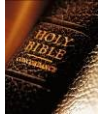


## The DEFENDER— December 2024

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



A monthly publication of the  
IN DEFENSE OF TRUTH radio broadcast  
and the Cub Hill Bible Presbyterian Church.



### FROM THE DIRECTOR'S Desk

What If...?

What if Joseph had not been sold into slavery? He wouldn't have been taken captive into Egypt. And what if he hadn't been sent to prison, or called from there to interpret Pharaoh's dream? What if he hadn't become Prime Minister? What then would have been the reason for Jacob's family settling in Egypt? There would have been no Jewish settlement in Egypt, no Moses, no Exodus from Egypt, no law, no prophets, no Christ, and no salvation.

Can we therefore conclude that the sins of Joseph's brothers, (by selling him into slavery), were in fact virtuous in disguise? Not at all. Their sin was sin, a clear violation of the perceptive will of God, for which they were held responsible and judged to be guilty. But God brought good out of evil. This reflects neither a contradiction in God's character nor a contradiction between His precepts and His decrees. Instead it calls attention to the transcendent power of His sovereignty.

The story of Moses provides another fascinating glimpse into the confluence of man's responsibility and God's sovereignty. The human action that takes place at Moses' birth is a clear indication of man's responsibility. His mother took action. She made an ark, a small boat, out of bulrushes and pitch and placed Moses in it. She then sent it down the Nile, where two things were prevalent: bulrushes and crocodiles. But she displayed her faith in God. Moses' sister Miriam also got involved, as she watched her baby brother float down the river. When Pharaoh's daughter saw the baby and heard him crying, she turned Moses over to his sister (and his mother) to nurse him. A lot of people got involved in this story, making decisions and taking action, in conjunction with the working of God's providential rule.

A lot of variables go into God's governance of His Creation. Moses' crying got him rescued rather than eaten. If there was no Moses there would be no burning bush, no exodus, no 10 Commandments, and no prophets. No prophets means no Jesus, no cross, no redemption, and no Christianity, meaning no western civilization as we know it. But there are no what ifs with God. His providence is in the details. History works out because of His plan. He sovereignly and providentially rules in the affairs of man. He also includes the choices made by sinful man to accomplish His ultimate purpose, which was bringing the incarnate Christ to earth to fulfill the Protoevangelium of Genesis 3:15.

So all of the events in history, from Creation to the birth of Christ, to the family lineage that brought you and me into the world were not the result of "what if" but rather "thus saith the Lord." God is so confident in the good that He is willing to allow the bad. And the result is that your birth, like that of Jesus, was not left to chance. Or as Romans 8:28 says, "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called, according to His purpose." I pray we remember that this Christmas as we thank Him for bringing us this far and pray for His wisdom and discernment as we seek His will for us moving forward. Merry Christmas everyone.

Rev. David Lewis

**Jesus Christ, the Same Yesterday, and Today,  
and Forever  
Christ, the Power of our Lives**

**By Robert Luthardt, Sr.**

The title above was the theme of the “Fifth Plenary Congress” of the “International Council of Christian Churches” held in Amsterdam, the Netherlands, on August 14-20, 1962. The subtitle was the marvelous message delivered by Dr. Willem H. Velema at this Congress (a summary follows below).

Christians who strive in God’s power alone, are in their new divinely ordained natures, naturally separated from worldliness (they know and adhere to the Ten Commandments – Exodus, Chapter 20) but are also separated from the age-old delusions of man – centered false teachings and of world conquests that run from the Tower of Babel (Gen. 11:1-8) to the modernist “New World Order” and the “One World Religion” of the “Prince of the Power of the Air” (Ep. 2:2; 2 Cor. 4:4). The time is at hand that the “old serpent” will be bound and cast into the “bottomless pit” by the invincible power of our “KING OF KINGS, and LORD OF LORDS” (Rev. 19:16, 20:1-2)

“We are living in dynamic days;” days of constant change. Man quests for power having strayed from God. Diverse powers are at work like Nationalism and Communism, Islam and New Agism, scientific research (some good, some evil) and in our time, space exploration abounds. Powers are changing rapidly and thoroughly (Dan. 12:4). The powers within man are ever astir and none can fully isolate from all the powers that impel us and mankind “fears being crushed by it all.”

Where can man find relief? We read in scripture that Christ is “the power of God” (1 Cor. 1:24); that the “crucified one” is the power of God seems incredible. Yet worldly power has proven insufficient. Paul wrote, the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek wisdom and both “miss the mark.” Jews demand proof but will receive nothing but the sign of Jonah (Matt. 12:39-40). The Greeks need their “cradle of man-centered philosophy” but the Gospel does not mesh with either demand.

The Apostle called Christ, “the Power and Wisdom of God” (1 Cor. 1:22-24). Christ is the sign we all need for His wisdom will NOT disappoint any who come humbly to a crucified Savior. At the cross, man’s pride also dies – a well-deserved death.

Christ battled, lived, and died for His sheep, against principalities, powers and rulers of darkness (Ep. 6:12) and taught that every force NOT of God will perish, so we must follow our “GOOD SHEPHERD” (John 14:9-18).

Jesus Christ came as a man to receive power and to share it with His “FRIENDS” (John 14:14-15). His redemption work on the cross brought our necessary atonement before God. Christ did “FOR” God and “against” our mortal enemy what we could NOT; keep the law perfectly (Acts 15:5-10, 24; James 2:10). Christ took our sins in His body on the cross and He triumphed (Gal. 2:16; Phil. 2:9-10).

A crucified Christ is unfathomable to the lost since they do not yet know and understand the evil of Satan nor the far greater power of God. They wish to live by their own power so for them the Cross of Christ is foolishness (1 Cor. 1:18) and are easily felled in Apostasy. Jesus Christ, our Creator, and the

Shepherd that cares for His lambs, has the power of eternity He won for us at Calvary's Cross (Ep. 1:19-23). This is the "GOOD NEWS – Christ's Gospel." He alone has God's divine power, and He shares it with all His sheep (John 10:4-5), by God's promise through the "Comforter" (John 15:26, 16:13) most particularly at Pentecost (Acts 2:29-39).

How can we receive His power and how can we share it as we are called to do? We are to recognize that Jesus Christ reveals Himself to us by God's infallible and inerrant Word and by His Holy Spirit: in the Divine unity of the Trinity of God (John 5:39; 1 Pet. 1:2; Ep. 2:18; Gal. 4:6). The Apostle John tells us, "God's Word was given to us that, ... Ye might believe that Jesus is OUR CHRIST and that we have life through HIS NAME" (John 20:31, 1 John 5:13). Also, the Holy Spirit "works faith in us" by God's Word (Rom. 10:17) which faith "liveth and abideth forever" as Peter taught (1 Pet. 1:23) and James (1:18) and in Hebrews (4:12-16). All who would have the power of God must turn to the scriptures for there is Jesus Christ and salvation revealed.

We live in a day when men and denominations violate God's Word and commandments by adding to or taking away from the plain teachings of Scripture which both are expressly forbidden (Gen. 4:2, 12:32; Prov. 30:5-6; Rev. 22:18-19). How can one consider themselves to be a believer yet deny the very words God has spoken?

No one can deny that belief in Jesus Christ entails a personal experience. It is the Joy of Christian life that we have a personal contact with God and our Savior (John 17:1-3, 20-23). Such personal contact is evoked by the Holy Spirit through the knowledge of Jesus Christ flowing out of the scriptures. Believers, once "born again" (John 3:7-8, 14-15) hear Christ's call (John 10:27-30).

Any who dare "ADD" their own interpretation to God's divine truth in effect puts God's Word "on ice and thereby minimizes words like 'sin and resurrection' and concepts such as the 'Virgin Birth' or the 'bodily ascension of Jesus Christ.'" They fill the resultant void with ideas of their own making. They render false tribute to Christ but reject His rightful dominion over them. This is a dangerous form of apostasy because it wraps itself in a spurious biblical garment. It uses the words of scripture but rejects its contents.

Born Again believers experience Christ's power in their lives when they learn "God's Word" is the only source of their God-granted "GRACE" (Ep. 2:8-13). Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep MY WORD" and he must therefore have heard and read them (John 14:23; 2 Tim. 3:16) to avoid error (Mark 12:24-27) and please the Savior (Luke 24:13-48).

God's scriptures support nothing lurking in the antichrist's ecumenical movement of these last days that portend the imminent return of Jesus Christ. The Bible presents a living Savior returning for His Church (John 14:1-3). Those who reject Him are playing with eternal fire and will not escape without burns.

God forcibly compels no one but in the way of loving care and friendship invites and then con-scripts those who follow Christ's voice and the Father's call (John 15:15-16; Ep. 1:3-12). We must not forget "Many are called ... few are chosen" (Matt. 22:1-14).

So how can we each share in the power of Christ in our lives? Paul replies simply, "That I may know Him [Christ] and the power of His resurrection" (Phil. 3:10). Christ shows forth the power of His resurrection and works in us as the Holy Spirit pours His Spirit into our hearts and minds. Our

contact with Jesus Christ through our personal prayers and our enlightenment garnered from an opened Bible is under the loving care and Power of God. Paul's craving in his "changed life" was for Christ and His resurrection power. To have Christ's power requires God-given faith that surrenders all our will to His. This is a "living faith" that recognizes that, "... when I am weak THEN AM I STRONG" (2 Cor. 12:10). A Christian's life is weakness and strength and power – side by side. We turn from our inherent weakness to the power inherent in our Savior.

Paul prayed that the Ephesians be granted that "Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith (Ep. 3:16-19); for those in Colosse strengthened with all their might according to His glorious power" (Col. 1:11). Note that in the message by the Apostle Peter, "you are kept by the 'POWER OF GOD' through faith unto salvation" (1 Pet. 1:5, 9-10).

Believers have this hope for even the destiny of our bodies, "Jesus Christ shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto 'His GLORIOUS BODY'" (Phil. 3:21) and Christ could say, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth" (Matt. 28:18). Go ye therefore ... in the name of the FATHER ... SON and ... HOLY GHOST (vs. 19) and so we live as one with Christ being "made perfect;" one with the Father and one with Christ (John 17:22-23) under the power of the Trinity of God (John 14:26, 15:26). Indeed, we live in dynamic days where diverse powers try to fell us but Christ exposes those sinful forces which we alone cannot master, but His power is sufficient.

So, we may ask, who is at the helm of my life? Is Christ our "Lighthouse"? By the power of His sinless life, we are enabled to "work out our salvation" but with "fear and trembling" (Phil. 2:12) and to follow the Holy Spirit's command to "be ye separate" and not in any way be "unequally yoked" with unbelievers (2 Cor. 6:14-18). It is God which worketh in you both to WILL AND TO DO OF HIS GOOD PLEASURE (Phil. 2:13).

Keep looking up (Luke 21:28).

**Chief Source:** A Message of the Fifth Plenary Congress of  
The International Council of Christian Churches  
**Message:** Christ, The Power of OUR LIVES  
By Dr. Willem H. Velema  
**Delivered:** Amsterdam, Netherlands (August 14, 1962)

*Merry Christmas*

*From*

*Reverend David Lewis and the staff of In Defense of Truth*



## The Christmas Message—Galatians 4:4-5 By Joseph Burghauer

Christmas is usually celebrated by gathering with family and friends, gift-giving, and wishing for peace on earth. But there is often an ignoring or a misunderstanding of the true significance of the birth of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. As Christians, we also rightly object to the presence of crass materialism, ungodly celebrations, and fables. (The Puritans and other Christians of the past often prohibited the celebration of Christmas.) May we remind ourselves of the true meaning of Christmas by looking at Galatians 4:4-5:

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth His Son, made of a woman, made under the law, To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.

What does “the fulness of time was come” mean? We can understand how the world was ready for the birth of Christ and for His message to be spread. Among the reasons:

1. There was Pax Romana—when the Roman Empire ruled with relative peace and order. The early disciples could travel with greater ease over a wide area due to the Roman roads and vast territorial extent.
2. Koine Greek was an international language. This helped the spread of Christianity. The New Testament was written in this language and the early disciples were able to communicate more efficiently as they traveled or were dispersed.
3. There was anticipation among the Jews for their Messiah. (This may have been heightened by Rome’s oppressive rule). We read of this in the account of Simeon and Anna in Luke 2:25-39.

The above reasons (and others) may be true, but we must look to the Old Testament for the proper meaning of “the fulness of time”. It must refer to God’s timetable for His people’s redemption in this most significant event of human history.

The time of the Messiah’s appearance was prophesied in Daniel 9:24-27. (This prophecy was given over five hundred years before His birth). If the command given by Artaxerxes in 445 B.C. (Nehemiah 2:5) is what Daniel refers to, the 69 x 7 years ended just prior to Calvary, when the “Messiah be cut off” (The Crucifixion). The time had now arrived for the birth of this Messiah, to fulfill God’s prophecy given to Daniel.

Next, we consider the phrase “God sent forth His Son, made of a woman”. God the Father sent to earth the Second Person of the Trinity, Who is God the Son. The Old Testament includes many prophecies about the Incarnation (God also becoming a man). Among the most well-known are Isaiah 7:14 and 9:6. Matt. 1:23 quotes the Isaiah 7 verse and here God tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ is “God with us”. The Bible calls Jesus the Son of God many times, including in the narrative of His birth in Luke 1:35.

“Made of a woman” refers to the fulfillment of Genesis 3:15. The singular “seed” or offspring of the woman will be the Savior of His people. That the seed is of a woman rather than a man indicates that the woman’s offspring would not have an earthly father. This was

fulfilled in Jesus Christ, Who was begotten of the Holy Spirit and born of a virgin (Luke 1:34-35).

The Messiah (Christ) had to be made of a woman in order to be our Savior. He had to be a man to be the Second (or Last ) Adam to be our representative to die for our sins and for us to receive His righteousness. Also, He could not have an earthly father, for He could not have Adam's sin on His account, for then He would Himself have needed a Savior! (Perish the thought)! Our Lord was not born with original sin, He was born righteous (Luke 1:35) and incapable of sin (impeccable). I Cor. 15:45-49; Rom. 5:12-21; Heb. 4:15 are among the verses that tell of Jesus as the Second Adam and His being without sin.

“Made under law” can refer to two aspects:

1. Our Lord was a Jew, born under the Mosaic Law.
2. Christ as the Second Adam had to obey God's law that existed even prior to the Mosaic Law (Gen. 26:5). And Rom. 2:15 tells us that God's law is “written in their (Gentiles) hearts”. Even though they were not under Mosaic Law, the Gentiles were still under God's law as His law (commandments) was given from the time of Adam.

Christ did not have to obey the law for Himself or to be qualified to be our Savior, since He was already completely confirmed in His Righteousness (unlike Adam before his fall). He was qualified to be our Redeemer as the sinless and impeccable God-man. We understand that He was made under the law to obey the law in our place so we can have His obedience given to us (believers), and He was made under the law to pay the penalty of the law (eternal death) for our sins.

“To redeem them that were under the law”. To redeem means “to buy out”. This term is used to refer to the purchase of a slave's freedom. Christ was sent to redeem His people from their slavery to sin and the resulting curse of the law. (Matthew 1:21; Gal. 3:13). In the Galatians verse, we read that Christ was “made a curse for us”. The unsaved are still under the curse of the law and must obey it perfectly for eternal life, which they cannot do since they are sinners with original sin from Adam's transgression and their own sin. (James 2:10; Galatians 3:10-11, Romans 2:13). The law was given to show us our sinfulness (Rom. 3:20, 7:7) and to “lead us to Christ”. (Gal. 3:24). Christ was “made a curse for us” as God “made Him to be sin for us”. (2 Cor. 5:21). The “us” refers to His people and as God says in Ephesians 1:4: “According as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world”.

Finally, we read at the end of verse 5 of Galatians chapter 4: “that we might receive the adoption as sons.” Not only are believers redeemed from their status as law-breakers, they are adopted into God's family as true sons and daughters (John 1:12; Ephesians 1:5).

When the time came for God to fulfill His prophecies and promises to send the Messiah, He sent His only begotten Son to become a man as well as to remain God to perfectly keep the law for His people whom God had chosen. Christ also became a curse for them to pay the penalty for their sins. This was done not only for our forgiveness and to earn eternal life for us, but also that we would become God's adopted sons and daughters. This is the true Christmas message.



*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
Christmas Eve Service	7:00 pm
New Year's Eve Fellowship	9:00 pm—midnight