

FORUM FOR THE DEFENSE OF FAITHFULNESS by Pastor Willem Hekman

The militant Muslims in Indonesia have an organization called “Forum for the Defense of Islam”. By disturbing, closing and burning churches and places of worship they feel they are defending Islam. God does not need the believers in Jesus Christ to defend Himself, Christendom, Jesus Christ or His Holy Word, the Bible. In 1 John 2:1 God’s Word says that Jesus Christ is our defense. *“if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. He is the atoning sacrifice for our sins, and not only for ours but also for the sins of the whole world.”*

No where in God’s Word does God almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth request sinful and weak human beings to defend Himself, His Church, His servants or His Son, Jesus Christ. We are told in Hebrews 9:14 and throughout His Word to serve the living God – NOT TO DEFEND HIM! It is utterly ridiculous to even think or consider that God or His Church needs our defense. God is asking you and I to be faithful to serve and obey Him and He will reward us. *“Be faithful, even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life.”* (Revelations 2:10). God has promised in Psalm 18:25 that He will be faithful to those who are faithful to Him. *“To the faithful you show yourself faithful to the blameless you show yourself blameless.”*

So I am proposing a Forum for the Defense of Faithfulness to the King of kings and the Lord of lords.

FAITHFUL TO THE LEGAL AUTHORITIES AS COMMANDED IN ROMANS 13:1-5;

*“Everyone must submit himself to the governing authorities, for there is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God.”*² Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted, and those who do so will bring judgment on themselves.³ For rulers hold no terror for those who do right, but for those who do wrong. Do you want to be free from fear of the one in authority? Then do what is right and he will commend you.⁴ For he is God’s servant to do you good. But if you do wrong, be afraid, for he does not bear the sword for nothing. He is God’s servant, an agent of wrath to bring punishment on the wrongdoer.⁵ Therefore, it is necessary to submit to the authorities, not only because of possible punishment but also because of conscience”. **The only exception to this rule is, if and when the authorities or the government request or command you to do something in direct contradiction or disobedience to His Word. Examples are Daniel who refused the king’s command to only pray to the Babylonian king, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah who refused the king’s command to pray to the golden image and Peter and John who refused to stop teaching in the Name of Jesus. In all cases God Himself protected His servants who obeyed God rather than men.**

FAITHFUL TO THE GREAT COMMISSION OF JESUS CHRIST AS COMMANDED IN MATTHEW 28:19-20;

“Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you”.

Also in Mark 16:15 Jesus says: "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned". Our duty as believers is to share the Good News of Salvation with all people everywhere and make disciples of all nations". This involves sharing the plan of salvation with all people regardless of their tribal affiliation and nationality. It makes no difference if the people are members of Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Shintoism, and Christendom or have no religious affiliation. Jesus Christ has commanded us to preach the Good News to all people created by God and make Christ's disciples of all nations in the world. I realize that the Government of Indonesia does not encourage for Christians to witness to Muslims but the command of Jesus Christ does not adjust to the wishes of any government, be it in Iran, Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Malaysia, Indonesia or China where the Chinese Communist Party also forbids preaching the Gospel. Our answer is the same as that of Peter and John speaking to the authorities in Acts 4:19 "Judge for yourselves whether it is right in God's sight to obey you rather than God".

FAITHFUL TO OBEY THE NEW COMMAND OF JESUS CHRIST AS RECORDED IN JOHN 13:34;

"A new command I give you: Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. ³⁵ By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Believers in Jesus Christ are commanded to love even their enemies or those who consider themselves their enemy. Love is the ID mark of a believer. Love is defined in 1 Corinthians 13:4, "Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. ⁵ It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, and it keeps no record of wrongs. ⁶ Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth. ⁷ It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, and always perseveres. Love never fails." My pastor of Calvary Life Fellowship in Brea, California, Rev. Luke Sydo explained to me that world basically consists of two kinds of people, givers and takers. The Lord is telling us to be "givers".

FAITHFUL TO WORSHIP GOD IN SPIRIT AND IN TRUTH AS COMMANDED IN JOHN 5:24;

"God is spirit, and his worshipers must worship in spirit and in truth." The house church movements in China are an example of believers worshipping God in spirit and in truth. The house church movement is one of the largest church growth movement in the world. The most recent census enumerated 4 million [Roman Catholics](#) and 10 million [Protestants](#). However, independent estimates have ranged from 40 million to 130 million Christians. According to [China Aid Association](#), [State Administration for Religious Affairs](#) Director [Ye Xiaowen](#) reported to audiences at [Beijing University](#) and the [Chinese Academy of Social Sciences](#) that the number of Christians in China had risen to 130 million by the end of 2008, including 20 million [Catholics](#). This has been officially denied by the Foreign Ministry. Recent studies have suggested that there are roughly 54 million Christians in China, of which 39 million are Protestants and 14 million are Roman Catholics as the most common and reliable figure among others.

FAITHFUL TO MEET TOGETHER TO ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER AS RECORDED IN HEBREWS 10:25

"Let us not give up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but let us encourage one another--and all the more as you see the Day approaching." **We must be faithful attending Sunday worship services, Bible studies, prayer meetings, fellowship meetings.**

FAITHFUL IN DAILY BIBLE READING

Hebrews 4:12 *“For the word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thoughts and attitudes of the heart.”*

Lukas 8:21 *“Jesus replied, “My mother and brothers are those who hear God's word and put it into practice.”* **For almost 10 years I served in the primitive Asmat tribe on the South Coast of Papua. Every morning we were called by the MAF (Missionary Aviation Fellowship) on a radio communication system and we had to report in, share problems and difficulties and receive instructions about coming flights. This was our life-line with the outside world. So as believers we must report-in every morning and listen to God's instructions in His Word. His Word is indeed our life-line and foundation for life and service.**

FAITHFUL IN DAILY PRIVATE PRAYERS AS COMMANDED IN EPHESIANS 6:18,

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.” **God talks to us in His Word and we talk to Him in our prayers. The Lord Jesus was so faithful to communicate with His Father. He never missed a day to talk to His Father.**

Mary A. Kidder of New York wrote a precious song about private prayer in 1876 and the question posed here are very relevant for all of us today.

Ere you left your room this morning,
Did you think to pray?
In the name of Christ our Savior,
Did you sue for loving favor,
As a shield today?

Refrain: O how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day;
So when life seems dark and dreary,
Don't forget to pray.

When you met with great temptation,
Did you think to pray?
By His dying love and merit,
Did you claim the Holy Spirit
As your guide and stay? Refrain

When your heart was filled with anger,
Did you think to pray?
Did you plead for grace, my brother,
That you might forgive another
Who had crossed your way? Refrain

When sore trials came upon you,
Did you think to pray?
When your soul was bowed in sorrow,
Balm of Gilead did you borrow
At the gates of day?

Refrain: O how praying rests the weary!
Prayer will change the night to day;
So when life seems dark and dreary,
Don't forget to pray.

Think upon it. Did you pray before you left your room this morning?

In James 4:17 we read that "Anyone, then, who knows the good he ought to do and doesn't do it, sins." This is called the sin of omission. We know the good we should be doing but we don't do it. God calls it sin. Sin must be confessed and God forgives.

1 John 1:9, "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word has no place in our lives*".

This Forum for the Defense of Faithfulness is for all believers in Jesus Christ. By prayer we connect with our Head Quarters and report in for duty with our Master, the powerful Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. We surrender and submit our bodies to God the Father and turn away from the behavior patterns of the world.

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God--this is your spiritual act of worship. ² Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--His good, pleasing and perfect will." Romans 12:1-2.

As the Indian believer of the Garo Tribe in North India answered in the face of witnessing his wife, children and himself being killed when he refused to deny Jesus Christ as personal Savior and return to Hinduism

1. I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
I have decided to follow Jesus;
No turning back, no turning back.
2. The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
The world behind me, the cross before me;
No turning back, no turning back.
3. Though none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
Though none go with me, still I will follow;
No turning back, no turning back.