



The Voice of Truth



December 2, 2012

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 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 sup-

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 of money, and, according to one of their books, 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! ♦

"Does It Matter What I Believe?"

By Jarrod Jacobs

Many ask this question in reference to religious matters. A large number of people in our society try to say that it does not matter what we believe so long as we are honest and sincere about religious issues. Is this true? Let us study the Bible and see the consequences of one reasoning that it does not matter what we believe so long as we are sincere.

If it does not matter what we believe just as long as we are sincere people, then why did Jesus condemn the Pharisees while He was on earth? Let us read **Matthew 15:9**. There Jesus said, "*In vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.*" Does this sound like Jesus does not care how we worship him? How is it possible to worship "in vain" if it doesn't matter what we believe? Further, in **Matthew 22:29**, Jesus condemned the Sadducees, telling them, "*You are wrong, because you know neither the Scriptures, nor the power of God.*" How can Christ say that people are "wrong" if it does not matter what you and I believe on religious matters?

Let us look at an early teacher and preacher of the gospel: A man by the name of Stephen. This space will not allow us to print the entire text, but please read **Acts 7** so you can understand the entire context. Toward the end of **Acts 7**, Stephen condemns the Jews for refusing to believe that Jesus was the fulfillment of all Old Testament proph-

ecy (**v. 51-53**). Please notice what happened, "*When they heard these things, they were cut to the heart, and they gnashed on him with their teeth ... They cast him out of the city and stoned him*" (**Acts 7:54, 58**). Does this sound like the reaction of a people who heard a sermon suggesting that it doesn't matter what we believe so long as we are sincere in what we do?

We could add to this study by relating the various reactions of people who heard the apostle Paul preach. The Bible shows us that he was run out of Antioch in Pisidia, stoned at Lystra, run out of Thessalonica, and Berea as well (**Acts 13:50, 14:19, 17:10, 13-14**). These are but a few examples, and more of Paul's suffering is recorded for us in **II Corinthians 11:23-28**. Please note the responses to Paul and when they came. This is not the reaction of folks hearing, "I'm OK and you are OK," or "It doesn't matter what we believe"! Instead, we know he preached the gospel and the gospel only (**Gal. 1:6-12; Rom. 1:16; I Cor. 2:2, 5**).

My friend, what we believe matters! What we believe will determine whether we go to Heaven or Hell (**Jn. 8:24**)! This is how serious it is. When people declare that it does not matter what you believe as long as you are honest and sincere, they are saying something completely foreign to the Scriptures. *Credit: The Old Paths - 5/27/12 ♦*

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**). ♦

***A faith that will not take us to worship will not
Take us to heaven!***

God's Two Laws Of Pardon

By Heath Rogers

"For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. 6:23). We live in a fallen world—everyone feels the wages of sin. All the pain and problems that plague mankind can ultimately be traced back to sin. But, as the above passage points out, God offers a way out.

The word pardon means, "to release a person from further punishment of a crime" (Webster's). What man needs, and what God provides, is pardon. We have suffered enough for our sins. We want to be released from further punishment. We seek eternal life with God and Christ. The Bible is the best selling book of all time because it contains the message of pardon, or the forgiveness of sins. Man's greatest need—salvation—is found in the Bible.

God is able to forgive us of our sins because of the shed blood of His Son Jesus Christ (**Matt. 26:28; Eph. 1:7**). But the fact that the blood has been shed does not mean that everyone is automatically forgiven. We chose to sin, resulting in our being lost. We must also choose to be saved. God has made a way for us to be forgiven, and this way can be referred to as a law of pardon.

God is not going to save us on the merit of our goodness. Cornelius is a great example of this (**Acts 10**). Cornelius was *"a devout man and one who feared God with all his household, who gave alms generously to the people, and prayed to God always" (v. 2)*. Yet, he was told to send for Peter who would tell him what he "must do" (**v. 6**). The fact that he was told he must do something implies that a law exists which he had to obey in order to be saved.

1 Timothy 2:3-4 says, *"For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth."* God wants to save everyone, but this is not possible until man comes to a knowledge of His law of pardon. Man is not free to choose HOW to be saved. There is a truth that must be learned, believed and obeyed before we are saved. Jesus provides the truth and points the way (**John 14:6**). He has been given all authority (**Matt. 28:18**). He is God's approved spokesman (**Heb. 1:1-2**). And He is the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him (**Heb. 5:9**). To learn God' law of pardon, we must listen to Jesus.

What has Jesus said we must do to be saved? Believe! *"Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if*

you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins" (John 8:24). Repent of Our Sins! *"I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish" (Luke 13:3).* Confess Faith in Christ! *"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32-33).* Be Baptized! *"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).*

Anything other than, or short of, what Jesus says is not the truth. It is through obedience to the gospel that we enter into Christ (**Gal. 3:26-27**) and enjoy every spiritual blessing in Him (**Eph. 1:3-14**).

We do not become perfect when we become a Christian. Even the most sincere Christians sin from time to time. Unforgiven sins have the same effect on Christians that they do on alien sinners—spiritual death, eternal Hell. So, the question of how Christians receive the forgiveness of their sins is also very important.

We Must Confess Our Sins! *"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).* Confession is good for the soul. Our forgiveness is dependant upon our willingness to own up to the fact that we have sinned. God must see in us a heart like that of David who confessed, *"I have sinned against the Lord" (2 Sam. 12:13).*

Repent of Our Sins! Acts 8 tells of Philip the evangelist taking the gospel to those in Samaria. Among those who were converted was one identified as Simon the sorcerer (**vs. 9-13**). He sinned by trying to buy the ability to dispense the gifts of the Holy Spirit for his own personal gain (**vs. 18-19**). He was told by the apostle Peter to *"repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you" (v. 22)*. Repentance is more than just being sorry that you have sinned. To repent means to turn away from sin. God must see in us an effort to turn away from sin and back towards Him.

Pray For Forgiveness! Simon was also told to pray for forgiveness. God must hear from us that we desire to be forgiven.

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God is ready and willing to forgive all people of their sins. But we must seek His forgiveness through the means He has made available. If you are not a Christian, the blood of Jesus will cleanse you of your sins if you will fulfill

the requirements of God's first law of pardon. If you are a Christian, the blood of Jesus will cleanse you of your sins if you will fulfill the requirements of God's second law of pardon. God is faithful to do what He has promised if we will do what He requires of us. ♦

GOD HAS A RIGHT

Author unknown

- God has a right to a definite part of your time
 - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to a definite part of your money
 - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to be glorified through your tongue
 - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to be honored through your influence
 - He has the power to take all of it.
- God has a right to your life
 - He has the power to take all of it. ♦

Do You Just Belong?

Are you an active member?
 The kind that would be missed?
 Or are you just contented that your name is on the list?
 Do you attend the meeting and mingle with the flock?
 Or do you stay away to criticize and knock?
 Do you take an active part to help the work along?
 Or are you satisfied to only just belong?
 Think this over, my dear friends:
 I know you won't go wrong.
 Are you an active member, or do you
 just belong?

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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Our Address

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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