

# “As Long As I Love...”

There are many concepts and beliefs that are held regarding salvation. We must never just accept something because it is commonly accepted or taught by religious teachers but see what the Scriptures say lest we be deceived.

By Kevin A. Sulc

Let us examine the concept of "As long as I love Jesus, it doesn't matter what I do in my life." The young man who said this to me several years ago was attempting to justify a sin in his life. As I have discussed religion with people in the 13 years since this statement was made, it has become clear that this doctrine is very popular in most religious groups. But what does the Bible teach? Can a person lie, curse, commit immoralities, or do anything he wants to do and still be righteous in God's sight, providing he "loves" Jesus? Salvation would indeed be easy if it were true. We would not have to be concerned with commandments! Ah . . . I think we have found why this concept is so prevalent. But is this a concept of wisdom that really leads to salvation?

I find it hard to believe that any honest Bible student would accept any doc-trine that says salvation has nothing to do

with what we do in our life. "Are we not saved by the grace of God," you ask? Certainly (**Ephesians 2:8**). But I ask you, "May we sin so that the grace of God abounds on us?" Paul answers "No!" in Romans 6:1. If you examine the complete context of **Ephesians 2** (and any passage which speaks of salvation), you learn that the means of our salvation is a gift from God, namely, the cross of Christ, but that it is conditioned upon and for the purpose of our walking in the good works that are of Christ and not in the works of disobedience (e.g. read all of **Ephesians 2:1-10**, not just **verse 8**).

"But I love Jesus," you say, "isn't that all He wants?" What do you mean by love? "Love" has been redefined in the "Christianity" of today to simply mean you have some sort subjective inward emotion that makes you feel "close" to God. Biblically, there is more to it. Think about it. If we say we love someone, but it is only a feeling, is it really love? Not as defined by **1 Corinthians 13**. Jesus Himself said, "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." If we really love Jesus, it does matter what we do in our lives.



### Classes this Week:

<b>Sunday 5:15</b> Kid's Class at the Building	<b>Sunday Evening</b> College Class at the White's	<b>Mon 7 PM</b> Men's Class at the Davis'	<b>Wed 10 AM</b> Ladies Class at the Jerkin's	<b>Thur 7 PM</b> I Jn Study at Jillian Petty's
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### Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Lori Holloway	Chick Wade
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	Jared Nixon
Ross Folmar	Grandparents of Mary Ann Roberts	Joe Perry (Anna Miller's Relative)
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt (Dyle's grandmother)	Erlene Davis (Walker Davis' mother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)	Bill Rhodes (Toni Herd's Uncle)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Frank Johnson (Debbi Coleman's Uncle)	Herbert Missildine (Toni Herd's Uncle)
Christi Gibson (Fallon Hartsell's Mother)	Mike Reed (Friend of the Long's)	Call Yvette to have a name added to this list

### October Birthdays

- 1 - Micah Mauldin
- 2 - Suzanne Nichols
- 6 - Jessica Anderson
- 8 - Heath Fowler
- 11 - Mason Chandler
- 12 - Stacy Norman
- 14 - Lauren Drake
- 20 - Keith Bailey
- 21 - Scott Shields
- 22 - Hunter Crawford
- 22 - Chris Davis
- 22 - Christopher White
- 25 - Josh Sutton
- 26 - Sarah Sutton
- 26 - Palmer Daniels
- 26 - Mel Ambrose
- 29 - Belle Johnson
- 29 - Matt Hall
- 31 - Kitty Tam

### News and Notes

- Larry Rouse will be away in a meeting at the North Gardendale church in the Birmingham area through Wednesday.
- Jon Coleman had successful follow-up surgery and received a very good report!
- Ken Sullivan's dad and stepmom were in an auto accident and are recovering in Dothan.
- Please be sure to greet our visitors and encourage them to fill out a visitors card.
- If you have any Bible question or would be interested in a home Bible study please let one of our members know.
- After every service Audio CDs will be available in the foyer. Please take them and give them to others!

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# The Auburn Beacon



Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (**Matthew 5:16**)

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## Swallowing Camels

By Forrest D. Moyer



### Thought to Ponder

If the devil ever laughs, it must be at hypocrites; they are the greatest dupes he has.

"Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you tithe mint and dill and cummin, and have neglected the weightier provisions of the law; justice and mercy and faithfulness; but these are the things you should have done without neglecting the others. You blind guides, who strain out a gnat and swallow a camel!" (**Matt. 23:23-24**).

In the context of this chapter, Jesus is showing the hypocrisy of the harsh, legalistic Pharisee who very carefully strains a tiny gnat out of a glass of water or wine and then turns around and swallows a whole camel, hump and all! A gnat was an insect and, therefore, unclean for the Jews. So was a camel. "In order to avoid the risk of drinking anything unclean, wine was strained through muslin gauze so that any possible impurity might be strained out of it. This

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is one of the instances of humour which must have raised a laugh. For it is the picture of a man carefully straining his wine through gauze to avoid swallowing a microscopic insect, and yet cheerfully swallowing a camel. It is the picture of a man who has completely lost his sense of proportion" (Barclay).

These hypocrites were very careful in making sure that they minutely counted every little herb in the garden in order to

(Continued on page 2)

**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
Call (334) 734-2133 or  
E-mail:  
LarryRouse@aubeacon.com



### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
Worship .....10:20 AM  
Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse  
Evangelist and Editor

Check Us Out On the Internet: [www.aubeacon.com](http://www.aubeacon.com)

(Continued from page 1)

give 10% of it to the priests and Levites to whom the tithe was paid. They gloried in their tithing as is seen in the case of the Pharisee in **Luke 18:12**: "I give tithes of all that I possess." They felt so godly because they were so meticulous.

Yet, Jesus charged them with a serious offense. They left undone "the weightier matters of the law: justice and mercy and faith." He did not tell them to leave undone these little things (tithing), but He emphasized the need of their practicing in their lives the "weightier matters." Thayer says that the "weightier matters" are of "great moment," thus, of great importance. Justice, mercy and faith (faithfulness) are of great importance before God.

Justice has to do with anything concerning justice and injustice, right or wrong. No matter how careful one might be to tithe of the smallest herb and yet showed injustice to fellowman, he is a sinner before God. We must be concerned about right and wrong in our relationships.

Mercy is kindness and good will toward mankind, especially those who are less fortunate than are we. Over and again God shows this to be one of His traits that we must imitate.

Faith in this instance most likely means fidelity, faithfulness, the character of one who can be relied on (Thayer). These are characteristics of a godly person. No matter how many legalistic duties we perform, we cannot be righteous without

these godly traits in our lives. Do we strain out gnats, but swallow camels?

Do you stress cleanliness in the home and in meal preparation? Of course such is vital. You are straining out the gnats. However, many families who are so fastidious in food preparation will allow themselves and their children to feed on moral filth and corruption via the television or magazines or movies. This is indeed swallowing the camel.

Some brethren are so concerned about attending every service of the church. And all ought to be! But sometimes these who stress attendance so emphatically will go out on Monday and mistreat their employees or customers or fellow-workers. Some will cheat on their jobs, scream at their kids, browbeat their wives and yet claim to be faithful Christians because they "attend every service." Swallowing the camel!

Some of Jesus' greatest lessons had to do with relationships between one another. Certainly, justice, mercy and fidelity involve our relationships with God and with mankind. Applying the golden rule is a master lesson on relationships. The Spirit guided Paul to write: "... put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you" (**Col. 3:12-13**). Important matters? Of course.

What is the solution to a right relationship with God? Ignore the gnats? Absolutely not. But do not be so engrossed with the gnats that you blindly swallow the camel!



## "Exposing Error"

By James P. Needham

There can be no doubt that exposing error is as much a part of preaching the gospel as is the presenting of the positive precepts of divine truth. This is undeniably proven by the following Scriptures:

**Jeremiah 1:10** - "See, I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, to pull down and to destroy and to throw down, to build and to plant." In this verse are found four terms: three negative ("root out," "pull down," "destroy," "throw down"), and two positive ("build" and "plant"). Two thirds of Jeremiah's preaching was to be negative, and one third positive.

**2 Timothy 4:2** - "Preach the word: be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine." Three terms are used in this passage: two negative ("reprove," "rebuke") and one positive ("exhort"). Hence again, two thirds is to be negative.

Those non-combative soldiers of the cross who have more sympathy for the espouser of error than for its expositor had better spend more time taking inventory of their own preaching and less of it trying to determine if the combatant soldier is complying with their judgment in the battle.

If we learn anything from the above passages it is that MORE of our time should be spent in **exposing error** than in imparting the positive truths of the word. Anybody who has lived on a farm knows well the lesson. It takes more time to clear new ground of the trees and noxious weeds than it does to plant the seeds once that

It takes more time to clear new ground of the trees and noxious weeds than it does to plant the seeds once that is done. The same is true in the spiritual realm. It is much harder to **unteach** people than to **teach** them.

is done. The same is true in the spiritual realm. It is much harder to **unteach** people than to **teach** them. It is absurd to even think of going into a new ground and planting seed without first clearing it. It is worse than ridiculous to think of implanting the positive truths of God's word in the hearts of men before they are disabused of the errors of men (**Lk. 8:14**).

Unfortunately, we know some who spend 2/3's of their time in the negative alright, but not in fighting error, but [in fighting] those who are exposing it. They would do well to spend more time worrying about whether they are doing enough exposing error and less worrying about whether others are spending too much! If all would do their share, maybe it wouldn't appear that some are doing too much.

All my preaching life I have had to fight error with a mass of compromising brethren about my neck. They usually say they are behind me, but when I investigate, I find they are so far behind me that nobody can tell whether they are supporting the truth or the error! They usually have a lot to say about how sound they are, but generally I have found them to be more **sound** than anything else! They think they have to tell everyone how sound they are, otherwise, they might not find out about it! One would never guess it from their actions -- Lightning kills, not thunder!

It is strange how some brethren think they can convince others they are sound when they fellowship error, and fraternize those who espouse it while destructively criticizing those who expose it!

