died For Our Sins, According to the Scriptures” KJV
Part 2: “For Our Sins, According to the Scriptures”**

By Joseph Burghauser

What is meant by “our sins”? In 1 Corinthians chapter 1, verses 2 and 8, we see who is addressed in Paul’s letter:

Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all that in every place call upon the Name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours (verse 2). Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ (verse 8).

“Our,” “you,” and “ye” refer to “the church of God” or “saints” (“to be” in verse 2 is not in the original Greek). Paul’s “our” are those who are “sanctified in Christ Jesus” and who God will keep “blameless” (see Jude 24). In Chapter 15, Paul continues to address those as “brethren,” who have “received” and “stand” in the gospel (verse 1). Verse 2, at first glance, can be taken to mean there may be some doubt about the true conversion of some “brethren.” But if we look at verse 17, we understand that Paul is saying that the “brethren” are saved by their faith in the gospel, unless (which is impossible) the gospel is false, making their faith to be “vain.” So the “our” in our verse must refer to those who are or who will become believers (the elect).

The popular evangelical view is that Christ died to make the forgiveness of everyone’s sins possible, but no one in particular is guaranteed to be forgiven. This ‘offer’ of redemption, they say, must be accepted by faith, and can be rejected. We reject this understanding, as we believe it is not “according to the Scriptures.” The Bible teaches that God’s purposes are unchangeable and that He accomplishes what He desires (Isaiah 46:10). Psalm 103:12 states, “As far as the east is from the west, so far hath He removed our transgressions from us.” (See also Psalm 32:1-2.) Since God has decreed that He will forgive the sins of the elect, He cannot fail to save them (Matthew 1:21). We believe that Christ’s sacrifice was more than sufficient to pay for the sins of everyone, but that His death was not intended to just ‘give everyone the chance to be saved,’ but to without fail save those that the Father chose to save (Acts 13:48; Romans 8:29-30, 9:16-24; Ephesians 1:4-7, 11; 2 Timothy 1:8-9).

To support the view that “our sins” are those of the elect, we can turn to Isaiah 53. We see the words “our,” “us,” and “we” in many verses. Verse 5 states: “But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed.” Of those referred to as “our,” verse 8 states: “... for the transgression of My people was He stricken.” Verse 11: “... shall My righteous servant justify many; for He shall bear their iniquities.” And verse 12 adds: “... He bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors.” The words “our,” “we,” “My people,” and “many” are used. Christ is said to “bare the sin of many” and to “justify many.” The “many” are referred to as “all we” and “us all” in verse 6: “All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all.” So the Suffering Servant (Christ) takes upon Himself the sins of many people, but

not everyone. He actually “heals” (verse 5) His people as He “bears their iniquities” as their substitute (verse 11). “All we” and “us all” are the elect (His “people”). To “bear” means He took “our sins” upon Himself to pay the ransom to the Father to “remove our transgressions from us.” This removal is God’s promise to those He chose.

For additional support that “our sins” are those of the elect, we remember that the sacrifices that were required of the chosen nation of Israel were not made for the sins of the Egyptians or the rest of the world but for the elect nation of Israel alone.

In the New Testament, the word “many” is also used to refer to those for whom Christ paid the ransom for their sins: Matthew 26:28; Mark 10:45; Romans 5:19; Hebrews 9:28. (1 Timothy 2:6 says Christ “gave Himself a ransom for all,” but if we look at 1 Timothy 2:1-2, we see the “all” is to include kings and others in high position, not every person.) So, “our sins” are those of the elect (all those God chose to become believers).

To further see how “Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures,” we can look at two examples of how the Scriptures foretold His death in types and shadows. In 1 Corinthians 5:7b, we read, “For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us.” Exodus chapter 12 tells of God’s final plague on Pharaoh for refusing to free Israel from their bondage. The Jews were told to kill a lamb and to put its blood over the doorposts and on the lintel of the firstborn sons. John the Baptist referred to Christ as “The Lamb of God Who takes away the sin of the world” (John 1:29). Another example would be that of the raising of the bronze serpent as mentioned in our previous article on John 12:32. These examples of Israel’s physical deliverance pointed to Christ’s Final Perfect Sacrifice for eternal deliverance.

The Scriptures foretold other details of His death for our sins. Our Lord drew attention to this as He quoted the first verse of Psalm 22. This Psalm includes a description of crucifixion: “they pierced My hands and My feet” (vs. 16). (In Zechariah 12:10 the Lord speaks of His Second Coming as He states of Israel: “They shall look upon Me Whom they have pierced.”) Psalm 22 also describes the physiological effects of extreme dehydration, asphyxiation, and heart failure from crucifixion in verses 14-17 (see John 19:34). Verse 18 foretells of the casting of lots for His clothing (see John 19:23-24). Verses 6-8 predict that He would be despised; and tell of those that would say, “He trusted on the Lord that He would deliver Him: let Him deliver Him, seeing He delighted in Him” (see Matthew 27:39-44). Exodus 12:43, 46; Numbers 9:12; and Psalm 34:20 foretell that our Passover Lamb and Righteous Man could have none of His bones broken in His death. John 19:31-33 refers to this fulfillment “according to the Scriptures.” Psalm 69:19-21 predicts the offering of vinegar (Mark 15:23; John 19:28-30). In Isaiah 53:7, we read that the Suffering Servant will be silent before His accusers (see Mark 15:3-4). The darkness at the cross (Mark 15:33) was predicted as a sign of God’s judgment in Deuteronomy 28:29 and Amos 8:9. Another sign of God’s judgement of Israel in the Old Testament was being handed over to the Gentiles (see Psalm 106:40-41 and Ezra 9:7b). Jesus said this would happen to Him in Mark 10:33-34.

Did Christ die for your sins? Christ died for sinners; so God the Father can justify those who place their faith (trust) in Christ alone. Acts 16:31 “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou

shalt be saved." The Lord Jesus Christ said in John 6:37, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me; and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out." And in Matthew 11:28, He said, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

As you come to Him as your Lord and Saviour, as revealed in the Scriptures alone, you can know "that Christ died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," and that He will give you rest.



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	12:30 pm
Wednesday Evening Bible Study	7:00 pm
Outdoor Movie Night (July 11th)	8:30 pm