

“Salvation Issues”

Joe Slater

Not everything taught in the Bible is a salvation issue. Now, before you have a heart attack or start a petition to dismiss this preacher, hear me out!

Years ago, a sincere brother wrote that if you are wrong about *anything* taught in the Bible, you'll be lost. I told that brother a true story: At the first place I preached full-time, I taught Genesis in the adult Bible class. We came to Genesis 42:1-5 where Jacob sent his sons to Egypt to purchase grain (the KJV says “corn”). One class member commented, “Some people say the Egyptians didn't have corn, but the Bible says there was corn in Egypt, so that's what I believe!”

I explained that “corn” simply meant grain, not the sweet corn or field corn we grow. I even read John 12:24 where the KJV says “a corn of wheat” (other translations say “a *grain* of wheat”), but he would have none of it. His Bible said “corn,” therefore he believed yellow corn with tassels and ears must have grown in Egypt just as it does here!

So, I asked the brother who insisted that being wrong about *anything* resulted in being lost: “Was this person lost for believing there was ‘corn’ in Egypt?” Not surprisingly, he didn't answer; but he still insisted that being wrong about *anything* was a ticket to perdition.

Other extremists falsely claim that virtually nothing is a salvation issue except believing in Jesus. They insist that gospel obedience, Scriptural worship, and other matters don't affect salvation. Do Not Count Me Among Those! But equally false is saying **everything** is a salvation issue. As is generally the case, truth lies between the extremes.

All of us have changed our mind as we learned and grew. We'll likely do so again. Let's strive for accuracy while avoiding false extremes!

THERE'S POWER IN THE BLOOD

“For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you upon the altar to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life” (Leviticus 17:11, ASV)

Recently I read a statement affirming that when one donates blood, it could save as many as three lives. The blood that Jesus gave, however, can save the entire world!

Not only can the blood donated by anyone other than Christ, not be sufficient to save more than a few individuals, there is also the possibility that the blood might be tainted. As one lady said, “My dad had to have blood . . . and it was tainted with hepatitis, the one that kills you!”

Our lesson text tells us that *“it is the blood that makes atonement.”* As it relates to the blood of Christ, John tells us that *“if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanseth us from all sin”* (1 Jn. 1:7). In John's gospel account we read, *“On the morrow he (John the immerser) seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world”* (Jn 1:29)! Yes, the shed blood of Jesus makes atonement for all mankind.

As the food commercial says, “you can slice it, you can dice it, you can mince it, you can chop it.” And, believe me, people do try to do all this to God's plan of salvation. But regardless of how much hacking is done, the word of God remains firm and true. God's love remains strong and nothing will change the fact that there is power in the blood

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)

If you are what you've always been, you are not a Christian. A Christian is a new creation.

(Vance Havner)

Namesake

It's difficult to receive correction, isn't it? It's easy when being corrected to fall into judging the person's motives for correcting us, taking offense at the way they corrected us, and searching out inconsistencies and errors in the life of the one correcting us.

But I guess that's why David was said to be a “*man after God's own heart*” (1 Samuel 13:14). You see, David faced the stinging rebuke by the prophet, Nathan. In fact, Nathan set him up in such a way that David had to have been humiliated and embarrassed. But what did King David do? Did he criticize Nathan for the way he rebuked him? No. Did he make excuses for his conduct? No. Did he seek out a way to discredit Nathan? No.

Do you know what King David did? He named a son after Nathan! Check it out (1 Chronicles 3:5). Not only did David not take offense at what Nathan did to him, he later named one of his son's “Nathan.” That's true humility and reflects a genuine desire to be right with God. David didn't hate Nathan for his rebuke, he loved him for it.

Friends, those who have the courage to confront you for your own good aren't worthy of our hatred or vengeance. In fact, in David's case, his confronter was worthy of “namesake.” Give it some thought.

--Steve Higginbotham (via *Bulletin Gold*)

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Old Jake was a God-fearing cowboy. The other cowboys laughed at him, mocking him for His staunch faith. One of the skeptics berated him for believing the account of Balaam's donkey talking. “Can you make a donkey talk, Jake?” The devout cowboy replied, “Nope, I can't even make a donkey!”