

# Catherine Booth and Female Ministry

## Foundations and Growth

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### Introduction

Several biographical works of Catherine Booth, as well as many Salvation Army "histories," offer details of her rôle as an integral founding member. Each of these report, in some measure, her position regarding the equality of women and her justification for women preaching. Some also describe Booth's relationship with others who influenced her or were of like mind on this subject. What is lacking from them is a more complete picture of the work of these influential people, who preceded Booth's own justification and demonstration of women in preaching ministries. Additionally, there is seldom a focus on the theological and ecclesiological dimensions of these relationships.

While acknowledging the history of women in preaching ministries as being centuries (if not millennia) old, such a comprehensive treatment is not possible in the length of this paper, nor will a broad examination be necessary. Instead, the strong connection between Catherine Booth's views and the views of others who preceded her is limited in this piece to a shorter time period and focuses chiefly on two individuals. The work here begins with a review of the words of Margaret Fell, a key leader at the beginning of The Society of Friends (the Quakers) in the seventeenth century, and continues with a similar portrait of Phoebe Palmer, an evangelistic worker of the nineteenth century. While other

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people will be revealed in relationship to the larger picture of The Salvation Army's beginnings, the paper focuses on these two influences to illustrate the central idea. This work will show, through the words of Fell, Palmer, and Catherine Booth herself, that while Booth's position regarding the equality of women and their justified role as preaching ministers broke no new ground in biblical arguments, there were differences in perspective between Booth and these other two personalities that played a role in her own preaching ministry and in the formation of Salvation Army practice regarding female ministry.

## Three Women Writing

### Margaret Fell and *Women's Speaking Justified*

On the occasion of Catherine Booth speaking to a Quaker assembly, one of her earliest biographers noted more than a few points of sympathy between members of the assembly and their guest speaker that day. Indeed, he said, "were not the Quakers the Salvationists of two hundred years ago?"<sup>1</sup> What he observed was a similarity in social impact made by both the first Quakers and the early Salvationists. Among the common elements observed was the intentional choice for plainness of dress by Booth and the Quakers.<sup>2</sup> Both groups also experienced sometimes violent opposition to their action including imprisonment for some of its members.

From a theological perspective, the Quakers were also credited by the same biographer for their movement from liturgical ceremony to a focus on "a living Christ" in reference to both groups' decision not to observe the sacraments.<sup>3</sup> Further similarities between the two groups move us closer to our subject. One of the chief tenets of Quaker belief was the conviction of its founder, George Fox, that each individual could be led to the truth regarding biblical interpretations by an "Inner Light." This obviated the need for any formal clerical training, and indeed, for any formally ordained clergy at all.<sup>4</sup> Status-giving titles and offices were eschewed for more equality-bearing social references.<sup>5</sup>

Together with the Puritans, the Quakers were part of the English Protestant movement of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries that would in different ways challenge the establishment. Far apart from the Puritans, though, whose biblical

interpretations firmly established hierarchical social orders regarding men and women, the Quakers' biblical interpretations insisted on egalitarian social and gender relationships.<sup>6</sup> This extended to the then quite radical notion that even women were permitted to speak during the religious services.<sup>7</sup>

Along with Fox, a chief exponent and defender of this aspect of gender equality, was Margaret Fell. The Quakers had established separate Women's Meetings, during which women met to discuss and decide matters on all subjects, social and ecclesial. Written in 1666 while she was in prison for holding such meetings without the authorization of community officials, Fell's treatise, *Women's Speaking Justified*, is a landmark writing on the subject.<sup>8</sup> In this piece, Fell establishes in the first paragraph her purpose and thesis—to refute the objections of those in the church who depend upon Scripture to deny women a voice in gospel proclamation. In particular, she cites two New Testament epistle passages, 1 Corinthians 14.34–35 and 1 Timothy 2.11–12. Her intent was to demonstrate that, as they were first applied, these passages do not represent any barrier to female ministry. It is only through the misapplication of their teaching that barriers have been constructed by those opposed to women preaching.<sup>9</sup>

Margaret Fell begins her argument by appealing to what she believes God Himself wants, as evidenced by the Genesis creation narratives. As created by God, men and women are jointly considered a reflection of the divine image. God's will in the beginning was for male and female together to share in the blessings of the garden, and together to receive the charge to "be fruitful and multiply" in their rule over the rest of creation. This is the state of things in Genesis chapter one: God sees no hierarchical distinctions between men and women, and indeed "hath put no such difference between the Male and Female, as Men would make."<sup>10</sup>

What happens next in the Genesis narrative (chapters two and three), Fell argues, is not only the temptation to sin and the sin itself (with its consequent punishment and banishment from the garden), but also the first female proclamation of Truth. Eve truthfully reports her sin, and as part of His judgment, God puts within the woman the very source of ultimate triumph over evil, as represented by the tempter serpent. Any who would reject a woman speaking God's truth is really acting out of envy, the same impulse that drove the serpent; that is,

those who oppose women speaking are allowing the seed of the serpent to speak. By saying that the victorious Seed of the Woman promised by God is Christ, Fell also seems to be extending this concept by suggesting that the Church—God's people—also plays this role of defeating evil, and that biblical references to God's people and the Church describe this agent as female. This metaphoric role continues through the book of Revelation, where in chapter 12' the woman in heaven with child is threatened by the dragon.

What follows in Fell's essay is a lengthy recitation of scenes from the New Testament of women acting in ways that prove their ability to function as God intends. With each instance cited, the reader is meant to understand that the woman speaking or otherwise ministering is doing the very thing that modern critics say she cannot—namely, perceive the truth of God and act accordingly.<sup>11</sup> Further, the author points out in various examples that a woman is acting or speaking at a time when men, in the same situation, could not or would not.

While demonstrating that the New Testament is full of women acting according to God's intent but contrary to "modern sensibilities," Fell directly confronts the objections to female ministry that use Pauline citations. She asserts that far from keeping women from ministry, Paul actually includes many women in his work. Fell's interpretation of 1 Corinthians 14 focuses on Paul's intention and desire that the church assembly avoid confusing or meaningless babble and conduct its worship in orderly and edifying ways: "Here the man is commanded to keep silence, as well as the woman, when in confusion and out of order."

When Fell addresses what others have thought to be a clear pronouncement—that women should not speak publicly during the worship assembly but should ask any questions they have of their husbands at home—we begin to see her primary thesis. These women whom Paul wishes to keep silent, Fell says, are "women that were under the law" and still subject to the effects of sin. But those who had received the Spirit of Christ prove the promise of God to be true, and they were free to speak. She cites 1 Corinthians 11, where both men and women were allowed to prophesy in the assembly, and the only restrictions pertained to head coverings. In interpreting 1 Timothy 2, Fell maintains that this passage is chiefly about dressing modestly. She allows that a married woman should not "usurp authority" over her husband, but distinguishes this from speaking or preaching in church.

The writer then returns to the attack on those who would oppose women speaking, naming them as followers of the serpent or dragon. She states that the time for keeping women silent is past, for a new day has dawned.<sup>12</sup> Women are free to speak as the Spirit gives power. Fell notes that throughout the biblical period (Old Testament and New) God's original intent is evident; but especially now, in these last days when the Spirit is poured out on both men and women, no one should be in a position to limit the infinite power of God.<sup>13</sup>

### Phoebe Palmer and *The Promise of the Father*

Between the seventeenth and nineteenth centuries many new ministry opportunities for women arose in "radical and evangelical Christianity . . . especially when doctrine encouraged women to seek personal inspiration in the Scriptures and to expect a powerful encounter with the Holy Spirit."<sup>14</sup> Women in such groups could now speak a word of testimony in the church assembly, participate in mission work, and act independently of male authority—all at the impulse of the Spirit of God. The concept illustrating God's promise for the last days, that God's Spirit would be poured out on sons *and* daughters, became a central aspect of church groups who saw the promise fulfilled on Pentecost in Acts' chapter 2 as the beginning of a new age.<sup>15</sup>

During this time we also see, in both Britain and America, waves of revival or "awakening" of Christians that paralleled the gradual formation of new Christian denominations such as the Methodist Church that grew from the evangelical revivals of John Wesley. One of the key points of connection between Britain and America was Phoebe Palmer, whose father had been converted in Britain under Wesley's work before moving to America, where Phoebe was born. Her conversion and membership in the Methodist Church in New York City was followed by an experience of "entire sanctification."<sup>16</sup>

One way of seeing this spiritual experience subsequent to initial conversion is to view sanctification as initiating a new way of life marked by a "second blessing" of the Holy Spirit. The holiness movements that followed this line of thinking were also the groups that promoted a type of evangelism that urged prayerful responses at altar rails<sup>17</sup> and testimonies of experiences in the meetings. The involvement of women in these services is notable.<sup>18</sup>

In fact, it is the involvement of *all* believers that marks a key change in these revivalists following Wesley. Again, leaning on the promise of the Spirit's outpouring on both men and women, both clergy and lay alike, the work to win the world for Christ had to involve an empowered laity.<sup>19</sup> No institutional force could stake a claim to any argument—biblical or social—that prevented God himself, through the gifting of individuals by the Holy Spirit, from working His will in the world.<sup>20</sup> A spirit-driven imperative is key to these movements.<sup>21</sup>

The foundational interpretation of Acts 2 is that women have the authority to be involved in ministry, and it is the starting point for Palmer's preaching and writing. When she wrote *The Promise of the Father*, Palmer was expressing what was by now a commonly held belief—that women could and should preach when God calls.<sup>22</sup>

Palmer follows the general outline already seen in Margaret Fell's writing, and her argument in defense of this position is laid out in three parts. She attacks the arguments based on 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2, saying that those who interpret these verses in a way that prohibits female ministry are simply misinterpreting Scripture. These are situational directives by Paul and should not be applied to the church universally, especially when the Spirit of God is calling women to act. The oft-cited "curse" of Eve for the sin in the Garden of Eden from Genesis chapter 3 does not apply as the hierarchical interpreters use this narrative, connecting it as they do to the Pauline passages to keep women out of any leadership roles or even speak authoritatively in any manner of church assembly that would include men.<sup>23</sup>

A second method to Palmer's writing is to cite numerous examples of women throughout Scripture who evidenced a calling of God in their lives for a specific act or moment of speaking to lead God's people. Finally, Palmer appeals to the second chapter of Acts as a fulfillment of God's promise of sending the Holy Spirit upon women as well as men. Her point is this: Christian churches of her day were responsible for imposing silence upon the Christian woman so that "her voice may but seldom be heard in Christian assemblies."<sup>24</sup> This is not as God intends, nor is it, she believes, an accurate reflection of actual Christian practice through history. Wesleyan-Methodist women are not the only ones who have responded to God's call, she says, noting that women "have been recognized as accredited teachers by the Quakers from the beginning."<sup>25</sup>

### Catherine Booth and *Female Ministry*

Palmer was not alone in the nineteenth century in observing that it was institutional Christianity (and not God) responsible for inhibiting its own mission by preventing women from taking part. A similar sentiment expressed by her contemporary Catherine Booth would attribute this success in keeping women silent from the time of Pentecost also to the devil's schemes. But this is not to excuse the church leaders from their responsibility. It is the "prejudice and custom" of men, who must be held accountable if the "outpouring of God's Spirit upon His handmaidens [has been rendered] null and void."<sup>26</sup>

The connections between Phoebe Palmer and Catherine Booth have been widely noted<sup>27</sup> and perhaps need no other evidence than the superscription to the title of Booth's 1861 version of *Female Ministry; or, the Rev. A. A. Rees versus Mrs. Palmer, being a reply to a pamphlet by the above gentlemen on the Sunderland Revival*.<sup>28</sup> Reverend Rees had written a Scripture-based attack on Palmer's public preaching ministry during area revivals, to which Booth responded with a letter that was published first as a pamphlet in 1859. The argument of *Female Ministry* follows closely on many other's biblical interpretations.<sup>29</sup> Indeed, the framework of Booth's essay is by now quite recognizable as the structure of Fell and Palmer with some variations.

Catherine Booth's work, *Female Ministry*, takes up the scriptural argument involving 1 Corinthians 14 and 1 Timothy 2, and holds the ground staked out by Palmer and others that these passages must be read in context. Anything lost from original egalitarian intent at creation is restored by the work of Christ.<sup>30</sup> Booth fills her essay with evidence of her learning and scholarly perspective, quoting many commentaries while passing judgment on linguistic nuances and opinions of other scholars. In the course of her assessment, she makes lengthy appeals to women of the Bible who act in ways that are consistent with a woman responding to God's call, even when that action is contrary to a man's design or custom. Booth also leans heavily on the description of Acts 2 of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. Citing her language experts, she insists that to prophesy, as these women did, meant they were preaching and teaching, which demonstrates that God himself blessed this course of action.<sup>31</sup>

The hallmark of Booth's appeal, the aspect that would stand above others as she and those who followed continued to defend female ministry, is found in her

use of Galatians 3.28, where the writer states that in Christ there is no male nor female. "If this passage does not teach that in the privileges, duties, and responsibilities of Christ's Kingdom, all differences . . . [of] sex are abolished," then what does it teach, and why was it written?<sup>32</sup> This is an expression of a theology of restoration, a belief that with salvation comes a restored equality first given and intended by God at creation.

Significantly, with this gift comes a responsibility. It is the necessity to respond, to use the gift. One cannot be filled with the Spirit and remain silent. Such a blessing required a testimony, if not indeed the formal undertaking of preaching. The Booths can safely be counted among those who ascribed to such a doctrine.<sup>33</sup> The second blessing of entire sanctification described by the Wesleyan Revivalists was a matter of personal experience for them. Catherine Booth's letters depict the struggle and breakthrough when she "lay all on the altar."<sup>34</sup> The very words of Phoebe Palmer were to contribute to the Booths' own sense of their experiences, as well as their word choice when preaching to enable others to express "the inner changes that accompanied conversion."<sup>35</sup>

## Social Impact

### Female Ministry and Propriety

The journey from experiencing the Holy Spirit's blessing to preaching about it was not easy for Catherine Booth, though she had long defended the right for other women to do so and certainly admired other female preachers. The essential argument in her essay defending female ministry followed that of Margaret Fell and Phoebe Palmer. But Booth began her piece with an additional concern—to answer those who say that the "public exercises of women . . . are unnatural and unfeminine."<sup>36</sup>

Underlying this philosophical objection is a notion that, by nature, men and women are best suited for different kinds of activities or occupations. Another way of saying this is to posit that men and women ought, by virtue of their natures, to occupy differing "spheres" of life. In particular, woman is best suited for the home and family concerns, while man is better equipped to occupy roles in business and government.<sup>37</sup> An accompanying aspect of this philosophy is the

belief that men and women are different intellectually and emotionally—that is, men have more brains, women more heart.

Booth's response is to acknowledge that custom does make a woman appear out of place in the pulpit. But, "making allowance for the novelty of the things," she writes, there is not "anything either unnatural or immodest in a Christian woman, becomingly attired, appearing on a platform or stage."<sup>38</sup> On the contrary, a woman has the highest of qualifications given by God: "a graceful form and attitude, winning manners, persuasive speech, and, above all, a fine-tuned emotional nature."<sup>39</sup> What stands out here is her acceptance of a notion that women may be defined by certain "female" qualities, but these are in no way limiting factors when it comes to public speaking ministry. (Here again, she follows the Quaker desire for conservative dress, even as a matter of deference to a husband's will.<sup>40</sup>) Even those who persist in using the language of "spheres" acknowledge Booth's participation in expanding opportunities for women beyond the commonly accepted arenas.<sup>41</sup>

Booth specifically rejected the belief that women had a different quality of mind or soul. Her objections to these ideas were forcefully presented in correspondence with her intended husband, William.<sup>42</sup> Catherine's position was steadfast: Although women may be kept by social structure from educational opportunities, or otherwise prevented from developing their intellect, one should withhold judgment on natural abilities until such time as increased education is more widely available. As to moral inferiority, she maintained that any difference between the sexes in their ability to love God or serve God faithfully was nonexistent, or God would have provided some other means of salvation or spiritual relationship. Here again, she appeals to the notion of restoration, believing that, as originally created and redemptively re-created, female is the equal of male.<sup>43</sup>

### Female Rights

We have noted briefly the reluctance of women like Margaret Fell to push beyond the boundaries of the Church in exerting female rights. This had little to do with a belief that women were somehow inferior, but rather that their agenda did not include what later social reformers would call "equal rights," outside of the worship arena.<sup>44</sup> Not every defender of female ministry rights cared to use them or even defend the specific right to preach. Phoebe Palmer wrote in the

opening pages of *Promise of the Father* that she preferred to leave some issues for others, insisting that she did not "intend to discuss the question of 'Women's Rights' or of 'Women's Preaching,' technically so called."<sup>45</sup> She acknowledged, however, that there were circumstances to which God called women to respond in ways that took them beyond their attributed arena, enabling them to "meet the emergency with becoming dignity, wisdom and womanly grace."<sup>46</sup>

Booth herself seemed conflicted. She decried the way that women who were formerly active in ministry (especially in John Wesley's circles) had been "buried" as a talent from the parables, believing that if God had given women the ability to serve then "why should not woman persuade the vacillating; instruct and console the penitent, and pour out her soul in prayer for sinners?"<sup>47</sup> Nonetheless, Catherine Booth was reluctant to follow through on her own impulses, resisting for a time the call to preach.<sup>48</sup>

It is interesting to note here that one of the differences between Booth and Palmer comes just at the point of considering the implications of their arguments. Palmer's stance on women in ministry could be defined as more passive or narrowly constructed: *only* when under the influence of the Holy Spirit is a woman justified to leave her "proper sphere of life." Booth's view was that God had issued a call to action, and everyone should respond. It is only artificial convention that keeps women away from the pulpit and in their sphere, while men leave their "natural sphere" to attend to the pulpit.<sup>49</sup> The difference may be subtle, but the practical implications of Booth's view can be seen in the actual practice of the early Salvation Army.

### Organizational Results

Catherine Booth's defense of women's leadership in ministry may not have been original in its scriptural approach or construction, as others have noted, but the way her belief was put into practice does mark a difference between the impact of her work and the work of those who came before her.<sup>50</sup> And it was the circumstances and growth of the nascent Christian Mission/Salvation Army which brought about these practical implications. When finally she did accede to the promptings of the Spirit and begin to speak publicly, Booth found herself in great demand and, in fact, took the lead in much of the work while her husband was ill.<sup>51</sup> At times she was the better-known speaker, traveling for the struggling mission in circles of monetary support that her husband never could enter.<sup>52</sup>

By 1870, the role of Catherine Booth and other women in their mission work was firmly established. The writing of the formal Mission Constitution institutionalized practical ministry and leadership roles for women,<sup>53</sup> and in many places throughout the world in those next decades of Salvation Army expansion, it would be women who took the lead.<sup>54</sup> To maintain that women have uniquely held qualities and are equally called of God, the Army also had written by this time a directive in its *Orders and Regulations*—that these institutional powers ought not to “neglect to call such talents into action” if the mission is to be fulfilled.<sup>55</sup>

### Postscripts

Margaret Fell's Quaker defense of women in ministry established a framework followed by Phoebe Palmer, and then Catherine Booth. The purpose here is not to show any direct transcription or demonstrate unequivocal borrowing of ideas. Rather, it is to lay before the reader a common set of appeals to Scripture that refute contemporaneous objections to female public ministry. Added to that are a number of commonalities—between the Quakers and the Booths in areas of personal inspiration, nontraditional structure, and theological sensibilities; and between the Revivalists and the Booths in areas of method and mission—that, taken together, show a strong flow of influence in the perspective and growing public ministry of Catherine Booth. These influences, combined with situational differences (in time, place, and opportunities), were to create the conditions into which the Army was born.

Where is the argument for female ministry today? Responding to recent denominational restrictions on women preachers, one writer, noting the heritage of Wesleyan-Holiness churches, has posted these “four scriptural cornerstones” that prove the authority to empower all people to engage in public witness mission. They are a perfect summary of the positions of Fell, Palmer, and Booth:

**First, creation.** Women are created as equal inheritors of God's image, and the subsequent subjugation of women is a sinful consequence of the Fall. Faith and new life in Christ restore the created intention of God and eliminate this distortion.

**Second, public proclamation.** Both testaments record the faithful and fearless service of women, including prophets like Miriam, Deborah, Huldah, and the Corinthian women who were told to cover their heads

when they prophesied. Jesus chose a woman as the first to hear his charge to proclaim his resurrection.

**Third, God's new order.** The same disciple Paul who told unruly women at Corinth and Ephesus to be quiet in worship declared that in Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female (Galatians 3:28).

**Fourth, the Spirit's calling.** Pentecost made it plain that God pours out his Spirit upon all flesh so that "sons and daughters" prophesy.<sup>56</sup>

## Notes

1. Frederick de Latour Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth: The Mother of The Salvation Army*, Vol. 2 (St. Albans, England: The Salvation Army Printing Works, 2nd edition, 1912), p. 230.

2. *Ibid.*, p. 231: "If the Army had many things in common with the Friends, this was . . . [particularly] true of Mrs. Booth. The severe simplicity of her dress had caused her in the early days of her public work to be taken again and again for a Quakeress. Her modest demeanour as a speaker served to harmonize with the spirit and custom of the Friends."

3. *Ibid.*, p. 230. See also Barbara J. MacHaffie, *Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1986), p. 89.

4. William Booth was especially suspicious of higher education and believed that every convert could be readily turned into an evangelist simply by virtue of the power of the Holy Spirit. This perhaps played into his strong affinity with the lay preachers so common in American Revivalism. See a history of his educational battles in Roy Hattersley, *Blood & Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army* (London: Little, Brown and Company, 1999), pp. 36 ff.

5. MacHaffie, *Her Story*, p. 89.

6. Kristen E. Kvam, Linda S. Schearing and Valarie H. Ziegler, eds., *Eve & Adam: Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Readings on Genesis and Gender* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press, 1999), pp. 358-9.

7. MacHaffie, *Her Story*, p. 89.

8. Barbara J. MacHaffie, ed., *Readings in Her Story: Women in Christian Tradition* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), p. 109.

9. Fell's tract has been variously excerpted in anthologies, such as MacHaffie, ed., *Readings in Her Story* (pp. 109-12), and Kvam, et al., eds., *Eve & Adam* (pp. 280-87), where the title is written as *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures*. A complete transcription of this work (with original spelling variants) may be found at <http://www.voicenet.com/~kuenning/qhp/fell.html>, internet, accessed 20 November 2000. The flow of Fell's argument is glimpsed in the fuller superscription to her work (which may be considered an extension of the title): *Women's Speaking Justified, Proved, and Allowed of by the Scriptures, All such as speak by the Spirit and Power of the Lord Jesus. And how Women were the first that Preached the Tidings of the Resurrection of Jesus, and were sent by Christ's own Command, before he Ascended to the Father, John 20.17.*

10. Fell, *Women's Speaking*. Citations are from the full-text tract webpage version, <http://www.voicenet.com/~kuenning/qhp/fell.html> [no page numbers].

11. She notes, for example, the woman at the well in Samaria, who receives the truth of Jesus and evangelizes her townsfolk; the woman whose act of anointing Jesus would be preached as gospel in future generations; the women at the tomb who delivered the words to the Twelve (the men who were *not* there).

12. Here we see an aspect of eschatology that viewed much of history up to their day as being under the sway of the beast. This early community of Quakers believed that the

victorious events described at the end of Revelation were made manifest in their time, so that "the true light now shines" and the new Jerusalem, even now "coming down from heaven," brings the "freedom and liberty, and perfect redemption to her whole seed." It is in keeping with this view of eschatology that Fell's attacks upon the Pope (and by extension, upon Roman Catholicism) must be seen. The Pope and the forces of the "false Church" are agents of the seed of the serpent.

13. See Catherine M. Wilcox, *Theology and Women's Ministry in Seventeenth-Century English Quakerism: Handmaids of the Lord, Studies in Women and Religion*, Volume 35 (Lewiston, NY: The Edwin Mellen Press, 1995), pp. 35ff, for more on Quaker dispensational thinking and its implications in many areas of their practice.

14. Margaret McFadden, "The Ironies of Pentecost: Phoebe Palmer, World Evangelism, and Female Networks," *Methodist History* 31 (January 1993): p. 63.

15. *Ibid.* McFadden later (pp. 65–66) shows how even differing views of eschatology each allowed adherents to see the power of God's Spirit enabling personal mission, giving license now for women also to take the lead. Pre-millennialists saw the presence of so many women testifying to God's activity in their lives as evidence of the fulfillment of prophecies that signaled the end was approaching. This was the foundation of Phoebe Palmer. Post-millennialists, though, saw the "last days" as having already been initiated at Pentecost, and the coming fulfillment of God's Kingdom was somehow related to faithful use of the gifts given to both men and women at the time to fulfill the Great Commission of evangelizing the world. This was the foundation of Catherine Booth.

16. Janette Hassey, *No Time For Silence: Evangelical Women in Public Ministry Around the Turn of the Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Academie Books, 1986), p. 97.

17. McFadden, "Ironies of Pentecost," p. 68, notes the development by Phoebe Palmer of "'altar phraseology' by which anyone could receive the 'second blessing' by 'laying all upon the altar' and willing a new life." Barbara A. Howie, "Phoebe Palmer," class notes for Religious Studies 128, West Virginia University (available at <http://are.as.wvu.edu/phebe.htm>, internet, accessed 1 December 2000), notes further that "Palmer simplified John Wesley's doctrine of entire sanctification . . . [identifying it] with the baptism of the Holy Spirit . . . her 'altar theology' . . . simplified the achievement of sanctification to a three-step process of entire consecration, faith, and testimony." She points to the year 1847 as the time when Palmer's developing "altar phraseology" came to bear as parts of Charles Finney's urban revival meetings. Whereas Wesley used a future tense when speaking of sanctification, the hymns of these latter meetings spoke of sanctification as an accomplished fact, though understanding that growth follows.

18. McFadden, "Ironies of Pentecost," pp. 67–70.

19. Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform in Mid-Nineteenth-Century America* (New York: Abingdon Press, 1957), pp. 81–2.

20. Nancy A. Hardesty, *Women Called to Witness: Evangelical Feminism in the 19th Century* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1984), pp. 87–8, notes especially Charles Finney among those revivalists who saw a preference for the lay ministers, men and women, as "soul-winners." The strong defense of women in this regard is outlined on pp. 88ff.

21. Diane Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous: The Urban Religion of The Salvation Army* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 22–3, notes that the Army's ideas on holiness, "such as the connection between sanctification and empowerment for service, was influenced by [the] early exposure to American revivalism." With perhaps a contrary view of the beginnings of the Army, or at least one that addresses the variety of volunteers with multiple theological views joining the Booth's Christian Mission, some of who left as the Booths grew more Wesleyan in their doctrines, is Norman Murdoch, "Evangelical Sources of Salvation Army Doctrine," *Evangelical Quarterly* 59 (July 1987): pp. 240–41.

22. Phoebe Palmer, *Promise of the Father: A Neglected Specialty of the Last Days* (Boston: Henry V. Degen, 1859).

23. "Hierarchical," meaning those who see social stratification, with males having authority of females, as an ordered reflection of the "post-Fall" decrees. Other interpreters, the "Egalitarians," see any such punishing hierarchy erased by Christ's redemption, and original equality is restored and should be exercised by God's redeemed people.

24. Palmer, *Promise of the Father*, p. 5.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 321. Palmer is speaking of a sympathetic voice in the English evangelist William Bramwell when she notes further that "it is possible that on this subject Mr. Bramwell's sentiments were much in unison with those of the respectable society of Friends." William Bramwell was the name given to William and Catherine Booth's first child, William Bramwell Booth, the second General of The Salvation Army.

26. Catherine Booth is quoted in Donald W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (New York: Harper & Row Publishers, 1976), p. 94.

27. Roger Green, *Catherine Booth: A Biography of the Cofounder of The Salvation Army* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), pp. 138–40, reprints a letter from Palmer to Booth highlighting their shared revivalist ministry inclinations.

28. Citations follow from the version retitled "Female Ministry; or, Woman's Right to Preach the Gospel," in Catherine Booth, *Papers on Practical Religion* (London: International Headquarters [Salvation Army] Printing & Publishing Offices, 1891), pp. 133–67.

29. Hassey, *No Time for Silence*, p. 99.

30. *Ibid.*, p. 100.

31. Booth, "Female Ministry," pp. 141, 145, 147–8.

32. *Ibid.*, p. 159.

33. Norman H. Murdoch, "Evangelical Sources of Salvation Army Doctrine," *Evangelical Quarterly* 59 (July 1987): p. 241.

34. John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), p. 326.

35. Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous*, pp. 20–21. See also the report of W. T. Stead, *Catherine Booth* (originally published as *Mrs. Booth of The Salvation Army*, London: James Nisbet & Co.: 1900; reprint edition 1979), p. 37, noting that it would be some years after her conversion that Catherine Booth had the means by which to know the "assurance of salvation." Winston, p. 22, also recognizes the formative parallels between Quaker

sacramentalism and philosophy of personal enlightenment ("use of the metaphor 'inner light' to describe their spiritual experiences") and the growing spiritual vocabulary of the Booths.

36. Booth, "Female Ministry," p. 133.

37. Nineteenth-century America saw perhaps the fullest expression of what came to be called the "cult of true womanhood"; but in Great Britain, aspects of this thinking already had found its way into the social consciousness. See a discussion on this topic in MacHaffie, *Her Story*, pp. 93–6.

38. Booth, "Female Ministry," p. 133.

39. *Ibid.*

40. Fell, *Women's Speaking Justified*, in reference to 1 Timothy 2: "Yet the apostle is speaking to such as he is teaching to wear their apparel, what to wear, and what not to wear; such as were not come to wear modest apparel . . . and such are not to usurp authority over the man, but to learn in silence with all subjection, as it becometh women professing Godliness with good works." Booth, "Female Ministry," pp. 134–5, in quoting a minister of the Society of Friends, writes "that there are no women among us more generally distinguished for modesty, gentleness, order, and right submission to their brethren, than those who have been called by their Divine Master into the exercise of the Christian ministry."

41. W. T. Stead, *Catherine Booth*, takes up the exegetical arguments of the egalitarians in examining Pauline passages in a chapter on "Womanhood," and begins by making this note (p. 75): "The most distinctive element which Mrs. Booth contributed to the life of the English-speaking world is unquestionably the immense impetus and stimulus which she has given to the utilization of womanhood outside the domestic sphere, and the general recognition of the capacity of women in all kinds of public work."

42. Green, *Catherine Booth*, p. 123, notes the "strain" in their relationship from their early disagreement over this issue.

43. Catherine Bramwell-Booth, *Catherine Booth: The Story of Her Loves* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970), pp. 50–51.

44. Douglas M. Strong, "The Crusade for Women's Rights and the Formative Antecedents of the Holiness Movement," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 27 (1992) [no page numbers] (available from the Wesley Center for Applied Theology webpage of Northwest Nazarene University at <http://wesley.nnu.edu/theojrn/26-30/27.6/html>, internet, accessed 1 December 2000), is one who is especially keen on disassociating the leaders of women revivalists' rights from other areas of social impact (notably abolition but conceivably the later suffrage movements).

45. Palmer, *Promise of the Father*, p. 1; she continues, following the divided mindset of others on appropriate roles for women: "We believe woman has her legitimate sphere of action, which differs in most cases materially from that of man."

46. *Ibid.*, p. 2.

47. Bramwell-Booth, *Catherine Booth*, p. 141.

48. Green, *Catherine Booth*, p. 125, notes that while she was defending the rights of women like Palmer to preach, even while writing *Female Ministry*, Catherine Booth was

not yet herself involved in public ministry. She was defending the "principle of female ministry" but not her "own personal right to preach."

49. *Ibid.*, p. 126. The argument of spheres is two-fold, she would say, since God in Genesis told man to "till the ground" this must be *his* divinely appointed sphere: "And, if exemption is claimed from this kind of toil for a portion of the mail [sic] sex, on the ground of their possessing ability for intellectual and moral pursuits, we must be allowed to claim the same privilege for women." (Booth, "Female Ministry," p. 134). Booth's daughter, Maud, would address an assembly of New Yorkers in 1895 to decry the rise of "the New Woman," by which was meant something approaching today's conception of "the liberated woman." See Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous*, pp. 44ff.

50. W. T. Stead, *Catherine Booth*, p. 10: "Catherine Booth alone among women succeeded in compelling the practical recognition of the apostolic precept in Christ, neither bond nor free, male nor female, in the organization of the Christian Church. . . . It was not until Mrs. Booth . . . that there was anything approaching to a popular recognition of the capacity of women to teach, to organise, and to command."

51. Green, *Catherine Booth*, p. 144.

52. *Ibid.*, p. 159. Edward Bishop, *Blood and Fire! The Story of General William Booth and The Salvation Army* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1965), p. 87, notes that during this time, "women in Britain were still considered members of an inferior sex. It was not merely that most men classed women thus. Most women accepted this state without argument. In the face of such acceptance, Catherine and William Booth had stipulated in the Foundation Deed of 1878 that 'a woman may hold any position of authority or power in the Army, from that of a local officer to that of General.'"

53. Green, *Catherine Booth*, p. 172.

54. Winston, *Red-Hot and Righteous*, pp. 177ff, e.g., the influence of "Doughnut Girls."

55. Bishop, *Blood and Fire*, pp. 87-8.

56. Rebecca Laird, "What Has Gender Got to Do with It?" *ChristianityToday.com* webpage, posting of September 12, 2000, available at <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2000/010/32.105.html>, internet, accessed 1 December 2000.

# Divorce and Remarriage

## A Salvationist's Perspective

*Harry Brocksieck*

### Introduction

The subject of divorce and remarriage is a challenging one, arising from the questions of cadets in several classes at the training college where I am Principal in the Eastern Europe command. As I have not heard of an official Salvation Army position on the matter, I contacted fellow training principals of The Salvation Army requesting any information which they may share with their cadets when the issue presents itself. Many who responded said they had little to offer; one principal referenced three magazine articles, another sent me a small booklet covering several ethical issues. Dissatisfied with my collection of material, I decided to write my own understanding of the topic for my cadets.

While attending Trinity Divinity University near Chicago, Illinois, I spent many hours reading the college's considerable collection on the subject of divorce and remarriage. Reading for my understanding, however, rather than for a class paper, I did not cite many sources. The Finnish libraries, where we are presently stationed, have limited English books and none on the subject. After my first draft of this paper I received a copy of the Tyndale Bulletin from Tyndale House, Cambridge, England. One article contained significant information that helped me bring this document to its present condition. What follows are my understandings and conclusions on the issue.

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## Biblical Guidelines

### Genesis 2:24

The original command regarding marriage is Genesis 2:24. This is God's plan. One man plus one woman become one flesh. The Creation narrative is about one man and one woman for a lifetime, to the exclusion of all others, necessitating chastity before marriage and fidelity within it. The biblical concept is very strong. It is a part of the Creation Order. It is God's plan and purpose in theory and practice. Jesus reiterates this plan in Matthew 19:4–6. Christians, surely, are intended to live out this plan. It is not impossible; it is the norm, especially as we learn to claim offered grace.

### Exodus 21:10–11

The Exodus 21:10–11 (and Deuteronomy 24:1–4) passages provide the basis of the rabbinic divorce law. Exodus 21:10–11 describes the three-fold marriage obligations provided by the husband—food, clothing, and marriage rights (conjugal relations). Jewish marriage contracts also detailed parallel requirements for the wife to feed, clothe, and have marital relations. Author David Firth writes, “Men and women had the right to divorce if any of these obligations were not carried out. The guilty party lost the dowry. . . . The penalty for material neglect was the normal divorce and loss of dowry, but emotional neglect was punished by gradual transfer of the dowry to the injured party in the hope that the guilty party would relent.”<sup>1</sup> The purpose of the divorce decree was to free both parties to continue their lives—to marry or not to marry.

### Deuteronomy 24:1–4

In Deuteronomy 24:1–4, Moses gives a provision for divorce if the husband finds displeasure with his wife based on Exodus 21:10–11. The husband can give his wife a certificate of divorce and send her away, but this text also allows her to remarry—almost expects her to remarry—which was the Jewish custom. (A restriction states that once a man divorces his wife and she marries another, she should not remarry the previous husband.)

**Matthew 5:27–28, 31–32**

In *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*, the definition of adultery is a desire for what is forbidden; an obsessive sexual craving and strong desire to possess and enjoy; to have a strong inordinate desire, especially sexual desire. *Merriam Webster's Dictionary* describes it as "willful sexual intercourse with someone other than one's wife or husband." Pope John Paul II, issuing an encyclical on the "Role of the Christian Family in the World," suggested other definitions which included the consideration of the other "not as a person but as a thing, an object of trade, at the service of selfish interest and mere pleasure" (Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation*).

In His definition of adultery (Matthew 5:27–28) Jesus includes lust in the heart—not merely outward actions or words. It is important to understand the definition in the comments Jesus makes later in Matthew 5:31. Some translations of the Bible use the word "adultery" but the original Greek word "porneia" should be translated as "indécency" or "unchastity" (RSV) or "marital unfaithfulness" (NIV). This word must mean something short of the normal English idea noted here—because in Jewish culture adultery was punishable with death by stoning (Leviticus 20:10 and Deuteronomy 22:24).<sup>2</sup>

Turning to Matthew 5:31 Jesus gives another provision for divorce. If the wife commits adultery in the marriage, then the husband can divorce his wife. If a man divorces his wife for reasons other than adultery, he will cause her to commit adultery when she remarries. If he divorces her and she has not committed adultery, she is free to remarry and neither she nor her new husband are guilty of adultery. If she has committed adultery, then the person who marries her commits adultery. The marriage contract is now null and void. It is as if this man has never been married. He can remarry. The woman is given a certificate of divorce, which allows her to remarry, but if she was the guilty party she is not to remarry without committing the sin of adultery. The unfaithful woman's husband, now divorced, can remarry.

Therefore, if there was a biblical basis for the breakdown of the marriage, then divorce and remarriage were allowed. Also note that Jesus gives the reason for this provision when questioned about it: He said "hardness of heart" was the reason Moses had to accede reluctantly. So, whenever there is a provision for divorce, there is also a contributing agent of "hardness of heart."

### Matthew 19:1–12

The Pharisees ask Jesus in Matthew 19:1–12 if he agrees with Hillel's view, which allowed men to divorce their wives on the ground of "any matter." Men following Hillel's view could—at any time and for any reason—return the dowry and dismiss the wife.

The Shammaites and Jesus had a different interpretation. They both argued that the only ground for divorce in this verse was "a matter of indecency." The Shammaite view in this debate is abbreviated in a similar way to Jesus' teaching: "A man should not divorce his wife except if he found indecency in her." This appears to suggest that Shammaites only allowed divorce for the one ground of indecency, but we know that they also allowed divorces based on the other three grounds derived from Exodus 21:10–11.<sup>3</sup>

If the wife is unfaithful, it is not a sin for the husband to remarry. If someone divorced for "any matter," then they were not properly divorced and were not released from the marriage contract. Likewise, if someone is divorced except for biblical reasons, he or she is not divorced. Firth also notes, "Polygamy was still practiced by Palestinian Jews but not practiced in any Graeco-Roman culture." He continues, "There is no extant (existing) record of any part of Jewish society which did not accept these other three grounds. Jesus was silent on Exodus 21:10–11, perhaps because he was not asked about it or, more probably, because he agreed with the standard teaching which was followed by all branches of Judaism. He did not, after all, leave any teaching about monotheism or celibacy outside marriage, presumably because here too he agreed with the teaching shared by all other Jews on these subjects."<sup>4</sup>

### Mark 10:1–12

In Mark 10:1–12 (the same text as Matthew 19:1–12), Mark records Jesus' answer to the Pharisees' questions, but he also records later statements Jesus made to the disciples. These later statements seem to clarify that while divorce is permissible, remarriage is not permissible without committing adultery (indecency). Luke 16:18 echoes Mark 10:11–12.

### Romans 7:1–3

The Romans 7:1–3 passage reminds us that when a woman's husband dies, the wife is free of her marital commitments and may remarry.

### I Corinthians 7:1–40

Jesus also notes that marriage is not a requirement in contrast to the Jewish custom. Accepting those who are not married is a gospel standard. Paul agrees in I Corinthians 7:25–28,36. Earlier in I Corinthians 7 we see that verses 10–11 are based on the gospel tradition as understood by Paul, and verses 12–14 are based on a similar tradition for married believers. In verse 10, Paul specifically wants believers married to unbelievers; who are separated, not to resort to divorce but to hope for reconciliation.

We gain further insight in I Corinthians 7 where we see in verses 1–2 that Paul does not recall the original creation order found in Genesis 2:24. Instead, he allows marriage to avoid sinning. In verses 3–5 Paul refers to conjugal rights as a moral obligation within marriage, allowing brief periods of abstinence but not a long-term celibate marriage. In verses 10–12 he interprets the Lord to say that a woman is not to depart from her husband, but if she does, she should not remarry (though it is her right) but try to reconcile with her former husband. He wants a man not to divorce his wife.

In verses 12–15 it is Paul who makes a provision for divorce and remarriage if an unbeliever does not want to live with the believer. However, the believer cannot divorce the unbeliever if the unbeliever wants to stay. Paul says we should not give up hope for reconciliation. He also states that affection is due to each other in marriage and does not allow celibate marriages, as some troubled Christians at Corinth were suggesting. Verses 15–16 state that if the unbeliever departs, the believer is free from the bondage of marriage and may, according to the Jewish practice, remarry. Verses 32–34 recognize other marital obligations of care, including provisions of food and clothing, as the marriage contract states.<sup>5</sup>

In Jewish divorce certificates, the concepts of bondage and freedom are key:

[Date, Place] I [name] divorce and release of my own free will, today you [wife's name] who had been my wife before this time. You are free on your part to go and become the wife of any Jewish man that you wish. This is for you a writ of release and a bill of divorce. *Divorce Deed, AD 72, Masada*<sup>6</sup>

The divorce decree is compared to an emancipation certificate for a slave by early rabbinic traditions. This was not because they regarded marriage as slavery, but the divorce legislation of Exodus 21:10–11 was based on the law of the slave wife. They found many parallels between the release of a woman from marriage

and the release from slavery. The rules concerning release were similar as was the wording of the two certificates. The emancipation certificate said, "Lo, you are a free girl, you belong to yourself." The only words necessary on a divorce certificate were "Lo, you are permitted to (marry) any man."<sup>7</sup>

Paul refers to the standard Jewish divorce certificate in I Corinthians 7:39—"She is free to marry anyone she wishes, but he must belong to the Lord." (NIV)—but with deference to the rights of widows. Whereas the original purpose of a divorce certificate was to give a divorcee the same legal rights to remarry as a widow, Paul cites a divorcee's rights in order to defend the rights of widows. He is asserting that a widow can marry whomever she wishes, just as a divorcee can, most likely because he wants to deny the obligation of a childless Jewish widow to marry her brother-in-law (in levirate marriage) to produce an heir.

Paul's use of the comparison between a divorced and a widowed person should be noted. Divorce frees the person to remarry just as a widow is free to remarry, but he gives some advice concerning it. He instructs that peace is sought. When Paul says "God has called us to live in peace" (I Corinthians 7:15, NIV) he is saying that we must find practical solutions to situations where we do not have exact teaching. It is evident that Paul is responding to questions raised regarding specific situations and is giving his answer to those specific situations. But the "peace" ideally should not pertain to single situations; it should become a general rule—for this time and in this culture—that will help all people.

When specific questions about situations are raised in our culture today, we follow the principal of good exegesis (the biblical principal of God's original plan) and note the breakdown of the relationship and allow for divorce and remarriage. Admittedly, applying the principle to today's modern setting has its problems, but it is the way we determine how Scripture influences our daily lives.

## Today's Guidelines

How shall we understand these guidelines from the Old Testament, from Jesus, and from Paul? The Old Testament offers an ideal vision of God's plan—God's plan being the goal but not always the reality. Moses, for instance, allowed divorce within certain guidelines. His guidelines fit the issues of the day. The

principle is that there are circumstances which allow for divorce. Hardness of heart, for example, is not ideal but an allowable circumstance within the guidelines of a believing community. If God's plan is to be the normal, regular, even routine among Godly couples, then divorce is always failure, a tragic failure. It is not what is supposed to happen. God planned otherwise. But it is the "provisions" that allow for a lesser evil in the face of a larger failure.

### **The Provisions**

A man could divorce his wife in Moses' and Jesus' day by standing at the city gate and merely declaring his intentions of divorce three times. Within this context, Jesus understood that the person being divorced must be protected, and He did this by requiring the certificate which frees her to remarry. It was also the custom of the day for women to remarry after divorce in both the Grecian and Palestine courts. However, Jesus placed a stipulation on the woman that if she was unfaithful in the previous marriage she was not allowed to remarry. She was to remain single. If she had a certificate of divorce and the divorce was not made as a result of her unfaithfulness, then she could remarry. In addition, the husband could remarry if his wife was unfaithful.

In the New Testament, divorce per se does not preclude remarriage. One must ask about the circumstances and facts of the prior divorce in order to make any judgment about a possible remarriage. The comments forbidding remarriage are addressed to persons involved in illegitimate divorce (e.g. a Pharisee puts away his wife at a whim) In a situation of this nature, the divorce is illegitimate, and remarriage would only compound the wrong. But where an "innocent party" is the victim of a divorce caused by the "guilty party," then it seems logical that divorce by its very definition dissolves the prior marriage and opens the possibility of a new marriage.

It should also be noted that in New Testament times a woman could not write the request for divorce. She needed to find a man who would write the request and submit it to the courts. Later we see that the stipulations would apply to "spouse" rather than just to the man or the woman. So if the man is unfaithful, the wife is also free to remarry after giving him a certificate of divorce. The man, being the guilty party in this case, has caused the end of the marriage and is not allowed to remarry.

## Unfaithfulness

Having been “unfaithful,” in our thinking, means that a husband or wife has had sexual intercourse with someone other than his or her spouse. It is also generally understood to mean the following, all of which are used as possible grounds for divorce today:

- According to ancient marriage contracts, that any of the three components (food, shelter, conjugal relationships) in the contract have not been provided (e.g., a spouse withholding his/her body from the other spouse for a long period of time without consent (I Corinthians 7:3–5);
- Sexual intimacy with another person of the same gender;
- Emotional intercourse with another person to the deprivation of the spouse;
- Physically, mentally, and/or emotionally separating from the relationship so far that it has broken down and cannot be healed—that is, being “unfaithful” to the relationship itself.

## Context

According to Firth, “Paul refers to both women and men whenever he discusses the marriage obligations. In fact he is so conscientious in making balanced statements, that he repeats whole phrases in order to emphasize this.”<sup>8</sup> We note that Jesus states guidelines in Mark 10:5–9 but in verse 12 he limits them again. Can it be assumed that Jesus was narrowing His public comment in the privacy of the disciples, or was He just emphasizing the ideal? We note that Luke 16:18 and Paul in Romans 7:1–3 are not quoting the whole statement of Jesus. Do we take these as the guidelines or the statements of Jesus? We are reminded that every writer had their own reasons for writing and did not always use an entire quote, only what applied to the truth they were trying to make in that situation. We must not take verses out of context of the whole Bible but must have a systematic understanding of biblical teaching. Therefore, to arrive at a correct understanding regarding these matters we must take into account the teachings of the whole Bible and develop our conclusions after systematizing these truths.

Returning to the Apostle Paul in I Corinthians 7:15, we first ask, what does “not bound” mean? Does it imply being unbound to the relationship? Can divorce and remarriage occur?

Firth states the following:

Paul did not have to explicitly allow remarriage, and if he wished to forbid it for Christians, he would have to do so in very clear terms. Remarriage after divorce was a right enshrined in Graeco-Roman and Jewish law. The establishment of this right was the main purpose of the Graeco-Roman divorce certificate and the sole purpose of the Jewish divorce certificate. As seen above, the Jewish concept of divorce was likened to release from slavery, not because marriage was restrictive, but because the marriage bond was taken so seriously. Paul is emphasizing throughout I Corinthians 7 that the marriage bond is to be respected and not treated lightly, as in the Graeco-Roman culture, so he deliberately uses languages and images which have connotations of a slavery-type bond. . . . It is difficult for a Jewish woman to get a divorce certificate from a husband who walked out on her using the Greek law of divorce-by-separation. Without the divorce certificate she was not free to remarry.<sup>9</sup>

When the non-believer walked out of the marriage, they became guilty of neglecting the material and emotional support of their partner. This formed grounds for divorce in biblical law, so they were entitled to a valid divorce. As far as Paul was concerned, Christians were obligated to provide emotional and material support just as Jews were, so presumably they were also allowed to claim a divorce on these grounds. Paul regarded the teaching of the Lord to be that one should not walk out on a marriage as in the Hillelite or Graeco-Roman divorce for any matter—i.e., s/he should not end a marriage without biblical grounds. He did not regard sexual adultery as the only ground for divorce any more than the Shammaites did or (in my opinion) Jesus did. . . . Virtually every facet of Paul's teaching about marriage and divorce in I Corinthians 7 can be illustrated by parallels in the Jewish and non-Jewish marriage and divorce papyri. Paul is helping non-Jewish believers to cope with the Graeco-Roman custom of groundless divorce-by-separation. He reminds them that Jesus taught against a similar type of divorce within Judaism, and reminds them of their binding obligations within a marriage contract to provide emotional and material support for each other. He tells them that if their partner dies, or if they are divorced against their will, they are no longer bound by this contract and can remarry.<sup>10</sup>

Christian marriages had the security of a pre-Hillelite Jewish contract, which forbade divorce except on the biblical grounds of emotional neglect, physical neglect or adultery. Christian marriages also gave equal rights to men and women who could both gain a divorce for any of the biblical grounds without the one-sided right of the husband who was the only one who could validate the divorce by writing out the certificate. Paul has a positive approach to marriage throughout. He emphasizes throughout that a marriage is binding and that believers should do everything within their power to avoid the circumstances, which lead to a divorce, such as separating or not fulfilling their marital obligations. He leads believers from a world of Graeco-Roman morals and thought to a world of Jewish morals, and beyond to a world of Christian morals.<sup>11</sup>

Is there to be a difference between a marriage that occurs before people are saved, or are the rules for all people? Do we allow a divorce and remarriage without any guidelines if the couple were married in an unbelieving state? The marriage relationship was established as part of the Creation order; therefore, the idea and ideals of marriage apply to all people—believers and unbelievers. The Old and New Testaments, and subsequently the church, have developed rules of procedure within the believing community to take into account situations where a person is a believer and goes through a marital breakdown. The rules of the church are not meant to be punitive; they are meant to be helpful.

## Modern Applications

Let us now draw some conclusions that will help apply these scriptural concepts. To start, marriage is a good thing. God's ideal plan for relationships between a man and a woman is that they are one flesh, and what God has joined together man or woman should not separate (Matthew 19:6). In his book *Thinking Biblically: Studies in Biblical Ethics for Salvationists* Graham Durston states:

The Salvation Army's Positional Statement on Marriage (1981) upholds the New Testament ideal for marriage. It defines marriage as "the voluntary and loving union for life of one man and one woman to the exclusion of all others, this union being established by an authorized ceremony." By its nature, marriage rests on a relationship of love, a reflection of God's love

for the human race. The permanence of the marriage bond provides for security and developing mutual trust, referred to in Scripture as "one flesh" relationship (Genesis 2:24, Ephesians 5:21-23)<sup>12</sup>

### **Remarriage after Divorce**

Concerning the issue of remarriage after a divorce, Durston states that The Salvation Army emphasizes the following:

The ideal is upheld with positive teaching and counseling. Reconciliation of estranged partners is sought by every means. The way of forgiveness is encouraged. It is expected that Christians try harder to achieve reconciliation and keep the marriage covenant. The Scripture provides the example for God's covenant love expressing itself in offered forgiveness to His estranged people. (See Hosea 2:16-23.)

Officers are encouraged to provide adequate preparation for marriage counseling to engaged couples.

Divorce is viewed as the last resort and a sad failure to maintain the ideal. Care and compassion is extended to Salvationists who find themselves in this situation. At the same time it is necessary for them to withdraw from active participation in the Corps during this distressing periods (as Local Officers). The Corps as a whole and especially the young people must not gain the impression that marriage can be easily entered into and just as easily concluded. No low, secular, careless approach to marriage can be tolerated in the Church, as this would not be in keeping with the New Testament principles. Of course the Corps should never condone a separated partner courting someone else before the Decree Absolute has been granted.

Each application for remarriage of divorced people is prayerfully considered on its merits. Remarriage of divorced people cannot take place without the approval of the divisional commander (regional officer).

Salvationists need to be aware that when marriage breakdown takes place within The Salvation Army, the corps finds itself caught in the tensions between this age and the Kingdom of God, law and grace, witness and compassion, prophetic ministry and pastoral care. There is a great need to support the believing community with your prayers for wisdom and compassion and a careful application of the biblical principles.<sup>13</sup>

Finally, Salvation Army officers are allowed to marry divorced individuals who, through counseling, have resolved the issues of the previous marriage and with the permission of the divisional commander. The Salvation Army accepts some individuals who are divorced as officers in The Salvation Army.

## Conclusions

What follows is a summary of the issues as presented in this paper:

- Celibate marriages are not allowed in the Christian home.
- A woman whose husband dies is free to marry anyone belonging to the Lord and is not required to marry her dead husband's brother in order to produce an heir.
- Nowhere in the Bible is divorce encouraged—even on biblical grounds. Divorce is considered the last option, and reconciliation is always preferred.
- If divorce is unavoidable, then the broken relationship must be formalized with a valid certificate dissolving the relationship so that *the other person* can be free to marry.
- There are biblical grounds for divorce that are acceptable, but there are non-biblical grounds that are not acceptable. Biblical grounds for divorce include the following: If any of the three components in the marriage contract—food, clothing, congenial rights—are not provided; if “adultery” (indecency) has occurred; if the “unbeliever” desires to divorce.
- Divorce is allowed.
- Remarriage after divorce is allowed.
- Remarriage after an interim marriage is not allowed. (Genesis 24)
- Neither marriage nor remarriage is a requirement. People can be single. Jewish thought was that all should be married, but Paul moved the Christian community into a new thinking by recommending a positive view of singleness: “It is good for them to stay unmarried, as I am.” (I Corinthians 7:8)

- After the Fall of man the Bible allows for divorce and remarriage for failure to keep the marriage contract of food, clothing, and marital rights. Here is a more current list of “indeencies” that would be considered acceptable reasons for the failure of the marriage covenant, allowing divorce and remarriage: incest; homosexuality; physical, spiritual, or emotional abuse; any sexual activity with someone other than your spouse, and deprivation of emotional, physical, or material support.
- If the unbeliever wants to depart from the marriage, he or she may, but the believer cannot dissolve the marriage if the unbeliever wants to stay.
- The creation order found in Genesis 1 and 2 states that heterosexual relations between married men and women are the only sexual relationships sanctioned by God and that homosexual relations are not rendered acceptable by a same-sex “marriage.”

Let us uphold and strive to attain and sustain God’s idea of marriage. Let us also recognize that all sin can be forgiven and that God can bless all marriages. God will be present and will bless the marriage if those who are married—no matter their past—are seeking God’s forgiveness, His presence, and His blessing. Let us move forward with God—all married, divorced, sinners, and believers.

*Notes*

1. David G. Firth, "I Corinthians 7 in the Light of Jewish Greek and Aramaic Marriage and Divorce Papyri," *Bulletin 52.2* (Tyndale House, Cambridge: Wesley Institute for Ministry and the Arts, NSW, 2001), pp. 232–33.
2. Captain Graham Durston, *Thinking Biblically, Studies in Biblical Ethics for Salvationists* (Australia: Aone Printing, 1988), p. 9.
3. Firth, pp. 235–36.
4. *Ibid.*, pp. 231, 236.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 232.
6. *Ibid.*, p. 237.
7. *Ibid.*, pp. 238–39.
8. *Ibid.*, p. 234.
9. *Ibid.*, pp. 240–41.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 242.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 243.
12. Durston, p. 11.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 12.

# Book Reviews

*Servants Together: Salvationist Perspectives on Ministry.*

The Salvation Army International Doctrine Council, 2002, 128 pp.

Reviewed by Captain Dean Pallant, The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory.

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*Servants Together* was written by the International Doctrine Council of The Salvation Army in response to a recommendation of the 1995 Salvation Army leaders conference that "the roles of officers and soldiers be defined and a theology of the 'priesthood of all believers' developed to encourage greater involvement in ministry." The book clearly states the essential foundations upon which the character and culture of all Salvationist life, both individual and corporate, must be based. It focuses on the nature and quality of "the people of God" in four key aspects: the calling, the ministry, the scope of leadership, and the character of leadership. This review will broadly summarize the content of the book's four sections and then focus on an issue which raised questions for me. In conclusion, I will offer some suggestions as to how the book could be used.

Section One pertains to the calling—to worship, community, and mission. The breadth of new thinking in recent years is well represented in this summary of issues. Serving as an important statement of official thinking, the book does well to pull together an integrated Salvationist position that strengthens a united sense of calling.

Some of the more contentious issues were glossed over, however, in the desire to preserve this sense of unity within the international Salvation Army. For example, the paragraph on baptism as an "essential of discipleship" (p. 30) does not accurately reflect the recent quality of internal debate on this issue. The paragraph explains the "baptism in the Spirit" without noting the symbolism of water.

I was equally disappointed to see little reference to the “membership” debate (i.e., qualifications for soldiership and adherency). Does this mean that we have a narrow definition of membership but a very broad sense of calling?

Section Two brings the focus from the calling of all Salvationists to the aspects of ministry itself, a whole life of ministry. Ideas of officership being a higher ministry are dismissed, as all Salvationists are called to servant leadership within the context of identifying, developing, and using our spiritual gifts. The emphasis on gifting as the basis for ministry and leadership throughout the book is most welcome. “Dualistic thinking” is a challenge to Salvationists in many areas of life, and the writers helpfully explain and reject the false teaching that abounds on a distinction between the sacred and the secular.

Section Three tackles the thorny issue of the scope of leadership. Accepting the notion of there being different types of leaders, the book even suggests three examples: the people-centered leader, the teaching-centered leader, and the manager leader. Its argument for broadening the scope of leadership centers on the concepts of commissioning and ordination. The book suggests that many more Salvationists should be “commissioned” into ministry (p. 67), the key points being that commissioning:

- should be used for a wider number of roles;
- could be designated for a specific period of time; and
- must be done publicly—with as much participation from others as possible.

This wider emphasis on commissioning people to ministry will give an important focus to the vital role leaders play in the growth of the kingdom.

Several pages describe the historic and biblical foundations for the use of the word “ordination” in the commissioning of officers. (Ordination was introduced into the commissioning of officers in 1978.) This is an important, if sometimes quite complicated, explanation, hinging on the question, What is unique about officership? (p. 78). While the book sets out the distinctive characteristics of the calling and work of an officer, it also tries to emphasize that this does not infer a superior status. While not wishing to ignore the importance of clarifying this relationship (a main reason for the General asking for this work), in the last seven years the issues have moved on. Demands for increased professionalism in social

services across the world are posing great challenges to the way we undertake ministry in the name of Christ. From a theological perspective, there is an urgent need to reflect on serious personnel issues impacting employees and officers in The Salvation Army. Many questions remain unanswered, such as:

- How do we theologically reflect on the recruitment requirement in the UK to be “sympathetic to the aims of The Salvation Army” against a theological desire for people to understand their service as “a calling to fulfill the will of God”?
- Where is the cutoff point in the organizational hierarchy for those with leadership abilities but little spiritual experience?

“The priesthood of all believers” was determined as the focal point for a Salvation Army theology of ministry. *Servants Together* retains a certain clarity of focus but does not fully develop the implications of the theology of officers and the ministry of employees.

Section Four focuses on the characteristics of leadership and argues that the Army needs both priestly and prophetic leaders. Ten characteristics of a true leader are presented and expounded in the context of what future Army leaders will need to possess. Although the book hinted to the effect (pp. 111, 119), these characteristics lacked specific references to accountability and transparency. It should be said that with the increasing move toward prophetic leadership, we need to heighten our theology of accountability and stewardship.

I could not find much reflection on issues of race and gender in terms of leadership and how the identity of a person affects their role and status. These are significant issues in all parts of the world and deserved greater attention from a theological perspective.

In conclusion, I warmly welcome the publication of *Servants Together* and hope that it will not be the last word on the subject from the Doctrine Council. We have used the book in the past few months during the development of our strategic planning processes and tools for the United Kingdom Territory. It has helped in laying the foundation for the cultural change taking place in the UK.

As a corps officer, I have found it very useful for sermon preparation and Bible study material. Questions at the end of each chapter are intended to stimulate discussion. It is unlikely, however, to be a resource for the average Salvationist. If the material were reproduced in a step-by-step fashion, rather

than in its existing academic tutorial approach of "read and discuss," it would prove helpful. Perhaps a series of leaflets could be produced, making the content and discussion points more accessible? Translated into other languages, these leaflets would serve to complement the book as a resource in corps, center, and headquarters discussion groups.

As General Gowans points out in his Foreword, the book will be of little value if it does not lead to "greater involvement in ministry." A year after publication, how many Salvationists have accessed the excellent thinking reflected in these pages?

Pamela J. Walker. *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian Britain*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2001: 360 pp.

Reviewed by Major Carol Seiler, The Salvation Army USA Western Territory.

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*Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down* begins with the promise of a study of "working-class urban religion, gender and popular culture" that will shed new light and raise new questions. It is an intriguing introduction, which includes the premise that The Salvation Army chronicled religion in the urban working class, an account previously thought to be lacking by historians. The seven chapters cover a breadth of topics from roots of the Army and female ministry, through conversion narratives, to the cultural change of working-class neighborhoods.

Throughout the book many new and rich stories are told, whose characters unfold into their strengths and weaknesses without the "reputation" of The Salvation Army being the main focal point. Although some of the chapters seem repetitive, the stories are engaging as they portray the realities and challenges of the time. Distinctions within sections of the book disappear as overall themes of working-class interaction, urban religion, charismatic expression, women as activists, and general mission opportunism based on popular culture develop and weave through the descriptions of each chapter.

Contrary to the routine approaches of glamorizing or idealizing the Army's "roots," author Pamela Walker identifies the tensions that were evident in the early Army. It is an enjoyable element of the book—refreshing and at times humorous. After reading some of these stories, one wonders if Army leadership may actually want to return to these roots. It is interesting that Walker notes the tenseness even in the manner in which narratives of conversion and holiness were written, that is, with a clear purpose to selectively include information to advance the organization. Describing the tension between authority and obeying God's will that permeated the movement from the early Christian Mission days, Walker explains that "Salvationists assumed their place within strict hierarchy and expected the prompting of the Holy Spirit to guide their soul-saving work no matter how unconventional it might be" (p. 39):

This theme of conflict pervades the early Army, as its soldiers dealt with gender issues, a change to a military structure from the Methodist structure, family rivalry as the Booth siblings reacted to Bramwell's leadership, and the paradox of putting forward innovation and unusual characters to attract the masses while wanting to control the very personalities that were applauded.

The impact of the defining decade of the 1890s is also explored in this book including the release of *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, noted as a "fusion of ideas of the social-imperialistic movement" (p. 237). The change in leadership to Bramwell and the loss of Booth children within that same decade is described as a critical time for a movement just over twenty years old.

Walker identifies the Army's military focus as an opportunistic response, stating that both British imperialism and the need to give masculine credibility to religion made a military approach very natural. Working-class men were very pugilistic, so a fighting-for-God approach turned that interest into a marketable style for the Army. Comments about "conversion narratives" are also interesting in setting the stage for gender appeal. Whereas women were aligned with social injustice and God's salvation, men were shown to have great sinful pasts, and their redemption into a military style kept their masculinity intact.

The use of "bait and switch" tactics to appeal to the working-class interest in theatrical entertainment provides intriguing stories. Walker also frames these as a brilliant tactic of image manipulation to show a reversal of life in salvation. Eliza Haynes, for example, was a woman officer who unbraided her hair, put on a nightgown, and paraded the streets. One of the "hallelujah lasses" in Victorian England, she was vividly demonstrating sexual invitation to entice people into the meeting halls (p. 133). The "hallelujah" portion of that term, apparently, was not entirely a "praise phrase" but used more in a theatrical sense. The contrast of the uniform, juxtaposing with the disorderly woman, demonstrated purity. The Army engaged in "netting the gutters," acting as vessels through which society's filth and disease would pass. We appear to have been very comfortable with using what people understood in order to make a point.

It is no wonder that the mainstream churches objected so much. Any respectable, middle class woman would not get involved in this coarse, working-class approach to salvation. Good deeds by one class to the other were allowed, but young women who joined the Army from the middle class were despaired for

by their families, and that included Maude Booth. The standard inaccessibility of religion to the working class, in tandem with the lack of effort in their salvation on the part of the middle class, seems inextricably linked to what was considered appropriate behavior.

This working-class theme helps the reader understand the Army's early social service response, which Walker links primarily to the women's ministry. The initial discussion of female ministry is credited to Catherine Booth's theological understanding, but the book ventures to present a reality that is more pragmatic. The harshness of working-class women's lives, in contrast to the women of the middle class, was foundational to the direction of the Army. These uneducated, earthy women were fighting for survival, their widespread abuse stemming from the prevalence of alcohol use by men. Therefore, in order to witness to women, domestic issues were aligned with social issues related to drinking. By linking with a woman and daughter in her early ministry, Catherine Booth "implicitly aligned women's interests (and later domestic interests) with God's will" (p. 39).

Joining the Army as members and then as officers considerably raised the credibility and authority (as well as the literacy) of these women, while the social issues, particularly related to drinking, were confronted in their neighborhoods. Tension arose, however, in the ministry of women as the brawling nature of the working class stood aside saintly images of motherhood. The book presents this contrast as a fine line, viewing Salvationist women as being able to move freely among their own class and with the most degraded.

Walker also indicates that, for the most part, the history of sexual indiscretions by converted women were primarily the result of being lured as young girls from the right path. Men, on the other hand, were often portrayed in all the degradations of their sin. However, an interesting story of a "fallen woman," who was brought into an early rescue home but "failed" in obtaining salvation, is shared in the book. "Effie" is rescued as a child and adopted by a single female officer. When she seeks her early past and moves into a life of sexual enjoyment, Effie is subsequently rejected by the officer, both as redeemable and as a daughter. The reactions of the Army to working-class realities makes for interesting reading.

The Salvation Army of Victorian Britain gave women unprecedented spiritual authority, yet even then inequalities between men and women officers were

evident—with a preference being given to single women over married. Walker notes that as early as 1881 there were different male and female wages paid to the officers, belying the equality presented (p. 115). For working-class women, this still meant a huge increase in wages and status; for the men, it was often a decrease. In addition, Booth did not appreciate women officers marrying because wifely duty was not as easily reconciled to the responsibility held by singles. The marriage ceremony reflected, at that point, a priority of the Army over marriage, causing consternation for middle-class families whose daughters may have become involved with the active mission of the Army to the neglect of traditional marriage and family obligations.

The “physically engaging” holiness movement was another surprising thread to the urban appeal of the early Salvation Army. Walker describes this holiness theology as one that not only allowed women and all types of people to become evangelists, but also gave the Army a theatrical and Pentecostal expression of religion that attracted the working class. This all-inclusive nature of the holiness theology is also linked to the putting aside of sacraments. The primary objection to the Army’s administering of sacraments was that unordained men (and women of any stature) were not permitted to be involved in sacraments in any other denomination. To solve this problem, the Army eliminated them (p. 117).

Railton was another key influence, living and working with the Booths for nearly a dozen years. He apparently “believed that ecclesiasticism was among the worst aspects of Christian churches” (p. 51). These and other strong biases certainly shaped the early direction of the Army, and they present opportunities for reflection as we continue to struggle with our identity and our roots.

On a final, unflattering note, Walker indicates that the Army, at times, may have lacked total honesty in an effort to accomplish its worthwhile goals. For example, when renting theaters for meeting halls, the Army was required to maintain the tavern license, even if no alcohol was served, in order to acquire the lease. This effectively put the tavern out of business, which resulted in opening a corps setting. It would be interesting to take liquor license contracts to the Board of Directors today.

Although Walker does not explicitly raise new questions—it may be that she lacks knowledge of the internal dynamics of The Salvation Army in order to compare current practice—but questions do come to mind. For instance, why

have we selectively idealized and immortalized the Army's response to Victorian England urban culture (the dramas, the open airs, the putting new converts to work or as leaders), instead of idealizing the more transferrable and sustainable concepts such as taking opportunity of the popular culture and applying it to an engagement of spiritual ministry?

The book does not draw any implications for modern times, but it is evident that discussions would arise among current Salvationists, whose opinions may differ from those within the academic community. For both a thought-provoking evening and a different approach to an historical understanding of issues facing the Army today, I would recommend *Pulling the Devil's Kingdom Down* to be included among your reading resources.

Andrew Mark Eason. *Women in God's Army: Gender and Equality in the Early Salvation Army*. Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003: 246 pp.

Reviewed by Lt. Colonel (Dr.) Barbara Robinson, The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory.

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I was caught off guard by the visceral nature of my reaction to Andrew Eason's recently published book, *Women in God's Army: Gender and Equality in the Early Salvation Army*. As I read, I found myself becoming increasingly angry, not with the author, but with the painful facts this book holds up for analysis. Eason is not telling us anything those of us who are denominational "insiders" do not already know. We have, however, become accustomed to blunting and rationalizing the historical realities he scrutinizes. Eason has written a stark, even painful overview.

*Women in God's Army* is a case study of the way in which theory, and even theology, can be nullified in practice. A Victorian evangelical denomination, The Salvation Army, adopts a radical rhetoric of gender equality. In arriving at such a position, the movement is profoundly shaped by the thought and influence of co-founder Catherine Booth. But the denomination emerges and consolidates within a world of cultural assumptions which make this pragmatically problematic. Ultimately, what is deemed "practical" all but kills the principle.

Eason correctly notes that most academic studies of the denomination simply assume that the egalitarian principles promoted by the formative Army were realized in most, if not all, aspects of Salvation Army life. This, he argues, is not so. Rather, "evidence suggests that any liberating opportunities for female preaching and authority were ultimately overshadowed by the presence of culturally confining attitudes and practices" (p. xii).

Exploring some of these "confining attitudes" is one element of the author's methodology, but only one. Eason's approach is multidisciplinary—a blending of social history and the history of ideas with feminist theology and sociological theory. However, this blending is not always entirely satisfying. For example, he assumes considerable awareness of the writing of feminist theologians, whom it is doubtful many historians have read. It is true that he directs the reader to

appropriate primary sources through extensive, helpful footnotes. But because the feminist analysis he alludes to greatly strengthens his overall argument, one wishes he had been somewhat more explicit about the influence of scholars like Valerie Saiving Goldstein and Joann Wolski on his own work.

*Women in God's Army* considers a range of influences which have muted the Army's gender radicalism, ostensibly from the 1870s until 1930. He considers the constraining outcomes of the formative Army's strong adherence to Victorian notions of gendered psychological differences—the argument that although men and women are equal, 'their natural strengths lie in different areas. Men were regarded as more suited for tasks requiring reason and governance. Women were believed to be the more religious, moral, and sensitive sex. According to this argument, while women were admirably, indeed dispositionally, suited to a preaching ministry, they were less capable of administration or leadership. Certainly, the statistics that Eason includes in the book indicate that women were rarely entrusted with administrative authority.

Eason highlights the influence exerted on the Army by the trend in the late Victorian/Edwardian period to emphasize—even celebrate—not only separate psychologies but separate spheres of primary influence for men and women. Evangelical writing described the place of women as the angels of hearth and home and the role of godly men as producers and providers. This ideology of separate, gendered spheres was reinforced by the late nineteenth-century trend among respectable middle- and working-class families to see women working outside the home in any kind of paid labor as somehow shameful and a social indicator of poverty. It became increasingly difficult for women to believe that they could be both good mothers and competent officers.

The author moves on to consider the impact of the Army's approach to spirituality on ministry opportunities for women. He looks particularly at how the elements of piety in the Holiness tradition affected Salvationist women. By equating self-assertion and self-interest with sin, as holiness teaching often does, it becomes very difficult for women to maintain any right to a public life. It is at this point in Eason's work that the reader would be greatly helped by more thorough explanations of some key working principles of feminist theology, a theological approach that proceeds by regular return to the question, What impact has the equation of male experience with human experience had upon the

other half of the Christian community?" (p. 7). Many feminists would argue that while classic or traditional understandings of the nature of sin usually emphasize the destructiveness and futility of human pride, this is speaking to the reality of male spiritual experience. The more common temptation and expression of sinfulness for women is not pride but a sense of persistent unworthiness—in never believing in or allowing the self to flourish, in failing to recognize one's creation in the image of God.

For these feminist theologians, "whatever denies, diminishes or distorts the full humanity of women . . . is not redemptive" (p. 9). Rather than stressing the sinful nature of "self-assertion," a cardinal principle of feminist theology is that "thinking, behaviour and structures that wittingly or unwittingly distort women's reflection of the divine or limit their opportunities for self-actualization are labelled as sinful" (p. 8). It may seem that feminists are simply putting a positive spin on the same "separate psychologies" theory, which historically has blocked leadership opportunities quite effectively for women. But it could also be argued that the low self-esteem, with which so many women struggle and which these theologians describe, may result from female socialization—women's ongoing experience of being women in the world.

A helpful aspect of Eason's work is the attention he gives to the influence of William Booth's own writing on women's roles and ministries, a strategy he regards as a necessary corrective to the preponderance of academic attention paid to the writing of Catherine Booth in the last decade.

When Eason turns to sociological theory as his analytic tool, he shifts his focus to uncovering evidence of social stratification, the "sociological category that charts ways in which authority or advantage are correlated with gender status" (p. 5). Here he applies some basic questions to the available historical data to provide concrete evidence of women's social position within the organization:

- Were single female officers proportionately represented in the middle and upper echelons of Army leadership?
- Did married female officers (with the exception of the Booth women) ever hold more important jobs than their husbands or hold positions of authority in the organization?
- How often did married couples receive separate appointments, and what were the nature of such postings?

- Conversely, if separate assignments were not given, who was awarded the appointment?
- Were married couples ever given separate salaries? If not, who received the wages?

The statistical tale these questions reveal is not reassuring. A more accurate title for this study might be "Women in God's Army: Gender and *Inequality* in the Early Salvation Army."

Eason also points out the dysjunction between the image that the denomination projects and the reality of women's leadership:

More often than not, the strength of women's representation in leadership positions has simply been assumed by drawing attention to one or two high-profile female officers. Such a strategy may serve to bolster a public image, but it does little to provide a full appreciation of the actual figures.  
(p. 6)

The author is thorough enough in his treatment of his subject to even note the way in which women's concrete responsibility within the Army has actually diminished with the increased rank of her husband:

When . . . the wives of senior officers were left without official appointments, they were reminded . . . that there was no shortage of humble and unobtrusive work for them to do. . . . It was incumbent upon a female officer to make the most of the lesser task and accept whatever service offers itself behind the scenes; it was taken for granted that a man had a right to an appointment, but it was merely advantageous for a woman to have one  
(p. 140).

Sound familiar?

The most disturbing aspect of this book, a book which I hope will be widely read, is that while Andrew Eason is a historian and *Women in God's Army* is a historical monograph, his book comes far too close to describing contemporary Army practice for comfort. So read it—and shudder!

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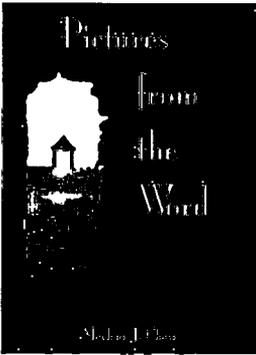


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*The Christian Heritage of the Sacred Jewish Festivals*  
by William W. Francis

This critically acclaimed book offers a fresh perspective on the sacred Jewish festivals, revealing their relevance to modern-day Christians. The work describes how Jesus participated in the feasts and how, in Himself, their meaning was fulfilled. Study questions at the end of each chapter make this book perfect for group or individual study.





## *Pictures from the Word*

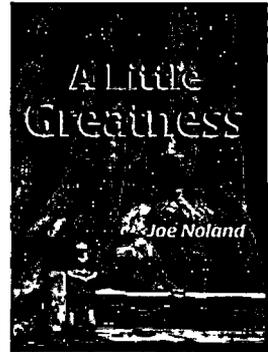
by Marlene J. Chase

This collection of 56 meditations brings to life the vivid metaphors of Scripture, addressing the frequent references to the vulnerability of man met by God's limitless and gracious provision. The author's writing illustrates passages often so familiar that their hidden meaning eludes us. *Pictures from the Word* will enrich your time of personal devotion and deepen your understanding of the Word.

## *A Little Greatness*

by Joe Noland

Under the expert tutelage of author Joe Noland, readers explore the book of Acts, revealing the paradoxes of the life of a believer. Using word play and alliteration, Noland draws us into the story of the early Church while demonstrating the contemporary relevance of all that took place. A Bible study and discussion guide for each chapter allow us to apply each lesson, making this an ideal group study resource.



## *Romance & Dynamite*

*Essays on Science and the Nature of Faith*

by Lyell M. Rader

"Whatever God makes works, and works to perfection. So does His plan for transforming anyone's life from a rat race to a rapture." Anecdotes and insights on the interplay between science and faith are found in this collection of essays by an "Order of the Founder" recipient known as one of The Salvation Army's most indefatigable evangelists.

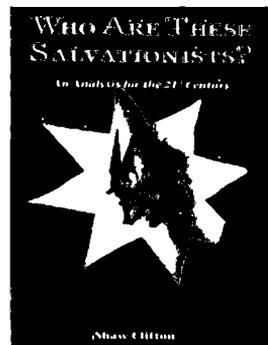


## *Who Are These Salvationists?*

*An Analysis for the 21st Century*

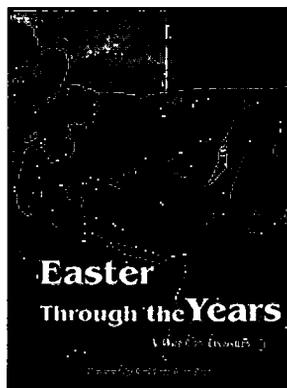
by Shaw Clifton

A seminal study that explores The Salvation Army's roots, theology, and position in the body of believers, this book provides a definitive profile of the Army as an "authentic expression of classical Christianity." Salvationists and non-Salvationists alike will find this to be an illuminating look at the theology which drives the social action of its soldiers.



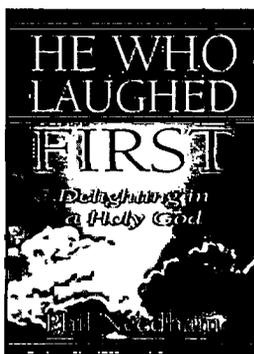
## *Easter Through the Years* A War Cry Treasury

This Easter, spend time reflecting on the wonderful gift of salvation God has given by reading *Easter Through the Years*, a companion volume to *Christmas Through the Years*. Articles, fiction, poetry, and artwork culled from the last fifty years of the *Easter War Cry* will recount the passion of Christ and unveil the events surrounding the cross and the numerous ways Easter intersects with life and faith today.



## *He Who Laughed First* *Delighting in a Holy God* by Phil Needham

This invigorating book questions why there are so many sour-faced saints when the Christian life is meant to be joyful. Needham explores the secret to enduring joy, found by letting God make us holy to become who we are in Christ—saints. *He Who Laughed First* helps the reader discover the why and how of becoming a joyful, hilarious saint.



## *Slightly Off Center!*

*Growth Principles to Thaw Frozen Paradigms*  
by Terry Camsey

Church health expert Terry Camsey seeks to thaw frozen paradigms of what is “Army.” Challenging us to see things from a different perspective, he urges his readers to welcome a new generation of Salvationists whose methods may be different but whose hearts are wholly God’s—and whose mission remains consistent with the principles William Booth established.



## *A Salvationist Treasury*

*365 Devotional Meditations from the Classics  
to the Contemporary*  
edited by Henry Garipey

This book brings to readers the devotional writings from over a century of Salvationists. From Army notables to the virtually unknown, from the classics to the contemporary, this treasure trove of 365 inspirational readings will enrich your life, and is certain to become a milestone compilation of Army literature.



## Our God Comes

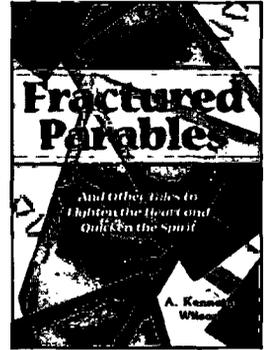


## *Our God Comes And Will Not Be Silent* by Marlene J. Chase

Like the unstoppable ocean tide, God reveals Himself throughout all creation and will not be silent. The author shares in her poems the symmetry in all creation that draws us toward the goodness of God. She invites the reader to distinguish His voice that speaks as only our God can speak.

## *Fractured Parables And Other Tales to Lighten the Heart and Quicken the Spirit* by A. Kenneth Wilson

By applying truths of Scripture to contemporary situations, we find that people of the Bible are as real as we are today. Wilson illuminates beloved biblical accounts in a new light by recasting Jesus' parables in modern circumstances and language. He challenges as he entertains us, helping readers see the humor in the mundane while deftly showing the spiritual application.



## *If Two Shall Agree*

### *The Story of Paul A. Rader and Kay F. Rader of The Salvation Army* by Carroll Ferguson Hunt

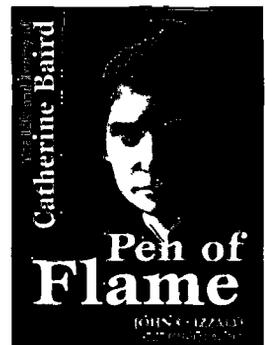


The author tells the fascinating story of how God brought these two dedicated servants together and melded them into a compelling team who served for over 35 years, leading the Army to new heights of vision, ministry, and growth. Read how God leads surrendered believers to accomplish great things for Him.

## *Pen of Flame*

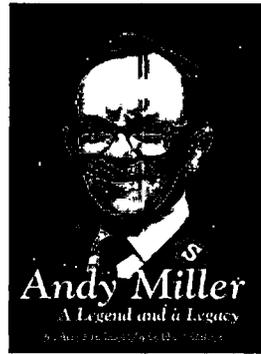
### *The Life and Poetry of Catherine Baird* by John C. Izzard with Henry Gariepy

Catherine Baird lived a life of extraordinary artistic value to The Salvation Army. As a poet, hymn writer, and editor, Baird changed the way the Army viewed the importance of the written word. From a decade of research and devotion John C. Izzard has painted a compelling word picture of one of the Army's strongest and yet most delicate authors.

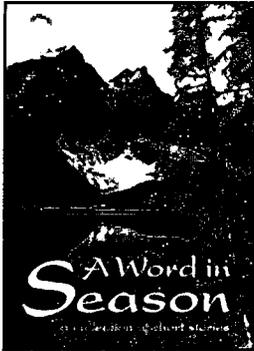


**Andy Miller**  
*A Legend and a Legacy*  
 by Henry Gariepy

As an American Salvationist, Andy Miller has had a powerful spiritual impact on innumerable lives, both within and outside the ranks of The Salvation Army. His vast ministry across the nation has left its indelible impact upon countless people. Through anecdotes, this biography conveys the story of one of the most colorful and remarkable leaders in the Army's history.



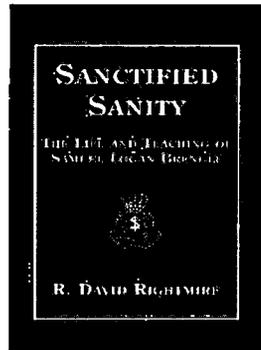
**A Word in Season**  
*A Collection of Short Stories*



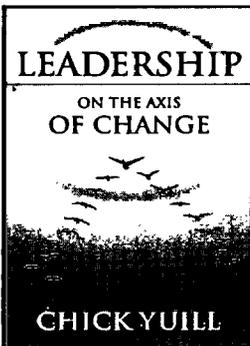
"For every season of our lives," writes Lt. Colonel Marlene Chase in her introduction, "the world of story can help us define our experience and move us beyond ourselves." More than thirty writers, including Max Lucado, have contributed to this compilation, which features factual accounts as well as fictional narratives within the panoply of Christian belief. It's the everyday experiences made extraordinary through faith.

**Sanctified Sanity**  
*The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle*  
 by R. David Rightmire

Many Salvationists may still recognize the name, but fewer appreciate the influence that Brengle had on the development of the Army's holiness theology. Dr. Rightmire has written a theological reassessment of Brengle's life and thought to reacquaint those of the Wesleyan-holiness tradition in general, and The Salvation Army in particular, with the legacy of this holiness apostle.



**Leadership on the Axis of Change**  
 by Chick Yuill



In great demand as a conference and retreat speaker, Major Yuill describes today's Christian church as an institution that "faces great challenges stemming from inert cynicism within and dynamic changes without." Part manual on the functions and principles of leadership, part declaration of the need for change, this book serves all spiritual leaders with both provocation to action and direction toward success.

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