

# WORD & DEED

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A JOURNAL OF SALVATION ARMY  
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

*The Salvation Army and the Rhetoric of Health, 1880-1900*

*Called to Abide—John 15:1-11*

*Salvation Army Mission Statements and the Mission of the Church*

*That All Shall Be One: The Theological Interplay of Holiness and  
Hierarchy*

*So Wild, So Deep—The Human and the Holy: A Study  
from the Psalms Part II*

*#Resist: The Book of Revelation as Resistance Literature*



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Salvation Army National Headquarters

Alexandria, VA, USA

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# WORD & DEED



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# Careful and Loving Looks at the Worldwide Army

Since the inception of *Word & Deed* in 1998, a broad array of works by a diverse set of authors have comprised The Salvation Army's scholarly journal of theology and ministry. Past contributors were mostly Salvationists from around the world. Their writings reflected the global, historical, theological, and missional nature of the Army. Framed by their personal perspectives, they wrote on topics of particular importance and value. As we step into the journal's 25th year of publication, this issue presents six authors who carefully write from their azimuth-like perspectives on topics related to the Army's history, theology, ministry, and mission, each with a loving look at the worldwide Army.

"Kind to Sinners, Severe on Saints" by Barbara Robinson is the lead article. She reviews the rhetoric of health in the Army's ministry over the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Robinson contrasts the Army's understanding of health and optimal wellbeing, grounded in homeopathy, with its critics' accusations at a time when the Army's evangelistic fervor was a pragmatic priority over leaders' and members' physical needs, limitations, and poverty conditions. Reflecting on a formative time for the Army, Robinson raises a question less about contradictory values, and more related to the idea of doing less for a greater good.

"Called to Abide" by Corinne L. Cameron is a contemporary echo of the Robinson article, born out of experience and love around a similar concern for wellbeing. Its focus is the overwhelming challenge of multiple demands in ministry. It's about trying to be "Je-

sus to everyone while risking sacrificing one's personal relationship with Jesus" and "conflating missional business with holiness." Cameron's answer is found in John 15:11 and the True Vine, Christ's call to abide while sharing the vine community with other branches.

"Salvation Army Mission Statements and Mission of the Church." In this article, author Jean Marc Flückiger traces the Army's contemporary documents and discussions of mission and church between 1999 and 2015. Over those years, he observes the transformation of mission statements and articulations of church identities viewed at the corps level. He suggests a three-part evolution of mission and identity in worship, life together, and serving the world. He hopes for the whole Army's move towards a fuller self-understanding of itself as a church in mission at the corps level.

"That All Shall Be One: The Theological Interplay of Holiness and Heirarchy." Christopher Button's intention in writing this article is stated up front: "to argue for a change in the way that we perceive ecclesial hierarchy through the lens of holiness." He presents the argument that as a church, the Army presently maintains an ecclesiastical spiritual hierarchy. In particular, he writes that Army membership, soldiers, and fulltime ministry should be perceived through the lens of holiness. He calls for our doctrine of sanctification to be reassessed and critiques all forms of spiritual hierarchy. He reminds the reader that the early Army wished to end the spiritual distinction between those in ordained ministry and lay members of the church. Button is not arguing against organizational hierarchy, but spiritual. His position is that only a second blessing of holiness endows a person with spiritual power to carry out ministry.

"So Wild, So Deep—The Human and the Holy: A Study from the Psalms Part II" is the continuation of Lyell M. Rader's earlier two-part study of the Psalms in two essays published earlier in this journal (Vol. XXIV, No. 2, May 2022). Here in this issue, his writing continues exploring the wild and the deep fulfilment of synergism between the human and the Holy in the Psalmist's writings. This issue includes: "Where Can I Go from Your Spirit—Psalm 139;" "Create in Me a Clean Heart—Psalm 51;" and "Here I Am—Psalm 40."

In the introduction to the series, Rader stated his objectives for

his essays on the topic: “to share the Psalmist’s prayers with understanding, to disarm our defenses against their beauty and power, to trace the fulfillment of our hearts’ desire for human flourishing—that is holiness—in the Lord Jesus Christ, and to experience anew his fullness.”

“The Book of Revelation as Resistance Literature” by Mark Braye is a thematic essay. In it, he explores the biblical text of Revelation as a form of resistance literature by presenting the condemnation and critique of Jesus against the seven churches of the Revelation. Braye highlights the forces and “elements of resistance” against apostasy and idolatry in the churches of Apostle John’s time, including the resisting of false religion, violence, empires, and despair. Finally, he offers how we the Army can use these Revelation resistance themes in our time to face today’s same challenges.

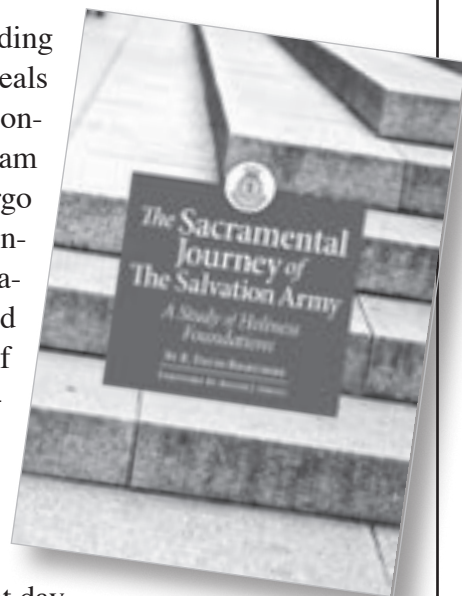
When we first looked over the articles noted above, a theme emerged that seemed appropriate as a metaphor for this issue. We find the metaphor in astronomy. An azimuth. An azimuth is the particular point from which an observer stands to see a star on a celestial horizon at a given moment. It geometrically defines the observer’s point of view on Earth at that moment. In this issue of *Word & Deed*, each author carefully shares an azimuth, his or her point of view on the horizon of a particular interest. The articles together then carefully share Salvationists’ thoughtful, loving looks on horizons yet to come, with hope for the worldwide Army.

JSR  
RJG

# *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*

By R. David Rightmire

Through his outstanding scholarship, Rightmire reveals the theology, context, and controversy surrounding William Booth's 1883 decision to forgo traditional Christian sacramental practices within his Salvation Army. This new, updated volume offers a full picture of Booth's decision: investigating its theological roots, taking into account its practical dimensions, and exploring its effects within The Salvation Army up to the present day.



David Rightmire is Emeritus Professor of Bible and Theology at Asbury University. In addition to having published a number of articles and reviews in professional journals, his books include *Salvationist Samurai: Gunpei Yamamuro and the Rise of the Salvation Army in Japan* and *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle*.

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# The Salvation Army and the Rhetoric of Health, 1880-1900

*Barbara Robinson*

“Wondrously kind to their sinners, but very severe on their saints.”<sup>1</sup>

Throughout the final two decades of the nineteenth century, the fledgling Salvation Army was the subject of a vigorous and highly polarized debate. Not only was it reviled as a peculiarly vulgar expression of working-class religiosity, ‘that shrieking crowd of religious fanatics’<sup>2</sup>, but Army leadership also faced sustained criticism from the secular press and disaffected former mission workers over their seeming disregard for the temporal welfare of their active membership. Critics sought to expose what they perceived as pervasive ideological contradictions within the rapidly consolidating revivalist movement’s understanding of optimal human wellbeing. The Army was accused of indifference to the physical needs, bodily limitations, and living conditions of a membership drawn predominantly from the working class. Here, critics asserted, was a spiritual fighting force that shot its wounded. How could the Army reconcile its advocacy on behalf of the urban poor with the expectation that its clergy adopt a lifestyle of severe, frequently physically debilitating poverty? Why, they asked incredulously, would Salvationist leaders

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*Barbara Robinson is a retired Anglican priest in Brockville, Ontario Canada.*

promote and popularize elements of the health reform movement influencing Victorian culture—hydrotherapy, homeopathy, and vegetarianism—while simultaneously applauding the self-abnegating fervour of those who had “given health away to Christ?”

This paper will consider the way that Salvation Army rhetoric, regulation, and declaration of mission intent expressed an instrumental approach to health, or “bodily wants,” which essentially bracketed the metaphysical assumptions of the broader Victorian health reform movement. Physical health, according to a Salvationist’s understanding, was not to be sought as an end in itself. It was neither an ethical state of constitutional wellbeing nor a moral achievement.

A perfected body was not the physiological equivalent of a perfected soul. For soldiers, members of The Salvation Army, health was a proximate good, not an absolute one, desirable as a source of adequate strength and necessary energy for the fulfilment of duty. An unapologetic commitment to what The Army characterized as “aggressive Christianity” and the comprehensive nature of the utilization of the military metaphor shaped a denominational “code” or “way of being in the world” in which health was defined as the capacity for usefulness or “success in the Salvation War.” Responsiveness to this military imperative meant that not only were neighbourhoods to be wrested from Satan’s occupancy and secular space recaptured and sacralised, but the very physical body of the soldier or member was terrain for mastery and conquest. Paradoxically, the demanding nature of such a religious code created the need for a rather uneasy alliance with a series of Victorian health regimes that emphasized oppositional values: self care, balance, and moderation of lifestyle.

The formative Salvation Army’s vision of health, and the methods adopted to promote it, illustrate the nonlinear dynamism of religious innovation, at times absorbing, and at other times resisting the dominant ethos of the broader social body. The Army’s summons to self-sacrifice, spiritual aggression, zeal, and self-abandonment embodied the Victorian admiration for the heroic, useful, and socially constructive life. Simultaneously, Salvationist rhetoric consistently attempted to set up a contrast between the new movement’s “vigour” and what it scorned as an anaemic, effete Christian spir-

ity which had debilitated the nineteenth century Church. The Army also endeavoured to stress motivational contrasts in its approach to the care and cure of bodies, its values informing a range of late Victorian philanthropic initiatives. Any social scheme or bodily therapeutic that minimized the importance of spiritual health would only ensure a “more eternal weight of misery at the cost of a little present relief.”<sup>3</sup>

Not all criticism of the toll exacted on bodily health by the power of The Army’s religious passion came from outside The Army. In a late 1898 article about The Salvation Army, featured in *The Contemporary Review*, John Hollins, a professional journalist and lay member (or “soldier”) of the Protestant movement described The Army as “wondrously kind to their sinners, but very severe on their saints.”<sup>4</sup> Hollins contributed his critique 20 years after the East London revival mission, under the superintendency of then Methodist minister William Booth, consolidated its image as a fighting force of militant Christian evangelicalism by changing its name from The Christian Mission to The Salvation Army. In Hollins’ article, “The Salvation Army: A Note of Warning,” the journalist lamented the lack of what he described as “really discriminating views” of the denomination. External perspectives, both church and secular, were mostly polarized, resulting in a situation wherein “enemies batter” and “friends flatter.”<sup>5</sup> Internally, Hollins claimed that the Army lacked open discussion: “Under the domination of the military idea and in the name of loyalty, we appear to have agreed to keep silence concerning the disquieting symptoms and weak places.”<sup>6</sup> For the journalist, this was unfortunate, for he argued that the organization was essentially sound, in many ways admirable and well able to withstand constructive observation of potentially problematic trends.

Hollins applauded what he described as “much deep spirituality” within the movement. The Army warranted credit for what he termed a “sensible recognition of women’s right to do what she has capacity for.”<sup>7</sup> The cosmopolitan nature of expansionism had demonstrated an ability to dissolve racial barriers and offered to the British working class vastly expanded horizons for work and religious vocation.

However, John Hollins expressed reservations both about the or-

ganizational structure and about the physical cost exacted by The Army's heroic expectations of its membership. A church system as autocratic as that of The Army, observed Hollins, "tends to summary action and the suppression of legitimate opinion. It will not bend to compromise: it does not admit mistakes."<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, the informing value system placed heavy, and at times physically debilitating, demands upon mission workers. During the late century, the ministry practice of Salvation Army clergy or officers closely approximated that of the Methodist itinerants a century earlier. Hollins claimed that the average length of stay at an appointment or posting was six months. During that time, the officer would conduct an average of 400 indoor and outdoor services; 15 per week. Consequently, wrote Hollins, "we seem to be working up to the extreme limit of our powers of endurance; we have no margin of strength; we lack some element of calm; we have scarcely a green place for rest and recuperation."<sup>9</sup> Because members in many congregations were poor, and because Army policy mandated that creditors be paid before clergy salaries were drawn, Hollins further asserted that "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."<sup>10</sup>

Other observers and critics of The Army's perceived vocational demands were less conciliatory. Samuel Horatio Hodges, a disaffected officer of Quaker background who resigned in the late 1880's, self-published the tract *General Booth: The Family and The Salvation Army, Showing Its Rise, Progress and Moral And Spiritual Decline in 1890*. The fact that Hodges later apologized to William Booth, retracted the contents of the pamphlet, and requested reinstatement in combination with Hodges' checkered employment career outside of The Salvation Army, puts his credibility as an objective informant in question. But Hodges, like Hollins, commented on the extreme physical and emotional demands placed upon Salvationists. The Army, he claimed, was "made by the blood of its martyrs." He accused the organization of "mistreating some of the best men and women that ever lived; sending them home in a steady stream, either backslidden in heart or broken down in body

and sometimes broken both body and soul.”<sup>11</sup>

That this was not only an issue in The Army’s inaugural decades, at the zenith of its revivalist fervour and in the heat of popular controversy, is evident from observations of the denomination’s medical advisor in 1903. Robert Brown, M.D., claimed to have been “astonished and disturbed” by his clinical experience among Army clergy. He wrote, “many very active and enthusiastic Army Officers break down completely within a comparatively short time. This should not happen and would not happen if they exercised ordinary foresight and care in regulating their daily round of toil.”<sup>12</sup> The physician asserted that officers “must obey the laws of health, which are the laws of God.” They must learn to reject “zeal without discretion.”<sup>13</sup>

But for many Salvationists, to live out the demands of the denominational code seemed to call for the rejection of Dr. Brown’s perspective! The idealized religious life was a life of holiness, defined as a life of what The Army termed “complete consecration” and absolute self-abandonment to the will and purpose of God. For The Army, cautionary rebuke like that of the good doctor indicated capitulation to the spirit of the world. George Scott Railton, influential early Army Commissioner, wrote of the movement’s membership:

To all these people home and comfort are as enjoyable as to yourself or anyone else; yet they glory in the possibility of a whole life of self-denying activity for Christ, and eagerly look forward to the day when, far from home and old friends, their bodies shall be lowered into a Salvationist Soldier’s grave.<sup>14</sup>

The most consistent exponent of The Salvation Army’s ethic of aggressive Christianity was William Booth’s wife, Catherine. Catherine had commenced her own public ministry in 1860 as a replacement preacher for her husband while he was recuperating from a “health breakdown” at a hydro in Derbyshire. As early as 1859, Catherine had published a spirited defense of women’s right to preach in reaction to a pamphlet written and circulated by Reverend Arthur Augustus Rees, who opposed the ministry of American

holiness teacher Phoebe Palmer.<sup>15</sup> Throughout the 1880s, and until her death from breast cancer in 1890, Catherine preached regularly in the salons, auditoriums, and churches of London's West End. She was renowned for her ability to combine authoritative spiritual presence with the womanly, gentle bearing and demeanour so admired by West End society. This is surprising, in that her rhetoric was consistently combative and polemic in relation to the Victorian churches. Catherine attacked what she called "the ordinary, silly, sickly circles of gossip and croquet... drawing room occupations considered most respectable and satisfactory in the case of young girls..."<sup>16</sup> The failure of the church to affirm and utilize the gifts of women had, according to Catherine, resulted in women's consignment to an irrelevant round of daily tasks, and more tragically, to a dilettante spirituality. She described conventional public worship as "cold, stiff, stilted... Listen to their songs, mostly sung by a few dressed up dolls perched in an organ loft or singing pew..."<sup>17</sup> Both William and Catherine Booth claimed that the churches had degenerated into venues of public discourse where congregants gathered to "have their intellects amused, their feelings tickled." This, for the Revivalists was anathema to the "proclamation of an evangelical Christocentrism... Any profession of Jesus Christ which brings no cross is all nonsense; it is not confession at all."<sup>18</sup> Emphasis on the Cross as the symbol of violent opposition to the Kingdom of Christ—voluntary and unjustified suffering, confidence in an ultimate victorious denouement—permeated the rhetorical militarism of the formative Salvation Army. Converts were not called to a comfort, but to a creative existential conflict that could result in both cultural and physical dis-ease. Consequently, Catherine and other Army preachers would unapologetically assert, "You cannot fight without wounds of body, heart, or soul."<sup>19</sup>

Bruce Haley, in *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*, identified interwoven discursive threads in the health ideology of the nineteenth century. One strand placed primary emphasis on health as "telicity," meaning the capacity for responsible action within one's environment. Haley cites the definition of health offered by Archibald McLaren, founder of the Oxford gymnasium, as repre-

sentative of this understanding: “that condition of the body and that amount of vital capacity which shall enable each man in his place to pursue his calling, and work on in his working life, with the greatest comfort to himself and usefulness to his fellowman.”<sup>20</sup> If one brackets the phrase “with the greatest comfort to himself,” McLaren’s definition was congruent with a Salvationist characterization of a life of holiness. Holiness was a lived expression of the Divine purpose for human experience. The holy life was a life of Christ following and Christ conformity. Preeminently, a life of radical identification with Christ was not a life of comfort but of usefulness. *Salvation Army Orders and Regulations for Officers* made this understanding explicit:

Health means strength to endure hardness, knocking about, coping with exhaustive open-air work and continuous house to house visitation; also, to endure the changeable and severe climates of foreign lands; in other words, to follow the Lord Jesus in manifold labours and self-denying toil. As the ability to endure these hardships means success in the War, health is greatly to be coveted on this account.<sup>21</sup>

The testimonial literature of the 1880s and 1890s consistently stressed the desirability of a life of sacrificial usefulness. The experience of Harriet Field, an officer writing in *The Deliverer*, a periodical of Women’s Social Services, is representative:

We most cordially agree with Charles Kingsley when he says, “We can become like God only in proportion as we are of use,” and however weary the end of the day may find us, we rejoice in spending and being spent in the service of the King of Kings.<sup>22</sup>

Commendation for “having spent and been spent” was a frequent element in Army obituaries and prescriptive literature. Memorializing the life of one early Rescue officer, *The Deliverer* reported:

Holiness in our late comrade was a divine purpose, which enabled her to do and dare for God; a force which impelled her to think and labour, to “spend and be spent,” without stint of time or strength or goods; an exhaustless energy of Spirit, leading her on to the very fullness of desire and glorious achievement.<sup>23</sup>

Although officers may have been motivated by an “exhaustless energy of Spirit,” their bodies were less tractable! It is evident from organizational reports and periodical literature that Salvation Army leaders were aware of the behavioural excesses that a rhetoric of Christian radicalism could prompt, and anxious to contain criticism or inferences of fanaticism circulating within the broader public. Characteristically, articles pertaining to the physical wellbeing of Salvationists included both commendation for the level of devotion demonstrated and warnings against incurring public censure for extremism. For example, in December 1879, an article entitled a “General Order Against Starvation” appeared in *The Christian Mission Magazine*. In the article, the officer was ordered to inform headquarters of privation or destitution before personal health was jeopardized. Writing on behalf of General Booth, the author stated,

He wished everyone to understand that such devotion, however noble, is to be avoided and condemned, especially because it not merely exposes the strength and life of the officers, which are of unspeakable value, to great risk; but it is likely to bring great discredit upon The Army. It was never intended that those who are faithfully and zealously labouring amidst difficulties should suffer want; but only that full salary should not be drawn and unnecessary expenses incurred... without the General’s consent.<sup>24</sup>

Reporting on a meeting conducted by William Booth on the grounds of Smedley’s Hydropathic Establishment, one of the largest



centres of alternative medicine in Victorian Britain, care was again taken to emphasize the interest of Army leadership in the wellbeing of the troops. The heading of *The War Cry* declared, "The General as a father loves the sick and wounded."<sup>25</sup> "Five years earlier, an Army benefactor named Lawrence, who was from Leicester and of Quaker background, donated a 10-room house at Matlock Bank, Derbyshire for use as a place where sick and wearied officers could recuperate. Described by *The War Cry* as "Our Hospital" in 1879, it stood adjacent to the famed Victorian hydro. Although the demand for care quickly outstripped the allocated financial resources, in the first five years of operation, over 500 officers received consultation and treatment at Matlock courtesy of Smedley's medical director, Dr. Hunter, an allopathically educated convert to hydrotherapeutics. Army write-ups about what were called the "Homes of Rest for Sick and Wounded Officers" tended to link the need for such institutions with the physical persecution experienced by officers rather than the more controversial reality of officer fatigue, or breakdown from excessive demands.

The hydrotherapy offered at Matlock was only one of a melange of alternative health practices promoted by The Salvation Army in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. The interest was pragmatic.<sup>26</sup> Physicians, regular or heterodox, were expensive. Increasing emphasis was placed on the role of hygiene in disease prevention during the late century. The functionalism of the Army's approach to health was congruent with the lived reality of the urban poor, who personally experienced the economic need to keep working, however they might feel, and held only minimal expectations of medical care. Practical recommendations for the treatment of illness, which were disseminated through Army periodicals, were characteristically based on the personal health experiences of the extended family of William and Catherine, a family for whom the boundaries between private and public life were largely dissolved in the totalism of a collective commitment to the movement.

What is largely absent from this Salvation Army health literature is the appropriation of perfectionist language of the Holiness movement; a language that permeated widely read nineteenth cen-

tury health journals such as *The Herald of Health*. For example, the editors of *The Herald* asserted that,

the hygienic and hygeio-therapeutic doctrines of this journal have taught men how they might purify and sanctify this bodily organization, making it a fit temple for the indwelling of the immortal spirit.<sup>27</sup>

Notwithstanding the Army's holiness heritage, and in contradistinction to a broad range of Victorian health teaching, health practices were infrequently linked to the experience of entire sanctification or a rhetoric of personal purity. As in the Salvationist approach to methods of evangelization, what mattered most was what seemed to work! Consequently, suggestions pertaining to the choice and utilization of therapies such as homeopathy, hydrotherapy, and vegetarian diet, were advanced with a rather atypical temerity. Alternative health regimes were presented as helpful, but not essential. Here, as with the treatment of sick and wounded workers, there is strong evidence of the movement's desire to avoid controversy around what it considered to be issues of secondary importance. For example, Florence Soper Booth, a physician's daughter and the daughter-in-law of William Booth, commented in an article for *The Officer* in January 1893,

I am a vegetarian and I believe it would be good for everybody to be the same. But I am not going to talk about that now. The Chief says the subject is too "strong meat." I fully understand that you prefer such food as is commonly used.<sup>28</sup>

William Booth was similarly circumspect. He was prepared to advise but not to legislate: "I recommend everybody who has not made the experiment of total abstinence from flesh meat in every form to do so at once. Give it a month's trial."<sup>29</sup>

However, this hesitation to make vegetarianism a matter of concern within The Salvation Army did not prevent Florence or Bram-

well Booth from speaking or publishing on the subject for groups such as The London Vegetarian Society. They contended that a vegetarian diet was biblical, economical, and physiologically adequate. Furthermore, they believed that there were moral dimensions to the vegetarian cause. Because the Victorians maintained that vegetable products were “non stimulating,” they argued that meatless meals helped the individual avoid temptation. Vegetarianism was “favourable to purity, to chastity and to perfect control of the appetites and passions.”<sup>30</sup> Elaborate physiological theories equated consumption of meat with propensity to alcoholism. The slaughter of animals for food was regarded as a brutalizing influence on industry workers. “The highest sentiments of humane men revolt at the cruelty, the degrading sights, the distressing cries, the perpetual bloodshed and all the attendant horrors which must surround the transit and slaughter of suffering creatures.”<sup>31</sup>

From the early 1860s, William and Catherine Booth underwent periodic and at times extended, courses of “water cure” or hydrotherapeutic treatment for a range of ailments. Consequently, the paraphernalia of hydrotherapeutics, cold sponge baths, wet sheet packs, sitz baths, hip baths, lamp baths, and douches were recommended to ailing Salvationists for conditions as diverse as fractured limbs, “inactivity of the liver, and cholera.” Once again, the basis of authority for the recommendation rested with the personal experiences of the charismatic founding family:

Some considerable experience and observation have satisfied us that there is no system of treatment so effectual in curing disease or in preventing serious consequences... When people generally learn the value of God’s precious, beautiful gift of water, both internally and externally, there will be far less suffering and much greater happiness and length of life.<sup>32</sup>

Both Catherine and Florence Booth were convinced of the value of homeopathy, a system of medicine and pharmacology developed by the German physician Samuel Christian Hahnemann

(1755-1834). Homeopaths claimed that a drug that caused illness in a healthy person would cure the same illness in a sick person—what Hahnemann called the principle of “like cured by like.” William, however, remained wary of physiological dogmatism of any kind, as indicated by a letter he wrote to his son Bramwell while on tour in Adelaide, Australia in 1899. Suffering from what he called “fever and diarrhoea,” William penned home,

I consented to have a doctor. All I asked was that he should be a good one, but I suppose the people with whom I am staying are Homeopaths, so I fell into the hands of a Homeopath. He has a diploma for both Homeopathy and Allopathy and talks about practicing both, but he prefers the former, and like a great many other people he hardly likes any other remedies than those which are in harmony with his own principles to effect any benefit... I said I thought there had better be a consultation as I wanted a man of another school.<sup>33</sup>

To the degree that health as a religious concern was codified in The Salvation Army, it was described in utilitarian terms. Officers were encouraged to recognize the role health could play as a recruitment strategy. Healthy people would “create a good impression as to what religion could do for people.”<sup>34</sup> Health accrued economic advantage to the organization. “A man or woman who has good health can live upon a much smaller income than one who is ailing and sick.”<sup>35</sup> Health ensured better troop deployment: “If these delicate ones were strong and these sick ones were healthy, those engaged in nursing and waiting upon them could be employed in other ways profitable to the kingdom of God.”<sup>36</sup>

In the West End of London during the summer of 1880, Catherine Booth preached on the text Ephesians 5:18, “Be filled with the Spirit.” Her sermon articulated a succinct summary of her religious views:

The very essence and core of religion is God first,

and allegiance and obedience to him first... if I cannot keep my health and be faithful to Him, then I must sacrifice it... if I cannot keep my life and be faithful to Him, then I must be prepared to lose it, and lay my neck on the block if need be... This is my religion, and I do not know any other.<sup>37</sup>

Despite the denomination's critics, The Salvation Army was unwilling to acknowledge any contradiction in its rhetorical approach to physical health; bodily wellbeing, although desirable, was of infinitely less significance than spiritual health. Soldiers were summoned to engage in a war against sin and the Devil, on the side of a Christ who "flung aside contemptuously the thought that living well in this world was a real benefit."<sup>38</sup> For the formative Army, it was not a matter of contradictory values, but of the subordination of a lesser good to a greater good.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> John Hollins, "The Salvation Army: A Note of Warning," *The Contemporary Review*, vol. 74 (July - December 1898), 442.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Spectator* (London, England), 15 July 1882.
- <sup>3</sup> Catherine Booth, "Sham Compassion and the Dying Love of Christ," *Popular Christianity*, Lecture III. (1887: reprint, Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1986), 64
- <sup>4</sup> John Hollins, *The Contemporary Review*, 442.
- <sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 437.
- <sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 438.
- <sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 439.
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, 442.
- <sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 443.
- <sup>11</sup> S. H. Hodges, *General Booth: "The Family" and The Salvation Army, Showing Its Rise, Progress and Moral and Spiritual Decline*, (Manchester: Printed and Published by the Author, 1890), 41.
- <sup>12</sup> Robert Brown, "Ailments of Army Officers," *The Field Officer*, July 1903, 267.
- <sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*
- <sup>14</sup> G. S. Railton, "The Salvation Army Following Christ," *Popular Christianity*, 197.
- <sup>15</sup> See Pamela Walker, *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001) for a comprehensive analysis of Catherine's position on women's responsibility within the church.
- <sup>16</sup> Catherine Booth, "Popular Christianity: Its Cowardly Service vs The Real Warfare," *Popular Christianity*, 107.
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.
- <sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.
- <sup>20</sup> Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*. (Cambridge, Mass. Harvard University Press, 1978), 20.
- <sup>21</sup> *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers of The Salvation Army by the General*. (London: Headquarters of The Salvation Army, 2nd Edition with Supplement, 1888), 38.
- <sup>22</sup> Harriet Field, "Behind the Office Door," *The Deliverer*, August 15, 1889.
- <sup>23</sup> "Mrs. Major Cooke As A Rescue Officer," *The Deliverer*, February 1896.
- <sup>24</sup> "General Order Against Starvation," *The Christian Mission Magazine*, Vol. 10 (December, 1878), 317.
- <sup>25</sup> *The War Cry*, Saturday, November 8, 1884.
- <sup>26</sup> See Bruce Haley, *The Healthy Body and Victorian Culture*. Haley argues that "nature-pathologies" such as hydrotherapy are born and flourish in periods of "medical scepticism" and only decline in influence when orthodox medicine is able to demonstrate "a convincing competence in treating disease." 34.
- <sup>27</sup> W. T. Vail, "The Morals of Hygiene," *The Herald of Health*, Vol. 3, No. 4

(April, 1864), 132

<sup>28</sup> Florence Booth, "Health-II," *The Officer*, (February 1893), 50.

<sup>29</sup> William Booth, "On Food." *Letters to Salvationists on Religion for Every Day*. (London: International Headquarters, 1902), 106.

<sup>30</sup> See for example, Harriet P. Fowler, *Vegetarianism: The Radical Cure for Intemperance*. (New York: M. L. Holbrook & Co., 1879), 36. "Meat, by its imbibing effect upon the mucous membrane of a diseased stomach, increases gastritis (inflammation of the stomach) which disease almost always exists in drunkards. By increasing gastritis, it increases thirst, its accompaniment. Thirst calls imperatively for liquor. Therefore, meat perpetuates intemperance."

<sup>31</sup> Bramwell Booth, "About Food: Vegetarianism," *The Local Officer* (May 1900), 367.

<sup>32</sup> William Booth, "Appendix: Hints on Health and the Water Treatment," *Letters to Salvationists for Every Day*. (London: International Headquarters, January 1902).

<sup>33</sup> William Booth to Bramwell Booth, (Adelaide, South Australia, March 13, 1899).

<sup>34</sup> *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers*, 38.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Catherine Booth, "Filled with the Spirit," *Aggressive Christianity*, 1880.

<sup>38</sup> Catherine Booth, "Sham Compassion and the Dying Love of Christ," *Popular Christianity*, 1887, 72.

# *Under Two Flags*

By Major Jason R. Swain

In this up-close look at the visionaries and events that helped build The Salvation Army and its God-inspired movement, discover how early Salvationists overcame rivalry, misunderstandings, and unexpected hurdles to set the foundation for a unified mission and forge ahead in giving their utmost for His Highest.

Major Jason R. Swain was commissioned as a Salvation Army officer in 1998 and served in many different types of appointments in the USA Southern Territory. He joined the publications staff at USA National Headquarters in July 2018. He is currently the Corps Officer at the Northeast Kentucky Corps in Ashland, Kentucky.



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# Called to Abide—John 15:1-11

*Corinne L. Cameron*

The Church is on the cusp of the season of Advent. It is a season that brings many gifts to ministry, such as the opportunity to formulate creative orders for worship, sing much loved anthems and carols, and discover new insights in treasured passages of scripture. However, Advent also brings additional stresses to ministry that include working extra long days, tending to different expectations, and meeting year-end fiscal demands. For Salvation Army officers, this stress is compounded with overseeing Christmas campaigns, which involve coordinating meals that feed thousands of people, organizing food and toy hampers for thousands of families, and overseeing the Kettle Campaign, the last of which generates most of the funds for the church's social ministry of the upcoming year. For many, it is increasingly easy to miss the *wonder* of the season due to the *work* of the season. One Salvation Army officer describes this as follows: "We... continue at an outrageously busy pace and wonder why we find it difficult to reflect on our relationship with God."<sup>1</sup>

The tension of demands in ministry is not unique to Salvation Army officers. Many in the clergy struggle to manage complex ministries and exceedingly long hours. One article on clergy burnout highlights that "no other profession demands competency in such a variety of roles as the ordained minister."<sup>2</sup> These competencies encompass knowing how to be a biblical scholar and employee re-

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lations expert; offering pastoral care in one hour, then negotiating a union contract during the next; and planning artistic worship as means to creatively find the money to balance a budget. Sadly, within these multiple demands, it is easy to conflate busyness with holiness; to sacrifice our personal relationship with Jesus in order to “be Jesus” for everyone we meet.

This sense of overwhelm is not limited to the clergy, either. North American society is overwhelmed. Philip Browning Helsel notes, “In our modern times, when we are asking someone how they are, they invariably answer ‘busy.’... People perceive themselves as busier... and maybe even believe that they must be busy.”<sup>3</sup> For many, workdays extend beyond office hours and demand that people be available at any time, creating the sense that workers should always be accessible. But work lives do not happen in a vacuum. We have homes to clean, children to accompany to various activities, and social media footprints to maintain. The demands create what often feels like a tenuous house of cards that will topple with the slightest breeze. Society is crying out for a reprieve. An article written for Canadian mothers asks these questions: “Is it selfish to make yourself a priority? Are we destined to be martyrs? To only get the crumbs of energy left at the end of the day once everyone and everything else is taken care of?”<sup>4</sup>

It is in this social context that we hear a unique call from Jesus: “Abide in me as I abide in you” (John 15:4).<sup>5</sup> These words are more than an invitation; they are a call to discipleship that enables us to not only survive the multiple demands of life, but to thrive in an abiding relationship with Jesus. This paper will reflect upon our call to abide. It will commence by placing the call within the context of Jesus’ ministry and the gospel’s first hearers. It will then provide an understanding for this wonderful word “abide” (*menō*). Under this foundation, it will progress to consider what abiding looks like in the life of a disciple, and the fruit borne in a disciple’s life through the relationship of abiding. It will conclude with a discussion of how this fruit may be lived out in ministering to the complex society described above.

## Context

The call to abide occurs as part of Jesus' equipping conversation in the Upper Room. Jesus is preparing his disciples for his arduous journey to the cross. He is preparing them to be left without his daily physical presence. This level of preparation for his departure is a unique feature of John's Gospel. Jesus' absence will be a painful reality for the disciples, one marked by grief and loss.<sup>6</sup> Jesus is also equipping them for his passion, his resurrection, and their own involvement in the ministry of the Church.<sup>7</sup> He knows how hard life will be for them, and so provides the promise of how they may be sustained in their personal relationships with him, as well as their journeys of faith.

Already in this discourse, Jesus has told them that Judas will betray him (13:21-27) and Peter will deny him (13:38). He has given the disciples the new commandment to love one another (13:38-35), and promised that the Holy Spirit will be with them (14:26).<sup>8</sup> Jesus knows how difficult remaining faithful will be for the disciples, evidenced by his prediction of how they will let him down as he is arrested. Jesus knows that in their own strength, faithfulness will be impossible. The call to abide provides for the disciples the way to remain faithful, not in their own strength, but in their connection to Jesus.

While connected to the Upper Room discourse, the call to abide also finds a home within the "I Am" statements of Jesus. Karoline Lewis explains how these statements "provide accessible common pictures meant to relay a fundamentally complicated theological truth."<sup>9</sup> In his name as the "True Vine," Jesus provides an image that the disciples can grasp so that they may understand just what it means to abide in him. This is an image of dependence and mutual indwelling; it is a promise of abundance despite the scarcity of life's circumstances. Dorothy Lee describes Jesus as "the Vine who carries sap to the branches, enabling them to flourish and produce plentiful grapes for the harvest."<sup>10</sup>

However, there is deeper imagery within the name True Vine. Beneath the surface of an agricultural image, provided for an agrarian population, is the deeper Old Testament image of the people of Israel as the vine. God had planted Israel to be the true vine, desiring

that the nation bear fruit. Sadly, their unfaithfulness resulted in the vine growing wild.<sup>11</sup> Jeremiah 2:21 asks, “Yet I planted you as a choice vine, from the purest stock. How then did you turn degenerate and become a wild vine?” Marianne Meye Thompson describes dire consequences for Israel when God ceased to care and protect the vine. Yet she also identifies the prophets’ yearning for God to restore the vineyard in order for it to once again become abundant and fruitful.<sup>12</sup> We read this hope in Isaiah 60:21: “Your people shall all be righteous; they shall possess the land forever. They are the shoot that I planted, the work of my hands, so that I might be glorified.”

The image of the vine is also an image of relationship. Gail O’Day explains that “When Jesus speaks of himself as the vine, then, his words are not only self-revelatory, but are revelatory of the interrelationship of God, Jesus, and the community... the life of faith.”<sup>13</sup> This connected community is particularly telling for the first hearers of John’s Gospel. At the time of the Gospel’s writing, many Christians had been thrown out of their synagogues for believing in Jesus. They had lost their community, but were now being encouraged to find a new way of understanding community as dependent upon their intimacy with God.<sup>14</sup> Jesus claiming the name of True Vine invites these first hearers into a relationship that abides. This relationship is not just a feeling or a belief; it is a way of being that is connected and dependent.<sup>15</sup>

## Abide

Jesus uses the word “abide” 11 times in John 15.<sup>16</sup> As we consider what it means to be called to abide, it is important to pause and reflect upon this significant word. The Greek word that is used here is *menō*, and it appears in the Gospel 40 times. It may be translated to mean “abide,” “remain,” “stay,” “continue,” or “dwell.” While there are a number of ways the word is translated, the significance of the word deepens as the Gospel progresses, revealing the primary way in which Jesus chooses to describe discipleship.<sup>17</sup> The Gospel begins with Jesus physically staying (abiding) with the disciples in 1:38-39. Yet as the Gospel progresses, we see the understanding of abiding deepen; for example, as Jesus’ words abide with his disciples (8:31).

As the Gospel continues, Jesus teaches the significance of abiding in a relationship, first when describing the relationship between Jesus and his Father (14:10), then in his promise for the Spirit to abide in the disciples (14:17).<sup>18</sup>

The image of abiding deepens in John 15 to portray a relationship of mutual indwelling. It is an image of complete connectivity and dependence upon Jesus as the True Vine. This connectivity is modeled by Jesus' own relationship with his Father. There is a clear understanding of the disciples as branches connected to Jesus (the vine) and tended by God (the vine grower). Lewis highlights that "At the forefront of this image is the theme of mutual dependence."<sup>19</sup> The dependent relationship is a significant way in which John describes discipleship. On the one hand, discipleship involves abiding through a journey with Jesus and testifying of his good works. However, a deeper characteristic of abiding involves dependent relationship that infuses followers with the inner resources needed to be a disciple. Michael J. Gorman explains that these different levels of abiding "are not two different realities but two different ways of describing one reality."<sup>20</sup>

Jesus models the call for an abiding relationship through his own relationship with his Father. John 15:1 says, "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vinegrower." The roles are intimately connected. Jesus is the True Vine, the Father tends the vine, and the disciples are the branches that are nourished through the life-giving sap of the vine. At the forefront of this name, is an image of mutual dependence that is intimately connected.<sup>21</sup> However, while this relationship is intimately connected, it is important to note that it is not a relationship of equal contributions. In fact, a disciple's obedience to the call to abide is only possible because of the indwelling of Jesus, empowered by the Spirit.<sup>22</sup>

In considering the word *menō*, particularly one of its translations to mean "remain," it may be tempting to view abiding as a passive stance. Nevertheless, a more helpful way to understand this relationship is to recognize in it an invitation to return and find our home. Lee explains how Jesus "calls disciples into a familiarity of relationship where Jesus' self-revelation is his ongoing and progres-

sive opening to his disciples of his own inner life, the life of divine filiation, which is infinite in its depth and breadth and richness.”<sup>23</sup> Living in this call invites disciples to adopt an openness and responsiveness<sup>24</sup> to the presence of Jesus in their lives. Their lives will be obedient and open to an invitation to surrender. Abiding in Jesus is a relationship that infuses and informs every aspect of a disciple’s life.

The call to abide was significant for the disciples as they were being prepared for Jesus’ passion, resurrection, and physical absence. It was significant for the early Christian community, who were ostracized and learning how to be in relationship with God outside of the temple and synagogue. But it is also significant for Christians in ministry today. Our society is oriented on self, and those in ministry can be tempted to prove their self-worth or appear competent. Yet this call to abide draws us away from relying upon the successes of our external selves and towards seeing ourselves as the place where Christ dwells,<sup>25</sup> which in turn will deepen our ability to respond to Christ in others. Gorman highlights obedience to this call to abide as significant for Christian ministry today:

Thus part of the mission of the church is to attend to itself even as it attends to the world. The community’s own mission is inevitably, and inextricably, both centripetal and centrifugal, internally and externally oriented, each dimension of mission leading out of the other in an unending back-and-forth, a missional circle comparable to a hermeneutical circle or spiral.<sup>26</sup>

## **An Abiding Life**

With this understanding of *menō*, we will now focus our attention on how obedience to the call to abide appears in the life of a disciple. Jesus’ name as the True Vine is a revelation that deepens the disciples’ understanding of who he is, but also tells the disciples who they are.<sup>27</sup> Using the first six verses of this pericope, we will gain an understanding of an abiding life. Firstly, this call to abide is a call to surrender and be open to pruning. “[God] removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes to

make it bear more fruit.” (15:2). Thompson explains that the Greek word used for pruning is *kathairein*, which means “cleansing.”<sup>28</sup> Therefore, being open to pruning is less about being punished and disciplined, and more about living surrendered in order that we may receive the life-giving sap of the branch to the full. This cleansing is similar to the living sacrifice described in Romans 12:1-2:

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

In the next verse, we encounter a second layer of abiding relationship: living with openness to God’s word. “You have already been cleansed by the word that I have spoken to you” (15:3). The Gospel of John opens by identifying Jesus as the Word (1:1), and throughout the Gospel, a disciple’s faith is expressed both in relation to Jesus as the Word and in listening to the words of Jesus. In addition to being cleansed by Jesus’ words, abiding in the Word means hearing his words (8:27,43), keeping them (8:51-52), and remembering them (15:20).<sup>29</sup>

The image of abiding progresses to reveal a third way in which this call is lived out in a disciple’s life: through abandoning self-sufficiency to live in dependence on God. This call to dependence is clearly stated as follows: “Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing” (15:4-5). Jesus draws on the biological fact that a branch has no life unless it is attached to the vine. This is a countercultural call away from relying upon self. It requires that disciples remember to draw their energy from Jesus<sup>30</sup> because the connection to Jesus as the True Vine makes the way of discipleship possible. This connection helps create in disciples a sense of worth

that stems from relationship with Jesus rather than self-sufficiency. John 15:4-5 is an invitation to all disciples to dwell in this dependence, especially those in ministry. One minister asks this question:

What if we were able to define ourselves (and our worth) based on our being rather than our doing? What if... we are only 'fully awake, fully alive' when we recognize the sacred that is within us? It takes space. It takes time. It takes intentionality. It demands that we step aside from all that is chaotic and draining in our life and to simply be in the presence of God.<sup>31</sup>

A disciple's relationship with the vine is one of deep provision and sustenance. As such, it is important to view separation from the vine as a tremendous loss rather than a punishment.<sup>32</sup> Understanding Jesus' deep provision in the call to abide creates an openness to see a fourth aspect of abiding life, an invitation to obedience, in this next verse. "Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned" (15:6). A significant trait of an abiding life is obedience. Throughout the Old Testament, there exists an expectation to live in obedience to God's law; to treat God's law not as a rule book, but as the means of experiencing a covenantal relationship with God.<sup>33</sup> The Psalter opens with these words:

Happy are those who do not follow the advice of the wicked, or take the path that sinners tread, or sit in the seat of scoffers; but their delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law they meditate day and night. They are like trees planted by streams of water, which yield their fruit in its season, and their leaves do not wither. In all that they do, they prosper (Psalm 1:1-3).

Therefore, an abiding life is one that is fully connected and obedient to Jesus as the source of life. Living an abiding life means living in a posture that receives instruction and the infilling presence of the



Spirit; that embraces a covenantal life. Yet obedience is a choice, and choosing to live out of obedience means refusing to be filled with the nourishment that comes from the vine. This lack of nutrition results in branches withering and dying, similarly to the wicked of Psalm 1:4 described herewith: “The wicked are not so, but are like chaff that the wind drives away.” Just as the wicked are blown away, dead branches are pruned by God. In saying that, it is important to see this withering as the natural happenstance of striving to live independently from the vine rather than in obedience, connected to the nourishment of the vine. Thompson explains that “there is no failure on the vine’s part to give life, but there is a failure on the branches’ part to receive it.”<sup>34</sup>

These first few verses of the pericope paint a picture of an abiding life; one that is surrendered, infused with the Word, dependent, and obedient. John 15 further progresses to provide a promise in relation to how obedience to the call to abide manifests itself as fruit in the life of a disciple.

### **Fruit of Abiding**

The image of Jesus as the True Vine promises a life that is fruitful. Specifically, Jesus promises that out of an abiding relationship, the disciples will bear fruit. The promise of this fruit increases with each verse, from bearing fruit (15:2), to bearing much fruit (15:5), to bearing fruit that will last (15:16).<sup>35</sup> This progression reveals to us that as an abiding relationship deepens, so too does the fruit of this relationship become abundant. Within this promise of fruitfulness, it is important to distinguish that our call as disciples is to abide rather than bear fruit. If that were not the case, we would be strongly tempted to chase after the *fruit* of the relationship, and in the process neglect the *actual* relationship. Fruit is borne from an abiding relationship; fruit does not lead to the abiding relationship. An abiding relationship becomes a way of life that is “holistic and abundant, both ‘spiritual’ and material—an embodied wholeness.”<sup>36</sup>

The fruit that is promised is not a vague generality. Rather, Jesus provides examples of the fruit that will grow in the life of an abiding disciple. The first fruit we will consider is confidence in prayer.

Jesus promises that “If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you” (15:7). What is unique about this aspect of the fruit is that it is also a posture of abiding. God invites us to abide in prayer to step aside from ministry demands and welcome a space where God embraces us and affirms that “what is important to us is also important to God.”<sup>37</sup> From prayer as abiding, prayer then becomes a fruit of that same abiding. Samuel M. Ngewa emphasizes that “coupled with the promise of power in bearing fruit is a promise of power in prayer... There are no limits as long as the condition of abiding in Jesus is met.”<sup>38</sup>

As we progress through the next section of this passage, we encounter a second fruit borne from abiding: living a life that glorifies God. Jesus promises, “My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples (15:8). Jesus flourishes as the True Vine because his Father tends the vine, then disciples flourish by abiding in this vine. This fruitfulness does not bring attention to the disciple. Instead, flourishing reflects the glory of God in the disciple. God is glorified by a disciple’s fruitfulness. An example of fruitful living that glorifies God is displayed when Paul celebrates the Corinthians for generously giving to the Christians in Jerusalem.” “You glorify God by your obedience to the confession of the gospel of Christ and by the generosity of your sharing with them and with all others...” (2 Corinthians 9:13).

As disciples continue to abide in Jesus, this abiding will result in a third fruit: the fruit of love. Similar to prayer, love is both a way to abide *and* a fruit of abiding. Again, Jesus provides a call to abide as follows: “As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love” (15:9). The mutual indwelling of an abiding relationship is a relationship of love. Lee explains that “the world finds its place, gathered into the Son’s devotion to the Father and participating in the Father’s love for the Son. The Spirit is the one who enables this love, who channels it, both within the divine being and between the world and the Son.”<sup>39</sup>

The fruit of love, flowing out from the mutual indwelling of abiding, is shaped by the love of Jesus, and is lived out in community. Abiding in Christ’s love enables a disciple to see Jesus in others and

truly love them. The writer of a later Johannine epistle demonstrates how love is revealed in others. “Beloved, since God loved us so much, we also ought to love one another. No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God lives in us, and his love is perfected in us” (1 John 4:11-12). To live in this fruit means the disciple, and consequently the Church, will live shaped by the love of Jesus. Disciples will be known for how they love,<sup>40</sup> and this love will stand in such stark contrast to our self-involved Western society.

As disciples abide in Jesus as the Word, the Word lives within them, which brings about a fruit of steadfastness, a gracious equipping to keep the commandments of God. This fourth fruit is emphasized as follows in the next verse of John 15. “If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father’s commandments and abide in his love” (v.10). As with prayer and love, a posture of abiding also becomes a fruit of abiding. One of the ways a disciple abides with Jesus is by immersing him or herself in the Bible, faithfully setting aside time to connect with God through his Word. These words then take hold in a disciple’s heart and become a way to discern God’s activity in the world, as well as his presence in different situations. They also enable disciples to hear God’s voice when faced with decisions or difficult situations. Jong Woo Kim states that “abiding makes it possible to listen to God, to hear and ask to be in alignment with God’s heart.”<sup>41</sup> A significant way to know God’s heart is to read God’s words. Jesus promises this earlier in the Gospel as follows: “If you make my word your home you will indeed be my disciples, you will learn the truth and the truth shall make you free” (8:31-32).<sup>42</sup>

Abiding in love through prayer and God’s word, while living in the mutual indwelling of the vine, leads to the fifth fruit: the fruit of joy. Jesus promises, “I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete” (John 15:11). Jesus knows how hard life will be for his disciples. He knows the deep grief they will experience from his absence and his crucifixion. Jesus also knows that living beyond the celebration of the resurrection in a society that is hostile to him will produce many situations that could rob the disciples of Jesus’ joy. In these verses, Jesus is

not offering a situational happiness. Rather, he is promising a deep wellspring out of which the disciples will experience joy despite their circumstances. O'Day explains that a complete joy is a Messianic joy; it is joy of abundance that results when God restores God's people.<sup>43</sup> The image of the vine is restored from the wild vine that defined the life of Israel leading up to and including the exile. Throughout Isaiah, a longing for this vine to be restored is evident, and its restoration in Jesus as the True Vine is the source of joy. Isaiah 35:1-2 looks forward to this. It reads, "The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing." Joy as fruit of abiding enables disciples to feel a closeness with Jesus infused with a sense of wholeness and peace. It also enables a disciple to live with hope, to look forward to restoration, and to believe in the goodness of God.

John 15:7-11 illustrates the fruit to be borne in the life of a disciple who abides with Jesus. When Jesus says our lives will bear fruit, he does not generalize. Rather, he provides specific examples of the kinds of fruit that will grow and ripen in our lives. These fruits are prayer, lives that glorify God, love, steadfastness, and joy.

### **Bearing Fruit in Community**

As disciples, we are called to abide. As we heed this call and live in an intentional abiding relationship with Jesus, our lives will bear fruit. Yet this fruit is not to be hoarded; it is to be shared. The fruit of our abiding will naturally leave our morning quiet times and extend into our communities. For not only are we connected to Jesus, the True Vine, who is tended by God, the vinegrower, we are also interconnected with the other branches of the vine. John Collins describes this as follows:

When we become part of the church, we join a web of relationships with other members, all of whom are connected to Christ. The lives of the members are woven together by the invisible bond of the Holy Spirit. We all depend on one another... To abide in

Christ is to use our connection to other Christians as the vehicle by which Christ ministers life to us—and each of us is a vehicle of Christ's life to others.<sup>44</sup>

Our society is extremely fractured and disconnected, which has only been exacerbated by the various responses to COVID-19, including mandated social isolation and disparate views on healthcare. The call to abide comes in a unique time of social anxiety, stress, and extreme individuation. That is why true fruit of abiding will be lived out in the context of community, and the Church has a unique role to play in this. O'Day highlights that if the Church were to live “as branches of Christ, individual distinctiveness would give way to the common embodiment of love. The distinctiveness of community would derive solely from its relationship to God and Jesus.”<sup>45</sup> Love as a fruit is communal and individual.

The fruit of love needs to exist outside of the Church, too; borne in community. Gorman emphasizes that spirituality flowing from a mutual indwelling with Jesus is not only related to mission; it is inseparable.<sup>46</sup> He envisions discipleship as a mobile vine that is oriented in Christ's abiding love, all the while moving out to share that love with the world, infused and empowered by the Holy Spirit.<sup>47</sup>

Yet the problems of the world will often seem so immense, the demands of ministry so great, that if we are not careful the mobile vine will become disconnected from the True Vine. If we are not careful, we as disciples will, in reaction to these demands, lose ourselves and our identities in Christ, as well as our responses of love. In order to live in a community of love as the Church, disciples will always be called to abide. By abiding in Christ, ministry will not morph into an unhealthy must. Rather, it will remain an outflow of love, infused by an abiding relationship with the True Vine.

## **Conclusion**

As Advent continues within the Church and we sing carols that embrace the incarnation of Jesus, we have the invitation to listen for the voice of Jesus and Jesus' call to abide. As we heed this call, we will be intricately connected to the True Vine. We will live lives

infused with the sap that courses through this vine so that even the outermost reaches of our branch will be nourished. Through abiding with Jesus, we will not only survive the multiple demands of life. We will thrive. We will bear abundant fruit that will last.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>22</sup> Thompson, 325.
- <sup>23</sup> Lee, 148.
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# *Sensational Grace*

By Commissioner Jolene K. Hodder

In these days where the weight of the world feels heavy, the issues are complicated, and there are few simple answers, Commissioner Jolene Hodder shares everyday, relatable life experiences, drawing out deeper spiritual truths in the process. Follow along as her modern-day parables provide refreshing reminders about the gift of God's unmerited favor—His grace.

Commissioner Jolene Hodder is a Salvation Army officer with a passion for leading others to Christ and then equipping, motivating, and preparing them for effective ministry. Jolene is the author of two published books, *A Bend in the Road* and *Walking in White*. She currently ministers as the USA National Secretary for Program in Alexandria, Virginia.



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# Salvation Army Mission Statements and the Mission of the Church

*Jean-Marc Flückiger*

As a pragmatic movement, The Salvation Army has always tried to establish short and helpful slogans to encapsulate its mission. Some have become famous even outside the Army, like the iconic “Soup, Soap, Salvation” or “Saved to Save” and its alternative, less radical form, “Saved to Serve.” Both are paralleled by the two “S” patches worn on Salvationist uniforms. In the early nineties, an International Mission Statement of The Salvation Army was formulated:

The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in his name without discrimination.<sup>1</sup>

This statement has been adopted in all territories worldwide. It is still in function and often used in Salvationist publications, such as annual reports or websites. When it was created, I remember being

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moved by the simplicity and beauty of the statement. I felt encouraged to find a clear definition of the mission of the Salvation Army.

In 1999, when British John Gowans was elected General, he began to communicate a new slogan concerning the mission of The Salvation Army. Gowans' aim was probably not to propose an alternative to the International Mission Statement. It seems to me that he was looking for something that might be powerfully preached. He built up a new series of three "S" words (like the old "Soup, Soap, Salvation"), which was easy to remember and striking in its simplicity and deepness. His message was that the Army had been raised by God "to save souls, to grow saints, and to serve suffering humanity."<sup>2</sup> This slogan was easy to understand and remember, yet theologically deeper than the old motto, "Soup, Soap, Salvation." Furthermore, Gowans used brilliant preaching skills to serve this new message. Many times, when traveling to all parts of the world to meet fellow Salvationists, the General preached this mission statement with passion and conviction.

The impact of his action was visible. During his three years of tenure as General, John Gowans encouraged Salvationists worldwide and gave them a renewed vision of their ministry. He successfully rooted this new slogan in the mind of Salvationists.

In 2004, the youth department of The Salvation Army in the United Kingdom and Republic of Ireland was renamed "Alove" and proposed a mission statement issued from a thorough theological reflection.<sup>3</sup> Its core consisted of four terms defining the mission of The Salvation Army: *Worship* (giving our lives and world back to God), *Discipleship* (participating in a relationship with Jesus and his community), *Mission* (going into the world to find Jesus and point him out), and *Social Action* (giving a voice to the voiceless). These inspiring definitions of the Church's mission were adopted and adapted by The Salvation Army in Switzerland, where they embodied the concept "Revolution" or "rEVOLution," built upon four words:

1. Worship: Worship (I love and honor God).
2. Discipleship: Grow (I take Jesus uncompromis-

ingly as my role model).

3. Mission: Win (We unveil Jesus to the world).

4. Social Action: Serve (We fight for human dignity).

Although these four words were initially designed for youth ministry, they became part of the official strategy of the Church work department in Switzerland. Many corps adopted them as their motto to benefit from a new focus for their ministry. Some of these corps added a fifth word to the list: *Welcome*.

This paper asks if these ancient and recent slogans are overall equal to one another and consistent with the global ecclesiology of The Salvation Army.

## **DIGGING DEEPER: WHAT IS THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH?**

When defining a Salvationist view of the mission of the Church, I have mainly used *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* (2010), *Community in Mission* (Phil Needham, 1987), *Servants Together* (The Salvation Army, 2008), *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ* (The Salvation Army, 2008), and the official responses of The Salvation Army to documents published by the World Council of Churches. In these works on ecclesiology, a tendency towards threefold mission descriptions can be observed. For example, Needham states that the Church is made of sacramental life, life together, and servanthood.<sup>4</sup> *Servants Together* and *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* also propose a threefold description of the Church's mission. Let me first cite *Servants Together*, which refers to the universal Church, or at least The Salvation Army, as a whole: "We are servants of Christ who are called to *worship him*, to be *together in community* and to be *sent out into the world in mission*."<sup>5</sup> This statement is reflected in the content table of the book. There are three chapters in the first section: "Worship," "Community," and "Mission." *The Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine* has a similar description with regard to the corps, spiritual life at the local level:

The corps is The Salvation Army's local congregation. It is a visible expression of the Church. It has its own ways of *worshipping, training and serving*, based on the teaching of the Bible, the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the nature of its mission. Its purpose is consistent with the calling and teaching of the one, universal Church. Its three key strengths are its missional zeal, its commitment to holiness, and its strong community outreach.<sup>6</sup>

*Servants Together* points out worship, being together in community, and being sent out in mission. The *Handbook*, speaking of the corps level, mentions worshipping, training, and serving. These words are very similar, particularly if one understands training as a process happening in the context of community. Elsewhere in the *Handbook*, nearly the same group of terms is mentioned: "One very important change since the 11 Articles of Faith were formulated and adopted is the evolution of the movement from an agency for evangelism to a church, an evangelistic body of believers who *worship, share fellowship, minister and join in mission together*."<sup>7</sup>

Here, one can find mention of four aspects of the mission of the evangelistic body of believers: worship, fellowship, ministering, and mission. The meaning of the verb "minister" is somewhat unclear here, that is, it is not explained in detail. However, it can be broadly translated to mean "fellowship." In that case, The Salvation Army aims to serve one another in love and with the gifts of the Spirit, pursuing discipleship. Therefore, this last quote of the *Handbook* also employs a threefold description of the Church's mission.

A last example that confirms the three sub-themes of the Church's mission is the definition of Church in *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ*. It explains:

The Church universal includes all who *believe* in the Lord Jesus Christ, *confessing* him as Saviour and Lord, and *witnessing* to that sacred commitment through *loving mutual submission* (Matthew 18:15-

20; John 13:34- 35; Ephesians 5:21) and *sacrificial service* (Mark 8:34; Matthew 20:25-28; John 13:1-17).<sup>8</sup>

We believe that the Church universal is the whole of the *worshipping, witnessing* Christian community throughout the centuries comprised of whatever groupings, large or small, accepted or persecuted, wealthy or poor, into which her members may have been gathered in the past or in the present.<sup>9</sup>

The quote also supports the view of a mission in three parts. *Believing* and *confessing* can be included in the first part: worshipping. *Loving mutual submission* is one aspect of fellowship, which is referred to above. *Witnessing* and *sacrificial service* are both about serving the world. The second passage mentioned also has *worship* and *witnessing* in its description of the mission of the Church.

Therefore, I suggest grouping the mission of the Church into three aspects: worshipping God, living together, and serving the world. *Worshipping God* entails common and personal worship. *Living together* entails fellowship and discipleship. *Serving the world* entails evangelization and social work, with social justice in mind.

Interestingly, the three pillars of mission can also be identified in the papers of the World Council of Churches, even if the words and order might be different.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, the three aspects of mission are mentioned and developed in the Anglican Church, through the book *Mission-shaped Church*, where they are described using three prepositions: UP, IN, and OUT.<sup>11</sup> *Mission-shaped Church* infers UP, IN, and OUT from the four marks of the Church: one, holy, catholic, and apostolic. However, it is easy to parallel the three prepositions to the threefold mission presented here. UP concerns Worshipping God, IN concerns Living together, and OUT concerns Serving the world. Moynagh and Harrold also use UP, IN, and OUT in their work *Church for Every Context*.<sup>12</sup> Instead of inferring the mission of the Church from the marks of the Church, I contend that the three pillars could also reflect a trinitarian view of mission. Worshipping

God alludes to God the Father, living together alludes to God the Holy Spirit, and serving the world alludes to God the Son.

## COMPARED CONTENTS: SALVATION ARMY MISSION STATEMENTS AND THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH

If the three aspects of mission are omnipresent in recent Salvation Army publications, it is not with these exact terms and not always in this order. The wording chosen in this paper is personal and may be, of course, debated. *Servants Together* is the book where these three aspects of mission appear the most clearly. This observation is of the highest importance because it demonstrates a widening in the self-understanding of the Salvation Army and aligns the Army with a biblical vision of the Church. In no way does the formulation of these three pillars of mission withdraw the Army from its historical mission. Serving the world is still present, but it is now more clearly flanked with worshipping God and living together. A visual representation of the historical mission statements of the Salvation Army, including the suggestions of the present article, illustrates this evolution:

**Table 1**

|   | Worshipping God |                  | Living Together |              | Serving the world |             |
|---|-----------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------|-------------------|-------------|
|   | Common worship  | Personal worship | Fellowship      | Discipleship | Evangelization    | Social work |
| "Soup, Soap, Salvation"                             |                 |                  |                 |              | *                 | *           |
| "Saved to Serve"                                    |                 |                  |                 |              | *                 | *           |
| International Mission Statement                     |                 |                  |                 |              | *                 | *           |
| "Save Souls, Grow Saints, Serve Suffering Humanity" |                 |                  |                 | *            | *                 | *           |
| Alove (UK)  | *               | *                | (*)             | *            | *                 | *           |
| Revolution (CH)                                     | *               | *                | (*)             | *            | *                 | *           |
| Present concept built on <i>Servants Together</i>   | *               | *                | *               | *            | *                 | *           |



Table 1 compares the contents of different Salvationist mission statements (by the author). The stars in the bracket under “Fellowship” indicate that the formulation “We” had some fellowship dimension. Some corps in China added a fifth verb (to welcome) to underline this fellowship. In the heading “Social work,” the term refers also to social justice.

The table shows that the older mission statements are situated entirely in “serving the world,” but in addition to both proclamation of the Gospel and social work. The name “The Salvation Army” itself, one of our most significant slogans indeed, would appear only in the column, “Evangelization.” When considered from top to bottom, the table expresses clearly the evolution undergone by the Army during its history; a movement from a missionary force (The Christian Mission) to The Salvation Army of today, now moving towards a more full understanding as a church.<sup>13</sup> As time passes, the mission statements in the table also mention discipleship and worship, thus covering all the fields of the Church’s mission.

## MISSION STATEMENTS OF SALVATION ARMY CORPS

The threefold dimension of mission presented here comes from documents of The Salvation Army. However, it is unclear how far these notions have reached the worldwide Army, and especially the corps, in practice. Earlier this year, Commissioner Henrik Andersen<sup>14</sup> mentioned an observation he recently made as he searched for definitions in the *Year Book of the Salvation Army*. It concerned the definition of a corps, which changed slightly in 2006 and significantly in 2014. In the following years, a corps was defined as such:

**2005:** A Salvation Army unit established for the preaching of the Gospel and service in the community (I did not search for the first mention of this definition).

**2006:** A Salvation Army unit established for the preaching of the Gospel and to provide Christian-motivated service in the community.

**2014:** A Salvation Army unit established for the preaching of the Gospel, worship, teaching, and fellowship and to provide Christian-motivated service in the community (still the same in 2021).

As observed, significant terms were added in 2014: worship, teaching, and fellowship. In this way, the definition of a corps very closely aligns to the one presented in *Servants Together*, as well as the concept presented in this article. The only difference is the mention of teaching rather than discipleship, and the mention of worship without indicating its different possible extents. This change demonstrates that the ecclesiological papers of The Salvation Army needed years before being taken into account by publications like the *Year Book*. I suggest that such notions, like the threefold mission of the Church from *Servants Together* and the *Year Book* definition of a corps, may benefit from more straightforward distribution, as they both can supply strategical help to Salvationists worldwide.

## CONCLUSION

The ecclesiological documents examined in this short paper deliver information about the mission of the Church and the Army. In efforts of rearrangement, I suggest that we define the Church's mission by following this trinitarian concept: worshipping God, living together, and serving the world. When compared to these three concepts, the slogans and mottos of The Salvation Army show that at the start, The Salvation Army was concerned exclusively with serving the world. Through the decades, they began including other scopes of mission. The use of such clear mission definitions, whether they be for the corps or the Army as a whole, may help us to stay focused as we serve.

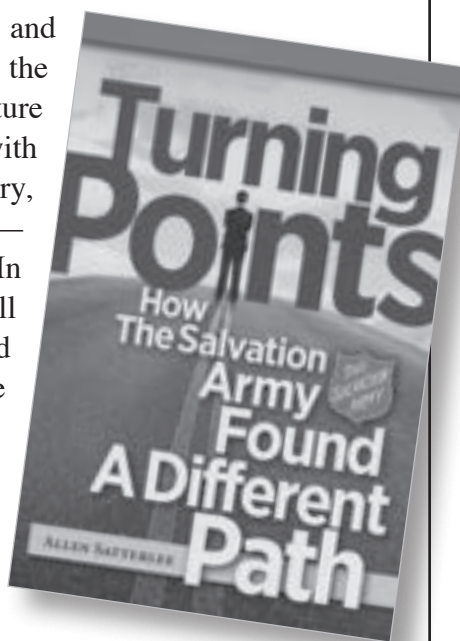
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# *Turning Points: How The Salvation Army Found a Different Path*

By Allen Satterlee

When Founders William and Catherine Booth combined the existing ecclesiastical structure of the Christian Mission with the framework of the military, it was more than a gimmick—something new was created. In 1890, the Army waged a full attack on society's ills and incorporated a social service ministry. *Turning Points* outlines key moments in The Salvation Army's history and illustrates how Salvationists faithfully serve God and all of humanity.



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# That All Shall Be One: The Theological Interplay of Holiness and Hierarchy

*Christopher Button*

## Introduction

My intention for this paper is to argue for a change in the way that we perceive ecclesial hierarchy through the lens of holiness. When the doctrine of sanctification is understood in relational and universal terms, then it acts as both a critique of all forms of hierarchy and a subversion of any sacred-profane distinctions. This can be seen as a counterintuitive claim, as there *appears* to be an implicit hierarchy within Christian spirituality.<sup>1</sup> However, the functionality of spiritual gifts within the order of worship does not constitute a fundamental hierarchy, but rather a simply practical model for the application of those gifts in specific circumstances. Instead, we should see that sanctification undermines any attempt to see human difference as existing within ontic reality. This is because of the fundamental shift from human identity as “individual human existence” to human identity as “in Christ.” It is Christ who is holy, and rather than possess holiness as part of their essential nature, the human being *participates* in Christ’s holiness.

This paper specifically addresses the implicit hierarchical struc-

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ture of The Salvation Army's ecclesiology.<sup>2</sup> The early Army wished to end the spiritual distinction between those in ordained ministry and lay members of the Church. The early Army argued that ordination did not endow a person with the spiritual power to carry out ministry; only second-blessing holiness did so. Therefore, anyone who had received the blessing of total sanctification was able to carry out ministerial function, specifically, evangelism. However, once requirements were established in order for ministry candidates to experience the second blessing, a spiritual hierarchy was introduced between those who were "holy" and those who were not. When combined with the developing militaristic hierarchy, changing views on ordination, and a continuing belief that only some believers are holy, both spiritual and organisational hierarchy are implicit within the ecclesiology of the Army.

Instead, by understanding holiness in terms of relationality and universality, the hierarchical ecclesiology of the Army can be held to critique, and any lingering ideas of spiritual hierarchy may be ended. When all are made holy in Christ who is our sanctification<sup>3</sup>, then any form of hierarchy can be understood only in strictly functional and organisational terms, always grounded within a precisely eschatological framework. Hierarchy exists as a functional response to the ongoing sinfulness of humanity, not because hierarchy is essentially good. Thus, hierarchy, like the sinful nature, exists only on this side of the eschaton. The sublimation of hierarchy in Christ, through the Holy Spirit, is the inauguration of that eschatological reality established here and now.

This paper is intended to prepare the ground for further work to be done in alleviating the Army's dogmatic approach to its ecclesiology, as well as dominant sociological, historiographic, and ethnographic approaches the Army has previously carried out. I will set out my argument in three sections: relational and universal sanctification, where I will establish my basic argument that justification and sanctification share the same logic; holiness and ministry in the early Army, where I demonstrate that hierarchy is foundational to the Army; and lastly, holiness and its challenge to hierarchy, where I will show how relational and universal holiness acts as a challenge to hierarchy.

## **Relational and Universal Sanctification**

The logic of justification and sanctification is the same—both are utterly dependent upon the sheer monergistic gift of God’s grace in Christ, in whom we move and live and have our being, and who is our sanctification. Sanctification is the actualization of Christ’s righteousness, which has already begun in the life of justified humanity through the death and life of Jesus.

In the person of Jesus, the divine and human natures are united, not only in the particularity of Christ’s own individuality, but also in the entirety of humanity itself. Apostle Paul’s logic is clear. He writes that in Adam, all have died (Adam not only as a particular human, but also as the representative human, the entirety of humanity) and so in Christ (the new Adam), all now live.<sup>4</sup> For Christ takes into himself not only the particularity of his human experience, but the entirety of humanity. Justification is not an individual application of God’s righteousness, but the redemption of humanity *in Christ*. The grace of God is made known in humanity through the *de jure* imputation of Christ’s righteousness.

It is impossible to overemphasize that it is Christ’s righteousness, not the righteousness of the individual, being spoken about. It follows that it is Christ who is our sanctification, and that our redemption is through Christ’s faithfulness, not by our faith in Christ.<sup>5</sup> Our faith is the realization of what Christ has done for us on the cross and in his resurrection, which opens us to the reality that Christ has made real to us now. Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes:

If the ‘people’ must repent, it does not matter how many repent, and in actuality it will never be the whole people, the whole church; but God can regard the whole ‘as if’ all had repented. “For the sake of ten I will not destroy them” (Gen 18:32). God can see the whole people in a few, as God could see and reconcile the whole of humanity in one man.<sup>6</sup>

The strictly eschatological nature of justification *de jure* (by judgement) is seen in the continuing sinfulness of the human person alongside their justification. The Lutheran doctrine of *simul pecca-*

*torum in toto et simul iustum in toto* (entirely a sinner and entirely justified, simultaneously) expresses this. Even when justified, the believer maintains the *cor incurvum in se*. Bonhoeffer writes:

A human being remains totally *peccator*; the works of the justified are never holy. The Kingdom of God is not for us to build. Only when God says that God is pleased with this work, then it is a good work. The conscience is not the judge of what is good. To do well means to act at God's good pleasure. In faith we are called to obedience, but in obeying we are always in need of forgiveness.<sup>7</sup>

The experience of conversion is the *cor excurvitas ex se* (the heart turned outwards), the moment when through the grace of Christ and the ongoing work of the Holy Spirit, the human heart is turned outwards away from the desire to be *siccut deus* (as/like God), and instead lives as the *imago Dei* (image of God) by living for the sake of others. This is a true *metanoia* (turning away/conversion) because it is a turning away from inner selfishness and life lived for the sake of the world. Justification *de facto* (in fact) is then made real in the ultimacy of the life to come. The Christian life of justification is an eschatological looking towards what will be, which is inaugurated now through the Spirit, and expressed through the commitment of life towards the needs of others. Paul Fiddes describes it in this way:

To participate in God means that there is the ever-present opportunity to be aligned with a movement of communication beyond ourselves which is pure love, and which is also a movement of the will... Openness to others will not mean conformity to the human other, which would be a loss of one's own will, but conformity to the Christ whom we meet in and through the other.<sup>8</sup>

The logic of sanctification is the same as justification. Christ's holiness is imputed *de jure* at the cross and resurrection, and imparted



*de facto* in the life which is to come. John Wesley wrote, "... At the same moment that we are justified, yea, in that very moment, sanctification begins."<sup>9</sup> In a Salvationist context, Roger Green writes, "Here he [Booth] embraced Wesley fully: along with justification comes initial sanctification; people grow in God's grace until, by faith, they receive perfect love, after which they continue in their Christian growth."<sup>10</sup> For both Booth and Wesley, sanctification begins at justification and is then actualized through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, at a secondary event, so that the believer is filled with perfect love. However, Bonhoeffer writes that:

It is perhaps possible to think of the relation between justification and sanctification as analogous to the relation between creation and preservation. Justification is the creation of the new human being. Sanctification is their preservation and safekeeping unto the day of Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup>

Justification and sanctification operate not only with the same logic, but are part of the same act of Christ. The experience of holiness—what might be considered the moment of sanctification or of the second blessing—is the opening of the heart, which takes place in the awakening of the individual to the reality of their justification. This does not imply a static discipleship. Rather, it leads to a continuing regenerative relationship with Christ based on the fundamental understanding that we are saved by grace alone and are transformed through the work of Christ in the Holy Spirit.

However, this does not mean that the person grows in sanctification, as Bonhoeffer writes: "Growth in faith does not mean growing sanctification; rather sanctification exists in the death of the human being."<sup>12</sup> The disciple does not become more holy over time, but instead is more able to express what it means to participate in God's grace through the continual work of the Spirit to open the heart of the believer. The Wesleyan language of being changed from "glory into glory" recounts the continual work of the Holy Spirit to enable the disciple, through the renewing of their mind, to be able to work out what their salvation means. Frederick Coutts wrote:

Perfection in a final and complete sense will never be gained. Ever there will be the glory of going on. I can yield my forgiven life to God that He may accept me and give me of His Spirit as much as I am able to receive. That may take place in a moment of time. But the work of His Spirit in my heart and life will never be ended.<sup>13</sup>

As the heart is turned outwards, the believer comes to understand that they have been given freedom from the power of sin over them. This is the ontic reality of justification, the overcoming of the power of sin so that the person can live for the sake of others. This is the life that is called holy, one that is lived for others. This is rightly termed the death of self, dying with Christ so that we might be raised with Christ. Rachel Muers describes this sense of freedom from the power of sin addressed in Bonhoeffer's writing, noting:

In Bonhoeffer's account freedom is not a built-in human capacity at all. There is nothing about me, taken in isolation, that makes me free; not my rationality, nor my will, not even my 'thrownness' into the world. For Bonhoeffer, the freedom proper to humanity is freedom in relationship, both to God and to the neighbour in community. As creaturely freedom, it is received before it is possessed or exerted; it is 'freedom *for*' or 'freedom *in relation to*' another, rather than 'freedom to' do something. Insofar as it is 'freedom from' anything, it is freedom from the endless circle of the 'heart turned in on itself' – Luther's *cor curvum in se*—the attempt to secure one's own existence and meaning...<sup>14</sup>

To summarize, justification and sanctification follow the same logic and must not be thought about separately. I suggest that what we refer to as "holiness" also be understood as the righteousness of Christ, which is imputed to all humanity *de jure* at the Cross and imparted to all humanity *de facto* in the life to come. The individual

moment of conversion is the faithful realization of what God has done in an act of sheer monergistic grace through the opening of the inward-turned heart, made possible by the ongoing work of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit actualizes the work of Christ so that the believer may live free from the power of sin for the sake of the other. Sanctification begins in justification, is realized in conversion, and is completed in resurrection.

Sanctification is universal in the same way that justification is universal. Firstly, because in the incarnation of Christ, all of humanity is justified, just as in Adam all of humanity fell. Humanity is unified not in its goodness but in its sinfulness, and it is because of the universal sinfulness of humanity that universal justification is imputed to humanity. Secondly, because *Christ's* sanctification is actualized in the believer's life, not the believer's own sanctification, it cannot be claimed that a person "is holy." Rather, the believer is graciously enabled to participate in Christ's holiness. Bonhoeffer writes:

...The human being understands himself only by his act-of-relating to God, which only God can establish. The human being sees his own unity grounded in God's word directed toward him, a word whose content is judgment and grace...his essence is not his own possibilities but rather is determined by the statements, you are under sin, or you are under grace.<sup>15</sup>

This means that it is impossible for a person to claim a greater or lesser degree of holiness or declare that one person is holy and another is not. A person may have an experience of holiness, but this is not the granting of holiness, or even the intensification of what has already been given. It is simply the subjective experience of what has already been objectively achieved by Christ.

Sanctification is relational because holiness is life lived for others, which is possible only in relation to others. The sanctification of Christ, which is *de jure* imputed to humanity, is seen in Christ's eternal *promiety* (existence for others). To use Bonhoeffer's language, it is the eternal act as one who serves as humanity's vicarious representative.<sup>16</sup> Salvation is about our relationship with God, but

the realization of that salvation is about our relationships with other human beings—the repairing of what was split asunder in our sin as characterized in the *cor incurvum in se* (the heart turned in on itself). Holiness is always the life lived for others, and so it is impossible to actively participate in Christ’s holiness without being in relationship with others. John Webster writes:

It is difficult to overstress the importance of this relational character for grasping the nature of God’s holiness... The holiness of God is not to be identified simply as that which distances God from us; rather, God is holy precisely as the one who in majesty and freedom and sovereign power bends down to us in mercy.<sup>17</sup>

What is true of our relationship with God is true of our relationship with other humans. Holiness does not separate a person from the world or humanity, but instead re-embeds them into the world as a place where the Kingdom of God is revealed and made known. Holiness is not an escape from the world or a rejection of the world, but is the active engagement with concrete reality as the only place where Christ’s holiness can be known. Holiness is relational because it is found only in relationships between people, as well as the relationship between the believer and God. It cannot be separated.

### **Holiness and Ministry in the Early Army**

In its earliest days, the Army was committed to challenging any distinction between the ordained and the laity. There was no ordination for officers, and it was understood that all disciples were able to be evangelists. William Booth wrote:

The idea never dawned on me that any line was to be drawn between one who had nothing else to do but preach and a saved apprentice lad... I have lived, thank God, to witness the separation between layman and cleric become more and more obscured, and to see Jesus Christ’s idea of changing in a moment ignorant fishermen into fishers of men nearer and nearer realisation.<sup>18</sup>

This was grounded in the Army's understanding that its officers were primarily full-time evangelists and not pastors. Indeed, the military metaphor so dominated the imagination of the early Army that at times it bordered on arrogance, as seen in George Scott Railton:

The advantages of an Army over any other organisations of a religious kind need scarcely be explained to those who have long been within it or who know anything of the Churches. Here is the only religious power which takes hold of a man or woman utterly without education or training of any kind, and opens before him or her the way to carry the salvation of God to thousands of others every day... [and this] puts this Army utterly beyond comparison with any Church.<sup>19</sup>

The Army understood that the capacity to undertake ministry was possible only because of the Holy Spirit, and so anyone who had been made holy was able to be a minister. Catherine Booth wrote:

We are teaching the Churches that others besides clergymen, ministers, deacons and elders can be used for the salvation of men... As a clergyman said to me the other day, "There are 35,000 souls in my parish, what can one do?" What indeed! Set the carpenters and the washerwoman on to them, saved and filled with the Spirit.<sup>20</sup>

William Booth took this one step further. Rather than understanding the Army as an all-lay movement, what he says in the following quote suggests that it is possible to think of the Army as an entirely *ordained* movement. William Booth wrote:

You cannot say you are not ordained. You were ordained when you signed Articles of War, under the blessed Flag. If not, I ordain every man, woman and child here present that has received the new life... I

ordain you with the breath of my mouth. I tell you what your true business in the world is, and in the name of the living God I authorise you to go and do it. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!<sup>21</sup>

This can suggest a rejection of hierarchy and a democratization of ministry through an emphasis on sanctification. One could consider the inherent hierarchy of the Army, with its military ecclesial imagery and military-style ranks for its ministers, as operating in a purely functional capacity. However, rather than creating only a functional distinction between soldier and officer, the Army has also generated a spiritual distinction between those who are holy and those who are not. Harold Hill notes:

In attempting to maintain a sectarian equality of believers, [the Army] resisted the idea that its officers were clergy like other clergy. At the same time, because of the autocratic temperament of its founder, it adopted a military, hierarchical structure, which served to expedite the process of clericalization.<sup>22</sup>

This can be seen in the 1908 *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers*, which detailed the requirement for Officers to have had the experience of total sanctification for themselves, without which they would be unable to fulfill their role.<sup>23</sup> The *Orders and Regulations* stated that holiness means cleansing from all unrighteousness, constant obedience to the will of God, love for God with all the heart, and love for the neighbour to the promotion of his or her highest good.<sup>24</sup> Sanctification was required for officership, meaning a spiritual distinction between officer and soldier existed.

We should not see the early Army as a glorious time of democratized ministry and spiritual equality. Rather, we should see it as a time in which a spiritual hierarchy between those who have had a sanctification experience and those who have not was more clearly emphasized. Furthermore, throughout the history of the Army, there has been a continued commitment to its militaristic hierarchical structure, and an increasingly clerical approach to that hierarchy.

When writing about the similarity between Army officers and Anglican ministers, Bramwell Booth wrote:

In this we humbly but firmly claim that we are in no way inferior, either to the saints who have gone before, or – through remaining separate from them, even as one branch in the Vine is separate from another – to the saints of the present. We, no less than they, are called and chosen to sanctification of the Spirit and to the inheritance of eternal life. And our Officers are, equally with them, ministers in the Church of God, having received diversities of gifts, but the one Spirit—endowed by his grace, assured of his guidance, confirmed by his Word, and commissioned by the Holy Ghost to represent him to the whole world.<sup>25</sup>

More recently, the debate about the nature of officership has continued. Commissioner Hubert Scotney wrote:

The distinction made today between clergy and laity does not exist in the New Testament... it is foreign to the entire concept of Salvationism to imagine two levels of involvement. Any distinction between officers and soldiers is one of function rather than status.<sup>26</sup>

Colonel William Clark argued that:

By a direct call from God into the ranks of Salvation Army officership, we have been given particular spiritual authority... Whatever our role... happens to be for the time being... we are primarily spiritual leaders... Our calling is to be a certain kind of person and not... to do a certain kind of job.<sup>27</sup>

In 1978, the official ceremony for making an officer was changed to include the phrase, “In accepting these pledges which you each have made, I commission you as officers of the Salvation Army

and ordain you as ministers of His Gospel.”<sup>28</sup> In opposition to this change, Chick Yuill wrote,

May I suggest that we need to re-emphasise the truth that there is no real distinction between officers and soldiers, that the difference is simply of function.<sup>29</sup>

It is important to note that Yuill was arguing for a functional distinction between officers and soldiers, but did not mention those members of the Army who are not soldiers.

In a somewhat telling response to Yuill, Brigadier Bramwell Darbyshire wrote:

In spite of all the stuff about the priesthood of all believers, ordained and commissioned officers are different from non-officer Salvationists. They are not cleverer, wiser, more loved of God than their fellows, but they are special, set apart for Jesus... No one is more grateful for the Army's dedicated lay staff than this old warrior; but let's get it right. They may be as much involved as officers, but there is for an officer a sacramental decision and if we lose sight of this the Army is finished.<sup>30</sup>

Whilst the requirement for a sanctification experience is no longer applied to candidates for officership, there remains an explicit organizational hierarchy and an implicit spiritual hierarchy inherent to the Army. The renewed interest in understanding holiness as a secondary experience of blessing or intensification following conversion should also be seen in the light of spiritual hierarchy, even if the language of the higher life has been abandoned.

The Army's understanding of sanctification has informed its hierarchical approach and been instrumental in its ecclesiological thinking. By challenging the way that the Army understands holiness, a simultaneous challenge is made to the Army's ecclesiology, and especially its hierarchical structure.



## **Holiness and the Challenge to Hierarchy**

As I have already begun to outline above, a relational and universal understanding of holiness acts as a critique to hierarchy, both functional and spiritual. In the first instance, relational and universal holiness prevents any kind of spiritual hierarchy from forming. Holiness is not the purview or possession of any one person or even a group of people. Only Christ is holy. The universal Church is called holy because Christ is the head of the Church. The particular denominations that subsist within the universal Church are not themselves holy in their essential nature or in their temporal structure. Rather, through their subsistence in the universal Church of Christ, they might be called holy within the grounds of inaugurated eschatology. The same logic is true for the individual believer as much as it is true for all of humanity.

Just as in Christ all humanity is justified *de jure* through Christ's faithfulness and because of Christ's righteousness, so all of humanity is sanctified in Christ *de jure* because of Christ's holiness and not the holiness of a person or collective humanity. As such, whilst a believer might be considered holy—again, within the grounding of inaugurated eschatology—this is strictly Christ's holiness imputed to humanity and not the holiness of that person. Therefore, there can be no distinction from human to human, disciple to non-believer, over who is or is not holy; for none are holy in themselves, but all are holy through their participation in Christ. No one grows in holiness through their discipleship, but by the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit, a person is continually transformed from glory to glory so that he or she may more fully act out Christ's holiness in the world.

Thus, there can be no spiritual hierarchy of any kind because none are greater or lesser than another in their relationship to Christ, nor in their "own" holiness and state of justification. It is Christ who is holy, it is Christ who saves, and it is Christ who is the head of the Church. It is always the sheer monergistic, gracious act of Christ that makes humanity righteous, not humanity in itself.

Secondly, relational and universal holiness undermines all structural and organizational hierarchy because holiness is the great leveller. In the same way that relational and universal holiness, and pointing to Christ as the only one who is holy, prevents spiritual hi-

erarchies from forming, relational and universal holiness also acts to critique *all* human forms of hierarchy. Whilst good order is required for the benefit of humanity, it must be understood within the context of fallen and still sinful humanity. Good order fulfills a function required purely because of the ongoing sinfulness of humanity, but it is not itself a part of the kingdom to come; the kingdom known now only partially in its inauguration.

The sheer monergistic display of Christ's grace in bringing us into participation with him through his death and resurrection acts as the great leveller for humanity. There is no ontically hierarchical distinction between one person and another, none are greater than another. All are found in Christ, and all are known only as being in Christ. Any hierarchy that exists can make no claims to anything ultimate, but must be entirely and utterly functional, prosaic, and aware of its own limitations. Holiness reminds the hierarchical organization that people who act with power over others possess that power not because of who they are, but because of the job that they do. What's more, any power they might wield is only temporary and subject to the rule of Christ. They must answer for the use of their power.

No human is by their nature in authority over another, for Christ is the only King, the only High Priest, the only head of the Church. This is true of all organizations, cultures, civilizations, and forms of government. It is especially true of the Church. A church with a hierarchical structure must continually be reminded that this is not a spiritual reality; it is only a temporary earthly reality, put aside in the life to come. The form of the Church matters; it makes a difference. And it is important to more closely align that form to the fundamental truths of Christ's holiness. The existence of a spiritually hierarchical church is the consequence of humanity's sinfulness, but holiness is the reminder that all are one in Christ, and that any attempt to think otherwise is to be confronted by the reality of the Cross.

## Conclusion

When we understand holiness as both relational and universal, then our approach to the structures and behaviours of the Church should change. If the hierarchy of the Church is purely functional, existing

only on this side of the eschaton, then those who wield power within that hierarchy cannot claim any form of spiritual exceptionalism in the decision-making process. Too often, the use of spiritual discernment and prayer, whilst often genuinely meant, leads to the act of granting certain actions perceived spiritual authority rather than regarding them as pragmatic attempts to respond to God.

The same is true for false distinctions between those who are holy and those who are not, whether this distinction is made between differing forms of spiritual experience, or between active followers of Jesus and those who do not yet know what Jesus has done for them. When holiness is understood in relational and universal ways, these distinctions fall away and are revealed for what they *actually* are—an attempt to maintain power and position for oneself.

As I have stated above, I am not advocating for a change in ecclesial structure within the Army. I am arguing that we change the way our structure is understood. This will have ramifications for how membership is also understood, specifically soldiership, as well as how full-time ministry should be perceived. These are questions for another time. There is a need for the Salvationist doctrine of sanctification to be reassessed in light of relational and universal holiness, and therefore, a need to open the Army's ecclesiology up for further discussion. I believe that further engagement with the theology of Bonhoeffer will speak aptly to this discussion.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> For instance, 1 Corinthians 3: 1-4 and 1 Corinthians 14: 1-5.
- <sup>2</sup> From now on, the Army.
- <sup>3</sup> 1 Corinthians 1: 30.
- <sup>4</sup> 1 Corinthians 15: 22.
- <sup>5</sup> Galatians 2:15-21.
- <sup>6</sup> Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (2009) *Sanctorum Communio*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English edition, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, pp. 119-120.
- <sup>7</sup> Bonhoeffer, DBWE 1, p. 240.
- <sup>8</sup> Fiddes, Paul (2000) *Participating in God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity*, Westminster: John Knox Press, pp. 52-53.
- <sup>9</sup> Sugden, Edward H. [Ed.] (1966) *Wesley's Standard Sermons*, Vol. 2, London: The Epworth Press, pp.446-448.
- <sup>10</sup> Green, Roger (2017) *War on Two Fronts: William Booth's Theology of Redemption*, Alexandria, VA: Crest Books, p. 24.
- <sup>11</sup> Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (2003) *Discipleship*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English Edition, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, p. 192.
- <sup>12</sup> Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, (2012) *Ecumenical, Academic and Pastoral Work: 1931-1932*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English edition, Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, p. 215.
- <sup>13</sup> Coutts, Frederick (2003) *The Doctrine of Holiness*, (web edition) London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, pp.10-11.
- <sup>14</sup> Muers, Rachel (2019) "Anthropology" in *The Oxford Handbook of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, Eds. Michael Mawson and Philip G. Ziegler, New York: Oxford University Press, p. 203.
- <sup>15</sup> Bonhoeffer, Dietrich (2008) *Barcelona, Berlin, New York: 1928-1931*, Dietrich Bonhoeffer Works English edition, p. 405.
- <sup>16</sup> Bonhoeffer, DBWE 1, P. 155-156.
- <sup>17</sup> Webster, John (2003) *Holiness*, Grand Rapids, MI: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co. p. 45.
- <sup>18</sup> Railton, George Scott (1914) *The Authoritative Life of General William Booth*, New York: Reliance Trading, p. 17.
- <sup>19</sup> The General, (1878) *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers*, London: The Salvation Army, p. 10.
- <sup>20</sup> Booth, Catherine (1883) *The Salvation Army in Relation to Church and State*, London: S. W. Partridge. p.75.
- <sup>21</sup> Booth, William (1898) "Farewell Charge in the Royal Albert Hall" in *The War Cry* 22nd January 1898. London: The Salvation Army. p. 9, col. 3.
- <sup>22</sup> Hill, Harold (2006) *Leadership in The Salvation Army: A Case Study in Clericalization*, Milton Keynes: Paternoster Press p. 73.
- <sup>23</sup> The General, *O&Rs for Field Officers*, pp. 5-9.
- <sup>24</sup> The General, *O&Rs for Field Officers*, pp. 131.
- <sup>25</sup> Booth, Bramwell (1926) *Echoes and Memories*, revised ed. London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd. pp. 67-68.

<sup>26</sup> Scotney, Hubert (1969) “The Salvation Army is a Christian Mission” in *The Officer* July 1969, London: The Salvation Army, p. 452.

<sup>27</sup> Clark, William (1976) “Divinely Called” in *The Officer* July 1976, London: The Salvation Army, p. 289.

<sup>28</sup> Hill, Harold (2017) *Saved to Save and Saved to Serve: Perspectives on Salvation Army History*, Oregon: Resource Publication, p. 97.

<sup>29</sup> Yuill, Chick (1985) “Matters Arising” in *The Officer* October 1985, London: The Salvation Army, pp. 439-440.

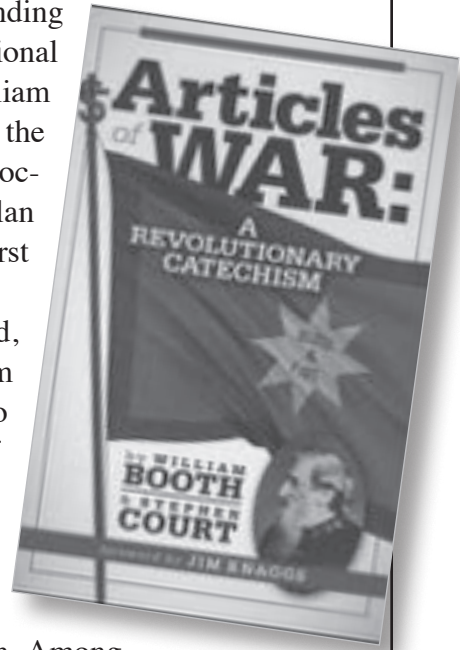
<sup>30</sup> Darbyshire, Bramwell (1998) Letter in *The Salvationist*, 1998, p. 6.

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# So Wild, So Deep—The Human and the Holy: A Study from the Psalms Part II

*Lyell Rader*

## WHERE CAN I GO FROM YOUR SPIRIT

### *PSALM 139*

John Calvin called the Psalms, “the anatomy of the soul.”

*O Lord, you have searched me and known me. You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it (139:1-6).*

*Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I*

---

*Lyell Rader retired from Salvation Army officership as a lt. colonel, and was Promoted to Glory over four years ago. We are publishing this lecture as it originally occurred. There is no bibliography attached.*

*flee from your presence? If I ascend to heaven, you are there; if I make my bed in Sheol, you are there. If I take the wings of the morning and settle at the farthest limits of the sea, even there your hand shall lead me, and your right hand shall hold me fast. If I say, "Surely the darkness shall cover me, and the light around me become night," even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day, for darkness is as light to you (139:7-12).*

Failed, ashamed, addicted, Francis Thompson haunted Booth's London like a soulless apparition. Alice Meynell, the poetess, and her husband took him in, guarded and evoked his shining gifts. He wrote:

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days; I fled him, down the arches of the years;/ I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways/ Of my own mind; and in the mist of tears/ I hid from Him, and under running laughter,/ Up vistaed hopes I sped;/ And shot, precipitated,/ Adown Titanic glooms of chasmed fears,/ From those strong Feet that followed, followed after./ But with unhurrying chase,/ And unperturbed pace,/ Deliberate speed, majestic instancy/ They beat—and a Voice beat/ More instant than the Feet--/ 'All things betray thee, who betrayest Me.'

The poem ends, "Halts by me that footfall:/ Is my gloom, after all,/ Shade of His hand, oustretched caressingly?/ "Ah, fondest, blindest, weakest,/ I am He Whom thou seekest!/ Thou dravest love from thee, who dravest Me" (Thompson in Witherspoon, 1951:1162-1164).

It is the universal experience. Awareness of him may come through an epiphany of beauty, a jolt of conscience, an onset of pain or grief, an unexplainable deliverance, sighting of a holy life, questions and yearnings beyond the mundane, a sense of order, of providence, of loving purpose that enwraps us. In Georges Bernanos' *The Diary of a Country Priest*, the young priest is dying. His chaplain is delayed



in coming for Last Rites. A friend at the bedside said that there are no final consolations of the church. “What does it matter?” the priest says haltingly. “Grace is everywhere...” (Bernanos, 1965:298).

“... There is no man that is in a state of mere nature” Wesley believed; “there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God... No man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath” (cited in Runyon, 1998:28). “God is always previous,” said Baron von Hugel (cited in Gire, 1996:51). That is why we hold our tongue when we are inclined to make judgments about those who differ from us.

Again Wesley:

The thing which I was greatly afraid of... and which I resolved to use every possible method of preventing, was a narrowness of spirit, a party zeal, a being straitened in our own bowels; that miserable bigotry which makes many so unready to believe that there is any work of God except among themselves. I thought it might be a help against this frequently to read, to all who were willing to hear, the accounts I received... of the work which God is carrying on in the earth... not among us alone, but among those of various opinions and denominations. For this I allotted one evening in every month. It is generally a time of... breaking down the partition-walls which either the craft of the devil or the folly of men has built up; and of encouraging every child of God to say... “Whosoever doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven, the same is my brother, and sister, and mother” (Mt 12:50, Wesley cited in Runyon, 1998:216).

In every nation, those who respond to the inward stirring of prevenient grace, however dim their understanding, all who “fear God and work righteousness,” are accepted of him (Ac 10:35).

David ponders his own birth and the matrix of his personality.

*For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit*

*me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them! I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you (139:13-18).*

“I thank you,” the Jerusalem Bible translates, “for the wonder of myself” (139:14).

Our second granddaughter is six months old. She just learned how to crawl *forward*. By degrees, it is dawning upon us who this little sunny, alert, inquisitive, demur mite is. Parker Palmer tells of a period in his granddaughter's infancy when she stayed with him. He said he began observing the inclinations and proclivities that were planted in her at birth, what she liked and disliked, what drew or repelled her. He recorded his observations in a letter which he plans to give her when she arrives at young adulthood. “Here is a sketch of who you were from your earliest days in this world,” he wrote. “It is not a definitive picture—only you can draw that. But it was sketched by a person who loves you very much. Perhaps these notes will help you do sooner something your grandfather did only later: remember who you were when you first arrived and reclaim the gift of true self.” Parker observes: “We arrive in this world with birthright gifts—then we spend the first half of our lives abandoning them or letting others disabuse us of them” (Palmer, 2000:12).

How weighty, how mysterious God's thoughts regarding us, his dream, his provision, his pleasure.

According to legend, Helen of Troy, whose beauty, it was said, launched a thousand ships, was kidnapped and taken across the seas to a distant city where she suffered amnesia and ultimately became a prostitute. Friends at home never gave up hope of her return. One of them set out to find her. Along the waterfront of a foreign city he

came upon a disheveled figure with a lined, pained face remotely familiar. “What is your name?” he asked. The name she gave was meaningless. “May I see your hands?” he pressed. When she complied, he recognized their lines and gasped: “You are Helen! Helen of Troy! Do you remember?” She looked up puzzled. “Helen!” he shouted. Her mind began to clear, she discovered her lost self and returned to her home and throne.

*O that you would kill the wicked, O God, and that the bloodthirsty would depart from me—those who speak of you maliciously, and lift themselves up against you for evil! Do I not hate those who hate you, O Lord? And do I not loathe those who rise up against you? I hate them with perfect hatred; I count them my enemies (139:19-22).*

It is fascinating to follow David, the warrior’s, mind. Years as a fugitive, guerilla captain and then embattled monarch cultivated his capacity to hate with a white hot vehemence. The old soldier’s fingers curl into a fist as he contemplates forces which blot and blight and block the good.

C.S. Lewis explains:

These poets lived in a world of savage punishments, of massacre and violence, of blood sacrifice in all countries and human sacrifice in many. And of course, too, we are far more subtle than they in disguising our ill will from others and from ourselves... The Psalmists’ tendency to chew over and over the cud of some injury, to dwell in a kind of self-torture on every circumstance that aggravates it, most of us can recognize as something we have met in ourselves. We are, after all, blood-brothers... (Lewis, 1958:23-24).

His reverie ends in prayer:

*Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting (139:23-24).*

## PART TWO

*In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. I baptize you with water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire...*

*Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan, to be baptized by him... And when Jesus had been baptized, just as he came up from the water, suddenly the heavens were opened to him and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3:1,11,13,16-17).*

Waist-deep in Jordan, Jesus took his stand with us. A voice was heard, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (an echo from Psalm 2:7, which every Jew accepted as Messianic, and from Is. 42:1, an account of the Suffering Servant). And alighting on him, the Spirit came as a dove.

A history of the Spirit preceded Jesus. Ancient Israel first experienced the Spirit as the shaper of a nation. The Old Testament often refers to spiritual gifts that sustain community: gifts of courage for leaders, wisdom for teachers, creativity for poets, inspiration for

prophets. In Israel's early history, the nation experienced the power of the Spirit again and again, delivering it from danger and distress. The Spirit rescued Israel and held it together as a people. But as time went on, the hope grew for a greater outpouring of the Spirit in the future (Pinnock, 1996:84).

Isaiah foresaw that the Spirit of God would rest upon God's servant (11:2; 42:1); through him mercy and justice would flow to the nations. "A new heart will I give you, and a new spirit will I put into you" wrote Ezekiel (36:26-27; 37:14). "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed..." said Isaiah (44:3). And in Joel's vision, "...It shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh" (2:28)—*ruach*, the breath of life, the gathering wind, the energy of creation.

According to Jewish belief during the period of the second temple, the Spirit was withdrawn because of the sins of the people. There was an "echo of his voice" (*bat qol*) but not the Spirit. In St. Luke's account of Jesus' birth, the Spirit comes again into prominence. Gabriel announces that the forerunner will be filled with the Holy Spirit (1:16), the spirit and power of Elijah (1:17). The angel appears to Mary—a scene depicted by the Florentine Filippo Lippi (1440) in exquisite courtesy and ceremony, Mary in brocaded velvet, the Spirit as a dove hovering radiantly between.

So the gospel story proceeds: the ancient Simeon, in the Spirit, dedicates the child (Lk 2:25-32); Jesus is nurtured in Spirit (Lk 1:80), anointed in Spirit, (Lk 3:21-22), accompanied in Spirit (4:1,14). By the Spirit, he sets out his mandate: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor" (Lk 4:16-21). By the Spirit he teaches with astonishing authority (Lk 7:16) and in the end offers himself up to God (He 9:14).

The Gospels present Jesus as dependent on the Spirit. They depict the Spirit as helping him trace out his

human path. The Gospel writers want their readers to identify with the Spirit-filled Jesus as a paradigm and live out of this very baptism in the Spirit... (Pinnock, 1996:85-88).

The most endearing picture we have of the Spirit is that of the Comforter (*parakletos*, literally, one called alongside, a name for the Spirit only found on the lips of Jesus, in the Gospel of John, 14:15-17,26; 15:26-27; 16:7-11,13-15). In the Greek version of the Old Testament, it is only used in a verbal form, mainly to translate *hacham*, to hearten or comfort (Ps 23:4). In Jesus' day, faithful Jews were looking for the *paraklesis* of Israel (Lk 2:25), the comforting of those who trusted in God's promise of redemption (Is 40:1; 51:12; 66:13). Isaiah's prophecy closes with the eschatological picture of the consolation of faithful Israel "as one whom his mother comforteth" (66:13), when Yahweh comes in fire and whirlwind for redemption and judgment (66:15; Ac 2:2f.) for the gathering of the nations who shall see his glory (66:18) and the inauguration of the new creation (66:22).

The spiritual discipline of Examen (which in Latin refers to the tongue or weight indicator on a balance scale) has two aspects: consciousness and conscience. At the end of the day, one recollects the signs of the Spirit's companionship and allows the Spirit to uncover areas which need cleansing and healing. Frank Laubach dedicated a year to learning how God speaks through the course of ordinary events. Early in the experiment he wrote: "God, this going in search of Your vocabulary promises to open a whole world of new vision. I have a little book in my pocket to record Your words as they come to me all day long, just as I might learn any language." The experience of that year led him into his life's work. On a Tuesday in Baroda bazaar, India, he wrote:

Over 330 millions who cannot read are calling for help. Need is Your language, is a word from You. How to approach this problem is baffling. Unsolved problems are Your language, for in them You are our schoolmaster training us" (cited in Foster, 1992:33-34).

Where can I go from your Spirit?

## **CREATE IN ME A CLEAN HEART**

### ***PSALM 51***

Do you remember Robert Frost's poem about his New England childhood, when in the Spring they swung on the birches? The lads would climb to the topmost branches and then fling outward, feet first, kicking their way down through the air to the ground. The old poet reminisces, "So was I once myself a swinger of birches./ And so I dream of going back to be."

It's when I'm weary of considerations,/ And life is  
too much like a pathless wood/ Where your face  
burns and tickles with the cobwebs/ Broken across it,  
and one eye is weeping/ From a twig's having lashed  
it open/ I'd like to get away from earth a while/ And  
then come back to it and begin over (Frost in Beard-  
sley, 1962:73-74).

This is the spirit of the Psalms of "disorientation," when life is out of kilter. Walter Brueggemann writes:

The problem with a hymnody that focuses on equilibrium, coherence, and symmetry is that it may deceive and cover over. Life is not like that. Life is also savagely marked by disequilibrium, incoherence and unrelieved asymmetry...

It is a curious fact that the church has, by and large, continued to sing songs of orientation in a world increasingly experienced as disoriented...

It is my judgment that this action of the church is less an evangelical defiance guided by faith, and much more a frightened, numb denial and deception that

does not want to acknowledge or experience the disorientation of life... It is clear that a church that goes on singing “happy songs” in the face of raw reality is doing something very different from what the Bible itself does (Brueggemann, 1984:51:52).

And so David—

*Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; According to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin (51:1-2).*

*For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, So that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me (51:3-5).*

*You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities (51:6-9).*

*Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit (51:10-12).*

*Then I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners will return to you. Deliver me from bloodshed, O God, O God of my salvation, and my tongue will sing aloud of your deliverance. O Lord, open my lips,*



*and my mouth will declare your praise. For you have no delight in sacrifice; if I were to give a burnt offering, you would not be pleased. The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. Do good to Zion in your good pleasure; rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, then you will delight in right sacrifices, in burnt offerings and whole burnt offerings; then bulls will be offered on your altar.*

David is aware of his transgression—willful, self-assertive defiance; iniquity—bending, twisting, distorting what is right and good; and sin—failing, missing the mark of God’s intention. “I *know* how bad I’ve been;” the Message paraphrases, “my sins are staring me down” (51:3, *Message*, the Hebrew verb is emphatic and continuous). The only relief is cleansing, typified by hyssop, the bush used to sprinkle blood on the doorposts at Passover (Ex. 12) and for the purification of lepers (Lev 4). “*Create* in me a clean heart” (the Hebrew verb is used only of God).

Gordon MacDonald, nationally prominent pastor of Grace Chapel, near Boston, best selling author, President of InterVarsity Fellowship, in a moment toppled from a pedestal of influence through an extra-marital involvement. In his 1988 book, *Rebuilding Your Broken World*, he tells how his humiliating, excruciating experience inducted him into the society of the “carriers of secrets” within the church. As a pastor he was aware that congregations were full of men and women living with self-inflicted or other-inflicted wounds. But,

I never (never, never, never) had any idea of how many more secret carriers there really were and how deep were their shame and their pain... those numberless people who walk into sanctuaries all over the world carrying their secrets behind bright clothing and forced smiles. They sing the songs, pray the prayers, listen to the sermons. And all the while the secrets fester within their private world, causing either a constantly broken heart or a hardened heart (MacDonald, 1988:54-55).

David's secret is brought to light in an encounter with Nathan, the prophet (2 Sa 12:1f.). In the book he makes a clean breast of it, no diminishing, no deflecting, no denying. There is a moment in Leonard Bernstein's modern opera, *MASS*, when the officiating priest puts on one vestment after another, until he fairly staggers under the weight of tradition. The music portrays a sense of violence in the scene, as if the falseness of religiosity will destroy him. But finally he tears off all the vestments and stands in blue jeans and T-shirt before the altar. "Look at me," he sings. "There is nothing but me under this" (cited in MacDonald, 1988:199).

When MacDonald's world broke, it happened in three stages. In the first, the secret was buried in himself for a long time. Then it was shared with his wife and family and a few intimates. Finally, it became public. He and his wife Gail withdrew to their cottage, "Peace Ledge" in New Hampshire, where, over time, a number of principles emerged regarding the way to restoration:

- Be silent; withdraw.
- Don't defend yourself.
- Enjoy the amusement of God's messengers.
- Assume the ministry of the interior.
- Listen to the deep things.
- Receive the mercy; live like a forgiven person.
- Don't dodge the pain; walk right through it.
- Look for those who need grace and aren't getting it.
- Join with those who know how to praise God.
- Look for new themes (MacDonald, 1988:168-188).

## PART TWO

*As Jesus passed along the Sea of Galilee, he saw Simon and his brother Andrew casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. And Jesus said to them, "Follow me and I will make you fish for people" (Mk 1:16- 17).*

*When they had finished breakfast, Jesus said to Simon*

*Peter, “Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my lambs.” A second time he said to him, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” He said to him, “Yes, Lord; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Tend my sheep.” He said to him the third time, “Simon son of John, do you love me?” Peter felt hurt because he said to him the third time, “Do you love me?” And he said to him, “Lord, you know everything; you know that I love you.” Jesus said to him, “Feed my sheep...” After this he said to him, “Follow me” (Jn 21:15-19).*

Two invitations. Between them, the soul’s precarious ascent. In Peter’s own account (reflected in St. Mark’s gospel): the lakeside call (1:16-17), the embrace of poverty (1:20; 10:28), the words and signs of power (2:12), costly companionship (3:6,14), the intimate circle (5:5:37f.), the sending out (6:7), the trials of faith (6:47-52), brave confession and burning rebuke (8:27-33), mountaintop epiphany (9:2-8), ambition and rivalry (9:33-41; 10:35-45), unexpected hazard (14:26-31), Gethsemane slumber (14:37), recourse to violence (14:47), threefold abandonment (14:66-72), and restoring grace (16:7). If ever a disciple waited for the Father’s promise (Ac 1:4) to tame his reckless testosterone and toughen his faith, to disinfect his leadership, to hearten him, if ever a disciple needed an immersion in Spirit to save him from himself and from the evil one, it was Peter (Ac 1:82:14-18).

Something happened. In his maturity, holiness became his theme (1 Pe 1:1-2,15; 2:5,9; 3:15; 2 Pe 1:3-4; 3:11,14,18). “So roll up your sleeves” he wrote, “put your mind in gear, be totally ready to receive the gift that’s coming when Jesus arrives. Don’t lazily slip back into those old grooves of evil, doing just what you feel like doing. As obedient children, let yourselves be pulled into a way of life shaped by God’s life, a life energetic and blazing with holiness. God said, “I am holy; you be holy” (1:13-16).

The road may be pock-marked and steep with “every kind of aggravation” (1:6-7, *Message, poikilois peirasmois*). But there is

matching grace (*poikiles charitos*, 4:10). In the end is a spirit that meets the gold-standard (1:7). The test of purity is the reflection of the refiner's image. The work of a moment? Yes, and of a lifetime.

There is a blessing of whole-heartedness, of clean-heartedness. The depth and decisiveness of the blessing are particular accents of Salvation Army teaching. (Compare the statement, "Full Salvation" of the International Council in *Salvation Story* with the document, "The Call to Holiness" released this year by a coalition of evangelical Protestants and Catholics.)

Our holiness teaching is central to our identity. Wrote Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle:

The bridge which the Army throws across the impassable gulf that separates the sinner from the Savior—who pardons that He may purify, who saves that He may sanctify—rests on these two abutments: the forgiveness of sins through simple, penitent, obedient faith in a crucified Redeemer, and the purifying of the heart and empowering of the soul through the anointing of the Holy Spirit... Remove either of these abutments, and the bridge falls... (Brengle, 1923/1981:68-69).

In a classic expression of sanctification, Douglas Steere writes of Thomas Kelly:

In the late autumn of 1937... a new life direction took place in Thomas Kelly. No one knows exactly what happened, but a strained period in his life was over. He moved toward adequacy. A fissure in him seemed to close, cliffs caved in and filled up a chasm, and what was divided grew together within him.

His writings and messages began to be marked by a note of authority.

To you in this room who are seekers [Kelly said in a Friends meeting in Philadelphia], to you, young and

old who have toiled all night and caught nothing, but who want to launch out into the deeps and let down your nets for a draught, I want to speak as simply, as tenderly, as clearly as I can. For God can be found. There is a last rock for your souls, a resting place of absolute peace and joy and power and radiance and security. There is a Divine Center into which your life can slip, a new and absolute orientation in God, a Center where you live with Him and out of which you see all of life, through new and radiant vision, tinged with new sorrows and pangs, new joys unspeakable and full of glory” (Kelly, 1941:18-19).

## HERE I AM

### *PSALM 40*

Midway on our life’s journey, I found myself/ In dark woods, the right road lost. To tell/ About those woods is hard—so tangled and rough/ And savage that thinking of it now, I feel/ The old fear stirring: death is hardly more bitter./ And yet, to treat the good I found there as well/ I’ll tell what I saw... (Dante in Palmer, 2000:56).

Thus Dante introduces his *Inferno*.

The most common form in the Psalms is the lament, the “psalm of disorientation.” And yet there are also Psalms of what Walter Brueggemann calls “new orientation.”

The psalms regularly bear witness to the surprising gift of new life just when none had been expected. That new orientation is not a return to the old stable orientation, for there is no such going back... Rather, the speaker and the community of faith are often surprised by grace, when there emerges in present life a

new possibility that is inexplicable, neither derived nor extrapolated, but wrought by the inscrutable power and goodness of God. That newness cannot be explained, predicted, or programmed (Brueggemann, 1984:124).

Such is Psalm 40.

*I waited patiently for the Lord; he inclined to me and heard my cry. He drew me up from the desolate pit, out of the miry bog, and set my feet upon a rock, making my steps secure. He put a new song in my mouth a song of praise to our God. Many will see and fear, and put their trust in the Lord (40:1-3).*

“I waited, waited for the Lord. He bent down to me” (NEB). There is a great heaviness in the repetition of the verb, and darkness. David recalls “the desolate pit.” Such cavities were a grim feature of David’s Palestine, deep in mud and slime. When they were used for confinement, the victim would struggle, sink, and ultimately suffocate (Ge 37:23-24; Jer 38:6-13). David is using the term metaphorically. What the circumstance was of his desolation, we do not know. In his edgy warrior existence, there would be many. We have our own.

The Quaker educator Parker Palmer tells of his pit. Twice in his forties he spent endless months in the “snake pit of the soul.” He wrestled with the desire to die. Visitors during this time were well meaning but ineffectual. Some would say, “It’s such a beautiful day; go out and soak up some sunshine and look at the flowers”; others, “Try to remember all the good you’ve done and surely you’ll feel better”; or “I know exactly how you feel...” peddling, he knew, a falsehood.

Blessedly there were several people, family and friends who stood with him. One was Bill, who having asked his permission, stopped by Parker’s home every afternoon, sat him down in a chair, knelt in front of him, removed his shoes and socks and for half an hour simply massaged his feet. Bill rarely spoke. When he did, he never gave advice but simply mirrored Parker’s condition: “I can sense your struggle today” or “It feels like you are getting stronger.” The words

reassured him that he still could be seen by *someone*, although he felt invisible. The relationship was like that of which Rainer Maria Rilke writes: "... Love... consists in this, that two solitudes protect and border and salute each other."

One sleepless night, Parker heard a voice say, simply and clearly, "I love you, Parker." It was, he writes, a moment of inexplicable grace. In therapy, his counselor offered an image that helped him eventually reclaim his life: "You seem to look upon depression as the hand of an enemy trying to crush you. Do you think you could see it instead as the hand of a friend, pressing you down to ground on which it is safe to stand?" Parker writes:

I started to understand that I had been living an ungrounded life, living at an altitude that was inherently unsafe. The problem with living at high altitude is simple: when we slip, as we always do, we have a long, long way to fall, and the landing may well kill us.

For a long time, the "oughts" had been the driving force in my life - and when I failed to live "up" to those oughts, I saw myself as a weak and faithless person. I never stopped to ask, "How does such-and-such fit my God-given nature?" or "Is such-and-such truly my gift and call?"

... I was finally able to say yes to life, a choice for which I am grateful beyond measure, though how I found that yes remains a mystery to me" (Palmer, 2000:72).

To David (and Parker) was given a new song. It is said our recorded voice patterns are as unique as our fingerprints. There is no song like our song, no journey like our own.

*Happy are those who make the Lord their trust, who  
do not turn to the proud, to those who go astray af-*

*ter false gods. You have multiplied, O Lord my God, your wondrous deeds and your thoughts toward us, none can compare with you. Were I to proclaim and tell of them, they would be more than can be counted (40:4-5).*

Words of sheerest gratitude. “O Joy that seekest me through pain,/ I cannot close my heart to thee,” George Matheson wrote at a time when “Something had happened to me, which was known only to myself, and which caused me the most severe mental suffering” (Taylor, 1990:137). “I trace the rainbow through the rain/ And feel the promise is not vain,/ That morning shall tearless be” (SA Song Book, 1987:621). It seemed to be dictated by an inner voice, he said, four stanzas completed in five minutes, his new song:

*Sacrifice and offering you do not desire, but you have given me an open ear. Burnt offering and sin offering you have not required Then I said, “Here I am; in the scroll of the book it is written of me. I delight to do your will, O my God; your law is within my heart” (40:6-8).*

*I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; see, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O Lord. I have not hidden your saving help within my heart, I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.*

*Do not, O Lord, withhold your mercy from me; let your steadfast love and your faithfulness keep me safe forever (40:9-11).*

God’s deliverance only comes to completion as his cause becomes our own. “Here I am...” The text carries a messianic significance as well (He 10:5-10). “The place God calls you to is the place where your



deep gladness and the world's deep hunger meet" (Buechner, 1993:119).

E.M. Blaiklock writes of the final verses:

...As though he pictures himself in the sanctuary, the choir now silent and the multitude departing, the psalmist imagines a pause. He stands alone near the place of song... In the emptying courtyard he turns to private prayer, for the last tremors of his suffering, the pain that has taught lessons so deep, are still felt in recent memory... How poor and needy (17) after all was he... Let God, his only hope, preserve" (Blaiklock, 1977:11,102).

*For evils have encompassed me without number; my iniquities have overtaken me, until I cannot see; they are more than the hairs of my head, and my heart fails me.*

*Be pleased, O Lord, to deliver me; O Lord, make haste to help me. Let all those be put to shame and confusion who seek to snatch away my life; let those be turned back and brought to dishonor who desire my hurt. Let those be appalled because of their shame who say to me, "Aha, Aha!"*

*But may all who seek you rejoice and be glad in you; may those who love your salvation say continually, "Great is the Lord!" As for me, I am poor and needy, but the Lord takes thought for me. You are my help and my deliverer; do not delay, O my God (40:12-17).*

## PART TWO

*Now in Jerusalem by the Sheep Gate there is a pool, called in Hebrew Beth-zatha, which has five porticoes. In these lay many invalids—blind, lame, and paralyzed. One man was there who had been ill for thirty-eight years. When Jesus saw him lying there and knew that he had been there a long time, he said to him, “Do you want to be made well?” The sick man answered him, “Sir, I have no one to put me into the pool when the water is stirred up; and while I am making my way, someone else steps down ahead of me.” Jesus said to him, “Stand up, take your mat and walk.” At once the man was made well, and he took up his mat and began to walk (Jn 5:2-9).*

*One day Peter and John were going up to the temple at the hour of prayer, at three o’clock in the afternoon. And a man lame from birth was being carried in. People would lay him daily at the gate of the temple called the Beautiful Gate so that he could ask for alms from those entering the temple. When he saw Peter and John about to go into the temple, he asked them for alms. Peter looked intently at him, as did John, and said, “Look at us.” And he fixed his attention on them, expecting to receive something from them. But Peter said, “I have no silver or gold, but what I have I give you; in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, stand up and walk.” And he took him by the right hand and raised him up; and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong. Jumping up, he stood and began to walk, and he entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God (Ac 3:1-8).*

Pastor Ames, the old minister in the novel *Gilead*, prays a blessing over a friend’s son, a prodigal lad, so sad and so lost. The boy’s

father, Boughton, is also a minister, retired now and close to death. Ames conjectures:

... Old Boughton, if he could stand up out of his chair, out of his decrepitude and crankiness and sorrow and limitation, would abandon all those handsome children of his, mild and confident as they are, and follow after that one son whom he has never known, whom he has favored as one does a wound, and he would protect him as a father cannot, defend him with a strength he does not have, sustain him with a bounty beyond any resource he could ever dream of having. If Boughton could be himself, he would utterly pardon every transgression, past, present, and to come, whether or not it was a transgression in fact or his to pardon. He would be that extravagant. That is a thing I would love to see.

But as the boy leaves from the bus station, it is Pastor Ames who places a hand on his bowed head and prays, “The Lord bless thee and keep thee...” After the boy’s departure, Pastor Ames goes to the father’s house.

There he was... sleeping on his right side as he always did, in the embrace of the Lord, I have no doubt, though I knew if I woke him up, he’d be back in Gethsemane. So I said to him in his sleep, I blessed that boy of yours for you. I still feel the weight of his brow on my hand. I said, I love him as much as you meant me to. So certain of your prayers are finally answered, old fellow. And mine too, mine too. We had to wait a long time, didn’t we?

Later, Pastor Ames reflects:

I do wish Boughton could have seen how his boy received his benediction, how he bowed his head.

If I told him, if he understood, he would have been jealous to have seen it, jealous to have been the one who bestowed the blessing. It is almost as if I felt his hand on my hand. Well, I can imagine him beyond the world, looking back at me with an amazement of realization—“This is why we have lived this life!” There are a thousand thousand reasons to live this life, every one of them sufficient (Robinson, 2005:243-245).

We are here to bestow blessing, God’s shalom. Holiness that does not do this is not holiness at all.



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# #Resist: The Book of Revelation as Resistance Literature

*Mark Braye*

The hashtag “#Resist” has become a prominent rallying cry on social media and in the zeitgeist over the last couple years. It is trending, both online and in society. The social, cultural, and political climates, especially in North America, have several issues brewing and swirling about: racism, sexism, misogyny, homophobia, Islamophobia, xenophobia, anti-immigration, extreme economic disparity, health and healthcare coverage concerns, and threats of war and violence. Sadly, this list is not exhaustive. We live in a world gone wrong. Despair and anxiety are rampant, and fear seems to motivate too many people in too many situations. Too often, children, women, and men are acting, reacting, and interacting with our world in unhealthy and even destructive ways. These negative and corrosive forces need to be resisted. They need to be identified, acknowledged, and worked against.

Toxic elements like the ones listed above are nothing new, however. When we reflect on history, we realize the need to resist unhealthy forces has existed long before now. The hashtag is new; the need to resist is not.

The following essay is a thematic paper exploring the biblical text of Revelation. In it, I will attempt to articulate elements of Revela-

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tion as resistance literature; I will write and talk about the implications of resistance in the author John's time and how we can apply those themes in our day.

"Revelation is the most explicitly counter-imperial book in the New Testament," writes Greg Carey. "It pronounces God's condemnation of Rome and its empire and looks for the future establishment of a new society in the New Jerusalem coming down from heaven."<sup>1</sup> These are the words of introduction from Carey's essay "The Book of Revelation as Counter-Imperial Script" from the book *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*<sup>2</sup>, edited by Richard A. Horsley. Carey concludes his opening thoughts in stating: "[Revelation] calls in the meantime for faithful endurance of persecution by the forces of empire, anticipating that it may lead to martyrdom."<sup>3</sup>

In this essay, I plan to explore the following forces and elements of resistance in Revelation: Resisting False Religion, Resisting Violence, Resisting Empire, and Resisting Despair.

## **Resisting False Religion**

The historical and cultural setting in which John found himself when writing the Book of Revelation was a complicated one. An early date has him writing the book shortly after Nero's reign, from 54-68 AD. And a late date has the book written towards the end of the reign of Domitian, which was in 81-96 AD. There were several conflicts in social, political, religious, and personal spheres during these time periods.

One of the major motifs in Revelation is its critique of false religion. In this section of the paper, considering Revelation's resistance of false religion, I want to use the seven letters to the seven churches in Revelation 2-3 as an entry point into considering what Revelation is saying about false and genuine religion. The letters to the churches in the second and third chapters of Revelation contain words of critique and words of commendation. We will use the content of these letters to consider what Jesus' message was to the churches in Asia Minor so long ago, and how the message to those churches relates, if in any way, to today's Church.



“To the angel of the Church in Ephesus, write [this]”<sup>4</sup> Jesus says to John:

These are the words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands: “I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance. I know that you cannot tolerate evildoers; you have tested those who claim to be apostles but are not, and have found them to be false. I also know that you are enduring patiently and bearing up for the sake of my name, and that you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then from what you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.”<sup>5</sup>

The Church in Ephesus receives positive comments in the above passage. Their endurance and perseverance through suffering is commendable. The disciples endure “patiently” and they are “bearing up” for the sake of the name of Jesus Christ. They are known for their hard work and for being faithful to doctrinal positions. In fact, their discernment and evaluation of possible apostles and their teachings is spoken of highly.

Yet Jesus does have something against them; there is critique after the commendation. The Church in Ephesus has forsaken their first love, or the love they had at first.<sup>6</sup> “...You have abandoned the love you had at first,” Jesus says and John writes to them. The Church in Ephesus has become a loveless community of faith. Their doctrinal positions are solid, their work ethic is admirable. But their ethic of love is missing. In his book *Seven Deadly Spirits: The Message of Revelation's Letters for Today's Church*<sup>7</sup>, T. Scott Daniels states: “In their zeal for moral purity, they have lost the centrality of love.”<sup>8</sup>

The consequences of the Church members in Ephesus losing their love are significant. They will have their lampstand removed if they do not repent and return to the works of love they did at first. Church-

es that lose their love for each other and others lose their lampstand, their place. Their very witness is compromised. The witness and ways of an unloving Church are not consistent with the witness and ways of Jesus Christ. When John addresses the lack of love displayed by the Church in Ephesus, “he is certainly including the love they have for God, but he seems to be emphasizing the love they were to continue to share with one another.”<sup>9</sup> Daniels continues: “Our love for God and our love for one another are deeply connected. Brokenness in our love for God inevitably leads to the shattering of our love for neighbor.”<sup>10</sup> Love for God and love for others is paramount to genuine faith and genuine Christian discipleship. In Ephesus, however, “the radiant light of love for God and one another”<sup>11</sup> had faded.

This happens in New York, Paris, and Sarnia, too; not only in the city of ancient Ephesus. As I sit here and type, in fact, my mind wanders to a current situation in the church where my wife and I serve. A lack of love is corroding and hindering our fellowship and witness. There are forces of animosity and hostility at work among our sisters and brothers in Christ, discouraging some and distressing others. I pray we hear and take to heart part of the message to the Church in Ephesus to repent and return to the ways and witness of love.

The Church in Smyrna, a city 35 miles north of Ephesus, was a hostile Jewish community; Christians were suffering. In the letter John writes to them, Jesus knows they are experiencing “affliction” and “poverty.”<sup>12</sup> Jesus also knows they are being slandered by others in the city. There are no negative comments made to this community of faith; there is no real critique. However, they *are* commanded to stop being afraid and to be faithful in Revelation 2:10.

Perhaps the takeaway from the Church in Smyrna is that there are those around us who practice false religion; whose faith does not line up with what they say they believe. There are those in the city who practice slander against the Christians, who say “‘They are Jews and are not, but are a synagogue of Satan.’”<sup>13</sup> The sisters and brothers in Smyrna are called to be faithful and resist this type of false faith and false religion; as are we in our fellowship and witness today.

The letter to the Church in Pergamum reads:

And to the angel of the church in Pergamum write:

These are the words of him who has the sharp two-edged sword: “I know where you are living, where Satan’s throne is. Yet you are holding fast to my name, and you did not deny your faith in me even in the days of Antipas my witness, my faithful one, who was killed among you, where Satan lives. But I have a few things against you: you have some there who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the people of Israel, so that they would eat food sacrificed to idols and practice fornication. So you also have some who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. Repent then. If not, I will come to you soon and make war against them with the sword of my mouth. Let anyone who has an ear listen to what the Spirit is saying to the churches. To everyone who conquers I will give some of the hidden manna, and I will give a white stone, and on the white stone is written a new name that no one knows except the one who receives it.”<sup>14</sup>

The Church in Pergamum “lived in the shadow of the provincial capital’s imposing acropolis, on which many official buildings and religious sites were located,” writes Michael J. Gorman in his book *Reading Revelation Responsibly*<sup>15</sup>, “including a tremendous altar to Zeus and a towering temple of the imperial cult.”<sup>16</sup> The fellowship in Pergamum was not in the “Bible belt” of that day. In fact, the church members were surrounded by false religion and cultic practices. And these other worldviews were influencing their witness. The critique Jesus levels against the church in the city of Pergamum was that some of the members there were practicing and accommodating the ways of the other belief systems around them. They were letting the false religions around them creep into their lives and ways of faith. Some in the church in Pergamum held to the teachings of Balaam; some in the church were holding to the teachings of the Nicolaitans. Regarding the possibility of compromised faith and witness, Richard K. Eckley says, “the Pergamene Christians were encouraged to hold fast, even as they were presently resisting the false teachers.”<sup>17</sup>

The commendation to the Church in Thyatira highlights their love, faith, service, and perseverance. “I know your works,” Jesus says and John writes, “your love, faith, service, and patient endurance. I know that your last works are greater than the first.”<sup>18</sup> Their critique, sadly, is a harsh one. They have tolerated “that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet and is teaching and beguiling [Jesus’] servants to practice fornication and to eat food sacrificed to idols.”<sup>19</sup> Their error is not simply an error of doctrine or interpretation. Their error surpasses doctrinal issues; their error includes their lifestyle and is an error of compromised witness.

This happens today, too. Our witness as the Body of Christ can be compromised and convoluted when our words and deeds do not match the teachings and beliefs of our faith. We need to resist being beguiled by the false prophets and false religion of our day.

The letter to the Church in Sardis is a harsh one, too. They do not receive any positive comments. And the critique is blistering: “I know your works; you have a name of being alive, but you are dead.”<sup>20</sup> The message to the Christians in Sardis is blunt and cuts to the heart of the integrity of their faith. They have a good reputation, but it is not an accurate portrayal of their witness. Writing about Sardis, T. Scott Daniels says the letter is painting “a picture of a Church that is proud, bored, and living off its memory, but is not moving forward. So, the spirit of Sardis,” he continues, “seems to be a spirit of apathetic faith that allows the Church to look alive when in reality it is dead.”<sup>21</sup>

If I can be candid, my own denomination and tradition, The Salvation Army, tends to want to relive the past and bask in the memory of the “glory days.” It is fair to say, perhaps, that other denominations and traditions experience this to various degrees as well. There is value in looking to and appreciating the past, but not at the expense of a vibrant and authentic faith today. This is a tendency to be resisted.

The Church in Philadelphia does not receive a critique; there are no negative comments recorded by John in their letter from Christ. Our framework of resisting false religion, though, can be gleaned from their commendation. The Church in Philadelphia is lauded for keeping Christ’s word and not denying his name in Revelation 3:8-10. The Church in Philadelphia “was doing the Word. These people

loved God with everything in them, and they loved their neighbors as they loved themselves.”<sup>22</sup> Contrast this expression of love in Philadelphia with the loss and lack of love in the Church in Ephesus. The lesson for us is to resist losing love; to resist the possibility of love leaving our fellowship and witness.

The fellowship in Laodicea does not get commended; there are no positive comments in the letter they receive. The criticism in their letter is articulated in Revelation 3:15-17:

I know your works; you are neither cold nor hot. I wish that you were either cold or hot. So, because you are lukewarm, and neither cold nor hot, I am about to spit you out of my mouth. For you say, ‘I am rich, I have prospered, and I need nothing.’ You do not realize that you are wretched, pitiable, poor, blind, and naked.<sup>23</sup>

The appraisal addresses the usefulness and impact of their fellowship and witness. They are neither hot nor cold; they are lukewarm. They are not hot like a cup of tea or a good bowl of soup on a cold day. And they are not cold, like a refreshing glass of water on a hot day. They are like a bowl of soup that has sat on the table too long, or a bottle of water that has sat in a car all day in the summer.

The implications for the Church today are significant. The message is: do not become lukewarm. We are being called to continue to cultivate and kindle the light of our faith; we are being called to keep the fire of our faith burning. Only then will our fellowship and witness make an impact and affect the communities of our world in positive ways. We must resist the tendency to become complacent in our faith and witness.

I believe looking to the seven letters to the seven Churches in Revelation 2-3 gives us a solid framework for thinking about resisting false religion and practicing a faith that is true and vibrant.

## **Resisting Violence**

The Book of Revelation contains incredibly graphic and disturbing images and allusions to violence. Some of the verses and pas-

sages in John's Apocalypse are horrific. Examples include, but are not limited to:

Beware, I am throwing her on a bed, and those who commit adultery with her I am throwing into great distress, unless they repent of her doings; and I will strike her children dead. And all the churches will know that I am the one who searches minds and hearts, and I will give to each of you as your works deserve.<sup>24</sup>

I looked and there was a pale green horse! Its rider's name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.<sup>25</sup>

They were told not to damage the grass of the earth or any green growth or any tree, but only those people who do not have the seal of God on their foreheads. They were allowed to torture them for five months, but not to kill them, and their torture was like the torture of a scorpion when it stings someone. And in those days people will seek death but will not find it; they will long to die, but death will flee from them.<sup>26</sup>

So the four angels were released, who had been held ready for the hour, the day, the month, and the year, to kill a third of humankind.<sup>27</sup>

The beast was given a mouth uttering haughty and blasphemous words, and it was allowed to exercise authority for forty-two months. It opened its mouth to utter blasphemies against God, blaspheming his name and his dwelling, that is, those who dwell in heaven. Also it was allowed to make war on the saints and to conquer them. It was given authority

over every tribe and people and language and nation, and all the inhabitants of the earth will worship it, everyone whose name has not been written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that was slaughtered.<sup>28</sup>

From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty.<sup>29</sup>

In his book *God & Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now*<sup>30</sup>, John Dominic Crossan takes great exception with the violence in Revelation; particularly acts of violence that seem to implicate Jesus as the perpetrator of said violence. “To turn the nonviolent resistance of the slaughtered Jesus into the violent warfare of the slaughtering Jesus, is for me as a Christian,” he writes, “to libel the body of Jesus and to blaspheme the soul of Christ.”<sup>31</sup>

I think Crossan makes a fair point; it is worth considering these verses and wrestling with these passages. It is certainly troubling to read parts of Revelation and the violence it contains, and consider these actions acts of God or acts of Jesus Christ, whom we consider the “Prince of Peace.”<sup>32</sup> There are countless instances of language and images of anything but peace in John’s Apocalypse.

“The book of Revelation,” writes Robert H. Mounce, “is regularly regarded as belonging to that literary genre we have described as apocalyptic.”<sup>33</sup> And one of the prominent characteristics of this genre, apocalyptic literature, is that it utilizes vast amounts of symbolic and metaphorical language. In his book simply titled *Apocalyptic*<sup>34</sup>, an introduction to this genre of literature, Leon Morris states: “A feature of much apocalyptic that often makes it unintelligible to modern men is the use of strange symbolism.”<sup>35</sup> Therefore, we must read Revelation responsibly. We must read Revelation as apocalyptic literature, taking into account its symbolic and metaphorical language and elements.

When we take the above into consideration, I believe we start to see Revelation as a text not condoning or promoting violence, but

rather a text resisting violence. I believe the following passages from Revelation can make this case wonderfully. In Revelation 6, we read:

Then I saw the Lamb open one of the seven seals, and I heard one of the four living creatures call out, as with a voice of thunder, “Come!” I looked, and there was a white horse! Its rider had a bow; a crown was given to him, and he came out conquering and to conquer. When he opened the second seal, I heard the second living creature call out, “Come!”

And out came another horse, bright red; its rider was permitted to take peace from the earth, so that people would slaughter one another; and he was given a great sword. When he opened the third seal, I heard the third living creature call out, “Come!” I looked, and there was a black horse! Its rider held a pair of scales in his hand, and I heard what seemed to be a voice in the midst of the four living creatures saying, “A quart of wheat for a day’s pay, and three quarts of barley for a day’s pay, but do not damage the olive oil and the wine!” When he opened the fourth seal, I heard the voice of the fourth living creature call out, “Come!” I looked and there was a pale green horse! Its rider’s name was Death, and Hades followed with him; they were given authority over a fourth of the earth, to kill with sword, famine, and pestilence, and by the wild animals of the earth.<sup>36</sup>

And in Revelation 19, John writes:

Then I saw heaven opened, and there was a white horse! Its rider is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness he judges and makes war. His eyes are like a flame of fire, and on his head are many diadems; and he has a name inscribed that no one knows but himself. He is clothed in a robe dipped in blood,



and his name is called The Word of God. And the armies of heaven, wearing fine linen, white and pure, were following him on white horses. From his mouth comes a sharp sword with which to strike down the nations, and he will rule them with a rod of iron; he will tread the wine press of the fury of the wrath of God the Almighty. On his robe and on his thigh he has a name inscribed, “King of kings and Lord of lords.”<sup>37</sup>

Jesus does not ride the red horse of war, the red horse of violence. “The One called the Word of God is not riding the red horse of war but the white horse of triumph. Jesus doesn’t overcome evil by war, but by his word.”<sup>38</sup> Christ’s word, his message and proclamation, is depicted as a “sharp sword” coming from his mouth. This is not a sword of conventional war; a sword used to kill and cultivate death. This is a sword used to wage war against evil and violence; to speak judgment upon the nations who practice these violent ways.<sup>39</sup> This sword is Christ’s gospel message used to cultivate life.

In *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John & the Praying Imagination*, Eugene Peterson writes about the juxtaposition of the red and white horses in the two passages above. “But war is a red horse, bloody and cruel, making life miserable and horrid. It is the action of power-hungry persons; it is delusion of insane pride; it is an expression of greed gone crazy.”<sup>40</sup> He continues, “The perennial ruse is to glorify war so that we accept it as a proper means of achieving goals. But it is evil. It is opposed by Christ. Christ does not sit on the red horse, ever.”<sup>41</sup>

The way of Jesus, the way of God, is not a way of violence. “When the slaughtered Lamb is seen in the midst of the divine throne in heaven, the meaning is that Christ’s sacrificial death *belongs to the way God rules the world*.”<sup>42</sup> The way God rules the world—the way Jesus rules the world—is through becoming the slaughtered Lamb of God, “who takes away the sin of the world!”<sup>43</sup> The “robe dipped in blood” in Revelation 19:13 is not a relic from an epic battle; it contains Christ’s own blood, shed on the cross. Jesus does not spill the blood of others; he spills his own blood *for* others.

Revelation contains incredibly violent scenes. However, when we read the text as apocalyptic literature, considering the ways of God manifested in Jesus, the prince of peace, we can see and hear its message of resisting violence.

## Resisting Empire

While Revelation is certainly apocalyptic literature, it is also an epistle; a letter. One that is most definitely prophetic literature. “[It] is a prophetic critique of the Roman Empire. Revelation is a daring proclamation that Jesus Christ, not Julius Caesar or any other emperor,” Brian Zahnd writes, “is the world’s true emperor and Savior. It’s the empire of Christ, not the empire of Rome, that is the eternal city.”<sup>44</sup>

The message of Revelation resists empire. It resists the power structures, the violent tendencies, the economic models, and the religious practices cultivated by empires and used to degrade people. The people of God belong to the Way of Jesus Christ. It is a new community and fellowship in which love is the prevailing sentiment, ideally. It is a community where peace, mercy, grace, and joy flourish. Throughout the text of Revelation there are numerous instances when John writes and tells believers to endure, to persevere, and to remain true. It is a call to resist empire and the elements of empire around the churches. To a certain extent, this is not a call to something new. In *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now*<sup>45</sup>, Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther write:

The call by Revelation to resist empire, then, was not an invitation to engage in a new praxis. Rather it was a reminder to the followers of Jesus of the commitment they had made at their baptism, where they had chosen to enter *ekklesiai* that were alternative to the social arrangements around them.<sup>46</sup>

Revelation calls believers to resist empire. We can heed this call. While the names and faces have changed, the destructive forces and elements of empire exist today. The way of Jesus is extremely countercultural and embodying this way is still a prophetic calling of the Church today.

## Resisting Despair

We can, perhaps, use Revelation's call to persevere and to endure as its calling card, one of its main themes. It is a call to resist despair. John's writings and visions are so vivid in detail of the violence, suffering, pain, and anxiety depicted. Reading through most of the book is like watching a genre-bending film, with elements of science-fiction, horror, fantasy, and adventure. Hope seems lost among the dreadful scenes and events taking place. Most of the text in Revelation would not make it on to an inspirational framed print to hang in a living room or office. It's seen as too discouraging and evokes despair.

But then we read Revelation 21-22. The violence, horror, and disturbing content depicted in the previous chapters has been defeated. Ultimate hope from God rules, not empire, not violence, not false religion. Those elements have passed away. God, through Jesus Christ, has defeated them. Some of my favorite words of Scripture depicting this ultimate hope come from Revelation 22:

Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more night; they need no light of lamp or sun, for the Lord God will be their light, and they will reign forever and ever.<sup>47</sup>

In the end, "God is triumphant," writes Grant Osborne. "He is 'Lord God Almighty,' the one who is omnipotent and in control of all things... Satan has been defeated at the cross, and even the death of the saints," he continues, "becomes their triumph over him."<sup>48</sup>

There is much in our world to despair, but the Book of Revelation is a hopeful book for us, too. It requires persevering and enduring

through chapter after chapter of odd material, but in the end, it offers a hope in communion with God that will last forever and ever. The Book of Revelation offers a hope that can heal us of our tendencies towards false religion, violence, empire, and despair.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Greg Carey, "The Book of Revelation as Counter-Imperial Script," in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, edited by Richard A. Horsley. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008), 157.
- <sup>2</sup> Richard A. Horsley, editor, *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*. (Louisville, Kentucky: Westminster John Knox Press, 2008).
- <sup>3</sup> Greg Carey, "The Book of Revelation as Counter-Imperial Script," in *In the Shadow of Empire: Reclaiming the Bible as a History of Faithful Resistance*, edited by Richard A. Horsley, 157.
- <sup>4</sup> Revelation 2:1 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>5</sup> Revelation 2:1-5 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>6</sup> Revelation 2:4 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>7</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits: The Message of Revelation's Letters for Today's Church*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2009).
- <sup>8</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits*, 39.
- <sup>9</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits*, 40.
- <sup>10</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits*, 40.
- <sup>11</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits*, 40.
- <sup>12</sup> Revelation 2:9 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>13</sup> Revelation 2:9 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>14</sup> Revelation 2:12-17 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>15</sup> Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness: Following the Lamb into the New Creation*. (Eugene, Oregon: Cascade Books, 2011).
- <sup>16</sup> Michael J. Gorman, *Reading Revelation Responsibly: Uncivil Worship and Witness: Following the Lamb into the New Creation*, 93.
- <sup>17</sup> Richard K. Eckley, *Revelation: A Commentary for Bible Students*. (Indianapolis, Indiana: Wesleyan Publishing House, 2006), 73.
- <sup>18</sup> Revelation 2:19 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>19</sup> Revelation 2:20 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>20</sup> Revelation 3:1 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>21</sup> T. Scott Daniels, *Seven Deadly Spirits*, 93.
- <sup>22</sup> Dwight M. Gunter II, *Seven Letters to Seven Churches: Lessons from the Book of Revelation*. (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 2011), 107.
- <sup>23</sup> Revelation 3:15-17 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>24</sup> Revelation 2:22-23 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>25</sup> Revelation 6:8 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>26</sup> Revelation 9:4-6 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>27</sup> Revelation 9:15 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>28</sup> Revelation 13:5-8 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>29</sup> Revelation 19:15 (New Revised Standard Version)
- <sup>30</sup> John Dominica Crossan, *God & Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now*.

(New York, New York: HarperOne, 2007).

<sup>31</sup> John Dominic Crossan, *God & Empire: Jesus Against Rome, Then and Now*, 224.

<sup>32</sup> Isaiah 9:6 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>33</sup> Robert H. Mounce, *The Book of Revelation: The New International Commentary on the New Testament*, Revised Edition. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 6.

<sup>34</sup> Leon Morris, *Apocalyptic*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1972).

<sup>35</sup> Leon Morris, *Apocalyptic*, 36.

<sup>36</sup> Revelation 6:1-8 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>37</sup> Revelation 19:11-16 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>38</sup> Brian Zahnd, *Sinners in the Hands of a Loving God: The Scandalous Truth of the Very Good News*. (New York, New York: Waterbrook, 2017), 174-175.

<sup>39</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Revelation: The New Cambridge Bible Commentary*. (New York, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 244.

<sup>40</sup> Eugene Peterson, *Reversed Thunder: The Revelation of John & the Praying Imagination*. (New York, New York: HarperOne, 1988), 77.

<sup>41</sup> Eugene Peterson, *Reversed Thunder*, 77.

<sup>42</sup> Richard Bauckman, *The Theology of the Book of Revelation: New Testament Theology*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 64.

<sup>43</sup> John 1:29 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>44</sup> Brian Zahnd, *Sinners in the Hands of a Loving God: The Scandalous Truth of the Very Good News*, 152.

<sup>45</sup> Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now*. (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 1999).

<sup>46</sup> Wes Howard-Brook and Anthony Gwyther, *Unveiling Empire: Reading Revelation Then and Now*, 117.

<sup>47</sup> Revelation 22:1-5 (New Revised Standard Version)

<sup>48</sup> Grant R. Osborne, *Revelation: Baker Exegetical Commentary of the New Testament*. (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2002), 15.



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# Book Notes

*Roger J. Green*

These book notes have always been about books that we wanted to bring to our readers' attention. However, in this issue of the journal, I would like to share with our readers four websites that will be helpful for reading, researching, writing, and preaching. They all contain a wealth of information via links to books, some of which are published by the people associated with the websites themselves. The first three mentioned are particularly useful in sharing sources of the Army's biblical and Wesleyan theology. The fourth provides invaluable resources from the broader Christian tradition and has been set up by a longtime friend and colleague of mine at Gordon College. It is a ministry that Professor Ted Hildebrandt began several years ago, and all resources in his website are free to anyone anywhere in the world. There are not only book resources mentioned, but there are entire courses and extensive lectures on the Scriptures, theology, and Church history available.

First, here are three websites that provide resources for our biblical and Wesleyan theology: [AsburySeminary.edu/Resources/](http://AsburySeminary.edu/Resources/); [WTSociety.com/Wesleyan-Theological-Journal](http://WTSociety.com/Wesleyan-Theological-Journal); and [HolinessandUnity.org/Resources/](http://HolinessandUnity.org/Resources/). This last website is intended for the Wesleyan Holiness Connection, a coalition of Wesleyan denominations and ministries that The Salvation Army has been a part of since its inception.

Second, Professor Hildebrandt's website is called [BiblicaleLearning.org](http://BiblicaleLearning.org). Here is what he says about the website:

BiblicaleLearning.org offers free access to biblically based online learning resources (text, audio, YouTube videos) by many evangelical biblical scholars teaching on each book of the Bible. There are also video courses on Greek, Hebrew, hermeneutics, bible study methods, and biblical backgrounds, as well as thousands of 360 degrees views and still photos of biblical sites in Israel. The site seeks to use the internet for the glory of God and the good of the global community. It offers free quality biblical education for those who cannot attend brick and mortar schools.

There is a lifetime of learning available to anyone who wants to take advantage of these four websites.





Salvation Army National Publications

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*Crest Books, a division of The Salvation Army's national publications department, was established in 1997 so contemporary Salvationist voices could be captured and bound in enduring form for future generations, to serve as witnesses to the continuing force and mission of the Army.*

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A. Kenneth Wilson, *Fractured Parables: And Other Tales to Lighten the Heart and Quicken the Spirit; The First Dysfunctional Family: A Modern Guide to the Book of Genesis; It Seemed Like a Good Idea at the Time: Some of the Best and Worst Decisions in the Bible*

Allen Satterlee, *Turning Points: How The Salvation Army Found a Different Path; Determined to Conquer: The History of The Salvation Army Caribbean Territory; Amy Reardon, Holiness Revealed*

Bob Hostetler, ed., *Samuel L. Brengle's Holy Life Series*

Carroll Ferguson Hunt, *If Two Shall Agree (with Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO)*

Check-Hung Yee, *Good Morning China*

Chick Yuill, *Leadership on the Axis of Change*

David Laeger, *Shadow and Substance: The Tabernacle of the Human Heart*

Ed Forster, *101 Everyday Sayings From the Bible*

Frank Duracher, *Smoky Mountain High; Now You Know: The Rest of The Army's Story*

Harold Burgmayer, *The Beat Goes On!: Music as a Corps Ministry*

Harry Williams, *An Army Needs An Ambulance Corps: A History of The Salvation Army's Medical Services*

Helen Clifton, *From Her Heart: Selections from the Preaching and Teaching of Helen Clifton*

Henry Garipey and Stephen Court, *Hallmarks of The Salvation Army*

Henry Gariepy, *Israel L. Gaither: Man with a Mission; A Salvationist Treasury: 365 Devotional Meditations from the Classics to the Contemporary*; Andy Miller: *A Legend and a Legacy*

Herbert Luhn, *Holy Living: The Mindset of Jesus*

*How I Met The Salvation Army: True Stories of Christian Redemption*

*In the Balance: Christ Weighs the Hearts of 7 Churches; Joy Revealed; The Kingdom Revealed*

Jason R. Swain, *Under Two Flags*

Joe Noland, *A Little Greatness*

John C. Izzard, *Pen of Flame: The Life and Poetry of Catherine Baird*

John Cheydleur and Ed Forster, eds., *Every Sober Day Is a Miracle*

John Larsson, *Inside a High Council; Saying Yes to Life*

Jolene Hodder, *Sensational Grace: Discovering Pearls of Truth in Daily Life*

Jonathan S. Raymond, *Social Holiness: The Company We Keep*

Judith L. Brown and Christine Poff, eds., *No Longer Missing: Compelling True Stories from The Salvation Army's Missing Persons Ministry*

Ken Elliott, *The Girl Who Invaded America: The Odyssey of Eliza Shirley*

*Living Portraits Speaking Still: A Collection of Bible Studies*

Lyell M. Rader, *Romance & Dynamite: Essays on Science & the Nature of Faith*  
Margaret E. Doughty, *The Offering: An Act of Worship*

Marlene Chase, *Pictures from the Word; Beside Still Waters: Great Prayers of the Bible for Today; Our God Comes: And Will Not Be Silent*

Philip Needham, *He Who Laughed First: Delighting in a Holy God, (with Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City, MO); When God Becomes Small; Christ at the Door; Christmas Breakthrough, Lenten Awakening*

*Quotes of the Past & Present*

R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Bren-  
gle; The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*

R.G. Moyles, *I Knew William Booth; Come Join Our Army; William Booth in Ameri-  
ca: Six Visits 1886 – 1907; Farewell to the Founder*

Roger J. Green, *The Life & Ministry of William Booth* (with Abingdon Press, Nashville); *War on Two Fronts: William Booth's Theology of Redemption*

Shaw Clifton, *Never the Same Again: Encouragement for New and Not-So-New Christians; Who Are These Salvationists? An Analysis for the 21st Century; Selected Writings, Vol. 1: 1974-1999 and Vol. 2: 2000-2010*

Stephen Banfield and Donna Leedom, *Say Something: Inspiring Accounts of Everyday Evangelism*

Stephen Court and Joe Noland, eds., *Tsunami of the Spirit: Come Roll Over Me*  
*Stephen Court, Articles of War: A Revolutionary Catechism*

Terry Camsey, *Slightly Off Center! Growth Principles to Thaw Frozen Paradigms*  
*The Salvation Army 101: An Overview of The Salvation Army's Mission, Organization, and Doctrine*

*The Salvation Army 101: An Overview of The Salvation Army's Mission, Organization, and Doctrine*

Tim Foley, *Rest — for the rest of us*

*Valiant and Strong: A Pictorial Celebration of The Salvation Army's 150 Years*

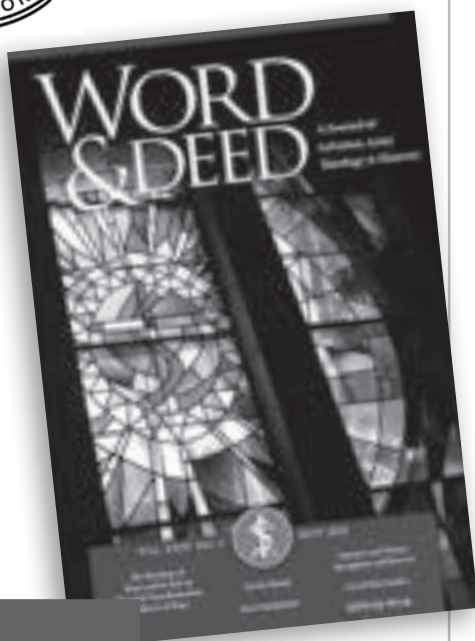
William W. Francis, *Building Blocks of Spiritual Leadership; Celebrate the Feasts of the Lord: The Christian Heritage of the Sacred Jewish Festivals*

# CALL FOR PAPERS



**T**he editors of *Word & Deed* are pleased to invite articles, essays, sermons, and book reviews for publication in the November 2023 issue of the journal.

The purpose of *Word & Deed* is to encourage and distribute the thinking of Salvationists and other Christian writers on topics broadly related to the theology and ministry of The Salvation Army. The journal helps explain ideas central to the mission of The Salvation Army, exploring the Army's theology and ministry in response to Christ's command to love God and our neighbor.



**Submission Deadline: Jan 1<sup>st</sup> • 2023**

*Requests for style sheets/other correspondence can be addressed to:*

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*All manuscripts should be sent to the journal co-editors:*

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**Manuscripts should be lengths as follows:** academic papers (articles, literature reviews and essays) – 5,000 words or fewer; sermons – 3,000 words or fewer; book reviews – 2,000 words or fewer. The title of the article should appear at the top of the first page of the text, and the manuscript should utilize endnotes, not footnotes. All Bible references should be from the New International Version. If another version is used throughout the manuscript, indicate the version in the first textual reference only. If multiple versions are used, please indicate the version each time it changes. Manuscripts must be submitted digitally in Microsoft Word format. A 100-word abstract of the paper may be used at the discretion of the editors.



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