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Editorial Introduction

Major Stephen Court, editor

Welcome to the 122nd issue of Journal of Aggressive Christianity. JAC122 includes a wide range of contributions, including first-timers, PtGers (Promoted to Glory), German, Briton, American, and the popular Anonymous.

Shaw Coleman, an Aussie in Germany, invited us to "Say Goodbye To Everything You Love About The Army" (we didn't promise not to ruffle any feathers!).

Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle follows up with "My Experience Of Sanctification". We're looking to some of the saints of the past in this issue on holiness to glean from their testimony. This is the first of three in JAC122...

The second is Adjutant "Kate Lee's Secret". Because it is in this section of JAC122, you can guess at her secret!

And finally in this little holiness trilogy, famed 'Anonymous' tells us, "How I Got Sanctification". No two testimonies are exactly alike, but we're hoping that these three will inspire hunger for any such holiness experience you currently lack. Press in.

Daniel Duncan, at Asbury Seminary, in "Worth Fighting For", considers ecological issues from a spiritual perspective.

In a master's thesis called "Clothed In Righteousness: A theology of Salvation Army uniform as an aid to holy living", Captain Marcus Mylechreest proposes a theology of the uniform as an aid to holy living (!).

Lieutenant Scott Swires, USE, begins an exercise in Cultivating A Culture Of Creativity.

Cadet Justin Steckbauer, USC, invites us to join him in, "Examining The Salvation Army Officer's Covenant".

And, wrapping up JAC122, we're running 'The Angel Adjutant' "Kate Lee's Covenant" for your edification.

Share widely, Read deeply. Apply liberally. Remember that if you finish JAC122 before October, you can still satisfy your hunger for provocative, orthodox, edifying writing around aggressive Christianity in JAC001-JAC121 - 121 archived issues signifies more than a thousand articles for your training / thinking / devotional benefit. Enjoy.

Say Goodbye To Everything You Love About The Army

Shaw Coleman

Like most people, I have a love-hate relationship with change and innovation. As an artist, some people expect me to epitomise a yearning for societal change and cultural revolution. And in some ways, that's true. But I imagine people may be surprised to discover my conservative (spießig) core. On one hand, I am constantly developing, implementing and executing new ideas. On the other hand, I draw the most inspiration from the past. I regularly choreograph new dance works, but love watching 200-year-old ballet pieces; through the work of The Limelight Collective I am almost completely redefining what Salvation Army ministry in Germany can look like, but I carry a deep sense of being rooted in the ideals and practices of our founders.

I have lived in this tension between conservatism and revolution for quite some time. In a dimly lit car park in Melbourne, I remember hearing the squeak of our car's wheels on the smooth concrete surface of the spiral ramp. In the front seats, my parents are discussing controversial and particularly painful changes happening in our corps and throughout the territory. It's the mid-1990's, and the so-called 'Worship Wars' are reaching a climax in Australia. Even as a 10-year-old, I mistrust the open sea of possibility that guitars, overhead projectors and an inexorable stream of Hillsong albums present, and treasure the safe harbour of brass bands, songsters, timbrels and musty-smelling songbooks.

"Why can't things just stay the way they are?!" I blurt out. "I like the way we do things now, with the band, with the songbooks."

As a child of officers, I was used to changing schools, changing homes, changing corps. The one constant in my life outside my family was Salvation Army culture. Changing that, too, was breaking my heart.

One house, one corps and two schools later, I had recently become a corps cadet. Without warning, the YPSM announced that the corps would discontinue both corps cadets and youth group, and replace it with a weekly worship and Bible study evening for teens with a catchy, cool name. Again I was heartbroken, and my engagement with the new programme was marked by bitterness. Eventually, I moved to a different corps.

Looking back on my younger self, I am able to show myself a lot of grace for my youthful naivety. I had confused my personal preference with what was effective for The Salvation Army's mission. I had forgotten that The Salvation Army does not exist for the enjoyment of its members, but for the salvation of the world.

Since my later teen years, I have come to painfully appreciate the wide divide between our internal Salvation Army culture and the culture of the wider world, and visiting and living in various countries around the world has taught me first-hand the value of cultural adaptation and relevance in daily communication. How much more, then should we make sure we communicate the Gospel to the world in ways they understand.

This is the core of Salvationist methodology, the idea that birthed our movement. The Booths and their comrades acknowledged that most unchurched people don't like churches. The early Army made their halls as unlike churches as possible, scandalously modelling their spaces after theatres and music halls - places where people enjoyed frequenting - and their music after the tastes of the working classes. They were quick to incorporate new technologies like the bicycle and the motor car. They spearheaded innovation in entertainment and media formats, creating the world's first full-length film presentation and effectively founding the film industry in Australia. Everything about the way the Church engaged with the world was negotiable.

Such revolutionary behaviour was understandably painful and disorientating. Catherine Booth writes of her process of mourning the Methodist practices she grew up with but, accepting that if they were no longer fit for purpose, concluded that they must be replaced. Later she famously said, "There is no improving the future without disturbing the present".

"There is no improving the future, without disturbing the present,' and the difficulty is to get people to be willing to be disturbed! We are so conservative by nature--especially some of us. We have such a rooted dislike to have anything rooted up, disturbed, or knocked down. It is as much the work of God, however, to 'root out, and to pull down, and to destroy,' as 'to build and to plant'; and God's real ambassadors frequently have to do as much of the one kind of work as of the other. This is not pleasant work..."

- Catherine Booth

"Disturbing" is a beautiful description of the pain and discomfort of change, and of our natural resistance to it. Changes bring about uncertainty and danger, they can be confusing and traumatic. We can feel cast adrift on an open sea of possibility, not know where land is. A good reason to cling to what we know. A plausible explanation why many of The Army's initial innovations, though long obsolete, still find a home in The Salvation Army of 2019, over a century later – it is easier to embrace a specific innovation than it is to embrace constant change.

Many people believe that dancing – particularly ballet – is about being light on your feet. In fact, usually the opposite is true: dancers need to have a strong connection with the floor, a sense of groundedness. They need to know exactly where their centre of balance is in order to have the freedom to move gracefully. This is a beautiful image of how we can be resilient in the face of constant innovation. When I came to Germany for the first time, it was my first time leaving home. I had no family, no friends, not much money, I didn't speak German... but I did have my Bible, and I have never clung to it more than in that time of huge personal upheaval. I knew the Rock I had built my life on, I knew where my weight was grounded, and so I was able to move freely and graciously. I am convinced that when we know who we are in Christ Jesus, and we trust Him to lead us safely through, we can face any change, no matter how painful or confusing.

My parents have spent a lot of their Officership working with recovering addicts. One of the principles they have observed is that we only change when the pain of change is less than the pain of staying the same. This is attested in the Bible through God's relationship with His people in the Old Testament. Despite the repeated warnings of the prophets, time and again the Israelites would only turn back to God after He put them in situations more painful than the pain of repentance. In Jeremiah chapter six, God chastises His people for their stubborn refusal to repent, for clinging to the status quo. In verse 16 He says:

*“Stand at the crossroads and look;
ask for the ancient paths,
ask where the good way is, and walk in it,
and you will find rest for your souls...”*

- Jeremiah 6:16

As Salvationists, I believe God has always been calling us back to our 'ancient paths', our holy creativity, our readiness to do whatever we can to better communicate the Gospel. As people engaged in God's mission to the world, we do well to take note of the crises we find ourselves in and see them as a warning to make changes – the greater the crisis, the greater the changes. As we experience the discomfort of engaging with a broken world, let us remember God's repeated command to His warriors: “Be strong and courageous.”

My Experience Of Sanctification

Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle, 1934

Sixty-one years ago this Christmas Eve I gave my heart to Christ. For five nights I had been at the Penitent Form blindly seeking and waiting for the ecstatic thrill, the touch of fire, the vision, the rapture or some other flaming emotion that others said had come to them; but I waited in vain. Then, without emotion, I gave myself to God and rose from my knees. I don't think there was any shine on my face and there certainly was no thrill in my heart. I suspect the jubilant old saints looking on had doubt concerning me; but it was no make-believe.

Later, one night, on the desolate, wind-swept prairie road under the silent stars, mother and I were walking a mile or more to a Prayer Meeting. I had just told her that I was glad we had not moved to Texas, where I might have become a dare-devil cowboy and lost my soul; here in Illinois I had given my heart to God and meant to serve Him. It was then that the touch came. It was not a thrill, a vision, an ecstasy, a rapture. It was peace, assurance, blessedness.

I walked in that blessedness for days, maybe weeks. But one night, when I was coming home from school, something within me flamed up with resentment at some vile words as school-mate flung at me, and I struck him. He did not strike back. We had no further trouble, but I had trouble in my heart. I discovered there was something within me that, under provocation, would not act like Jesus.

For the next ten years, with no one to enlighten me, I found myself entangled very largely in the experience Paul describes in the seventh chapter of Romans. I wanted to be good, and counted myself a Christian; I obeyed the rules of the church; I taught in the Sunday-School; I sang in the choir; I took part in religious services; I read my Bible; I prayed – but I found that 'when I would do good' evil was in me.

My conversion had kindled in me a new and deepening sense of moral responsibility. I was all boy – shy, bashful, inarticulate, among uncultured farmers – but secret ambitions burned in my heart. The strange, new, tugging, urging passions, tempers, mysterious moods; a curiosity of early adolescence wrestled with the new life of the spirit God had graciously given me, and made of my soul a battle-field.

I have no recollection of hearing of the experience of Sanctification during the first eight years of that period. Then, through the testimony of some fellow-students, I heard of Sanctification as a distinct, second work of grace. I heard an evangelist preach on the subject. I sought the Blessing and was richly blessed, but I did not get 'the Blessing', and the blessing I did receive leaked out.

"I struggled and wrestled to win it,
The Blessing that setteth me free."

But I did not see the way of faith and, indeed, I do not now think that I was prepared for the inner crucifixion which enables one to believe until holiness of heart.

But on the ninth day of January, 1885, just on fifty years ago, I came to the end of myself. My whole being went over to Christ and Him crucified, to share in His cross, His reproach, His travail; to be His man, His slave of love. And in that moment I found it easy to believe.

The word came to me, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9). God had spoken to my inmost soul in those words, and especially in the words, "to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." With my whole heart I believe, and in that moment a deeper and more assured peace than that which came to me as a child on the wind-swept prairies took possession of my heart.

The Comforter moved into my heart. Christ was revealed in my wondering, worshipping spirit, and I adored Him.

I have been asked the secret of keeping the Blessing, and I can only reply: Keep in the will of God, obey Him, seek Him daily, waiting at His gates. Read the Bible regularly. Never neglect secret prayer. Keep testifying to the grace of God bestowed upon you. Help others.

I have been asked again if the realization of Sanctification has ever waned during the past fifty years. Judging by my emotions, yes; judging by my volitions, no.

There have been times when my emotional experience has ebbed out and I wondered whether I had lost my Lord and my experience. Once I was sure that I had, and I cast away my confidence and for twenty-eight days was sorely tempted and sifted by the devil. When deliverance came – for I was not cast away – I discovered that my will had not wavered in its purpose, that my volitions had held fast to Christ in the midst of the emotional storm and desolation that swept over my soul.

To all my tempted comrades I would say: Hold fast! Be faithful, regardless of how you feel, for Christ will never leave His own. He knows the way you take. He, too, was tempted for forty days and nights of the devil. That trial of faith and loyalty proved to be one of the greatest blessings of my life.

Sanctification has meant complete abandonment to the will of God, but not in such a way that my will has become passive in its functioning. It has had to be, and has been, active, firm, assertive in purpose, to be the Lord's. I have not been allowed to sit in passive rapture singing myself away to everlasting bliss. God and man must cooperate, work together, both in the reception and continuance of the Blessing.

The great heights are set over against the great depths. So the highest religious attainments are set over against the dark depths of fanaticism; and the only way to

escape falling into that abyss is by being humble-minded and praying such a prayer as David's: "Teach me knowledge and good judgement." I have prayed for years that my light and my love might keep step with each other. Light without love may lead to pride – may make us supercilious and give us a false sense of superiority. Love without light may lead to great indiscretions and false judgements and fanaticism.

I am told that many young people confuse temptations of the flesh with departure from the Blessing of Full Salvation. They remain masters of themselves, but feel that if the Blessing is theirs they should not even feel a stirring for things of the flesh. But this is not true.

All appetites and desires of the body are normally perfectly innocent. The sexual desire is no more sinful, normally, than the desire for food or drink. None of these desires is destroyed by the grace of God, but they are brought under subjection to the law of Christ, of purity and unselfish love, and are never to be indulged in sinful ways. They express themselves instinctively. Their appeal is instinctive, and the first instinctive movement is not under the subjection of the will; but immediately the intelligence takes cognizance of the instinctive movement and the appeal is presented to the will for a decision for or against, at the point the sanctified soul must assert its loyalty to the law of Christ, the law of purity. If it does so, however strong may be the instinctive appeal, there is no sin. If the will and mind yield and consent to that which is unlawful, even though no act is performed, sin has found lodgment in the heart.

Sanctification is an instantaneous act: as instantaneous as death. The approach to death may be gradual and prolonged, but there is a moment when a man is alive and the next moment he may be dead. So there is a moment when a man's heart is not pure and the very next moment – through faith in the atoning work of Christ, in the loving, kindly purpose and will of God that sin should cease within us – the blessed work may be done.

But we must beware of thinking that there is no further development. We are bidden to 'grow in grace'. We have entered into a rich grace through this act of Sanctification and we are to grow in it, though we cannot grow into it. We may, and should, increase daily in knowledge, in good judgement, in understanding, in ever-increasing love and devotion to God and to the well-being of our fellow-men. Jesus Himself grew in wisdom as He grew in stature and in truth.

We should for ever get rid of the idea that Sanctification is purely an emotional condition. It is equally volitional. You cannot, however, have any great inner experience without emotion.

A young man cannot fall in love with a sweet girl without deep emotions stirring within him. Where will you find more emotion than sweeps through the thronging thousands that go to see a baseball or football game. People forget themselves. They cease to be standardized, and every man expresses himself according to his temperament and the emotion that is surging within him.

One of the greatest dangers to religion today is the fear, probably born of pride, that people have of emotion. They are so anxious to be balanced and well poised that they cease to be vital and natural. They become faultily faultless, icily regular, splendidly null – no more.

The highest religious experiences make men and women as natural as little children and each one will express himself according to his own temperament.

I would say to young people: Don't be standardized. Be yourselves. Have some enthusiasm in your religion. Don't be a slave to what others may think. Keep your eyes off people and on Jesus, and cultivate love for the people who try you. They may not always be wise, but if they are good, bear with them.

These fifty years have been rich in spiritual blessing and sweet fellowship with my Lord and His people. But they also have been years of toil, of temptation, of tribulation, and sometimes of sore discipline of spirit amounting to agony. My Master is a man with a cross, who bade me take up my cross and follow Him if I would be His disciple, learn of Him, and finally share His triumph.

Some of my prayers I have not yet seen answered, but others that I poured forth with tears and strong desire for His glory and the Salvation and Sanctification of men fifty years ago are being answered before my eyes today in ways I did not, could not, foresee.

If you who are now reading this testimony have not the Blessing, but are longing for it, bow before Him now, confess your need, your inner corruptions and defeats, and enter into a solemn and eternal covenant with Him. Accept His challenge. Take up that cross before you now, and trust Him; trust Him to make you clean within, to sanctify you wholly.

His Blood cleanses from all sin. Believe it; believe it now for yourself, and invite the Holy Ghost to become the Holy Guest in the heart His Blood has made fit and clean for His indwelling.

“Behold, now is the accepted time.”

Kate Lee's Secret

By Adjutant Kate Lee

(in Minnie Carpenter's The Angel Adjutant. pages 137-141; includes a summary from Carpenter)

Soon after I was converted I realized a great need in my heart. I had turned my back on the old life, and my face was toward God. I had started to travel the upward way. For the first few weeks I went with a rush, the joy of the new life within buoyed me up. I felt as though I was walking on air. I did not feel any strain of the upward tread. But soon I began to feel the tension of the daily struggle, the weary march. There were obstacles in that way that impeded by progress. My circumstances were against me, and the influences surrounding me had a tendency to draw me from Christ.

I began to stumble and fall. The tempter was soon at my side suggesting, "You're not converted; it's all a delusion; you would not feel as you do; you would not fail as you've done, if you were really a child of God. Give it up, it's not use trying," he argued. And, worst of all, I knew sin still existed in my heart. How often passion had broken my peace. How many times bitterness and evil had manifested itself in my nature. Was I mistaken? Had I ever been converted? Was it all a delusion?

Just then God in His love and pity came to my heart; gave me a revelation. He not only showed me myself and my sin, but showed me my need. I needed something, and as I sat in a Holiness Meeting I realized that need was sanctification. For months the word sanctification was to me a heavy burden; a torture. I could not really grasp its meaning. I read and re-read the theory of sanctification, going from one authority on the subject to another, only to turn away still more puzzled. I then set myself to seek publicly and was several times found at the Holiness table, pleading for the blessing that I failed to understand. Again and Again I came to the Altar, and, as far as I understood, laid my all there. But as soon as the test came, without realizing that I did it, I took from off the Altar the sin I had laid there, or the gifts that I had surrendered to God.

This is where I failed many times, and during my Officership I have found scores of other souls who have failed on this very point. They come sincerely to the Altar, definitely laying their gift there, a living sacrifice; but when the knife is felt, the realization of dying comes upon them as they feel hurt and understand fully what it means, they shrink and draw back. Abram's experience, related in Genesis 15, has been a great help to me. He had to wait for the fire. He prayed all day, even until eventide, and then the birds of prey came down; but he stood by the sacrifice and drove them off. Then the fire came and consumed the sacrifice.

That was just the point to which I had to get. I had laid my all on the Altar, but then I had to wait for the fire. Meanwhile, the birds of doubt, fear, and discouragement came flying around. I had to get up again and again to drive them off, and hold on to God.

Fresh light came; a new path opened up. The laying of self on the Altar meant following God fully and showing my colours everywhere. Could I do it? It was hard to die to self, and say, 'Yes, Lord.' But as I said it, I felt I was accepted, and afterwards, when I

carried out that vow, joy flooded my soul and I realized that the Spirit of the Lord was upon me. The desire to sin was removed, and my heart yearned to be kept pure and clean.

I have found the need of great watchfulness, and have needed much prayer to keep my soul in touch with God and on fire for precious souls. Although I realized, after I Was sanctified, that I was over sin and no longer under the power of sin, and that I was cleansed from the desire to sin, yet in his subtlety the devil has come again and again and striven to bring me down.

Sometimes he has come as an angel of light, so that I have been led to the very verge of sin, tempted to indulge in what seemed at the moment harmless, perhaps because others, who professed as much as I did, indulged in it, too. Tempted to shrink from the sacrifice that a separated life must mean; tempted to give way to the flesh, one's natural desires and inclinations, I have even allowed the devil to take me to the edge of a great spiritual precipice, but God, in His mercy, has flashed His wonderful light upon my path in time to show me where I was, and what would be the outcome if I yielded to the temptation. Oh, how it caused me to pray and seek strength which enabled me to overcome!

Prayer has been my source of help, when burdens have pressed so heavily upon me that they threatened to crush my spirit; when disappointments, misrepresentations almost overwhelmed me, prayer has brought strength and comfort, a courage that could face a world of bitterness and scorn. I have proved that prayer will enable me to retain the substance of Holiness. Prayer enables me to retain a passion for souls; keep it burning in hours of disappointment and failure, indifference and hardness, when men and devils rise in power against me.

One must treat the path of Holiness carefully, with a watchful eye and ear always open to His voice, and a spirit ever ready to obey. But it is a wonderful way, a way of purity, where the soul can see God, even in the struggles of life. A way of joy; the deepest of joys. The realization of His smile enables me to live independent of all the joys of the world and to rejoice in this hour of sorrow. A way of power; when the channel is clear He works through it and accomplishes His will.

(in the words of Minnie Carpenter...)

A personal experience of Full Salvation was the secret of Kate Lee's success.

This life was not spasmodic. She did not pass in and out of the holy place, or step on and off the Highway of Holiness. She dwelt there. That does not imply that never during those thirty years was she overcome by satan. Once, into a deep sorrow was poured the bitterness of gall through the wickedness of another. The enemy came in like a flood, threatening to overwhelm and root up many precious things, but the Spirit of the Lord was there to lift up a standard against him. "If ye forgive not your enemies, neither will your Father forgive you", was the word that came to her heart. She closed

her lips, hushed her sobs, crept to the feet of her Lord, where are ever the print of cruel nails, to remind His children of His sufferings and His forgiveness.

“I was wrong,” She said, “very wrong. I must forgive, I do forgive;” and to the close of her life, she lavished love upon the one who sore wounded her. “If we sin we have an Advocate.” She laid her case in His hand, and left it there.

The Officers who served as Lieutenants with Kate Lee give us glimpses of the live she lived in the privacy of her Quarters. We may stand at the door of the sanctuary where she met with God and learn a little. Says one of her Lieutenants, “It seemed to me that she prayed without ceasing. Her live was one continual looking to God. She prayed upon rising. We prayed together after breakfast; later, she went to her room for an hour’s private prayer and study; for special undertakings or emergencies she had special seasons of waiting upon God.”...

It was a great strength to her to feel that she lived in the atmosphere of prayer. When in the midst of a specially heavy battle for souls, she would write to comrades she knew had power in prayer and beg them specially to help her to fight through to victory.

Very real were the powers of darkness and evil against which this frail little woman set herself; sometimes they pressed her sore. She felt something of the sorrows and travail of soul of her Saviour, of whom it is written, ‘And being in an agony, He prayed.’ At times she suffered depressions so heavy that they prostrated her. The Lieutenant says, ‘At these times, all I could do was to let her feel that I was carrying on, whilst she sought her chief remedy, prayer. By and by, she would come from her room, strengthened and peaceful, ready again for the fight.’

Writes another of her helpers:

“She was a wonderful Officer in public, but I love best to remember how she conquered in her own private life. When we remember how she attacked the devil’s kingdom, we can well believe that he did not leave her unmolested. She had her full share of difficulties, hardinesses, disappointments, and physical weakness; but whatever her feelings were, she rose above them, and went on with her work.

“In her office, over the fireplace, hung a large picture of Christ in the Garden of Gethsemane. On her writing table was the same picture, but small; so, if she lifted her eyes from her writing, she was reminded of Him whom she loved with her whole heart. As He conquered by prayer, so did she. One morning, one of Local Officers called to see her. When I went to her room to fetch her, her eyes were red with weeping. ‘Dear, I can’t go down like this,’ she said; ‘will you see to the business for me?’ She had been pleading – agonizing with God.”

“Had she a weakness? Well, it may seem much to say it, but though I lived with her so long, I cannot think of one; she was an all-round conqueror.”

How I Got Sanctification

Anonymous

The Experience Of A Devoted And Successful Soul-Winner - May 1902, The Field Officer

My parents were godly people, and at an early age I was instructed in religious things. I shall never forget the anguish I suffered in consequence of telling an untruth when very young. This extreme sensitiveness to moral and religious obligations grew up with me. From an early age I enjoyed a small measure of Regenerating Grace, though, for much of the time, not precisely conscious of my state before God.

I often labored to bring myself into a state of extreme anguish before God, and wept because of failure. I had a longing thirst for God and for Holiness, and at times my faith became almost victorious. Yet as frequently as I arose in the majesty of faith, the enemy got advantage over me, and threw me again on my former ground.

Thus I continued for many years to rise and fall, and consequently made but little progress in divine things until the early part of last June, when, in the strength of Omnipotence, I resolutely determined that I would set myself wholly apart for God, and that my ceaseless aim should thenceforth be the entire devotion of all my powers to the service of my Redeemer.

To this one object I resolved that every earthly consideration should be subservient, and fully purposed never to rest satisfied till the witness was obtained that the offering was accepted and sealed.

I saw clearer than ever that God required activity in His service, and an intense desire to glorify His name was given me; but such a deep piercing sense of my helplessness prevailed, that it seemed as though I could not go forward until endued with power from on high.

Yet, notwithstanding this, hope gathered strength, while the whisperings of the Spirit seemed to say, "Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." All this was done in the absence of those high-wrought feelings and that distress of spirit which I had thought indispensable. God was indeed leading me by a way that I knew not.

From this time I began to feel that I was being built up and established in grace. Humility, faith, and love, and all the fruits of the Spirit, seemed hourly maturing. Such was the ardour of my spirit, and the living intensity of its fervor, that though at night my body took its usual repose, my spirit seemed continually awake in communing with God, and in breathings after His fullness.

Perhaps I should have said that previous to this I had resolved on taking the Word of God, and simply trying myself by its tests of a new creature, determined to abide by its decisions, without regard to my particular emotions at the moment.

I soon found, by the light of the Spirit, that I had conclusive evidence of my adoption. As I had resolved that I would abide by the decisions of Scripture, the Holy Spirit did not leave Himself without a witness in my heart. Quietness and assurance took possession of me, and an undisturbed resting on the promises because my heritage.

I should also say that prior to this I had commenced, and have since continued with increasing benefit – the making DAILY, in form and in the most solemn manner, a dedication of all the powers of body, soul, time, talents, and influence to God.

Thus I continued to enjoy increasing happiness in God; but not yet perfectly satisfied as to the witness – the seal of consecration. I was kept in constant expectation of the blessing.

It was on July 26th that it came. I resolved to spend the evening in prayer. So intense was my desire for the seal of the Spirit, that I made up my mind I would not cease to plead until it were given.

Thus, fixed in purpose, I, in the firmness of faith, entered as a suppliant into the presence of the Lord. As if preparatory to a long exercise, I thought, "Let me begin just right; and though I have entered into a covenant with God, let me now enter into an EVERLASTING covenant."

I imagined some extraordinary exercise, some unusual struggle, or desperate venture of faith, would be necessary. But God in a marvelous way saved me from the danger of spiritual pride by revealing Himself to me almost as soon as I approached Him.

From that moment I felt that I was fully set apart for God. I could now as easily have doubted my experience as I doubted that God was the supreme object of my affections. The language of my heart and lips was, "I live but to glorify Thee. Let my spirit henceforth ceaselessly return to the God Who have it. Let this body be actuated by the Spirit, as an instrument of Thy hand, for the performance of Thy pleasure in all things. I am Thine – wholly Thine. Thou dost now reign in my heart without a rival. Glory be to the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost forever!

While thus glorying in being enabled to feel and know that I was altogether the Lord's, the question, accompanied with light, power, and unquestionable assurance, came to my mind: "What is this but the state of Holiness which you have so long been seeking?"

It was enough! I now felt that the seal of consecration had in verity been set. God, by the testimony of His Spirit, had proclaimed me wholly His.

I said, and also felt: "Henceforth I am not of earth; the prince of this world, though he may come, yet hath nothing in me. The Lord, my Redeemer, hath raised up a standard against him. I AM SET APART FOR EVER FOR THY SERVICE."

While thus exulting, the Voice of the Spirit again appealed to my understanding: “Is not this Sanctification?” I could no longer hesitate; reason as well as grace forbade; and I rejoiced in the assurance that I was wholly sanctified – throughout, body, soul, and spirit.

Oh, with what triumph did my soul dwell on the infinitude of the Atonement! I saw its unbounded efficacy as sufficient to cleanse a world of sinners and present them faultless before the throne. I felt that I was enabled to plunge in this ocean of purity.

Worth Fighting For¹

Daniel Duncan

The Center for Spiritual Development in Childhood and Adolescence, a global initiative of Search Institute, released a study in 2008 examining the experiences and thoughts of young people regarding spiritual development. The study surveyed over six thousand young men and women, aged twelve to twenty-five years, in a variety of spiritual backgrounds. In one part of the survey, these young people were given a variety of options for the question “How much does each of the following make it easier or harder for you to find meaning, peace, and joy?” Each person responded by qualifying the options as either “Somewhat or much easier,” “No effect,” or “Somewhat or much harder.” Eighty-seven percent of those surveyed indicated that “Spending time outside or in nature” made it somewhat or much easier to find meaning, peace, and joy. This option had the highest percentage of positive evaluations of the thirteen options available (Roehlkepartain et al. 2008, 31). While this study may indicate that nature plays an important role in the spiritual development of this world’s latest young adults, the “progress” of first-world nations and the industrial rise of developing nations often comes at the sacrifice of nature itself; of forests, rivers, wildlife, and soil. The intent of this paper is not to demonize the efforts which are undertaken to feed an ever-expanding world population nor is this paper determined to chastise the discerning conservation models in place to maintain responsibly the world’s resources. However, the levels of negligence and abuse of nature in modern society cannot be ignored. Just as worthy of notice is the response of the Christians to the current ecological situation. Since much of the Church is guided by the texts of the Old and New Testaments, this paper will explore how several representative passages from the Old Testament reveal God’s concern for non-human creation. Following this examination, an appropriation of the Old Testament texts to the present-day will provide a scriptural and theological foundation for the Church’s response to the various ecological issues.

What was the Role of Humanity?

One must begin this examination with Genesis for it from this book that many Christians assume an improper understanding of their identity and role in creation. Snyder rightly identifies that a “theological divorce” exists between heaven and earth as evidenced by some believers’ insistence that the Christian faith is all about the soul; there is “no spiritual significance in material things” (Snyder 2011, 3–4). This perspective encourages many Christians to release themselves from the responsibilities of being flesh and blood beings (Wirzba 2003, 3). The reasoning follows that if salvation is only a matter of the soul, and if the soul is ultimately to experience full salvation only in heaven as a disembodied entity—an argument laden with biblical and theological misunderstanding—then what is so important about taking care of the material/physical world?

Yet the creation narratives in Genesis reveal an alternate understanding of humanity and its relationship to the rest of creation. As recorded in Genesis 1:26, God created

¹ This paper has been adapted from an earlier paper submitted to Asbury Theological Seminary in August 2018.

'*ādām* (man/humanity) on the sixth day after the creation of “all kinds of living creatures” (v. 24).² The etymological similarity between '*ādām* and the Hebrew for “ground,” '*ādāmā*, is striking and may signify an intimate relationship originating in the very act of creation (see 2:7).³ Yet, the creation of '*ādām* is just one part of the sixth day, and by no means is the creation of man a climax to the narrative of Genesis 1:1–2:4 (Wright 2004, 117).⁴ But this does not adequately respond to the assertion of humanity’s dominance over creation which is based on 1:27–28: “So God created humanity in his image, in the image of God he created them...God blessed them and God said to them, ‘Be fruitful and numerous, and fill the earth and subdue it; and rule over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing which crawls upon the earth.’” Vital to a defense of humanity’s dominion is the special description of man as made in “the image of God.” It is true that no other creation is given this distinction. However, the image of God is not an edict allowing for humanity’s dominance over creation, but it is a quality of humanity; people are representations of God in the world.⁵ For this reason, how human beings respond to creation is informed by an innate quality and vocation. If humanity represents God, and God not only considers the *whole* of creation to be “very good” (1:31) but also provides for his creation (Job 39:5–6) and even makes a covenant with it (Gen 9:9–10), then humanity needs to emulate God in its actions towards the rest of creation. The language of “subdue” the earth and to “rule” over the rest of creation (1:28), invites the reader into an “analogy of kingship” (Wright 2004, 121).⁶ This analogy will be helpful for further emphasizing the proper measure of humanity’s dominance over creation. As the Old Testament indicates in its overall narrative, kings were to serve their people (1 Kgs 12:7; Prov 31:8–9).⁷ By analogy, in Genesis the rule and subdue language indicates a type of dominance that is characterized by service. Furthermore, what one finds in Gen 2:15 is a vocation to service: “The LORD God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.”⁸ Genesis 1–2 reflects

²This and all following translations are my own.

³ Kohler and Baumgartner 2001, 1:14-15 suggest the similarity may be less that one term came from the other as that they share a linguistic ancestor perhaps *ādōm*, “red.”

⁴ It is important to recognize that the evaluation “very good,” which is made by God after his creative acts, is made when he looks upon “*all* which he made.” Oftentimes, I have heard “very good” applied solely to the man. This is unsupported by the text.

⁵ Understanding this point, in 2014 The Salvation Army released an international position statement on caring for the environment: <https://www.salvationarmy.org/isjc/ips>.

⁶ The language of image and rule in this passage is a linkage also found in other Ancient Near Eastern cultures. For example, in Egypt and Mesopotamia the “image of God” can be a royal designation and moniker for sovereignty. For more on this see Van Leeuwen 1997, 4:643-44; Curtis 1990; 3:390-91; Schüle 2005, 9-11.

⁷ If a king failed to serve the people, like Ahab did in his seizure of Naboth’s vineyard, then the king was severely chastised for his abuse (1 Kgs 21:17 – 24).

⁸ Kohler and Baumgartner 2001, 2:1582-83 provide considerable lexical data to assume a sense of protection or preservation covered in the word *šāmār* (to keep).

the fuller biblical teaching on kingship, namely service to those who are ruled (Wright 2004, 123). God's identification of and vocation for humanity was informed by his care for the rest of creation. Humanity was not born as a soul trapped in a material body, meant to abuse the material world until such time as it escaped the prison of the flesh. Humanity was intimately connected to the rest of creation and given the task of servant-kingship.

How was Humanity to Care for the Rest of Creation?

While Genesis provides a basis for understanding why and how God cares for non-human creation and consequently provides the framework for understanding humanity's vocation as servant-kings over creation, it does not suffice to end the discussion at Genesis. Therefore, this examination of the Old Testament will proceed to a discussion of representative passages from the two largest bodies of law: Leviticus and Deuteronomy. The guiding question for the following interpretation of the text is this: What do the laws regarding land and wildlife reveal about God's concern for the relationship between the people of Israel and the rest of creation?

In order to answer this question properly, one must understand the role that Leviticus and Deuteronomy played in the community of faith. For the sake of brevity, any conversation on the dating of this literature, important as it is, must be suspended. It will suffice to assert a canonical perspective for the following interpretation. However, what must not be ignored is the specific concern both of these books have for the issue of holiness. For instance, Leviticus contains the most references to holiness in the entire canon. When one counts *every* occurrence of the tri-consonantal root *qđš* within the book of Leviticus, it is hard to argue against the prevalent concern of holiness.⁹ In Leviticus, the command to "be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy" (Lev 19:2; cf. 11:44–45; 20:7) is the end goal for Israel. The laws which surround the imperative to be holy represent a semantic structure of instrumentation.¹⁰ Boundaries were established to keep Israel holy to YHWH. The prophets of the Old Testament attest to the severity of the consequences when the prescribed limits are crossed.¹¹

Deuteronomy is also concerned with the holiness of the people of Israel. However, in Deuteronomy the law was not necessarily a means to the imperative "be holy." Rather, the law existed to encourage participation in God's covenant (Childs 1992, 533). In Deuteronomy, Israel was declared to be holy to YHWH contemporaneous to Moses'

⁹ The tri-consonantal root appears 152 times in Leviticus. The adjective *qāđōš*, found in the command "be holy" and elsewhere, occurs twenty times.

¹⁰ This terminology may be found in Bauer and Traina 2011, 115. Selman 2003, 503 implies a similar usage without the terminology: "the law makes Israel distinct from all its neighbors. It is God's special gift to Israel and is a means to purity, holiness, and blessing."

¹¹ Occasionally the severe consequences involved humanity's relationship with the land: "She has fallen, not again to rise, virgin Israel, she is forsaken on her land, there is no one to raise her up" (Amos 5:2).

speeches to the people (Deut 7:6; 14:2, 21; 26:19; 33:3). However, the interchange¹² of God's acts with the people's acts illustrated in Deut 7:1–26 indicates that the state of holiness—while conferred on Israel—necessitated a response of obedience to God's *tôrāh* (Duncan 2018, 31). Therefore, obedience to the law as a participatory response to God's covenant faithfulness assisted the people in retaining a holy state to YHWH. For this reason, obedience should be seen as “a response within a relationship, not a response to the law as law” (Fretheim 2005, 149).

When considered together, the laws of Leviticus and Deuteronomy illustrate a system of moral and ethical imperatives intended to guide Israel in its relationship with YHWH and the rest of creation. It was a transformative law, molding Israel into a people holy to God, but it was more than this. As Genesis established, God's commands to humanity were not just a static set of laws but an indication of what was near to God's heart. As the people of YHWH, chosen by him (Deut 7:6), Israel was to embrace its role as a representative of God. Because God cared for his creation, he provided a law in service to life (Fretheim 2005, 134). What that law had to say about God, Israel's relationship with the rest of creation, and Christianity's response to ecological issues are the subjects of the remainder of this paper.

Land

God's gift of the land begins with a promise to Abram (Gen 12:7). From that point onward, any reader of the Old Testament would be hard-pressed to find significant passages detailing God's covenant that do not include a promise of land. The first vital point to make is that the land is God's to give: “The earth is the LORD's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein” (Ps 24:1 ESV; cf. Lev 25:23).¹³ There is nothing in all the Old Testament which proclaims that the possession of land is an inalienable right of humanity.¹⁴ Even in Genesis, it is an act of God which brings humanity into the land (2:15). Deuteronomy 7:7–11 also makes it abundantly clear that the election of Israel, which included the logical and subsequent provision of land, was not earned by the people of Israel. Reflecting on tithing laws in Deuteronomy, Richter seals this matter concisely: “The ultimate mark that the people of Israel are only tenants on Yahweh's land is that the produce of that land belongs to their overlord” (Richter 2010, 360).

Leviticus 19:9–10 says, “When you reap the harvest of your land, you shall not reap your field right up to its edge, neither shall you gather the gleanings after your harvest. And you shall not strip your vineyard bare, neither shall you gather the fallen grapes of your vineyard. You shall leave them for the poor and for the sojourner: I am the LORD

¹² Also found in Bauer and Traina 2011, 116, interchange is a term denoting the “exchanging or alternation of certain elements in an a-b-a-b arrangement.” Deuteronomy 7:1–26 contains the alternating actions of God and Israel, used to strengthen a dynamic relationship of causation between the two parties' actions.

¹³ Reflecting on this, Fretheim 2005, 139 goes so far as to state “the land is an issue of divine right, not human rights, and human beings are to treat it accordingly, as a gift not possession.”

¹⁴ In fact, in Leviticus 25:23 YHWH declares “The land will not be sold in perpetuity for the land is mine. For you are strangers and sojourners with me.”

your God” (ESV). There are several important items to address in this passage. The chapter as a whole presents a string of commands seemingly unrelated. However, when one considers the concern of Leviticus, as emphasized by the recurrent imperative “be holy,” the linking of these further commands is evident. The law functions as a means to holiness. What Lev 19:9–10 indicates is that holiness is exhibited by agricultural restraint. It may be argued that the primary beneficiaries of that restraint are the poor and sojourner. Verse ten states that the remnants of the harvest which are not gleaned are left behind for these vulnerable groups of people. However, there is another beneficiary implied in these laws. The land itself benefits from restraint. The clue to this fact is found in the alternation of Hebrew verbs for “to glean.” The verb *lāqaṭ* is exchanged for the verb *ʾōlēl* in verse ten. The latter verb is a more severe type of gleaning (Kohler and Baumgartner 2001, 1:834). The Hebrew nouns translated “vineyard” and “fallen grapes” are found in a unique position as objects in the sentence.¹⁵ In the case of verse ten, the objects are fronted (placed at the beginning of their respective clauses) even though this is not necessary for the sense of the sentence. This fronting serves to “topicalize” the objects, thus indicating a shift in the topic which the clause is all about (Holmstedt 2014, 114). Agricultural restraint benefits those who by law are permitted to glean the leftover grain and grapes, but the vineyard is prioritized as beneficiary in the prohibition against severe agriculture. Even if this was not the case, the function of the law indicates restraint as a positive aspect of land care. The most yield is considered preferable because having more than enough eliminates the need for dependency on someone or something else. Yet God demands restraint so that vulnerable people are fed and the land is protected from overburden. As Richter notes, “In Israel, the drive for economic security and surplus must always be tempered by God’s command for charity, and not even economic viability served as an acceptable rationale for greed” (Richter 2010, 363). By way of this lengthy discussion, one discovers that the needs of humanity and land are addressed in such a way as to imply a relationship of interdependence. What happens to one will affect what happens to the other. Rejection of the rights of one will result in alienation.

This latter point serves to introduce Lev 26:34–35: “Then the land shall enjoy its sabbath years as long as it lies desolate, while you are in the land of your enemies; then the land shall rest and enjoy its sabbath years. As long as it lies desolate, it shall have the rest it did not have on your sabbaths when you were living on it.” This passage is part of a collection of warnings against disobedience to God’s law. These two verses in particular reveal the consequences for Israel if they disobey the law recorded in 25:4, “but in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land...” In both passages the land is characterized in human terms. It needs to rest, like humanity, and if it is not permitted to rest it will “enjoy its sabbath years” while the people of Israel are in exile. Here there is no ambiguity about who the beneficiary is: Israel is to show agricultural restraint so that the land may experience the same rest which humanity

¹⁵ Typical word order in Hebrew is Subject, Verb, Object (Cook 2012, 237; Holmstedt 2011, 28-29), which can become inverted. The word order in this verse (Object, Verb, Subject) is inverted in two stages. First, there is semantic inversion to Verb, Subject, Object due to the directive mood of the verb. Second, there is pragmatic inversion to Object, Verb, Subject in order to topicalize “your vineyard/fallen grapes.”

experiences. If Israel refuses, then God will simply move the people out so that the land can have its rightful rest.

The passages mentioned above promote two important ideas. One is that the land is ultimately the LORD's: it is a "land that the LORD your God looks after. The eyes of the LORD your God are always on it, from the beginning of the year to the end of the year" (Deut 11:12). Because it is God's possession, ultimately occupation of the land is a gift from him. While the people of Israel were given "dominance" over it, the laws reveal God's concern for the land; that it not be abused for the sake of economic gain and that it experiences rest from agriculture. The law "show[s] a keen awareness that land care is part of the covenanted life" (Davis 2009, 109). Moreover, the holiness of Israel is intricately tied to its care of the land as evidenced in the way the law serves as a means toward holiness. This accentuates the interdependence of land and people. The land needs protection from abuse. The sabbath laws indicated that "it was not acceptable to take from the land everything that a populace could. Rather, God's people were commanded to operate with the long-term well-being of the land as their ultimate goal" (Richter 2010, 365). When the people protected the land, it freed the land to bear fruit without destructive agricultural practice and served to distinguish the people as holy to God. When the people failed to protect the land and overburdened it, they were penalized with exile. This truth is analogized in the modern world. The abuse of the land which is sometimes evidenced in agribusiness' drive for economic surplus, deprives the land of present and future fertility.¹⁶

Flora and Fauna

Just as the land is ultimately the possession of God, Psalm 50:10–11 proclaims, "For every animal of the forest is mine, the cattle on a thousand hills. I know every bird of the mountains; the moving thing of the field is mine." The community of Israel recognized God's welfare for wildlife (Ps 104:21, 27–28). This impetus to care for wildlife was unique in the ancient world, when and where animals were deemed as either tools for agriculture and warfare or nuisances in the city and dangers in the wilderness. Utility was the measure of worth in the great ancient empires. The modern world in many ways has adopted this view towards wildlife. If an animal or plant has no value to the human community, then it may be abused or destroyed. Additionally, even domesticated animals and plants which have been deemed of value in society, are many times treated deplorably. Unfortunately, some Christians rationalize this in their declarations that ultimately animals "have no soul," and therefore they cannot be saved or redeemed.¹⁷

¹⁶ Elizabeth Ridlington et al. 2018, 16 identifies the intensification of crop farming and industrial farming practice as the leading cause of fertile topsoil loss in the United States: "maximizing short-term productivity" has come "at the cost of creating a range of environmental and public health problems and threatening the long-term viability of American agriculture."

¹⁷ Snyder 2011, 4 identifies this mentality as a clear indication of the divorce between heaven and earth.

There is a different vision of the relationship between God, humanity, and creation presented in Genesis 9:8–17. After the great floodwaters receded, Noah built an altar to YHWH, and brought burnt offerings before God (8:20). This welcomed God into a conversation with Noah in which he established his covenant with humanity. This covenant extended to “every living creature which is with you, with bird with beast and with every living thing of the earth with you, from all those going out from the ark to all the living things of the earth” (9:10). In a sense, God reestablished the “right and proper order originally intended” in Eden (Cha 2012. 95). The ordering of creation, and all the benefits therein (peace, prosperity, wholeness and completeness, etc.), is condensed into the word *šālôm*. However, it is important to recognize that God’s covenant in Genesis 9, while restoring an aspect of the original intent, still had to reckon with the state of creation as a result of the “fall of humanity.” So, things were not to be exactly as they were in either the garden or the pre-diluvian land (9:3). What had changed was the relationship between God, humanity, and creation. The same covenant God made with Noah he made with all living things and the covenant was “a *covenant of preservation...[and] an everlasting, ongoing covenant*” (Snyder 2011, 4). Genesis 9:12 makes this latter point clear using language later to appear in other covenants between God and humanity.¹⁸ If God made a covenant with “all living things” which was meant to last “for all generations” then God’s concern for the wildlife is not based on utilitarian value. Likewise, if humanity exists within the same covenant as the rest of creation, then does this truth not suggest that humanity ought to exhibit care for *all* wildlife as fellow beneficiaries of God’s everlasting covenant?

Leviticus 19:19 introduces a few unique laws into this conversation: “Your cattle do not let breed with a different kind; your field do not sow with two kinds of seed.” It is important to recognize that while the literal law may seem irrelevant, the principle behind the law persists. It is probable that the farmers of Israel attempted to maximize their harvest yield through such means, and it was a routine practice to interbreed animals for domestic purposes.¹⁹ It may be that the people of Israel produced more through such means as crossbreeding, but the point is that such an effort toward surplus must be balanced with a concern for what God has declared important to him and what he has undertaken in order to make the people holy to him (cf. 19:23–25). This is difficult to understand in a modern setting, when and where humanity favors the “could” over the “should.” What science can do is astounding. Part of it may be driven by a need to feed an ever-growing population, but the measures that are taken to do so have a disastrous effect on animals, soil, and vegetation. Genetic manipulation of plants may end up harming humanity and destroying what non-modified crops remain. Furthermore, the crossbreeding or manipulation of domestic animals used for meat can have a detrimental effect on the health and genetic integrity of entire species. Humanity’s needs must be met, but abuse and manipulation of God’s wildlife is not

¹⁸ The Greek Septuagint provides a stirring way of looking at this: the covenant is established “for all generations” (*eis geneas aiōnious*). The last word in this phrase is the same word used for “everlasting life” in the New Testament.

¹⁹ Davis 2009, 87 interprets this prohibition as a conscious “countering [of] cultural norms so as to eliminate encroachment on the sphere of the holy.”

God-honoring or permissible. What Lev 19:19 indicates is that God's concern for wildlife should never be completely overshadowed by humanity's interests. This does not mean that the only alternative is to adopt a strict alternative dietary lifestyle. Rather, how we produce our food, whether by farms or the meat industry, must be influenced and directed by care for wildlife, even at the cost of productivity.

Domestic wildlife is not the only group of wildlife worthy of humanity's care. As aforementioned, utilitarian value should not determine how humanity acts out its relationship with the rest of creation. Deuteronomy 20:19–20 and 22:6–7 contain laws managing Israel's attitude toward undomesticated wildlife. While many of these creatures did benefit Israel, the law continued to speak of a divine concern for the wildlife which influenced Israel's actions towards the trees of the field and birds of the air. Deuteronomy 20:19–20 declares, "When you besiege a city many days, fighting to seize it, do not destroy its trees, swinging an ax against them. From it you may eat, but you will not cut it down. Is the tree of the field a man besieged by you? Only a tree which you know that it is not a tree for food you may destroy and cut down and build siege works against the city which makes war with you until it falls." There are a few considerations to make about this text. First, this law exists in the context of warfare, yet advocates compassion and care for the natural order. While death and destruction surround the people of Israel, the law ironically emphasizes the depths of God's love for his creation and Israel's imperative to care for that creation. Second, this law is unique "in the history of the growth of a humane outlook in ancient times" (Rad 1966, 133). The law intended to limit the impulse of Israel to emulate the other nations.²⁰ Moreover, God's law posed an important rhetorical question: "Is the tree your enemy?" Third, God's law also protected non-fruit bearing trees by implicitly eliminating arbitrary acts of tree-removal.²¹ These considerations clarify how the principle of this law can again be extended beyond the culture and time. Driven by goals and progress, nature is often sacrificed on the altar; a parking lot replaces a paradise.²² But God is not concerned with what humanity considers strategically advantageous or "necessary" for progress. He is concerned that wildlife, both fauna and flora, are cared for and responsibly managed.

This is a natural bridge to Deuteronomy 22:6–7: "If you encounter a bird's nest before you on the road, in any tree or upon the earth, young ones or eggs, and the mother is

²⁰ The Code of Hammurabi no. 59 states that trees are not to be cut down without consent, but this is outside of the context of warfare (Meek trans. 1969, 169). Hasel investigates Assyrian military actions against fruit-bearing trees within textual and iconographic sources. While his focus is on the question of siege-weapon construction and the timing of Assyrian violence against orchards, his article does provide evidence for some occurrences of warfare against trees (Hasel 2008, 72). Cole examines the motivation for this violence in his article and concludes that the "slow and systematic destruction" of fruit trees was one aspect of siege craft forcing a besieged city to surrender (Cole 1997, 36). Regardless, the law in Deuteronomy counteracts unnecessary destruction.

²¹ It should be noted that the exception for siege-weapons is within the context of YHWH's call of conquest.

²² I have unabashedly adapted a line from Joni Mitchell's relevant and environmentally conscious song "Big Yellow Taxi" (1970).

sitting upon the young ones or upon the eggs, do not take the mother over the children. Let the mother go and the children take for you so that it may go well for you and you may lengthen your days.” The purpose of the lengthy stringing of conditions for this law is to accentuate the intentionality of Israel’s care for the mother and the young. It is not enough to make a generalized statement. YHWH wants to make it abundantly clear that however the people find the bird, *this* is what must be done, and considerations of immediate utility are hardly a factor in this law (Rad 1966, 141). Rather, what this law encourages is the preservation of creatures in the promised land. The mother must be kept behind even if the young are taken so that the mother may continue to propagate the species. Here, there is a case to be made for the interdependence of humanity and wildlife. The immediate care of the mother bird will result in a protected species which will provide for the needs of humanity: “by taking the young birds (or eggs), but letting the mother go, food was acquired without the source of food for the future being cut off” (Craigie 1976, 289). This idea is almost a precursor to modern-day conservation methods. Land and wildlife management is concerned with conserving wildlife populations. Sometimes this results in limits or expansions on hunting, fishing, and commercial expansion. Many times, these limits are at the sacrifice of human progress (i.e. construction restrictions on protected wetlands). The United States is blessed to have many wonderful state land and wildlife management agencies which protect and care for wildlife, not just flora and fauna that have utilitarian value.²³

The laws regarding wildlife reveal several important points. All living things are ultimately God’s and are in covenantal relationship with both God and humanity. For this reason, wildlife has intrinsic worth beyond the value humanity places on it. Furthermore, the covenantal relationship is a relationship of interdependence. Ultimately, how the people of Israel treated domestic and untamed wildlife had an impact on the future sustainability of the human race as well as its holy state before God. While God permits humanity to be fed by flora and fauna, he does not permit the abuse of his wildlife, excessive measures, or overproduction at the expense of his creation. Human-induced species loss is neither promoted nor excused in the Old Testament, and while the texts are not explicit in the condemnation of human-induced species loss, this paper has provided considerable evidence for environmental care. As Richter concludes, “At every juncture, Israel was constrained to consider the *life* of the animal that served them and whom they consumed, by covenant law, even though such considerations cost them time and resources” (Richter 2010, 375).

Does Any of This Matter?

While this paper has assumed that all of humanity may be informed by the Old Testament laws concerning land, flora and fauna, one must briefly consider if these laws can be appropriated and how this may be done. To do so, one must first look to Christ, the “pioneer and perfecter” of faith (Heb 12:2). It would be a gross

²³ One specific example will suffice: In 1997, the Kentucky Department of Fish and Wildlife led the way in the successful reintroduction and subsequent restoration of the elk population in the state. While this project has led to the utilitarian value of wildlife resource for hunting, the careful and continual management of this population represents the kind of intention and concern which produces limits to unnecessary and harmful progress.

understatement to remark that Jesus had issues with the way the contemporary religious leaders interpreted, practiced, and taught the law. All four gospels are replete with confrontations between Christ and Pharisees, Sadducees, scribes, etc. However, Matthew 5:17 contains a compelling word from Jesus: “Do not think that I came to destroy the law or the prophets; I came not to destroy but to fulfill.” In the context of Matthew’s Gospel, the author provides a series of “antitheses” on the law (5:21–48) which go beyond the specific laws and into the principles behind the laws (Dunn 2013, 510). If the true meaning of the law is exposed by Jesus in these antitheses than the verb “to fulfill” should be understood “in the sense of ‘bring to its intended meaning’—that is, to present a definitive interpretation of the law” (Hagner 2000, 106). Therefore, the laws examined in this paper are not fulfilled in the sense of being at an end or finished. Rather, the fundamental issues or principles behind the law are represented in the person of Jesus Christ. By living out this fulfilled law Jesus will restore the relationship between humanity and creation (Cha 2012, 95). Paul confirms this in Colossians 1:19–20: “For in him all fullness was pleased to dwell and through him to reconcile *all things* to him, making peace through his blood and crucifixion, even [through him] those upon the earth, even those in the heavens” (*italics mine*). It is true that Paul’s theology on the law is incredibly complex and this paper is not prepared to digress in order to produce an exhaustive evaluation of it. However, it is enough to state that in neither one of the strongest letters critiquing the law (Galatians and Romans) does Paul claim that every aspect of the law is obsolete (Thielmann 1993, 539). Rather, Paul says that the moral norms of the Old Testament law must be included when one is defining the love in which the whole law is fulfilled (Gal 5:14; Schreiner 1993, 544).

If the Old Testament principles of care for creation are still in force, and if Jesus Christ will reconcile “all things,” then it stands to reason that the Christian church needs to respond to ecological crises whenever and wherever they arise.²⁴ The Church should not sacrifice this present world to destruction, for God cares for his creation and has commanded his people to do likewise. Reflecting on Revelation 4:11, Wendell Berry asserts that “our responsibility, then, as stewards, the responsibility that inescapably goes with our dominion over the other creatures...is to safeguard God’s pleasure in his work” (Berry 2010, 100). The New Testament attests to a future when God will dwell with his people in a new heaven and new earth (2 Pet 3:13; Rev 21:1–3). However, the biblical vision of the future...is not to be regarded as psychological escapism from the problems of the present. The prophets’ use of their future vision, just as their use of the historical past, was designed to effect change *in the present*...an eschatological interpretation of any Old Testament theme...rebounds back into the present world with an ethical thrust. (Wright 2004, 186)

The Church must not escape into the hope of heaven and sacrifice the goodness of God’s creation in the present. This land, fauna, and flora are not humanity’s possession to abuse. Rather, God has given kingship over the land and wildlife in order that humanity care for it, even if occasionally that means sacrificing progress or excess. This

²⁴ 2 Corinthians 5:17-21 implies that what God has deemed worthy to reconcile is within our “ministry of reconciliation,” as representatives or ambassadors of Christ.

truth must inform the Church's practice. Speaking for voiceless creation in the public sphere, supporting efforts aimed at ecological restoration, promoting sustainable agriculture and hunting, and condemning abuse of non-human creation are all ways in which the people of God can obey his commands. When the people of God recognize his concern for creation, identify their interdependent relationship with the land and the wildlife, and realize that the hope of the future includes a redeemed and reconciled creation, they are invited by the LORD into a life of abundance.²⁵

When Israel's exile was nearing an end, the prophet declared these beautiful words, illustrating the joy of a reconciled people who live in a world equally reconciled with them and glad to receive them: "For with joy you will go out and in peace you will be brought forth. The mountains and the hills will break forth before you singing and all the trees of the field will clap their hands. Instead of the thorn the cypress will go up and instead of the nettle the myrtle will go up; it will be to YHWH for a memorial and everlasting sign which will not be cut off" (Isa 55:12–13). Christians who fight for creation display their commitment to covenant. Christians who fight for the rest of creation fulfill their calling and enjoy the blessings of *šālôm*.²⁶ The land, the flora, and the fauna are worth fighting for.

²⁵ Norman Wirzba observes, "The aim of salvation is to create the space in which the joy and peace of God's creation can be experienced and shared. The attainment of salvation demands that those forces which undermine creation—violence, greed, suffering, jealousy, pride—be confronted and overcome" (Wirzba 2003, 19).

²⁶ Note that Isaiah 55:13 illustrates a reversal of the curse placed on the earth as a result of Gen 3. In this passage a reconciled people experience a reconciled earth.

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Clothed in Righteousness: A Theology Of Salvation Army Uniform As An Aid To Holy Living

Captain Marcus Mylechreest

Within the realms of the worldwide Christian Church The Salvation Army stands unique in the wearing of a distinctive set of clothing as a sign of membership. But is there more to the Salvation Army uniform than a visible public witness? Are there deeper, sacred associations?

This dissertation seeks to develop a theology of Salvation Army uniform. It will take into account the rediscovery of historical principles and weave them into the fabric of The Salvation Army's heritage within the Wesleyan holiness tradition.

Through the reflection of the valued use of uniform, both past and present, it will become evident that subtle changes in perception have occurred. The result may have left today's wearer with an insufficient understanding of the spiritual resources available through the uniform. This study also makes comparisons with other religious garments and highlights the doctrinal value present in the simple style of the uniform.

The Salvation Army's ongoing position of sacramental practice will also feature whereby the wearing of uniform can be understood as a means of grace.

Ultimately, grasping the truth that a saved and sanctified believer is clothed in Christ the witness of the uniform must first speak to the wearer before it can witness to the world.

[>> link to PDF of article](#)

or paste this link into your web browser:

<http://armybarmy.com/JAC/JAC122%20Clothed%20in%20Righteousness.pdf>

Cultivating a Culture of Creativity - part 1

Lieutenant Scott Swires

Being a Classic Disney fan, I find it an ideal setting for exploring Faith. I believe that God speaks to us through the redeemed imagination, therefore a place that holds a position for Imagination Engineers is appealing to me as a believer. What are they doing and why do they do it that way? Once we understand what and why something is, then we get to the fun part, which is asking things like “what if.”

As Paul explains, the three greatest things are Faith, Hope, and Love (1 Corinthians 13:13). I find it interesting that the three greatest things cannot be understood in the World’s favorite methods of defining: qualitatively and quantitatively. This means Faith, Hope, and Love are not measurable using scientific methods. Many would argue they don’t exist because they cannot be observed scientifically. For many, talking about something like Faith is silly. Talking about Hope and Love are also silly and childish. I like how C.S. Lewis shared that when he grew up he, “put away childish things, including the fear of childishness and the desire to be very grown up.”

The world's standard that something does not hold a significant weight and value unless it is measurable is dangerous to the system that it represents. Then the only things that matter come from... matter. It's why atheists are desperate to prove that emotions like enjoyment and fulfillment have a physical source. Faith, Hope, and Love are powerful because they are evidence that something else is in the room with us. (Suspiciously look left. Suspiciously look right.) A person once shared that we come to God when we start to believe there must be something more to our universe, but our deeper relationship comes from realizing that He fills it. To consider that something else is possible is the way in which we engage the unseen realm of the spirit. The imagination is the place where the material and the spiritual meet. So without accepting our imagination we limit our relationship with God and others.

Hebrews 11 says that without Faith it is impossible to please God. We have to believe that He is and He wants good things for us. This chapter is beautiful in explaining that Faith in action is the definition of creation. To create is to believe that something unseen will eventually be seen. As we create we are doing Faith. Because Faith is the substance of things hoped for and not seen. Faith is the act of going into the unseen realm and grabbing something that is there and then bringing into this realm. God created everything seen from things unseen. God created by an act of Faith in Himself. He is the example of how we are to create- by believing in His ability to do. When we believe that He is and that He wants amazing things for us the sky is not even a limit (Jeremiah 29:11, Ephesians 3:20, Psalm 145:19).

This is how I heard it- it’s like tapping for maple syrup. You have a spile that you drive into the tree, breaking the barrier that is holding back the syrup. From that point on syrup can come out of the tree. Go up to the tap with a container, and you can get some syrup. Now, imagine a barrier between you and the unseen realm of the spirit. Imagine the presence of God full and ready to burst on the other side of the barrier. Your act of

creating by Faith is driving the pile into the barrier and releasing the presence of God. Whenever anyone walks past your act of creation there is then the opportunity to experience the Presence of God. It will help to have your bucket ready, which is you. You are a vessel created to catch God's presence and a prime place to do that is in a place that has cultivated a habit of creativity.

I think Walt Disney became skilled at this and developed it into a virtue. My wife and I have a poster of Walt Disney superimposed over Cinderella's Castle and the construction site, a reality he would not live to see. Below it is the quote, "It's kind of fun to do the impossible." During the opening ceremony of Walt Disney World, a man leaned to Roy and said that it was a shame that Walt hadn't lived to see it. Roy turned and said that if Walt hadn't seen it then they wouldn't be sitting there. Walt had seen the park long before anyone else did. Walt breached the barrier with his passion and belief in what could be and I believe that breach allows people the opportunity to encounter the presence of God. Whether it's going to Disney, watching Jiro Dreams of Sushi, or sitting next to your kids as they play, I encourage you to find a place where creation is happening and practice being aware of God's presence.

Examining The Salvation Army Officer's Covenant

Cadet Justin Steckbauer

The views on this post do not necessarily constitute the official positions of The Salvation Army or its affiliates, the views given are solely of those making them.

"CALLED BY GOD

**to proclaim the Gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ
as an officer of The Salvation Army**

I BIND MYSELF TO HIM IN THIS SOLEMN COVENANT

to love and serve him supremely all my days,

to live to win souls and make their salvation the first purpose of my life,

to care for the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, love the unlovable, and befriend those who have no friends,

to maintain the doctrines and principles of The Salvation Army, and, by God's grace to prove myself a worthy officer.

Done in the strength of my Lord and Saviour, and in the presence of the Territorial Commander, training college officers and fellow cadets."

Part of becoming an officer in The Salvation Army is entering into a covenant, a binding agreement, that constitutes a fundamental shift in life mission. This lifestyle agreement is a declaration of devotion, love, service, and proclamation.

The very first three words are foundational: **"Called by God."** If I'm not called by God to be an officer, then I'm little more than a fraud, and a liar. And I will be found out, it's only a matter of time. This is a calling, nothing less. No one who is not called will survive it.

Called by God, to what? Called to proclaim the gospel, as an officer. What is first in the calling by God? It is to proclaim God, Jesus Christ, the living gospel.

It continues saying, **"I bind myself to Him..."** This tells me that I've bound myself, not to The Salvation Army, not to a human authority, but bound to God almighty. And if I start to think I'm doing it for TSA, then I'm in trouble. I'm not here to make TSA look good, or build up TSA brand, or make TSA more relevant in society. No. I'm bound to Jesus Christ, to proclaim the gospel, and to give glory, honor, and praise to Jesus Christ. Many times we hear about the good things "The Salvation Army" is doing. But I don't think that's quite right. We need to give proper glory to Jesus Christ. Do we pretend to be a secular social services group when it suits us? No, I will openly glorify Christ first.

Doing the most good is the catch phrase, soon coming to its conclusion. How about next: "For the glory of God!" Or all for Jesus Christ! I've no interest in hiding the name of Christ to appease big donors. And nothing good can come from that.

It continues, **"To love and serve Him supremely..."** I love how the covenant gets the order right. One might be tempted to put the proclamation of the gospel first. But that wouldn't be correct. Loving relational and practical service to God is the order of things. God first. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength. And love your neighbor as yourself.

"To live to win souls and make their salvation the first purpose of my life."

Called to give out social services? Called to administer good programs? Called to take statistics? Called to push paper? No, called to live to win souls. That's strong language right there. And it gets even stronger: Make their salvation the first purpose! First purpose, that's saying it's the number one priority in ministry work.

I didn't get called primarily to meet temporal needs, though I will do that joyously. I didn't get called primarily to do budgets, manage staff, and administrate a building, but I will do that. No, I was called first and chiefly to win souls to Christ. Don't get me wrong, meeting needs is vital, biblical, and essential! It is a great blessing, and a command of Jesus Christ (Matthew 25:31-46).

But my key business is soul winning. Yet not me alone. If I were to prop myself up, as the single, one man army of winning souls, with all the soldiers and adherents as my faithful audience, that would be foolishness. No, instead my goal as an officer is to empower soldiers, adherents, and everybody in the room, man, woman, and child to live a lifestyle of persistent gospel proclamation.

Sadly, I often hear excuses people make to not be soul winners: "Well, I want to show them by my lifestyle." Well, that's good. But at some point you have to get to the gospel, tell them about Jesus.

"Well, it's more about relationships, you can't just walk up to strangers." Relationship evangelism is a great thing. But tell me, how many relationships do you have with non-believers? If not many, then it's just a catch phrase, it's not a real thing. In my life I've had several strangers come up to me and talk to me about Jesus. It was almost always a positive experience for me. Don't under-estimate the power of the gospel. But maybe it's not that it doesn't work, it's that we're afraid to try and do it. Because we might get rejected.

"Well, I wait for people to ask me why my life is so different." I'm sure you probably do live a good Christian life. But honestly, how many people in the last year have asked you why you're different? For me, I can't think of any. If we aren't active, seeking out,

and intention with evangelism, it won't happen at all. We as humans tend toward laziness, it's just a fact. So we have to be careful to stay active in the abundant harvest.

Every generation before ours recognized their requirement of evangelizing the lost and carrying the gospel to the world, and our generation, I believe, will rise up to carry the gospel to this generation. And maybe not in the most conventional means! Think outside the box. How can we reach people where they are? We will innovate, and carry the gospel, I really do believe that.

"to care for the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, love the unlovable, and befriend those who have no friends."

There is definitely a great, and mighty place for mercy ministry! The ministries of Matthew 25:31-46, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, visit the prisoner and the orphan, and provide housing for those who are homeless. These things are a beauty to behold!

Social services, feeding programs, clothing, shelters, visiting prisoners, and so on and so forth. We get this right in The Salvation Army usually. As long as it stays in the proper order, as secondary to the gospel, then we're on the right track. The Salvation Army is always best when the mission is fully integrated, a union of gospel and social work, where they are intertwined and folded into each other. But if this ministry work takes over and overshadows evangelism, then we're getting off mission. In fact, William Booth was worried later in his life, that the social services work of the SA was taking over, and he began traveling and doing open air meetings and preaching to crowds to try to counter-balance that equation.

"to maintain the doctrines and principles of The Salvation Army..."

This is a very important factor in the ministry work of TSA. Officership isn't about coming in and changing TSA to suit our personal viewpoints or ideas. SA has 11 doctrines, that are well stated, and accurately depict the truth. We have an amazing mission statement that I truly love. We have various definitions in our mission statement, and doctrines, that tell us who we are, and what our place is within the global body of Christ (the church). We have a mission statement that says we're called to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ, and meet human needs without discrimination. We have doctrines that tell us we consider scripture the authority over our lives, that Jesus Christ is our savior, that our God is a trinity, that holiness is vital to the Christian life, and a day of judgment and accountability will come.

We have important theological beliefs, theological positions that help us exegete the scriptures accurately, which flows into our sharing the love of Jesus, and the truth of His word. We're a holiness movement, based on biblical theology, a theology of grace through faith in Jesus Christ and a high regard for the 66 books of the Bible.

There are core doctrines and principles of The Salvation Army that have endured since the very beginning of the movement, and indeed, principles and theology that have

endured since the times of the early church in the first century A.D. If I'm called to be an officer, it's part of my sacred duty to uphold the principles and doctrines of The Salvation Army, even if my personal feelings might digress at times from stated positions. I take that responsibility very seriously.

Sadly, a few, in the recent past have tried to play god, and redefine truth and God's word to suit their own desires, feelings, and opinions. But we are grateful that God upholds His army, and guides us in all the paths of righteousness, delivering us from all evil, and blessing us to be true to the scriptures and true to our savior Jesus Christ.

"...by God's grace to prove myself a worthy officer."

There is no way I can possibly do this. It's way too much. The work is too hard. The stresses too high. The sorrows too painful. That's exactly the point though. I can't do it. But by God's grace, which is active in my life, it will all be done. Sin will be overcome. Lives will be changed. Souls will be saved. People will be served. And it will all come together beautifully, not by my strength, not by human effort, but by the grace of God. God does His work in clay pots, you and me. God does holy, beautiful, mighty deeds that transform the face of the Earth, and He does these incredible wonders, these mighty spiritual mysteries through even simple, limited people like you and me. Isn't that amazing? It truly is.

Done in the strength of my Lord and Saviour, and in the presence of the Territorial Commander, training college officers and fellow cadets."

If we try to do ministry in our own strength, forsaking prayer and pressing forward in manic-like workaholism, we will be busy much, but will affect little change. But if we go out prayerfully, fasting, seeking His face, searching diligently for His will in the work of the army, then we will be vessels for His kingdom proclamation to fly out across the face of the Earth. Two options are available, foolish self-effort, and prayerful God-seeking powerhouse Christianity. As for me, I'll take the strength given by my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, because I know I'm in great need of it. And when that day comes, I'll do it before the presence of my leaders, and fellow soldiers and warriors in the mighty army of God that is called The Salvation Army! I see a mighty army before me, a great cloud of witnesses past and present from the history of this army bidding me to come and die, bidding me to fight the good fight, bidding me to make war on the gates of hell and darkness, and by God's grace, and in the strength of my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who is my great high commander, I will discharge my duties, and make war on hell, and lead the lost multitudes to the open side of my savior, who pours out His love and truth and grace and mighty power into an army of God challenging the darkness in these last days.

Kate Lee's Covenant

Adjutant Kate Lee

Solemnly entered into, January 1897; Renewed, January 1918

TO MY PRECIOUS LORD AND MASTER

In the first moments of this year I present myself to Thee in the deepest humiliation of soul, sensible of my utter unworthiness. I desire nothing in the world so much as to be Thine, and with the utmost solemnity, surrender myself fully unto Thee.

I declare Thee, O Lord, this day, to be my God, and myself to be Thine OWN child. Hear, O Thou God of Heaven, and record it in Thy Book of Remembrance, that I am THINE, only Thine.

From this first day of January do I solemnly renounce all that has had dominion over me, and every sin, and every lust, and in Thy name, set myself in eternal opposition to the powers of Hell.

The whole frame of my nature, all the faculties of my mind, all the members of my body would I present to Thee this day, as a living sacrifice.

I consecrate myself to Thee; all my worldly possessions; and I pray Thee to give me the strength and courage to exert for Thy glory all the influence I may have over others.

Receive and wash me. Forgive all past failings, clothe me with The perfect righteousness, and sanctify me throughout by the power of the Spirit.

Help me that I may never withdraw in any point from this renewal of my consecration and Covenant.

Help me to live in the spirit of real consecration and crucifixion; and should I fail in carrying out this Covenant in all points as I ought, then, dear Lord, forgive and lead me to perfection.

In Thy strength I promise to be true till death. Until then, keep, guard, and direct me.

Remember, dear Lord, this Covenant when I am about to pass away; and should I then be incapable of recollecting it, look with pity on The dying child. Put strength and confidence into my departing spirit, and receive it to the embrace of Thy everlasting love.

For Jesus Christ's sake.

May this petition be granted.

(signed) Kate Lee.

(renewed January 1920)