

Are You Heaven Bound? By David J. Riggs

It matters not what else you do in life, if you miss heaven you have been a complete failure. You might gather about you great riches and fame and leave thousands of friends to mourn your departing, but if you are not ready for heaven you have been a miserable failure. On the other hand, you may die in a charity home for the poor and be buried in a potter's field without a single friend to mourn, but if you receive heaven, your life has been a marvelous success.

You can't afford to miss heaven for if you miss it, you miss all. It is the place of eternal rest (**Heb. 4:9-11**) where pain, sickness, and death will not be known (**Rev. 21:4**). It is an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that does not fade away (**1 Pet. 1:4**). It is that city built by the living God (**Heb. 11:10**).

You don't have to miss heaven. Humbly submit yourself to the will of God (**Matt. 7:21**). Let His Word guide you (**2 Tim. 3:15**) and let no one beguile you or your reward (**Col. 2:18**). Overcome temptations (**James 1:12**) and suffer for His cause with rejoicing (**Matt. 5:11-12**). If you do these things, heaven will be yours someday for the God of heaven who cannot lie has promised it.

I quote a few words from some of our songs: "I am going to a city where the streets with gold are laid, where the tree of life is blooming, and the roses never fade. Here they bloom but for a season, soon their beauty is decayed; I am going to a city where the roses never fade." "I am bound for the promised land, promised land, I am bound for the promised land; O who will come and go with me? I am bound for the promised land." "When we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun; we've now less days to sing God's praise than when we first begun."

Credit: oakridgechurch.com/riggs ♦

THINK ABOUT IT!

When a farmer stops plowing his land, stops planting seed, and stops harvesting his crops, he has stopped doing those things that identify him as being a farmer. When a Christian stops attending worship services regularly, stops studying, stops giving as he has been prospered, and has stopped working for the Lord, he has stopped being a Christian because he has stopped doing those things that identify him as a Christian. "By their fruits ye shall know them," (**Matthew 7:20**). ♦

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

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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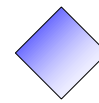


Schedule of Assembly

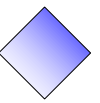
Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

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

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The Voice of Truth



December 4, 2011

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 teaching system. Catherine Booth (the founder's wife) was

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a woman preacher who addressed great audiences. She wrote vigorous defense of female ministry. The Bible prohibits a woman functioning is 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).

ported 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!

In the New Testament, the work of the church was sup-

"Timeless Truths About The Bible"

By Jarrod Jacobs

The Bible is a powerful tool (Jer. 23:29). It is a warrior's weapon (Eph. 6:17; II Cor. 10:3-5)! Unfortunately, the Bible is something that is taken for granted by many in our society. It is treated as a book of myths and legends, as a magic charm, and other things. Let us learn what the Bible truly is, and respect it for what it is.

How Is The Bible Described?

A good way to appreciate what the Bible is is by noting its inspired descriptions. The Bible is described as the "Sword of the Spirit" by the apostle Paul. "Therefore take up the whole armour of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God" (Eph. 6:13-17). A soldier of the cross (II Tim. 2:3-4) is "out of uniform" without his sword!

Hebrews 4:12 declares God's word to be sharper than any "two-edged sword." When God's word is handled accurately, it results in people being cut to the heart at its proclamation (Acts 2:37)! If people are not cut to the heart at the preaching and teaching of God's word, something is wrong with us! We must not be handling God's word correctly (II Tim. 2:15). May we remember God's word is a "sword" and use it as a good soldier should!

God's word is also described as "dynamite." Again, Paul writes, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to every one who believes, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek." (Rom. 1:16). From our text, Paul said the gospel is God's "power." That word "power" comes from the Greek word "dunamis" (δύναμις). It is from this word that we get our English word "dynamite." Therefore, by inspiration, Paul recognized that the Gospel is the "dynamite" of God. Just as dynamite is a

powerful explosive, so also the Gospel is a powerful spiritual explosive! It has the power to break through the hardened heart of sin. It can crumble a heart calloused after years of unbelief and immorality to reveal that soft heart willing and ready to obey God!

God's word is also compared to a fire. Jeremiah wrote, "Is not my word like a fire declares the Lord ... ?" (Jer. 23:29). Just as a fire can burn off the chaff in the field, so also, the Lord's word can burn away the "trash" in our lives to reveal a heart ready to do His will.

In connection with this, I find it fascinating to read that when the disciples spoke with the Lord on the road to Emmaus, they said, "Did not our hearts burn within us while he talked to us on the road, while he opened to us the Scriptures?" (Lk. 24:32). Again, when the Holy Spirit fell upon the apostles, "divided tongues as of fire appeared to them and rested on each one of them" (Acts 2:3).

Another description of the word of God is "truth." In Jesus' prayer to His Father, He readily proclaimed, "Sanctify them in the truth; your word is truth" (Jn. 17:17). In a world known for dishonesty, God's word is truth! Never forget this!

Reactions To The Bible

Just as we see timeless truths in the description of the Bible, we also see timeless truths when observing people's reactions to it! When people hear God's Word, they will react in one of two ways without exception. They will either accept and obey God's word, or they will reject and dismiss God's word. Let us look at some examples of this.

First, we see Abraham as he reveals a heart of

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submission. When called by God, he answered, "Here am I" (Gen. 22:1) and was obedient to God's command. In contrast, when Pharaoh heard God's word, he hardened his heart (Ex. 5-12). Again, we find that the apostles showed their submission to the Lord when He spoke, but many of Jesus' disciples "walked with him no more" when He said something they did not want to hear (Jn. 6:66-69).

"Fervent in Spirit"

By Gene Taylor

As Christians we have work to do. We were created in Christ for good works (Eph. 2:10) and to be zealous for them (Tit. 2:14). Albert Barnes said, "An idle man and a Christian are names which do not harmonize."

The above text points out two basic attitudes the Christian can have in relation to the work of the Lord. One can be either "lagging in diligence" or "fervent in spirit." Of course, if one is going to please the Lord the latter is preferred.

"Lagging in Diligence"

The King James Version translates this phrase as "slothful in business." To be slothful is to be lazy or indolent. William Barclay stated, "There is a certain intensity in the Christian life. There is no room for lethargy in it" (The Daily Study Bible Series, Romans, p. 178).

God's people in the Old Testament were warned against having such an attitude. Amos 6:1 pronounced woe upon those who were "at ease in Zion." Jeremiah 48:10 says, "A curse on him who is lax in doing the Lord's work!" (NIV).

Diligence is required of Christians—God's people today. They are to give diligence to grow in Christ (2 Pet. 1:5); to abound in diligence (2 Cor. 8:7); and to be diligent, never becoming sluggish (Heb. 6:9-12).

Diligence is a product of commitment. The Corinthians' commitment to the Lord was demonstrated by doing what needed to be done in reference to the sinner they had in their midst (I Cor. 5:9-13). 2 Corinthians 7:11 says, "For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter."

Friend, which of these best describes you? Will you act like Abraham or Pharaoh when you read and study God's word? Will you be like the apostles of the Lord, or those foolish followers who left the Lord when He expected them to change? Let us all show the proper respect for the word of God. Let us read, study, speak, and submit to God's word (I Pet. 4:11; Eph. 4:3). Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com

"Fervent in Spirit"

The word translated "fervent in spirit" means to boil with heat, be hot. It is used of boiling anger, love and zeal for what is good or bad. As used in our text, it means to have a burning zeal to do the will of God.

An example of this attitude is Jesus Christ. John 2:17, in speaking of Him, says, "Then His disciples remembered that it was written, 'Zeal for Your house has eaten Me up.'" Apollos is also an example of zeal. Acts 18:24-25 states, "Now a certain Jew named Apollos...came to Ephesus...and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord..." Both Jesus and Apollos were successful in accomplishing their God-given tasks.

Fervor and enthusiasm are the keys to success in the Lord's work. The church at Laodicea was chastised because of their lukewarmness (Rev. 3:14-16). Barclay says, "The one man whom the Risen Christ could not stand was the man who was neither hot nor cold" (Ibid.). He added, "The Christian may burn out, but he cannot rust out."

Sadly, though, this spirit is lacking in some who claim to be God's people. There are those who put off, sidestep, maneuver out of, or procrastinate with respect to that which needs to be done in the kingdom of the Lord. It seems impossible to move some "Christians" into action. The fire and enthusiasm of the first century church is missing from their lives. They may have restored the truth, but they seem to have forgotten the spirit.

Conclusion

Ephesians 6:6 counsels us to be, "doing the will of God from the heart." May none of us drag our feet but instead give ourselves enthusiastically to doing the work of the Lord. Such a life of service will grant us the best life here and in the hereafter. Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com