

What Is A Salvation Issue?

I. Introduction: The language of “salvation issue” is not in the Scriptures. It is a man-made phrase. It varies based on who defines it too. One says: “I decided many years ago that I would consider ALL who profess faith in the Lord, and who seek to live, to the best of their ability, opportunity and understanding, in compliance with His will for their lives, as my beloved brethren. Will we differ on many areas of personal conviction and practice? Of course we will. But I have reached that point in my Christian walk where I no longer consider such differences to be "salvation issues." Instruments, fellowship halls, number of cups, classes, versions, potlucks ... Frankly, I couldn't care less! I can take or leave any of them. They simply don't matter! If God Himself hasn't declared such to be essential to either fellowship or salvation (and He hasn't), then neither shall I” (<https://www.zianet.com/maxey/reflx416.htm>). When asked what a “salvation issue” is and to define it using the Scriptures, here is an answer from a novice “preacher”: “Well, the words "salvation issue" is a term I used. I didn't coin it out from the scriptures and I may not have to define it using scriptures. However, what I simply mean by a salvation issue is an issue that is very important that when you teach it wrongly, it could lead one to hell. An example is the issue of institutionalism I have given; another issue is What a man must do to be saved, etc...” This person went on to say who wrote Hebrews and other things are non-salvation issues (FaceBook message, 5/10/2022; Email 5/23/2022). My examples here are to show the broadness of this false doctrine.

A. Some will say that God has to say you're lost if you do this for it to be a “salvation issue”. They cite passages such as: **I Corinthians 6:9-10** and **Revelation 21:8** (<https://frontroyalchurchofchrist.com/how-to-determine-salvation-issues/>).

1. That same page says: “Let's not go around saying, “You'll go to hell if you do that!” Unless, of course, that's what Scripture says. But let's certainly challenge each other to maturely consider whether or not our actions are pleasing to God. There will be times when we see things differently and we will have to continue to reason together to “discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect” (Romans 12:2). But when we disagree, we MUST NOT condemn one another.”

2. The same page says: “There are certain behaviors – which if we persist in them – we are explicitly told will eternally separate us from God. There are other behaviors which mature Christian reasoning will lead us to understand are not the Lord's will. So let us be mature in deciding how to conduct ourselves and how to edify our brothers and sisters in Christ.”

B. Some will support teaching against this error by posting material on it (<https://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/cms/a-salvation-issue/>), but then turn around and practice it: “There have been times when I was unable to find a sound congregation in the area I lived. In those cases, I was able to find a group that at least allowed me to worship acceptably. But when it came to supporting the work there, I chose to send my contributions to a congregation that I knew was using its funds correctly. I also taught on the issues as opportunities arose, especially the core issue of establishing proper authority for all that we say and do. I was polite but firm in my teachings while trying not to be a pest about these things. I

figured that if the group asked me to leave, then that would be the time to establish a congregation that followed the Lord. Otherwise, there was teaching to be done and brethren to be strengthened...”

(<https://www.lavistachurchofchrist.org/cms/should-we-leave-our-current-church-because-of-unbiblical-practices/>).

1. The idea of greater or lesser matters of importance is false (**Matthew 23:23-24** and **I Timothy 5:21**; cf. **Jeremiah 7:23** and **Matthew 28:16-20**).
2. Some excuse themselves for being amongst those in error by using **Revelation 3:1-4**. There were those whose faith was dead (cf. **James 2:14-26**). Those in error incorrectly infer that the faithful were aware of the lack of work of the others and okay to continue with those they know to be in error. The text does not say or imply that. The fact is, there may always be those in error amongst the faithful unknowingly (**I Timothy 5:24-25**).
3. To imply or state that fellowship [joint participation] can remain while knowing some are in error or even in disagreement is utterly false (**Romans 16:17**, **I Corinthians 1:10**, **II Corinthians 6:14-7:1**, **Ephesians 5:6-11**, **Philippians 2:2**, **Philippians 3:16**, **I Timothy 6:3-5**, **I John 1:1-7**, and **Revelation 2:14-16**).

II. Body: To Have A Relationship With God, You MUST Abide In The Doctrine Of Christ (**II John 1:9**).

A. The word translated “doctrine” [διδασκαλία] means: “instruction (the act or the matter): — doctrine, hath been taught. Teaching, that which is taught; doctrine, teaching, concerning something. The act of teaching, instruction in religious assemblies of the Christians, to speak in the way of teaching, in distinction from other modes of speaking in public” (Strong’s # 1322). I.E. **Matthew 7:28-29**

1. We are talking about the New Testament as Jesus is the mediator of such (**Hebrews 9:15**).
2. The words of the Apostles were from Jesus through the Holy Spirit (**John 16:1-15**).
3. Evangelists were expected to continue to teach what they had been taught by the Apostles (**I Corinthians 4:17** and **II Timothy 2:1-4**).
4. This is not hard to understand (**I Thessalonians 4:1-2**).
5. Thus, we sin if we teach any other doctrine (**Acts 15:24**, **Galatians 1:6-9**, and **I Timothy 1:3-7**).
6. If it is of man, you’re not saved (**Galatians 1:10** and **Colossians 2:22**). In other words, if you cannot find it in the Scriptures it is of man and you’re lost. For example, the whole “salvation issue” doctrine.

B. Think about whatsoever ye do in word or deed (**Colossians 3:16-17**).

1. **Colossians 3:17** is a very direct command. Think about that and how we must keep it (**Mark 7:7-9**, **John 14:21**, **John 15:10**, **I John 2:1-6**, and **Revelation 22:14**).
2. Remember, what the Apostles instructed by inspiration was by the authority [in the name of] Christ (i.e. **II Thessalonians 3:6**).

- C. What is sin (**James 4:17**, **I John 3:1-10**, and **I John 5:17-18**)?
1. What is the reward for sin (**Romans 6:23**)?
 2. What happens with the relationship between God and sinner (**Isaiah 59:1-3** and **John 9:31**)?
 3. Is ignorance an excuse (**Acts 17:30**)?
- D. Even matters of authorized liberties are “salvation issues”...
1. We have the liberty to eat whatever meats we want (**Romans 14:2-3**), but once one creates a law therein that person has departed from the faith (**I Timothy 4:1-5**).
 2. If one’s liberties cause another to stumble (**Romans 14:13-16**) sin has occurred (**Romans 14:21-22**).
 3. Even with authorized liberties, acting in doubt is sin (**Romans 14:23**). Think about those who teach things they are not sure of.
 4. Such liberties and matters of scruple could not even cause disputes amongst the saints (**Romans 14:1**).
 5. To downplay the faithfulness that is required for salvation is utterly careless and false (**I Peter 4:17-19**).

III. Conclusion: Under the perfect law of liberty that we live under in Christ (**James 1:25**), any single offense makes one guilty of all (**James 2:10-12**).