

# WORD & DEED

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A JOURNAL OF SALVATION ARMY  
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

*Salvation for Both Worlds: Toward a Biblical and Wesleyan  
Social Theology*

*Salvación para ambos mundos: hacia una teología social bíblica  
y wesleyana*

*George Scott Railton: Father of Salvation Army World Missions*

*The Everlasting Mercy: Cues from St. Luke on Loving Strangers*

*Wondering and Waiting: Habbakuk 1:1-4*

*Reviving Holiness Through Pneumatology*



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# WORD & DEED



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## Welcoming New Friends

*“And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him” (Colossians 3:17).*

If ever there has been a biblical watchword for this journal the Colossians 3:17 passage is it. We have been and will continue to be guided by the authority of the Scriptures, which give us the full revelation of God in the person of Jesus Christ, Lord and Savior. Our constant prayer in this twenty-sixth year of publication is that we will continue to be faithful to the Scriptures and thereby support the first doctrine of The Salvation Army, which states, “We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.”

And as we mentioned in a recent editorial, we are grateful for the friends who continue to help us in this grand project, beginning with both the faithful readers of the journal and also the staff of National Headquarters who make this journal possible. The material in this issue of the journal represents the writing of friends both old and new. The lead article is written by our friend and a member of the editorial board for several years, Donald E. Burke. His article entitled “Salvation for Both Worlds: Toward a Biblical and Wesleyan Social Theology” is a critical reminder of the roots of the social ministry of The Salvation Army. We were so grateful for this excellent article that we had it translated into Spanish to follow the English article.

That article is followed by a colleague of Don Burke’s at Booth

University College in Winnipeg, Canada, and a faithful friend of this journal—Andrew M. Eason. Andrew is a scholar in Salvation Army history, and wrote his article for inclusion in an issue of *Methodist History*. However, we are of the opinion that articles of this caliber deserve a wider audience, and so we gladly republish this article on one of the great leaders of the early Salvation Army, George Scott Railton. We do so with the permission of the editors of *Methodist History*. We realize that many of our readers do not have access to that journal but are now able to read this excellent article here. Because we are republishing this article with permission we do so with footnotes rather than endnotes. Readers interested in this period of Army history and George Scott Railton will find those footnotes invaluable.

Our readers will know of our love and respect for our friend Lyell Rader, who went to be with the Lord several years ago. If there is one word to capture Lyell's writing, that word would be exquisite. Read Lyell's article carefully, and sentence by sentence, it will be a challenge to your own Christian life. Lyell still speaks to us and to the greater Church through his writings here in *Word & Deed*.

And just to jump ahead to the book review section of this issue before introducing two new friends—as we mentioned in our November 2023 issue, we are delighted that our lifelong friend, David Rightmire, has come on board as our book review editor. David is not only an exceptional writer, but an avid reader. We are pleased indeed that he has joined us and look forward to his contributions.

And finally, we want to mention two new friends. The first, Christopher L. Scott, provided us with a sermon in the November 2023 issue and has done so again in this issue. We are grateful for submissions of sermons for *Word & Deed* because they demonstrate what it means to be biblically based in our preaching. Christopher Scott is the senior pastor at the Lakeview Missionary Church in Moses Lake, Washington, and is an encouragement to us because his interest in *Word & Deed* is representative of several people outside of Salvation Army circles who find the journal helpful. We rely on those friends to make the journal known in their denominational circles.

The second new friend is Justin Polsley, whose article on holi-

ness takes our readers to the center of one of the most important biblical and Wesleyan doctrines, that of holiness. Justin is a soldier in The Salvation Army (a lay Salvationist) who presently serves as the Youth Discipleship Ministry Director in The Salvation Army's Northern and Central Illinois Division in the USA Central Territory. We are grateful both for Justin's support of *Word & Deed*, and also for his article in this issue.

And so we pray that we are an example of what it means to follow the biblical commandment to do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus. May *Word & Deed* be a viable pattern of living out the gospel in word and deed.

RJG  
JSR

# Salvation for Both Worlds

## TOWARD A BIBLICAL AND WESLEYAN SOCIAL THEOLOGY<sup>1</sup>

*Donald E. Burke*

From early in his Christian journey, John Wesley engaged in a range of activities directed toward the alleviation of the suffering of those who were, for various reasons, marginalized in eighteenth-century English society. Visiting the sick and imprisoned, feeding the hungry, and serving the poor were core activities of Wesley and the Methodists. Further, across the many years of his ministry, Wesley repeatedly exhorted his Methodist followers to make engagement with the poor a fundamental part of their Christian living. In fact, Wesley would assert that without this regular service to the poor, his followers' Christian faith was in jeopardy. The temptation to settle into comfortable lives would be too great to resist unless it was tempered by frequent service to the marginalized.<sup>2</sup>

The succeeding generations of those who have claimed Wesley as their spiritual ancestor have produced a number of significant social reformers who have called the Church to serve and advocate for the poor. Examples of these perspectives and practices from the Wesleyan traditions would confirm that this emphasis on the transforma-

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tion of individual lives, the alleviation of human suffering, and even the transformation of the world is an ever-flowing stream that pours from the headwaters of our Wesleyan tradition.

Nevertheless, Donald Dayton, commenting upon what he termed “the Wesleyan preferential option for the poor,” observed that while Wesley’s practice “... seems to make an option for the poor constitutive of the life of the church,” he is “less clear how Wesley would argue the theological grounding for this praxis.” Dayton goes on to suggest that one reason for the neglect of this theme in later generations is that Wesley did not ground his praxis sufficiently theologically to make the issue normative for those who would claim him as mentor in the following centuries.<sup>3</sup>

In response to Dayton’s assessment, my suggestion in this paper is that there are compelling theological foundations for the Wesleyan concern for the marginalized which run deeply in the Scriptures, in Wesley’s theology, and in the Wesleyan psyche. It is not my intention to put words into Wesley’s mouth or to assert that he had a fully developed social theology. However, I do want to suggest that John Wesley had imbibed the Scriptures so thoroughly that it is possible to sketch out the contours of a biblical and theological grounding for our persistent Wesleyan orientation toward the love of our neighbour which expresses itself in service to the marginalized and a hope for the transformation of the world.

The recognition that Wesley’s theology is focused on transformation and re-creation is key to understanding the impulse to transform society that was expressed in his own ministry, and that continues to percolate in the ministry of those who lay claim to his heritage. Whether we are discussing the transformation that is possible in individual lives, the restoration of the image of God, or the re-creation of all things, for Wesley God’s work in the world is one of transformation. The scope of this transformation and of this transformational impulse is expansive.

In this paper I want to sketch out three currents in Scripture and Wesley which ground our social mission theologically. We begin with the shape of the canon and its bookends—creation and new creation.

## Creation and New Creation

Contrary to the piecemeal way in which we often read the Scriptures, I am convinced that the Bible—taken in its entirety—is fundamentally optimistic. The Scriptures convey an optimism of grace, grounded in the firm conviction that the goodness of God will triumph. Overarching the canon is the framework of the creation of all that exists by the God who, in Genesis 1-3, calls the world into existence. The world, fresh from the Creator’s hands is repeatedly described as “good” and at the end of the first creation narrative is deemed “exceedingly good” (Genesis 1:31). At the other end of the canon, the Bible closes with the stunning vision of a new heaven and a new earth (Revelation 21-22) which will restore—and more—the goodness of God’s handiwork.

In between these canonical bookends there is, of course, the tragic story of a world in disarray, of a humanity run amok. It is the drama of humankind endowed with the image of God but nevertheless deeply flawed; the image of God distorted by disobedience and alienation from God, from each other, and from the rest of creation. We cannot read very far into the Scriptures without coming away with a deep sense of the profound loss that the world has suffered through human sin. It is difficult to exaggerate the depth of the depravity into which humankind has fallen. Further, we quickly learn that the ramifications of this alienation have spread beyond humankind to the larger creation. The Bible is thoroughly realistic about the human propensity to perversity and about the ramifications of human sinfulness personally, socially, economically, and ecologically. This biblical realism leads some to despair of the world; to reject it as beyond hope; and to withdraw from engagement with the world. At its worst, this may lead some to resignation about the state of the marginalized, sometimes citing Jesus’s observation that “you always have the poor with you” (Matthew 26:11) as though it is an excuse—if not a mandate—for the marginalization of hundreds of millions.

But having said this, when we read the full canon of the Scriptures, we are driven to the conclusion that the one who created the world is determined to recreate it. God is not only the Creator but

also the Re-Creator. From one end of the canon to the other, the Bible affirms God's persistent, stubborn, and boundless love for the world. The visions of a new creation in Revelation are not merely wishful thinking; they are the culmination of the entire biblical narrative. Neither are the visions of a new heaven and a new earth the product of a pessimistic dismissal of the world as it is, in favor of the world as we might wish it to be. Rather, these visions are a deep affirmation of God's determination to fulfill the purposes of creation. Without the visions of Revelation, the biblical story is incomplete, inchoate and without purpose. Therefore, there is a fundamental congruency within the canon of Scripture between the creation in Genesis and the new creation in Revelation. In between these book-ends we find the story of God's call to faithful human partners to join with Him in the work of bringing the new creation to reality.

This structure of the canon infuses Scripture with an optimism of grace, with the firm conviction that God's faithfulness and love will triumph. More than simply patching over the world, God purposes to recreate it. The movement from creation through uncreation to new creation is foundational to the understanding of the Scriptures and it was fundamental to Wesley as well.

Theodore Runyon has recognized and written extensively about "the new creation" as a key motif in Wesley's thought, most notably in his book, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*.<sup>4</sup> His argument is that Wesley's fundamental concern with the renewal of the image of God in humankind brings with it an emphasis upon the renewal of the harmony of the original creation. Runyon writes, "For Wesley religion is not humanity's means to escape to a more tolerable heavenly realm but participation in God's own redemptive enterprise, God's new creation, 'faith working by love,' bringing holiness and happiness to all the earth. But this inevitably means confronting the injustices of the present age."<sup>5</sup> It is this emphasis upon the work of God in the renewal of the divine image which, according to Runyon, spurs Wesley's unwillingness to excuse his followers from an easy acceptance of the suffering, alienation, and oppression of the marginalized. His hope in God's work of new creation spurs Wesley to work for a world in which harmony and well-being might

flourish for all humankind.

Randy Maddox argues that this emphasis on the new creation became more prominent in Wesley's thought later in his life. Particularly in three sermons, "The General Spread of the Gospel" (1783), "The Signs of the Times" (1787), and "Of Former Times" (1787), according to Maddox, Wesley emphasized God's work of new creation in the socioeconomic realm. He writes:

These late sermons also evidence Wesley's characteristic emphases about how we can best cooperate in God's nurturing of new socioeconomic realities. His broadest emphasis is on the church's mission of evangelism. Central to this emphasis is his conviction that transformed action in the world is grounded in transformed lives. As those already experiencing God's inner renewing work, Christians should seek to meet the social and economic needs of others. But we should not limit ourselves to concern for external welfare; like God, we should long that others experience as well the new creation of the spiritual dimensions of their lives.<sup>6</sup>

This linkage between the ministry of Christians to meet socioeconomic needs and to bring socioeconomic transformation with the spiritual transformation of human lives leads us next to consider briefly Wesley's understanding of salvation.

### Wesley's Soteriology

John Wesley's theology was, fundamentally, soteriological. Salvation, in its fullness, was the constant theme of his preaching and his writing. There are many excellent treatments of Wesley's theology of salvation,<sup>7</sup> so for our purposes a simple sketch of the way of salvation is adequate.

Foundational to Wesley's theology was his belief that humanity has been deeply marred by sin. Not only has humankind been alienated from God, but there is a corresponding corruption of the image



of God in which humanity was first created. If left to its own devices, humanity would be lost. But the gulf between human depravity and God is bridged by God's prevenient grace which is present universally and operative when it prompts a positive response from human beings. This prevenient grace, as it were, mitigates the paralyzing effect of sin and prompts a willing human partner to respond to God's grace.

Justification and new birth are joined together for Wesley as the next benchmark in his order of salvation. For Wesley, justification signals what God does for us through His forgiveness of our sin; new birth or regeneration is what God does within us, the first movements of God's transforming work toward the restoration of the image of God. Justification *restores the relationship* between God and human beings while new birth and sanctification *restore the image of God*. The subjective change or transformation (or regeneration) begins with the new birth. However, as important as the new birth is, it is also, in and of itself, only a beginning. Christian perfection or perfect love or sanctification is the further work of transformation. That is, the transformation that begins with new birth continues on toward Christian perfection.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout the entire order of salvation, the grace of God meets with an obedient response from God's human partner. The initiative rests with God and is founded upon grace; however, it must meet with a positive human response. Thus, Wesley's soteriology is deeply cooperant, bringing together divine grace and human response into a dynamic and powerful transforming work. Make no mistake: Wesley is thoroughly convinced that the foundation of this transforming work is to be found in God's grace. But he maintains that unless the human partner responds to this grace, it will be thwarted. Furthermore, Wesley's soteriology is fundamentally optimistic (even if realistic) about the possibility of true transformation. The sinner can be transformed; sin can be overcome. The grace of God can triumph over sin in the life of a faithful, regenerate human being.

In broad strokes, Wesley's account of salvation with Christian perfection as the real transformation of the human person, leads to an optimistic, hopeful stance. The future can be embraced as filled

with hope and positive potential. But Wesley's understanding of salvation on the individual level, according to Theodore Runyon, leads quite naturally to a broader interest:

Wesleyans are united in insisting that salvation includes the transformation of the creature. Many would extend this transformation not only to the individual but to society. They find a peculiar affinity between Wesley's doctrine of sanctification and movements for social change. When Christian perfection becomes the goal on the individual level, a fundamental hope is engendered that the future can surpass the present. A holy dissatisfaction is aroused with regard to any present state of affairs—a dissatisfaction that supplies the critical edge necessary to keep the process of individual transformation moving. Moreover, this holy dissatisfaction is *readily transferable* from the realm of the individual to that of society, where it provides a persistent motivation for reform in the light of 'a more perfect way' that transcends the *status quo*. So, Wesleyans are united on both the possibility and the necessity of real transformation.<sup>9</sup>

As Runyon argues, there is a fundamental and direct link between Wesley's emphasis on the transformation of the individual that is embedded in his teaching of new birth and Christian perfection on the one hand, and the transformation of society on the other. The extension from the transformation of the individual to the transformation of society is compelling. The optimism about personal transformation parallels the optimism about the transformation of the world. This linkage became more prominent in Wesley in the later years of his ministry. A similar linkage—sometimes unstated, but nonetheless present—can be found in others.

Within our own tradition, William Booth, the co-founder of The Salvation Army and a committed proponent of Wesleyan holiness teaching, later in his life wrote a short article entitled, "Salvation for



Both Worlds.”<sup>10</sup> Known widely as a revivalist whose passion was to save souls and to lead them into the experience of “entire sanctification” before delivering them to their eternal reward, Booth reframed his mission and his theology in 1889 and 1890. In “Salvation for Both Worlds” and then in his book, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, Booth set out his vision for this significant recasting of his ministry and that of The Salvation Army. In his reflection upon forty-four years of service to God, Booth wrote:

... as I came to look more closely into things, and gathered more experience of the ways of God to man, I discovered that the miseries from which I sought to save man in the next world were substantially the same as those from which I everywhere found him suffering in this [world], and that they proceeded from the same cause—that is from his alienation from, and his rebellion against God, and then from his own disordered dispositions and appetites ... but with this discovery there also came another, which has been growing and growing in clearness and intensity from that hour to this; which was that I had two gospels of deliverance to preach—one for each world, or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both. I saw that when the Bible said, ‘He that believeth shall be saved,’ it meant not only saved from the miseries of the future world, but from the miseries of this [world] also. That it came from the promise of salvation here and now; from hell and sin and vice and crime and idleness and extravagance, and consequently very largely from poverty and disease, and the majority of kindred woes.<sup>11</sup>

Booth’s words reflect what Roger Green has described as “a second conversion experience;”<sup>12</sup> that is a conversion from a single-minded focus on saving individual souls for eternity, to a broadened concept of salvation as embracing both the next world *and this*

*world*. But Booth was by no means the only Wesleyan to forge a bridge between the personal and the social dimensions of salvation.

With its strong emphasis on transformation and with its extension beyond the transformation of discrete individuals to the transformation of society, there is a stream in Wesleyan theology which draws us to the conclusion that the goal of involvement is not simply the amelioration of suffering, but more positively the transformation of society and the world. It is no accident that in 1890 Booth would write an article entitled, “The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles” in which he envisioned the establishment of God’s Kingdom on earth with its center in London, England.<sup>13</sup> If we are able to filter out the clear triumphalist overtones of nineteenth-century British imperialism, we can see the trajectory of Booth’s theology. The Wesleyan teaching of Christian perfection created a trajectory that leads from the transformation of the individual to the transformation of society, and finally to the establishment of the Kingdom of God. This trajectory leads us to consider the biblical motif of the Kingdom of God.

### The Kingdom of God

Near the beginning of his Gospel, Mark characterizes the ministry of Jesus in this way: “Now after John was arrested, Jesus came to Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news’” (Mark 1:14-15). In the programmatic declaration of Jesus in the synagogue at Nazareth as recounted in Luke 4, Jesus cites the words of the prophet Isaiah: “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” (Luke 4:18-19 NRSV). This is then followed by the astonishing declaration by Jesus, “Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing” (Luke 4:21). These references to the coming of the Kingdom of God—which could be multiplied many times over—are characteristic of the accounts of Jesus’s ministry as we find it described in the New Testament and especially in the Syn-

optic Gospels. There can be little doubt that the Kingdom of God was a key theme in the ministry of Jesus. Not only did He proclaim the coming of the Kingdom in words, but through His ministries of healing, forgiveness, and inclusion He also enacted the Kingdom. But having said this, what are some of the features of the Kingdom of God? What does it actually mean in practice? In this portion of the paper we shall consider briefly first the character of the Kingdom and then, secondly, its timing.

If we go back to the very beginning of the idea of the Kingdom of God, we shall find it in the Old Testament concept of the LORD, the God of Israel, as the divine King. Within the experience of the Israelites, the LORD was the King of Israel (see for example Exodus 15:18; Numbers 23:21; Judges 8:23; Isaiah 6) and indeed over all creation. As King, the LORD exercises sovereignty over Israel as well as the heavens and the earth. For its part, Israel, as the people of the LORD, understood itself to be the people over whom the LORD rules. The LORD is their sovereign and they are God's domain or Kingdom. The claim this made upon Israel was twofold: first, they were to give undivided and uncompromising loyalty to the LORD; and second, Israel was to be an alternative community, one in which politics, economics, and social relationships reflected the justice, holiness, and compassion of God.

The backdrop against which this vision of Israel as the domain of the LORD was developed is their oppression in Egypt. Having been exposed to the tyranny of an oppressive social, political, and economic system, Israel as the people of the LORD was called out of Egypt to establish an alternative community—to be a people set apart, religiously, politically, economically, and socially. The best place to see the nature of this alternative community is the book of Deuteronomy. It demands of Israel an uncompromising loyalty to the LORD. But it couples this with a social vision in which the rapacious practices of Egypt are set aside in favor of a community in which concern for the neighbor trumps the self-interest of the individual. Israel, as the Kingdom of the LORD, is to be a community in which there is a wide distribution of power, resources and, most fundamentally, land. But the real barometer of how high a standard

of behavior is expected can be seen in the way in which Israelites were required to treat those who had no rights or means of support within the community: widows, orphans, and aliens. These three groups were likely to be the poorest and the most easily oppressed in Israelite society. If Israel provided for these marginalized groups, then it was an indicator that the life of the community was congruent with its vocation; and, of course, if Israel oppressed these vulnerable populations, their actions would indicate a fundamental failure to live up to this ideal.

Unfortunately, in the history of Israel the high ideals of Deuteronomy were seldom, if ever, achieved. In some streams of Old Testament tradition, the institution of the monarchy in Israel is identified as a turning point when Israel began to compromise on its vocation as an alternative community and became like the nations. By the end of Solomon's reign and through the following centuries, the two Israelite kingdoms each in its own way became indistinguishable from its neighbors in the manner in which it organized and distributed power and resources. Thus, the prophets of the eighth century BCE—prophets such as Amos, Micah, and Isaiah—would rant against the crushing oppression of the weakest members of society. Their calls for justice and righteousness were uttered against the backdrop of a people who had returned to Egypt in every way except geography. The calls to protect the widow, the orphan, and the alien are a potent protest against the voracious economic, social, and political practices that were rampant. The weakest were the most oppressed; the economy was built on the assumption that those on the margins were dispensable; and justice was identified with legality rather than with the wellness of the community.

In this context, when we turn to the New Testament, the words of Jesus at Nazareth take on added meaning. His proclamation of the coming of the Kingdom of God is not a vacuous proclamation of pious platitudes. It is a call to action; a declaration of God's mission to the disenfranchised and the marginalized. It is a proclamation that it is amongst the poor, the sick, the imprisoned, and the oppressed that the Kingdom of God comes closest.

Yet the Kingdom of God is not simply a tool of protest. It is also a

vision of a world in which those on the margins are brought near the center; in which the people of God are known by their orientation toward the poor, just as God is said to take special interest in the well-being of those who are weakest and most in distress. Alongside their strong denunciations of the abuses that were characteristic of Israel and Judah in the eighth century BCE, we find the prophets envisioning a better day when God's rule will be established and the world will be characterized not by oppression and injustice, but by *shalom* and righteousness. Swords will be beaten into ploughshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah 2:4; Micah 4:3); the wolf shall live with the lamb ... for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD (Isaiah 11:6, 9). From their lips these words describe the quality of the life of the community as it should be and as it will be. The extension of this hope is found in the coming of the Kingdom of God with the ministry of Jesus. There is a vision of the Kingdom of God as the realm in which peace, justice, and mercy embrace; in which there is neither Jew nor Gentile, free nor slave, male nor female.

We turn then, from this broad description of the character of the Kingdom of God to a consideration of its timing. Without doubt, there is in the ministry of Jesus the clear assertion that the Kingdom of God has come near. In some sense the Kingdom has come; it is now present. And yet there is, within the teaching of Jesus and within the New Testament as a whole the expectation that the fullness of that Kingdom awaits a final consummation. The Kingdom is not only realized, but there is an eschatological dimension to it. We wait in hope for the Kingdom.

This eschatological vision of the coming Kingdom has inspired reform movements through the millennia. As a student of the Bible, Wesley could not help but be influenced by this dynamic vision of the Kingdom of God that formed a central theme in the ministry of Jesus. For Wesley, it functioned alongside his teaching of Christian perfection and grew in importance as he matured.

Randy Maddox, among others, has argued that later in life Wesley was drawn toward postmillennialism, that is, the belief that God's work of establishing the Kingdom was already underway and that it

required no dramatic return of Christ to usher in its fullness.<sup>14</sup> The Kingdom of God would come in its fullness and be established in the millennium even before the return of Jesus. This postmillennialism inspired efforts to transform socio-economic systems to bring them into conformity with the economics of the Kingdom; and its motivated efforts to rectify the injustices and inequities that permeated western societies. Once again, as with his affirmation of the new creation and his belief in the necessity of the transformation of individuals through Christian perfection, we find that Wesley's optimism shines through in his belief in the establishment of the Kingdom of God.

## Conclusion

In this paper I have outlined three themes of a biblical and Wesleyan social theology, one which is grounded in Scripture and which is consistent with the thought of John Wesley. Other themes, such as the imitation of Christ, the love of God and the love of our neighbor, and the dangers of wealth could be drawn into our discussion to provide a more well-rounded account of Scripture and of Wesley's own mature teaching. However, in light of the limitations of the present endeavor, I want to conclude by drawing upon an observation of Kenneth Collins regarding Wesley's concern for the poor. According to Collins, a truly Wesleyan social theology requires that our efforts be devoted not only to the material needs of our neighbor, that is, to the reform of society; they must also be devoted to the transformation of the individual. As Collins notes, the truly radical nature of John Wesley's ministry was that "... he recognized that the evils of economic injustice, though significant, were informed by more basic evils that had their roots in the human heart. Accordingly, the greed of the rich, their taste for luxury and waste, could not be overcome simply by state fiat, nor by moralizing, but by a transformation of the inward person as well."<sup>15</sup> Moreover, with respect to the poor, Wesley was critical enough to realize that meeting their material needs was an incomplete salvation. The whole gospel, according to Wesley, was one which brings the eternal and the temporal together. It is, indeed, a salvation for both worlds.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> This is a revised version of a presentation made as part of the Earl Robinson Memorial Lecture Series in October 2021.

<sup>2</sup> For a review of Wesley on this point see Rebekah Miles, “Works of Mercy as Spiritual Formation: Why Wesley Feared for the Souls of the Rich,” in *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 98-110.

<sup>3</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “‘Good News to the Poor’: The Methodist Experience after Wesley,” in *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 67.

<sup>4</sup> Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley’s Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 169-70.

<sup>6</sup> Randy L. Maddox, “Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory,” in *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 42.

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley’s Theology Today*; Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994); Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 2007); *The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley’s Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Wesley was, of course, careful to qualify the ways in which this Christian perfection is to be understood.

<sup>9</sup> Theodore Runyon, “The New Creation: The Wesleyan Distinctive,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31, no. 2 (1996): 111-12.

<sup>10</sup> William Booth, “Salvation for Both Worlds,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 51-59.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-54.

<sup>12</sup> Roger J. Green, “An Historical Salvation Army Perspective,” in *Creed and Deed: Towards a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army*, ed. John D. Waldron (Oakville, ON: Triumph Press, 1986), 63.

<sup>13</sup> Booth, “The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Prin-

ciples,” 60-71.

<sup>14</sup> Maddox, “Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory,” 40-41.

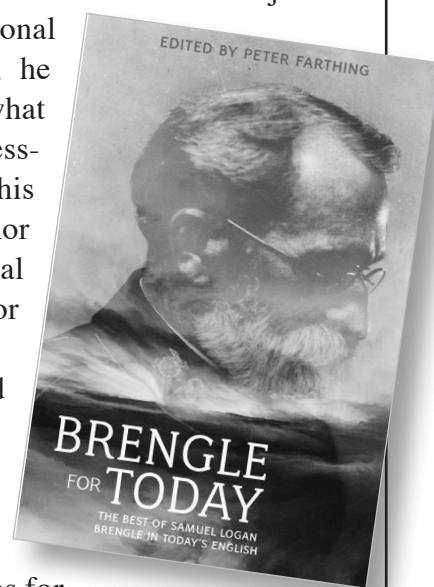
<sup>15</sup> Kenneth J. Collins, “The Soteriological Orientation of John Wesley’s Ministry to the Poor,” *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 36, no. 2 (2001): 34-35.

# *Brengle for Today*

Edited by Peter Farthing

Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle was The Salvation Army's most influential teacher of holiness and an author of several books on the subject. While serving as the International Spiritual Special Ambassador, he often taught and preached on what he described as the "second blessing" of personal holiness. In this collection of wisdoms, the author re-presents Brengle's original teachings in plain language for the modern reader.

Peter Farthing wrote and co-produced the award-winning documentary *Our People* and the book *1865: The Year that Made The Salvation Army*. He has developed courses for corps and small groups, including courses on holiness and Salvation Army theology. He currently resides in Sydney, Australia.



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## La salvación para ambos mundos

### HACIA UNA TEOLOGÍA SOCIAL BÍBLICA Y WESLEYANA<sup>1</sup>

*Donald E. Burke*

Desde el principio de su andadura cristiana, Juan Wesley se comprometió en una serie de actividades dirigidas a aliviar el sufrimiento de aquellos que, por diversas razones, estaban marginados en la sociedad inglesa del siglo XVIII. Visitar a los enfermos y encarcelados, dar de comer a los hambrientos y servir a los pobres fueron actividades fundamentales de Wesley y los metodistas. Además, a lo largo de los muchos años de su ministerio, Wesley instó repetidamente a sus seguidores metodistas a hacer del compromiso con los pobres una parte fundamental de su vida cristiana. De hecho, Wesley afirmaría que sin este servicio regular a los pobres, la fe cristiana de sus seguidores estaba en peligro. La tentación de instalarse en vidas cómodas sería demasiado grande para aguantarla a menos que se atemperara con un servicio frecuente a los marginados.<sup>2</sup>

Las generaciones sucesivas de quienes han reivindicado a Wesley como su antepasado espiritual han producido un número importante de reformadores sociales que han llamado a la Iglesia a servir y a abogar por los pobres. Los ejemplos de estos planteamientos y prácticas de las tradiciones wesleyanas confirmarían que este énfasis en la transformación de las vidas individuales, el alivio del sufrimiento

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humano e incluso la transformación del mundo es un flujo constante que mana de las fuentes de nuestra tradición wesleyana.

No obstante, Donald Dayton, comentando lo que él denominó “la opción preferencial wesleyana por los pobres”, observó que mientras la práctica de Wesley “... parece hacer de la opción por los pobres algo constitutivo de la vida de la iglesia”, tiene “menos claro cómo Wesley argumentaría las bases teológicas de esta praxis”. Dayton continúa sugiriendo que una de las razones del descuido de este tema en las generaciones posteriores es que Wesley no cimentó su praxis lo suficiente desde el punto de vista teológico como para hacer que la cuestión fuera normativa para quienes le reclamarían como mentor en los siglos siguientes.<sup>3</sup>

En respuesta a la valoración de Dayton, mi sugerencia en este papel es que existen fundamentos teológicos convincentes para la preocupación wesleyana por los marginados que están profundamente arraigados en las Escrituras, en la teología de Wesley y en la psique wesleyana. No es mi intención poner palabras en boca de Wesley ni afirmar que tuviera una teología social plenamente desarrollada. Sin embargo, sí quiero sugerir que John Wesley se había empapado de las Escrituras tan a fondo que es posible esbozar los contornos de unos cimientos bíblicos y teológicos para nuestra persistente orientación wesleyana hacia el amor al prójimo que se expresa en el servicio a los marginados y en una esperanza de transformación del mundo.

El reconocimiento de que la teología de Wesley se centra en la transformación y la recreación es clave para entender el impulso de transformar la sociedad que se expresó en su propio ministerio y que sigue filtrándose en el ministerio de quienes reivindican su herencia. Tanto si hablamos de la transformación que es posible en las vidas individuales, de la restauración de la imagen de Dios o de la recreación de todas las cosas, para Wesley la obra de Dios en el mundo es una obra de transformación. El alcance de esta transformación y de este impulso transformador es amplio.

En este ensayo quiero esbozar tres corrientes de las Escrituras y de Wesley que fundamentan teológicamente nuestra misión social. Comenzamos con la forma del canon y sus extremos: la

creación y la nueva creación.

### Creación y nueva creación

Contrariamente a la forma fragmentaria en que solemos leer las Escrituras, estoy convencido de que la Biblia, tomada en su totalidad, es fundamentalmente optimista. Las Escrituras transmiten un optimismo de gracia, basado en la firme convicción de que la bondad de Dios triunfará. Por encima del canon está el marco de la creación de todo lo que existe por el Dios que, en Génesis 1-3, llama al mundo a la existencia. El mundo, recién salido de las manos del Creador, es descrito repetidamente como “bueno” y al final del relato de la primera creación es considerado “extraordinariamente bueno” (Génesis 1:31). En el otro extremo del canon, la Biblia cierra con la asombrosa visión de un nuevo cielo y una nueva tierra (Apocalipsis 21-22) que restaurarán, y mucho más, la bondad de la obra de Dios.

Entre estos extremos canónicos se encuentra, por supuesto, la trágica historia de un mundo en desorden, de una humanidad desbocada. Es el drama de la humanidad dotada de la imagen de Dios pero, sin embargo, profundamente imperfecta; la imagen de Dios distorsionada por la desobediencia y el distanciamiento de Dios, de los demás y del resto de la creación. Es imposible leer mucho de las Escrituras sin salir con un profundo sentido de la profunda pérdida que el mundo ha sufrido a causa del pecado humano. Es difícil exagerar la profundidad de la depravación en la que ha caído la humanidad. Además, aprendemos rápidamente que las ramificaciones de esta alienación se han extendido más allá de la humanidad a la creación en general. La Biblia es completamente realista sobre la propensión humana a la perversidad y sobre las ramificaciones de la pecaminosidad humana a nivel personal, social, económico y ecológico. Este realismo bíblico conduce a algunos a desesperarse con el mundo, a rechazarlo como más allá de toda esperanza y a apartarse del compromiso con el mundo. En el peor de los casos, esto puede conducir a algunos a la resignación sobre el estado de los marginados, citando a veces la observación de Jesús de que “siempre tenéis a los pobres con vosotros” (Mateo 26:11) como si fuera una excusa, si no un mandato, para la marginación de cientos de millones.



Pero, dicho esto, cuando leemos el canon completo de las Escrituras, nos vemos abocados a la conclusión de que el que creó el mundo está determinado a volver a crearlo. Dios no es solo el Creador sino también el que vuelve a crear. De un extremo al otro del canon, la Biblia afirma el amor persistente, obstinado e ilimitado de Dios por el mundo. Las visiones de una nueva creación en el Apocalipsis no es simplemente una ilusión; es la culminación de toda la narración bíblica. Las visiones de un nuevo cielo y una nueva tierra tampoco son producto de un pesimista que ignora el mundo tal y como es, en favor del mundo tal y como desearíamos que fuera. Más bien, estas visiones son una profunda afirmación de la determinación de Dios de cumplir los propósitos de la creación. Sin las visiones del Apocalipsis, la historia bíblica está incompleta, incipiente y sin propósito. Por lo tanto, existe una congruencia fundamental dentro del canon de las Escrituras entre la creación en el Génesis y la nueva creación en el Apocalipsis. Entre estos extremos encontramos la historia de la llamada de Dios a los fieles aliados humanos para que se unan a Él en la labor de hacer realidad la nueva creación.

Esta estructura del canon transmite a las Escrituras un optimismo de gracia, con la firme convicción de que la fidelidad y el amor de Dios triunfarán. Más que simplemente remendar el mundo, Dios se propone volver a crearlo. El movimiento desde la creación, pasando por deshacer la creación, hasta la nueva creación es esencial para entender las Escrituras y también lo fue para Wesley.

Theodore Runyon ha reconocido y escrito ampliamente sobre “la nueva creación” como motivo clave en el pensamiento de Wesley, sobre todo en su libro “The New Creation: John Wesley’s Theology Today”.<sup>4</sup> Su argumento es que la preocupación fundamental de Wesley por la renovación de la imagen de Dios en la humanidad conlleva un énfasis en la renovación de la armonía de la creación original. Runyon escribe: “Para Wesley la religión no es el medio de la humanidad para escapar a un reino celestial más tolerable, sino la participación en la propia empresa redentora de Dios, la nueva creación de Dios, ‘la fe obrando por amor’, que trae santidad y felicidad a toda la tierra. Pero esto significa inevitablemente enfrentarse a las injusticias de la época actual”.<sup>5</sup> Es este énfasis en el trabajo de

Dios en la renovación de la imagen divina lo que, de acuerdo con Runyon, impulsa a Wesley a no excusar a sus seguidores de una aceptación fácil del sufrimiento, la alienación y la opresión de los marginados. Su esperanza en la obra de la nueva creación de Dios insta a Wesley a trabajar por un mundo en el que puedan prosperar la armonía y el bienestar para toda la humanidad.

Randy Maddox sostiene que este énfasis en la nueva creación se hizo más prominente en el pensamiento de Wesley más tarde en su vida. Particularmente en tres sermones, “The General Spread of the Gospel” (1783), “The Signs of the Times” (1787) y “Of Former Times” (1787), de acuerdo con Maddox, Wesley enfatizó la obra de Dios de la nueva creación en el ámbito socioeconómico. Escribe lo siguiente:

Estos sermones tardíos también evidencian el énfasis característico de Wesley sobre cómo podemos colaborar mejor en el cultivo divino de las nuevas realidades socioeconómicas. Su énfasis más amplio está en la misión evangelizadora de la iglesia. Un aspecto central de este énfasis es su convicción de que la acción transformada en el mundo se basa en vidas transformadas. Como aquellos que ya están experimentando la obra renovadora interior de Dios, los cristianos deberían tratar de satisfacer las necesidades sociales y económicas de los demás. Pero no debemos limitarnos a preocuparnos por el bienestar exterior; al igual que Dios, debemos anhelar que los demás experimenten también la nueva creación de las dimensiones espirituales de sus vidas.<sup>6</sup>

Este vínculo entre el ministerio de los cristianos para satisfacer las necesidades socioeconómicas y llevar a cabo la transformación socioeconómica con la transformación espiritual de las vidas humanas nos lleva seguidamente a considerar brevemente la forma en que Wesley entendía la salvación.

## La soteriología de Wesley

La teología de John Wesley era, fundamentalmente, soteriológica. La salvación, en su plenitud, fue el tema constante de su predicación y de sus escritos. Hay muchos tratamientos excelentes de la teología de la salvación de Wesley,<sup>7</sup> así que para nuestros propósitos un simple esbozo del camino de la salvación es suficiente.

Fundamental para la teología de Wesley era su creencia de que la humanidad ha sido profundamente dañada por el pecado. No solo la humanidad se ha distanciado de Dios, sino que existe una corrupción correspondiente de la imagen de Dios en la que la humanidad fue creada primero. Si se la dejara a su libre albedrío, la humanidad estaría perdida. Pero el abismo entre la depravación humana y Dios está salvado por la gracia preveniente de Dios, que está presente universalmente y es operativa cuando suscita una respuesta positiva de los seres humanos. Esta gracia preveniente, por así decirlo, mitiga el efecto paralizante del pecado e induce a la pareja humana dispuesta a responder a la gracia de Dios.

La justificación y el nuevo nacimiento se unen para Wesley como el siguiente punto de referencia en su orden de salvación. Para Wesley, la justificación señala lo que Dios hace por nosotros a través del perdón de nuestros pecados; el nuevo nacimiento o regeneración es lo que Dios hace en nosotros, los primeros movimientos del trabajo transformador de Dios hacia la restauración de la imagen de Dios. La justificación *restaura la relación* entre Dios y los seres humanos, mientras que el nuevo nacimiento y la santificación *restauran la imagen de Dios*. El cambio subjetivo o transformación (o regeneración) comienza con el nuevo nacimiento. Sin embargo, por muy importante que sea el nuevo nacimiento, también es, en sí mismo, solo un comienzo. La perfección cristiana o el amor perfecto o la santificación es el trabajo ulterior de transformación. Es decir, la transformación que comienza con el nuevo nacimiento continúa hacia la perfección cristiana.<sup>8</sup>

A lo largo de todo el orden de la salvación, la gracia de Dios se encuentra con una respuesta obediente del socio humano de Dios. La iniciativa corresponde a Dios y se basa en la gracia; sin embargo, debe encontrar una respuesta humana positiva. Así pues, la soteri-

ología de Wesley es profundamente colaborativa, pues aún la gracia divina y la respuesta humana en una obra transformadora dinámica y eficaz. No se equivoque: Wesley está plenamente convencido de que el fundamento de este trabajo transformador se encuentra en la gracia de Dios. Pero sostiene que a menos que la pareja humana responda a esta gracia, se verá frustrada. Además, la soteriología de Wesley es fundamentalmente optimista (aunque realista) sobre la posibilidad de una verdadera transformación. El pecador puede ser transformado; el pecado puede ser superado. La gracia de Dios puede triunfar sobre el pecado en la vida de un ser humano fiel y regenerado.

A grandes rasgos, la consideración de Wesley sobre la salvación con la perfección cristiana como transformación real de la persona humana, conduce a una postura optimista y esperanzadora. El futuro puede abrazarse como algo lleno de esperanza y potencial positivo. Pero la forma en que Wesley entiende la salvación a nivel individual, de acuerdo con Theodore Runyon, conduce de forma bastante natural a un interés más amplio:

Los wesleyanos están unidos al insistir en que la salvación incluye la transformación de la criatura. Muchos extenderían esta transformación no solo al individuo sino a la sociedad. Encuentran una peculiar afinidad entre la doctrina de Wesley sobre la santificación y los movimientos por el cambio social. Cuando la perfección cristiana se convierte en el objetivo a nivel individual, se engendra una esperanza fundamental de que el futuro puede superar al presente. Se despierta una santa insatisfacción con respecto a cualquier estado actual de las cosas, una insatisfacción que proporciona el margen crítico necesario para mantener en movimiento el proceso de transformación individual. Además, esta santa insatisfacción es *fácilmente transferible* del ámbito del individuo al de la sociedad, donde proporciona una motivación persistente para la reforma a la luz de “una forma más perfecta” que trascienda el *statu*

*quo*. Así pues, los wesleyanos están unidos tanto en la posibilidad como en la necesidad de una transformación real.<sup>9</sup>

Como sostiene Runyon, existe un vínculo fundamental y directo entre el énfasis de Wesley en la transformación del individuo que está integrado en su enseñanza del nuevo nacimiento y la perfección cristiana, por un lado, y la transformación de la sociedad, por otro. La extensión de la transformación del individuo a la transformación de la sociedad es convincente. El optimismo sobre la transformación personal es paralelo al optimismo sobre la transformación del mundo. Este vínculo se hizo más prominente en Wesley en los años más tardíos de su ministerio. Un vínculo similar, a veces no expresado pero presente, puede encontrarse en otros.

Dentro de nuestra propia tradición, William Booth, cofundador del Ejército de Salvación y comprometido defensor de la enseñanza wesleyana de la santidad, escribió más tarde un breve artículo titulado “Salvation for Both Worlds”.<sup>10</sup> Conocido ampliamente como un revivalista cuya pasión era salvar almas y conducirlos a la experiencia de la “entera santificación” antes de entregarlas a su recompensa eterna, Booth replanteó su misión y su teología en 1889 y 1890. En “Salvation for Both Worlds” y luego en su libro, “In Darkest England and the Way Out”, Booth expuso su visión para esta significativa refundición de su ministerio y el del Ejército de Salvación. En su reflexión sobre los cuarenta y cuatro años de servicio a Dios, Booth escribió:

... a medida que fui observando las cosas más de cerca y acumulando más experiencia de los caminos de Dios hacia el hombre, descubrí que las miserias, de las que yo buscaba salvar al hombre en el otro mundo, eran sustancialmente las mismas que aquellas por las que en todas partes lo encontraba sufriendo en este [mundo] y que procedían de la misma causa, es decir, de su distanciamiento y su rebelión contra Dios, y entonces de sus propias disposiciones y apetitos

desordenados ... pero con este descubrimiento vino también otro, que ha ido madurando y ganando claridad e intensidad desde aquel momento hasta hoy; que era que yo tenía dos evangelios de liberación que predicar: uno para cada mundo, o mejor dicho, un evangelio que se aplicaba por igual a ambos. Vi que cuando la Biblia decía: “El que crea se salvará”, significaba no solo salvarse de las miserias del mundo futuro, sino también de las miserias de este [mundo]. Que venía de la promesa de la salvación aquí y ahora; del infierno y el pecado y el vicio y el crimen y la ociosidad y la extravagancia, y en consecuencia en gran medida de la pobreza y la enfermedad, y la mayoría de las aflicciones afines.<sup>11</sup>

Las palabras de Booth reflejan lo que Roger Green ha descrito como “una segunda experiencia de conversión”;<sup>12</sup> es decir, una conversión de un enfoque decidido en salvar almas individuales para la eternidad a un concepto más amplio de la salvación que abarca tanto el próximo mundo *como este mundo*. Pero Booth no fue en absoluto el único wesleyano que forjó un puente entre las dimensiones personal y social de la salvación.

Con su fuerte énfasis en la transformación y con su extensión más allá de la transformación de individuos discretos a la transformación de la sociedad, hay una corriente en la teología wesleyana que nos lleva a la conclusión de que el objetivo de la implicación no es simplemente el alivio del sufrimiento, sino más positivamente la transformación de la sociedad y del mundo. No es casualidad que en 1890 Booth escribiera un artículo titulado “The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles” en el que imaginaba el establecimiento del reino de Dios en la tierra con su centro en Londres, Inglaterra.<sup>13</sup> Si somos capaces de filtrar los claros tintes triunfalistas del imperialismo británico del siglo XIX, podremos ver la trayectoria de la teología de Booth. La enseñanza wesleyana de la perfección cristiana creó una trayectoria que conduce de la transformación del individuo a la transformación de la sociedad y,

finalmente, al establecimiento del reino de Dios. Esta trayectoria nos lleva a considerar el motivo bíblico del reino de Dios.

## El reino de Dios

Cerca del comienzo de su Evangelio, Marcos caracteriza el ministerio de Jesús de esta manera: “Después que Juan fue arrestado, Jesús vino a Galilea proclamando la buena noticia de Dios y diciendo: ‘El tiempo se ha cumplido y el reino de Dios está cerca; arrepentíos y creed en la buena noticia’” (Marcos 1:14-15). En la declaración programática de Jesús en la sinagoga de Nazaret que se vuelve a contar en Lucas 4, Jesús cita las palabras del profeta Isaías: “El Espíritu del Señor está sobre mí, porque me ha ungido para llevar la buena noticia a los pobres. Me ha enviado a proclamar la liberación a los cautivos y la vista a los ciegos, a dejar libres a los oprimidos, a proclamar el año de gracia del Señor” (Lucas 4:18-19 NRSV). Después sigue la sorprendente declaración de Jesús: “Hoy se ha cumplido esta escritura delante de vosotros” (Lucas 4:21). Estas referencias a la venida del reino de Dios, que podrían multiplicarse muchas veces, son características de las cuentas del ministerio de Jesús tal como lo encontramos descrito en el Nuevo Testamento y especialmente en los evangelios sinópticos. No cabe duda de que el reino de Dios fue un tema clave en el ministerio de Jesús. No solo proclamó la venida del reino con palabras, sino que a través de sus ministerios de curación, perdón e integración también promulgó el reino. Pero una vez dicho esto, ¿cuáles son algunas de las funciones del reino de Dios? ¿Qué significa realmente en la práctica? En esta parte del ensayo consideraremos brevemente primero el carácter del reino y luego, en segundo lugar, su momento.

Si nos remontamos al principio mismo de la idea del reino de Dios, lo encontraremos en el concepto del Antiguo Testamento de el SEÑOR, el Dios de Israel, como el Rey divino. Dentro de la experiencia de los israelitas, el SEÑOR era el Rey de Israel (véase por ejemplo Éxodo 15:18; Números 23:21; Jueces 8:23; Isaías 6) y de hecho sobre toda la creación. Como rey, el SEÑOR ejerce su soberanía sobre Israel, así como sobre los cielos y la tierra. Por su parte, Israel, como pueblo del SEÑOR, se entendía a sí mismo como

el pueblo sobre el que manda el SEÑOR. El SEÑOR es su soberano y son el dominio o reino de Dios. La demanda que esto hacía sobre Israel era doble: primero, debían dar una lealtad indivisa e inquebrantable al SEÑOR; y segundo, Israel debía ser una comunidad alternativa, una en la que la política, la economía y las relaciones sociales reflejaran la justicia, la santidad y la compasión de Dios.

El telón de fondo en el que se desarrolló esta visión de Israel como el dominio del Señor es su opresión en Egipto. Habiendo estado expuesto a la tiranía de un sistema social, político y económico opresivo, Israel, como pueblo del SEÑOR, fue llamado a salir de Egipto para establecer una comunidad alternativa: ser un pueblo apartado, religiosa, política, económica y socialmente. El mejor lugar para ver la naturaleza de esta comunidad alternativa es el libro del Deuteronomio. Exige de Israel una lealtad inquebrantable al SEÑOR. Pero combina esto con una visión social en la que las prácticas rapaces de Egipto se ponen a un lado en favor de una comunidad en la que la preocupación por el prójimo triunfa sobre el interés propio del individuo. Israel, como reino del SEÑOR, ha de ser una comunidad en la que exista una amplia distribución del poder, de los recursos y, lo que es más fundamental, de la tierra. Pero el verdadero barómetro del nivel de conducta que se espera puede verse en la manera en que los israelitas estaban obligados a tratar a los que no tenían derechos ni recursos de sustento dentro de la comunidad: viudas, huérfanos y extranjeros. Estos tres grupos eran probablemente los más pobres y los más fácilmente oprimidos de la sociedad israelita. Si Israel proporcionaba ayuda a estos grupos marginados, entonces era un indicador de que la vida de la comunidad era congruente con su vocación; y, por supuesto, si Israel oprimía a estas poblaciones vulnerables, sus acciones indicarían un fracaso fundamental a la hora de estar a la altura de este ideal.

Desafortunadamente, en la historia de Israel los elevados ideales del Deuteronomio rara vez, o nunca, se alcanzaron. En algunas corrientes de la tradición del Antiguo Testamento, la institución de la monarquía en Israel se identifica como un punto de inflexión cuando Israel comenzó a comprometer su vocación de comunidad alternativa y se convirtió en un pueblo como las naciones. A finales del

reinado de Salomón y a lo largo de los siglos siguientes, los dos reinos israelitas llegaron a ser, cada uno a su manera, indistinguibles de sus vecinos en la forma en que organizaban y distribuían el poder y los recursos. Así, los profetas del siglo VIII a.C., profetas como Amós, Miqueas e Isaías, despotricaban contra la opresión aplastante de los miembros más débiles de la sociedad. Sus llamamientos a la justicia y la rectitud se pronunciaron con el telón de fondo de un pueblo que había regresado a Egipto en todos los sentidos excepto en el geográfico. Las llamadas a proteger a la viuda, al huérfano y al extranjero son una potente protesta contra las voraces prácticas económicas, sociales y políticas que imperaban. Los más débiles eran los más oprimidos; la economía se basaba en el supuesto de que los marginados eran prescindibles; y la justicia se identificaba con la legalidad más que con el bienestar de la comunidad.

En este contexto, cuando nos remitimos al Nuevo Testamento, las palabras de Jesús de Nazaret adquieren un significado adicional. Su anuncio de la llegada del reino de Dios no es una vacua proclamación de lugares comunes piadosos. Es una llamada a la acción; una declaración de la misión de Dios hacia los desposeídos y los marginados. Es una proclamación de que es entre los pobres, los enfermos, los encarcelados y los oprimidos donde el reino de Dios está más cerca.

Sin embargo, el reino de Dios no es simplemente un instrumento de protesta. Es también la visión de un mundo en el que los marginados se acercan al centro; en el que el pueblo de Dios es conocido por su orientación hacia los pobres, tal como se dice que Dios se interesa especialmente por el bienestar de los más débiles y desamparados. Junto a sus enérgicas denuncias de los abusos característicos de Israel y Judá en el siglo VIII a.C., encontramos a los profetas previendo un día mejor en el que se establecerá el gobierno de Dios y el mundo se caracterizará no por la opresión y la injusticia, sino por el *shalom* y la rectitud. Las espadas se convertirán en arados y las lanzas en podaderas (Isaías 2:4; Miqueas 4:3); el lobo vivirá con el cordero... porque la tierra estará llena del conocimiento del SEÑOR (Isaías 11:6, 9). De sus labios salen estas palabras que describen la calidad de la vida de la comunidad tal y como debe estar y tal y

como será. La extensión de esta esperanza se encuentra en la llegada del reino de Dios con el ministerio de Jesús. Existe una visión del reino de Dios como el ámbito en el que se abrazan la paz, la justicia y la misericordia; en el que no hay ni judíos ni gentiles, ni libres ni esclavos, ni hombres ni mujeres.

Pasamos entonces de esta amplia descripción del carácter del reino de Dios a una consideración de su momento puntual. Sin duda, hay en el ministerio de Jesús la clara afirmación de que el reino de Dios está cerca. En cierto sentido, el reino ha llegado; ahora está presente. Y sin embargo, en la enseñanza de Jesús y en el conjunto del Nuevo Testamento existe la expectativa de que la plenitud de ese reino aguarda una consumación final. El reino no solo se realiza, sino que tiene una dimensión escatológica. Esperamos el reino con esperanza.

Esta visión escatológica del reino que viene ha inspirado a los movimientos reformistas a lo largo de los milenios. Como estudiante de la Biblia, Wesley no pudo evitar verse influido por esta visión dinámica del reino de Dios que constituía un tema central en el ministerio de Jesús. Para Wesley, coexistió con su enseñanza de la perfección cristiana y fue cobrando importancia a medida que maduraba.

Randy Maddox, entre otros, ha argumentado que más tarde en su vida Wesley se sintió atraído hacia el postmilenialismo, es decir, la creencia de que la obra de Dios de establecer el reino ya estaba en marcha y que no necesitaba un retorno dramático de Cristo para marcar el comienzo de su plenitud.<sup>14</sup> El reino de Dios llegaría en su plenitud y se establecería en el milenio incluso antes del regreso de Jesús. Este posmilenialismo inspiró los esfuerzos por transformar los sistemas socioeconómicos para hacerlos cumplir con la economía del reino; y sus motivados esfuerzos por rectificar las injusticias y desigualdades que impregnaban las sociedades occidentales. De nuevo, como con su afirmación de la nueva creación y su creencia en la necesidad de la transformación de los individuos mediante la perfección cristiana, encontramos que el optimismo de Wesley brilla en su creencia en el establecimiento del reino de Dios.

## Conclusión

En este ensayo he esbozado tres temas de una teología social



bíblica y wesleyana, que está fundamentada en las Escrituras y que es consistente con el pensamiento de John Wesley. Otros temas, como la imitación de Cristo, el amor a Dios y el amor al prójimo, así como los peligros de la riqueza, podrían incluirse en nuestra conversación para ofrecer un relato más completo de las Escrituras y de la propia enseñanza madura de Wesley. Sin embargo, a la luz de las limitaciones del presente esfuerzo, quiero concluir recurriendo a una observación de Kenneth Collins sobre la preocupación de Wesley por los pobres. De acuerdo con Collins, una teología social verdaderamente wesleyana requiere que nuestros esfuerzos se dediquen no solo a las necesidades materiales de nuestro prójimo, es decir, a la reforma de la sociedad; también deben dedicarse a la transformación del individuo. Como observa Collins, la naturaleza verdaderamente radical del ministerio de John Wesley era que “... reconocía que los males de la injusticia económica, aunque significativos, obedecían a males más básicos que tenían sus raíces en el corazón humano. En consecuencia, la codicia de los ricos, su gusto por el lujo y el despilfarro, no podrían superarse simplemente por decreto del estado, ni moralizando, sino también transformando el interior de la persona”.<sup>15</sup> Además, con respecto a los pobres, Wesley era lo suficientemente crítico como para darse cuenta de que satisfacer sus necesidades materiales era una salvación incompleta. Todo el evangelio, de acuerdo con Wesley, era uno que aunaba lo eterno y lo temporal. Es, en efecto, una salvación para ambos mundos.

### Notas finales

<sup>1</sup> Esta es una versión revisada de una presentación realizada como parte de la serie de conferencias en memoria de Earl Robinson en octubre de 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Para una reseña de Wesley sobre este punto, véase Rebekah Miles, “Works of Mercy as Spiritual Formation: Why Wesley Feared for the Souls of the Rich”, en *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote (Nashville: Abingdon, 2002), 98-110.

<sup>3</sup> Donald W. Dayton, “Good News to the Poor: The Methodist Experience after Wesley”, en *The Portion of the Poor: Good News to the Poor in the Wesleyan Tradition*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon, 1995), 67.

<sup>4</sup> Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1998).

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 169-70.

<sup>6</sup> Randy L. Maddox, “Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory”, en *Wesleyan Perspectives on the New Creation*, ed. M. Douglas Meeks (Nashville: Abingdon, 2004), 42.

<sup>7</sup> Por ejemplo, véase Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*; Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994); Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville, Tenn: Abingdon Press, 2007); *The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley's Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997).

<sup>8</sup> Por supuesto, Wesley tuvo cuidado de matizar las maneras en que debe entenderse esta perfección cristiana.

<sup>9</sup> Theodore Runyon, “The New Creation: The Wesleyan Distinctive”, *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 31, núm. 2 (1996): 111-12.

<sup>10</sup> William Booth, “Salvation for Both Worlds”, en *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason y Roger J. Green (Nueva York: Peter Lang, 2012), 51-59.

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, 53-54.

<sup>12</sup> Roger J. Green, “An Historical Salvation Army Perspective”, en *Creed and Deed: Towards a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army*, ed. John D. Waldron (Oakville, Ontario: Triumph Press, 1986), 63.

<sup>13</sup> Booth, “The Millennium; or the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army



Principles”, 60-71.

<sup>14</sup> Maddox, “Nurturing the New Creation: Reflections on a Wesleyan Trajectory”, 40-41.

<sup>15</sup> Kenneth J. Collins, “The Soteriological Orientation of John Wesley’s Ministry to the Poor”, *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 36, núm. 2 (2001): 34-35.

## George Scott Railton

### FATHER OF SALVATION ARMY WORLD MISSIONS

*Andrew M. Eason*

#### Introduction

While the beginnings of The Salvation Army in East London can be traced to a founding Methodist couple—William and Catherine Booth—its character and development bore the imprint of many pioneering individuals. Chief among them was a devout Wesleyan by the name of George Scott Railton, who joined the Booths’ revivalist mission in the early 1870s. Quickly becoming William Booth’s right-hand man, Railton was privileged “to hold a higher position of influence in the councils of the Army than any other mortal who has not the good fortune to be born a Booth.”<sup>1</sup> In this capacity, Railton helped to fashion or fortify key features of Salvationist identity, from Christian militarism and female ministry to self-denial and sensational tactics. Yet, even more importantly, he sought to place these and other characteristics into an international framework, seeing them as means to the evangelization of the entire earth. Possessing a global outlook from early youth, Railton deserves to be called the father of Salvation

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1. Cited in “Popular Papers that Pay,” *The Pall Mall Gazette*, October 5, 1886, 2.

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Army world missions.<sup>2</sup> In word and indeed, he did the most to turn the Army into a transnational religious organization. Therefore, an examination of his life and thought is indispensable for anyone seeking to appreciate the nature and scope of Salvationist missions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

### Childhood and Adolescence Shaped by World Missions

George Scott Railton's acquaintance with world missions began very early in life, because he was born into a family intimately as-

2. The biographer Bernard Watson came close to saying as much when he called George Scott Railton "the father of the Salvationist missionary spirit." See Bernard Watson, *Soldier Saint: George Scott Railton, William Booth's First Lieutenant* (1970; reprint, New York: The Salvation Army, 1977), 28. Notwithstanding the significance of this claim, Railton's pioneering role in Salvationist world missions has been either ignored or insufficiently examined by historians and mis-siologists. See, for example, Harold Hill, *Saved to Save and Saved to Serve: Perspectives on Salvation Army History* (Eugene, OR: Resource Publications, 2017), 16, 204, 351, 369; A. Kenneth Wilson, "Railton, George Scott," in *Historical Dictionary of The Salvation Army*, 2nd ed., ed. John G. Merritt and Allen Satterlee (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 463-465; William C. Kostlevy, "Railton, George Scott," in *Historical Dictionary of the Holiness Movement*, 2nd ed., ed. William Kostlevy (Lanham, MD: The Scarecrow Press, 2009), 243-244; Paul du Plessis, "Echoes of Methodism in The Salvation Army's Commitment to World Mission," *Word & Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology & Ministry* 7, 1 (November 2004): 6-7, 11; Lyell M. Rader, Jr., "Railton, George Scott," in *Biographical Dictionary of Christian Missions*, ed. Gerald H. Anderson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 556; and E. H. McKinley, "The Salvation Army: A Missionary Crusade," *Christian History* 9, 2 (1990): 19-20. A similar critique can be applied to *G.S.R.: Selections from Published and Unpublished Writings of George Scott Railton*, ed. John D. Waldron (Oakville, ON: The Triumph Press, 1981). Including only a fraction of Railton's works, this short non-scholarly anthology does not adequately address the subject of world missions. By drawing on a host of previously untapped primary sources, the present article aims to provide a more comprehensive account of George Scott Railton and his contributions to Salvationist missionary work overseas.

sociated with the missionary movement. Both of his parents, Lancelot Railton and Margaret Scott Railton, had served as missionaries in various parts of the West Indies. Lancelot, a native of Barnard Castle (a market town in northeast England) had been sent out by the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society in late 1838.<sup>3</sup> A novice in ministry, he simply possessed a year's theological training from Hoxton Theological Institute, Wesleyan Methodism's newly established ministerial college. After spending roughly eighteen months in Montserrat, Lancelot was transferred to Antigua, where he met and married Margaret Scott, a missionary teacher from Edinburgh.<sup>4</sup> Margaret had been working on the neighboring island of Saint Barthelémy under the auspices of the Swedish Missionary Society. Her involvement with this nascent Protestant body owed a great deal to her older brother, George Scott, a Wesleyan Methodist missionary stationed in Stockholm. Playing an instrumental role in the formation of this Scandinavian society, Rev. Scott had recruited his sister for service overseas.<sup>5</sup> Although Margaret and Lancelot remained in the mission field after marriage—serving in Beechamville (Jamaica) and Nevis—a serious breakdown in health forced them to leave

3. "Missionary Intelligence," *The Watchman*, November 14, 1838, 366; Anthony Steele, *History of Methodism in Barnard Castle and the Principal Places in the Dales Circuit* (London: George Vickers, 1857), 227; Kenneth B. Garlick, "The Wesleyan Theological Institution," *Proceedings of the Wesley Historical Society* 39 (February 1974): 104-105, 108.

4. Eileen Douglas and Mildred Duff, *Commissioner Railton* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1920), 2; "The Late Rev. Lancelot Railton," *The Watchman and Wesleyan Advertiser*, November 30, 1864, 389; "Missions," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 19 (September 1840): 772.

5. Elizabeth D. Bini, "British Evangelical Missions to Sweden in the First Half of the Nineteenth Century" (Ph.D. Thesis, University of St. Andrews, 1983), 268-276; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 1; "Margaret," *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 22 (January 1865): 10-12.

the Caribbean in 1847.<sup>6</sup>

Upon return to the United Kingdom, Lancelot was initially appointed to Wesleyan Methodist circuits in eastern Scotland. Much of his pastoral ministry at this time was based in and around the small coastal town of Arbroath, which was where George Scott Railton was born in the early summer of 1849.<sup>7</sup> Transferred to the Newcastle District the following year, Lancelot would serve the remainder of his ministry in a handful of places throughout northern England.<sup>8</sup> Notwithstanding the heavy demands of chapel life, he continued to be deeply invested in the cause of world missions. On numerous occasions between the late 1840s and the early 1860s, Lancelot not only participated in branch meetings of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society but also partnered with other Nonconformist bodies to raise funds for the foreign field.<sup>9</sup> During the final stage of

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6. "Missions," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 22 (September 1843): 764; "Irish and Foreign Missions," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 23 (September 1844): 764; "Recent Deaths," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 11 (February 1865): 190-191.

7. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 18; "Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 3 (September 1847): 910; "Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 4 (September 1848): 1015.

8. See "The Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 6 (September 1850): 964; "The Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 9 (September 1853): 848; "The Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 2 (September 1856): 830; "Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 5 (September 1859): 830; and "Wesleyan Conference," *The Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine* 8 (September 1862): 835.

9. See, for example, "Wesleyan Missionary Society," *The Dundee, Perth and Cupar Advertiser*, October 29, 1847, 2; "Wesleyan Missions," *The Preston Chronicle and Lancashire Advertiser*, November 15, 1856, 5; "Anniversary of the Wigton Branch Wesleyan Missionary Society," *The Wigton Advertiser*, May 12, 1860, 4; "London Missionary Society," *The Wigton Advertiser*, September 22,

this very busy period, Railton even addressed a local association of the Church Missionary Society, the evangelical arm of Anglican foreign missions. Expressing his "heartfelt desire" that this voluntary organization might "long flourish and abound," he garnered loud applause from the audience.<sup>10</sup> In each of these ways, Lancelot demonstrated his ongoing commitment to the spread of the gospel worldwide.

The same could be said about Margaret Scott Railton, who was much more than just a minister's wife. One of her important responsibilities was to promote foreign missions among Methodist young people. Beginning in the late 1840s or early 1850s, she held monthly prayer meetings in her home for juvenile collectors, who solicited funds for the mission field from family members, friends, and the general public.<sup>11</sup> Involving boys and girls in fundraising proved to be extremely lucrative during the Victorian era, because "most parents and neighbours did not wish to look ungenerous in the eyes of a child working on behalf of charity."<sup>12</sup> How much money Margaret's juvenile agents managed to raise is unknown, but the pennies they and others collected across England amounted to millions of pounds for the leading Nonconformist and Anglican missionary societies.

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1860, 4; "Wesleyan Missionary Society," *The Wigton Advertiser*, May 11, 1861, 4; "Wesleyan Missions," *The Ludlow Advertiser*, October 18, 1862, 1; and "Wesleyan Missions," *The Shrewsbury Chronicle*, December 12, 1862, 5.

10. "Church Missionary Society Meeting at Wigton," *The Wigton Advertiser*, August 18, 1860, 4.

11. Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 2. Joseph Blake, the founder of the Wesleyan Juvenile Missionary Association, was a strong advocate of such meetings. See Joseph Blake, *The Day of Small Things; or Incitement to Juvenile Activity and Usefulness, Founded on Practical Effort, in Connection with Christian Missions* (London: J. Mason, 1849), 45-46.

12. F. K. Prochaska, "Little Vessels: Children in the Nineteenth-Century English Missionary Movement," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 6, 2 (1978): 109.

In addition to supervising such fundraising efforts, Margaret wrote various poems and stories for *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering*, a missionary periodical for young people. Sometimes alluding to missionaries who had died in the field, she urged her child readers to emulate these heroes of the faith.<sup>13</sup> Whether or not they went abroad, the young were encouraged to pursue the path of self-denial—to give their all for the sake of the gospel.<sup>14</sup> For Margaret, such self-sacrifice came from focusing intently on Christ, the inspiration behind all evangelistic activity. As she wrote in 1852: “Let us think more about Jesus. This is the beginning and end of every good work. Let us think how much He loves us, how much we owe Him, how much His heart was set on the salvation of sinners.”<sup>15</sup> Reflection on the Savior’s love for the spiritually lost was essential and ultimately the key to generating more and more zeal for world missions.

A passion for foreign missions was certainly absorbed by George Scott Railton, who had this to say of his childhood: “I had again and again felt a great interest in the missionary enterprise, which was so constantly uppermost in my parents’ minds.”<sup>16</sup> Helping to form a Juvenile Missionary Society among his boyhood friends in Ormskirk, he dreamt repeatedly of a future ministry among the non-Christian

13. See, for example, Margaret [Scott Railton], “It is Not in Vain to Go to Africa to Die,” *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 11 (July 1854): 81; and Margaret [Scott Railton] “The Missionary’s Child,” *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 15 (April 1858): 38-40. All of the articles she wrote for this periodical were simply signed “Margaret”. See “Margaret,” *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 22 (January 1865): 10.

14. Margaret [Scott Railton], “Gold and the Gospel,” *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 11 (March 1854): 25-26.

15. Margaret [Scott Railton], “A Rest on the Milestone,” *The Wesleyan Juvenile Offering* 9 (December 1852): 143.

16. Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 7.

populations of the globe.<sup>17</sup> Railton’s education served to reinforce these ambitions, especially after he was sent to Woodhouse Grove, a Yorkshire boarding school for the sons of Methodist preachers, in 1860. While the curriculum was dominated by classical languages (Latin and Greek) and mathematics, the institution’s overriding purpose was to inspire young men to follow in their fathers’ footsteps.<sup>18</sup> In support of this sacred goal, chapel



George Scott Railton, portrait.

services led by ministers and missionaries were a staple of campus life, and students routinely solicited funds for those stationed overseas.<sup>19</sup> Most likely, interest in missions was also stimulated by occasional revivals on campus, including one sparked by Railton

17. Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 7. For more on the development of Juvenile Missionary Associations in Victorian churches see Brian Stanley, “‘Missionary Regiments for Immanuel’s Service’: Juvenile Missionary Organization in English Sunday Schools, 1841-1865,” in *The Church and Childhood*, ed. Diana Wood (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1994), 391-403.

18. J. T. Slugg, *Woodhouse Grove School: Memorials and Reminiscences* (London: T. Woolmer, 1885), 123-155; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 11.

19. Slugg, *Woodhouse Grove School*, 205-208.



and a number of his peers.<sup>20</sup> Remaining at Woodhouse Grove for approximately four years, he was afforded ample opportunities to nourish the soul as well as the mind.

Sadly, near the end of his schooling at Woodhouse Grove, George Scott Railton experienced a tremendous loss. In November 1864, both of his parents died within hours of each other after contracting typhus from a sick family in their Peel circuit on the Isle of Man.<sup>21</sup> Arriving home just in time to say goodbye, he received the following farewell from his father: “[T]here is a grand work for you to do, I believe.”<sup>22</sup> While surely consoled by these parting words, Railton was now a fifteen-year-old homeless orphan with few resources to fall back on. Fortunately, however, his elder brother, Lancelot Jr., a Wesleyan Methodist minister, managed to find him a job as a clerk at a London shipping firm.<sup>23</sup> As the company corresponded on a regular basis with clients in Spain, he seized the opportunity to learn Spanish. Picking up the language in a short length of time, Railton spent his Sundays at the docks on the Thames, where he assisted an unnamed missionary working among Spanish sailors. This person may have been attached to the Wesleyan Seamen’s Mission, one of several societies ministering to nineteenth-century seafarers.<sup>24</sup> Despite having little success among these mariners, Railton

20. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 19; Slugg, *Woodhouse Grove School*, 205.

21. “The Late Rev. Lancelot and Mrs. Railton,” *Mona’s Herald, and Fargher’s Isle of Man Advertiser*, November 16, 1864, 3.

22. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 16.

23. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 20; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 17-19.

24. For more on this type of ministry see *The Christian Year Book; Containing a Summary of Christian Work and the Results of Missionary Effort Throughout the World* (London: Jackson, Walford, & Hodder, 1867), 77-83; and “Seamen in the Port of London—What is Done for Them?” *Christian Work Magazine of Religious and Missionary Information* (April 1864): 161-164.

clearly preferred mission work to secular business. Consequently, he must have felt relieved when his shipping company dismissed him, apparently over his refusal to tell white lies in correspondence. As Railton’s superior explained to him: “You might make a successful business man, but we have no use for you with such absurd scruples.”<sup>25</sup> The grand work that his father had prophesied for him was not to be found in the world of commerce.

In contemplating what lay ahead, Railton possessed an overwhelming desire to become a missionary. This, of course, had been his intention since childhood, but the question now was how to make this dream become a reality. According to his earliest biographers, he had little interest in aligning himself with existing missionary societies, fearing that they would “hamper him with rules and regulations, and would expect him to study theology instead of going at once to the heathen.”<sup>26</sup> Therefore, in 1868, he decided to set out alone for the interior of Africa. Yet with only a modest amount of money in his pocket, he got only as far as the Maghreb. Traveling through Tunisia and Morocco—countries largely untouched by Christian missions<sup>27</sup>—Railton sought to attract attention by waving a flag inscribed with

25. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 19.

26. Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 20.

27. With rare exceptions, Christian missions only began to take root in this predominantly Muslim region during the last quarter of the nineteenth century. See “Missions in Morocco,” *The Moslem World* 2 (July 1912): 258-262; Samuel Marinus Zwemer, “North Africa as a Mission Field,” *International Review of Mission* 12 (October 1923): 556-566; E. F. F. Bishop, “With Methodism from Tunis to Algiers,” *International Review of Mission* 42 (April 1953): 162-171; and Dennis H. Phillips, “The American Missionary in Morocco,” *The Muslim World* 65 (January 1975): 1-20. This is confirmed by a compendium of worldwide Christian missions published in 1868. It recorded no missionary activity in Morocco and less than a handful of missions to the Jews of North Africa. See *The Christian Year Book; Containing a Summary of Christian Work, and The Results of Missionary Effort Throughout the World* (London: Jackson, Walford, and Hodder, 1868), 114-115.

the words “repentance,” “faith,” and “holiness.” Little else is known about the methods he employed, but clearly his efforts failed to win the Moors for Christ. Sensational evangelism, however sincere, was not enough to penetrate the profound differences of language, culture, and religion. Eventually running out of money, the naive missionary ended up at the British consulate in Tangier. Sir John Drummond Hay, Queen Victoria’s long-serving representative in Morocco, undoubtedly viewed these missionary exploits as foolhardy, but he apparently made arrangements for the teenager to work his passage home on an outbound ship.<sup>28</sup> For all intents and purposes, Railton’s first evangelistic journey to distant lands had been a fiasco, but he did not view it this way. As he remarked years later, he had learned “many lessons” from this youthful misadventure.<sup>29</sup> Precisely what lessons may have been learned remains unknown, but the young man’s impulsive personality likely made it difficult for him to fully grasp the folly of rushing unprepared into the mission field.

### Adult Life Motivated by World Missions

Back in Britain, George Scott Railton intended to find suitable employment in London, but weeks of job hunting proved fruitless. Hearing that work was readily available in the quarries of Cornwall, he headed there and took a laboring position in one of the lead mines.<sup>30</sup> While in the southwest of England, he worshipped with the Bible Christians, an offshoot of Wesleyan Methodism known for

28. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 21. For more on Drummond Hay’s tenure in Morocco, see Khalid Ben Srhir, *Britain and Morocco During the Embassy of John Drummond Hay, 1845-1886*, trans. Malcom Williams and Gavin Waterson (London: RoutledgeCurzon, 2005).

29. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 21.

30. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 21-22; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 22-23.

sensational tactics, including the use of female preachers.<sup>31</sup> In 1870, after spending roughly a year among the Cornish people, Railton moved to the northeast of the country, where he joined a company owned by a paternal uncle. Railton excelled in the secretarial and accounting duties assigned to him, but his primary interests remained spiritual in nature.<sup>32</sup> Devoting much of his free time to religious pursuits, he soon became an authorized lay preacher in the Middlesbrough Circuit of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion. Here he continued to minister until early 1873, when the following entry was made in the circuit’s Minute Book: “Mr. Railton has removed to a wider sphere of duty.”<sup>33</sup> Such remarks were apt, foreshadowing the role this young man would play in a Christian body that eventually encompassed much of the globe.

This organization, of course, was The Salvation Army, which began as a mission in the East End of London in 1865. Founded by Rev. William Booth—a former Methodist New Connexion minister—and his wife Catherine, it sought to evangelize the lower classes of this impoverished area.<sup>34</sup> Frequently exhausted by the demands of this fledgling enterprise, William Booth was known to occasionally seek rejuvenation at a hydropathic spa in the East Midlands. On one particular visit in the early 1870s he happened to meet Lancelot

31. For more on the role of female preachers in the Bible Christians, and in various other expressions of Methodism, see *The Methodist Defense of Women in Ministry: A Documentary History*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2017); and Jennifer M. Lloyd, *Women and the Shaping of British Methodism, Persistent Preachers, 1807-1907* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009).

32. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 22-23; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 23-25.

33. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 25.

34. Two of the best scholarly treatments of this formative period are Norman H. Murdoch, *Origins of the Salvation Army* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994); and Pamela J. Walker, *Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001).



Jr., the sibling of George Scott Railton. Learning about Booth's ministry among the poor, Lancelot remarked: "I have a brother who I think would just suit you. I must tell him about you."<sup>35</sup> In due course this information was conveyed to the younger brother, who eagerly acquired some of the literature produced by the Booths' Christian Mission. Railton was especially happy to obtain a copy of William Booth's recently published book *How to Reach the Masses with the Gospel*.<sup>36</sup> Captivated by this material, Railton quickly came to sense that the Booths' revivalistic association was "the special place for which the Lord, by His education, had fitted him."<sup>37</sup> This conviction only deepened after he spent three days with William and Catherine in London in late October 1872. Within several months of this brief visit, Railton had relinquished his employment in Middlesbrough and become a member of the Christian Mission. Accepting an invitation to live in the Booth home, he rapidly became an invaluable part of the ministry team. Appointed General Secretary of the Christian Mission in September 1873, Railton went on to exert a tremendous influence on the Booths and on many of those serving under them.<sup>38</sup>

35. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 27.

36. William Booth, *How to Reach the Masses with the Gospel: A Sketch of the Origin, History, and Present Position of the Christian Mission* (London: Morgan, Chase and Scott, 1871).

37. "George Scott Railton," *The War Cry*, September 11, 1880, 1. Emphasis in the original. See also George Scott Railton, "My First Sight of The Army," *The War Cry*, July 23, 1898, 6. All references to *The War Cry* come from the edition published in London, England.

38. George Scott Railton, "Ten First Recollections of the Christian Mission," *The War Cry*, August 6, 1892, 5; "Christian Mission Work," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (September 1873): 136; "Poplar," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (December 1872): 184; "Correspondence: A Friend's First Impression of the Mission," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (January 1873): 7-8; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 28-34.

George Scott Railton's supreme contribution was to expand the missionary horizons of those belonging to the Christian Mission. Their ministry may have originated among the spiritually destitute of London's slums, but it did not end there. Railton implied as much in the many articles he penned for the Mission's monthly magazine. Framing the salvation of the lost in the widest possible terms, he regularly spoke of the planet as a whole. As he wrote in one very early piece: "The world is lost, and Jesus has come to save it; and it *must* be saved at any cost..."<sup>39</sup> Believing that sin and degradation had no borders, he envisioned nothing less than the evangelization of the entire earth. Profoundly troubled by the plight of the unsaved at home and abroad, Railton expected all genuine Christians to work openly and unashamedly towards this goal. To opt for a more privatized faith was simply unacceptable, given that eternal damnation awaited those without Jesus. As he noted in an editorial on open-air evangelism: "We have the world to convert, and if we feel inclined to keep our religion to ourselves, there is certainly something radically wrong within us."<sup>40</sup> Much of his scorn was reserved for the religious institutions of his day, which were said to favor material gain more than aggressive evangelism in the streets: "How can the world be expected to believe in Christ when they see the churches even in their corporate capacity aspiring so eagerly after show and position, and money, and all that is of the earth?"<sup>41</sup> While often quick to judge other Christian bodies, Railton could never ignore any perceived neglect of Christian witness. The world was fraught with iniquity and therefore desperately in need of redemption through Jesus Christ.

Even though other leading members of the Christian Mission

39. George Scott Railton, "The Revolution: A New Year's Address," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (January 1873): 2. Emphasis in the original.

40. George Scott Railton, "On Open-Air Religion," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (November 1873): 162.

41. George Scott Railton, "About Believing," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (October 1874): 265.

would have echoed this conviction, the demands of the home front naturally preoccupied their minds for most of the 1870s. This was particularly true of William Booth, the organization's founding father, who had more than enough things to do in the inner cities of the United Kingdom. In the words of Bernard Watson: "[T]he task confronting him in Britain was so mighty that he could not see beyond it."<sup>42</sup> Booth needed someone to broaden his field of vision, someone to inspire him to attempt even greater and bolder things for the Kingdom of God. This someone, of course, was George Scott Railton, whose ambitions for the Christian Mission were definitely lofty: "Let us push along farther and farther still amongst the masses of ruined men around us, giving ourselves no rest until we have spread throughout the world the honors of His name who bought us with His blood. ... We must never be content with little things. On! On! On!"<sup>43</sup> In order for this grand plan to be realized, there was no time to be idle. The only thing to do was to move forward.

In communicating this sweeping evangelistic objective, George Scott Railton often appropriated the language of warfare. The militant imagery found within the Pauline epistles may have provided him with some inspiration, but historical circumstances also played a major role in his choice of words and phrases. Among other things, Railton exploited the ties between Christianity and soldiering that had emerged in the wake of the Crimean War (1853-1856) and the Indian Mutiny or Rebellion (1857-1858).<sup>44</sup> No longer reviled as immoral and godless, the British soldier was now regarded as a person who could and should be a Christian. Such a connection was only solidified by the new hymns of the period, which often

42. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 28.

43. George Scott Railton, "On!" *The Christian Mission Magazine* (January 1876): 3-4.

44. Olive Anderson, "The Growth of Christian Militarism in Mid-Victorian Britain," *The English Historical Review* 86 (1971): 46-72; Edward M. Spiers, "War," in *The Cambridge Companion to Victorian Culture*, ed. Francis O'Gorman (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 80-100.

spoke of Christians marching into battle to fight sinful foes. Railton was drawn to this kind of music before joining the Christian Mission, and it has been said that he was especially fond of "Onward, Christian Soldiers," a song written by the Anglican priest Sabine Baring-Gould.<sup>45</sup> It is also worth noting that the working-class communities targeted by the members of the Christian Mission could relate to a militant form of Christianity, since they were accustomed to fighting for their very survival.<sup>46</sup> So, for all of these reasons, Railton peppered many of his *Christian Mission Magazine* articles with military metaphors.<sup>47</sup> Again and again he referred to Christians as soldiers going into battle, deploying weapons against the forces of Satan's kingdom, in order to conquer new territory for their Almighty Savior. Victory was the ultimate goal, but it could not be achieved without aggressive tactics and a constant supply of reinforcements. Only a sizeable salvation force, employing measures designed to arrest the attention of sinners, could ever hope to redeem a planet controlled by the wicked one.

Utilizing this militancy to good effect, George Scott Railton helped to transform the Christian Mission into The Salvation Army

45. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 23.

46. Walker, *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down*, 183.

47. See, for example, George Scott Railton, "About Holy War," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (September 1873): 129-132; George Scott Railton, "About Holy Peace," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (October 1873): 145-147; George Scott Railton, "The Enemy," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (May 1874): 121-124; George Scott Railton, "About Victory!" *The Christian Mission Magazine* (June 1875): 141-144; George Scott Railton, "Torpedoes," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (September 1877): 221-224; George Scott Railton, "Reinforcements," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (October 1877): 249-251; George Scott Railton, "Peace or War?" *The Christian Mission Magazine* (March 1878): 57-60; George Scott Railton, "Terms of Peace," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (April 1878): 85-89; and George Scott Railton, "Rushing into War," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (May 1878): 113-116.

in 1878. His presence at a Mission business meeting in May of that year proved to be particularly significant. Hearing that William Booth wished to change the name of the organization—to find something more appropriate to the times—Railton suggested the title “Volunteer Army.”<sup>48</sup> While liking the notion of an army, Booth rejected the term “volunteer,” most likely because of its association with the Volunteer Force, a part-time militia established in 1859 to protect the homeland from foreign invasion. Numbering 200,000 citizen soldiers by the 1870s, this voluntary corps was known to march through British towns and cities on weeknights and weekends.<sup>49</sup> Loathe to view his Christian followers as part-timers, Booth straight away declared his movement to be a *Salvation Army*.<sup>50</sup> Within months of this historic meeting, the Christian Mission’s preaching stations were rebranded as corps, its full-time evangelists were commissioned as officers, its members were enrolled as soldiers, and its new openings were described as invasions. Such a transformation was remarkable in many respects, leading one Methodist observer to exclaim: “The military nomenclature applies not only to persons, but to duties and services, as well as to places and things; in fact, *persons, places, and things* are alike military.”<sup>51</sup> Had he known more about the Army, this writer would have also added “beliefs” to this list, since Christian militarism was an essential part of the movement’s theology of missions. Obsessed with conquest, the newly minted Salvationists vowed “to carry the blood of Christ and the fire

48. “The ‘Salvation Army’,” *The Liverpool Mercury*, July 2, 1879, 8. This article originally appeared in *The Daily Chronicle*, a newspaper published in London.

49. Hugh Cunningham, *The Volunteer Force: A Social and Political History 1859-1908* (1975; reprint, London: Routledge, 2018), 1-4, 68-71, 111.

50. Robert Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army*, vol. 1 (1947; reprint, New York: The Salvation Army, 1979), 226-230.

51. Thomas Lawrence, “The Salvation Army,” *The Primitive Methodist Quarterly Review and Christian Ambassador* 4 (April 1882): 288. Emphasis in the original.

of the Holy Ghost into every corner of the world.”<sup>52</sup>

There can be no doubt that George Scott Railton intended The Salvation Army to be a global missionary body. As he wrote in one early pamphlet aimed at the public, the Army’s reason for existence was “to spread through the entire world, and to last so long as God has enemies to be fought with and overcome.”<sup>53</sup> Practicing what he preached, Railton spent much of his own ministry in other lands. The extent of his journeys was captured well by Bramwell Booth, The Salvation Army’s second General: “Railton was a great pioneer, one of our pathfinders. He planted our Flag in country after country. ... In distance, his travels probably equaled a score of completed journeys round the globe.”<sup>54</sup> Considering his missionary convictions, one should not be surprised that Railton oversaw the official opening of the Army’s work in the United States in 1880.<sup>55</sup> As he noted on the eve of this momentous advance: “I do trust that instead of keeping anything back, or turning away the glorious gospel God has given us, we shall become more and more determined to push it forward ... to insist that all peoples, all nations, kindreds, and tongues shall accept it and shall accept it in its fullness, and

52. “Our War Congress,” *The Christian Mission Magazine* (September 1878): 225.

53. [George Scott Railton], *All about The Salvation Army* (London: S.W. Partridge and Co., 1882), 26. See also George Scott Railton, “153 Officers Abroad,” *The War Cry*, June 6, 1883, 1.

54. Bramwell Booth, “Our First Commissioner,” *The Staff Review* (July 1925): 64. See also “From the Editor’s Table,” *All the World* (February 1911): 112; and George Scott Railton, “The Army Press,” *All the World* (January 1913): 13.

55. Unofficially, The Salvation Army’s work in America commenced in 1879, when Eliza Shirley and her parents Amos and Annie—recent immigrant Salvationists from England—held religious services along Army lines in Philadelphia. See Edward H. McKinley, *Marching to Glory: The History of The Salvation Army in the United States, 1880-1992*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1995), 5-10.

shall rise up to be in their turn its proclaimers to others.”<sup>56</sup> This missionary expedition, which represented the Army’s first sanctioned venture beyond the shores of the British Isles, was not meant to be the last. Many more foreign exploits would follow, especially for Railton, who went on to spend a lot of time in Africa, continental Europe, South America, the West Indies, the Middle East, and several parts of Southeast and East Asia.<sup>57</sup>

Largely because of these incessant travels, George Scott Railton remained the leading champion of world missions within the early Salvation Army. Often functioning as a reconnaissance scout, he was eager to report on the possibilities for ministry in new lands or among unreached peoples. A firm believer in the Great Commission—the biblical injunction to make disciples of all nations—he never failed to remind fellow Christians of “[h]ow much we have yet left undone!”<sup>58</sup> Time and again he urged Salvationists to consider the plight of those residing in the non-Christian regions of the globe. Having firsthand knowledge of conditions overseas, he understood that the greatest needs lay not in Britain but in foreign climes: “Who, indeed, with a heart that [beats] can look upon the millions of other lands who have no Army corps near them, and not be there than amidst the crowded missions of this country?”<sup>59</sup> This is why he called upon western Salvationists to volunteer for foreign missionary service. As important as donating money to world missions might be, the greatest offering of all was to be “God’s messenger” in some distant part of the earth.<sup>60</sup> Spreading the gospel

56. Cited in “The Expedition to America,” *The War Cry*, February 21, 1880, 1.

57. For a complete listing of every place visited by Railton see Bramwell Booth, “George Scott Railton,” *All the World* (September 1913): 553.

58. George Scott Railton, “Left Undone,” *All the World* (March 1902): 161.

59. George Scott Railton, “Volunteers for Foreign Service,” *The Officer* (March 1897): 89.

60. George Scott Railton, “Unemployed Souls,” *All the World* (April 1886): 75-

message was a sacred obligation, a debt that all Christians owed to God and to their fellow human beings. Alluding to Romans 1:14, Railton wrote: “We are debtors to every nation. It is well to confess it, but, while we confess, let us each be prepared to play our part. Let each of us be ready to let life and all go for the millions of India, of China, of Africa, of Europe, to whom we owe all that we owe, to our next-door neighbors in sin.”<sup>61</sup> Seeing world evangelization as paramount, he implored all Salvationists to respond to the call of Scripture, whatever the cost might be.

Sharing the good news with people throughout the earth was not a task reserved for men alone, for as Railton told women: “Thy God says to thee, as much as to anyone, ‘Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.’”<sup>62</sup> In concert with key figures like Catherine Booth, he worked to ensure that female Christian Mission members and Salvationist lassies had access to a public ministry.<sup>63</sup> Because many Victorians were prejudiced against the

76; George Scott Railton, “Home Rule,” *The War Cry*, July 10, 1886, 8; George Scott Railton, “Where are We?” *All the World* (March 1889): 100.

61. George Scott Railton, “To the East!” *The War Cry*, August 24, 1882, 1.

62. George Scott Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It* (London: S. W. Partridge & Co., 1877), 121.

63. For more on Catherine Booth, an accomplished Victorian preacher and passionate defender of female ministry, see Roger J. Green, *Catherine Booth: A Biography of the Cofounder of The Salvation Army* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996); Pamela J. Walker, “‘A Chaste and Fervid Eloquence’: Catherine Booth and the Ministry of Women in the Salvation Army,” in *Women Preachers and Prophets through Two Millennia of Christianity*, ed. Beverly Mayne Kienzle and Pamela J. Walker (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1998), 288-302; John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2013); and *Settled Views: The Shorter Writings of Catherine Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2017), 123-166.



preaching of women, Railton frequently had to defend the practice. Referencing relevant New Testament passages—such as John 4:1-42, Acts 2:17-18, and Galatians 3:28—he maintained that “the female has as much right to preach the gospel, to exercise any sacred office, as the male.”<sup>64</sup> While believing that Scripture supplied the licence for female preaching, Railton also justified this type of ministry on pragmatic grounds. As he noted in 1882: “[W]herever women are set free from the disgraceful bondage generally imposed on them, victories are won such as men never accomplish.”<sup>65</sup> Given the millions upon millions dying without Christ, it was imperative to utilize women in the proclamation of the gospel. Nothing, Railton argued, should hinder their ministrations, not even the cares of domestic life. As he wrote in 1888: “I protest against all avoidable loss of women soldiers’ time from the war, for housework. . . . Let us fight every day, and as long as we live, to prevent anyone under our roof from being less a soldier than they ought to be. . . . Give every woman her rights!”<sup>66</sup> Despite the paternalistic ring to some of these assertions—which implied that men were the custodians and defenders of feminine rights and freedoms—Railton did seek to challenge the widespread Victorian assumption that women belonged in the private sphere.<sup>67</sup> All daughters of The Salvation Army, whatever

64. George Scott Railton, *Apostolic Warfare: Being the Annual Report for 1889 of the Salvation Army* (London: International Headquarters, 1889), 41-43; George Scott Railton, “Seven Thousand Witnesses,” *All the World* (February 1889): 92; Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It*, 116.

65. Cited from an unpublished report in *G.S.R.: Selections from Published and Unpublished Writings of George Scott Railton*, 66. See also George Scott Railton, *Twenty-One Years Salvation Army* (London: Salvation Army Book Depot, 1886), 94-112; and Railton, *Apostolic Warfare*, 42-48.

66. George Scott Railton, “Fight It Out! [Part 7]” *The War Cry*, October 20, 1888, 9.

67. For more on Railton’s views about gender and ministry, see Andrew M. Eason, *Women in God’s Army: Gender and Equality in the Early Salvation Army*

their race, were called upon to play a public part in conquering the world for Christ.<sup>68</sup>

In pursuit of this far-reaching agenda, George Scott Railton called for adaptation to different cultures. His primary justification for this strategy was the Bible itself, notably 1 Corinthians 9:19-23: “What is, after all, the object of all scriptural study, or other study for those who are to be missionaries, if not that they may learn how to walk in the Apostles’ footsteps and how to make themselves as much ‘all things’ to the ‘all men’ of to-day as the first disciples were the ‘all men’ of their century.”<sup>69</sup> A commitment to being all things to all people to save some may have come to the fore once the Army entered the foreign field, but the substance of this principle had already guided the organization’s earliest work at home. Here, in particular, Railton played a central role in crafting and defending numerous methods for reaching the British working classes. Believing that the masses were asleep in their sin, he urged Christian Mission members and Salvationists to employ sensational tactics to awaken them from their spiritual slumber.<sup>70</sup> The measures they adopted, such as holding religious services in theaters and setting hymns to popular secular tunes, may have invited criticism from middle- and upper-class Christians, but Railton saw them as effective ways of relating to men and women who rarely entered a church or chapel building.<sup>71</sup>

(Waterloo, ON: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2003), 64-72.

68. George Scott Railton, “Sons and Daughters of the Blood,” *All the World* (April 1901): 202.

69. George Scott Railton, *Why Not? The Salvation Army Question* (London: Headquarters of The Salvation Army, 1896), 73.

70. George Scott Railton, “About Sensationalism,” *The Christian Mission Magazine* (July 1874): 177-181; Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It*, 63-80, 89-98; Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 32-36.

71. Railton, *All about The Salvation Army*, 4, 9-13.

Having helped to pioneer this approach among the “heathen” masses in England, Railton naturally endorsed its implementation among the non-Christian inhabitants of distant lands. It is fair to say, however, that his comments on missionary adaptation could be tainted at times by a western sense of superiority over the colonized world. This was evident, for example, from the remarks he made on the eve of the Army’s “invasion” of India in 1882: “In the strength of God [the Army’s missionary officers] are resolved to lay aside their Western dignity, and to show by their dress, and in every possible way, that they feel themselves to be the brothers and servants of those to whom God sends them.”<sup>72</sup> By emphasizing his fellow Salvationists’ willingness to sacrifice their “western dignity,” Railton effectively undercut the sincerity of his subsequent assertions about brotherhood and servanthood. The message he ultimately conveyed was that Indian culture lacked the worth or respectability of western cultures. Glimpses of western superiority could also be detected in the correspondence Railton wrote while furloughing in Natal in 1885. Convinced that adaptation was a powerful way to win over the local Africans, he posed the following question to Salvationists in a letter sent back to Britain: “Where are the men and women who will stoop to live in Zulu kraals to save the Zulus?”<sup>73</sup> By envisioning adaptation in terms of stooping, Railton betrayed the European belief

72. George Scott Railton, “The Army Going Down!” *The War Cry*, August 10, 1882, 1. For more on the Salvation Army’s beginnings in India, see Andrew M. Eason, “Religion versus the Raj: The Salvation Army’s ‘Invasion’ of British India,” *Mission Studies: Journal of the International Association for Mission Studies* 28, 1 (2011): 71-90; and Solveig Smith, *By Love Compelled: The Salvation Army’s One Hundred Years in India and Adjacent Lands* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1981).

73. George Scott Railton, “Those Afar Off,” *The War Cry*, June 13, 1885, 1. Largely because of Railton’s pleas, The Salvation Army began work among the Zulus in the late 1880s. See Andrew M. Eason, “‘All Things to All People to Save Some’: Salvation Army Missionary Work among the Zulus of Victorian Natal,” *Journal of Southern African Studies* 35, 1 (March 2009): 7-27.

that Africans were lower in the scale of civilization.<sup>74</sup> In spite of his positive commentary on certain aspects of African life and thought, and notwithstanding his vocal opposition to the westernization of Zulu converts, he still tended to possess some of the prejudices of his colonial age.

Less condescension was apparent when George Scott Railton traveled through China in the early twentieth century. Arriving just years after the Boxer Rebellion, or Uprising (1899-1901), he came to appreciate the depth of the animosity that many Chinese harbored towards westerners and Christianity.<sup>75</sup> Critical of how European and American powers had exploited the inhabitants and cities of China, he expressed sympathy for the “boxers,” whose rioting had been sparked by a “most justifiable hatred and contempt for all ‘foreign devils.’”<sup>76</sup> In a demonstration of solidarity with this oppressed nation, Railton donned a Chinese shirt and cap as he journeyed from place to place.<sup>77</sup> Boasting that “[t]he devotion and fervor of Chinese people when truly saved cannot be surpassed,”<sup>78</sup> Railton foresaw a great future for The Salvation Army in this expansive East Asian land. At the same time, he recognized that the Army’s prospects on the ground would require “a thoroughly Chinese force,” a contingent of Salvationists committed to avoiding “any undue appearance

74. Jeffrey Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700* (New York: Routledge, 2008), 139-144.

75. For more on this chapter in Chinese history see Joseph W. Esherick, *The Origins of the Boxer Uprising* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987); and Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity in China* (Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 82-87.

76. George Scott Railton, “Our Chinese Prospects,” *All the World* (July 1909): 378. See also George Scott Railton, “Things Chinese,” *All the World* (May 1913): 298.

77. Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 221; Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 160, 164-168.

78. Railton, “Our Chinese Prospects,” 379.



of European or American characteristics.”<sup>79</sup> Railton never lived to see The Salvation Army’s official entry into mainland China, which took place in 1916, but he laid the foundation for this extension, not least by emphasizing the need for an adaptive approach based on apostolic principles.

Inspired by the lives of the apostles, George Scott Railton also became a vocal proponent of voluntary poverty. Taking to heart the stories of the disciples, who had given up everything to follow Jesus, Railton placed little emphasis upon material comfort.<sup>80</sup> This was most noticeable in his movements from place to place, because he invariably traveled as cheaply as possible. When asked once about the frugality of these arrangements, he responded that he “traveled third-class because there was no fourth.”<sup>81</sup> Railton had little sympathy for those who preferred the trappings of affluence, contending that the Christian life was “a matter of continual and extreme self-denial.”<sup>82</sup> Adding his voice to the late Victorian debate about missionary lifestyles overseas, he criticized mission societies that paid their European agents generous stipends in the field.<sup>83</sup> From his perspective, the “surroundings of wealthy civilization” were “re-

79. George Scott Railton, *Some Prophecies Fulfilled: Being a Brief Account of Some Aspects of Salvation Army Work in Various Countries* (London: The Salvation Army, 1913), xiv.

80. Railton, *Apostolic Warfare*, 49-51.

81. Cited in Albert Orsborn, *The House of My Pilgrimage* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1958), 31.

82. George Scott Railton, “Fight It Out! [Part 6]” *The War Cry*, October 13, 1888, 9.

83. For more on the controversy about missionary lifestyles, and the circumstances surrounding it, see Andrew Porter, *Religion Versus Empire? British Protestant Missionaries and Overseas Expansion, 1700-1914* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2004), 276-278; and Cox, *The British Missionary Enterprise Since 1700*, 196-212.

pelting” to the “heathen” populations of the globe, who were more likely to be won to Christ by manifestations of “absolute self-renunciation.”<sup>84</sup> While displays of self-sacrifice were evident in the ranks of the early Salvation Army—since officers were paid a meager allowance—Railton still deemed it necessary to warn his fellow Salvationists about the temptations of worldly riches. To place the treasures of this earth over the spiritual interests of God’s Kingdom was the worst kind of treachery: “Surely, if the Army should [ever] turn aside to league itself with His enemies for money or applause or anything else the world can give, it would be the most horrible betrayal Christ ever suffered.”<sup>85</sup> Faithfulness to the redeemer of humanity demanded self-denying labors from every officer and soldier within the organization.

For George Scott Railton, devotion to Christ also entailed the

84. Letter from George Scott Railton to the editor of *The Christian*, dated March 30, 1887. This piece of correspondence was republished by The Salvation Army. See “Unpaid Native Agency,” *The War Cry*, April 16, 1887, 9.

85. George Scott Railton, “Sold Again!” *The War Cry*, April 2, 1898, 8. See also George Scott Railton, “The Duty of Poverty,” *The Officer* (July 1893): 203-204. While Railton never came to the conclusion that The Salvation Army had betrayed Christ, he did criticize some developments within the organization. When, for example, the Army unveiled a life insurance program in the mid-1890s, Railton was quick to condemn this venture, judging it to be inconsistent with a Salvationist’s call to sacrifice all for the sake of God’s Kingdom. Around the same time, he also began to voice his disapproval of the Army’s emerging social scheme, not only because it required soliciting the support of wealthy elites but also because it tended to divert attention away from soul-saving work. The latter propensity was especially alarming to Railton, who placed the salvation of the soul above all else. As he wrote in 1896: “How horrible to think that Christians, in the very act of glorifying the world’s Savior, by giving a little food to hungry bodies, can be utterly forgetful of the fact that the souls of so many millions, rich and poor, are utterly destitute—are sinking lower and lower amidst the waves of worldliness, sin and unbelief—and must soon be lost forever unless they can be got on board the gospel ship.” See George Scott Railton, “Sinking Souls!” *The War Cry*, February 15, 1896, 1; and Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 116-133.

overcoming of racial divisions. Alluding to Paul's message to the Athenians, he subscribed to the belief that all nations and all tribes were of one blood (Acts 17:26). Aware of the fact that bigotry and other forms of iniquity often blinded people to this biblical truth, Railton urged his fellow Christians to love the sinner as a brother or as a sister. Each spiritually destitute person was a valued member of "the human race, which was intended to be a family under one father."<sup>86</sup> Salvation, of course, was the key to restoring familial unity, and Railton considered the Army's spread throughout the earth to be a providential means to this end. As he exclaimed in 1886, at the organization's first multinational congress, which brought together Salvationists of various racial backgrounds: "We of all nations are one in Christ Jesus! That is the secret of our international union."<sup>87</sup> Railton was eager to participate in an event of this magnitude, since it demonstrated the continuing relevance of Galatians 3:28—that union with Jesus Christ superceded all earthly differences. Referring to the racially diverse members of The Salvation Army as the "sons and daughters" of "one Blood," he challenged them to pursue the unsaved with "a unity of heart, and life, and action."<sup>88</sup>

Regardless of these calls to unity in Christ, The Salvation Army was not immune to the evils of racism. George Scott Railton discovered as much when he visited the Army's operations in the Cape Colony in the mid-1880s. Witnessing its racially inclusive religious services in Cape Town, he was appalled by the behavior of white congregants, who often scoffed at the testimonies of black Salvationists. Due to such poor treatment, many black converts had already left The Salvation Army for other churches and chapels.<sup>89</sup> Cer-

86. George Scott Railton, "About Fraternity," *The Christian Mission Magazine* (October 1875): 249.

87. Cited in "The International Congress," *The War Cry*, June 5, 1886, 1.

88. Railton, "Sons and Daughters of the Blood," 202.

89. George Scott Railton, "Our South African Comrades," *All the World* (October 1885): 242.

tain that forced integration gave black soldiers "very little chance of developing their own powers," Railton recommended the establishment of separate corps (places of worship) for blacks and whites.<sup>90</sup> Although this proposal was made out of respect for the capabilities of black Africans, it was clearly inconsistent with Railton's theological convictions about oneness in Christ. Such unity was sadly lacking here, and the Army went on to launch a racially segregated ministry in South Africa, not unlike that of other Christian bodies.<sup>91</sup> To his credit, however, George Scott Railton would go on to forcefully criticize the racism that made such an arrangement necessary. As he wrote from South Africa in 1901: "Would to God that there might be, very speedily indeed, a new outpouring of love for the native races. ... [How] much longer [will] the Father of all allow the white races, calling themselves Christians, to go on ignoring the rights and the highest interests of all other peoples?"<sup>92</sup> Never happy with the way blacks were treated on the African continent, Railton longed for the day when "the mountain of the white man's prejudice

90. Railton, "Our South African Comrades," 243.

91. *The Salvation War 1885* (London: Salvation Army Book Depot, 1885), 83; Brian Tuck, *Salvation Safari: A Brief History of The Salvation Army in Southern Africa, 1883-1993* (Johannesburg: The Salvation Army, 1993), 12; Andrew M. Eason, "'Desperate Fighting at the Cape': The Salvation Army's Arrival and Earliest Work in Late-Victorian Cape Town," *Journal of Religious History* 33, 3 (September 2009): 276-277. For more on the racial tensions and practices within South African churches and missions see Vivian Bickford-Smith, *Ethnic Pride and Racial Prejudice in Victorian Cape Town: Group Identity and Social Practice, 1875-1902* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 1-9, 25; John de Gruchy and Steve de Gruchy, *The Church Struggle in South Africa* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2005), 1-50; and Richard Elphick, *The Equality of Believers: Protestant Missionaries and the Racial Politics of South Africa* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2012), 94-100.

92. George Scott Railton, *The History of Our South African War* (1901; reprint, London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, n.d.), 124, 129.

against all who are not white” would finally be removed.<sup>93</sup>

While criticisms of this kind never led George Scott Railton to question the legitimacy of British imperialism, it would be wrong to say that he was excessively patriotic. His allegiances were to the world as a whole, not to one country. Such a mentality may have owed something to Railton’s ceaseless travels around the globe, but he attributed this cast of mind to his missionary parents, who taught him “to regard all nations with equal interest.”<sup>94</sup> Guided by this conviction, he had little time for nationalistic celebrations. When, for instance, special events were held to mark Queen Victoria’s Golden Jubilee in June 1887, Railton was relieved to learn that The Salvation Army had been excluded from a church service for the monarch at Westminster Abbey. As he wrote in the Army’s weekly newspaper, Salvationists had no need to feel upset about being left off the guest list, since they did not wish “to say or do anything that would sound or look as though [they] really belonged to one nation only.”<sup>95</sup> In his mind, attendance at this royal anniversary was out of keeping with The Salvation Army’s international spirit. Putting too much stock in one’s citizenship was a hindrance to the organization’s global mission, as Railton candidly confessed in 1893: “The ‘English’ officer abroad is a nuisance wherever he may go, whereas the man who can forget where he was born truly for the time, and be born again as often as necessary, can make himself felt to be a brother anywhere.”<sup>96</sup> However challenging it might be to undergo these conversions in

93. George Scott Railton, “Native Work in Africa,” *All the World* (June 1905): 316. See also George Scott Railton, “The Native Question in South Africa,” *The War Cry*, May 26, 1900, 7; and George Scott Railton, *Day by Day in The Salvation Army: Being a Brief Account of Salvation Army Work in Various Countries* (London: International Headquarters, 1910), 50.

94. George Scott Railton, “Love All Nations [Part 1],” *The War Cry*, September 2, 1893, 4.

95. George Scott Railton, “The Army and the Jubilee,” *The War Cry*, June 25, 1887, 8.

96. George Scott Railton, “Love All Nations [Part 2],” *The War Cry*, September 9, 1893, 2.

strange new places, they reflected Railton’s belief that no single nation should own a Salvationist’s soul.<sup>97</sup>

In any discussion of the soul, George Scott Railton assumed that salvation came through Christ alone. Needless to say, this presupposition lay at the heart of his evangelical faith, which stressed devotion to the Bible and respect for its authority. Biblicism of this sort was a hallmark of evangelicalism throughout the Victorian period.<sup>98</sup> Resisting any attempts to reinterpret the Scriptures or to undermine their power, Railton was especially scornful of modern biblical criticism: “The unbelief with which we have to do is simply the most ancient stupidity of the world dressed up in the fashion of the present century, and trying to pass itself off for something remarkably clever.”<sup>99</sup> It did not help matters that some proponents of this emerging scholarship had begun to question the justice of a loving God sentencing people to eternal punishment.<sup>100</sup> Having no time for these liberal developments, Railton remained a steadfast believer in “the old-fashioned doctrine of hell, and in the old-fashioned gospel teaching of Jesus Christ about damnation.”<sup>101</sup> Convinced that eternity in a fiery abode was the ultimate destination

97. This particular sentiment is evident in the first verse of a song he composed. See “George Scott Railton,” *All the World* (August 1913): 513.

98. See D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (1989; reprint, London: Routledge, 2005), 12-14.

99. George Scott Railton, “Corybantic Faith and Unbelief,” *The War Cry*, March 12, 1892, 3.

100. For more on the criticisms of this doctrine see Michael Wheeler, *Heaven, Hell, and the Victorians* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994); and Geoffrey Rowell, *Hell and the Victorians: A Study of the Nineteenth-Century Theological Controversies concerning Eternal Punishment and the Future Life* (1974; reprint, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

101. Cited in “The Salvation Army in Bath,” *The Bath Chronicle*, April 20, 1882, 2.

for those who did not know or accept the immutable and absolute claims of the gospel, he urged Salvationist missionaries to disturb the souls of their non-Christian neighbors.<sup>102</sup>

Given the unbending nature of Railton's convictions on the destiny of the unsaved, and the fact that these evangelical beliefs were clothed in the bellicose language of Salvationism, one might have therefore expected him to initiate or encourage attacks on other religions. Surprisingly, however, this was not the case. "[T]he abuse of the religious beliefs and practices of others," he argued, was "not the way to win [a person] for our Savior."<sup>103</sup> If the "message of salvation and damnation" were to penetrate the heart of the sinner, she or he first needed to see in the life of the missionary an unparalleled example of "true faith and prayer and love to all."<sup>104</sup> Only then would spiritually lost individuals be drawn by the Holy Spirit to ask the life-giving question originally posed by the Philippian jailor: "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). An evangelistic strategy pursued along these gracious and irenic lines, Railton suggested, represented the best way to elicit a positive response to the claims of Christianity.

The necessity of this approach likely had something to do with George Scott Railton's travels through Muslim-majority areas such

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102. See George Scott Railton, "Don't Disturb Anybody," *The War Cry*, October 5, 1882, 1; George Scott Railton, "More Hell!" *The War Cry*, November 9, 1882, 1; George Scott Railton, "100,000 Gone at a Stroke!" *The War Cry*, September 12, 1883, 1; George Scott Railton, "The Lost World," *The War Cry*, November 7, 1883, 1-2; and George Scott Railton, "Our 'Open Door'," *The War Cry*, December 10, 1898, 2. Railton's views reflected the position of the early Salvation Army as a whole. See Philip William Garnham, "The Salvation Army and the Doctrine of Hell: A Theological Critique of the Endless Punishment of the Wicked" (Doctor of Ministry and Theology Thesis, King's College London, 2017), 13-22.

103. George Scott Railton, "Foreign Service," *The Field Officer* (December 1907): 445.

104. Railton, "Foreign Service," 445.

as Java, Turkey, and North Africa.<sup>105</sup> Having observed "the walls of prejudice" between Christians and Muslims in many of these places, he understood the pressing requirement to replace hostility with love.<sup>106</sup> Examples of this desperately needed charity were evident in how Railton depicted Islam in Salvationist periodicals. Above all, he did not spend time denouncing the Prophet Muhammad, despite the fact that this was often part of western and missionary discourse.<sup>107</sup> Impugning the Prophet's character was counterproductive, he warned: "How could anybody ever hope to win a Mohammedan for Christ by trying to make him believe that he and all his forefathers had been deceived by a 'false prophet?'"<sup>108</sup> Such a sweeping condemnation would have sat uneasily with Railton, because he refused to equate the Islamic religion with utter falsehood. Genuinely "delighted" with its daily calls to worship, he confessed: "[I am] more and more confident that the prayers of so many must include many a true call upon the one Father of us all."<sup>109</sup> Even though Muslims denied the divinity of Jesus Christ, he implied that they possessed some connection to God. Here, in particular, Railton came fairly close to the position of William Henry Temple Gaird-

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105. Arch R. Wiggins, *The History of The Salvation Army*, vol. 5 (1968; reprint, New York: The Salvation Army, 1979), 7-9, 62, 219.

106. George Scott Railton, "In Journeyings Oft," *All the World* (April 1912): 214.

107. For more on western and Christian images of the Prophet Muhammad see Thomas Prasch, "Which God for Africa: The Islamic-Christian Missionary Debate in Late-Victorian England," *Victorian Studies* 33, 1 (Autumn 1989): 51-73; Pieter Pikkert, "Protestant Missionaries to the Middle East: Ambassadors of Christ or Culture?" (Doctor of Theology Dissertation, University of South Africa, 2006), 52-56; and John V. Tolan, *Faces of Muhammad: Western Perceptions of the Prophet of Islam from the Middle Ages to Today* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019).

108. Railton, "Foreign Service," 445.

109. Railton, "Foreign Service," 445.



ner, a long-serving Anglican missionary in Egypt, who “advocated recognition of the positive spiritual values in Islam ‘while maintaining the specificity of the Christian message.’”<sup>110</sup> There was never a doubt in Railton’s mind that saving faith resided exclusively in Christianity, but he largely echoed Gairdner’s assessment that Islam contained a measure of spiritual light.

A degree of courtesy and respect also marked George Scott Railton’s treatment of African spirituality. Notwithstanding his tendency to associate Africa with heathenism, he approached the continent’s traditional religions with a graciousness rarely seen among the missionaries of the colonial era.<sup>111</sup> Referring to the blacks of the Eastern Cape in 1887, he wrote: “They are commonly described by Europeans as being ‘superstitious,’ because they believe in the possibility

110. Deanna Ferree Womack, “The Authenticity and Authority of Islam: Muhammad Rashid Rida’s Response to Twentieth-Century Missionary Publications,” *Social Sciences and Missions* 28, 1-2 (2015): 99. It is unknown if George Scott Railton ever met William Henry Temple Gairdner (1873-1928) or knew of his work, but Gairdner’s writings helped to forge a more sympathetic approach to Islam and other world religions in missionary circles. See W. H. T. Gairdner, *The Reproach of Islam* (London: Student Volunteer Missionary Union, 1909); W. H. T. Gairdner, “*Edinburgh 1910*”: *An Account and Interpretation of the World Missionary Conference* (Edinburgh: Oliphant, Anderson & Ferrier, 1910), 134-153; Womack, “The Authenticity and Authority of Islam,” 94-99; and Geoman K. George, “Early 20th Century British Missionaries and Fulfilment Theology: Comparison of the Approaches of William Temple Gairdner to Islam in Egypt, and John Nicol Farquhar to Hinduism in India,” in *Christian Witness Between Continuity and New Beginnings: Modern Historical Missions in the Middle East*, ed. Martin Tamcke and Michael Marten (Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2006), 11-22.

111. For more on missionary attitudes toward African traditional religions see Evaristi Magoti Cornelli, “Inter-religious Relations,” in *Christianity in Sub-Saharan Africa*, ed. Kenneth R. Ross, J. Kwabena Asamoah-Gyadu and Todd M. Johnson (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2017), 411-420; and Laurenti Magesa, “Christianity and African Religion,” in *The Routledge Companion to Christianity in Africa*, ed. Elias Kifon Bongmba (New York: Routledge, 2016), 252-268.

of witchcraft, such as is described in the Scriptures. To such people a Christianity bereft of all real faith in supernatural power has naturally enough gone without success.”<sup>112</sup> Rather than dwelling on the “heathen” nature of traditional African belief, Railton chose to highlight its similarity to the worldview of the Bible.<sup>113</sup> Here was something positive, a point of entry for the message of the gospel. It is telling that his only criticism was directed at modern (European) Christianity, which he judged to be “bereft of all real faith in supernatural power.”<sup>114</sup> A desacralized Christianity, he claimed, had failed to entice this profoundly religious people. Elaborating on the spirituality of Africans years later, Railton had this to say: “The dreadful stories we have heard of the people’s superstitions, of their fetish worship, of their human sacrifices, simply means that a profound, unutterable fear of the unknown God possesses them.”<sup>115</sup> While not necessarily disavowing these stereotypical representations of Africa, he saw a reverence for the divine behind them. Railton regarded this sense of awe as laudable, for he was of the opinion that his black brothers and sisters were “far too intelligent to sink to the depths

112. George Scott Railton, “First Visit to a Kaffir Chief’s Kraal,” *The War Cry*, October 15, 1887, 1.

113. For a helpful discussion of this connection in more recent times see Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 98-127.

114. Railton was quite dismayed by the low spiritual state of his own country. As he wrote in the opening paragraph of his first book: “In days when almost everything is disputed, when everything supernatural is repudiated as utterly absurd and impossible by so many, amongst the most educated as well as amongst the most ignorant, it behooves all who can produce positive evidence of the existence and activity of miracle-working power to come forward, and to tell the truth and the whole truth.” See Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It*, iii.

115. Railton, “Native Work in Africa,” 318.



of European godlessness.”<sup>116</sup> This pre-existing relationship to “the unknown God” served as a source of missionary optimism for Railton, who predicted a great future for Salvationist evangelism on the continent.

Precise details about what lay ahead were obviously difficult for George Scott Railton to know, but the system of governance he helped to set in motion guaranteed that there would be no self-governing Salvationist churches in the African mission field or anywhere else in The Salvation Army world. Autocratic leaders based in London would control all denominational matters, aided and abetted by the arguments of pioneers like Railton, who believed that paragons of pious self-sacrifice like William Booth deserved to rule over others: “Whenever God can find a man willing to lay down his life to save others, He gives him the absolute right and power which so great a work requires.”<sup>117</sup> Convinced that “a single will must reign, and one individual bear the great burden of responsibility, if anything worthwhile is to be accomplished,” Railton disparaged the committees and voting systems utilized by other Christian bodies, calling them a waste of valuable time.<sup>118</sup> Authoritarianism, not democracy, had God’s stamp of approval.<sup>119</sup> To be sure, he did not always act like The Salvation Army’s onerous regulations applied to him personally. As Railton confided to his wife during an unauthorized journey through China: “I am getting a part of the exhilaration

116. Railton, “Native Work in Africa,” 318.

117. George Scott Railton, *The Story of John Wesley, the Saved Clergyman* (London: Salvation Army Headquarters, 1882), 29. Railton played a leading part in the Christian Mission’s transformation into an autocratic organization in the late 1870s. See Watson, *Soldier Saint*, 13-14; and Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army*, 198.

118. Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It*, 179.

119. Railton, *Twenty-One Years Salvation Army*, 181-182.

I do because I am like a naughty boy out of bounds.”<sup>120</sup> In his capacity as an itinerant missionary, he was prone to go wherever the Spirit led him, regardless of the orders emanating from the organization’s leadership back in Britain. Defiance of this sort was fine for George Scott Railton, who remained a revered figure among Salvationists, but the rank and file members of the Army did not have the same freedom to disobey. As the historian Norman Murdoch has pointed out, they had to live and work within the confines of a “Christian imperium” that somewhat resembled the hierarchy of the British Empire.<sup>121</sup> Railton never acknowledged this double standard, perhaps because it was a consequence of the autocratic empire he had done so much to put in place.

## Conclusion

Like the other members of the early Salvation Army, George Scott Railton was not without flaws. As exceptional as his life and ministry may have been, he exhibited some of the inconsistencies and blind spots that mark the human condition. Most glaring was Railton’s fervent support for autocracy, which was hard to reconcile with his more egalitarian views on gender and race. All might be one in Christ, but the force of this biblical assertion was weakened by his penchant for militarism and the hierarchy that underpinned it. The same could be said of Railton’s paternalism, which qualified his more progressive views on women. Moreover, in the midst of urging missionaries to adapt to foreign cultures, he sometimes betrayed a sense of western superiority. It is equally true that Railton’s strident views on the fate of the unsaved were difficult to square with his relatively gracious attitude towards other religions. Yet, in spite of these and other weaknesses, no one did more than George Scott Railton to place the early Salvation Army on a global trajectory. Having been exposed to world missions from early childhood, he prompted the Booths and their followers—male and female—

120. Cited in Douglas and Duff, *Commissioner Railton*, 164.

121. Murdoch, *Origins of the Salvation Army*, xi, 111, 129.

to consider the fields of harvest far beyond Britain's shores. Never content with talk alone, Railton not only headed the Army's first official "invasion" of a foreign country but also devoted much of his remaining life to itinerant missionary work in diverse regions of the planet. A leading champion of self-denial, he routinely urged Salvationists in the west to embrace a life of voluntary poverty in distant lands. Given these vital contributions to the missionary enterprise, it is not surprising that Railton's death in the summer of 1913 was portrayed as "a great loss to the Army."<sup>122</sup> Who could fill the shoes of someone who had played such a pivotal role in transforming a small East London mission into a transnational army of salvation? Obviously, no one could do so, for there would only be one father of Salvation Army world missions.

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122. "Death of Commr. Railton," *The War Cry*, July 26, 1913, 9. See also "The Army's First Commissioner," *The Social Gazette*, July 26, 1913, 2.

# Heavenly Places Revealed

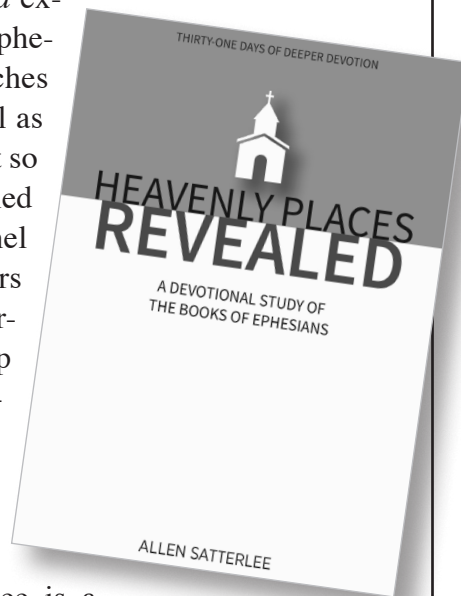
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Lt. Colonel Allen Satterlee is a retired Salvation Army officer who with his wife, Esther, served over forty years in The Salvation Army. The author of fourteen books, Satterlee received his master's degree from Liberty John W. Rawlings School of Divinity and continues to work part-time in retirement for The Salvation Army USA Southern Territory as the Spiritual Life Development Officer.

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# The Everlasting Mercy

CUES FROM ST. LUKE ON LOVING STRANGERS

*Lyell Rader*

## Introduction

Saul Kane is a hellion soul in John Masefield's poem, "The Everlasting Mercy."

"I lived in disbelief of Heaven./ I drunk, I fought, I poached, I whored./ I did despite unto the Lord./ I cursed, 'would make a man look pale./ And nineteen times I went to gaol."

The poem recounts a brawling, boozy prize fight and a buck-naked rout through town. Kane is a ruined man.

The plot continues downward, until, uncannily, grace appears.

"... In my heart the drink unpriced./ The burning cataracts of Christ.

I did not think, I did not strive./ The deep peace burnt my me alive;/ The bolted door had broken in./ I knew that I had done with sin./ I knew that Christ had giv-

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

en me birth/ To brother all the souls on earth. ...

O glory of the lighted mind,/ How dead I'd been,  
how dumb, how blind,/ The station brook, to my new  
eyes,/ Was babbling out of Paradise./ The waters  
rushing from the rain/ Were singing Christ has risen  
again" (Masefield, [www.theotberpages.org/poems](http://www.theotberpages.org/poems)).

Mercy is the medium in which we do our work, the mercy that brings the wayward home, that makes the stranger kin.

### Part One

Luke was a stranger, the only Gentile among the New Testament writers. He tells movingly of Jesus' way with strangers, the poor, the odd, the followers of alien faiths. We draw from Luke's Gospel pericopes of mercy, especially toward the outsider, to find dramatic cues for living faith today.

### *We Dwell Among Strangers*

*"On the way to Jerusalem Jesus was going through the region between Samaria and Galilee. As he entered a village, ten lepers approached him. Keeping their distance, they called out saying, 'Jesus, Master, have mercy on us!' When he saw them, he said to them, 'Go and show yourselves to the priests.' And as they went, they were made clean. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, praising God with a loud voice. He prostrated himself at Jesus' feet and thanked him. And he was a Samaritan. Then Jesus asked, 'Were not ten made clean? But the other nine, where are they? Was none of them found to return and give praise to God except this foreigner?' And then he said to him, 'Get up and go on your way, your faith has made you well'" (Lk 17:11-19).*

Setting out from the Chinese city of Xi'an you can find miles of open fields where archaeologists are unearthing an army of life-size figures buried by the first Chinese emperor, 2,200 years ago at the site of his tomb. Rather than bury an army of living men to accompany him into the afterlife, the custom of the time, he had artisans craft thousands of individual, full-bodied soldiers. They seem to be coming out of the earth, everywhere clay people crawling from the ground. Annie Dillard writes of the sight: "I seemed to see our lives from the aspect of eternity. I seemed long dead and looking down" (Dillard, 1999:15).

The number of people who have ever lived on earth runs from seventy billion to over one hundred billion. The dead are conjectured to outnumber us fourteen to one (Dillard, 1999:49). When Ted Bundy, the serial killer, was arrested, he could not comprehend the fuss. "I mean," he said, "there are so many people" (Dillard, 1999:21). Writes Dillard again:

"There are 1,198,500,000 people alive now in China. To get a feel for what this means, simply take yourself—in all your singularity, importance, complexity, and love—and multiply by 1,198,500,000. 'See? Nothing to it'" (Dillard, 1999:47).

In this alarming, depressing press of strangers, we are told each is particular and precious to God. The lepers of our text are an emblem of all who stand afar off; dis-eased. And the Jesus of the text is a promise that each is "by mercy wound, round and round" (Gerard Manley Hopkins).

### *At Their Core is Faith*

*"A centurion [in Capernaum] had a slave whom he valued highly, and who was ill and close to death. When he heard about Jesus, he sent some Jewish elders to him, asking him to come and heal his slave.*

*When they came to Jesus, they appealed to him earnestly, saying, 'He is worthy of having you do this for him, for he loves our people, and it is he who built our synagogue for us.' And Jesus went with them, but when he was not far from the house, the centurion sent friends to say to him, 'Lord, do not trouble yourself, for I am not worthy to have you come under my roof; therefore I did not presume to come to you. But only speak the word, and let my servant be healed. For I also am a man set under authority, with soldiers under me; and I say to one, 'Go, ' and he goes, and to another, 'Come, ' and he comes, and to my slave, 'Do this, ' and the slave does it.' When Jesus heard this he was amazed at him, and turning to the crowd that followed him, he said, 'I tell you, not even in Israel have I found such faith.' When those who had been sent returned to the house, they found the slave in good health" (Lk 7:2-10).*

The centurion was a pagan. The word is pejorative. When he heard about Jesus, he asked him to come. It was like a prayer. We all pray. Authors Philip and Carol Zaleski tell of a startling shot in a mundane slide show by a friend returned from Tibet. Among the dreary slides of monks and mountains, there stood out suddenly the picture of a prayer frame of rough lumber: four cross beams, each with ten prayer wheels fitted with bits of paper inscribed with prayers. As the mountain winds stream down, the wheels whiz round and fling their petitions skyward. The wheels are not of jade or crystal or blown glass, but of discarded plastic Coca-Cola bottles.

Wherever one finds human beings, the Zaleskis write, you find them at prayer. Prayer lies at the heart of culture. All art was originally sacred art, all drama, sacred drama. "Much of the productive work of the world has been instigated and hallowed by prayer" (Zaleski, 2006:12).

We discover the humanity of the stranger by listening to her prayer, by approaching with reverence for reverence (1 Pe 3:15), by

becoming the *I* to her *Thou*. For the one who does,

"Good people and evil, wise and foolish, beautiful and ugly, become successively real to him; that is, set free, they step forth in their singleness, and confront him as *Thou*. In a wonderful way, from time to time, exclusiveness arises—and so he can be effective, helping, healing, educating, raising up, saving. Love is responsibility of an *I* for a *Thou*" (Buber in Herbert, 1956:48).

### ***God Loves the Stranger***

*"When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom. ... He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: '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.' ... Then he began to say to them, 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing.'"*

*"... You will say, 'Do here also in your hometown the things that we have heard you did in Capernaum.' ... The truth is, there were many widows in Israel in the time of Elijah ... yet Elijah was sent to none of them except to a widow of Zarephath in Sidon. There were also many lepers in Israel in the time of the prophet Elisha, and none of them was cleansed except Naaman the Syrian. When they heard this, all in the synagogue were filled with rage" (Lk 4:16-19, 21, 23-28).*



The first murderous altercation in the Gospel accounts is over the inclusiveness of God. We can hardly bear to include the stranger. On the basis of a few misconstrued texts (Mt 7:13-14; see Lk 13:23-24) we have constructed a doctrine of *fewness*. And this in the face of the repleteness of biblical testimony to the wideness of God's mercy: "... We have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the *world*" (1 Jn 4:14). "... God was reconciling the *world* to himself in Christ" (2 Co 5:19). "[God] is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but *everyone* to come to repentance" (2 Pe 3:9). "[God] wants *all* men to be saved and to come to a knowledge of the truth" (1 Tm 2:4). "For God has bound all men over to disobedience so that he may have mercy on them *all*" (Ro 11:32).

In John Wesley's day, as in our own, many Christians held that "by virtue of an eternal, unchangeable, irresistible decree of God, one part of mankind are infallibly saved, and the rest infallibly damned" (Wesley in Runyon, 1998:37). On the contrary, Wesley believed (as do Salvationists):

"The Lord is loving unto every man, and his mercy is over all his works. ... The same Lord over all is rich in mercy to all that call upon him." But you say, 'No, he is such only to those for whom Christ died. And those are not all, but only a few ... who were 'chosen in him before the foundation of the world.' Flatly contrary to your interpretation ... is the whole tenor of the New Testament. ... He is the propitiation, not for our sins only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (Wesley in Runyon, 1998:39).

Wesley went further:

"If taught by the inward voice of God the essentials of loyalty to God and obedience to what he or she understands to be the will of God, the nonChristian fears God and practices righteousness, and thus is not condemned but accepted of God" (Runyon, 1998:220).

### ***Our Commission is to Love Them Too***

"... A lawyer stood up to test Jesus. 'Teacher,' he said, 'what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the law? What do you read there?' He answered, 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbor as yourself.' And he said to him, 'You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.' But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, 'And who is my neighbor?' Jesus replied, 'A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road, and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, 'Take care of him, and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.' Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?' He said, 'The one who showed him mercy.' Jesus said to him, 'Go and do likewise'" (Lk 10:25-37).

We have mysteriously, in evangelical circles, adopted Matthew 28:18-20 as the commission par excellence for the church. Yet, we know there are related statements in all of the Gospels (Mk 16:14-20; Lk 24:44-49; Jn 20:19-23). John Stott called the incarnational

commission in John the crucial form “and the most neglected because it is the most costly.” He added: “I now see more clearly that not only the consequences of the commission but the actual commission itself must be understood to include social as well as evangelistic responsibilities unless we are to be guilty of distorting the words of Jesus” (Stott in Arias and Johnson, 1992:83).

The thrust of Jesus’ parable is the fundamental place of ordinary neighborliness and temporal care, exemplified here by the acts of a non-Christian.

## Part Two

### *We Have Much to Regret*

*“When the days drew near for him to be taken up, he set his face to go to Jerusalem. And he sent messengers ahead of him. On their way they entered a village of the Samaritans to make ready for him; but they did not receive him, because his face was set toward Jerusalem. When his disciples James and John saw it, they said, ‘Lord, do you want us to command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?’ But he turned and rebuked them” (Lk 9:51-55).*

There is a dark side to all religion. If religion may express our yearning for God, it may also embody our flight from him.

“There are so many ways of ‘taking the Name in vain,’ of recruiting allegedly transcendent mandate as sanction for envy, place-seeking, contention, obduracy, lovelessness and callousness. A right theology has sterner tasks within the psyche than with the mind. ‘Truth in the inward parts,’ as the psalmist sought it, is more exacting than the logic of a credo, the niceties of a ritual or the benchmarks of a discipline” (Cragg, 1994:269).

The world does not divide into the OK and the not-OK. The line between good and evil, as Alexander Solzhenitsyn discovered in the Gulag, runs through every human heart.

To wit, the story of John Newton. It is commonly thought that Newton, author of “Amazing Grace,” was a slave captain who, upon his conversion, renounced his vice and became a champion of the anti-slavery movement. But, in fact, Newton was converted in his mid-twenties. Because of his new love for Christ, and for his childhood sweetheart whom he hoped to marry, he sought “respectable” employment in the slave trade. He was offered command of a slave ship but decided instead to serve as First Mate. Three slaving voyages as captain followed, without a twinge of conscience. He considered his new career “the appointment Providence had marked out” for him. Each of his slave voyage journals begins with the words, “... Voyage intended (by God’s permission) ... to Africa.” On the upper deck, he wrote tender letters to his wife and, reportedly, composed hymns such as “How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in the believer’s ear”) while below deck, filthy, brutalized and infirm, were the slaves. When Newton finally left the slave trade it was due to illness not conscience. Many years later, his journal reflects his confusion and anguish at how he could have been involved in the trade as a Christian (Brendlinger, *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, 41:1, Spring, 2006:230-231).

The saintly Bernard of Clairvaux, author of “Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee,” was a prime recruiter for the star-crossed Children’s Crusade, one of the more tragic episodes in a succession of maniacal crusades against unbelievers. Karen Armstrong writes:

“I was struck by the nihilism of crusading. Instead of reaching out to the Jews in their midst, instead of trying to learn from Islam (a far more advanced civilization than their own), the Crusaders had been unable to govern their fears and resentment. They had killed, maimed, burned, desecrated, and destroyed what they were psychologically incapable of understanding. And in doing so, they had vitiated their

own integrity and their own moral vision. Auschwitz showed where such calculated hatred could lead...” (Armstrong, 2004:257).

We do not need to look far today to find those who wish to command fire to come down from heaven upon the stranger.

### *The Spirit Witnesses and We Witness*

*“... The angel Gabriel was sent by God to a town in Galilee called Nazareth, to a virgin engaged to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David. The virgin’s name was Mary. And he came to her and said, ‘Greetings, favored one! The Lord is with you’” (Lk 1:26-28).*

*“Is there anyone among you who, if your child asks for a fish, will give a snake instead of a fish? Or if the child asks for an egg, will give a scorpion? If you then, who are evil, know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more will the heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to those who ask **him!**” (Lk 11:11-13).*

Renaissance artists were entranced by Luke’s account of the Annunciation. Filippo Lippi (1406-1469), the Florentine, for example, has Gabriel ruddy and young, his hair a gold filigree, and Mary, demure in blue satin, still. They kneel with exquisite courtliness and pent drama while above hovers a dove.

“When the Advocate comes whom I will send to you from the Father, the Spirit of truth,” Jesus promised, “he will testify on my behalf. You also are to testify...” (Jn 15:26-27).

The Spirit is the agent of prevenient grace, the grace that comes to meet us. Said Wesley,

“Everyone has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which sooner or later ... enlightens every man that cometh into the world. ... Everyone ... feels more or less uneasy when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath” (Wesley in Runyon, 1998:28).

The Spirit prompts the human quests of our time: for moral authenticity, for community, for transcendence and mystery, for meaning (Hall, 1997:57f.). By the Spirit, we may rest ... assured ... that we not carry, Atlas-like, the burden of ministry alone. As Cliff Knechtle puts it:

“A person’s coming to Christ is like a chain with many links. There is the first link, middle links, and a last’ link. There are many influences and conversations that precede a person’s decision to convert to Christ. I know the joy of being the first link at times, a middle link usually and occasionally the last link. God has not called me to only be the last link. He has called me to be faithful and to love all people” (cited in Hunter, 1996:155).

Karen Armstrong in her recent autobiography tells of her soul-destroying tenure in an abusive convent and a long, haunted passage of undiagnosed epilepsy and mental illness. In the end her faith was gone. Nevertheless she stood in church one day to sponsor the baptism of Jacob, the severely autistic son of friends who were Oxford professors and atheists. Jacob knelt, stiffly upright, his hands joined, eyes fixed sternly ahead. The ceremony had been cut to a minimum. Geoffrey, the priest, asked “What do you ask of the church of God?” “Faith,” Karen replied in Jacob’s stead. “What does faith bring to you?” he continued. “Life everlasting,” she replied again. “If then, you desire to enter into life, keep the commandments: You shall love

the Lord your God with your whole heart, and with your whole soul, and with your whole mind, and your neighbor as yourself.” At each phrase Jacob nodded. There was poignancy in the phrase “with your whole mind,” but, Karen thought, he did know how to love.

The priest placed a few grains of salt on Jacob’s tongue. “Grant, we pray you, Lord, that your servant who tastes the savor of salt may no longer hunger but be filled with heavenly nourishment.”

Karen reflected:

“Jacob did hunger for something that he could never have put into words. And I too had once had a similar hunger. I had wanted to be filled with God, transformed by a holiness that would bring me a fuller and more satisfying existence. But instead I had starved my hand and my heart, and that hunger had atrophied, died, and been replaced by a malaise with all things religious. And yet when I looked at Jacob, I felt nostalgia for what I had once been.”

Sprinkling a few drops of water on Jacob’s head, the priest pronounced, “Jacob, I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” “Jacob gave a long, audible sigh of satisfaction,” Karen writes, “while Jennifer [his mother] and I, excluded from the source of this peace for very different reasons, exchanged glances and smiled slightly.” She ends her autobiography: “Now I have to mount my staircase alone. And as I go up, step by step, I am turning, again, round and round, apparently covering little ground, but climbing upward, I hope, toward the light” (Armstrong, 2004:185-187, 306).

With mercy at every rung.

### ***Weakness is an Advantage***

*“A dispute also arose among them as to which one of them was to be regarded as the greatest. But he said to them, ‘The kings of the Gentiles · lord it over them;*

*and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather the greatest among you must become like the youngest, and the leader like one who serves. For who is greater, the one who is at the table or the one who serves? Is it not the one at the table? But I am among you as one who serves” (Lk 22:24-27).*

*“Without beauty, without majesty (we saw him), no looks to attract our eyes; a thing despised and rejected by men, a man of sorrows and familiar with suffering. a man to make people screen their faces; he was despised and we took no account of him. And yet ours were the sufferings he bore...” (Is 53:3-4a, JB).*

As officers in the West, we no longer have the ‘home court advantage,’ “in which the whole Western world marched to medieval Christianity’s drum and played the game of life by the Church’s rules. ... In this more secular world, an increasing number of people have lived their lives beyond the influence of any church, and they have no background for even knowing what Christians are talking about” (Hunter, 1992:152).

Perhaps, we must relearn the grace of lowliness, the dignity of littleness—and the dangers of uncritical militancy. Major Barbara Robinson recalls a widely circulated photo in our newspapers of a soldier, in lethal combat gear, cuddling an injured child. It is an “ambiguous embrace.”

“For me the picture highlighted in a graphic and poignant way some of the contradictory components we Salvationists are required to negotiate as aspects of our denominational identity. ... Perhaps, we need to challenge each other to handle [our military] metaphor more thoughtfully; to abandon jingoism and seek a meaning which speaks to the terrible sorrows and brokenness of our time”



(Robinson, *Officer*, January–February, 2006:38).

She tells the story of Wadji Isekandar, an Arab/Bedouin from Northern Sudan, whose first exposure to Christians occurred when a colleague invited him to church. He listened to them praying:

“I’ve been forbidden to sit my final exams because they know I am Christian. God, help me to love the university administration. ... Our family is being evicted from our home because they have learned we are Christians. Help us to find ways to show care to our landlord. ... God, heal my resentment because my son has been refused a place in a medical residency because they know I’m a Christian. Give me a forgiving heart.”

Wadji was staggered by this strange viewpoint. He approached the pastor angrily, offering to advocate for justice through personal connections. But, explains Robinson, “Ultimately, he responded to Christ as a man ‘undone,’ overwhelmed by the counter culture vision and spirit of grace expressed in that Christian assembly. In The Salvation Army we sing about winning the world for God. Wadji was won for God in the way my husband won my heart—by the winsome tenderness of love” (Robinson, *Officer*, January–February, 2006:45).

### *We Do the Things That Make for Peace*

“... *Jesus said: ‘Someone gave a great dinner and invited many. At the time for the dinner he sent his slave to say to those who had been invited, ‘Come, for everything is ready now.’ But they all alike began to make excuses. ... Then the owner of the house became angry and said to his slave, ‘Go at once into the streets and lanes of the town and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind, and the lame.’ And the slave said, ‘Sir, what you ordered has been done, and*

*there is still room.’ Then the master said to the slave, ‘Go out into the roads and lanes, and compel people to come in, so that my house may be filled’” (Lk 14:16-18, 21-23).*

*“As he came near and saw the city, he wept over it, saying ‘If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes” (Lk 19:41-42; see also 1:79; 2:14; 2:29; 7:50; 8:48, etc.).*

The genius of the gospel is in the mending of the broken. The wholeness that results is called in the Greek *eirene*, in the Hebrew, *shalom*. The parable particularizes the wounded, the welcomed.

In “The Flaw of the Excluded Middle,” anthropologist Paul Hiebert explains that people in most nonwestern societies include three levels in their worldview. The lower level is the natural, material world. The middle is the realm of powers which affect people’s crops, business, health, fertility, child-rearing, family relations, social relations, and other immediate concerns. The upper is the transcendent cosmic level where questions of origin, purpose, and destiny are addressed.

Hiebert points out that many Western missionaries minister only at the lower and upper levels, ignoring middle level concerns; consequently their converts are forced to revert to pre-Christian practices to cope with everyday life. “It is no coincidence that many of the most successful missions have provided some form of Christian answer to middle level questions.”

According to George Hunter, middle-level questions now drive ordinary people in the West more than the theoretical issues of the upper level. For example, the New Hope Community Church in Portland, Oregon found that call-in inquiries to their radio program consisted largely of questions about illness, stress, finances, marriage, children, making sense of life. Said Associate Pastor David Durey: “They are not interested in your doctrinal distinctive or mine” (Hunter, 1996:160).



The table fellowship of Jesus was a radical form of reconciliation. We as a culture are enthralled by the myth of competitive conflict and redemptive violence. The saga of the ragged, irrepressible St. Francis of Assisi provides a model for the officer role in reconciliation.

During the Fifth Crusade, Francis traveled to Egypt, to tend the wounded, to pray for peace. He crossed the Saracen lines with his companion Illuminato, chanting “Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil.” They two were caught, beaten and chained.

Sir Steven Runciman writes:

“The Muslim guards were suspicious at first but soon decided that anyone so simple, so gentle and so dirty must be mad, and treated him with the respect due to a man who had been touched by God. He was taken to the sultan who was charmed by him and listened patiently to his appeal.”

“I have been sent by God to save your soul,” Francis told the Sultan, suggesting that he might want to summon his wise men to witness the event. When they arrived, Francis pleaded for several days for the Sultan’s conversion. In the end, the advisors counseled the immediate beheading of the friars. But the Sultan had them escorted back. He made an overture of peace, asking, as they left, to pray that before he died he would be shown the true faith (House, 2001:210-215). Non-violent measures have led to the greatest social transformations of our lifetimes. The Salvation Army is the world’s largest standing army. We are positioned uniquely for reconciliation.

The Hindu chairman of one of E. Stanley Jones’ meetings in India said in his closing remarks:

“Jesus has stood four times in history before the door of India and has knocked. The first time he appeared in the early days he stood in company with a trader. He knocked. We looked out and saw him and liked him, but we didn’t like his company, so we shut the

door. Later he appeared, with a diplomat on one side and a soldier on the other, and knocked. We looked out and said, ‘We like you, but we don’t like your company.’ Again we shut the door. The third time was when he appeared as the up-lifter of the outcasts. We liked him better in this role, but we weren’t sure of what was behind it. Was this the religious side of imperialism? Are they conquering us through religion? Again we shut the door. And now he appears before our doors, as tonight, as the disentangled Christ. To this disentangled Christ we say: ‘Come in. Our doors are open to you’” (Jones, 1968:110).

# *Supper with the Shepherd King*

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Lt. Colonel Dan Jennings is the Secretary for Personnel in the USA Central Territory of The Salvation Army and has a Master of Arts in Theological Studies from the Nazarene Theological Seminary in Kansas City, Missouri. Jennings has a desire to unearth and discover the never-ending truths found in the Bible and finds tremendous fulfillment in leading, teaching, and developing others. *Supper with the Shepherd King* is his first book.

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# Wondering and Waiting

**HABBAKUK 1:1-4**

*Christopher L. Scott*

Most of us have been mesmerized by the pictures we've seen of our planet Earth taken from space. Those pictures from space reveal the beautiful oceans, the various continents, the perfectly round shape of Earth, as well as the clouds and weather we can see developing on Earth. It looks like the most beautiful place in the galaxy. Earth, from those pictures, looks peaceful, clean, and calm. Those pictures of our world are nothing but majestic.

Yet, while Earth looks so beautiful when you are tens of thousands of miles away, those of us that live on Earth don't see the same beauty. When we live on Earth, we live amid a different world. We see dust blown up by the wind, violence among animals, pollution from creation, injustice by humans, sadness in our communities, and we see suffering.

In the midst of this we often ask God, "Do you know what's going on? When will you intervene? Why don't you do something? If you are good why do you allow pain, suffering, and evil?"

The Old Testament book of Habakkuk was written 2,600 years ago, yet it deals with a modern problem and common questions we all experience. The book of Habakkuk answers our questions because Habakkuk was asking the same questions *then* that we ask *now*. Thankfully, we don't just read about Ha-

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bakkuk's questions, we read about God's answers.

## Habakkuk's Call

*"The oracle which Habakkuk the prophet saw"*  
(Habakkuk 1:1, NASB).<sup>1</sup>

### The Prophet

His name, "Habakkuk" (*habaq-quq*), only shows up two times in the Bible (Hab 1:1; 3:1). But the book of Habakkuk is quoted several times in the New Testament. Habakkuk 2:4 is quoted by Paul (Rom 1:17; Gal 3:11) as well as by the author of Hebrews (Heb 10:38), and Habakkuk 1:5 is quoted by Paul in a sermon that Luke records in Acts 13:41.

While nothing in Scripture describes Habakkuk, we can make some conclusions about him from what we read. Habakkuk likely was an officially ordained prophet, part of the temple liturgical singing. He appears well educated, deeply sensitive, and based on his literary style, as much of a poet as a prophet.<sup>2</sup> He also was probably a composer of music or led worship in the temple based on the musical notations of Habakkuk 3:19. Habakkuk likely recorded this book in 606-604 BC, under king Jehoiakim (Jer 22:15-17; 2 Kings 23:34-24:5). This means he lived in the final dark days of the southern nation of Judah.

### The Oracle

The word "oracle" (*mas-sa*), meaning "message," "prophecy," or literally "burden," is "a pronouncement or message from God to people."<sup>3</sup> In the Old Testament there are three types of oracles: judgement, blessing, and salvation.<sup>4</sup> The book of Habakkuk is an oracle of judgement against the evil of the nation of Judah, its kings, its people, and its rulers.

While most prophets in the Old Testament brought God's messages *to the people*, Habakkuk is different. Habakkuk brings the people's questions *to God*. And that starts here in verses two and three.

## Habakkuk's Cry

*How long, LORD, must I call for help, but you do not listen? Or cry out to you, 'Violence!' but you do not save? Why do you make me look at injustice? Why do you tolerate wrongdoing? Destruction and violence are before me; there is strife, and conflict abounds"*  
(Habakkuk 1:2-3).

### How Long?

Habakkuk is perplexed by the common wickedness he sees. He wonders why God doesn't do something about it. Based on these two verses it is clear he has been asking these questions for a while,<sup>5</sup> but he is not getting a response. And because he hasn't received a response he wonders what is going on. Habakkuk is frustrated and exasperated.

Habakkuk has probably been trying to fix the situation. He probably had given sermons, taught classes, held seminars, conducted counseling, sang songs, wrote "letters to the editor," and possibly conducted PR campaigns to try to get the people to return back to God from their wicked ways.

### Why?

In verses two and three we see Habakkuk pile up the synonyms as he describes what was going on among the people in Judah: "violence" (vv. 2, 3), "iniquity" (v. 3), "wickedness" (v. 3), "destruction" (v. 3), "strife" (v. 3), "contention" (v. 3). Charles Ryrie describes that "the *strife* and *contention* was between the Jewish people themselves, not with their enemies."<sup>6</sup> Habakkuk's issues were with his neighbors in the city of Jerusalem, his fellow priests, and political rulers under whom he served. Because of this God is going to send a foreign nation to punish them.

We are hearing about the hurting heart of Habakkuk. He has not received an answer from God, he sees wickedness continue in his nation, he feels like God is distant, and he probably feels alone.

## Questions of God Should Occur in the Context of Trust of God.

Throughout Scripture there are many biblical examples of people asking God questions but not getting answers. David (Ps 13:1-4; 22:1, 11, 19-20), Asaph (Ps 74:1-2, 10-11), and the Sons of Korah (Ps 88) are just a few of the examples from the Psalms.

When we read about Habakkuk and see other examples of people asking God questions but not receiving answers, it reminds us that our questions should focus on God's *work*, not God's *character*. We question what God *does*, not who God *is*. We can question God's *actions*, but we should never question His *deity*. Additionally, our questions should be directed toward God. We should talk *to* God, not *about* God to others. We should complain *to* God, not *about* God to others. It's okay to ask questions such as: "God, are you doing your job?" "God, it feels like you don't care?" "God, I wonder if you are paying attention?" "God, are you taking a day off?"

I believe we can say these things and still be respectful for who God *is* even if we question what He *does*. However, this is a fine line. A child asking a parent, "Why do you want me to eat all my vegetables?" is very different from the child asking, "Why do I need to do what you say?"

We can trust God because of His character. We know God is omniscient (all-knowing), omnipotent (all-powerful), and holy (just and perfect). Yet, the more we *know* Him, the more we *trust* Him. It is important that we must not believe that God's silence is a sign of His indifference or inactivity (see Dan 10:12-14 for proof). In the midst of our struggles, sufferings, and problems we need to recognize the long-range plans that God has and is putting together even though those long-range plans never make sense at the beginning.

We must remember that God can see the whole picture, we cannot. We've seen Habakkuk's cry and his questions he asks from a place of trust and next we see Habakkuk's heart and concern.

## Habakkuk's Concern

*"Therefore the law is paralyzed, and justice never*

*prevails. The wicked hem in the righteous, so that justice is perverted" (Habakkuk 1:4).*

## The Law

The "law" here is the Hebrew word *torah*, which was the authoritative teaching of the Old Testament that revealed God's will and was supposed to direct the life of God's people in righteousness. "When used in the singular without clear definition, as here, *torah* signifies God's covenantal code established with Israel, given through Moses and set forth particularly in the book of Deuteronomy (e.g., Dt 1:5; 4:8; 17:18-19; 31:9; 33:4; Jos 8:31-32)"<sup>7</sup>

But the Law was ineffective. The Law apparently is "ignored" (NIV translates it as "paralyzed"). In other words, the Law has had no effect on the people. It has literally been "numbed" in the lives of the people in Judah. The people are not respecting the Law or giving authority to it. The Law in the life of the people of Judah was like cold, numb hands that try to tie a fishing knot. The Law had been considered pointless.

## The Situation

Sin was ruling in the land. The rulers were not administering justice to those that needed it. Corruption and lawlessness were part of the situation they were living under. But how bad was it? Habakkuk lived under King Jehoiakim of Judah. Jehoiakim ruled in Judah 609-605 BC under Egypt's oversight and 605-601 under Babylon's oversight. During his rule, Jehoiakim killed innocent people who opposed him, refused to pay poor laborers (2 Kings 23:35-37; Jer 22:13-19), killed Uriah the prophet for prophesying that Jerusalem would fall (Jer 26:20-23), and burned the prophet Jeremiah's hand-written prophecy (Jer 36). Furthermore, prophets and priests were known to commit adultery and abuse their authority under his rulership (Jer 23:1-2, 9-11).<sup>8</sup>

## Questions of Evil and Suffering Should Acknowledge We Live in a Fallen World.

One of the modern myths we need to extinguish as Christians is that if we become Christians all our problems will go away. When we become Christians our basic spiritual problem of being separated from God because of sin is fixed, but there's still the problem that we live in a fallen world. We live in a world that does not follow God's laws and that is ruled under Satan's program (John 12:31; 2 Cor 4:3-4). This means life won't always go as planned for us as Christians. This means we need to acknowledge that the world in which we live in is sinful, and that sinful world pollutes our lives.

When things don't go the way we think they should we need to remind ourselves that there is injustice in this world. We need to remind ourselves that the sin of the Old Testament still affects us today. In the book of Genesis, Adam and Eve committed the original sin (Gen 3), then Cain kills Abel (Gen 4), then God sends the Flood to wipe out Earth because of sin (Gen 6), then God scatters the people because they were prideful, wanting to build a tower to the heavens (Gen 11), then God wipes out Sodom and Gomorrah because of the sin there (Gen 18). That's a lot of sin for only half of one book of the Bible! And if that's not bad enough for you, read the book of Judges, 2 Kings, or Jeremiah.

Consider Habakkuk, who was probably a priest in the temple. He likely taught the Law, possibly led singing (Hab 3:19), and he likely enjoyed a good and safe life in Jerusalem. But as we will learn from Habakkuk 1:5-11, God is going to send the nation of Babylon to punish Judah for their sins. Habakkuk is going to endure the Babylonians coming simply because of the fallen world, not because of what he did or didn't do. Nothing Habakkuk has done has caused God's punishment to come on Judah, yet Habakkuk still has to endure it.

Pain, evil, and suffering are the fault of the world we live in, not God. God gave us the freedom to make choices and a byproduct of that freedom is that sometimes the choices that others make hurt *us*. Sometimes our own choices hurt us, but those are easier to wrestle with because we know whom to blame: ourselves. But when other people's decisions affect us negatively, those are the hard situations to endure.

When I lived in Texas I knew a guy who raised his daughter to love God and follow God. She graduated college and married a man who wanted to be a pastor. She supported him as he went to seminary and served in his first pastor position. But after he had been a pastor a few years, he felt that he should be in the Air Force instead. Again she supported him and his decision to leave Christian ministry to join the Air Force and pursue his dream to be a pilot. Soon she found herself alone with their three kids while her husband was flying in the Air Force with his female copilot. It wasn't too much longer until the man announced he felt he wasn't supposed to be married to his wife. Instead, he believed he was supposed to marry his female copilot. The woman I knew found herself divorced, alone, and caring for her three children while her ex-husband was traveling the world with his new wife.

May I say something clearly and directly? Nothing that woman did caused her to have to experience the hurt, pain, and shame she has had to endure. She did everything right. She chose a spouse who loved God, she supported him through seminary to be a pastor, she supported him as a pastor, she supported his dream to be a pilot in the Air Force, yet she ended up middle-aged and divorced with three kids by herself.

When we have questions about suffering like this, we need to acknowledge that we live in a fallen world. Sometimes we experience pain and suffering that was not caused by anything that we did. But it's important we remember that our viewpoint is limited, much like the view of Earth was one hundred years ago.

## Conclusion

For more than a thousand years we *knew* Earth was round, but we could not *prove* it. That was until 1931 when Captain Albert Stevens, an officer in the U.S. Army Air Corps, took his airplane to 21,000 feet above the ground and took a picture of the Andes Mountains in front of him. If Earth was flat the Andes Mountains should have been level or slightly above the horizon of his picture, which he took 287 miles away. But the Andes mountains were well below the horizon of his picture, thus serving as the first physical ev-



idence that Earth was round.<sup>9</sup> For years we knew *intellectually* that the Earth was round, but we couldn't prove it or see it *physically*.

And that's sometimes how it works for us when we as Christians are in pain and suffering. We know that God is good. We know God loves us. We know God has a plan. But it's hard to endure because we can't see His plan. We can't see the whole picture that God is painting. But we can trust that in the future, after we've endured pain and suffering, God will show us the full picture and our faith will become sight. Better still, we will see Him face to face.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Scripture taken from the *New American Standard Bible*, Copyright The Lockman Foundation 1960, 1962, 1963, 1968, 1971, 1972, 1973, 1975, 1977, 1995. Used by permission.

<sup>2</sup> J. Ron Blue, "Habakkuk" in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary: Old Testament*, edited by John Walvoord and Roy Zuck (Colorado Springs, CO: David C. Cook, 1985), 1508..

<sup>3</sup> Leland Ryken, *Symbols and Reality* (Wooster, OH: Weaver Book Company, 2016), 31.

<sup>4</sup> Ryken, *Symbols and Reality*, 32-43.

<sup>5</sup> The phrase *ad-ana* indicates that the wicked conduct has continued for a long time without God stopping it (Carl Friedrich Keil, *The Twelve Minor Prophets*, vol. 2 [Grand Rapids, MI: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1949], 56).

<sup>6</sup> *Ryrie Study Bible* (Chicago, IL: Moody Publishers, 2012), 1117.

<sup>7</sup> Carl E. Armerding, "Habakkuk," in *The Expositor's Bible Commentary: Daniel–Malachi (Revised Edition)*, edited by Tremper Longman III and David E. Garland, vol. 8 (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2008), 611.

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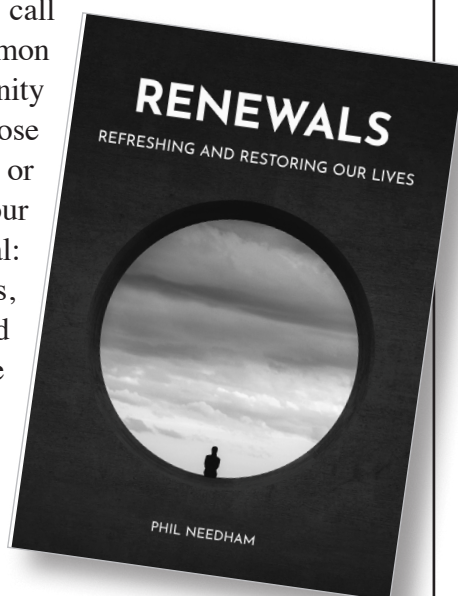
<sup>9</sup> "90 Years of Our Changing Views of Earth," NASA. <https://www.nasa.gov/feature/90-years-of-our-changing-views-of-earth> Accessed May 30, 2023.

# Renewals

By Phil Needham

*Renewals* launches the second half of the Christian Year that some churches call Trinity and others call Common Time. It explores how the Trinity teaches us to relate to all those with whom we have a close or distant relationship. All our relationships are covenantal: our personal relationships, our church relationships, and our relationships with the world. They call for constant renewal.

Phil Needham was a retired Salvation Army officer living in Atlanta who shared a vision of The Salvation Army as a missional people of God who are called by Christ to follow Him into the world, be His credible disciples, and share His compassion with the excluded. Needham was Promoted to Glory in 2023 and is the author of *Christ at the Door* and *Easter People*. *Renewals* is the fourth in his series of books of meditations based on the Christian Year.



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# Reviving Holiness Through Pneumatology

Justin Polsley

Since its inception, The Salvation Army has been guided in its theology by the Scriptures, which are interpreted within a Wesleyan framework. Central to that theological understanding is the doctrine of holiness in both personal and social settings, and although there have been transitions in that understanding, the Army still considers itself Wesleyan, and is part of the Wesleyan revival that is recognized within the broader Church. The Salvation Army was a charter member and continues as a member of the Wesleyan Holiness Connection, which is having an impact in today's Church.

Because of the resurgence in Wesleyan theology both in the Army and in the broader Church, it is important to recognize the Army's understanding of holiness theology in personal and social settings.<sup>1</sup> The Methodist movement has come under criticism for not keeping the doctrine of holiness central to its life and mission. In *The Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies*, William Abraham claims, "John Wesley's doctrine of Christian perfection is at best a dead letter and at worst a source of political delusion among contemporary Methodists."<sup>2</sup> Likewise, The Salvation Army has recognized through the report of the International Spiritual Life Commission that the Army has not always been faithful to the urgency of our holiness doctrine.<sup>3</sup>

The thesis of this paper is that there must be a re-envisioning of

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John Wesley's pneumatology in order to be completely faithful both to the biblical doctrine of holiness and to the life of holiness in the Army, which compels us to love God and neighbor. To examine the connection of pneumatology to holiness, this paper will explore the works of Wolfhart Pannenberg and Jürgen Moltmann. First, it will examine the Spirit's role in the trinitarian doctrine as understood by each theologian, then their pneumatology and how it links to holiness.

### A Trinitarian Understanding of the Holy Spirit

Wesley's pneumatology flows from his understanding of the Trinity. Although he was not considered a systematic theologian, he did make definitive statements about the three persons of the Godhead. In "A Letter to a Catholic," Wesley describes God the Father and the Son both as divine and part of the Trinity. He then asserts,

I believe the infinite and eternal Spirit of God, equal with the Father and the Son, to be not only perfectly holy in himself, but the immediate cause of all holiness in us: enlightening our understandings, rectifying our wills and affections, renewing our natures, uniting our persons to Christ, assuring us of the adoption of sons, leading us in our actions, purifying and sanctifying your soul and bodies to a full and eternal enjoyment of God.<sup>4</sup>

Wesley's trinitarian understanding is the essence of the Christian faith. He asserts, "It enters into the very heart of Christianity: It lies at the heart of all vital religion."<sup>5</sup> Even still, he is averse to going into depth on the nature of the Trinity and even warns against doing so: "I know not that any well judging man would attempt to explain them at all."<sup>6</sup> However, Wesley does briefly explore the intratrinitarian relations in his "A Letter to a Catholic," as the Father is "the Father of his only son," indicating God's Fatherhood comes only from the Son and not from believers.<sup>7</sup> And on the Son, he writes, "I believe he is the proper, natural Son of God, God of God, very God of very God."<sup>8</sup> He also roots his soteriology in the trinitarian

understanding as he states, "But I know not how anyone can be a Christian believer till ... God the Holy Ghost witnesses that God the Father has accepted him through the merits of God the Son."<sup>9</sup>

### Pannenberg's Trinitarian Perspective

Wolfhart Pannenberg's concept of pneumatology begins similarly to Wesley's, which is its relationship in the Trinity. Until Pannenberg in the twentieth century, there was no robust trinitarian understanding that deeply involved the Spirit outside of sacraments. Pannenberg's work directly explores the Spirit's role and work in the Trinity and the world. He states,

The involvement of the Spirit in God's presence in the work of Jesus and in the fellowship of the Son with the Father is the basis of the fact that the Christian understanding of God found its developed and definitive form in the doctrine of the Trinity and not in a biunity of the Father and the Son.<sup>10</sup>

To make this point, Pannenberg did not focus on what he called the baptismal formula but rather focused primarily on the writings of the New Testament.<sup>11</sup> Similar to Wesley, Pannenberg asserts that the Trinity was involved in the work of salvation but expanded this idea: "The event of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ ... refers both to the work of the Spirit, who as the Creator of all life raises Jesus from the dead."<sup>12</sup> For Pannenberg, the work of the New Testament necessitates a trinitarian God; each person works distinctly yet in concert towards salvation. To Pannenberg, the Spirit is more than the bond of love, as others have argued, but a distinct Person who "stands over against the Father and the Son as his own center of action."<sup>13</sup>

Pannenberg has a strong emphasis on the mutuality of the Trinity. For instance, he asserts that the relationship between the Father and the Son is dependent on one another.

"But in another way the relativity of fatherhood that finds expression in the designation 'Father' might well involve a dependence of the Father on the Son and thus be the basis of true reciprocity in the

trinitarian relations.”<sup>14</sup> Furthermore, it was the Spirit who enabled Jesus while He was on this earth: “The Spirit was earlier given to the Son permanently and without measure so as to equip him for his work.”<sup>15</sup> The Spirit, then, was the unifying force that enabled the fellowship of the persons of the Trinity. As already alluded to, he recognized how Augustine’s description of the Spirit as the bond that unites them diminishes the dignity of the Spirit. He states, “The Spirit, too, does not glorify himself but the Son in his relation to the Father and hence also the Father in the work of the Son.”<sup>16</sup> In other words, the Holy Spirit distinguishes Himself by His glorification of the Son and the Father and is indispensable for their fellowship.

### Moltmann’s Trinitarian Perspective

Similar to Pannenberg, Jürgen Moltmann was interested in a “holistic” trinitarian perspective. His understanding of the Trinity is a social understanding centered on relationship and love. In doing this, he emphasizes the “doctrine of the perichoresis,” which,

links together in a brilliant way the threeness and the unity, without reducing the threeness to the unity, or dissolving the unity in the threeness. The unity of the triunity lies in the eternal perichoresis of the trinitarian persons. Interpreted perichoretically, the trinitarian persons form their own unity by themselves in the circulation of the divine life.<sup>17</sup>

A way this can look for Moltmann is his understanding of the relationship between the Son and the Spirit. On “pneumatological Christology,” he states,

We have also to talk about a *kenosis of the Holy Spirit*, which emptied itself and descended from the eternity of God, taking up its dwelling in this vulnerable and mortal human being Jesus. The Spirit does indeed fill Jesus with authority and healing power, but it does not make him a superman; it

participates in his weakness, his suffering, and his death on the cross.<sup>18</sup>

However, for God to be a social, relational, loving God, this means God is a God who suffers. Moltmann states, “Because God himself wants man to be free God desires the freedom of his image on earth, and yet cannot force freedom on him; he can only create it and preserve it through the suffering of his eternal love.”<sup>19</sup> In other words, if God is a God of love, then God must suffer, for suffering comes with love. Moltmann says, “The fellowship of the God who is love has these two sides: it leads us into God’s sufferings and into his infinite sorrow; but it will only be consummated in the feast of God’s eternal joy and in the dance of those who have been redeemed from sorrow.”<sup>20</sup>

Moltmann, working from a pneumatological perspective, varies slightly from Pannenberg in the mutuality of God. He states, “In the eternal begetting and birth of the Son, God proves himself Father and is Father indeed. The Son and the Spirit proceed eternally from the Father, but the Father proceeds from no other divine person.”<sup>21</sup> Unlike Pannenberg, Moltmann’s Trinity doctrine has the Father as the initiator of His relationships to the others in the Trinity. He also has a “monarchy of the Father” that only defines the trinitarian relationship, not creation’s relationship to God.<sup>22</sup>

Even still, Moltmann’s involvement of the Spirit in the Trinity stands out. He has the Spirit intimately involved in the life of Jesus on earth. He states, “And it is therefore the Spirit who also ‘leads’ Jesus into the mutual history between himself and God his Father, in which ‘through obedience’ (Heb. 5.8) he will ‘learn’ his role as the messianic Son.”<sup>23</sup> The Spirit’s descending on Jesus without measure with the voice from heaven declaring sonship depicts the Spirit’s role of “the real determining subject of this special relationship.”<sup>24</sup>

### Pneumatology

Each theologian establishes that the Holy Spirit is God, starting with the Trinity.

Both Pannenberg and Moltmann have the Spirit as the medium

for the relationship between the Father and Son, something Wesley could not have considered as it was an idea only developing during his time. Interestingly, their relational Trinity and the work of the Spirit in the Trinity informs their understanding of pneumatology, the Spirit in creation, and believers.

### Wesley's Pneumatology

From the Trinity, Wesley's understanding starts with Creation and the Fall of humanity. He states that in Eden, the Holy Spirit was with and within humans: "Our first parents did enjoy the presence of the Holy Spirit."<sup>25</sup> The sin of Adam and Eve marked the departure of the Spirit of God from within humanity, "but when man would not be guided by the Holy Spirit, it left him."<sup>26</sup> The consequences of this are clear for Wesley. "The general character, therefore, of man's present state is death."<sup>27</sup> In another sermon, he states the impact was severe, which was "the entire depravation of the whole human nature, of every man born into the world, in every faculty of his soul."<sup>28</sup> In other words, humanity was made to dwell with the Spirit, and without the Spirit, humanity is dead, morally and otherwise.

Therefore, since the absence of the Spirit is the issue, the presence of the Spirit is part of the solution,

Considering what we are, and what we have been, nothing less than the receiving that Spirit again would be redemption to us; and considering who that heavenly person was that was sent to be our Redeemer, we can expect nothing less from him.<sup>29</sup>

Redemption of human nature, or the image of God, was communicated by the Son through the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit's role, then, is to connect the believer to God and the grace of Christ. Wesley states, "But I think the true notion of the Spirit is, that it is some portion of, as well as preparation for, a life in God, which we are to enjoy hereafter."<sup>30</sup> This is directly opposed to "imputed righteousness," which Wesley commented on a few times. Instead of imputed righteousness, the Holy Spirit renewing the nature of humanity al-

lows for real righteousness in this life.

### Wesley on Holiness

Wesley's holiness or Christian perfection works directly with his pneumatology because they are the same thing. Although his holiness theology is often complex, there is a simplicity to it that he aimed to communicate. In his writing, "A Plain Account of Christian Perfection," he clarifies that one can experience life without sin. To Wesley, though, this does not mean that one is not going to make mistakes—"A man may be filled with pure love, and still be liable to mistake."<sup>31</sup> He states that people who have holiness are also subject to illnesses and temptations. Most clearly, though, in his sermon "The Circumcision of the Heart," he writes,

It is that habitual disposition of soul which, in the sacred writings, is termed holiness; and which directly implies, the being cleansed from sin, 'from all filthiness both of flesh and spirit;' and, by consequence, the being endued with those virtues which were also in Christ Jesus; the being so 'renewed in the spirit of our mind,' as to be 'perfect as our Father in heaven is perfect.'<sup>32</sup>

Convinced by Scripture and his own experience, Wesley argues that people may experience life without sin in this lifetime. In other words, holiness means a pure heart without sin; it is to have the character of God through the Holy Spirit; it is to have pure love of God and neighbor. Or, as one author states, "The believer had to confront the depth of sin, recognize that God intended to deal with sin's power in this life, wait expectantly upon God in the means of grace, and bear witness to the work of God as and how it happened."<sup>33</sup>

### Pannenberg's Pneumatology

Pannenberg's pneumatology is also founded on his understanding of the Trinity. He discusses the giving and giving back of the Spirit between the Father and Son, which is the essence of



their relationship. He writes,

As the Father gives the Spirit who proceeds from him, so the Son gives him back and in this way proves his self-distinction from the Father as the Son who in eternity receives from the Father the Spirit who raises him to life.<sup>34</sup>

This intratrinitarian dynamic informs his pneumatology as Spirit as gift. Pannenberg opines that there are layers to the Spirit, in which the first is that the Spirit's "dynamic" is imparted in all living beings. In other words, the essence of life itself. And the Spirit as gift "is related to their becoming sons and daughters in baptism by fellowship with Jesus Christ."<sup>35</sup> Once believers receive the Spirit, he claims "we have a part in the intratrinitarian life of God, in the mutuality of fellowship between Father, Son, and Spirit."<sup>36</sup> However, for Pannenberg, this gift of the Spirit as mediation to sonship comes only with "faith and baptism" instead of faith alone, as Wesley taught.<sup>37</sup>

He was also interested in understanding how the Spirit works beyond the believer and the church and its involvement in all of creation. He writes, "On the one side the Spirit is the principle of the creative presence of the transcendent God with his creatures; on the other side he is the medium of the participation of the creatures in the divine life, and therefore in life as such."<sup>38</sup> For Pannenberg, the Spirit is the life force of all creation, giving life to its inhabitants.

### Pannenberg's Holiness

Pannenberg does not directly address the doctrine of holiness, but he does handle it indirectly in his pneumatology. He does this often when discussing the restored nature of humans back to God through the Holy Spirit:

Above all, however, the love that is poured into believers' hearts by the Holy Spirit (if the genitive in Rom. 5:5 is a subjective genitive) cannot be a habit of virtue related to the creaturely soul but has to be

the divine love itself that dwells in believers by the Holy Spirit.<sup>39</sup>

Here Pannenberg communicates a real-tangible love that is poured into the hearts of believers, and this is not behaviors learned but a gift and benefit from the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. He states that the Spirit "sanctifies creatures by giving them a fellowship with the eternal God that transcends their transitory life."<sup>40</sup> Additionally, in the topic of Spirit as gift, he argues that the Spirit does not control the believer but instead lets them participate in "God's action of reconciling the world and our participation in the movement of his reconciling love toward the world."<sup>41</sup>

### Moltmann's Pneumatology

Moltmann's pneumatology emphasizes the role of the Spirit working both in and with the people of God and in creation. Experiencing the Holy Spirit "is not limited to the human subject's experience of the self. It is also a constitutive element in the experience of the 'Thou,' in the experience of sociality, and in the experience of nature."<sup>42</sup> He compares the Spirit to the Old Testament temple, the Shekinah, as the unique presence of God,

If we live entirely in the prayer 'Thy will be done,' the Shekinah in us is united with God himself. We live again wholly, and can undividedly affirm life. The wanderings are over. The goal has been reached. We are conscious of God's happiness in us, and are conscious of ourselves in God's bliss.<sup>43</sup>

Moltmann connects the dwelling of God's presence amid Israel's suffering to the loving character of God. In the same way, the Spirit dwells with us. This dwelling is not the Spirit becoming like humanity, but is with Humanity. Moltmann opines, "The theophany of the Spirit is not anthropomorphism, but is made possible through his indwelling in created being."<sup>44</sup>

Similar to Pannenberg, the Spirit is not relegated to the church

or believers but is permeating through all of creation. The Spirit is present where there is life or passion. “So the essential thing is to affirm life—the life of other creatures—the life of other people—our own lives.”<sup>45</sup> He understands the Spirit as bringing the divine life to humanity and all of creation.

### Moltmann’s Holiness

Agreeing with Wesley, Moltmann says, “Holiness means harmony with God, happiness a person’s harmony with himself.”<sup>46</sup> Later, in *The Source of Life*, he states, “Harmony with God is called *sanctification*.”<sup>47</sup> This harmony is only possible through the new life that comes from the indwelling of the Spirit, the substantial transformation made possible by the presence of the Spirit. He continues that sanctification, “means first of all rediscovering the *sanctity of life* and *the divine mystery of creation*, and defending them from life’s manipulation, the secularization of nature, and the destruction of the world through human violence.”<sup>48</sup>

For Moltmann, holiness is not only a state of being but a transformation in one’s concerns for life. It is a disposition that moves towards and protects life in all of creation.

### Conclusion and Further Research

Pannenberg and Moltmann both have their pneumatology come from their trinitarian theology. They both have the Spirit active as the medium in the relationship between the Father and the Son. With this as the foundation, the Spirit is also the medium for all of creation and a “gift” to believers; that same love that is mediated between the Father and Son through the Spirit is accessible to believers.

What is clear between Wesley, Moltmann, and Pannenberg is that holiness is interwoven, or conflated, with love. Pannenberg makes this clear as he writes, “The love of one’s neighbor which Jesus preached is nothing other than participation in God’s own mind and activity.”<sup>49</sup> To have a transformed mind or heart means to be compelled to love, love that flows into the hearts of believers. The Salvation Army affirmed this as Samuel Logan Brengle in the twentieth century writes, “Do you want to know what holiness is? It is pure love.”<sup>50</sup>

Looking at Pannenberg and Moltmann’s work, re-envisioning Wesley’s pneumatology must encompass ecological and societal justice. Spirit existing within all creation is directly opposed to a dualism that enables people to abuse the environment. For if the Spirit is life and giver of life, those who have the Spirit ought to be compelled to protect life and the environment, not use the environment up. Wesley was particularly interested in being hospitable towards others and, later in life, what might be called social injustice when he began to address slavery.<sup>51</sup> Moltmann claims that with the indwelling of the Spirit, “We live again wholly, and can undividedly affirm life.”<sup>52</sup> Love and wholly affirming life must motivate those with the Spirit to take action and not just have sentiments or affections. Although John Wesley’s pneumatology in his time had no equal, Pannenberg and Moltmann expanded Wesley’s work and broadened the work of the Spirit. There are differences between these theologians, but they all have an irreplaceable role of the Spirit.

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> R. David Rightmire, “Transitions in Salvation Army Holiness Theology: A Historical Assessment,” in *Saved, Sanctified and Serving: Perspectives on Salvation Army Theology and Practice*, ed. Denis Mestrustery (United Kingdom: Authentic Publisher, 2016), 87.

<sup>2</sup> William J. Abraham, “Christian Perfection,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies*, ed. James E. Kirby and William J. Abraham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 587, <https://doi.org/10.1093/oxford-hb/9780199696116.001.0001>.

<sup>3</sup> “We confess that at times we have failed to realize the practical consequences of the call to holiness within our relationships, within our communities and within our movement. We resolve to make every effort to embrace holiness of life, knowing that this is only possible by means of the power of the Holy Spirit producing his fruit in us.” “International Spiritual Life Commission Report,” *New Frontier Chronicle*, May 7, 1998, <https://caringmagazine.org/international-spiritual-life-commission-report/>

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<sup>6</sup> *ibid.*

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<sup>12</sup> *ibid.*, 314.

<sup>13</sup> *ibid.*, 384-85.

<sup>14</sup> *ibid.*, 312.

<sup>15</sup> *ibid.*, 321.

<sup>16</sup> *ibid.*, 316.

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<sup>19</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Trinity and the Kingdom* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1981), 60.

<sup>20</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>21</sup> *ibid.*, 183.

<sup>22</sup> *ibid.*, 183.

<sup>23</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 79, [https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic\\_entity%7Cbibliographic\\_details%7C1869766](https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C1869766).

<sup>24</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>25</sup> John Wesley, “On The Holy Spirit” John Wesley Center, accessed March 3, 2022, <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-141-on-the-holy-spirit/>.

<sup>26</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>27</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>28</sup> John Wesley, “Original Sin,” John Wesley Center, accessed March 3, 2022, <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-44-original-sin/>.

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<sup>32</sup> John Wesley, “The Circumcision of the Heart,” John Wesley Center, accessed March 3, 2022, <http://wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/the-sermons-of-john-wesley-1872-edition/sermon-17-the-circumcision-of-the-heart/>.

<sup>33</sup> William J. Abraham, “Christian Perfection,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Methodist Studies*, ed. James E. Kirby and William J. Abraham (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 590.

<sup>34</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume III* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993), 28, [https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic\\_entity%7Cbibliographic\\_details%7C2290630](https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C2290630).

<sup>35</sup> *ibid.*, 26.

<sup>36</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume I* (London: T&T Clark, 1992), 210.

<sup>37</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume III*, 28.

<sup>38</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume II*, (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991), 49, [https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic\\_entity%7Cbibliographic\\_details%7C2292130](https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C2292130).

<sup>39</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume III*, 211.

<sup>40</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume I*, 400.

<sup>41</sup> Pannenberg, *Systematic Theology: Volume III*, 29.

<sup>42</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 52.

<sup>43</sup> *ibid.*, 68.

<sup>44</sup> *ibid.*, 69.

<sup>45</sup> *ibid.*, 13.

<sup>46</sup> *ibid.*, 183.

<sup>47</sup> Jürgen Moltmann, *The Source of Life: The Holy Spirit and the Theology of*

*Life*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1997), 48.

<sup>48</sup> *ibid*, 48.

<sup>49</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *The Apostles Creed in Light of Today's Questions* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 1972), 25, [https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic\\_entity%7Cbibliographic\\_details%7C3353181](https://search.alexanderstreet.com/view/work/bibliographic_entity%7Cbibliographic_details%7C3353181).

<sup>50</sup> Matthew Seamen, "'To Turn the World Upside Down': Practical Holiness in the Anthropocene," *Word and Deed* Vol XIX, no. 2 (2017): 11, [https://www.thewarcry.org/content/uploads/2019/04/WDMay2017\\_Interior\\_Werk24.pdf](https://www.thewarcry.org/content/uploads/2019/04/WDMay2017_Interior_Werk24.pdf).

<sup>51</sup> Kenneth W. Brewer, "Wesley, National Sins, and Repentance: Does True Repentance Mandate Reparations?" *Wesley Theological Journal* 56, no. 1 (January 2021): 28.

<sup>52</sup> Moltmann, *Spirit of Life: A Universal Affirmation*, (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1991), 68.

# *Rest—for the rest of us*

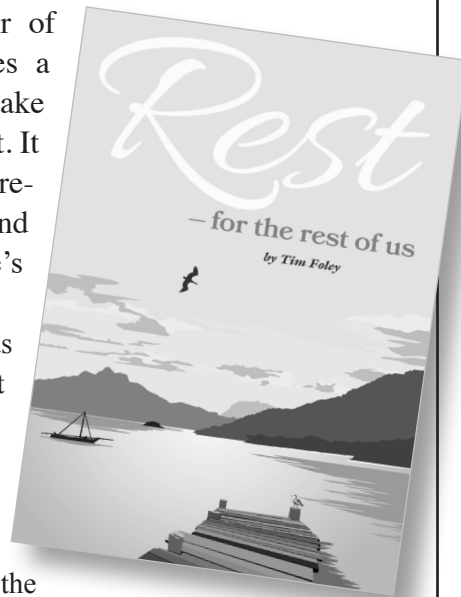
By Tim Foley

When life demands 24/7 attention, you may find it impossible to rest. We live in a fast-paced world. It doesn't slow down, so why should you? With an engaging narrative, this book by Tim Foley, an experienced scholar and teacher of spiritual formation, provides a refreshing and informative take on the subject of sabbath rest. It speaks to anyone looking to renew their sense of joy and find options for coping with life's pleasures.

Lt. Colonel Tim Foley has been a follower of Jesus Christ since 1978. He was commissioned as a Salvation Army officer in 1982. He currently serves as the Divisional Leader for Officer Development in the Northwest Division of the Western Territory. He holds a master's degree in theology and a doctorate degree in spiritual formation for ministry leaders.

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## **Book Review**

Twiss, Richard. *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys: A Native American Expression of the Jesus Way*. Downers Grove, IL: IVP Books, 2015. 230 pages.

Reviewed by Major Amy Reardon, Divisional Secretary for San Diego County, The Salvation Army Western Territory.

In recent years, The Salvation Army and other churches have become increasingly aware that their worship services tilt toward a Eurocentric culture. More attention has been turned to marginalized groups to ensure that they feel welcome as part of our worshipping communities. As positive as this is, it isn't always the answer. Rather than trying to fold Indigenous people groups into our congregations, we may better honor God by accepting them as brothers and sisters in Christ and respecting how they culturally worship the Triune God. To that end, *Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys* is an illuminating book written by the late Richard Twiss of the Lakota tribe. Among Dr. Twiss' many accomplishments, he cofounded the North American Institute for Indigenous Theological Studies, now known simply as NAIITS. This is of particular interest to North American Salvationists, as two officers in Canada who are of Indigenous descent are seconded to the group.

*Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys* has nothing to do with actual cowboys. "Cowboys" is used as a label for Western culture; more specifically, for Euro-American culture and its clash—past



and present—with the Indigenous people of North America. The purpose of the book is to highlight the efforts being made by courageous Indigenous people to meet hegemony head on and encourage native people to worship in ways that are congruent with their own culture. To do this, Twiss takes some time exploring the damage done by those who have long insisted that the customs of Indigenous people are necessarily pagan.

Twiss unpacks how prejudice, ethnocentrism, hegemony, and colonialism were inextricable from the gospel as first presented to the native populations of this land. “The white man” determined himself arbiter of authentic Christianity. Those who carried the gospel to the native population centuries ago (and even still) did not recognize they had infused their own culture into the message they were bringing. Twiss is concerned that the gospel be presented in ways that are appropriate to the culture receiving it, as even in the twenty-first century Euro-centric customs are perceived as the only biblical manner of worship.

Twiss stresses what should be obvious: God was not absent from North America prior to the arrival of missionaries! He was already influencing culture and moral code. In addition, there were visions and prophecies of the gospel and the missionaries to come. Twiss recounts the story of visions that two Indigenous men had in the late 1700s (21). In these visions, “white men” brought them truths about the Creator. In one vision, a white man presented a native with an object engraved with a cross. At that point in history, Native Americans had never seen a white man. “Creator had been at work preparing the Native people for the arrival of the gospel of Jesus,” Twiss writes (21).

While many of us were taught to think of syncretism as a terrible evil, Twiss sees value in not discarding pre-Christian practices that already pointed to the gospel. He writes:

“I think we would be better served if we considered syncretism to be the exploration of the synthesis of faith, belief and practice in a dynamic process of blending, adding, subtracting, changing, testing and

working things out. This process does not take anything away from the authority of Scripture or orthodoxy” (p. 33).

He speaks of elements of culture such as dance, sweathouses, the wearing of regalia, and the beating of drums as things that have been unjustly labeled as strictly pagan. These cultural staples have faced several opponents: the first missionaries, who didn’t understand them and so assumed they must be evil; non-Indigenous Christians today who look askance at such practices; and Indigenous people who view them as inappropriate. The last of these three opponents is one of Twiss’ greatest concerns. Indigenous people who wish to follow Christ have historically been persuaded that their native ways were wrong, and so they rejected them rather than using them to the glory of God. Many natives still distance themselves completely from these practices. Others, says Twiss, keep the cultural pieces out of their church buildings, but when they have a personal crisis they return to those practices. Twiss wants his people to understand that these religious expressions are as appropriate as singing from a hymnal to the glory of God. He and his colleagues have made great effort to restore these practices and use them in holy ways.

The expositions and arguments in the book are incredibly persuasive. As I read, I felt as though scales fell from my eyes. I was reminded of an incident with a Native American who was a member of the first corps where my husband and I were appointed. Before a long trip with our youth group, she lit a bundle of sage and shook it at and around the van as a prayer for our safety. In my ignorance, I was practically scandalized. As I read this book I realized that my view of appropriate worship was steeped in European thought and custom. The book made me wonder what customs The Salvation Army might have suppressed as it spread around the globe, especially in countries that were colonized by England.

The final third or so of the book grew less compelling as it delineated all of the Indian Christian organizations and musicians, a great many conferences and who the speakers were, etc. This kind of detail may be of minimal interest to those who do not know the people

mentioned and picked up the book to learn about equity. Still, it is a fairly contemporary accounting of the progress being made by evangelical Christians who wish to worship in ways that feel like home to them.

*Rescuing the Gospel from the Cowboys* is not a casual read. Twiss is a true scholar, and he writes like one. Though, I would recommend it highly for those who are prepared to dig in. This book brought me face to face with my own misunderstanding, and I'm glad it did.

If I may add a postscript: not long after the first time I read this book, I received a query in my position as assistant principal at the College for Officer Training. It was an email asking if the board of NAIITS could hold a retreat on our campus. I was beyond thrilled that we were able to accommodate them. Even better, the Army officers assigned to NAIITS gave our staff and cadets a lecture and led us in a smoke ceremony. It was a very moving experience. We had opportunity to understand first-hand that a traditional Native American ceremony can make one very aware of the presence of the Holy Spirit.

## Book Review

Swan, Wendy R. *Living Right While Righting Wrong: A Salvationist Theology of Protest*. Toronto, Canada: The Salvation Army, Canada and Bermuda Territory, 2022. 291 pages.

Reviewed by Maribeth V. Swanson, Territorial Social Services Secretary, The Salvation Army USA Central Territory, Hoffman Estates, IL.

Salvationists have historically been a force for acts of service in poor and marginalized communities across the world. The movement of The Salvation Army was birthed in the East End of London in the late 1800s, a district historically documented for its deep poverty, high crime rates, overcrowded and poor housing conditions, and debauchery. It was in these streets and with these people that William and Catherine Booth found their destiny. Thus, not only serving the poor and marginalized, but also seeking justice and engaging in protest to bring shalom, have been grafted into the DNA of Salvationists from the beginning. The author of *Living Right While Righting Wrong*, Wendy Swan, proposes that the Booths' initiation of social services and engagement in acts of protest were responsive to the blighted conditions and recognition of the systematic injustices of the day (i.e., William Booth's Cab House Charter and ministry to the "submerged tenth"). The "Do Something" approach to social action was certainly born out of a deep heart of love for a suffering world and a reaction to the forces of injustice Booth had encountered.

Swan suggests Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* provided a comprehensive, formative inquiry into the Army's systematic development of social services and action, yet he didn't develop a theological framework for social justice that could guide Salvationists (4). Thus, clarity of understanding and expanded language regarding the theological constructs of our doctrines are required to faithfully align Salvationists' engagement in social protest on behalf of and with the poor and marginalized. The author's goals are to develop a theological understanding of injustice, and our protest against injustice, for those associated with The Salvation Army (i.e., soldiers, officers, volunteers, advisory board members, employees, etc.), and to build accountability for our role within the Body of Christ.

This work connects the prophetic voices for justice from the Old and New Testament (including the life, teaching, and resurrection of Jesus), with the foundational Wesleyan doctrine of holiness, as expressed in Booth's expanded application of a personal holiness that is actively lived out on a daily basis through sacrifice, prayer, knowledge of the Word, and actions that respond in love to the injustice or evil in the world. The actions of early Salvationists were profoundly influenced by John Wesley's definition of holiness as a personal pursuit of "perfect love," and Swan explores how William Booth intertwined and expanded the doctrine of holiness to include the call to arms for deliverance and redemption of the world, fought on the battlefield of economic and social injustice.

While The Salvation Army organizationally, and Salvationists individually, have been involved in fighting against injustice and standing with the poor and marginalized, these initiatives and protests against injustice have, at times, been engaged in before we have taken time to reflect on the biblical basis and call for Salvationists to be involved in a particular response. What can the Salvationist do to bring shalom to this situation? What will it require? Can and how do we protest and stand with the marginalized without hate for the oppressor? How do we ensure that when we act and stand up for the poor and marginalized, we recognize the sovereignty of God? When we're in the thick of battling injustices, what do we do to ensure we

hold fast to the belief that He alone is "the governor of all things"? He alone holds all power and authority to right the wrong in this world, and our responsibility is to live rightly through our reliance on the work of the Holy Spirit within our lives and His gifts of grace, wisdom, and love for others—the oppressed and the oppressor.

The author takes great care in not prescribing what are and what are not acceptable strategies for protest. Readers are encouraged to examine their hearts and the *why* before acting. Daily practices of Jesus' disciples are viewed within the sphere of protests against injustice. Prayers for work with victims of human trafficking, praying for the oppressed and the oppressor, can be acts of protest against the pervasive evil in this world. Swan also acknowledges that there are places in the world where Salvationists are severely limited in organizational action due to restrictions placed upon them and the cultural contexts in which they serve. Yet, all Salvationists can respond through their behaviors and actions that reflect the light and life of Jesus within their circle of community and cultural context.

*Living Right While Righting Wrong*, comprised of ten chapters, seeks to guide the reader in expanding their understanding of the theological principles that undergird the doctrines and work of The Salvation Army. It will certainly serve as a primer for those with limited exposure to the vocabulary of theologians, as the book is replete with theological and sociological terminology. Yet, both the armchair and trained theologian will be enriched by this exploration of the Army's distinctive voice, which is needed to protest with conviction and purpose. To support the learner, a helpful glossary of terms is included, as are an appendix of significant Salvation Army documents, a history of protest timeline, a bibliography, and thorough endnotes. Additionally, each chapter provides a summary of theological terms and discussion questions that can be used individually by the reader, with a class, or in a small group.

This work can certainly expand the knowledge, vocabulary, thought, and potential application of theological principles and values for those, including the Salvationist, engaging in protest against social injustice. It recognizes the formative social action

taken by the co-founders, William and Catherine Booth, and early Salvationists. Their application of Scripture and theology continues to inform a Salvationist theology of social protest, identifying a shared purpose and distinctive calling to bring hope that is based on the “biblical message that the world-as-it-is is not the world-as-it-should be” (221).

## Book Notes

*Dr. David Rightmire*

***Holiness: A Biblical, Historical, and Systematic Theology***, co-authored by Matt Ayars, Christopher Bounds, and Caleb Friedeman (Intervarsity Press, 2023).

These three Wesleyan theologians provide a treatment of the theme of holiness, showing that this doctrine is grounded in Scripture as well as the broad Christian tradition. Matt Ayars, assistant professor of Old Testament at Wesley Biblical Seminary; Christopher Bounds, professor of Theology at Asbury Theological Seminary; and Matt Friedeman, associate professor of New Testament at Ohio Christian University, make the case for the experience of entire sanctification as a real possibility in the Christian life. The work is divided into four parts: “Holiness in the Old Testament,” “Holiness in the New Testament,” “Holiness in Christian History,” and “A Holiness Theology.” The early chapters provide evidence for the claim that the Wesleyan approach to holiness is firmly grounded in Scripture and the historic teachings of the church. The systematic chapters present an account of variations within the Wesleyan tradition. The authors make a compelling case for the recovery of a robust doctrine of holiness, and call readers to enter into a life of holiness as a present possibility.

***Follow the Healer: Biblical and Theological Foundations for Healing Ministry***, by Stephen Seamands (Zondervan Reflective/Seedbed, 2023).

This latest book by Stephen Seamands, *emeritus* professor of

Christian Doctrine at Asbury Theological Seminary, is based on the premise that there is a transformative truth that changes the way Christians pray for others to be healed. It's the simple truth that the healing ministry to which we are called is not our ministry, but Christ's. And as His ministry continues today through His body, the Church, He invites us to join Him. The author, in a biblically informed and theologically balanced manner, calls the reader to participate in the healing ministry of Jesus, and discusses the five ways Jesus heals: "directly and supernaturally," "through doctors and medicine," "through the human body's healing power," "through grace sufficient," and "through victorious dying." In separate chapters, he relates this Christian ministry to the themes of the image of God; the Kingdom of God; the mystery of healing; and the Holy Spirit and healing. *Follow the Healer* offers a holistic, Wesleyan approach to healing, which seeks not only to help the broader evangelical world more readily embrace healing ministry, but also to offer those already engaged in such (i.e., Pentecostals and charismatics) a more balanced and discerning approach to this ministry.

### ***Tribute to Commissioner Phil Needham***

In addition to the above-mentioned titles, *Word & Deed* would like to acknowledge the literary legacy of the late Phil Needham (1940-2023), whose multiple books on Salvation Army theology, practical ministry, discipleship, and Christian spirituality have made a significant impact on many through the years. His books include *Community in Mission* (1987), *When God Becomes Small* (2014), *Following Rabbi Jesus: The Christian's Forgotten Calling* (2018), *Christ at the Door* (2018), and *He Who Laughed First: Delighting in a Holy God* (2020). Of particular note are the volumes which form a part of his "through the Christian year" devotionals, namely, *Christmas Breakthrough: Finding the Real Gifts of the Season* (Crest Books, 2019); *Lenten Awakening: Daily Meditations from Ash Wednesday to Easter* (Crest Books, 2020); *Easter People: Daily Meditations for the Eastertide Season* (Crest Books, 2022); and his final book, *Renewals: Refreshing and Restoring Our Lives* (Crest Books, 2023).



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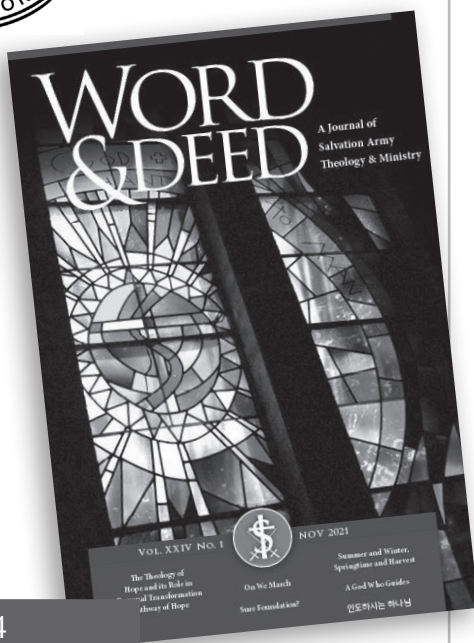
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