



The Voice of Truth



December 6, 2009

Should Christians Support The Salvation Army?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

This is the time of year in which you see the Salvation Army bell ringers at almost every store looking for donations. The question is, "Should Christians support the Salvation Army?" Let us examine the teachings of the Salvation Army, and what the Bible teaches. Remember, teaching false doctrine is sin, and the Lord will punish those who do so (**Gal. 1:8; 2; 2 John 9-11**). The book of **Jude** tells us that God reserved the blackness of darkness, punishment of eternal fire for such false teachers.

The Salvation Army teaches that in consequence of our first parents' sin, we are born sinners, totally depraved, having inherited a disposition to self-pleasing (**Handbook, pp. 85-86**). Sin is not inherited, infants do not inherit the sins of their parents (**Ezekiel 18:20**), and little ones know neither good nor evil (**Deuteronomy 1:39**). Through growth children learn to choose between good and evil (**Isaiah 7:15-16**). God is the Father of our spirits (**Hebrews 12:9**), hence, when they come from Him (**Ecclesiastes 12:7**), they are as pure as the Source. In **Matthew 18:3**, the purity of little children is here revealed. Man begins to practice evil in his youth (**Genesis 8:21**). Since Jesus had a human mother, was he at least half depraved?

The Salvation Army doctrine contends that man has no way to be saved simply through the Gospel message of salvation; rather, he must receive a special illumination of the Holy Spirit, so that he may personally know the Word is true (**Handbook, pp. 89, 133**). This, of course, is in contradiction with **Romans 1:16** which shows that the Gospel is the power of God to save. "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, why?" "For it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." James tells us, "*receive with meekness the implanted word, which is able*

to save your souls" (**James 1:21**). "For the word of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us who are saved it is the power of God" (**1 Corinthians 1:18**).

The Salvation Army ministers no baptism; they assert that it is not necessary in order to receive salvation. They reason that there are climates and circumstances which would make immersion impractical, hence only repentance and faith are required (**Handbook, pp. 185-186**). But, Christ taught otherwise; He commanded that the Gospel be preached throughout the whole world and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved (**Mark 16:16**). Peter, having affirmed that salvation in the days of Noah was through water of the flood (**1 Peter 3:20**), now draws a comparison with the water of baptism (**1 Peter 3:21**). Salvation offered through water in the days of Noah is exactly parallel to salvation offered through water baptism. The Salvation Army has no authority to change this divine ordinance.

The Salvation Army makes no provision for the memorial of the Lord's Supper. Though Jesus plainly said of the memorial supper, "*This do in remembrance of me*" (**1 Corinthians 11:24**), the Salvation Army excludes it, amazingly, that they might testify to themselves and others against the danger of trusting to any external rite as though it has virtue in itself (**Handbook, p. 88**). The Salvation Army testimony is that of unbelief!

The use of mechanical instrument music for Christian worship is not authorized by the New Testament. It is an addition to the specific New Testament command to sing (**Ephesians 5:19**), and it is well known that it was a human introduction of the seventh century A.D. But, music plays an important part in Salvation Army religious work... it is

symbolic of the cheerful quality of Salvation Army religion (**What is the Salvation Army?, p. 25**). It is further symbolic of the Salvation Army's disregard of sacred truth! The New Testament specifically authorizes singing as an act of Christian worship (**Colossians 3:16**). The use of mechanical instruments in worship is unknown to the New Testament.

The Salvation Army also uses women preachers in its teaching system. Catherine Booth (the founder's wife) was a woman preacher who addressed great audiences. She wrote vigorous defense of female ministry. The Bible prohibits a woman functioning in such a capacity (**1 Timothy 2:12 ff**); she cannot be a public preacher to sexually integrated audiences. The woman is not to function in the teaching role so as to subordinate man; nor is she to dominate him. He is head; she is to be submissive (**1 Corinthians 11:3; 14:34**).

In the New Testament, the work of the church was supported strictly by free-will contributions from its members (**Acts 11:29; 1 Corinthians 16:2**). The Salvation Army is involved in various enterprises for the raising money, and, according to one of their book, must even look to the public for some of its financial support (**Ibid. p.26**).

The Salvation Army is a false religion. They do not follow God's Word, and no Christian should support this sect. We desire to call all accountable men, women, boys and girls back to the truth! ♦

"The Burden of Malachi" By Jarrod Jacobs

The book of Malachi is the last book of the Old Testament. It was written at a time when God was giving His people one last chance to repent before they experienced a period of 400 years where there was "no open vision" from God (to borrow a phrase). Malachi begins with the words, "*The burden of the word of the LORD to Israel by Malachi*" (**Mal. 1:1**). The word "burden" means, "a burden or load, figuratively a judgment which

lies heavy on a people" (Wilson's, p. 59). Why was this word a burden? What was this judgment and why would it lie heavy on the people? Let us look in this book and find out what God said to His people. Let us also learn the intended lessons and work to make sure that these things do not happen to us!

God's People Did Not Honor Him

In **Malachi 1:6-7**, we read, "*A son honoureth his father, and a servant his master: if then I be a father, where is mine honour? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the LORD of hosts unto you, O priests, that despise my name. And ye say, Wherein have we despised thy name? Ye offer polluted bread upon mine altar; and ye say, Wherein have we polluted thee? In that ye say, The table of the LORD is contemptible.*" God charges the people with disrespect and dishonoring Him. The Jews ask in **verse 7** how this happened, and the Lord answers them by describing the way they were worshipping. They offered polluted, or unclean bread on the altar, and their attitude was one of pride. They also despised the altar. In other words, they gave God the leftovers in their worship! They gave God the least of their time and devotion. They focused on this world and its pleasures, rather than looking to God and pleasing Him, and God condemned them for it.

God's People Were Bored With Worshipping Him

In **verse thirteen of chapter one**, God says, "*Ye said also, Behold, what a weariness is it! and ye have snuffed at it, saith the LORD of hosts; and ye brought that which was torn, and the lame, and the sick; thus ye brought an offering: should I accept this of your hand? saith the LORD.*" These people literally were bored with serving God. They had no intention of pleasing God through sacrifices, and did not want to serve God. Instead of it being a pleasure and privilege to serve the only true and living God, they considered it a burden upon them.

This is a sad commentary on the people of God. They were bored with God and did not want to serve Him as they should. God also condemns the way they sacrificed whatever they wanted instead of the best of what they had. Let us notice what David said in **Psalm 122:1**. *"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the LORD."* This attitude, and not the attitude of those in Malachi's day ought to be our attitude today. Let us come to worship with zeal and enthusiasm! Let us be ready to serve God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength (**Mk. 12:30**)!

God's People Had A Perverted View Of His Character

In **Malachi 2:17**, God tells them, *"Ye have wearied the LORD with your words. Yet ye say, Wherein have we wearied him? When ye say, Every one that doeth evil is good in the sight of the LORD, and he delighteth in them; or, Where is the God of judgment?"* These folks had pushed God to the point that He was literally disgusted with them (Wilson's, p. 477). These people had completely perverted the character of God. They taught that God delights in those who do evil. You can see the utter disrespect as they sneered, *"Where is the God of judgment?"*

Sadly, their attitude was not unique, but a resurrection of the attitude of their forefathers. Before the people had gone into exile, God through Isaiah said, *"Woe unto them that call evil good, and good evil; that put darkness for light, and light for darkness; that put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter! Woe unto them that are wise in their own eyes, and prudent in their own sight!"* (**Isa. 5:20-21**) Woe to those today as well who try to pervert God's character and scoff at His power and might!

God's People Robbed Him

In **Malachi 3:8**, God accuses, *"Will a man rob God? Yet ye have robbed me. But ye say, Wherein have we robbed thee? In tithes and offerings. Ye are cursed with a curse: for ye have robbed me, even this whole nation."*

Just as they had defiled the altar, they had also robbed God through their tithes and offerings. They refused to do as God commanded. They did not give like they should, and God was ready to punish them for it. As we read further in this chapter, we notice that these Jews had become very arrogant. *"Your words have been stout against me, saith the LORD. Yet ye say, What have we spoken so much against thee? Ye have said, It is vain to serve God: and what profit is it that we have kept his ordinance, and that we have walked mournfully before the LORD of hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are set up; yea, they that tempt God are even delivered"* (**Mal. 3:13-15**). There is no room in God's kingdom for those who think they can work wickedness and God will not care; or that He will not punish them for acting that way.

God's People Were Given An Opportunity To Return

Even at this time, God had not given up on them completely. In **Malachi 3:7** God said, *"...Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts."* After all God's people had done, God was still ready to forgive them. He told them to return to Him, and when they did, He would return to them. This passage is like **James 4:8** which says, *"Draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you..."* After all the terrible things these people did to God, God was still willing to forgive.

In like manner, if we want to be forgiven by God, we must realize that we have sinned (**Rom. 3:23**), and make our life right with God through obedience to His word. In spite of their arrogance and thievery, God was willing to take them back because He loved them as a man loves his son (**Mal. 3:17**). So also, God is willing to take us back when we repent (**II Pet. 3:9**).

God's People Had A Reward Waiting For Them.

Notice the promise God made to these

wicked Jews, "Bring ye all the tithes into the storehouse, that there may be meat in mine house, and prove me now herewith, saith the LORD of hosts, if I will not open you the windows of heaven, and pour you out a blessing, that there shall not be room enough to receive it. And I will rebuke the devourer for your sakes, and he shall not destroy the fruits of your ground; neither shall your vine cast her fruit before the time in the field, saith the LORD of hosts. And all nations shall call you blessed: for ye shall be a delightsome land, saith the LORD of hosts" (Mal. 3:10-12). After their selfishness and unwillingness to serve God, He still was there with out-stretched arms waiting for them. He told them, "...prove me NOW...".

How foolish these people were for not taking God up on His offer.

How foolish people are today, as well. Jesus Christ extends the invitation, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. 11:28-30). Do not let the cares of this world lead you away from the Truth. Stay grounded and settled in God's word as long as you live (I Cor. 15:58). Do not become like these people in Malachi's day (Rom. 15:4; I Cor. 10:11).

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦

Belief is a Work of Faith

By David Riggs

"Jesus answered and said to them, 'This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent.'" (John 6:29)

To believe that Jesus is the Christ is the "work of God." Some argue that if "works" were necessary, it would nullify salvation by grace. However, they fail to understand the difference between meritorious works devised by men from those commanded by

God. Salvation is not by "grace alone" or "faith alone," but by "grace through faith" (Ephesians 2:8), and by "faith which works through love" (Galatians 5:6). Whenever one obeys the "works" which God ordained, it does not nullify grace, but complements it. Grace teaches us to obey (Titus 2:11-14). Jesus is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (Hebrews 5:8-9).

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3

Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24

Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30

Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21

Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27

Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

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Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com