

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

## **JAC Online**

**Issue 70, December 2010 – January 2011**

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## Editorial Introduction

by Major Stephen Court

Greetings in Jesus' name! Mercy and peace to you from God our Father. I trust the battle progresses well on your front.

Thanks for dropping by JAC70. You have stumbling onto a goldmine of edifying, challenging material in this issue and the 69 issues archived and available for free on the table of contents page.

The Raders kick off this issue with a primary document. TRANSFORMATIONS was delivered this year in cities across the Australia Southern Territory at the McPherson Lecture Series. It is privilege to read 'Rader thoughts' at any time, and this substantial lecture is certain to challenge and edify.

Major Howard Webber's book, MEETING JESUS, is selling all over the place. You will want to read it. THE MAIN THING is the second of two excerpts he's blessed JAC with. This is great material to inform evangelism.

Lieut-Colonel Munn, the principal of the International College for Officers, offers us the second primary document of this issue, with HOLINESS MOVEMENT – TIME TO BE HOLY, a lecture delivered this year to the international youth holiness institute of that name at ICO.

Captain Michael Ramsay's brand new book PRAISE THE LORD FOR COVENANTS is filling a need in Salvation Army praxis. But he proves that this new book is not the last word on the subject by contributing A VERY MOVING COVENANT that will be of special interest to one important contingent of soldiers around the world.

Jonathan Evans leads The War College in Vancouver. And it is out of years of experience that he offers an academic take on INTENTIONAL DISCIPLESHIP COMMUNITIES.

More than a century ago one Salvationist wrote A NOTE OF WARNING in Contemporary Review (1898). Read J Hollins's piece here. Though there is much with which to disagree, there is much about which to debate for Salvationists today.

General William Booth provides another century-old article for JAC70, with the second in a three-part series called A HIGHER UP RELIGION.

Our regular columnist, Commissioner Wesley Harris, who, by the way, has his tenth book coming out soon, advises us, IF AT FIRST YOU DON'T SUCCEED...

And, since there is a High Council meeting during the shelf life of this issue, we offer some suggestions for those gathering to prayerfully consider and discuss.

And, that's that! JAC70! What a treasure chest! Dig in. Share it with your friends, your comrade soldiers, your facebook friends, and anyone else you think might be interested in the contents.

This is a historic issue. By the time the next issue arrives on your screen (scheduled for February 1, 2011, unless Jesus returns first), the whole Salvation Army will have been mobilized and deployed in day and night cry for justice – non-stop prayer in response to the bold Global Call from the General. All glory to God for the Call, and in anticipation of our response.

God bless The Salvation Army.

## Transformations

by General Paul Rader & Commissioner Kay Rader  
*McPherson Lecture - Australia South - August 2010*

Transformation for the Salvationist is first about the power of the Gospel, the promise of real Redemption and the possibilities of Grace. It emanates from the Cross Of Christ, his atoning death, his risen life, his session at the right hand of the Father, the outpouring of his Spirit, and the promise that at his coming we will share in his glory. Whatever and whoever we have been or hoped to be, "Dear friends, now we are children of God, and what we will be has not yet been made known. But we know that when Christ appears we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. All who have this hope in Him purify themselves, just as he is pure" (1 John 3:2,3 TNIV). That is the ultimate promise of our transformation in Christ.

Blessèd hope now brightly beaming,  
 On our God we soon shall gaze;  
 And in light celestial gleaming,  
 We shall see our Savior's face.

By the pow'r of grace transforming,  
 We shall then His image bear;  
 Christ His promised word performing,  
 We shall then His glory share

But not just then. Even now, writes Paul, "All we, who with unveiled faces contemplate the Lord's glory, are being **transformed** into his image with ever increasing glory, which comes from the Lord, who is the Spirit" (2 Corinthians 3:18). Or as the *Message* has it: "All of us! Nothing between us and God, our faces shining with the brightness of his face. And so we are transfigured much like the Messiah, our lives gradually becoming brighter and more beautiful as God enters our lives and we become like him." Indeed every experience God in his wisdom allows he turns to this purpose. "We know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters. And those he predestined, he also called; those he called, he also justified; those he justified, he also glorified" (Romans 8:28-30 TNIV).

The whole of our experience in the Lord has been one of radical transformations. We were the pawns of Satan. Now we are the sons and daughters of God by faith in Jesus. We were the children of darkness, now we are the children of Light. We were the slaves of sin, but now we have been "set free from sin and have become [love] slaves of God, [so that] the benefit [we] reap leads to holiness, and the result is eternal life" (Romans 6:22). "But thanks be to God, that though you used to be slaves to sin, you have come to obey from your heart the pattern of teaching that has now claimed your

allegiance. You have been set free from sin and have become slaves of righteousness” (Romans 6:17-18). [‘Take off the chains!’]

Long my imprisoned spirit lay,  
Fast bound by sin and nature's night;  
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray;  
I woke; the dungeon flamed with light.  
My chains fell off, my heart was free,  
I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

Catherine Booth was content with nothing less than radical redemption from sin and from sinning. Salvation, she would have insisted, must be more than forensic. It must be effective. “Where there is no deliverance there can be no salvation. What a mockery and a delusion it is for a man to profess to be saved, while he is groaning under the power of his spiritual enemies. If you are under the domination of sin, you are yet an utter stranger to the salvation of God” (1887:50). Liberating. Transformative. Paul lists some of the offenders who will be excluded from inheriting the kingdom, from the sexually immoral to the greedy, slanderers, swindlers and drunkards. “And that is what some of you were. [But no longer!] You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the [transforming] Spirit of our God” (1 Cor. 6:9-11). And more, we weren’t just incidentally sinners, we were dead in our transgressions and sins, “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions -- it is by grace [we] have been saved” (Ephesians 2:5).

We were homeless, stateless, hopeless -- “foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world” (Ephesians 2:12). “Once you were not a people,” Peter reminds us, “but now you are the people of God!” “A chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light” (1 Peter 2:9-10). We were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship, “But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Jesus” (Ephesians 2:12-13). How near? “Therefore brothers and sisters, since we have confidence to enter the Most Holy Place by the blood of Jesus . . . . Let us draw near to God with a sincere heart and full assurance of faith” (Hebrews 10:19,22). How near? Nearer still. For he says, “I am the vine and you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing” (John 15:5).

## **TRANSFORMATIVE SPIRITUAL LOCATION**

Sociologists speak of ‘social location’ as descriptive of how we understand our own and others’ identity and place in society on the basis of gender, race, language, status, education, wealth and the like. Social location determines opportunity, potential, acceptance, relationship. By God’s mercy and abounding grace, we have been given a new ‘*spiritual* location.’ It has opened to us a whole new world of opportunity, of potential, of acceptance and security and transforming relationships within community. For by faith, we are ‘in Christ.’ In Christ we are made alive (1 Cor. 15:52). In Christ

Jesus, we are sanctified and called to be his holy people (1 Cor. 1:2). In Christ, there is a new creation; everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Cor. 5:17 NRSV). As God's handiwork, we are re-created in Christ Jesus!" (Ephesians 2:10). Just as we have received Christ Jesus as Lord, we are to "continue to live [our] lives in him" (Colossians 2:6). "You died," writes Paul to the Colossian faithful, "and your life is now hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory" (Colossians 3:3,4). Until then, in Christ alone, we stand firm (2 Cor. 1:21).

We have a totally new 'spiritual location' in Christ. We have a new identity. Sinners and slaves to sin we were. But not now. We are the beloved of God, called to be his holy people. Writing to the believers in Ephesus, Philippi and Colossae, Paul addresses them a God's holy people in xx, the faithful brothers and sisters in Christ (Colossians 1:2). We have entered a whole new world of possibility. We have been drawn into a new community. And we have been given a glorious destiny. Now "our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ, who, by the power that enables him to bring everything under his control, will **transform** our lowly bodies so that they will be like his glorious body" (Philippians 3:20-21).

Paradoxically, our life in Christ is made possible because of the reality of Christ in our lives. "I am crucified with Christ, and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me!" (Galatians 2:20). It is what Jesus wanted for us. It was what he prayed for in his great High Priestly prayer: "I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them" (John 17:26). It was for Catherine Booth the secret of a holy life. Earnestly seeking the blessing of a clean heart, she wrote: "In reading the precious book, *The Higher Life* [Wm. Boardman] I perceived that I had been in some degree of error with reference to the nature or rather manner of sanctification, regarding it rather as a great and mighty work to be wrought in me through Christ, than the simple reception of Christ as an all sufficient Saviour dwelling in my heart and thus cleansing it every moment from all sin" (quoted in Green 1996:106). Commissioner Brengle observed, "There is no such thing as holiness apart from 'Christ in you!'" It is Christ in us, Paul declares, that is our hope of Glory (Colossians 1:27).

## TRANSFORMATIVE COMMUNITY

In Christ we have been called into community. This is an essential dimension of our life in Christ and not an option. Paul writes: "To the church of God in Corinth, to those sanctified in Christ Jesus and called to be his holy people, *together with* all those everywhere who call on the name of our Lord Jesus Christ -- their Lord and ours" (1 Cor. 1:2). "Now I commit you to God," Paul assures his friends from Ephesus, "and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance *among all those* who are sanctified" (Acts. 20:32). The community of faith is intended to be a transformative community, a supportive community, an instructional community, a worshipping community, a functional and fruitful missional community. Speaking the truth to one another in love, "we will in all things grow up into him who is the head, that

is, Christ. From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work" (Ephesians 4:15,16).

There is an issue of necessity, of urgency, of accountability here. The church as expressed in our corps is not incidental to our life in Christ. It is integral to that life. For Paul our local faith fellowships, our churches and corps, are "God's household, the church of the living God, the pillar and foundation of the truth" (1 Timothy 3:15). It is why it has been so critical at this point in the history of our movement [and we are a spiritual movement, not just an organization, an NGO, a para-church structure, a society, a club for the religiously elite] for us to come to terms with our ecclesial identity. That has been helpfully clarified in the statement released in 2008 by General Clifton, *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ: an Ecclesiological Statement*. "We believe," the statement says, "that The Salvation Army is an international Christian church in permanent mission to the unconverted, and is an integral part of the Body of Christ like other Christian churches, and that the Army's local corps are local congregations like the local congregations of other Christian churches . . . . We do not believe that The Salvation Army's history, structures, practices or belief permit it to be understood as anything other than a distinct Christian denomination with a purpose to fulfill and a calling to discharge under God" (2008:10-11). It is a reality we are now more comfortably acknowledging. It affords us the opportunity to explore more intentionally the New Testament vision for the church and to draw upon the dynamic and motive power of the biblical images for faith communities. And if we in the Army have not been enamored of the horizontal continuities in church tradition -- its sacraments and liturgies, its traditions and trappings, we are committed to the vertical and dynamic marks of the Church in Mission under the Lordship of our heavenly Captain, moving out to the ends of the earth and the end of time in obedience to our Savior's command.

There are dangers, against which our founders warned us, in settling down and turning inward on ourselves. To be sure, we must attend to our inner life as a movement. Commissioner Phil Needham comments: "The mission of the Church is inextricably tied to the life of the fellowship . . . . Only as the Church is gathered for nurture can it be scattered for mission. Only as it worships can it serve . . . . Fellowship without mission dies of spiritual suffocation. Mission without fellowship dies of starvation" (1987:75-76). It was this concern that led to the convening of the 1995 International Spiritual Life Commission. The calls to Salvationists around the world issued in the wake of its meetings and further developed in Commissioner Robert Street's helpful book, *Called to be God's People* address this issue. [The text is available on line for download at [www.salvationarmy.org/resources](http://www.salvationarmy.org/resources).] The Calls are introduced with this statement:

"Our identification with God in this outward movement of love for the world requires a corresponding inward movement from ourselves towards God. Christ says 'come to me' before he says 'go into the world.' These two movements are in relation to each other like breathing in and breathing out. . . . The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in



evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit, and in the study of God's word."

Still we may find it too easy to opt for the outward structures, procedures and trappings of a churchly identity and focus more on the ceremonial and sacramental functions and traditions of formal worship, that certainly have their place. They have assisted the faith and fostered the worship of the faithful across the centuries. We should draw from that ecclesiastical tradition the necessary elements of faithful proclamation of the Word, such procedures and practices in worship as will faithfully nurture the faith of our people, and the maintenance of order and appropriate discipline. But we must not be caught up in a belated rush to emulate the mainline denominations which themselves are struggling to survive -- at least, in our country. [CT cover story] The emerging church models, the seeker-sensitive, performance oriented, high decibel, free wheeling fellowships may provide features worth emulating. In adopting the most accessible of these features without reference to the dynamics of the whole package, we may be left with a spiritually vapid and poorly performed approximation, while walking away from our own rich traditions of worship and witness. After all, we are about results in lives redeemed, made holy and useful in the Kingdom. And I have encouraged the creative development of new models for ministry and rejoice in the cutting edge examples of aggressive corps outreach. [614 street level ministries here in Melbourne and in Sydney -- and now being replicated around the Army world.] Still, we have great strength in remembering who we are as an Army: disciplined, joyful, identifiable, accessible, mission-oriented, outward looking, soul-seeking, always welcoming and available to the 'sat upon and spat upon', the sinning and sinned against.

## **TRANSFORMATION TOWARD CORPORATE HOLINESS**

"You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of his household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Ephesians 3:19-22). Through the reality of Christ in us by his Spirit we are ourselves, individually, temples of the Holy Spirit. But God desires more than a privatistic and personal sanctity. He wants a sanctified fellowship. He wills a "corporate holiness" in which the values of the Kingdom are lived out in our families, our communities and mission structures.

I am grateful to Stephen Court, Geoff Webb and Rowan Castle for giving us their fresh, compelling and often, troubling insights on the corporate implications of our commitment to a Holiness standard in a book they jointly authored and provocatively titled, *Holiness Incorporated*. I commend it to you for its gut-level honesty, prophetic intensity, and spiritual intelligence. The authors have made bold to engage the tough and sometimes untidy implications of living corporately as the people of God, called to holiness, in the real world of missional fidelity. Not everyone will be comfortable with how the issues

and alternatives are resolved, or, more often, left in creative tension. But you will, as did I in reading it, be pressed by the Spirit to confront the dilemmas and disconnects between our principles and our practice that they surface, with humility, penitence, and a better informed commitment to corporate as well as personal holiness.

The transformation of a corporate culture -- its sanctification, requires more than the godliness and good will of individuals. The principles of holy living for the individual must be translated into the standards, policies and expectations of the community. Further, the implementation of those policies must be expressed in established procedures. Implementing the procedures in turn, may require structural adjustments within the organization affecting the ways in which it operates. Transformation is only complete at the operational level. How do we actually function? How do we relate to one another? How are we guided in our decisions and the establishing of priorities by our commitment to a standard of 'Holiness unto the Lord'?

It is one thing to write 'Holiness unto the Lord' over the door and another to write it across every relationship, every code of conduct, every operational manual, every hiring and firing procedure, every administrative interaction, every budget, every audit, every representation to our own people and the public we serve -- and that so generously supports us. In virtually every meeting, in the American territories, where the Holiness Table has been central to the platform arrangement, [a tradition that goes back to the time of Evangeline Booth] we worship gazing at the words 'Holiness unto the Lord' embroidered in gold on the rich scarlet covering of velvet. What if we were to make small replicas of the holiness table and attach them to our computer terminals, our refrigerators, our cell phones, our tellys, our magazine racks, our clothes closets, our office desks as well as our pulpits? What if we had it written on every page of our planning calendars, or on our check books, credit cards and wallets? Extreme? "On that day Holy to the Lord will be inscribed on the bells of the horses, and the cooking pots in the Lord's house will be like the sacred bowls in front of the altar. Every pot in Jerusalem and Judah will be holy to the Lord Almighty" (Zechariah 14:21).

Holy living is about how we treat one another in our day-to-day interactions. John Wesley famously declared that there is no holiness that is not social holiness. Holy relationships are built on mutual respect that transcends our differences of social location: race, social status, and culture, including and especially, gender. One is caused to wonder if there is any area of social interaction where biases seem entrenched more intractably than gender. The Army historically has set a high standard in this regard, a standard we owe to the commitment of our founders, William and Catherine Booth. It was a standard they themselves modeled and built into the principles and practices of the early Army. Most importantly equality based on mutual respect between women and men is a biblical standard. Significant strides have been made in the Army in recent years in implementing this biblical standard, but entrenched attitudes do not change easily and it has been a continuing challenge to live up to our ideals. A transformation -- a conversion seems to be required to alter attitudes. I want Commissioner Rader to address this issue, not because I am not firmly committed to

biblical gender egalitarianism, but because she has invested so deeply in this issue and spoken eloquently and courageously to it across the years.

## TRANSFORMATION TOWARD GENDER EQUALITY

We now consider the uniqueness of an Army with an unprecedented number of women who were included on an equal with men from the beginning. As General Rader has reminded us, the Army set a high standard for mutual respect that transcends our differences of social location, including and especially, gender. As early as 1895 the *Orders and Regulations for Staff Officers* drafted by the Founder, William Booth himself, made clear the Army's official position on gender equality and I quote:

***One of the leading principles upon which the Army is based is the right of women. . .to an equal share with men in the great work of publishing Salvation to the world. . .She may hold any position of authority or power in the Army from that of a Local Officer to that of the General. Let it therefore be understood that women are eligible for the highest commands – indeed, no woman is to be kept back from any position of power or influence merely on account of her sex. . .Woman must be treated as equal with men in all the intellectual and social relationships of life.***

Evidence of its egalitarian history is seen clearly in Salvation Army history. Why, then, is it necessary to confront in this 21<sup>st</sup> century the issue of egalitarianism within the Army?

In the words of the Founder "The Salvation Army employs women." To this day The Salvation Army sets a fine example in numbers of women ordained and commissioned. Having said this, there are those within The Salvation Army who find unsettling parallels between existing attitudes within the Church regarding the ordination of women and their accorded roles and prevailing attitudes within the Army regarding ordained/[commissioned] women officers and their roles.

For example, it is particularly unsettling that we in the Army understand clearly the struggle within the Church of England when in recent years, representatives of the Anglican Church's Working Party Concerned with Women in Ordained Ministry, faced with the issue of ordination of women to the diaconate, opined, ***"Having willed the end, the Church is now faced with the challenge of willing the means."***

As the Church is faced with the challenge of willing the means, so is the Army. Moving from the radical theology and practice of an early Army of unlimited female leadership to recent times and more conservative/limited leadership roles for women officers in the Army has been and is a concern which demands our constant vigil. Although The Salvation Army holds a very definite view and has a policy of equality between the sexes, it is undeniably doing so against a powerful, historical and cultural background concerning attitudes towards women. The misunderstanding of the word

'equality' and its practical outworking can create misunderstandings, misjudgments and sometimes mishandling of situations the final consequence being relationships that fall far short of holy. "Willing the means" becomes the litmus test of day-to-day interactions .

"A basic doctrinal principle," says Salvation Army historian Roger Green, "was established as policy of The Christian Mission and this policy continued. It was strengthened with the birth of The Salvation Army. The principle was, 'people were placed in positions because of ability and not because of gender.'"

This uniqueness of The Salvation Army is a treasure worthy of loving protection. Whenever our useable past is either forgotten or ignored, we should seek to revive it. Pathways forgotten due to neglect or disuse we should seek to rediscover. To lead women officers onto open roads to tomorrow should be our ultimate goal.

Even before the Christian Mission became The Salvation Army, William Booth declared his intention to employ women fully in the work of ministry. He appointed women, married and single, in charge of many of the growing numbers of Christian Mission stations. They were expected to preach. They were the leaders. They had the example of Catherine Booth, the Army Mother and her remarkable daughters. Beginning in 1859 until her death in 1890 she preached constantly with great power and effectiveness. Indeed, when Catherine Booth died in 1890, the November issue of *Bible Christian Magazine*, declared her to be "the most famous and influential Christian woman of her generation." Her own preaching and writing persuaded many Christians of the value of women's ministry.

Catherine knew that if she did not preach she would be disobeying God. She could not resist the urgent call of the Spirit. In responding to that call to preach she bequeathed to every woman officer, married or single, the privilege of proclaiming the Gospel in public ministry. There is no doubt that it was contrary to the cultural expectation for women's roles at that time. It was contrary to the culture of Jesus' time for women to be regarded as credible witnesses. To this Catherine Booth responded, "The women were last at the Cross, first at the tomb." So from the women the news was first given of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus. It was they who took the word to the apostles. They were the first missionaries and ministers of the resurrection message.

Nevertheless, the idea of women being sent out into the malicious degradation of the 19<sup>th</sup> century world horrified many. Crowds pelted them with all manner of flying objects and told them to go home. A letter to the editor of the *East London Observer* in 1881 expressed the shock of seeing the Salvation Army women at work, said, (quote) "It is hardly consistent with one's feelings to see a woman standing at the corner of a street – preaching – and to what purpose? Why? To give encouragement to the roughs to deride, and to skeptics the opportunity of indulging in sarcastic remarks about the manner in which Christians publish their beliefs?"

Are we willing to succumb to this kind of ridicule? To settle down toward nominalism, the way of all churches or should we not be the Army positioned to be the light on the pathway of the Church universal, including mission organizations, to point the way toward ever expanding and equal opportunities between women and men in ministry? In her book, *Woman*, published in 1930, Evangeline Booth issued a passionate plea. It was this: "We must light new lamps. We must tread new paths. We must go on." At that time the Army was sixty five years old. It is now 145! Can we truthfully declare today that our best men are women? That even some of our best men are women?

Other movements/churches are picking up the gauntlet. The Army must not lose faith. We must not allow ourselves to become sidetracked. We must go on.

Loren Cunningham, Founder of one of the world's largest mission societies, YWAM, asks a telling question, *Why Not Women?* and takes a fresh look at scripture on women in missions, ministry and leadership in a book co-authored with Bible scholar, David Joel Hamilton. Loren declares, "I have a dream of a spiritual awakening sweeping the world through this emerging generation, the millennium generation. I see the Gospel finally being spread to every person in the world, with every nation and every people group disciplined with the teachings of Jesus Christ."

Then, he says: "As I envision this, I see every little girl growing up knowing she is valued, knowing she is made in the image of God, and knowing that she can fulfill all the potential He has put within her. I see the Body of Christ recognizing leaders whom the Holy Spirit indicates, the ones whom He has gifted, anointed, and empowered without regard to race, color or gender. This generation will be one that simply asks, "Who is it that God wants?" There will be total equality of opportunity, total equality of value, and a quickness to listen to and follow the ones the Holy Spirit sets apart."

Women have played and still play important roles during difficult periods of history. American author, Janet Hassey, reminds her readers of the vigorous nature of women in ministry during the evangelical resurgence between the American Civil War and the rise of fundamentalism in that country. She notes that during that period evangelical theology opened the door for women's adventures on behalf of the gospel and outlines several factors that were at work.

She lists them as:

1. ***The horrible fate of the unsaved*** which motivated believers to ignore social convention for the good of the lost.
2. ***A sense of the nearness of the Second Coming of Christ*** which predisposed believers to see women's gifts as part of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. . .these women received public encouragement from the leading ministers of the day.
3. ***The social factors at work*** such as the social upheaval of the frontier and the desperate needs of the urban areas which created an action-oriented

atmosphere in which social convention withered and women's ministries blossomed.

4. Later, the Church withdrew its enthusiasms and women were relegated to less important roles, indeed, roles that placed them just short of anonymity.

In an article written for the magazine *THE TABLET*, author/historian, Paul Johnson, reaches farther back into time and insists that women have played a structural part in Christianity, particularly during crisis times. For example, he says that the number of Christian women who were martyred reflected the resentment they aroused among pagan authorities. "Indeed it is likely," says Johnson, "that women formed the majority of the martyrs during the decades of crisis and persecution." Once the crisis was over, baptism was accepted, Christianity made lawful and in time, powerful, women were pushed into the background, the principle of masculine superiority reasserted itself.

"When during the Dark Ages the Church remained in a critical condition," says Johnson, "sometimes obliged to fight for its existence against paganism, it continued to call upon women to play a leading part in its survival. However, having resolved the crisis in the Church's favor, women were again pushed aside and the masculine order prevailed virtually everywhere."

Johnson points out that during the Reformation no way was ever found to mobilize women – no place was found for them in St. Ignatius' Society of Jesus; they were excluded from the Counter-Revolution in education and invisible at the Council of Trent. So a great opportunity was missed and as a result, the Church lost half Germany and the Low Countries, the whole of Scandinavia and England.

Historian Paul Johnson foresees an approaching spiritual crisis in which women will be in the front line. He concludes, "It behooves us to learn the lessons of the past and ensure that women are allowed – indeed encouraged – to exert themselves powerfully when the next major crisis strikes the Church."

It is unfortunate that pastoral directions forbidding women to speak or lead that were addressed to a particular historical situation by the apostle Paul have been taken as normative for the whole church by some theologians and church leaders. At the same time, the example of Jesus in his attitude to women and the practice of Paul, have been largely ignored. Katherine Haubert writes in her book, *Women as Leaders*:

**Dogmas, much like those of the Pharisees, have sought to put a stranglehold on the life and liberty Jesus accorded women. The challenge for the church is to allow the redeeming results of the Cross and Jesus' attitude to shape its views. The church needs to take the sickle of truth and cut through the barbed wire of cultural customs and taboo in order to follow the One who promised both men and women, "If the Son makes you free, you will be free indeed." (John 8:36)**

Paul declared, "There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, neither male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." (Galatians 3:28) Having made this liberating declaration, the apostle Paul lived it out in his relationships with women in the Church.

In Romans 16 he is careful to express appreciation for the contribution of women in the life of the Church. They played key leadership roles in teaching and ministering and he was quick to recognize their contribution and to thank God for them: **Priscilla**, who with her husband, Aquila, instructed Apollos in the way (Acts 18:26 and Romans 16:3); **Junia**, (v. 7); **Tryphena and Tryphosa and Persis**, (v. 12, 13). Even his relationship with the troublesome women, **Euodia and Syntyche** (Philippians 4:2), gives insight into his attitude toward women. He says, "They have contended *at my side* for the cause of the gospel." (Philippians 4:2-3).

It is significant that Paul's ministry in Philippi began in a prayer meeting of women, apparently led by Lydia. It was her heart that the Lord opened to respond to Paul's message (Acts 16:14).

"Follow my example as I follow the example of Christ!" Paul wrote to the Corinthian believers (1 Corinthians 11:1). It is his example and the example of Christ we are to follow. What did Jesus *do* in his relationships with women? And what did Paul *do* in his relationships with women who were his fellow-workers?

General Frederick Coutts spoke eloquently of the privilege of women to lead and to preach. He said, "In church order, theories of what ought to be so often break before the fact of what is. In the economy of the Kingdom, God's ways are not our ways, nor His thoughts, our thoughts. . .seeing that the grace of the Spirit and the gift of the office of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor and teacher have been and are so undeniably granted to women as well as men, 'for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,' (Ephesians 4:11-12) who are we to withstand God?"

The Salvation Army must be intentional in its resolve not to allow cultural bias, traditions, or interpretation of other views to deny women the right to fulfill their God-given calling as fully ordained ministers of the Gospel.

There is a world to win – a world of sin and suffering, of brokenness and bondage, a world waiting to hear the liberating Word and to feel the transforming touch of the Saviour's love through us – all of us. As we look to future challenges, part of the new paradigm for the Church will be an expanding role for women - and men's whole hearted acceptance of their role.

## TRANSFORMATION TOWARD ADVOCACY

Equality of respect and opportunity for women is a justice issue. Our transformation in Christ expands the horizons of our awareness and concern for the stranger, for those unlike ourselves, for the marginalized and exploited and disempowered. In the

synagogue in Nazareth Jesus takes the scroll and reads from Isaiah 61 to announce his mission: "The Spirit of the Lord is on me because he has anointed me to proclaim good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to set the oppressed free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor." Taking his seat he declared, "Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing" (Luke 4:18-21). To follow Christ is to share fully in his mission. We are an Army proclaiming salvation through faith in Jesus Christ and his atoning death. But too many of us seem to have forgotten that we signed on for much more. The Founder sometimes referred to Isaiah 58 as 'The Salvation Army Charter': "Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter -- when you see the naked, to clothe them and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood . . . . Your people will *rebuild* the ancient ruins and will *raise up* the age old foundations; you will be called *repairer* of broken walls, *restorer* of streets with buildings [NRSV 'to live in']" (58:6,7,12).

Our capacity to respond to natural disasters wherever they occur around the world has garnered the highest regard of the public. 'We respond to natural disasters with acts of God!' Salvationists around the world have risen up to respond to the sufferings of the people of Haiti. A single division in California, for example, has packed over one million meals for distribution to earthquake victims in Haiti. Volunteers have come from many territories to join hands in meeting the immediate needs of the people. Now we are gearing up to provide more long term solutions. It has been a ministry of hope -- for hope is in short supply in Haiti. [Herb in Haiti]

Given the Army's global stature and reputation and our deployment in 119 countries, this is God's moment for us to recover our heritage, becoming more intentional in addressing the causes of human suffering. Major Ted Horwood, International Projects Officer, in an article entitled "Social Redemption" gives this call to action: "We believe the local church is at the frontline of human need and where possible should be resourced and equipped to facilitate social change, which includes economic empowerment, justice, equity and peace. With nearly 15,000 corps, in addition to institutions and partnerships with other organizations around the world, the opportunity to effect change is potentially staggering. What is needed is a belief in ourselves. Not just as Christians, but as Christians functioning through The Salvation Army, a formidable force in the struggle against global poverty" (*The Officer*, March/April 2009:43).

The establishing of the International Justice Center in New York, a stone's throw from the United Nations headquarters, has raised the profile of this dimension of our mission. Commissioner Christine McMillan, director of the IJC, has been expanding our awareness of the social justice imperatives of scripture in her unique and insightful *Words of Life* readings earlier this year. She is speaking out compellingly on issues of social justice, not only speaking truth to power, but stirring our consciences as Salvationists. *Speak Out*, the online advocacy conference, sponsored by the



International Social Justice Commission and the Salvation Army Ethics Centre of the Canada and Bermuda territory, became an innovative platform for creating a global forum, involving over 1,100 participants from 60 countries. Forums, chat rooms, videos available for viewing and presentations provided biblical, theoretical and practical exposure to issues of advocacy for social justice.  
[http://www1.salvationarmy.org/IHQ/www\\_ihq\\_isjc.nsf](http://www1.salvationarmy.org/IHQ/www_ihq_isjc.nsf)

Social work motivated by our love for Christ has been our forte. Salvationists have a remarkable record of response to disasters. In recent years, however, we have become more intentional in pursuing holistic programs of sustainable community development and capacity building through integrated mission.

In September 2007 Colonel Bo Brekke was shot to death by an assassin in the discharge of his duties at the Army's territorial headquarters in Lahore. Salvationists around the world mourned the loss of one of our most gifted leaders. Before taking up the leadership of the Army in Pakistan, he and Colonel Birgitte Brekke served with courage and compassion in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Eastern Europe, Denmark and Norway. In Bangladesh they reached out to the poorest of the poor, providing programs of micro-credit to enable slum dwellers to attain some measure of self-sufficiency. For a group of homeless former prostitutes they provided literacy classes and work opportunities, forming Sally Ann products, a commercial fair trade venture, and arranging for the handwork of the women to be marketed around the world. Sally Ann products are produced by units in Bangladesh, Kenya, Moldova, Chile, Brazil and Peru. Pakistan and Ghana will soon come on line. The Brekkes embodied the kind of commitment that transforms communities and individual lives.

In 2005 Colonel Brekke published an account of the development of the Sally Ann Fair Trade program. It is a truly remarkable and deeply moving account of the development of the program and the ways in which it has touched lives and transformed communities.

Jessore is a town of 200,000 in Western Bangladesh. There is a large community of commercial sex workers in a place called, Hatkhola Lane -- 285 women prostitutes -- 300 women and 100 children in all. Joseph Das has been working there for the Army since '97. Took years to build up trust. Joseph and his team belong. So much so that people in Jessore sometimes refer to the brothel in Hatkhola Lane as the Salvation Army brothel!

Captain Albert Mir joined the team as a volunteer. Born a Muslim, he met Christ many years ago. He became an officer and works still in the brothel. At Christmas, he planned a one-man Christmas service in the brothel courtyard. Whores, pimps and customers stood around. Victims and abusers. A Jesus kind of crowd. The Captain read the Christmas story and spoke of love come down at Christmas. They didn't understand it all, but they knew Jesus understood poverty and knew what it was to suffer indignity. Then he brought out a Christmas cake and the brothel owner was

asked to cut it. Cheers went up for Jesus, cheers for Captain Mir who cared enough to share the story. Cheers for themselves so important in God's eyes!

Do they make a difference? The brothel is cleaner. Health care is available. Condoms are used more generally. More children go to school. More than 20 have been helped to leave the brothel. Women are organized into small production and savings group. Several work for Sally Ann. Ask Mina Rani Das -- a prostitute for 18 years. She still works in the brothel. She is there every day. She is one of Joseph's team. She wears The Salvation Army's blue sari uniform. "Something in Joseph's presence made an impression on her. The team's determination to continue their work in the brothel touched her. Captain Mir's gospel message moved her. She met Jesus in the brothel, and he changed her life!"

Perhaps because of the inevitable political implications of standing with the powerless and exploited, we have been somewhat slow to advocate for justice. Salvationists, however, were in the thick of the struggle for freedom and the defeat of apartheid in South Africa. There were risks, but Colonel Brian Tuck and South African officers black and white were in the vanguard of the struggle in Kwa Zulu Natal and Commissioners Trevor and Memory Tuck were with their people in strife-torn Soweto, for example, in the thick of the rioting when our officers had to drag the dead and injured off the street into our Army compounds during the struggle. When the Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established under the chairmanship of Bishop Desmond Tutu, Commissioner Paul duPlessis offered to make a presentation acknowledging publicly that though the Army has always included blacks, coloreds and Asians in our ranks, and had sought to encourage positive relationships between the races, we had not stood boldly against the evil of apartheid and, indeed, had been tacitly complicit. Fears that the public would lose confidence in the Army and our people feel betrayed by our representation to the Commission were quickly allayed. Indeed, facing up to our failures proved to be the right thing, eliciting many positive and supportive responses within and beyond the Army.

We have only begun to explore the potential the Army represents for confronting the systemic entrenchment of evil and injustice. The mission of Christ is our mission and requires that we respond to immediate human needs wherever we encounter them. 'Where there is a need, there is The Salvation Army!' But more, it moves us to attend to the causes of poverty and human suffering. God's concern for justice includes all of this, but moves us to responsible action in advocating for the disempowered and oppressed.

## **TRANSFORMATION TOWARD A GLOBAL VISION**

Biblical transformation begins with the work of the Holy Spirit in human hearts, making them new in Christ through faith. God's purposes in salvation extend beyond the individual to families and communities and nations. It was inevitable that The Salvation Army would become an international movement. Every Salvationist, wittingly or not, has enlisted in one of the world's great missionary movements. Our internationalism is

a vital dimension of who we are as a movement. It models the Body of Christ in its unity and rich diversity. More, it makes us a mighty force for salvation marching under one flag, soldiers of Christ with a common covenant, a global 'company of the committed'. We do not begin to understand our capacity for advancing God's Kingdom purposes in a world gone wrong.

How essential it is for our commitment to be rooted in a local corps, where we are nurtured and supported in our faith, given opportunity for witness and mission, and held accountable to the standards and expectations of the fellowship. But we are impoverished and disempowered as Salvationists if we do not begin to see ourselves as participants in God's global strategy for mission.

"My arms are around the world . . . "

Here is the Founder writing to officers: "Remember, no officer can be a Salvationist in the wider or fullest sense except he has in some measure this world-embracing love. I want every officer in every part of the globe to take his share in this wider life of the Army . . . . To think, and to feel and to pray and believe, in a large world-embracing way." Would this not have been his desire for all Salvationists?

Here is Oswald Chambers: "The first thing God will do with us is to 'force through the channels of a single heart' the interests of the whole world. The love of God, the very nature of God, is introduced into us, and the nature of Almighty God is focused in John 3:16, 'God so loved the world . . .'" (1935, September 21).

Here is a necessary transformation in self-understanding for the Salvationist which will not only expand one's sympathies and interests in prayer, or commitment of resources to the Army's global mission through self-denial giving. It may well mean making one's self available to God for service in some other part of the globe. We have met lay Salvationists making invaluable contributions to the Army's ministries and services in many parts of the world -- volunteers responding to natural disasters with a wide range of competencies, a hospital administrator in Zambia, an engineer serving in an isolated clinic in Papua New Guinea, an educator with a love for music coming regularly from Singapore to train a Boys' Home band in Indonesia, not to mention lay teachers serving in Army schools around the world.

What difference does all this make? Just this: transformation is about hope. We can change. I refuse to accept that our possibilities are bounded by our DNA, our environment or educational opportunities, or even our physical characteristics. I am not naive as to the degree that these determinants may shape our lives. We in the Army do not accept a predestination that determines our eternal destiny without regard to our response to or rejection of grace. And we need not accept a determinism that denies the possibility of transformation by grace. We believe people can change. We believe sinners can change. We believe the addicted can change. We believe that the obsessively greedy, selfish and bitter can change. We believe in the power of the Gospel to make everyone who comes in repentance and faith to Jesus a new creation.

We believe that through the sanctifying grace of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit within, our hearts can be cleansed and made pure so that we can love God and neighbor with a whole heart and a holy self-giving love. We believe that as we abide in Christ and he in us in a transforming friendship we can be changed into the likeness of Christ. If we are optimists, our optimism is an 'apostolic optimism' grounded in the promises of God and our experience of his grace at work in the likes of us! We can change. We must not insult the grace of God by doubting His power to transform human hearts. We must not give up on those to whom God sends us with His transforming Word.

If people can change then our corps can change. God can breathe that same resurrection life and power that makes us new in Christ into a moribund corps releasing new life among us. Transformation is about hope.

The Army can change. Most of us may be uncomfortable with change. But the ever creative Spirit is breathing new life into our movement. Hold onto your hats. God is at work by his Spirit.

Jesus is praying for our broken world.

Communities can change and nations can change through the power of the Gospel working in the lives of God's people. Our planet itself will be transformed. One day there will be a new heaven and a new earth. Precisely because we have this hope we are called to be faithful stewards of the global home God has given us to care for.

"Listen," says Paul, "I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed -- in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. . . . Then the saying that is written will come true: 'Death has been swallowed up in victory.' 'Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?' The sting of death is sin, and the power of sin is the law. But thanks be to God. He gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 15:51-57).

Then let us live in hope. Let us labor in hope. Let us look up in hope for the coming of our Savior King, who in his coming will make all things new. "Therefore, my brothers and sisters, stand firm. Let nothing move you. Always give yourselves fully to the work of the Lord, because you know that your labor in the Lord is not in vain" (15:58).

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## **The Main Thing** by Major Howard Webber

### **THE MAIN THING** **Major Howard Webber**

In the early days of The Salvation Army, back in East London, leaders were referred to as 'evangelists', and that, indeed, was their role: to reach and lead the lost to Christ. Many confined themselves to evangelism and nothing else, so that the problem was not that of getting people saved, but rather what to do with them afterwards. Social work and the relief of physical and material deprivation was often a part of the work of salvation, but always in the minds of those dealing with the immediate wellbeing of a person was concern for his or her ultimate wellbeing. Even in 1866, (pre-Salvation Army days), with a cholera epidemic, continued unemployment and its intense accompanying distress, William Booth and his workers kept their heads and did not allow themselves to be stampeded either into distributing food, clothing, blankets, etc, indiscriminately, or losing sight of the Christian Mission's first objective, that of the eternal salvation of the people.

Even the extensive organisation of this growing Movement did not impede the evangelist. Rather, it provided a means of retaining and channelling new converts, a problem that few of the missions of that time had resolved. The evangelist continued to concentrate on reaching the lost, the Mission's priority. Though the discipling and care of converts were very important, the priority was always that of getting more of the unsaved saved. When a person got saved they were immediately discipled, mobilised and encouraged to get their friends and families saved. Taking his son to an unsavoury, smoke-filled public house, William Booth said to young Bramwell, 'Willie, these are our people; these are the people I want you to live for and bring to Christ.' Obviously a word from a God-fearing father to his son, but surely as we look at the eternal state of those around us who live without Christ, is it not a word from God to us all?

One thing I think is true of most of the Church in this country, its emphasis on eternal issues has changed/moved. The thing that was, at one time, the main thing of the Church is no longer the main thing anymore. There are a number of reasons for this.

1. Churches are too busy doing 'churchy things' with the limited resources of money and manpower they have.
2. They are more concerned about maintaining the institution than being mobilised for mission. Often more time and energy is spent on maintaining some outdated delivery vehicle than the thing that the Church was created to deliver.
3. It is easier to see and then respond to a person's physical and material needs than their spiritual need.
4. Confidence has been lost:
  - a) Confidence in the Bible as the word of God.
  - b) Confidence in the truths of God's righteousness, the seriousness of sin

and God's wrath and judgment.

c) Confidence in God's longing for, and power to penetrate hearts and save the lost.

This process of moving away from the 'main thing' began over 100 years ago. In his lecture entitled *Why Did The English Stop Going To Church?*, based on in-depth research, Dr Michael Watts stated that the highest recorded voluntary<sup>a</sup> church attendance in England was that recorded in a census taken on Sunday 30 March 1851, when almost 40% of the population attended Sunday worship. He discovered that this was as a result of the education provided for children by the Church of England and the subsequent evangelism carried out by the Nonconformists when that generation reached adulthood.

An analysis that Dr Watts made of the conversion experiences of 670 Nonconformists who claimed to have been converted between 1780 and 1850 revealed that over one third had been brought up as Anglicans and were taught in their childhood that everyone had 'sinned and come short of the glory of God' and deserved to be punished with eternal damnation for breaking God's moral code.

Dr Watts concluded, 'It was left to the Evangelicals to point out that Hell could be avoided by accepting, through faith, the sacrifice that Christ had made for sinners at Calvary.' From his analysis, Dr Watts discovered that it was that 'fear of death, fear of judgment, fear above all of the eternal torment in the fires of Hell' that was the major factor that caused those 670 to consider and then respond to the evangelists' message.

To discover exactly when and why the decline set in, Dr Watts then carried out detailed research of denominational records and other sources, ensuring that he was comparing like with like, as there was not a similar universal church census for quite a number of decades. He discovered that the maintenance of the high attendance of Sunday worship for more than 30 years following the 1851 census was mainly due to the reawakening that began in 1859, and that the decline began in the mid-1880s.

So what caused the present decline which started all those years ago? Some people have suggested that the shadow cast by Charles Darwin's *On The Origin Of Species* was the cause, others, the flowering of British science, while still others proposed that it was German biblical criticism, or a combination of all three. But while these may have blunted the churches' message, they were not, as we might have expected, the main concern of the churches back then. According to the religious press of the 1860s and 1870s, the far more worrying cause of concern seems to have been the 'reinterpreting if

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<sup>a</sup> Prior to the 19th century the majority of English men and women were reluctant to attend worship. The only thing that could induce them to worship regularly was the threat of fines or imprisonment. Admittedly, there would still be those who attended worship in deference, to please to their landlord or employer, but the vast majority of those in the 1851 census attended of their own free will.

not rejecting of the orthodox doctrine of future punishment'. Certainly those churchmen who resisted this change in the doctrinal stance of many clergy at that time saw it as the most dangerous threat to the church's progress.

Although the conviction that those without Christ would spend eternity in Hell was a major factor in people being converted in the first part of the century, by the latter part many Christians regarded the doctrine with distaste. When F. W. Farrar published *Eternal Hope*, in which he rejected the idea of an eternal punishment, he received many letters stating that the reason so many working men rejected Christianity was because it held on to the belief in the 'everlasting damnation of the overwhelming majority of mankind'.

What then followed was that clergy shifted in their view and their preaching, from a focus on the eternal destinies of the saved and unsaved to focusing on an improved life here on earth in an effort to present a more attractive, acceptable, amenable and tasteful message to the non-Christian. However, instead of churches seeing their congregations increase, this change of emphasis saw the gradual erosion of their numbers. Dr Watts remarked, 'Liberal Christianity did not fill the churches, it helped empty them.' In focusing on offering commodities such as 'fellowship, entertainment and knowledge', as George La Noue and Dean Kelley put it, they offered no more than many a secular agency, while doing away with the one incentive that Christ gave to his Church: salvation, the promise of eternal life and a supernatural life after death.

Charles Spurgeon, the great Baptist preacher, was very concerned that the orthodox faith was being eroded or 'downgraded', with the truths of the atonement and eternal punishment being rejected. He believed that it would lead to the decline of the Church. This had an historical precedence. In the previous century a similar liberalisation of the English Presbyterians had taken place which had led to their decline.

Spurgeon's stand, which began in 1887, resulted in his resignation from the Baptist Union. He and his ilk, with their continued emphasis on the eternal punishment of the unsaved, became an embarrassment to those who embraced the new thinking. William Booth must have been aware of the change taking place in the doctrine of the Church around him for, when asked by an American newspaper at the dawn of the 20th century what he saw to be the chief danger of the coming century, his reply was, 'In answer to your enquiry, I consider that the chief dangers which confront the coming century will be religion without the Holy Ghost; Christianity without Christ; forgiveness without repentance; salvation without regeneration; politics without God; and Heaven without Hell.'

It seems logical to me that if there is not an eternal punishment for sin, then sin is not as serious, obnoxious and repulsive to God as the Bible says it is and, consequently, God's wrath would appear irrational, unreasonable and unjust. If there is no eternal punishment, why did God need to go to such enormous lengths at such enormous cost to save us from such a non-existent punishment? In short, why would people need a



Saviour if there is nothing, other than their ills in this short life, to save them from? If God is indeed God, would he have even contemplated the total humiliation of himself that entering human flesh entailed, never mind the rest, unless both the result of our sin and the enormity of his love and heartache for us all were not so great?

If we were but closer to him we would know the truth and we would share his burden, see the issues from his viewpoint and realise that the Bible and what Christ had to say on the subject of sin and punishment there is true. Yes, there are things that we don't understand, things that are difficult to digest. That is nothing new. We in this enlightened, more knowledgeable, scientific age are not the first to see difficulties or unanswerable questions. But, as with our forefathers, it need not prevent us from regaining confidence in the fact that the Bible does not *contain* the word of God, *it is* the word of God.

While academics theorise as to what is myth, fact or mere parable in the Bible, we must hold solidly to the truth we claim, which is that God himself brought together the Bible in the form we have it, to be accepted as his word and, aware of this continuing debate. William Booth himself said it was to be treated as 'the only authorised and trustworthy revelation of the mind of God' (*The Bible, Its Divine Revelation, Inspiration And Authority*).

The truth is that often theories treated as fact in one generation are discarded like a fashion garment by a later one. The fact is that God himself has done and still does extraordinary things, supernatural things through his word, the Bible. He transforms minds and hearts and lives and even whole communities through the reading of it, the exposition of it and obedience to its teaching. God himself confirms that it has his approval and bears his authority by what he does when it is accepted as his word.

Also, when we came to know God himself through Jesus, we recognised the God of our experience in the God of the Bible and it came alive. What previously may have been dull and boring became exciting to read. Has there ever been another book that has done and can do what this book can do?

When Susan Budd analysed the experiences of 150 secularists who rejected Christianity between 1850 and 1950 she found the crucial factor leading men and women in her sample to renounce Christianity was a conviction that what the churches taught was morally wrong, ie, eternal punishment, Hell, the Atonement and damnation for unbelievers.

So what are we to do with regards to those who find the message unacceptable, unpalatable, repugnant? Alter the truth because it does not suit or fit a person's concept of the issues? Trying to ingratiate ourselves with the world and its view has done the gospel no favours. In trying to make Christianity more relevant to men and women of the modern world, the Church has actually made itself irrelevant. The history of Christianity and the Bible tells us that the soul-saving gospel message has always been

both a stumbling block and foolishness to many. It has always been distasteful and an offence to the majority. It has always provoked hostility and rejection – we only need to look at the Acts of the Apostles and the lives of people like John Wesley to see that. But at one and the same time, where it has been faithfully presented, uncompromised, in all its fullness, God has always responded and blessed it with fruit.

Let us all return with confidence to the Bible as the word of God, God's truth. Let us accept with confidence what it says regarding God's righteousness, the seriousness of sin, God's wrath and judgment and God's merciful remedy provided for saving people from their just deserts. Let us have confidence in God's longing for and power to penetrate hearts and save the lost.

## Holiness Movement - Time to be Holy

by Lieut. Colonel Richard Munn

### 1 Peter 1:10-16

The passage in I Peter 1 - "Just as he who called you is holy, so be holy in all you do; for it is written: "Be holy, because I am holy." - is authoritative scripture on the holiness of God. It is a statement declared early in the Old Testament and reiterated in the New Testament.



The way Peter uses it follows a description of the all the prophets pointing to Christ as the fulfilment of this holiness, and he then points that line to us - the readers. These prophets 'were not serving themselves but you...even angels long to look into these things.

The holiness of God is the central attribute of His nature. It is the attribute around which, and from which, and through which all other attributes radiate.

"Holy is the way God is. To be holy he does not conform to a standard. He is that standard." (AW Tozer)

The recognition of God's holiness by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob stood in startling contrast with surrounding religions and deities. The moral purity, ethical virtue, integrity, and honour of Yahweh stood Him apart from the multiple petty, sensual, aggressive, immoral, unreliable deities that the pagan religions revelled in.

The early lesson was simple: "The Lord your God is one God." Immediately there were communicated central lessons in the concept of holiness: complete unity, purity and the idea of separation from evil.





Holiness describes the majesty of God, and the purity and moral perfection of his nature. We serve and worship a holy God. 'Holy, holy, holy,' was the vision of young Isaiah in the temple and 'Holy, holy, holy' is the worship of the elders around the throne.

God is utterly separate from everything else, He is perfectly united in essence and action and He is completely pure. Holiness is the absolute absence of any evil in Him.

And that is very good news for you and me, because, it means that the actions of God to us are always perfect and just.

It is good news because the principle that we become more and more like the object of our devotion and worship means that as we worship holy God, we have the propensity to become holy ourselves - whole, clean, absent from evil, people of integrity and honour and ethically strong.

Holiness expressed in a person connects us with the very heart of God. It is an indispensable prerequisite for every believer. Peter is so emphatic about this he makes a major change in the language and becomes imperative. He suddenly up's the ante.

We see that in our scripture reading: "Be holy, because I am holy."

The Salvation Army says it this way: "We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified (made holy)..."

Isn't this breathtaking and dynamic stuff!? It's breathtaking because it includes you and me! It's dynamic because the potential is unlimited. The horizon is expansive. The energy is explosive.



The Holy Spirit - the agent of holiness - is also called the 'comforter.' We need to understand it in a vigorous way. Literally, it means 'with strength.' So we are promised that the 'strengtheners' will be with us.



The Peter text captures the vigour. "Prepare your minds for action." I love the King James: "Gird up the loins of your mind." The figure is that of man gathering the folds of his long garment and tucking it into the folds of his belt so he can move freely and quickly. We would say today, 'roll up your shirt sleeves, get yourself together, let's go!'

Talk about the holiness movement, this is holiness movement all right. Great for an Army. I love it because it shatters any notion of holiness being a passive, reclining, inert, lifeless, placid state.

Peter then urges us to be 'self-controlled' - literally 'avoid excessive use of wine,' in other words, 'don't become intoxicated.' It has an exact application to drunkenness, and also broader application to other toxins that can poison our mind, spirit and body. Holiness is a commitment to living a clean life, free from impurity, whether chemical or mental or spiritual.

Then Peter finishes by urging us to set our hope on this grace as revealed in Christ.

The grace of holiness is here connected with the idea of a call.

The call of God. It is the same call mentioned in another great holiness verse, 'May God himself...sanctify you through and through... spirit, soul and body... the one who calls you is faithful and he will do it.' (1 Thess. 5:23,24)

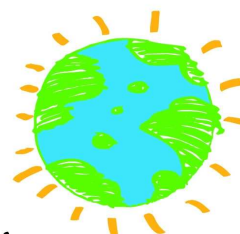
God calls us to holiness:

- We are separate from him.
- He is urgent about it.
- God wants to be connected with us.
- He is passionate about this call for holiness

At the time of salvation much of the emphasis is on the past. Repentance because of the past. Forgiveness from the past. Gladness that the past is over with.

What holiness does - the grace of holiness, the grace of sanctification - is to not only spare us from being locked into one moment in time, but it propels us into the future. Holiness keeps our faith dynamic. Holiness means that we can't be stranded back at one point in time remembering how glorious that moment was or those days were, but instead, it projects us into ever growing, vital relationship with God and with people.

Clean up



the world

**PAST  
FORWARD**

The grace of holiness is received in exactly the same way we receive the grace of salvation. We recognize the need, we pray, we consecrate and we receive by grace through faith.

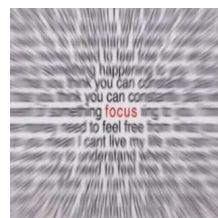
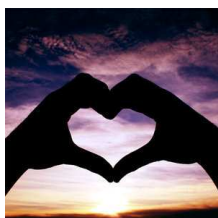
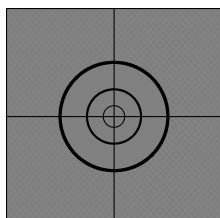


Holiness is an extension of the glorious grace of salvation. Salvation is always dominant, but it is now enhanced, intensified, magnified, reinforced by the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

Holiness is a continuing, deepening work of saving grace, subsequent to salvation that transforms the life of the believer from an uncertain, vacillating experience into an assured strong faith. One that rises above the annoying persistent temptations to sin.

#### WHAT IT IS:

- It is perfect harmony with the nature of God.
- It is the single eye. The perfect focus.
- The undiluted heart.
- It is separateness from sin.
- It now becomes harder to sin, than not to.



We are now more inclined to God and the things of God than things that are opposed to God. We now want to spend time with God, serve God, grow more like God. We become increasingly stronger in our faith, increasingly godly, increasingly wanting to serve him.

There are many names:

- Entire Sanctification
- Perfect love
- Full salvation
- Infilling of the Holy Spirit
- Baptism of the Holy Spirit
- Second blessing
- Blessing of a clean heart

Our Christian experience is not meant to be up and down, hot and cold, off and on.

The strength and vigour of the Holy Spirit will bring steady growth and stability to your pilgrimage. You will be characterized as one who is strong in Christ. Godly in temperament. You will reside in the naturalness of the Holy Spirit.

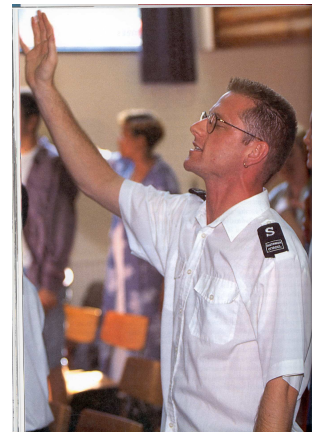
Your essential personality will be the same. No fear of becoming some kind of religious neurotic - the 'you' will remain, but now be beautifully enveloped in the ambience of God the Holy Spirit. You will be naturally attractive. A godly man or a godly woman is an attractive person. They are people reconnected with God.



You will be marked by a fresh vital experience with God. Not a jaded church person. You will love people. You will love God. You will love worship. You will love to serve. You will continue to grow.

So roll up your sleeves, don't pollute yourself any more, move forward with your hope in Christ and be holy, just as God is holy.

It's time!





## **A Very Moving Covenant**

by Captain Michael Ramsay

*Swift Current, Saskatchewan and the world for Jesus!*

Michael's new book - 'Praise The Lord For Covenants: Old Testament wisdom for our world today' is now available from [www.sheepspeak.com](http://www.sheepspeak.com)

Genesis 11:1 -12:4: A Very Moving Covenant by Captain Michael Ramsay

Moving is something that is very familiar to families in The Salvation Army. I have heard of Officers and children of Officers who, if they don't move in a given year, need to rearrange the house and make it look like they have moved to a new home.

Genesis 11:1-9 and 12:1-4 has something to do with moving. It says in 11:2 that the people were moving either from the east (KJV, NRSV) or eastward (NIV) when they find a place to settle down for a while. Now, just as my daughters' have moved four times in their 8 and 9 years of life, respectively, I imagine that the people in the story today of Genesis Chapter 11 have moved quite a bit too. At any rate they seem to have had quite enough of it. They say to each other, Verse 4, "Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves and not be scattered over the whole earth." They are tired of moving; they want to set down roots.

"But the LORD came down," Verse 5, "to see the city and the tower that they were building" and He was not happy. Why wouldn't He be happy? Was it because the people didn't want to move anymore? Yes, that is one reason. The other reason God wasn't happy was that, as we read in verse four, they say, "Come let us build ourselves a city, with a tower that reaches to the heavens, so that we may make a name for ourselves." These two reasons, I suggest are very much intertwined here. The people want to make a name for themselves (pride) and they don't want to move anymore.<sup>[1]</sup>

Look at Genesis 1:28; this is important. Here we have God's first recorded words to humankind. The very first thing the Bible records God saying to humankind is here. In verse 28, God blesses the people and says, "Be fruitful and fill the earth...(cf. Genesis 9:1)"<sup>[2]</sup> and then He gives them the responsibility to take care of the wildlife and the environment. God created us, humankind, and He didn't ask too much of us – He simply asked us to fill and take care of the earth and then later of course, Genesis 2:17, we run across the other commandment God gave us – not to eat the fruit off the tree of the knowledge of good and evil – and we know how well that turned out.

So here we are in our text today a couple of generations later and, if we haven't messed things up enough already by failing to do one of the two things God asked us to do, in Chapter 11 we are making sure that we really mess things up by failing to do the other one.<sup>[3]</sup> And by this time we should certainly know better. God has already de-peopled Eden because of the first sin. He graciously, however, let Adam and Eve live long enough to raise their own children, the first two it seems cause them a lot of heartbreak as their one son murdered his sibling – but even then God is



gracious – Adam and Eve have more children and Cain (Genesis 4), the murderer, is spared the immediate death sentence.

There is even more that happens between the garden and today's story of Babel though: Noah's Ark (Chapters 6-9). God has already drowned the earth and much of mankind in His sorrow and then, in his love for Noah, He not only spared Noah and his family but God also bound Himself through a covenant never to destroy the earth with a flood again and God set his rainbow in the sky to remind us of this (Gen 9:1-17). God is all-powerful and God is gracious.<sup>[4]</sup> But even with all of this history, even with the signature of God written with a rainbow upon the covenant and set in the heavens above for all to see (Genesis 9:17). Even with all of this, the first thing God told mankind to do when He created us was to go, scatter, fill the earth. And the first story recorded after Noah, his sons and the flood episode; the first thing it is recorded that we do in the very first narrative in Chapter 11 is to dig in our heels and refuse to move. We are given the commission to go and fill the earth but instead we build a city with a tower and say, 'thanks but no thanks God, I think I'll decline the orders to move.'<sup>[5]</sup>

Now, of course, this has some parallels to our vocation. Some Officers disobey orders to move because of their kids. Some people disobey orders to move because of their extended family. Some people disobey orders to move because of their health. There are many reasons to disobey orders (some of them may very well be legitimate) but there is never a good reason to disobey God and God has asked us to move many times and God has asked the people in Genesis to move but in Genesis Chapter 11, they seem to be bankrupt of obedience. They decide, 11:4, to stay "so that they may make a name for themselves" – pride.<sup>[6]</sup>

Does this sound familiar? Remember again back to Adam and Eve and their original sin. Was this not also based on pride? Did not they eagerly succumb to the serpent's temptation when he said, Genesis 4:5, 'you will be like God' all you need to do is eat the one fruit that He has told you not to eat. I wonder how many of us easily fall prey to that temptation?

I remember not that long ago Susan was reading to me from one of her magazines and they took a poll amongst youngsters as to what they wanted to be when they grew up and what do you think most of them said? Most of them said that they just want to be famous...they don't want to be famous for anything particular necessarily. They don't want to cure cancer, fly to the moon, fight for world peace, end world hunger or the sex trade specifically – that isn't what's important to them. They just want to be famous. They just want to 'make a name for themselves' as our text in Genesis 11 says today and in Genesis 11 they want to make name for themselves by disobeying God and remaining behind after he has told them to scatter, go, and fill the earth.

Now, of course, God vetoes their request to stay and just to show that He isn't eternally angry He gives them a bit of a going away present – he gives them the gift of tongues, so to speak (Cf. Acts 2).<sup>[7]</sup> He confuses their language. They stop building this city and they stop building this tower and they go forth and fill the earth. There is a little bit of irony here too. They wanted to stay and build the city and the tower so that they could make a name for themselves by working together and

staying put and now they have been remembered throughout history for just the opposite: becoming divided and scattering.

God will fulfil His covenantal promises whether we willingly follow along or not: he is faithful even when we are faithless (cf. Romans 3:3,4) and in Genesis 11, we have the story of some people who suffer the results of disobeying God and staying behind when he tells them to move but the story of humankind and of God's blessing doesn't end here any more than the flood story ended with the destruction of man's evil plans. Just like God saved humankind from the flood and blesses the world through His covenant with Noah (Gen 6-9), if we flip to the end of Chapter 11, we see that God prompts someone to move again so that He can bless his descendents and the world through them. Scholar Terence E. Fretheim tells us that the journey of Abraham's family from Ur can be understood as part of the migration from Babel.<sup>[8]</sup> Genesis 11:31 records, "Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot son of Haran, and his daughter-in-law Sarai, the wife of his son Abram, and together they set out from Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they came to Haran, they settled there." He stopped. He started to move to Canaan, he stopped but even though he stopped, God didn't stop there, Genesis 12:1-4:

The LORD had said to Abram, "Leave your country, your people and your father's household and go to the land I will show you. I will make you into a great nation and I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing. I will bless those who bless you, and whoever curses you I will curse; and all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

So Abram left, as the LORD had told him; and Lot went with him....

Look at this then. Here we have it: the good news of salvation. Abram obeyed God. God said move and Abram moved and God blessed all the earth through this action:<sup>[9]</sup> this is where the gospel is mentioned for the first time in the whole Bible, Genesis 12:3: "...all the peoples of the earth will be blessed through you." This was God's covenant promise to Abraham and this is indeed Good News.

In Chapter 11 of Genesis we see the pride and the stubbornness of humankind as we plan to stay in order to 'seek to make a name for ourselves' instead of following God. We then see Terah, presumably a good man, start this journey but stop along the way – before he ever reaches what will come to be known as 'the promised land'.<sup>[10]</sup> But through all of this, God doesn't give up on us. He calls out of that same land as the defiant city and the tower of Babel; He calls out of the same household of Terah who started the journey but didn't finish; He calls Abram and through Abram He blesses the whole world because -as we know- this blessing of 12:3 that 'all the nations of the earth will be blessed' is ultimately fulfilled with the incarnation, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Salvation has already been provided for the whole world, we just have to decide whether we want to experience that salvation or whether we would rather 'make a name for ourselves' instead. Would we rather remain in our pride, our sin, and our selfishness? Would we rather stay and 'make a name for ourselves' or would we rather give up everything and follow Jesus into the promise? This is our very real choice today. Sin and Death have been defeated. Salvation has already been

provided for the whole world. The selfishness of the people of Babel couldn't stop it. No action on the part of any of us can stop it. Salvation has already been provided for the world. Our only choice now is whether we want to experience it or not. And the only way to experience it is to forget about making a name for ourselves and instead leave all else behind and decide to follow Jesus.

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[1] Cf. Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, (NIB I: Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994), p. 412 where he argues that the primary sin here is the unwillingness to move and the 'making a name for themselves' is secondary.

[2] Josephus, *Antiquities* I.iv.1. Cited from Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, (NIB I: Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994), p. 412.

[3] Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, (NIB I: Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994), p. 412

[4] Cf. John H. Sailhamer, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, The, Pradis CD-ROM:Genesis/Exposition of Genesis/I. Introduction to the Patriarchs and the Sinai Covenant (1:1-11:26)/E. The City of Babylon (11:1-9), Book Version: 4.0.2

[5] Cf. Brueggemann, *Interpretation: Genesis*, (John Knox Press: Atlanta, Georgia), 1982, pp.97-104 and Michael K. Chung, 'The Narrative of the Tower of Babel in Dialogue with Postmodern Christianity', Presented to Fuller Theological Seminary (Fall 2005), P. 7.

[6] John H. Sailhamer, *The Expositor's Bible Commentary*, The, Pradis CD-ROM:Genesis/Exposition of Genesis/I. Introduction to the Patriarchs and the Sinai Covenant (1:1-11:26)/E. The City of Babylon (11:1-9), Book Version: 4.0.2 : the builders' attempt to make a name for themselves is a central feature of the story both in terms of the internal structure of the story and its linking with the surrounding narratives.

[7] Cf. R.C.H Lenski, *The Interpretation of the Acts of the Apostles*. (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Augsburg Publishing House, 1961), 62. But cf. also Robert W. Wall, *Acts*. (NIB X: Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon Press, 2002), 55.

[8] Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, (NIB I: Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994), p. 411.

[9] Cf. Captain Michael Ramsay, 'Covenant: When God is Bound: a look at Genesis 15:7-21', *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, Issue 52, December 2007 – January 2008, pp. 5-10. Available on-line: [http://www.armybarmy.com/pdf/JAC\\_Issue\\_052.pdf](http://www.armybarmy.com/pdf/JAC_Issue_052.pdf)

[10] Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, (NIB I: Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1994), p. 422.

## International Discipleship Communities

by Jonathan Evans

*An effective way of formation and mission*

“What do you want to be when you grow up?” A common and seemingly innocent question posed to a child but loaded with expectations and largely focussed on individual achievement in status and economic standing. This question frames contemporary educational efforts and programming that reinforces the fragmentation of the individual, focussing primarily on employable skills. Education becomes an incubator of narcissism by focussing on employable skill acquisition and grades while ignoring holistic values for personal development (or by holistic improvement in isolation with self-help books and trips to the gym.) Indeed, even religion has become individualised in the context of a pluralistic and secular culture. Robert Bellah writes about the trend towards individualisation in religion, “I believe the more dangerous threat today comes from the second alternative – the complete privatization of religion, so that religion becomes entirely personal with no collective expression at all. Indeed, in a significant sector of our population (which is not necessarily “secularized”) that has already happened.<sup>2</sup>” Creating disciples by nourishing individuals can take place without the entrapment of individualisation. Soon-Cha Rah states:

*“Individuation does not need to occur at the expense of an appreciation of a corporate point of view. Excessive and hyper-individualism contrasts to the healthy process of individuation by enslaving the individual to the tyranny of individualism, leading to personalism and privatism... that reflect the narcissism of American culture rather than the redemptive power of the gospel message.”<sup>3</sup>*

The proper context for creating disciples free from counter-gospel living involves the intentional cultivation of community. As community is an ambiguous term, it is important it is defined. Scott Peck describes a community as a “group of individuals who have learned how to communicate honestly with each other, whose relationships go deeper than their masks of composure, and who have developed some significant commitment to ‘rejoice together, mourn together,’ and to ‘delight in each other, make others’ condition our own.’<sup>4</sup>” Larry Crabb goes further calling for a certain type of community, “The greatest need in modern civilization is the development of communities – true communities where the heart of God is home, where the humble and wise learn to shepherd those on the path behind them, where trusting strugglers lock arms with others as together they journey on.<sup>5</sup>” This picture of growing and learning together embodies the gospel and reflects an educational model after God’s design. Communities that can be described as gospel-centred are distinguished from secular ones by Jean Vanier, founder of L’Arche, “Community is a

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<sup>2</sup> Robert N. Bellah, “Conclusion: Competing Visions of the Role of Religion in American Society,” in *Uncivil Religion: Interreligious Hostility in America*, ed. Robert N. Bellah and F. E. Greenspan (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 221.

<sup>3</sup> Soon-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism: Freeing the Church from Western Cultural Captivity*. (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 2009), 33.

<sup>4</sup> M. Scott Peck, *The Different drum: Community-Making and Peace* (New York: Touchstone, 1987), 59.

<sup>5</sup> Lawrence J. Crabb, *Connecting: healing for ourselves and our relationships* (Nashville: Thomas Nelson, 2005), xvii.

place of forgiveness.<sup>6</sup> Such a gospel-centred community would show the fruit of working together in the journey of Christ-likeness. Pachomius, the noted founder of cenobitic monasticism is described to have learned more about his need for patience from his fellow brother, John, than his years modelling the desert fathers in isolation<sup>7</sup>. Indeed, the community itself can be more educating and transformative than the organized practices of an institution. The community based model of theological education and spiritual formation resembles more closely the intention of God for people to live and grow in community. This truth will be seen by surveying the theology of community, historical trajectory of community discipleship and the ecology of development proposed by Urie Bronfenbrenner.

There are, of course, theological reasons for an educational model that consists of intentional Christian community. Eberhard Arnold observes: "Life in community is no less than a necessity for us – it is an inescapable "must" that determines everything we do and think. Yet it is not our good intentions or efforts that have been decisive in our choosing this way of life. Rather, we have been overwhelmed by a certainty – a certainty that has its origin and power in the Source of everything that exists. We acknowledge God as this Source."<sup>8</sup> The Divine community, The Trinity, is an eschatological model of such existence (Matt 18:20)<sup>9</sup>. Miroslav Volf points out that Christology leads to an individual kingship but does not create like Trinitarian Theology, an ecclesial salvific community itself<sup>10</sup>. The Trinitarian community is characterised by "unity in multiplicity,"<sup>11</sup> independence and interdependence<sup>12</sup>, complementary personal and relational persons,<sup>13</sup> mutually internal while catholicity<sup>14</sup> and reciprocity<sup>15</sup>. A Trinitarian foundation of community leads to an external trajectory, evidenced in the Son sent to reform a new community between God and humanity. In his book *Created for Community* Stanley Grenz offers a viewpoint of salvation that moves beyond individualism and into an invitation from Jesus, the sent one, to participate in Divine Community: "God wants to save us from sin so that he can bring creation to a higher purpose. God wants us to participate in an eternal community. God's desire is to create a redeemed humankind, dwelling within a redeemed creation, and enjoying the presence of the Triune God." Such a community rightfully holds an *imago Dei*<sup>16</sup>, a corporate reality rather than a "human-

<sup>6</sup> Jean Vanier, *Community and Growth: Our Pilgrimage Together* (Toronto: Griffin House, 1979), 10.

<sup>7</sup> Philip Rousseau, *Pachomius: The Making of a Community in Fourth-Century Egypt* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1999), 57 – 59.

<sup>8</sup> Eberhard Arnold, *Why We Live in Community* (Farmington: Plough Publishing, 1995), 1.

<sup>9</sup> Tertullian was first to point that Matt 18:20 is an invitational model in the name of Christ into community with each other and God. The community is eschatological by signalling the divine community while restrained by human limitations. Tertullian, *De pudicitia*.

<sup>10</sup> Miroslav Volf, *After Our Likeness: The Church as the Image of the Trinity* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 196-7.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 202.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 204 - 206.

<sup>14</sup> The catholicity refers to a representative relationship "The Father is in me and I in Him." (John 14:9-10) *Ibid.*, 208 - 209.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 211 – 212.

<sup>16</sup> Peter R. Holmes, *Becoming More Human: Exploring the Interface of Spirituality, Discipleship and Therapeutic Faith Community* (Waynesboro, GA: Paternoster Press, 2005), 57.

spirit-after-the Holy-Spirit-in-me theology.<sup>17</sup> Therefore Trinitarian theology results in educational models not where “the regenerate sit together with Christ Jesus in heavenly places<sup>18</sup>” but in a salvific community which is sent out into the world with a gospel invitation.

Jesus and his twelve disciples model a diverse community fulfilling the tradition God established with Israel to be a light to the nations. Jean Vanier describes Jesus’ school: “When he created the first community of the apostles, Jesus chose to live with men who were very different from one another.<sup>19</sup>” The prerequisite of such a community is Jesus’ calling to follow him. Peter Holmes explores Jesus’ community as a new family:

*“what has always been known is that He (Jesus) valued Yahwistic tradition and desired to birth a new type of family which He called Kingdom, emphasising new covenant relationships focused around Him. He also saw many obstacles set against this Kingdom’s success (Mark 4:26ff.; 10:14, 24ff.; 12:32ff., etc.). He therefore needed to equip His followers with a unique new outlook, echoing a Rapha or Yahwistic perspective, that would give them the spiritual and intellectual capital to hold steady in the battles that lay ahead. Just as in Exodus 15, Jesus’ disciples were told to ‘listen to Him’ (Luke 9:35). Their wholeness, like that of the Hebrew community, was to be found in relationship with Him and one another... Christ lived the recovery of Theocentric community, though not focused around Yahweh, but Himself.”<sup>20</sup>*

This Kingdom family is typologically a new school established by new traditions, information, spirituality and fellowship. However, it is not these means that create but The Holy Spirit reforming community as a visible expression of the peace that has been made in Christ. The result is a shared life with a high level of participation (Rom 15:14, 1 Cor 14:31, Eph 4:15, Col 3:16), a shared freedom<sup>21</sup> in a focussed and simple life.<sup>22</sup> This focussed simplicity is culminated in the person and mission of Jesus, the divine representative. The simplicity of life is not a lackadaisical or monotonous one, but built on replicating life in Jesus’ Kingdom. Ultimately, Jesus formed a community that brought life: “he healed sick bodies, resurrected the dead, drove out demons from tormented souls, and carried his message of joy to the poorest of the poor. Jesus’ message means the realization of the future invisible kingdom now; it is the promise that ultimately the earth will be won wholly for God.”<sup>23</sup> Jesus’ means are explained as unconventional in first century Palestine in the classic, *The Master Plan of Evangelism*, “The natural informality of this teaching method of Jesus stood in striking contrast to the formal, almost scholastic procedures of the scribes... Jesus asked only that His disciples follow Him. Knowledge was not communicated by the Master in terms of laws and dogmas, but

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17 *Ibid.*, 196.

18 Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 196.

19 Vanier, *Community and Growth*, 16.

20 Holmes, *Becoming More Human*, 180 – 1.

21 Holmes, *Becoming More Human*, 185.

22 Phil Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (London: The Salvation Army, 1987), 15 - 16.

23 Arnold, *Why We Live In Community*, 10.

in the living personality of One who walked among them.<sup>24</sup> Indeed, today a community formed around Jesus' life and teachings are alternative to educational models valuing distanced professional relationships and objective assessment of individual work.

The first century church established by the apostles continued the family model of education in homes. Pohl observes that, "households remain the most important location for hospitality in the New Testament period. Fellowship and growth in the earliest churches depended on household-based hospitality among believers<sup>25</sup>." By the Spirit the church has continued to express itself in intimate communal expressions. Arnold gives a brief historical sampling of Christian communities, *"we stand as brothers and sisters with all those who have joined together to live in community through the long course of history. They appeared among the Christians of the first century; in the prophetic movement of the Montanists in the second; in the monasticism of the following centuries; in the revolutionary movement of justice and love led by Arnold of Brescia; in the Waldensian movement; in the itinerant communities of Francis of Assisi; among the Bohemian and Moravian Brethren and the Brothers of the common Life; among the Beguines and Beghard; in the Anabaptist movements of the sixteenth century; among the early Quakers; among the Labadists of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries; among the early Moravians, and in many other denominations and movements down to our present day."*<sup>26</sup>

Indeed, throughout the Christian church intentional communities have existed both in renewal while preserving sacred texts, cultivating minds and mobilizing the wider church in its mission.

In modernity alternative bodies have continued to challenge and intensify spiritual training. Broadly speaking, there are two camps that emerged in the 1960s regarding theological training in the Western world following rapid social changes<sup>27</sup>. The two camps consisted of those who emphasized academic preparation for ministry and those who stressed practical training. The first view saw the pastor as a professional similar to a doctor or lawyer equipped with degrees and a curriculum that addressed relevancy. The practical school critiqued the relevancy of seminary curriculum to meet the demands of a modern and urban world and founded many "action training" centres<sup>28</sup>. The critique deemed that seminaries were unconcerned about secular involvement, interested in teaching and scholarship and that theology was taught abstractly<sup>29</sup>. Action training was founded upon a challenge to traditional education

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24 Robert E. Coleman, *The Master Plan of Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1964), 38

25 Christine D. Pohl, *Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1999), 41.

26 Arnold, *Why We Live In Community*, 8 – 9.

27 Bruce W. Jackson, "How Did We Get Here? A survey of Important Historical, Social, and Theological issues That Occasioned the Rise of Urban Theological Education" In *Transforming The City: Reframing Education for Urban Ministry*, edited by Eldin Villafane, Bruce W. Jackson, Robert A. Evans and Alice Frazer Evans (Grand Rapids: William Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2002), 14.

28 *Ibid.*, 15.

29 *Ibid.*, 16 – 17.

but soon lead to renewal and cooperation and eventual death with an obvious impact on theological training. Another educational reform movement of the 1960s emerged within the Evangelical Presbyterian seminary of Guatemala's theological education by extension (TEE) project. Pastors were trained on the job alongside missionaries. This system spread rapidly to meet the demand of leadership for the growing church. The obvious strength of such training was the development of indigenous leaders within their community. Bible Institutes, too, raised the educational capacity to develop leaders within the church. Most famously exemplified by Dwight L. Moody, Bible institutes were founded to complement seminaries while focussing on "a concern for the city, a vision to equip lay persons, and a commitment to practical application of training."<sup>30</sup> Consequently many congregations and denominations developed this model finding success training urban ethnic populations. At this time, "many larger, established, old-line churches were experiencing rapid membership losses in urban congregations, the vitality of the church was quietly shifting to independent, Pentecostal, Charismatic, and Evangelical churches." The predominant opinion was that seminaries and universities were "out of touch."<sup>31</sup> Finally emerging from the critique of university and seminary education is the model of community organizing. This movement began in the 1930's by Saul Alinsky, the founder of the Industrial Areas Foundation with a concern for social transformation and unity. Community organizing has involved the Catholic Church and mainline Protestant churches while more theologically conservative church communities have remained absent. Indeed, The Catholic Workers, The Iona Community, L'Arche and Sojourners all are examples of such communities typified by faith as much as social action<sup>32</sup>. Jackson notes it is encouraging that higher education has begun to include community organizing and development as part of their curricula<sup>33</sup>. From the brief survey of modern alternatives to education, the community model emerges as a theme strong in its empowerment of marginal populations, perceived relevancy and social transformation.

Having pointed out the theological and biblical examples of Christian community as an ideal form of discipleship, followed by a brief historical survey, this paper will discuss the practical ecology of discipleship. Urie Bronfenbrenner proposed a model of human development in his book *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* based on the ecological systems in which one exists. This nested model, like that of Russian dolls, begins internally at the microsystem, being the immediate relationship of the person with the educational community. It ends externally at the macrosystem, involving the person as part of the community in more broad patterns of culture such as economy, customs and bodies of knowledge<sup>34</sup>. Theology will be overlaid on Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to show the power of the gospel in such a community is transformative in students' lives and the environments where such communities exist. Consequently,

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30 Kim Davidson, "Demystifying Bible Institutes," In *Educating Urban Christians in the 21st Century: A Needs Assessment for Boston* (Boston: Emmanuel Gospel Center for the Boston Education Collaborative, 1998), 116.

31 Bruce Jackson, "How Did We Get Here?" 25.

32 Thomas P. Rausch, *Radical Christian Communities* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1990), 117.

33 Bruce Jackson, "How Did We Get Here?" 27.

34 Urie Bronfenbrenner, *The Ecology of Human Development: Experiments by Nature and Design* (Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1979).



this will show that the community-based discipleship model has integrity in discipleship as a more holistic means of formation and communicating the gospel.

Bronfenbrenner defines the microsystem as “the pattern of activities, social roles and interpersonal relations experienced by the developing person in a given face-to-face setting with particular physical, social and symbolic features that invite, permit or inhibit engagement in sustained progressively more complex interaction with, and activity in, the immediate environment.”<sup>35</sup> The microsystem is much more complex than the student and the curriculum which may often be the matter of discussion, including the content and structure. Spiritual Formation or “Christlikeness” encompasses the whole person in her whole context. The first context to be encouraged is a relationship with God. The Greek word for discipleship, *mathetes*, implies a subject or apprentice in relationship with the master.<sup>36</sup> Holmes points out that Hebrew Spirituality did not consist of a material-spiritual dualism but incorporated the physical and metaphysical as two sides of the same coin.<sup>37</sup> He quotes Rahner as describing the body of a person as “solid spirit.” Therefore, attention in such a community that is previously described as gospel-centred will factor in its curriculum daily rhythms of prayer, study, work and rest much like that in the rule of Benedict. The Benedictine rule is described by Ciardi as a synthesis of eremitic ideals such as asceticism, solitude, and prayer in the quest of knowing God and communal oneness in Christ<sup>38</sup>. Unity is achieved with an intentional spirituality and social structure considering the role of students, faculty and other community members. Vanier writes about the dynamics of those forming community:

*“Tensions in community often come from the fact that individuals have not talked about their expectations. They quickly discover that each of them wants something very different. I imagine that the same thing can happen in marriage. It is not simply a question of wanting to live together. If the marriage is to last you have to know what you want to do and to be together. This means that every community must have a Charter which specifies clearly why its members are living together and what is expected of each of them. It also means that before a community begins, its members should take time to prepare for living together and clarify their aims.”*<sup>39</sup>

The Microsystem of community discipleship resembles monasticism by embracing all parts of life such as relationships, rhythms and instruction. The intentionality of discipleship within the community encourages growth in Christlikeness as a chartered aim while discouraging life decisions that are out of line with following Christ<sup>40</sup>. In addition to being intentional, this of course must also be Spirit empowered and centred on God as Trinity, the model for intentional and interdependent community.

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35 Urie Bronfenbrenner, “Ecological Models of Human Development” In *International Encyclopaedia of Education*, Vol. 3, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Elsevier, 1994), 1643.

36 Holmes, *Becoming More Human*, 83.

37 *Ibid.*, 75.

38 Fabio Ciardi, *Koinonia: Spiritual and Theological Growth of the Religious Community* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1999), 117.

39 Vanier, *Community and Growth*, 4.

40 Larry Crabb, in his book *Connecting: Healing for Ourselves and Our Relationships* outlines four battles of the flesh students would do well to investigate and eliminate as barriers to connecting with God and others in community.

Mesosystems are the next and larger area containing the Microsystem. Mesosystems comprise the linkages and processes taking place between two or more Microsystems<sup>41</sup>. For instance a student's school will be affected by its relation with family and the workplace. In an intentional discipleship community the accommodations, interactions and relations of the student are more focussed and intense as work, school and social interactions are part of the same charter. Rod Wilson comments, "The depth of relationships and extent of the mission are clearly enhanced by physical proximity. It is one thing to nurture a fellow pilgrim in a church context, but quite another to live with that person on a daily basis. Since both have left one sphere of living and come together to be in a new body, there is the commencement of a new community that functions within different parameters."<sup>42</sup> Thus, intentionality in this regard can greatly benefit spiritual formation. The physical setting chosen that considers the gospel should be conducive to studying theology<sup>43</sup> while also facilitating a missional component. Jim Wallis founder of the sojourners states, "The oldest and best traditions of the church demand that the gospel be proclaimed and lived in the midst of the suffering world, and that those who would follow Jesus Christ be particularly sensitive to the poor and the oppressed. A commitment to social justice is simply a consequence of faith in Jesus Christ."<sup>44</sup> Again the link between spirituality and physicality is accentuated. Padgitt comments on spiritual formation through physicality as an integrated, whole Kingdom life of physical spirituality:

*"Jesus shared meals with his friends. He walked the dirt roads with them. He healed them with the touch of his hands. He used his spit to restore sight to a blind man. He washed the grime from the feet of his disciples. These moments of physicality are not incidental to our understanding of who Jesus was and is – they give us permission to trust that God really is present in the mundane physical acts of our own lives."*<sup>45</sup>

Indeed, the physical ordinary parts of life and community and the sudden interruptions of those in need are important teaching moments and demonstrations of the Kingdom of God. Often schools are situated in a predominant academic environment and focus that limits these types of interactions with other realms of development. An integrated model of community and teaching is being employed as this paper is written by Dave Diewert as he teaches "Solidarity, resistance Liberation: The Way of God in the World" in Vancouver's downtown Eastside. Paying attention to contexts where theory integrates with action provides a both/and solution to the previously mentioned debate between seminaries and action orientated theological education. Factoring in the Mesosystem relationship between spiritual formation and the school community shows that families, neighbourhoods, and workplaces are a component of theological education and can be harnessed and maximised for learning opportunities.

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41 Bronfenbrenner, "Ecological Models of Human Development," 1646.

42 Rod J. K. Wilson, *Counselling and Community* (Vancouver: Regent College Publishing, 2003), 51.

43 For Further discussion and interest read Bob Ekblad, *Reading the Bible With the Damned* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 2005)

44 Rausch, *Radical Christian Communities*, 169.

45 Doug Padgitt, *Church Re-imagined: The Spiritual Formation of People in Communities of Faith* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2005), 93.

Bronfenbrenner describes another realm of relationships between different physical settings termed Exosystems. “The exosystem comprises the linkages and processes taking place between two or more settings, at least one of which does not contain the developing person, but in which events occur that indirectly influence processes within the immediate setting in which the developing person lives.”<sup>46</sup> Two obvious contexts are in a relationship with an intentional discipleship community: the spiritual realms and the larger, parish church. Derived from the Hebrew model of holistic spirituality, the apostle Paul suggests that earth is the first heaven where human spiritual beings exist in relationship with a second heaven comprising an unseen realm where spiritual beings interplay and the third heaven where Yahweh is enthroned<sup>47</sup> (2 Cor12:3). Communities that address the revealed spiritual realities from the Scriptures allow members to acknowledge they are spiritual beings within a spiritual reality and help bridge the difficulties in relating to Trinity and other earthly phenomenon seemingly under control of “the powers” (Eph 6:12). Therefore, discipleship will factor in spiritual warfare and be faithful in prayer as Paul instructs, “Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert and always persevere in supplication for all the saints.” (Eph 6:18). Praying to God connects believers with one another and initiates the second exosystem relating to the community and the rest of the church. Discipleship communities have had an often-strained relationship with the established church while being a positive expression of renewal<sup>48</sup>. However, the interrelatedness described by Volf is apparent in the universality of church while recognizing each communities’ catholicity<sup>49</sup>. Rod Wilson shows in his book *Counselling and Community* that all the answers are not within a community and in particular may need the expertise of an outsider, specifically those in the counselling profession. Therefore, the discipleship community initiating in prayer will find itself seeking healthy reciprocal relationships with the institutional church with invitations and requests. Through this interaction discipleship is accentuated allowing students to discover a larger expression of the church, witness God’s particular calling to community and be subject to expertise not contained inside a community.

Finally, the student in a discipleship community will be involved in a Macrosystem defined as the “overarching pattern of micro-, meso-, and exosystems characteristic of a given culture or subculture, with particular reference to the belief systems, bodies of knowledge, material resources etc.”<sup>50</sup> Therefore, a community by its charter and curriculum must be aware of assumptions of its culture and theology and thereby teach and live counterculturally where these values are in opposition to the Scriptures. A community which engages with culture and lives prophetically while expressing relevancy will prepare students for living in the world while communicating the gospel as an alternative way to live. Indeed, the formation of an intentional discipleship community itself is prophetic in response to the theology and anthropology of Western individualization.<sup>51</sup> Moreover, a Christian community can be prophetic towards the “church in captivity.”<sup>52</sup>

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46 Bronfenbrenner, “Ecological Models of Human Development,” 1646.

47 Holmes, *Becoming More Human*, 77.

48 Rausch, *Radical Christian Communities*, 14.

49 Volf, *After Our Likeness*, 271.

50 Bronfenbrenner, “Ecological Models of Human Development,” 1646.

51 Soong-Chan Rah, *The Next Evangelicalism*, 20 – 21.

52 *Ibid.*, 21-23.

An Intentional Discipleship Community responds to the culture in which the church finds itself in the 21<sup>st</sup> century while providing an outlet for those wanting to grow up to be like Christ by living together. Rather than a replication of the individualization that is fostered today, a community focussed on spiritual formation is fuelled by and resembles The Trinity. This kind of community is not a new idea but follows a long line of historical examples and modern responses to theological education. Lastly, discipleship communities provide an intensification of development by structuring a holistic environment regarding the ecological systems from the micro to macrosystems and being an effective communication of the gospel by being a community within many communities.

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## A Note of Warning

by John Hollins

(from the Contemporary Review 1898, pgs. 436-445)

"O Heavens! If we saw an army ninety thousand strong maintained and fully equipt, in continual real action and battle against Chaos. Necessity, Stupidity .... fighting and incessantly spearing down and destroying Falsehood, Nescience. Delusion. Disorder, and the Devil and his Angels!"

—CARLYLK, " Past and Present."

A NOBLE wish,. and surely almost prophetic of the Salvation Army! Yet a Wesleyan Methodist, on leaving one of our services some years ago, remarked to the friend who accompanied him, "That's Methodism gone to seed!" which would, I have no doubt, be news for most people who had not noticed that Methodism was getting seedy, and fancied that the Salvation Army was quite another thing. Every movement within the realm of Christianity is perhaps indebted to preceding ones, and all contain the same living seed—Jesus Christ. But Sir Oracle was wrong. The Salvation Army is not degenerate Methodism. It bears evidences of genuineness and originality writ large upon it. It came into existence because of a need, and has in some sort answered it. It propagates no new fanatical doctrines, but preaches Christ crucified. Its developments have been, on the whole, rational and beneficent, and it has displayed considerable adaptability. In short, without making any comparison as to what may be termed *quality*, it is as true a movement as Methodism itself, and so entirely original that it approximates in a remarkable way to Carlyle's ideal host.

The world, as was to be expected, has given the Salvation Army a very mixed reception. It has been satirised, ostracised, eulogised. High and low, learned and unlearned, have opposed or defended it. Huxley girded at its "corybantic" religion, and charged full tilt against its social wing; Bradlaugh waxed wroth over its "drums and tramlings"; whilst, on the other hand, Jowett, of Oxford, praised it in his own judicious way, and Farrar is still the eloquent champion of much of its work. "Skeletons" have caricatured and persecuted it; the Church of England has imitated it, and Royalty blessed it. And yet though all tongues wag concerning this new, robustious thing under the sun, really discriminating views of the Salvation Army are by no means plentiful. With some truth it may be said that our enemies batter us and our friends flatter us. And we Salvationists, looking through the glasses of our foes, honestly fail to see what they appear to see, and are sometimes almost as much bewildered over the highly-coloured spectacles of our friends. We have scarcely learned to use our own eyes, to examine and judge for ourselves, and have very little idea of the true proportions, the strength and weakness, the possibilities and dangers of the Salvation Army. What may be called "public opinion" has no existence amongst us. There is no open discussion of matters affecting the welfare of the organisation, such as we find in other religious bodies. We have, indeed, what are called "officers' councils" and "soldiers' councils," but the title is a misnomer. What is meant is "officers and soldiers *counselled*." The Salvation Army, like every other institution, is imperfect, but, under the domination of the military idea and in the name of loyalty, we appear to have all agreed to keep silence concerning the disquieting symptoms and weak places existing in it. This is unfortunate, and may in itself constitute one of our gravest perils. And really there is no occasion for it. Bad men and bad institutions rightly fear examination, but the Salvation Army is sound

enough and strong enough to profit by an honest exchange of opinion amongst its members in their councils and publications.

The writer's main object in this article is to strike a note of warning in regard to certain tendencies and dangers that are revealing themselves in the Salvation Army. He has had a dozen years' experience of its ordinary evangelical work, and is simply an unpaid soldier or member. He is taking it for granted that his readers have a general idea of the character and scope of Salvation Army enterprises, and are agreed as to their beneficence, even though they may disagree as to their wisdom. Before entering upon my subject proper, however, perhaps I may be allowed to sketch very briefly a few notable characteristics of the organisation and its members that have impressed me.

The dominant notes in the Salvation Army are earnestness and joy. The Salvationist, like Ibsen's creation "Brand," sees soul and body where others see body, and perhaps soul; but, unlike Brand, he cannot help being happy, for Christ has appeared to him at the beginning of his religious experience. For let people say what they may about "irreverence" and about "dragging religion in the gutter," members of the Army have a genuine spiritual experience, and are in reality as reverent in spirit as other Christians. We are rough at times, and harsh, and occasionally mix things up—the trivial with the sacred. For instance, we were gravely told in the *War Cry* recently of a dying Salvationist who "passed triumphantly away *leaving one of the first silk handkerchiefs sold by the Army!*" But, notwithstanding our crudities and oddities, there is amongst us as a whole a clear realisation of the power and presence of God, and of our own demerits, along with a sincere desire to shape our lives according to the divine will.

It is impossible to be in the Salvation Army without feeling that the ruling passion there is for seeking and saving the lost. This accounts for its warm religious atmosphere. We are not only provided with opportunities for doing good, but also with a genial zone to do it in—a fact that will be appreciated by those who have to carry on any sort of work in the face of indifference or contempt.

Another thing that has impressed me is the presence in the Army of much elementary religion and much deep spirituality. A student of the Epistles will note how the most elementary moral axioms alternate there with the profoundest Christian doctrines. There is that in our organisation which constantly reminds one of this trait in the apostolic writings. The Salvation Army carries the Gospel to the most debased and ignorant, and it also unfurls a high standard of holy living. It has within its ranks those who have been saved from the power of gross habits, and has also choice spirits very many, men and women of saintly character. It has to feed many babes and nurture many who know something of "the deep things of God."

Then look at the sensible recognition by the Salvation Army of woman's right to do what she has capacity for! I should think that one-half of our number are women. Many of them fill positions of considerable responsibility, and one, Mrs. Bramwell Booth, successfully administers a great and difficult work.

Then think of the Army's cosmopolitanism. In England Hodge and John Artisan, arrayed in jerseys, may be seen hobnobbing with converted Hindoos and others of

that ilk who have come from the ends of the earth to take part in some great gathering of Salvationists, and to assist in the work of converting British heathens. And if an English Salvationist lands in any part of the world where the "yellow, red, and blue" of the Salvation Army has made its appearance, he will receive the same hearty welcome as his foreign comrades receive who land in England. It cannot be a matter of indifference that there is at work in various parts of the world, and among the classes where race-hatreds are perhaps strongest, an organisation that has caught the Christian note of universal brotherhood, and is seeking to dissolve the barriers that exist between nations.

Then much might be said about what may be termed the romance of Salvation Army work. For instance, Mary—once, we will suppose, your cook—having fallen in with the Army and got converted, left your service to your regret, became an officer, and is now in India. *You* have never passed through the Red Sea, or admired the scenery of Ceylon, or gazed on the sacred Ganges, or come in contact with Oriental races and civilisations! Well, she, your erstwhile cook, has, and had some intelligent conception of it, too! As she tells the story of Jesus, the native people throng round to listen, whilst priests and pundits learned in the immemorial wisdom of India stand respectfully by. In a modest way she is a religious leader, a teacher of truth, a reconciler of East and West. Since she joined the Salvation Army there have come to her joys, friendships, providences, compensations, consolations. She attributes them to the doing of God's will. And she is one of multitudes who, humanly speaking, have found whatever of good, and wonder, and beauty has come into their lives through the Salvation Army.

In proceeding to deal with some of our dangers as an organisation, or tendencies that may develop into dangers, I would call attention to the constitution of the Salvation Army. It is a voluntary association organised and carried on somewhat after the manner of a "killing" army. Its General possesses absolute authority within the domain of its operations, and, acting through the Chief of the Staff, issues orders and regulations for the movement throughout the world. He holds in trust all Salvation Army properties, for the purposes of the work. He even appoints his successor. It need hardly be said that the practical work of administration is done by the Chief of the Staff and headquarters officials generally, as representing the supreme authority.

The parallel between the Salvation Army and an ordinary army is not a perfect one, because, whilst the fourteen or fifteen thousand paid officers amongst us, who devote all their time to the work, may be considered as under effectual control, the members or soldiers, whilst being expected, of course, to carry out the rules that apply to their position, do that of their own free will, and devote just what spare time they choose to the service of the Salvation Army.

It will have already been gathered from what I have said that they have no regulating voice in the affairs of the organisation—no voting powers, no right to deal with matters even the most local.

Now, autocratic authority, and in military form, is surely a remarkable thing in a religious organisation. It seems to me that such authority makes its appeal to fear rather than to love. It tends to summary action and to the suppression of legitimate



opinion. It will not bend to compromise; it dare not admit mistakes. And in the present case, however wise and good our leaders may be, mistakes occur, offences arise, injustice is sometimes done.

The Salvation 'Army thus presents one or two curious features. Composed of voluntary members, it is yet ruled after a military fashion. Its authorities ask obedience in all matters affecting its work and discipline, and yet cannot impose penalties, ecclesiastical or otherwise, for disobedience. They can only appeal to conscience, or to a sense of loyalty, or to a fear of ulterior consequences. They make large demands upon the main body of the Army, guided only by their own sense of justice or fitness. Between authority, therefore, containing tendencies such as I have described, aiming to be real, and yet in a large measure unable to enforce its demands—and the voluntary element subject to great pressure from above; its rights unrecognised; without administrative powers; and yet able to free itself at will from authority—between these two, I say, how easily may conflicts occur! and with what disastrous results possibly!

A certain corps, where flourishing work used to be carried on, has been almost ruined, because an impression gained ground in it that our authorities, in the matter of a bequest, acted unrighteously, though legally. I think I understand how it happened. Authority took one view of the matter, the local society another. Authority, of course, carried the day, and the local members stung by a sense of what they considered injustice, and unable to defend themselves in a constitutional way, could only protest and leave. Now, if their position had been less one of mere subjection, and if they had been able to appoint one of their number to represent their case in some court, where the matter could have been calmly considered, there might have been a much happier ending to the dispute. As it is, the corps is wrecked and the good name of the Salvation Army destroyed throughout a whole district. Autocratic government may do fairly well in calm weather, but when storms arise there is only a step between autocracy and anarchy; and, whilst religious zeal has made a kind of truce between the autocratic and voluntary elements in the Salvation Army, there will have to be, for perpetual reconciliation, not only very judicious exercise of power on the part of authority, but also a wise recognition of the rights and privileges naturally associated with the voluntary element. In short, I think that the members of the Salvation Army ought to have some share in the administration of it. Perhaps it sounds absurd to speak of *soldiers* having a voice in the affairs of an *army*. In this case, however, it must be remembered that the soldiers of the Salvation Army help to build barracks and maintain officers as well as do the work. Practically, they (along with the public) provide the sinews of war—and fight the battles! It seems just, therefore, that they should have power to deal with matters that affect their own societies, at the very least. Besides, if a person is given a regulating voice in anything, his interest is deepened, his sense of responsibility quickened, and whatever of wisdom or experience he possesses is placed at the public service.

The Salvation Army is a religious denomination—nay, in what I believe to be a true sense of the word, a Church. When I was thinking over this article on two occasions lately, I happened both times to turn accidentally to passages in the Acts of the Apostles that refer to the position and power of the laity in the Church.\* Referring to the latter passage, my Commentary (Dr. Ellicott's) says: "It is probable . . . that the

Ecclesia, or popular assembly, did not possess the power of initiating measures; but their right to vote appears, from this instance, to have been indisputable."

The military system has certain obvious advantages as a working method. It ensures economy of time, dispatch, punctuality. But the multiplicity of regulations inseparable from it in a great organisation like the Salvation Army tends to mechanical action. Where so much is done by rule there is little room for personal initiative. Where so much effort has to be put forth, so many meetings to be held, and where strict account has to be given of what is done, it is little wonder that work degenerates into routine pretty often. In obedience to rules carried out "not wisely but too well," a few of us have sometimes gone out to "hold a meeting," with the quixotic intention apparently of converting bricks and mortar! And we have held forth and sang and banged our drum until one has been irresistibly reminded of Messrs. Quince, Snug, Bottom & Co.'s immortal performances in the "Midsummer Night's Dream"—their earnest futilities, their serio-comicalities.

Exclaims Thoreau in one place, referring to his over-decorous youth: "What demon possessed me that I behaved so well?" "What demon possesses us that we behave so well?" Salvationists might often cry as they consider the waste of time and energy arising from their obedience to regulations applied with slavish literality in circumstances where effort is practically thrown away.

We are apt to fix our attention upon great special features of the Salvation Army, such as the Social Scheme, the Slum Work, &c.; but we must go to the corps or societies wherein the ordinary work is carried on if we would test the quality of the movement, or seek to estimate its future possibilities.

It is in connection with them that the ceaseless efforts are put forth whereby the Salvation Army seeks to extend the Christian religion, increase its own store of spiritual power, add to its numbers, repair its losses. Now these societies very often reveal symptoms which must cause profound disquiet to thoughtful Salvationists, and which, if more generally considered would nip in the bud that tendency to brag of our achievements and put a good face upon our failures that shows itself amongst us sometimes. They are subject to strange fluctuations in regard to numerical strength. We cannot help noticing the sudden decline of many, the speedy extinction of others. Whilst we are extending our operations on every hand, some of the established corps are in a perilous state.

\* See Acts vi. 15 ; and Acts xv. 22.

One reason for this is the unstable moral and material conditions existing in the strata of society where much of our work lies. This we cannot avoid. But there are other causes. Perhaps to the work of no religious body does the parable of the sower apply so aptly as to that of the Salvation Army. We are always sowing; we sow everywhere. We get all sorts of cases, those "who have no root in themselves" as well as those "in good ground" with perhaps a few knaves and cranks thrown in. And immediately we send them out into the streets with a literal flourish of trumpets. But afterwards, "when affliction or persecution ariseth," many of them "are offended." The good remain, but the corps is reduced by one-half, and the public form their own opinions. There is surely room for caution, thoroughness, and some wise method of probation here?

Again, another cause is over-pressure. The demands in the Salvation Army, physical and otherwise, are very severe. During the average time of an officer's stay in one corps (which is six months) there are held about 400 indoor and outdoor meetings, besides much other work. A viaduct must not only be strong enough to bear the heaviest traffic, but, if it is to endure, must be much stronger. We however, seem to be working up to the extreme limit of our powers of endurance; we leave no margin of strength; we lack some element of calm; we have scarcely a green place for rest and recuperation.

Wordsworth's lines,

"The world is too much with us; late and soon. Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers," might be applied to our religious world. When one comes to consider a hundred years of effort on present lines, curious thoughts arise. Already there are worn-out officers and almost worn-out corps.

The authorities are of course responsible for much of this overpressure. Their aim seems to be to tax the time, energy, and giving capacity of the societies to the utmost. They are wondrously kind to their sinners, but very severe on their saints; and, whilst we believe that the reasons for the demands they make are right enough in themselves, that will not prevent the camel's back from being broken if the last straw is insisted on.

And now let us look at one or two phases of the financial administration. They used to sing in the music-halls:

"Why does the Salvation Army march the streets and play 'Tis for money." They don't do that now. The world is getting convinced about the integrity of our purposes as an organisation. True, there is still ridicule. We are still invited to "skin the donkey!" But they don't now insinuate that we stole that long-suffering quadruped!

So far as the societies are concerned, and taking into consideration their limited resources, our system must be called an expensive one. This partly arises from the fact that, as a rule, each corps however small has two stationed officers. In a division containing, say, twenty-five societies, the amount required for salaries will be some £2000 yearly. Then there are rents of halls, officers' quarters, and other local expenses, besides what is required by the authorities for general maintenance, &c. I calculate that at the least £4000 will be necessary to clear the working expenses in such a division, where there may be perhaps 2000 Salvationists. The fact that in many corps the officers cannot get in full the very modest salaries allotted to them emphasises what I have said about the expensiveness of the system. When we consider the poverty of so many of our members and congregations, there is, in view of what I have stated, good reason for the financial difficulties of our corps. In some the strain is serious and extremely harmful, and occasionally there is a condition of things where the officers are existing at very little above starvation-point. The divisional officer, it is true, has power to make money grants in cases of extreme need, when applied to for them. But officers are often reticent about making such applications. They know that the divisional exchequer is only scantily furnished, and have besides an impression, mistaken perhaps, that their doing so is an implied confession of incapacity. A "minimum wage" ought to be guaranteed to every officer; but perhaps the true way out of the difficulty would be to amalgamate small corps

that are reasonably contiguous; to work others by means of one officer to a corps instead of two, having some central quarters where several officers could reside together; to greatly extend the circle system, by means of which several small societies are worked by a pair of officers travelling from place to place ; and finally to use the most capable of the local members in a much greater measure than is at present the case for itinerant work. Some change is certainly needed, and even if under a new system so much effort could not be put forth as at present, that would be amply compensated by the removal of a blot from the Salvation Army; the saving in flesh and blood, in money, and in officers and members, who at present retire from the work altogether because they cannot stand its hardships, or are disgusted with the eternal beg, beg, beg; and, again, in officers, who could then be working in the new fields that are continually being opened up. Then there is another aspect of the financial question. Whilst many officers and corps are burdened as I have described, there are others seriously handicapped because they persist sometimes in erecting spacious buildings that are altogether beyond our means. The consequence is a crushing load of debt, and the devotion of much valuable time and energy in meeting severe obligations that ought never to have been necessary. We are a poor people, and had far better carry on our work in tents and sheds than indulge in erratic lapses from economy and sound finance.

A great responsibility rests upon our leaders. It devolves upon them to a large extent to guide and develop a notable and beneficent movement that may last for ages, and it would be a great mistake to imagine that its organisation is already perfect. I have indicated some of our dangers, or what appear to me as such.

Three words indicate three of our greatest needs—thought, thoroughness, caution. Our authorities would do well to institute a profound study of these and other needs and dangers, and of the ways whereby they may possibly be met.

There are spots on the sun; there are defects in the Salvation Army. But there is one great fact that more than anything else gives us heart for the future. It has life—rich stores of spiritual power, a wide and deep possession of "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and forever."

What I have written in this article has been on my own responsibility, though I have no doubt other Salvationists have had somewhat similar thoughts. One or two things I can say for others as well as for myself, however. We love the organisation of our choice; through it we have obtained spiritual illumination; in it we find many opportunities for doing good; and leaders who show in a practical way what self-denial means.

Looking outward, we are grateful for what has been accomplished. If the Salvation Army were to disappear tomorrow, there has been that of good wrought by its means in the lives of untold multitudes, which would surely earn for it a place in the memory of the world. Perhaps I, who am not a leader but an obscure Salvationist, may be allowed to say this for it.

But will it disappear tomorrow? Will it endure? Is the Salvation Army a sort of comet, obedient to high laws, yet destined to pursue a brief if brilliant course in the religious sphere, and then disappear forever? Or will it take a continuing place amongst those

other bodies which in their various orbits circle around the Cross as around a Sun? Such thoughts occur to many, within the Salvation Army and without. I cannot answer them. Permanence depends on many things, and I am not a philosopher.

I can only say—give us a fair field and a hundred years. At the end of that time, if all is well, we may compare notes. But should we not be able through "the accident of death" to celebrate our centenary, that of the Salvation Army will, I doubt not, be held amidst great jubilation.

JOHN HOLLINS.

#### NOTES.

*Salvation Army Government.*—It may be said that it is absurd to speak of grafting what may in a minor sense be termed popular government on to a military system. I would answer that the fact of a voluntary association having run into a military mould will make some development in that direction necessary. Otherwise, the tendencies I have described will increase, there being no adequate check upon them, and the organisation be crushed, perhaps, between the twin millstones of over-pressure and over-regulation. Then we must have regard to the future. We have our strong man now, our Cromwell; but suppose a Richard and evil days? Suppose a clique of officials acting against a general? Or a general, for some reason, declared unfit? Who is to remove him? And what if he objects? What possibilities of disorganisation and collapse lie here! Our present honoured leader holds his position by what may be termed creative rights, but I think that authority in the future may need ratification by the whole Salvation Army.

*Financial Pressure.*—One week recently the combined salaries of two officers amounted to the handsome sum of *ninepence*. In another case the officers (women) were obliged to go out one morning to friends and beg their breakfasts! Such cases, alas! are not rare. Then almost all the hard and puerile characteristics of the Salvation Army arise from its financial difficulties. Untoward and humiliating incidents constantly crop up in connection with money-getting and vastly minimise our influence. I am convinced that Salvationists everywhere are sick of this sort of thing, and desire the time when the Salvation Army shall be able more continuously to utter forth its deeper, diviner notes.

*Adaptability.*—I mentioned that the Salvation Army had shown adaptability. This is true, and yet, I think, that there is a danger of us reaching a certain point of adaptation, and sticking there. There seems to be a notion amongst us that adaptation means making our methods fit all circumstances. There is no essential virtue in drums and flags.

## A Higher Up Religion (part 2)

by General William Booth

*Originally printed in, The War Cry, No. 4.- Jan. 17, 1880.*

*Reprinted in, Holiness Readings. A selection of Papers on the Doctrine, Experience, and Practice of Holiness, Salvation Army Book Depot, London, 1883.*

Our theme is holiness. We speak to those who hunger and thirst after righteousness. You are the children of God. You have passed from death unto life. Your sins are forgiven you, and *you know it*. A great change has passed over you. Once you were the willing slave of sin. Sin in some form reigned over you, but the Saviour came, and He brought not only pardon but liberty. You were made free. You are free to-day. Hallelujah! Still, the work of deliverance is not complete. True, the absolute triumphing reign of evil in your soul has come to an end, but it is still there. The Philistine still dwells in the land, and the enemies who once had it all their own way still disturb your peace. At times they overcome you, bring you into condemnation, and threaten totally to subdue and bring you again into bondage. We need not enumerate those enemies. You know them only too well, -anger, malice, pride, envy, lust, and the like. All the land, that is, all your heart and life was once their own, and fain would they have it back again. You have had many a fight with them, and, I fear, suffered many a defeat, which defeats have had to be followed by tears of bitter repentance and fresh applications to the cleansing-blood. Oh, ten thousand thanks for the continued efficacy of the crimson fountain, and the never-failing willingness of Jehovah to forgive.

His mercy, indeed, to those who seek it endureth for ever. And the next best thing to not stumbling and falling down is, I suppose, to get up again, and the next best thing to not falling into sin is to repent and seek forgiveness. But is there no other way? Yes, we show you another and a more excellent way. It is according to God's plan and nature to forgive sin, but it is none the less according to His plan and nature to save from sinning. He is able to keep us from falling, and He is able to make us stand, and not only to stand but to run and not be weary, to walk and not faint. Bless His dear name. For is not His name called Jesus? And was not that name, which signifies deliverance, given to Him because He should save His people from their sins? Yes, He saves from sin down here, in this very evil world; He saves to the uttermost; He saves fully; He saves, He saves to-day.

This is the experience, dear reader, we want to set before you, and to prevent misunderstanding we pursue the line of remark started last week. We left off at the statement *that there was no position so exalted down here as to free us from temptation*. Adam and Eve were tempted, and, beyond controversy, they were without sin. Jesus Christ knew no sin, and yet satan attacked Him, and haunted and followed Him as perhaps, he never attacked and haunted and followed any other being, and that just because He was the best and holiest and most Godlike being that ever walked the earth. The devil saw Him and hated Him, perhaps as he had never hated a being before. Hence, he must either have flown from Him or flown at Him. He flew at Him, but only to be hurled back again and trampled upon and bruised. If you are a good copy of your Example, your Original, he will see the resemblance, see it before anyone else, and he will feel something of the old hatred and fly at you. But as He, your Master, overcame, so may you, so shall you, if you

are a faithful soldier, and you shall sit down with Him on His throne even as He has sat down on His Father's throne. But remember that resemblance to Christ, rather than saving you from temptation, will only the more certainly bring it upon you.

THIS IS NOT AN EXPERIENCE SO HIGH UP THAT YOU WILL BE SAVED FROM INFIRMITIES. – We came into the world with minds and bodies diseased and deranged as the result of sin. Our fathers, a good way back, have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth have been set upon an edge. We reap – in our imperfect memories and damaged perceptions and emaciated and diseased bodies – the result of their transgressions and also of our own. Hence, mentally, we are prone to make mistakes all sorts of mistakes; while, bodily, the worship we give and the service we render to the Great God of Heaven is marred and disfigured. But these infirmities cannot justly be accounted sins. I cannot condemn myself for what I cannot help. If I have a crook in my leg or a twist in my eye, no power can make me blame myself for my limping gait or my defective vision. They are infirmities and not sin – infirmities which render my service all imperfect contrasted with the pure service of perfect beings, but which imperfection is more than met and covered by the all-atoning sacrifice of my Saviour.

The requirements our loving Father make upon his children are graduated to their ability. If I am strong I must serve with my strength, if I am weak, according to my weakness. If I am wise I must serve with my wisdom, if I am ignorant according to the little light I possess. If I have ten talents I must use every one of them, if I have only one that one must be made the most of for His glory and the good of souls. "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with *all* thy heart." Therefore, whether it be a big heart or a little heart, so that it be laid on the altar and filled with His love; whether in this sense it be a perfect or an imperfect heart, He will be content. The work may be very imperfect, but if the eye has been single and the intention pure, if the worker has been perfectly offered and sprinkled and accepted, God will be pleased and satisfied, and say, amidst the plaudits of angels, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant."

## **If At First You Don't Succeed...**

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

A NEW twist of an old adage is that “If at first you don't succeed, you're running about normal!” We are not to be blamed if we don't score immediate success. But we are to be blamed if we allow our first efforts to be our last. Like others, Salvation Army officers should be given permission to fail – as long as they then go on to try other ways of succeeding. The only thing for which we shouldn't expect permission is giving up.

Even while we were candidates some of us may have been warned that officer ship wouldn't be a ‘cake walk’. There would be obstacles to overcome and some would be within ourselves. But by refusing to give up and with God's help it would be possible to go on to success.

I have learnt through the years that even good ideas can sometimes go down like lead balloons in one place but take off and fly in another. Subsequent attempts may often prove successful.

J.K.Rowling, the writer of the Harry Potter stories, had rejection slips from numerous publishers before she found acceptance. Now we can only feel sorry for those who turned down chances of the big time and admire the tenacity of one who refused to give up. Similarly, Colonel Harland Sanders, the creator of the ‘Kentucky fried chicken’ recipe took it to scores of outlets and received umpteen refusals but never gave up until his dream of sharing it came true.

Winston Churchill was invited to address students at his old school where the headmaster told the company that they were about to hear from one of the greatest orators in the English speaking world and they would never forget what he had to say. Then Churchill went to the podium and simply said, “Never, never, never give up” and then went and sat down! It may have been the shortest speech he ever gave but for those who heard it was certainly memorable.

For those who are set on the furtherance of the gospel these are not easy times; they are certainly not for the fainthearted. But as the line of a song has it, “Never mind, go on!”

Ultimately, victory is sure.



## High Council Issues

by Major Stephen Court

The High Council meets to select the next General during the shelf life of this JAC issue.

We dug through some Salvation Army Year Books of the past to get some context for where The Army is today, to help position ourselves to overcome the challenges and optimize the opportunities of the future.

These are the Year Book stats for several western territories for both 1995 and 2010 (we're the first to admit that Year Book stats are not consistently accurate, but that is all we have, and they ARE official). Here goes:

### Corps

Canada and Bermuda C+B 372 / 311 (about 17% decline);  
Australia Eastern AE 208 / 174 (about 12% decline);  
Denmark DEN 38 / 32 (around 17% decline);  
France F 43 / 29 (about a third decline);  
New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga NZ 104 / 94 (nearly 1/10 decline);  
Sweden SW 197 / 147 (1/4 decline);  
Switzerland SWIT 97 / 65 (about 1/3 decline);  
Norway NOR 124 / 111 (about 1/10 decline);  
UK823/ 704 (maybe 14% decline).

All nine territories shrank at least 1/10 in number of corps (and a few fudged 2010 stats by adding community service units).

### Active Officers

C+B 1395 / 877 (more 1/3 decline or so - in hard numbers, Canada lost more officers than NZ AND Sweden currently have)  
AE 692 / 520 (about 1/4 decline);  
D 47 / 37 (nearly 1/4 decline);  
F 126 / 72 (about 40% decline);  
NZ 422 / 316 (1/4 decline);  
SW 236 / 174 (more than 1/4 decline);  
SWIT 285 / 187 (more than 1/3 decline);  
NOR 269 / 182 (about 1/3 decline);  
UK1776 / 1247 (about 1/3 decline).

The best of the nine territories only lost a QUARTER of the officer corps. The worst lost hundreds of officers (only 15 years).

### Cadets

C+B 86 / 35  
AE 54 / 31  
D 0 / 0  
F 26 / 0  
NZ 35 / 28  
SW 4 / 12

SWIT 16 / 2  
NOR 15 / 8  
UK 94 / 79

Other than a heartening reversal in Sweden, there are all significant drops in cadets.

#### Senior Soldiers

C+B 24643 / 18866 (about a 1/4 drop);  
AE 14062 / 8698 (nearly 40%);  
D 1573 / 960 (1/3 decline);  
F 1061 / 919 (more than 1/10 decline);  
NZ 6691 / 5565 (18% or so decline);  
SW 8556 / 5321 (about 37% decline);  
SWIT 4726 / 3030 (more than 40% decline);  
NOR 8177 / 5515 (about 1/3 decline);  
UK 48121 / 31575 (more than 1/3 decline).

ENORMOUS decline through these territories, chopping tens of thousands of soldiers, covenanted for life, from the Army.

#### Junior Soldiers

C+B 6613 / 3067 (about 55%);  
AE 2883 / 490 (about 80% decline);  
D 115 / 12 (about 90% decline);  
F 84 / 80 (5% decline);  
NZ 1255 / 718 (about 40% decline);  
SW 479 / 125 (more than 3/4 decline);  
SWIT 482 / 379 (more than 20% decline);  
NOR 886 / 43 (95% decline);  
UK 9325 / 5022 (about 45% decline).

These numbers are tragic, nearly all more than 40% drops - and this projects to the senior soldiers strength in coming years.

Some comments on those numbers:

a. Thank God for the significant advances in Korea and Africa and Pakistan and parts of Asia, and for incremental advance in USA and other areas. Without it we'd be slipping off the map.

b. Around 1995, the benchmark for the comparison, Phil Wall started preaching about the decline of the UKI territory and what might happen if it continued. Well, it seems like not enough people were listening, because UKI is in free fall over the 15-year period.

c. During this period we elected no African generals, nor did we appoint any Africans to Western territorial commands. However, we did elect three British Generals (all outstanding Salvationists). At some point we need to ask what value experience in managing decline has for leadership (in that NZF territory has produced a batch of

CSs; UKI continues to spurt out TCs/comms; C+B has made a fairly recent international play in CSs - all despite a record of constant, significant decline over the period).<sup>1</sup>

d. Who is going to be accountable for this? Are the TYsSs having to wear the Junior Soldier stats around their necks every day at THQ? Are the TCs wearing sackcloth and ashes over the bleeding of soldiers? Are the DCs fasting and praying about how to reverse the decline in corps? Are the Candidates Secretaries resourced and supported in their recruiting? Someone has to step up and take responsibility AND turn us around. (Here's an idea! If we can't find any white-skinned people to do it, maybe we can look in Pakistan and Korea and Africa and India where the Army is aggressively advancing and appoint some of them as TCs and DCs and TYsSs and Candidates Secretaries and Chief Secretaries instead of the somewhat steady stream of decline managers).

e. The Army is better than this. It deserves better than this. God certainly deserves better than this. If you aren't uncomfortable reading this, you should be, so ask the Lord to make you uncomfortable (and to show you what you should do to help).

So, let's see what happens when we add 1960 numbers to the nine territories from above AND five more sets of numbers: the old East Africa Territory (now Kenya East, Kenya West, Tanzania, and Uganda Command), Korea, Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe), USA Eastern, and combined USA (all four US Territories).

1960 1995 2010

#### Corps

Global 17126 / 14907 / 15478

C+B 384 / 372 / 311

AE 202 / 208 / 174

DEN 56 / 38 / 32

F 53 / 43 / 29

NZ 97 / 104 / 94

SW 275 / 197 / 147

SWIT 120 / 97 / 65

NOR 141 / 124 / 111

UK 1018 / 823 / 704

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EA/K/U/Tan 171 / 413 / ke340/kw331/u75/t65(901) (more than doubled in 15 years!)

K 68 / 203 / 247 (20% increase in 15 years!)

R/Z 194 / 324 / 404 (1/4 increase in 15 years!)

USE 341 / 331 / 382 (16% increase in 15 years)

USN 1109 / 1189 / 1252 (<1% increase in 15 years)

#### Active Officers

Global 19692 / 17271 / 16938

C+B 1323 / 1395 / 877

AE 752 / 692 / 520

D 195 / 47 / 37

F 297 / 126 / 72

NZ 400 / 422 / 316  
SW 904 / 236 / 174  
SWIT 439 / 285 / 187  
NOR 650 / 269 / 400  
UK 2130 / 1776 / 1247

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EA/K/U/Tan 370 / 699 / ke422/kw446/u56/t126 (850) (>20% increase in 15 years!)  
K 168 / 465 / 582 (1/4 increase in 15 years!)  
R/Z 358 / 336 / 457 (more than 1/3 increase in 15 years!)  
USE 1327 / 1050 / 1071 (marginal increase in last 15 but decrease in 50)  
USN 3881 / 3571 / 3443 (marginal decrease)

#### Cadets

Global 997 / 1320 / 1126  
C+B 86 / 35  
A 54 / 31 /  
D 0 / 0  
F 26 / 0  
NZ 35 / 28  
SW 4 / 12  
SWIT 16 / 2  
NOR 15 / 8  
UK 94 / 79

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EA/K/U/Tan ? / 73 / k108/u24  
K ? / 63 / 59 (under 10% decrease in last 15 years)  
R/Z ? / 56 / 40 (more than ¼ decrease in last 15)  
USE ? / 101 / 72 (1/3 decrease in last 15 years)  
USN 201 / 387 / 262 (nearly 1/3 decrease in last 15 years)

#### Senior Soldiers

Global - ? / 797910 / 1122326 (40% increase in 15 years!)  
C+B 24643 / 18,866  
AE14,062 / 8698  
D 1573 / 960  
F 1061 / 919  
NZ 6691 / 5565  
SW 8556 / 5321  
SWIT 4726 / 3030  
NOR 8177 / 5515  
UK 48121 / 31575  
UK 9325 / 5022

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EA/K/U/Tan ? / 138956 / ke69554/kw113030/u5646/t5372 (193602) (39% increase in last 15 years!)  
K ? / 34799 / 41723 (about 20% increase in last 15 years)  
R/Z ? / 63267 / 122513 (nearly DOUBLED!)  
USE ? / 18377 / 20975 (about 15% increase)  
USN 81606 / 82010 (marginal increase)

Junior Soldiers

Global - ? / 348885 / 378009

C+B 6613 / 3067

A2883 / 490

D115 / 12

F84 / 80

NZ1255 / 718

SW479 / 125

SWIT482 / 379

NOR886 / 43

UK48121 / 31575

----

EA/K/U/Tan ? / 162572 / ke58126/kw122697/u6512/t3567 (189902) (about 17% increase in 15 years!)

K ? / 8692 / 6411 (more than ¼ decrease in 15 years)

R/Z ? / 19699 / 18882 (less than 10% decrease)

USE ? / 8438 / 8116 (marginal decrease)

USN ? / 35825 / 24902 (about 30% decrease!)

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A lot can be said of these stats. But for starters, praise the Lord on the 40% increase in soldiers in the last 15 years. Some might not like the comments about leadership above (and we'll clarify that General Clifton led the Pakistan Territory to 13% soldiers increase). But a lot of this 40% increase in soldiers can be sourced to General Paul Rader, who challenged the Army world for a million marching into the new millennium.<sup>2</sup> It is interesting that he comes out of USE (where there is statistically significant advance), led USW (which had significant growth under his leadership, and served more than two decades in Korea (see their fantastic advance above). So, leaders have effect. But, to initial comments:

1. Praise the Lord for every person saved in the time period under scrutiny.
2. Glory to God for every soldier fighting with covenanted zeal.
3. Thank the Lord for every leader faithfully fulfilling God's purposes.
4. Credit to God for the favour that the Army enjoys in relation to our warfare.
5. Obviously the non-western countries are carrying our global advance. India, Pakistan, Korea, Kenya, and Zimbabwe, among many others, are pushing the Gospel forward with effectiveness.
6. They can't rest on their laurels. Even though Zimbabwe has exploded in the last 15 years under consideration, it is slipping in junior soldiers - a telling statistic if the children are the future come early. Korea is slipping even more in junior soldiers. God help them reverse that trend.
7. We have suggested, possibly somewhat simplistically, that placing a Korean or African leader in charge of a slipping western territory might be the solution to problems. The only example we have of this is Commissioner Peter Heidong Chang in USW, where there was unusual, accelerated advance. That guarantees nothing

with other leaders. But proven ineffectiveness in leadership in a certain theatre of war can strongly suggest more of the same elsewhere (what is it they say about the geographic cure?).

Case study on leadership effectiveness:

USA 1993-2003.

Context: 1993 1998 2003

Corps

USC - 280 / 281 / 281 - stagnant

USE 327 / 367 / 438 - significant expansion (Irwin / Noland)

USS 325 / 351 / 350 plateau

USW 222 / 289 / 298 significant expansion (Rader / Chang)

Cadets

USC 47 / 58 / 43 stagnant

USE 97 / 112 / 123 advance

USS 106 / 83 / 99 decline

USW 92 / 77 / 55 significant decline.

The point is that BOTH USE and USW corps advance AND USS and USC stagnation cannot be explained by cultural trends. Pin it either on good leadership (USE/USW) or ineffective leadership (to varying degrees, in the other territories). We're choosing to pin it on Irwin/Noland/Rader/Chang's effective leadership. Leadership can counter cultural trends. See solution f below.

## SOLUTIONS?

So, those are the statistics. They suggest some of the challenges of The Salvation Army in coming decades. Here are some suggested solutions:

Solution a. HQ is not essentially a support or a facilitator or a resource. It is for leadership. (yes, it can support/facilitate/resource, but that is not its essential function). It should lead.

Solution b. accountability. In the non-African centres of advance (e.g. Korea and USA) there is accountability. Leaders are required to 'do' certain things and to 'report' on certain things.

Solution c. identity. We should see The Salvation Army as a revolutionary movement of covenanted warriors exercising holy passion to win the world for Jesus. We are not a collection of independent corps or divisions or territories. We are not a church or churches (see Major Harold Hill's *FOUR ANCHORS FROM THE STERN* in JAC64). We are 'militant episcopalian' (CO doesn't run an independent corps but is part of a division led by a DC - etc.).

Solution d. universal embrace of covenant. There are 1.2+ million senior soldiers and 378000+ junior soldiers around the world. If we all embrace our SS and JS

covenants then we not only reverse the fragmentation and decline, but we unite to fight in an unstoppable revolutionary force that will smash the enemy on its head.

Solution e. holiness. I know that this sounds facile. But JAC readers will know that we're convinced that holiness is the solution to every problem (including statistical decline - and the new audiobook *THE UPRISING*, is further evidence in favour of our support of that position [get it free at [isalvos.com](http://isalvos.com)]). Paul, Wesley, and Brengle were right. They are right. Let's preach and experience that holiness and see if it doesn't accelerate our advance.

Solution f. Leaders lead. We know that some territories advance because enemy is weak there and the church as a whole is advancing. We know that some territories are retreating because the enemy is strong there and the church as a whole is retreating. We know that leadership in the latter territories is probably more difficult than in the former. We are interested in effective leadership against the trends. That is, where is the Army advancing where there church is retreating? In those places, we reckon it is because solutions A-E are in play and that leadership is a key dynamic. We don't need many more managers or administrators (we need some, but not more!). But we do need leaders. And it doesn't matter if they happen to be married women or African. Further, we believe that good leaders' effectiveness can transcend context.

Solution g. It is politically correct to include extraordinary prayer in a list of solutions. The thing is, though, that the Army has been the biggest participant in 24/7 prayer to date, with several territories going non-stop for significant periods, and we find ourselves where we are statistically. So, 'prayer' is the spiritually correct inclusion to the list. BUT, it also means more than a sentence before lunch or an extra meeting each week. We're already doing heaps more than we have done in the recent past. Something supernatural and unprecedented is what we're looking for. It is easy to identify and very hard to do. General Shaw Clifton has called us to NON-STOP Prayer starting January 1. Are we up for it?

### The High Council

We expect that any officers considered for election will have positions on these issues.

If elected, what will they DO to change our results in Europe and most of the western Army?

What will they DO to deal with these seven suggested solutions?

What will they DO to optimise the relative success experienced in parts of India and Africa and Korea?

What will they DO to deal with that most troubling stat - aside from those we've listed above - bothering the Army, that of ZERO - zero being the number of married woman TCs (in history, and you can't count Emma and Florence Booth, married to

Frederick and Bramwell and sitting in the 'co-' seat and British Commissioner chair respectively)?

What will they DO to advance the mission to win the world for Jesus?

If they don't have prayed-up responses to these issues they are not worthy of your vote (we don't know how many voters will read this but feel free to pass it along to your territory's voter(s)).

High Council delegates should be considering these statistical trends and causes behind them. And the High Council affords a wonderful opportunity for the senior active leaders of The Salvation Army to discuss them. And while they're at it, they might invest some time discussing global strategy.

Global Strategy. Maybe there is one that we don't know about. We know that Commissioner DuPlessis was responsible for world evangelisation until his retirement. But he wasn't replaced. Commissioner Krommenhoek did serve for awhile as the General's representative for world evangelisation but now he's a TC and wasn't replaced. Such a strategy might encompass some of the following:

i. take seriously Korea's aggressive 2020 plan. Open doors, provide finance, deploy Koreans through target countries;

ii. take seriously the S2S (Saved to Save) School's vision for house churches through Scandinavia and northern Europe by training up mobile salvos and deploying them strategically;

iii take seriously India's Soldiers of the Cross soldier evangelists model by financing it but also by replicating it around the world;

iv take seriously MMCCXX, the plan to see new outposts in 2000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years (that is five years in and several countries advanced - hallelujah);

v take seriously The War College training system that produces proven warriors by promoting and facilitating strategic replication around the world (there is a plan);

vi take seriously the 10/40 Window challenges by mobilising powerful prayer battalions around the world, studying relatively successful ministries into those regions, identifying potential pioneer leaders, and preparing to finance the invasion (this fits nicely into the General's GLOBAL CALL to non-stop prayer);

vi(b) 'finance the invasion' - take seriously the opportunities latent in the investment portfolios of some FITs (financially independent territories) and prepare to invest them strategically and directly into these new invasions;

vii restructure IHQ such that ISs are actually responsible to coordinate the salvation war - the winning of the whole theatre of war under their responsibility (responsibility implies accountability);



viii take seriously one of the great bottlenecks to raising candidates to officership - that is, training colleges (and fix them);

ix take seriously the fragmentation of The Army around the world by focussing on our shared covenants - JS / SS / officer - and actually embracing them - as the sinews of the strategy;

x global non-stop strategic prayer to drive the attack;

xi preach holiness as taught by Paul, Wesley, and Brengle as the content of the campaign;

xii set goals. Goals are not universally popular. But the General has taught that healthy things grow. And we know that God has commissioned us to win the world for Jesus. Goals help us from settling with the status quo. Let's set some biggies. Here are a few suggestions:

- 2011 in 2011 - that is, 2011 cadets by the end of 2011 (close to doubling status quo);

- 202 by 2020 - that is, every country invaded within the decade. That means about 8/year. That's not unrealistic.

- celebrate Rader's Million Marching (by the millennium) achievement and recognise our failure at Larsson's 2 Million by 2010 (to include JS/SS/adherents), repent of it, and then hit the target. We're at about 1.7 mil right now (300,000 left? Let's do it!).

- Bring back the big goal-setters like Rader and Noland (and others) to help on vision and strategy.

These are suggestions, only. We understand that the High Council is a highly spiritual exercise. We believe that God has already decided who will succeed General Clifton. And we're convinced that consideration and discussion of these issues leading to planning of global strategy that takes into consideration the trends we've alluded to, and others, will help each delegate discern God's will and optimally advance the salvation war.

God bless The General.

God bless The Salvation Army.

### **Endnotes**

<sup>1</sup> This comment is not 'aimed' at any leaders of declining territories specifically. It observes that these leaders have most experience in declining regions, contexts in which the Body of Christ is facing many challenges. It is quite likely that weaker leaders in those situations would preside over steeper declines. The point is that our choices have been people (with an exception clarified later in the article) with experience in a culture of decline.

<sup>2</sup> We recognize that Rader doesn't get all the credit for the advance but he wasn't an accidental leader, just coincidentally in the general's chair during that success.