

**Hyphenated-Christianity**  
By Jonathan L. Perz

Have you ever been asked the question, “What religion are you?” Maybe it was worded, “What faith are you?” or “What denomination are you?” Regardless of the specifics, how did you answer this question?

Some might answer, “I am a Catholic.” Others might say, “I am a Baptist.” Many other names might be given—Lutheran, Methodist, Pentecostal, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Adventist. Broader divisions might be offered; yet some might have to be more specific than this due to divisions or sects within a denomination.

Such confounded answers beg the question, why can't people simply say “I am a Christian?”

It is written, “...and the disciples were first called Christians in Antioch” (Acts 11:26). In the first century, children of God were simply called Christians! There was no “hyphenated-Christianity!” There were no Catholic-Christians, or Baptist-Christians, or Lutheran-Christians. For that matter, you could not find a Catholic church, Baptist church or Lutheran church. There was only Christ's church and her members were simply called Christians.

In the only example of such behavior in the New Testament, Paul condemned Christians for dividing and naming themselves (i.e., denominating - 1 Cor. 1:11-13). Those who hyphenate their Christianity today are no less condemned!

The children of God in the first century all shared “one faith” (Eph. 4:5), one doctrine (Gal. 1:6-9; 1 Cor. 1:10; 2 John 9-11) and one name—Christian (Acts 11:26)!

Why can't people do the same today?

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

**The Three Monkeys**

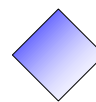
Three monkeys say in a coconut tree, discussing things as they're said to be. Said one to the others, now listen, you two, there's a certain rumor that can't be true: that humans descended from our noble race, the very idea is shocking disgrace.

Never did a monkey desert his wife, starved her babies and ruin her life. And you've never known a mother monk to leave her babies with others to bunk, or pass them on from one to another. Till they scarcely know who is their mother.

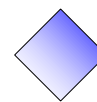
And another thing you'll never see: a monk build a fence round a coconut tree, and let the coconuts all go to waste, forbidding any other monks to taste. Why, if I put a fence around a tree, starvation would force you to steal from me.

Here's another thing a monk won't do: go out at night and get on a stew, making whoopee, disgracing his life, then reel madly home, and beat up his wife. They call this pleasure and make a big fuss; they've descended from something, but not from us! ♦

About the Hillcrest church of Christ		
Evangelist: Jimmy Pettigrew		
How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
<p><b>Telephone:</b> (920)499-5677 <b>E-mail:</b> hillcrestcofc@live.com</p>  	<p>1621 Hillcrest Drive Green Bay, WI 54313</p> 	<p><b>Bible Study:</b> Sunday, 9:00am <b>Worship Service:</b> Sunday, 10:00am <b>Bible Study:</b> Wednesday, 7:00pm*</p> <p><small>*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month</small></p>
<b>www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com</b>		



# The Voice of Truth



December 5, 2010

**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). 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 show 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

Continued on Page Two

In This Issue...	
<p><b>Pages 1 to 2</b> - Should Christians Support The Salvation Army? <b>Pages 2 to 3</b> - “Increasing In Strength”</p>	<p><b>Page 4</b> - Hyphenated-Christianity <b>Page 4</b> - The Three Monkeys</p>

*Continued from Page One, "Should Christians Support The Salvation Army?"*

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**).

## “Increasing In Strength”

By Jarrod Jacobs

Spiritual growth is something that is required of all children of God. Unlike our involuntary physical growth, one can control his/her spiritual growth, and does so on a daily basis. In fact, the Bible even commands men and women to grow spiritually. The apostle Peter wrote, *“As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: .... But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen”* (**I Pet. 2:2; II Pet. 3:18**). In the book of Hebrews, the Jewish Christians were chastised and rebuked for not growing as they should. They were told, *“For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil”* (**Heb. 5:12-14**).

Based on these passages, we can learn some vital points concerning spiritual growth. We learn that spiritual growth: **1)** Begins at an early spiritual age. Those who are new babes in Christ can and must “grow.” **2)** One grows through a diet of “milk” (or “the first principles”) and then later advances to the “meat” of God’s word. **3)** One grows from a babe in Christ to mature in Christ through “exercising” and using the senses. **4)** One’s growth and maturity in Christ is seen as one is better able to discern *“both good and evil.”*

Now that we understand these points, let us study about one specific case of spiritual growth in the New Testament. Saul (Paul) is a prime example of one who grew spiritually, and grew fairly quickly in the faith. We find the record of his conversion in **Acts 9**. There, Christ told him to

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! ♦

go to Damascus and it would be told him what he *“must do”* to be saved (**Acts 9:3-6**). Saul entered the city, and for three days and nights fasted and prayed before God (**v. 9, 11**). Once Ananias told him what he must do, Saul was baptized for the remission of his sins (**v. 17-18**). Then, *“he took food and was strengthened”* (**v. 19**).

Following this, we see Saul with the disciples at Damascus. Notice what happened then: *“And straightway he preached Christ in the synagogues, that he is the Son of God. But all that heard him were amazed, and said; Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests? But Saul increased the more in strength, and confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is very Christ”* (**Acts 9:20-22**).

Notice that in the text of **Acts 9:19-22**, the words *“strengthened”* and *“strength”* were used in reference to Saul. Do these words refer to the same thing? No. One time, Saul *“was strengthened”* after having received food. Remember, he had gone without food or drink for three straight days (**Acts 9:9**). The next time the word was used, we find Saul increasing *“the more in strength”* as a result of his preaching Christ (**v. 20**), and confounding (baffling) the Jews (**v. 22**).

Now, what was the difference between the first use of the word *“strength”* or *“strengthened”* and the second? The difference was that Saul was strengthened physically the first time, and spiritually the second time.

How did Saul increase *“the more in (spiritual) strength”*? It came through his learning and then his proclaiming the truth concerning Christ. Two, it came through

*Continued on Page Three*

*Continued from Page Two, “All Things Are Relative!!”*

his obedience and standing for the truth even when it contradicted his former lifestyle (**Acts 9:21**). It also came through controversy, i.e., confounding the Jews concerning Christ. What we read in **Acts 9:20-22** is a specific application of **Hebrews 5:14** which tells us spiritual growth requires us having our *“senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”*

A problem that is plaguing the Lord’s church in many places today is a lack of maturity on the part of Christians. Too many congregations have 20, 30, and 40 year-old babies when it comes to spiritual growth. These people cannot teach, they cannot lead the worship services, they cannot talk to someone about their soul one-on-one, they have little interest in spiritual matters, they know very little about the Bible, (other than what the preacher has said) and they certainly want nothing to do with controversy or with having to maintain the lines God has drawn against sin and error, i.e., *“discerning good and evil”* (See also: **Ezek. 22:26**)! It seems rather than increasing *“the more in strength”* as Saul did, they are satisfied to be baptized, and then “live and let live.” They are spiritual weaklings (some call them “spiritual invertebrates” — no backbone!); spiritual babies who need to be rebuked for their lack of growth (**Heb. 5:12-14**).

Brethren, we cannot have this attitude if we are going to be what God wants us to be. Let us have the fire and zeal of Saul. In fact, he would later write to Titus and say that Christ died *“that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works”* (**Tit. 2:14**). He wrote the Romans that Christians must be, among other things, *“fervent in spirit; serving the Lord”* (**Rom. 12:11**). We will not be what God wants us to be if we do not have that fire and fervor to stand for God’s word, to proclaim it far and wide, and let the chips fall where they may!

It is past time that we got busy on our spiritual growth. Brethren, this is not something that you wait for like a teenager’s “growth spurt.” Spiritual growth is something we must work at on a daily basis.

Why did Saul increase *“the more in strength”*? It was not because someone else did his work, nor because he let people think what they wanted to about Christ and His church. He did not grow as a result of “taking his seat” and waiting for strangers to walk in the door at Damascus or Jerusalem. He did not grow by saying that he and the Jews were “worshipping the same God.” Saul stands out

as a good example for all of us, because when we do what he did, we will grow as he did!

Was this all Saul did in order to become strong spiritually? Of course, not! We see Saul (Paul) consistently in prayer with God (**Eph. 1:15-23, 3:13-21; Phil. 1:3-4; Col. 1:3; I Thess. 1:2; II Tim. 1:3**). We see sacrifices Saul (Paul) made for the Lord (**Acts 15:25-26, 16:22-23, 21:13, 23:12-13; II Cor. 11:8, 23-28, 12:15; Col. 4:10, 18**). We also find Saul (Paul) concerned about his brethren, and being a good example toward them (**II Cor. 11:28; I Thess. 2:2-12**). All of these things played a part in Saul’s spiritual growth; and in **Acts 9:20-22**, we find a living example of **Hebrews 5:14**.

By the way, how is our growth? Are we still a ways off from where we would like to be as a Christian? I know of no person who would say they have grown as much as needed, do you? Therefore, let us get to work and be busy in our spiritual growth.

Let us follow the righteous example of Saul (Paul) who shows us what true strength is (**I Cor. 4:16, 11:1; Phil. 3:17**). Let us not merely tolerate, but demand that the strong, sound preaching of the gospel thunder forth from the pulpit. Let us challenge ourselves to bring others to Christ by explaining the truth to them. Let us not back down from the devil when he rears his head and challenges us. Let us not apologize for controversy between truth and error. Let us, with a determined resolve, stand as Saul stood, and do what he did. Let us *“confound the Jews”* of our day and discern both good and evil that we might lead others to Christ. *“Let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.”* (**Gal. 6:9**)

## Conclusion

Who knows the untold numbers of people that came to the Lord as a result of Saul’s (Paul’s) work (**Acts 19:10, 28:23-24, 30-31**, etc.). But, he could have done nothing had he sat on the sidelines and been satisfied to occupy his space, and not challenge error in her strongholds and citadels. Had he not *“increased ... in strength”* in his early days as a Christian, he may not have done all that he did.

You may never (physically) grow more than five feet tall, but you (and I) can be giants for the Lord when we increase in our spiritual strength and grow as a Christian should! *Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦*