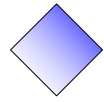


The Voice of Truth



December 1, 2013

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! ♦

"Seasonal Behavior"

By Jarrod Jacobs

A phrase I am sure we have heard many times this month is, "Tis the season." An observation some have made is that during this time of year, it seems that folks are more giving, more understanding, nicer, etc. Perhaps you have been a recipient of such generosity (or even better, you have been generous toward others, **Acts 20:35**) this month. I am sure it made you feel good, and you wondered why this type of thing doesn't happen more often. Me too.

Why is such behavior only "seasonal" with many folks? Isn't it true that we are to be generous and loving toward others every day, and in every season of the year, not merely during the winter months? Of course, that is true. So, why does this behavior take place with some folks only in December when it is needed so desperately all year long?

Some folks may answer this question by saying that since December is the month of Jesus' birthday, then folks are reminded of Christ's birth and try to be nicer. If this is the reason why folks (including you) are acting this way, then understand that your actions are based upon a FALSE assumption! You see, the Lord Jesus was not born in December, and the Bible is silent as to the date of His birth. So, while folks may delude themselves into thinking that Jesus was born in December, nothing could be further from the truth. (I don't know about you, but I don't intend to lie to myself or others about this or any other subject, **1 Cor. 3:18a**!) At the same time, shouldn't men be nice, giving, etc., all year long, anyway?

In this article, I want to encourage folks to not merely engage in good behavior for a "season", but to engage in righteous, moral, and upright behavior every day of the year! Please consider the following.

Seasonal Behavior In Adding To Our Faith

A practical example of what we are studying is seen in **II Peter 1:5-8**. For those who are Christians, we need to add certain characteristics to our faith. It is necessary for one to be forgiven of sins, but we need to also grow in our faith on a daily basis! Peter wrote, *"For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ" (II Pet. 1:5-8)*. These characteristics must be added daily, not merely during "seasons".

Seasonal Behavior In Treating Others As We Would Want To Be Treated

Not only must we be adding to our faith, but we also need to be treating others as we would want to be treated (**Matt. 7:12**). Many problems today are caused by someone acting in a selfish and unfair way. We can do better than this! Think of our Lord. Did He act in a selfish way? By no means! He was unselfish in His life, continually giving of Himself. In like manner, the apostle Paul stated that he would very gladly spend and be spent for the brethren (**II Cor. 12:15**). How are we doing in following the examples of Christ (**I Pet. 2:21-22**) and Paul (**I Cor. 11:1**)? Be honest! This characteristic of selflessness ought not be "seasonal" with us, but should be a way of life!

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Seasonal Behavior Concerning The Treatment Of Our Enemies

Loving our friends and family is a pretty easy thing, but what about loving our enemies? Again, it seems that during this time of year, people try harder to love others than they do at other times. During World War I, German and British soldiers stopped their fighting on the Western Front (December 24, 1914 and December 25, 1915) for a few hours in order to trade Christmas greetings, sing familiar carols, and in 1915, they even played a short soccer game together. Were you familiar with this unofficial truce that took place less than 100 years ago? How is it that sworn enemies who were intent on killing each other could stop and exchange pleasantries for a while? It is because they were willing to try harder! A more difficult concept for me to understand is how folks who have exchanged such pleasantries and showed such kindness, could then pick up arms to start killing each other again!! If these soldiers could be kind and treat enemies well for one day, why not two days? Why not every day thereafter? Jesus said, "*Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you; That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. For if ye love them which love you, what reward have ye? do not even the publicans the same? And if ye salute your brethren only, what do ye more than others? do not even the publicans so? Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect*" (**Matt. 5:44-48**). Are we putting forth our best effort to love and pray for our enemies, not merely on one day a year, but all year long? If not, why not? Shame on folks who display only "seasonal" good behavior!!

Seasonal Behavior In Worship

When it comes to our worship of God (**Jn. 4:24**), we find many folks changing schedules, and making efforts to be at worship on such days as December 24-25, or during the springtime (Easter). Catholics have Midnight Mass on December 24, and other denominational groups offer similar things. Why is this? It is because during this season, many folks place more emphasis on worship than at other times of the year. Yet, when the Lord speaks of worship to Him, He does not speak of it as a yearly, or biannual occurrence. This is not a "seasonal" thing with the Lord! Rather, we find the disciples gathering to worship God every first day of the week (**Acts 2:42, 20:7**; etc.). We read in the New Testament of folks so in love with the Lord

(ex: **I Pet. 1:8**) and His word that they gathered daily to hear the preaching of the gospel (**Acts 5:42**). If those folks could be transported to 21st century America, I wonder what they'd think of folks whose interest in spiritual things surges and flows like the ocean tides? Perhaps they would be reminded of Paul's words (**Eph. 4:14**), or James' words (**Jas. 1:6-8**), for truly a person whose thoughts center on spiritual things only once or twice a year are very much a child in understanding, lacking in faith, and wavering. If we can be convinced of the need for worshipping God one time in a year, may we be convinced to worship Him as He actually directs us to do!!

Seasonal Behavior In Our Preaching And Teaching

In studying for this article, it did not escape my notice that when Paul wrote Timothy, he exhorted him to, "*Preach the word; be ready in season and out of season; reprove, rebuke, and exhort, with complete patience and teaching*" (**II Tim. 4:2**). In spreading the gospel, we must be ready to teach and preach God's word at all times. In other words, we teach folks the truth when they are receptive to God's word and are ready to hear the truth. We also promote and preach God's word when folks are not receptive to it! In fact, we spread it when folks are clearly opposed to what we are doing! Paul's words to Timothy make it plain that we must be ready and willing to tell folks all the truth, not leaving out anything (**Acts 20:20, 27**). Such encouragement is seen throughout all the Scriptures! For example, when God told Ezekiel to preach His word to the captivity, He told Ezekiel, "*Behold, I have made your face as hard as their faces, and your forehead as hard as their foreheads. Like emery harder than flint have I made your forehead. Fear them not, nor be dismayed at their looks, for they are a rebellious house*" (**Ezek. 3:8-9**). God made a similar statement to Jeremiah (**Jer. 1:17-19**).

Sadly, we sometimes encounter folks who wish to hold back or keep part of the gospel away from folks for fear of "offending", making folks "mad", etc. In other words, they engage in "seasonal" preaching; by preaching only what is popular, or accepted by most folks, and leaving off anything the people do not want to hear. May this attitude never be true of us! May we be the kind of folks who DEMAND sound doctrine to be preached and taught regardless of the reaction men may have to it! Preaching and teaching God's word in its pure and unadulterated form needs to continue! (**II Tim. 4:2; I Pet. 4:11**) God made this clear throughout the Bible. Take careful note of the preaching and teaching of those whom God commends. (Ex: Daniel, Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, Jude, Jesus, The apos-

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ties, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Ezekiel, Jonah, etc.)

Conclusion

While there are some things which are

"seasonal" (baseball, hunting, work, etc.), there are other things which have no season. They must be evident all year long. Take the above to heart as we wind up 2011 and prepare for 2012! *Credit: The Old Paths - 12/11/11* ♦

THE ONE BODY

The church is the body of Christ, "And he is the head of the body, the church (**Col. 1:18**). There is only one body, one church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all" (**Eph. 1:22-23**). The New Testament teaches that there is only one body; this one body is the church. We are "fellow heirs of the same body" (**Eph. 3:6**). We are "reconciled to God in one body" (**Eph. 2:16**). Christ is founder of only one church. "Upon this rock I will build my church" (**Matt. 16:18**). Jesus did not say that we would build a church, His church or one of His churches. He said, "I will build my church." The word "church" signifies singularity. Jesus did not build many different churches, but one! None should encourage any to seek the church of your choice, but the church of Christ's choice, that is, the one that is Christ-built, blood-bought (**Acts 20:28**), the one in which He is the Saviour of (**Eph. 5:23**).

Since there is one, and only one church and since Christ saves only those in that one church; thus, if one living to-day is not a member of that church (**Rom. 16:16**), then he is not saved. ♦

The Nature Of The Kingdom Of God

IS NOT

1. Of This World (**John 18:36**).
2. Eating and Drinking (**Rom. 14:17**).
3. In Word (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
4. With Observation (**Luke 17:20**).

IS

1. In Power (**1 Cor. 4:20**).
2. Righteousness (**Rom. 14:17**).
3. Peace (**Rom. 14:17**).
4. Joy (**Rom. 14:17**).
5. Within You (**Luke 17:21**).
6. Unshakable (**Heb. 12:28**). ♦

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