

WORD & DEED

VOL. XX NO. 1



NOVEMBER 2017

A JOURNAL OF SALVATION ARMY
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

A "Sweet Privilege" for Believers:
Samuel Logan Brengle's Teaching on Prayer

Separate But Non-Sectarian:
The Salvation Army's Place in the History of Wesleyan Ecclesial Division

Benedictus: Paul's Parting Words on Ministry

Constructing a Practical Hermeneutic:
William Booth and the Sacraments



Salvation Army National Headquarters
Alexandria, VA, USA

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The purpose of the journal is to encourage and disseminate the thinking of Salvationists and other Christian colleagues on matters broadly related to the theology and ministry of The Salvation Army. The journal provides a means to understand topics central to the mission of The Salvation Army, integrating the Army's theology and ministry in response to Christ's command to love God and our neighbor.

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Vol. 20, No. 1

November 2017

ISSN 1522-3426

Cover Photograph, 614 Corps, Birmingham, AL, by Brian Wallace.

Word & Deed is indexed in the Christian Periodical Index and with EBSCO.

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Prayer, Presence, and Influence

Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green

Prayer, presence, and social/spiritual influence are three characteristics describing The Salvation Army. The Army is a people who pray, who have a presence in the local and global community, and who exercise social/spiritual influence. The Army is a people who pray with thanks and praise, for forgiveness, strength, and wisdom, as intercessors on other's behalf, and for more grace. Salvationists are people formed and transformed by prayer.

Prayer draws us into the presence of God. In God's presence we discover the Trinitarian unity and solidarity revealed in the holy, perfect love of the Father, Son, and Spirit. We remember God's redemptive, reconciling, restorative love for the world. By his grace, we are filled with the fullness of God, equipped and empowered to serve with a profound love of God and love of others. Prayer and presence are the foundation for our influence in Jesus' name. They are the ways we participate in God's redemptive and restorative work. As the gospel comes to us it comes through the socially spiritual, spiritually social influence of others and is then passed on to yet others. This is our identity, mission, privilege and impact as a people, a Salvation Army. This issue of *Word & Deed* brings the reader four articles expressing the truth about Salvationists' prayer, presence, and social/spiritual influence.

The lead article by Young Sung Kim is entitled "A Sweet Privilege for Believers" and provides an overview of the Army's apostle of holiness, Samuel Logan Brengle, and his teaching on prayer. Kim reminds us of Brengle's extensive contribution to the development of our holiness doctrine and "his immeasurable sanctified influence in the wider context of the international Salvation Army." He also brings to light the influence of John Wesley's theology on the

thinking and teaching of Brengle regarding prayer. He highlights Brengle's teaching of prayer as "the breath of God," a divine Channel of God's grace, the importance of prayer at the "mercy seat," on waiting on God, and the dynamic, extraordinary practice of shouting prayer while waiting on God. Kim's article carries themes of Wesleyan synergism characteristic of Salvationists' intimate, co-operant relationships with God and with each other when guided by the Holy Spirit.

James Pedlar captures Booth's attempt to carve out a new presence and influence for the Army on the ecclesiological map of his time. In his article "Separate but Non-Sectarian: The Salvation Army's Place in the History of Wesleyan Ecclesial Division," Pedlar makes the case that Booth's efforts resulted in the Army's ambiguous ecclesial status around matters of identity (church, sect, specialized voluntary society, revivalistic mission, religious order) and sacrament. Booth's vision of "the Army was as 'first responders' on the front lines to further God's Kingdom." Booth was a pragmatist with a strong urgency about the redemption of the world before the return of Christ. He had little time for traditional churchly trappings by envisioning the Army as a "force for aggressive salvation purposes." As a result, Pedlar concludes that Booth's Army remained separate, but non-sectarian, leaving the Army's identity and sacrament questions partially unresolved.

Lyell Rader's three-part series published in *Word & Deed* concludes with his third instalment, "Benedictus: Paul's Parting Words on Ministry, part three - The Trust." Rader reflects on the Apostle Paul passing his torch of ministry to Timothy. His emphasis is on Paul's presence and influence in Timothy's life as father, teacher, mentor, and intimate friend. Paul encourages Timothy to hold to a high standard in teaching others, to guard the health-giving words of the gospel, to entrust the gospel and what he has heard and learned to faithful people who are able to teach others. Rader communicates a grasp of Paul's counsel to Timothy in ways that are practical for today's missional challenges and opportunities.

In his article, "Constructing a Practical Hermeneutic: William Booth and the Sacraments," Rob DeGeorge helps the reader understand the influences of others on Booth's theological development. This he thought was true especially of revivalists James Caughey, Charles Finney, and Booth's former teacher William Cooke. Booth's pragmatic theological orientation leaned into common sense experience and the witness of the Spirit rather than doctrine, creed, or

convention to legitimize his Christian praxis. As a result Booth rejected traditional, institutional sacraments as necessary to salvation. DeGeorge contends that Booth stressed Scripture's spiritual understanding of "Communion with God" and "inward guidance of the Holy Spirit" over physical sacraments which he believed "tended to hinder the masses from experiencing grace." This became the centerpiece of Salvation Army theological understanding of the sufficiency of grace alone. DeGeorge presents Booth's implicitly practical-scriptural hermeneutic in which he held in priority the witness of the Holy Spirit and the divinely inspired influence of Scripture. He contends that Booth relied on Scriptural authority to readily appropriate new approaches and discard established methods including rituals and ceremonies to advance the gospel. Army praxis for Booth meant no baptisms that might promote a hope of heaven without being "born again," and no administration of the Lord's Supper showing priestly authority of one over another. In the end, regarding the Army's practice of the sacraments, the author suggests that Booth was inclined to leave undecided the matter of a return to the sacraments assuming his position of the non-practice of the sacraments for the time being remained "on sufficient scriptural grounds."

This edition ends with some Book Notes and also Captain Andy Miller III's review of David Rightmire's critically important work entitled *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army: A Study of Holiness Foundations*.

To prayer, presence, and influence, we would add pragmatic as an attribute of William Booth and characteristic of The Salvation Army today. The Army remains a people of prayer. Our best work is done on our knees in prayer together mindful of the Trinitarian presence of God in missional life. The Army remains a redemptive presence throughout communities of the world. Our social/spiritual influence is largely due to Booth's legacy of prayerful pragmatism advancing the gospel to the glory of God!

JSR
RJG

A “Sweet Privilege” For Believers: Samuel Logan Brengle’s Teaching on Prayer

Young Sung Kim

Introduction

Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936), known as the apostle of holiness, is a Salvation Army treasure both for his literary contribution in developing holiness doctrine¹ and for his immeasurable sanctified influence in the wider context of the international Salvation Army.² With the exception of the pioneering scholarly works on Brengle by David Rightmire,³ many significant facets of Brengle’s theological legacy have not been fully discussed in theological reflection. The aim of this paper is my small attempt at resolving this issue by focusing on Brengle’s teaching on prayer in his holiness theology. In the tradition of Christian spirituality, prayer is the key avenue to lead us to God. It is also significant to recognize that prayer is located at the center of Brengle’s holiness teaching and in his sanctified life. Doubtlessly, Brengle’s teaching on prayer is a rich subject for investigation, and a worthy way to examine his theology of holiness.

In this paper, I will discuss Brengle’s teaching on prayer in three divisions: First, I will introduce Brengle’s basic definition of prayer, a foundational reference for the purpose of this study. In this section, I will characterize Brengle’s key concept of prayer in four dimensions as follows: 1. Prayer as “a

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sweet privilege” for believers, 2. Prayer as “the breath of the soul,” 3. Prayer as the “channel” of God’s blessings and 4. Prayer as a form of “kneeling at the mercy seat.” Second, I will discuss Brengle’s emphasis on the concept of waiting for God in prayer, an ongoing theme of his teaching on holiness. Third, I will examine Brengle’s teaching on “shouting,” one of the most intriguing themes in his holiness writings. I am convinced that the subject of shouting, which is emphasized by Brengle as a distinct manifestation of extraordinary prayer, should be recognized as one of the most unique and challenging themes in his holiness teaching. It is my hope that studying Brengle’s teaching on prayer will deepen our understanding of his legacy of holiness teaching and his unalloyed passion for holy living.

Brengle’s Basic Definition of Prayer

Prayer as a “Sweet Privilege” for Believers

In *The Way of Holiness*, Brengle describes a paradoxical concept of the “secret of prayer.” He said: “prayer is a puzzle to unbelievers, but a sweet privilege to us... That is the secret of prayer.”⁴ In *When the Holy Ghost is Come*, Brengle encourages us to understand the nature of prayer as follows. He said that “prayer is exceedingly simple,” because it is “the faintest cry for help, a whisper for mercy.”⁵ In this statement, Brengle reminds us that “prayer is exceedingly simple” because the genuine purpose of prayer should be understood as a believer’s God-given privilege to lift up their wounded hearts to a merciful God who knows our needs and will hear our pleas. Brengle also affirmed that God provides the Holy Spirit as the divine agent for our life of prayer. The important work of the Holy Spirit is “to teach us how to pray, to instruct us what to pray for, and to inspire us to pray earnestly, without ceasing and in faith, for the things we desire and the things that are dear to the heart of the Lord.”⁶ For Brengle, truly, prayer is a God-given “sweet privilege” for believers who seek God’s blessings in order to fulfill His will in their lives.

Prayer as “the Breath of the Soul”

In addition, Brengle defined prayer as “the breath of the soul.”⁷ This fundamental understanding of prayer is echoed in the teaching of John Wesley (1703-1791) who was Brengle’s foremost teacher for holiness theology. Like Brengle, Wesley defined prayer as the breath of a believer’s spiritual life. In his sermon “The New Birth,” Wesley illustrated his view of prayer in this way. He said:

God is continually breathing, as it were, upon his soul, and his soul is breathing unto God. Grace is descending into his heart, and prayer and praise ascending to heaven. And by this intercourse between God and man, this fellowship with the Father and the Son, as by a kind of spiritual respiration, the life of God in the soul is sustained: and the child of God grows up, till he comes to “the full measure of the stature of Christ.”⁸

Like Wesley, based on his understanding of prayer as “the breath of the soul,” Brengle affirmed for us the significance of “ceaseless prayer” in the believer’s life. He urges us to pray continually as the apostle Paul teaches in 1 Thessalonians 5:17, to “pray without ceasing.” Analogically speaking, if we stop praying, we stop breathing; this leads to spiritual death. With Wesley, Brengle confirmed that the essential privilege of “ceaseless prayer” is to allow us to experience and enjoy “uninterrupted communion”⁹ with God, the happiest way to appropriate the life of Christlikeness in the path of our spiritual journey.

In fact, as the great example of a soul-winner, Brengle never tired of alerting us to the fundamental discipline of ceaseless prayer as the basis of the urgent calling of evangelism. Brengle underscored that “the life of the soul-winner must be one of ceaseless prayer”¹⁰ as the foundational prerequisite for effective soul-winning. He concluded that “all great soul-winners have been men of much and mighty prayer, and all great revivals have been preceded and carried out by persevering, prevailing knee-work in the closet.”¹¹

Prayer as a Divine “Channel” of God’s Grace

As another key concept, Brengle described prayer as a divine “channel” for conveying God’s blessings and power into people’s hearts. He said that prayer is “the way of approach to God. . . It is the *channel* by which all spiritual blessings and power are received” [italics mine].¹² In this definition, although Brengle did not use the term “means of grace” for explaining the meaning of prayer in a traditional sense, he uses the term “channel” as a way of defining the role and efficacy of prayer.

It is important to know that Brengle’s definition of prayer as a divine channel of God’s grace has a similarity to Wesley’s teaching on prayer. In fact, Wesley himself also indicated prayer as “a channel through which the grace of God is conveyed.”¹³ Further, Wesley declared that prayer is “the grand *means* of drawing near to God; and all others are helpful to us only so far as they are mixed with or prepare us for this” [italics mine].¹⁴ For Wesley, the means of grace is understood as “outward signs, words, or actions ordained of God.”¹⁵ Along the spectrum of the order of salvation (the *ordo salutis*), Wesley also delineated that the means of grace is facilitated as God-appointed “ordinary channels” whereby God “might convey to men preventing, justifying, or sanctifying grace.”¹⁶

At the same time, Wesley warned us to assure that the means of grace should not be seen as the end or goal of religion. Wesley simply reminded us: “Remember. . . to use all means *as means*; as ordained, not for their own sake, but in order to the renewal of your soul in righteousness and true holiness. If therefore they actually tend to this, well; but if not, they are dung and dross” [emphasis in the original].¹⁷ Throughout his writings on holiness teaching, Brengle, like Wesley, advised that prayer itself is not the goal of Christian life. Our life of prayer as a means of grace should be balanced and reflected in the holistic approach of correlation between works of piety (the inward ways of practice of the spiritual disciplines: i.e., searching the Scriptures, prayer, fasting, receiving the Lord’s Supper and public worship etc.) and works of mercy (social and outward appropriation of Christian responsibility: i.e., the proper use of money, solidarity with the poor, education etc.). In sharing the same passion as Wesley, Brengle also assures that prayer itself cannot be effective as a means or channel that may convey God’s blessings to the soul, unless the Holy Spirit works as the divine agent for transferring God’s grace which purifies our hearts

in faith. Truly, for Brengle, genuine and powerful prayer as a divine medium for conveying God’s blessings must be expressed in the total range of our “sacramental living”¹⁸ based on our continual intimate relationship with God in the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Prayer as “Kneeling at the Mercy Seat”

In his book *The Mercy Seat Revisited*, Nigel Bovey points out that Brengle can be considered as “the greatest mercy-seat exponent and front-line fighter”¹⁹ in the history of The Salvation Army.²⁰ In fact, Brengle proposed that the penitent form (the mercy seat) was the birth place of The Salvation Army. He illustrated the distinctive connection between the spiritual and missiological heritage of The Salvation Army and the use of the mercy seat in the early history of The Salvation Army as follows: “The Salvation Army was born, not in a cloister, nor in a drawing-room, but on a spiritual battlefield—at the penitent form.”²¹

In *Samuel Logan Brengle: Portrait of a Prophet*, Clarence Hall recognizes that “the penitent form is the immediate goal, the focal spot, toward which Brengle’s every point in his meeting technique tends. . . . If one would take the full measure of Brengle’s genius and heart as a soul winner, he must look here. . . . Brengle on the platform was mighty. But Brengle at the penitent form was mightier.”²² Truly, the mercy seat (the penitent form) is located at the heart of Brengle’s teaching and preaching on holiness as the birth place of spiritual transformation for the soul.

For Brengle, it is no doubt that the penitent’s act of kneeling at the mercy seat should be understood as a unique form of a dedicated prayer for salvation and sanctification. For Salvationists, kneeling at the mercy seat as a sign of self-dedication to God can be considered as a sacramental response to God in prayer. Having said that, as Bovey points out, it is significant to clarify that the use of the mercy seat “is not obligatory, nor in itself efficacious, Salvationists do not consider this sacramental public act to be a sacrament. Salvationists recognize that people can meet with God at any time and in any place. The mercy seat is a *place* of grace, but is not the *means* of grace” [emphasis in the original].²³

Regarding the symbolic purpose of the mercy seat,²⁴ Brengle said: “I have carried a penitent form around in my heart for half a century or more. And if there is ever any need, I constantly fly there.”²⁵ Truly, this heartfelt testimony

from our “teacher of holiness” should be considered as our spiritual milepost as we hunger for God’s restoring and sustaining grace in our sanctified lives and ministries. Our daily steps must surely include “importunate and persevering”²⁶ prayer.

Considering the distinctive heritage of the mercy seat in The Salvation Army worship tradition, it is unfortunate that use of the ministry of the mercy seat appears to be fading. Whether the use for holiness or salvation, the mercy seat well characterizes the Salvationist’s biblical and Wesleyan optimistic theological conviction that the work of God’s redemptive grace is sufficient and available for all, and whoever kneels down at the mercy seat can draw near to God and He to us and receive instantaneous change in faith through the power of the Holy Spirit.

Brengle’s Emphasis of Waiting on God

The importance and necessity of waiting on God in every aspect of Christian life, especially in the life of prayer, is a continuing theme in Brengle’s holiness teaching.²⁷ It is evident that Wesley also emphasized the importance of waiting for God’s blessings in his teaching of prayer. He indicated that “all who desire the grace of God are to wait for it in the way of prayer.”²⁸ Like Wesley, Brengle amplified his focal point as follows: “if I were dying, and had the privilege of delivering a last exhortation to all the Christians of the world, and that message had to be condensed into three words, I would say, ‘Wait on God!’”²⁹ Brengle’s basic explanation of waiting on God is found in his *Helps to Holiness*. It is written:

Waiting on God means more than a prayer of thirty seconds on getting up in the morning and going to bed at night. It may mean one prayer that gets hold of God and comes away with the blessing, or it may mean a dozen prayers that knock and persist and will not be put off, until God arises, and makes bare His arm on behalf of the pleading soul. There is a drawing nigh to God, a knocking at Heaven’s doors, a pleading of the promises, a reasoning with Jesus, a forgetting of self, a turning from all earthly concerns, a holding on with determination to never let go, that puts all the wealth of Heaven’s wisdom

and power and love at the disposal of a little man, so that he shouts and triumphs when all others tremble and fail and fly, and becomes more than conqueror in the very face of death and Hell.³⁰

Brengle recognized waiting on God as the fundamental spiritual principle in various stages of the Christian journey, is never easy but “a necessary part of the emptying and filling process of entire sanctification.”³¹ He said:

Oh, this waiting on God! It is far easier to plunge madly at this thing and that, and do, do, do, till life and heart are exhausted in joyless and comparatively fruitless toil, than it is wait on God in patient, unwavering, heart-searching faith, till He comes and fills you with the Almighty power of the Holy Ghost... Waiting on God empties us that we may be filled. Few wait until they are emptied, and hence so few are filled.³²

According to Brengle, “Real prayer is something more than a form of words, or a hasty address to God just after breakfast, before the Meeting, or before going to bed at night.”³³ He continually asserted that real prayer “is an intense, intelligent, persistent council with the Lord, in which we *wait on Him*, and reason and argue and plead our cause, and listen for His reply, and will not let Him go till He blesses us. But how few pray in this way! Let us covet earnestly and cultivate diligently the spirit of prayer ” [italics mine].³⁴ For Brengle, “real prayer” is an ongoing dynamic spiritual movement based on our vital and persistent encounter of the living God in faith. As we see in Brengle’s description of “real prayer” above, Brengle emphasized the necessity of waiting on God as a fundamental element of experiencing real prayer in our spiritual journey. The heart of this kind of prayerful life must be grounded on the faithful practice of waiting on God in our daily Christian walk.

In addition, Brengle carefully advised that waiting on God is the ongoing and necessary spiritual requirement not only for the prevention of “spiritual bankruptcy” but also to be equipped for the God-appointed ministry.³⁵ He asserted that:

There is a spiritual bankruptcy... I may be so eager to help souls that I give away all my spiritual capital. I talk and talk without waiting on God to fill me. This is folly. We should wait to be clothed with power from on high. We should take time to hear what the Lord will say; then speak so much as He gives us to speak and no more. Then again seek His face and be quiet and attentive before Him till He refills us. If we do not do this, we become weak inwardly; we draw on our reserve power, and become exhausted both spiritually and mentally. We may be so eager to give that we become impatient of waiting upon God to receive, forgetting that Jesus said: "Without Me ye can do nothing." Those who have blessed men the most, and blessed the most men, have taken time to listen to God's voice and to be taught of Him.³⁶

Rightmire rightly points out that "for Brengle, waiting on God was more than a means of appropriating and maintaining holiness; it was an essential resource for serving others."³⁷ Let's pay attention to Brengle's own words. He wrote: "Take time to wait on God, and when God has come and blessed you, then, go to the miserable ones about you and pour upon them the wealth of joy, the love and peace God has given you. But do not go until you know you are going in His power."³⁸ Truly, the essential intention of waiting on God in prayer must be embodied in the pure desire of renewing our souls in God's love, which is the foundation of the life of holiness. Ultimately, waiting on God (a form of works of piety) must be immersed in commitment to others in love, so that God's grace may be transferred into their lives by the guidance of the Holy Spirit (the goal of works of mercy).

As for the theological issue on the concept of waiting on God, it is crucial to recognize that Brengle's idea of waiting on God is distinguished from the errors of antinomian attitude toward the means of grace which is condemned as heretical belief in the history of the church. Against extreme antinomian attitude of denying the value and necessity of the means of grace in the ongoing Christian walk, Brengle's position of waiting for God does not mean that we are giving up all human activity and remaining in passivity, including the withdrawal of the means of grace in our daily Christian walk.

On the contrary, Brengle affirmed that waiting on God is an ongoing persistent spiritual movement and activity based on the co-operant relation between God and human beings. This is known as Wesleyan synergism.³⁹ Regarding the notion of the divine/human synergism of waiting on God in various dimensions of the spiritual journey (including “shouting” as we will discuss next), Brengle pointed out that “we are workers together with God, and if we will praise Him, He will see to it that we have something for which to praise Him.”⁴⁰ Considering the synergistic nature of waiting on God, Brengle also asserted that “we must stir up the gift of prayer that is within us, we must exercise ourselves in prayer until our souls sweat, and then we shall realize the mighty energy of the Holy Ghost interceding within us.”⁴¹

Despite the synergistic notion of waiting on God, however, Brengle also elucidated the fact that the essential condition of waiting on God is His sufficiency only, and we must be waited upon.⁴² He made this point clear as follows: “We must not forget that ‘our sufficiency is of God’—that God is interested in this work and waits to be our Helper. We must not forget that with all our study and experience and knowledge and effort we shall fail, unless patiently, daily, hourly, we wait upon God in prayer and watchful faith for the help and inspiration of the Holy Spirit.”⁴³

Brengle’s Teaching on “Shouting”

“Shouting” as a Distinct Manifestation of Extraordinary Prayer

In *Helps to Holiness*, as a separate chapter,⁴⁴ we find Brengle’s important teaching on shouting. In it, Brengle passionately urges us to know the importance and necessity of shouting. Shouting can be understood as a distinctive manifestation of extraordinary prayer, allowing us to lead into “a secret spring of power and victory.”⁴⁵ The genuine experiential nature of shouting in the Christian practice can be identified as an example of a fervent, persistent and earnest way of crying out to God. In the various steps of spiritual progress to conversion and sanctification, shouting can also be observed as a dynamic prayer experience of completely liberating oneself in total surrender to God.

For Brengle, shouting signifies a vital spiritual sign not only for anyone who is honestly seeking God’s blessing, but also particularly for the “Spirit-baptized”

believer.⁴⁶ For Brengle, shouting is not an option for the believers' spiritual lives. It is God's expectation for every "honest, seeking" soul to take into their ongoing spiritual battlefields. The importance of shouting as a confrontation with ongoing spiritual warfare is stressed when Brengle says "nothing can stand before a man with a genuine shout in his soul. Earth and Hell flee before him, and all Heaven throngs about him to help him fight his battles"⁴⁷; "When there is victory, there is shouting, and where there is no shouting, faith and patience are either in retreat, or are engaged in conflict, the issue of which for the time being seems uncertain."⁴⁸

Certainly, Brengle emphasized that shouting urgently needs to be demonstrated even in our ordinary worship setting as an outward expression of inward conviction of faith. He pointed out that "many a prayer meeting has failed at the shouting point. Songs were sung, testimonies had been given, the Bible had been read and explained, sinners had been warned and entreated, prayers had been poured forth to God, but no one wrestled through to the point where he could and would intelligently praise God for victory, and, so far as could be seen, the battle was lost for want of a shout."⁴⁹

Shouting and Waiting on God

In relation to the previous discussion on Brengle's teaching of waiting on God, I want to point out that Brengle's key concept of shouting is also closely connected with his emphasis of the importance of waiting on God. For Brengle, shouting symbolizes a dynamic outward spiritual manifestation of the believer's inner desire for and assurance of being blessed by God's grace, even as they wait on God. Brengle illustrated the relation between shouting and waiting on God as follows:

The shouting of some people is as terrible as the noise of an empty wagon rolling over cobble stones; it is like the firing of blank cartridges. It is all noise. Their religion consists in making a racket. But there are others who *wait on God* in secret places, who seek His face with their whole hearts, who groan in prayer with unutterable longing to know God in all His fullness and to see His kingdom come with power; who

plead the promises, who search the word of God and meditate on it day and night, until they are full of the great though [*sic*] and truths of God, and faith is made perfect. Then the Holy Ghost comes pressing down on them with an eternal weight of glory that compels praise, and when they *shout* it takes effect. Every cartridge is loaded, and at times their *shouting* will be like the boom of a big gun, and will have the speed and power of a cannon-ball [*italics mine*].⁵⁰

Theological Interpretation of Shouting

Brengle's theological interpretation of shouting is worth examining in the larger spectrum of the Wesleyan way of salvation (*via salutis*),⁵¹ focusing on the ways of appropriating God's grace in the foundation of divine/human synergism. Brengle pointed out that:

Shouting and praising God is to *salvation what flame is to fire*. You may have a very hot and useful fire without a blaze, but not till it bursts forth into flame does it become irresistible and sweep everything before it. So people may be very good and have a measure of salvation, but it is not until they become so full of the Holy Ghost that they are likely to burst forth in praises to their glorious God at any hour of the day or night, both in private and public, that their salvation becomes *irresistibly catching* [*italics mine*].⁵²

In this statement, Brengle indicates that the various aspects of the manifestation of shouting (along with "praising God") will show how God's salvific intervention can be appropriated into people's hearts. Interestingly enough, Brengle asserts that there is a certain stage of shouting that leads us in our salvation to "what flame is to fire." Brengle indicates that in this particular stage, which is manifested in a unique prayer form of shouting, our "salvation becomes irresistibly catching." The crucial point is this: for Brengle, the genuine internal nature of shouting implies the salvific connection to how

God's grace works through various human stages in the process of salvation and sanctification.

Considering Brengle's emphasis on the soteriological aspect of shouting, I propose that his phrase "their salvation becomes irresistibly catching" dynamically illustrates an outward evidence of inner conviction. It expresses being ignited and blazed by God's grace for salvation in the larger Wesleyan understanding of God's prevenient grace (from the Latin *pre* meaning "before" and *venient* meaning "coming to").

To get to the base of his soteriological foundation, Wesley underscored that prevenient grace, in relation to fallen humanity, is God's initial restoring grace that comes before conversion. Wesley saw that prevenient grace brings on the first stage of reawakening a spiritual sense towards God, and it opens up the possibility of having a genuine knowledge of God in "some degree of salvation."⁵³ Wesley also stressed the universality of prevenient grace by referring to the "conscience" found in all human beings as a special endowment by God.⁵⁴ Arguably, Wesley viewed that God's gift of prevenient grace is *irresistibly* bestowed upon every human being as the Spirit's initial restoration of the depraved human nature.⁵⁵ It is crucial to acknowledge that the description of an irresistible quality of prevenient grace should not be confused with the Calvinistic soteriological notion of monergism which indicates that God is "the sole determining agency in salvation"⁵⁶ without any synergistic effects from human participation in the process of salvation.

I am fully aware that the traditional Wesleyan view of prevenient grace is understood as "resistible grace," just as justifying and sanctifying grace are also understood as resistible grace in the Wesleyan order of salvation. However, in line with Kenneth J. Collins's theological argument,⁵⁷ I perceive prevenient grace as "irresistible grace" in regards to it as a follow-up of Wesley's emphasis on original sin and human depravity. It is understood that because of the total corruption of human nature after the fall, God's initial redeeming grace should be bestowed by God alone.

Thus, irresistible grace has to operate at least at some point in the Wesleyan order of salvation.⁵⁸ At this point, prevenient grace (as irresistible grace) suggests that a fallen humanity could not reject God's initial restoration of faculties. In regards to this theological perspective, although the setting is different, I suggest that there is an interconnected theological implication between Brengle's description of the salvific notion of shouting and the context of how God's

prevenient grace irresistibly operates in the process of God's initial restoration of the human faculties.

Certainly, Brengle continually stressed that shouting as a distinctive and vital spiritual activity must be applied and experienced throughout the whole process of the Christian journey, from the stage of "babies in Christ" (justification) toward the stage of "adult Christians" (entire sanctification) and until death (glorification).⁵⁹ Particularly, Brengle emphasized that:

Shouting is the *final and highest expression of faith made perfect* in its various stages. When a sinner comes to God in hearty repentance and surrender, and, throwing himself fully on the mercy of God, looks to Jesus only for salvation, and by faith fully and fearlessly grasps the blessing of justification, the first expression of that faith will be one of confidence and praise. No doubt, there are many who claim justification who never praise God; but either they are deceived, or their faith is weak and mixed with doubt and fear. When it is perfect, praise will be spontaneous [*italics mine*].⁶⁰

Here, Brengle stresses that every one of God's people must pursue the final stage of the spiritual manifestation of shouting, symbolized as "the final and highest expression of faith made perfect." In light of the Wesleyan way of salvation, it is important to recognize that this stage signifies the appropriation of God's blessing, which is entire sanctification that subsequently follows justification. Brengle affirmed that this ultimate stage of shouting is bestowed by God who made us holy "through the precious Blood and the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire."⁶¹

Continually, Brengle underscored that the definite way of assuring this blessing of "the final and highest expression of faith" cannot be demonstrated through an ordinary form of prayer, but rather with "praise and hallelujahs"⁶² through a genuine exclamation mark of shouting. As Wesley affirmed, however, it is crucial to acknowledge that even in this stage of "the final and highest expression of faith," the sanctified are required to continually grow in grace with a willful obedient faith that is based on Christ's atoning sacrifice through the power of the Holy Spirit. In this way, then, our ongoing manifestation

of shouting in faith will persistently fan the flame throughout our journey to holiness of sanctifying grace.

Conclusion

Based on his Wesleyan theological framework, we learned that Brengle affirms prayer as an undeniable “sweet privilege” for believers as they draw near to God in various facets of their spiritual journey. Particularly, Brengle depicts this spiritual privilege with various expressions such as “the breath of the soul,” “divine channel of God’s grace,” “kneeling at the mercy seat” and “shouting.” At the same time, Brengle consistently emphasizes that the idea of “waiting on God” should be recognized as a principal spiritual discipline for the believer’s prayer life and in every aspect of the Christian journey. Our task is to now persistently taste this God-given “sweet privilege” for believers and to live with it until we reach “the final and highest expression of faith” in Christ who is the reason for us to shout!

Endnotes

- ¹ Samuel Logan Brengle, the first American-born Commissioner, wrote nine books on holiness in his lifetime as gifts for the people's spiritual life. Reading Brengle's books is meant to be a blessed experience in order to nurture one's soul for holy living and to understand Brengle's distinctive Wesleyan doctrinal teaching of holiness, especially in the context of the 19th century holiness movement. The list of Brengle's primary writings is as follows: *Helps to Holiness* (originally published in 1896. London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, LTD., 1955), *Heart-Talks on Holiness* (originally published in 1897. Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1949), *The Way of Holiness* (originally published in 1902. Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1949), *When the Holy Ghost is Come* (originally published in 1909. London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, LTD., 1954), *The Soul-Winner's Secret* (originally published in 1903. London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, LTD., 1950), *Love-Slaves* (originally published in 1923. Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1960), *Resurrection Life and Power* (originally published in 1925. London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, LTD., 1953), *Ancient Prophets: With a Series of Occasional Papers on Modern Problems* (originally published in 1929. Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1978), *The Guest of the Soul* (originally published in 1934. Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1980).
- ² E.g., Clarence W. Hall, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Portrait of a Prophet* (New York: The Salvation Army, 1933); Alice R. Stiles, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Teacher of Holiness* (London: The Salvation Army, 1974); William Clark, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Teacher of Holiness* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1980); and Sallie Chesham, *Peace Like a River* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1981).
- ³ For example, see R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle* (Alexandria, Virginia: The Salvation Army National Publications, 2003).
- ⁴ *The Way of Holiness*, p. 84.
- ⁵ *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, 91
- ⁶ *When the Holy Ghost Is Come*, 91
- ⁷ *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, 11.
- ⁸ John Wesley, Sermon "The New Birth" in Albert Outler (ed), *The Works of John Wesley*, Bicentennial Edition, 26 vols. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1984-87 ff. Hereafter cited as *Sermons*), 2:193.
- ⁹ John Wesley, *The Letters of the Rev. John Wesley, A.M.* ed. 8 vols. John Telford, ed. (London: The Epworth Press, 1931. Hereafter cited as *Letters*), 5:283.

- ¹⁰ *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, 11.
- ¹¹ *Helps to Holiness*, 80.
- ¹² *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, 11.
- ¹³ Wesley, "The Means of Grace," *Sermons*, 1:391.
- ¹⁴ Wesley, *Letters*, 4:90.
- ¹⁵ Wesley, "The Means of Grace," *Sermons*, 1:381.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*,
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 396-397.
- ¹⁸ Cf. Dean Smith, "The Sacramental Life: Towards an Integrated Salvationist Vision," *Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 14, No. 1 (November 2011), 37-50.
- ¹⁹ Nigel Bovey, *The Mercy Seat Revisited* (London: United Kingdom Territory, 2010), 59.
- ²⁰ The origin of the modern mercy seat, formerly called the "mourner's bench" or "anxious seat" (Charles Finney) is rooted in the context of the 19th century revival movement, which mainly influenced the religious soil of North America and England. Since The Salvation Army's earliest days, the terms "mercy seat" and "penitent form" were used interchangeably in various worship settings.
- ²¹ *Love-Slaves*, 68.
- ²² Clarence W. Hall, *Samuel Logan Brengle: Portrait of a Prophet*, 172.
- ²³ Major John G. Merritt (ed), *The A to Z of The Salvation Army* (Plymouth, UK: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 2009), 368.
- ²⁴ Cf. "Call to the Mercy Seat" in Robert Street, *Called to be God's People: The International Spiritual Life Commission: Its report, implications and challenges* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1999, reprinted in 2008), 19-24. The third call of the International Spiritual Life Commission's 12 Calls for Salvationists is "the call to the mercy seat," which declares that "we call Salvationists worldwide to recognise the wide understanding of the mercy seat that God has given to the Army; to rejoice that Christ uses this means of grace to confirm his presence; and to ensure that its spiritual benefits are fully explored in every corps and Army centre" (*Called to be God's People* [1999], 19).
- ²⁵ Nigel Bovey, *The Mercy Seat Revisited*, 61. See also, Ch. 3 "The Sacraments of the Churches" in Frederick Coutts, *The Salvation Army in Relation to the Church*, (International Headquarters, London, 1978), 18.
- ²⁶ *The Soul-Winner's Secret*, 13
- ²⁷ R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 126-127.
- ²⁸ Wesley, "The Means of Grace," *Sermons*, 1:384.

- ²⁹ *Helps to Holiness*, 38. See also, *At the Center of the Circle: Selections from Published and Unpublished Writings of Samuel Logan Brengle* (John D. Waldron, ed., [Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1976], pp. 13-14).
- ³⁰ *Helps to Holiness*, 38-39.
- ³¹ R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 127.
- ³² *Helps to Holiness*, 125. See, R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 127.
- ³³ *Love-Slaves*, 88.
- ³⁴ *Ibid.*, 88.
- ³⁵ R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 127.
- ³⁶ Brengle, *At the Center of the Circle*: Selection from Published and Unpublished Writings of Samuel Logan Brengle (1976), 74-74. Cited from R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 127.
- ³⁷ R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, p. 127.
- ³⁸ *Helps to Holiness*, 49
- ³⁹ For a basic understanding of Brengle's doctrinal concept of Wesleyan synergism, see his book *The Way of Holiness* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Dept., 1949), 15-16. It is crucial to understand that Brengle's theological position on this subject should not be confused with the heretic beliefs of Pelagianism or semi-Pelagianism. Unfortunately, in my opinion, Glen O'Brien impatiently misrepresents Brengle's soteriological writings on Wesleyan synergism by introducing Pelagian or semi-Pelagian thought in his article "Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?" (*Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry*, Vol. 13, No. 1. [November 2010], 9).
- ⁴⁰ *Helps to Holiness*, p. 134.
- ⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 134.
- ⁴² R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity*, 126.
- ⁴³ *Love-Slaves*, 78.
- ⁴⁴ *Helps to Holiness*, 130-135.
- ⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 130.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 130.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 131.
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 133.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 135.
- ⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 130-131.
- ⁵¹ The new *Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* briefly describes the rubric of the Wesleyan way of salvation as follows: "Wesley saw holiness as being a part of the complete way of salvation, the *via salutis* which begins with regeneration,

the new birth which accompanies justification. From that instantaneous work it increases gradually until there is another work in which cleansing from sin results in a heart of ‘perfect love,’ by which Wesley meant purity of motivation or intent, a sincerity of love. The sanctifying process then continues until its completion at the believer’s death or glorification.” (*The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine*, [London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010], 213).

⁵² *Helps to Holiness*, 130.

⁵³ John Wesley, Sermon “Working out our own salvation” in Thomas Jackson (ed.), *Works of John Wesley 14 vols. 1872 Edition* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1872. 2002. Reprinted. Hereafter cited as *Works*), Vol. VI., 509.

⁵⁴ John Wesley, Sermon “Working out our own salvation,” *Works* VI, 512. To understanding the Wesleyan view of the doctrine of prevenient grace in relation to the doctrine of revelation, see Chapter 5 “Revelation: A Wesleyan Approach” in H. Ray Dunning, *Grace, Faith, and Holiness* (Kansas City, Missouri: Beacon Hill Press, 1988), 140-180.

⁵⁵ See these select references of Wesleyan scholars to further understand God’s prevenient grace as “irresistible grace,” William R. Cannon, *The Theology of John Wesley: With Special Reference to the Doctrine of Justification* (Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946), 107-108. Robert E. Chiles, *Theological Transition in American Methodism: 1790-1935* (New York: University Press of America, 1965. Reprinted 1983), 149. Jason E. Vickers, “Wesley’s theological emphases” in Randy L. Maddox and Jason E. Vickers eds. *The Cambridge Companion to John Wesley* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010), 200-201. W. Brian Shelton, *Prevenient Grace: God’s Provision for Fallen Humanity* (Anderson, Indiana: Francis Asbury Press), 152-153. In his book *Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities*, a well-known Arminian scholar Roger E. Olson points out that “Wesley and some other Arminians have even affirmed a sense in which grace [prevenient grace] is irresistible!” (Roger E. Olson, *Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities* [Downers Grove, Illinois: IVP Academic, 2006], 59).

⁵⁶ Roger E. Olson, *Arminian Theology: Myths and Realities*, 19.

⁵⁷ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 80-82. Same author, *The Scripture Way of Salvation: The Heart of John Wesley’s Theology* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 43-44.

⁵⁸ Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley*, 80.

⁵⁹ In Estrelida Alexander’s theological analysis of the biographical accounts on Jarena Lee, Julia Fouts, Zilpha Elaw and Amanda Berry Smith, “four extraordinary nineteenth-century black women in the Wesleyan and Holiness traditions,” we see how the dramatic experimental expression of “shouting” spontaneously manifested in the various stages of

Amanda Berry Smith's spiritual progress - evidence of her conversion and sanctification experiences. Estrela Alexander, Chapter 5 "Conversion and Sanctification in Nineteenth-century African American Wesleyan Women" in Kenneth J. Collins and John H. Tyson, *Conversion in the Wesleyan Tradition* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2001), 94-97.

⁶⁰ *Helps to Holiness*, 132.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 132.

⁶² *Ibid.*, 132.

Separate but Non-Sectarian: The Salvation Army's Place in the History of Wesleyan Ecclesial Division

James E. Pedlar

The first half of the nineteenth century was a tumultuous time for British Wesleyans. Wesleyan Methodism began to splinter very soon after Wesley's death, beginning with the Methodist New Connexion in 1797, and small secessions such as the so-called "Kirkgate Screamers" in Leeds, 1805 and the Band-Room Methodists in Manchester, 1806. These splits were followed by the emergence of the Primitive Methodists in 1811 and the Bible Christians in 1815. The short-lived Tent Methodists formed in 1822, and the carnage continued with the infamous "Leeds organ case," which led to the establishment of the Protestant Methodist Connexion in 1828. In 1835 that body joined with the newly-formed Wesleyan Association, which had emerged in opposition to the Wesleyan Methodist Conference's plan to establish a theological institution with Jabez Bunting as President. The heterodox Arminian Methodist Connexion emerged in Derbyshire in the early 1830s, only to have most of its membership join the Wesleyan Methodist Association in 1837. These secessions were dwarfed numerically by the exodus from the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion in the 1850s after the infamous Fly Sheets controversy. Some of these discontented Methodists eventually found their way into the Wesleyan Reform

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Union and others joined with the Wesleyan Methodist Association to form the United Methodist Free Churches in 1857. William and Catherine Booth were caught up in some of these controversies, throwing their lot in with the Wesleyan Reformers during the 1850s for a brief time, before moving on to Congregationalism and eventually settling in the New Connexion. All of these schisms, of course, are limited to the Wesleyan family of churches in Britain. We could go on to survey the many divisions of Methodism in North America over issues of polity, slavery, and, holiness revivalism.¹

The splintering of nineteenth century Wesleyanism was so pervasive that it is rather difficult to sort out the various bodies. The fact that many of these groups later merged back into united Methodist denominations further muddies the waters. In his 1968 book, *Methodism Divided: A Study in the Sociology of Ecumenicalism*, Robert Currie attempted to clarify the developments by providing a two-fold typology of British Wesleyan division, categorizing denominations as either constitutionalist “secessions” or revivalist “offshoots.” So, he described the New Connexion, Protestant Methodists, Wesleyan Methodist Association, and Methodist Reformers as “secessions,” and the Band Room Methodists, the Primitive Methodists, the Bible Christians, Tent Methodists and Arminian Methodists as “offshoots.” The secessions developed over a longer period of time through a period of extended controversy, were usually led by Ministers, and were composed mainly of Wesleyan membership, whereas the offshoots developed more quickly, were normally led by Wesleyan laypersons or lay-ministers, and attracted more non-Wesleyan membership.²

While Currie’s analysis is sociological, it also reflects the way those in the “offshoot” camp drew on some of these distinctions in defending themselves theologically against the charge of schism. For example, when Hugh Bourne, co-founder of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, wrote the first history of that denomination in 1823, one of his chief objectives was to defend the new body against the charge of schism. His main tactic was to stress that he had never intended to separate, nor to take members away from the Wesleyans, but rather to establish “a new thing” in areas where Wesleyans had not been at work.³ Likewise, William O’Bryan, founder of the Bible Christians, stressed that before his expulsion he had “established preaching in eight different parishes on the north coast of Cornwall, in most of which promising Societies were formed.”⁴

In many ways The Salvation Army fits Currie's pattern of an "offshoot" and shares many traits with these revivalist bodies. It was not formed out of an immediate secession from another Christian body. In fact, because William and Catherine Booth had been operating as independent evangelists since 1861, the relationships between the early Christian Mission and other religious bodies were even more tangential than they were in most other Wesleyan offshoots. Another similarity is that Booth, O'Bryan, and Bourne all broke ties with established Wesleyan bodies because they were operating as freelance evangelists, or wanting to operate as such. In all three cases a loosely organized revival operating alongside the established denominations provided the network and organization that would develop into a denomination. We see this pattern repeated also in later holiness denominations, many of which emerged out of holiness and camp meeting associations.⁵ Salvationists defended their new movement using many of the same arguments that were used by other revivalists, arguing that the founders never intended to start a new denomination and they gained most of their members through new evangelistic work rather than "sheep-stealing."

What makes The Salvation Army unique is that Salvationists continued to maintain that they were *not* another denomination, even after they had clearly established themselves as an autonomous body and even when it was clear that their members had no church home outside of The Salvation Army. The unique self-understanding of the movement is indicative of the profound ambiguity in early Salvationist ecclesiology. William Booth claimed his Army was a missionary agency, not a Christian denomination. However, the Army's autonomy meant that it took on the functions of a "church" from an early point in its history. Booth added to the ambiguity by sometimes claiming that his movement and its offices were in no way inferior to any other church or body of clergy. In what follows I will sketch out some of the main features of William Booth's ecclesiology, beginning with more general convictions and concluding with the question of the Army's own ecclesial status. Although the early Salvation Army's ecclesial status was unique and idiosyncratic, it was built upon common assumptions shared by other Wesleyan revivalists in the nineteenth century. Thus, it throws into sharp relief many of the challenges facing nineteenth century Wesleyan ecclesiology.

An “Unsectarian” Ideal

Early Salvationists combined high expectations for “genuine” Christianity with open-heartedness toward true Christians across the denominational spectrum. According to Roger Green, Booth believed the universal Church was composed of all believers who had experienced justification by faith and who witnessed to Christ in word and deed.⁶ Salvationists saw themselves as part of the Church, and never claimed that they alone *were* the true Church. They aimed to avoid controversy with other denominations in matters of Christian faith and practice, and saw the salvation experience as something which transcended theological differences. So Catherine Booth wrote in 1883: “We believe God cares very little about our sectarian differences and divisions. The great main thing is the love of God and the service of humanity; and when we find people actuated by this motive, we love them by whatever name they are called.”⁷ William Booth claimed that by not holding membership in any church, Salvationists were “non-sectarian” and could “promote general godliness and harmony” and “avoid as the very poison of hell all controverted questions.”⁸

To a certain extent, the Booths could claim to be following the example of John Wesley, who admired genuine Christians from across the denominational spectrum, including those who he believed to be in serious doctrinal error.⁹ However, it would be wrong to suggest that Wesley or the Booths were completely indifferent about theology. William Booth tenaciously upheld fundamental evangelical doctrines, and would follow Wesley in affirming that theological diversity was inevitable and acceptable, provided these diverse views did not undercut the soteriological core of the Christian faith. Similarly, both Wesley and Booth would prioritize the transformative experience of faith in Christ over orthodoxy for its own sake. William Booth explicitly claimed that his non-sectarian vision for the Army was rooted in his Wesleyanism, and even suggested that Salvationists could succeed where Wesley had failed in this regard.¹⁰ His ambition was that the Army would “spread far and wide a spirit of love and hearty co-operation” and “lessen the dividing walls of sectarianism.”¹¹

These anti-sectarian convictions also enabled early Salvationists to support common missionary efforts among those who shared a vibrant evangelical faith. They were true to the spirit of nineteenth century revivalism, which presupposed that evangelical Protestants shared enough ground to work together on revival

campaigns and “home missions.” Extra-denominational mission agencies were common, and revivalists saw such bodies not as “churches” but as missionary organizations that advanced the kingdom alongside local churches.¹² When William Booth addressed the Wesleyan Methodist Conference in 1880, he would explicitly identify the Army as one of these extra-denominational mission agencies. They were not interested in setting up a church, but establishing a mission to the unchurched. “We do not fish in other people’s waters. We are not chargeable with that...No, we get our converts out of the gutters, we fish them out of the slush and slime.”¹³

Victorian evangelicals cooperated in missionary activity because they viewed Christian unity as a “spiritual” or “invisible” reality. This understanding of unity is evident in the founding of such bodies as the Evangelical Alliance (1847).¹⁴ As John Read notes, similar convictions were held by such leaders as Congregationalist David Thomas, who had an important impact on the Booths.¹⁵ But such comfort with denominational separation could lead to a seeming lack of concern for ecclesiological questions in general. A telling example is seen in New Connexion theologian William Cooke’s *Christian Theology, Explained and Defended* (1848), a standard theology text in that denomination. Cooke was William Booth’s teacher as Booth studied for ministry in the New Connexion. This text works its way systematically through Christian doctrine, with nine of eighteen chapters focused on soteriology, and one on Christian ministry, but it has no chapter on the church.¹⁶ Likewise, Cooke’s *Catechism* contains only a one-sentence definition of the church and a one-sentence answer to the question, “Who is the head of the church?,” both of which are dealt with at the very end of a chapter on the means of grace which focuses most of its attention on sacramental questions.¹⁷

Cooke’s theology text is an extreme illustration of Friedrich Schleiermacher’s famous comparison between Protestant and Catholic ecclesiology: “Protestantism makes the individual’s relation to the Church dependent upon his relation to Christ, while Catholicism, contrariwise, makes the individual’s relation to Christ dependent on his relation to the Church.”¹⁸ The institutional life of the Church was relativized and downgraded in significance in relation to its true “spiritual” or invisible nature. The Salvation Army began in this context with a plan to act as a non-sectarian and revivalistic home mission

movement, and the early Salvationists' lack of concern regarding their ecclesial status should be seen against this background.

Participatory Postmillennial Pragmatism

William Booth's understanding of the church was also built upon his high view of human participation in God's work of redemption. He believed Christians were truly divine agents, playing an essential role in God's plan to establish his kingdom on earth. According to Roger Green, "the one true sign of the Church" for Booth was "participation in the work of redemption, both personal redemption and, after 1889, social redemption, leading ultimately to the establishment of the kingdom of God."¹⁹ Booth's postmillennial eschatology fueled his robust understanding of human agency. As ardent postmillennialists, the Booths believed that the Church had the means to usher in the worldwide triumph of the gospel prior to the cataclysmic intervention of the second coming.²⁰ Like many nineteenth century evangelicals, they lived expectantly, believing that the dawn of the millennium was almost upon them and that it was time for the Church to mobilize for the final advance of the gospel. Since the millennium loomed on the horizon, the institutional forms of the Church were relativized and given a subordinate position in relation to the function they might serve in this grand mission.

The Booths were also strong supporters of the "new measures" revivalism associated with the ministries of Charles Finney and James Caughey.²¹ The Army creatively developed a wide variety of novel means to bring sinners to a saving knowledge of Christ. William Booth had a Biblicist view of Christian practice and little sense of being bound by Christian tradition. This meant that the development of new methods was "very desirable... supposing that such are *in accordance with the great doctrines and principles taught in the Bible.*"²² Booth even admitted that he believed the church was in competition with secular forms of entertainment, and needed to offer something exciting and different to the masses.²³ The unique and novel institutional forms and evangelistic methods of The Salvation Army emerged out of this set of views and assumptions about church and mission.

William Booth believed the Holy Spirit had a key role in leading God's people to develop unusual and novel means of spreading the gospel. He emphasized the

Spirit's empowering work, as did with his Wesleyan-Holiness contemporaries. He also saw the outpouring of the Spirit as an eschatological sign, a conviction which would become a hallmark of Pentecostalism in the following generation (albeit modulated into a premillennial key).²⁴ The millennial reign of Christ, according to Booth, would be "preceded by further and mightier outpourings of the Holy Ghost than yet known," and thus global evangelization would "be carried on with greater vigor, although, in substance, on the same lines as those on which the apostles fought and died."²⁵ A golden age of gospel influence over the whole world was possible *now* if the Church would rise up and fulfill its mandate in the power of the Spirit.

The Church *per se*, however, did not feature prominently in Booth's expectant vision. The millennial kingdom would arrive as the "throne of righteousness" was "set up in the hearts of men" who were wholly sanctified by "the power and operation of the Holy Spirit."²⁶ The progression of the work of redemption began with the Spirit's work in individuals and moved to the advent of the millennium as believers lived holy lives and reversed the curse of sin in the world through their influence.²⁷ "Just in proportion as these principles triumph in the hearts and consciences of men will millennial blessedness prevail."²⁸ Even more explicitly, Booth could speak of how Salvationists hasten the coming millennium by spreading the principles of "that millennial kingdom which God has already established in his own heart."²⁹

In summary, early Salvation Army ecclesiology was shaped by revivalistic pragmatism, expectant Spirit-centred postmillennial missionary urgency, and an "unsectarian" vision for the Church. All of this was undergirded by common Protestant evangelical presuppositions about the priority of spiritual unity over institutional unity and continuity. The practices and institutions that gave shape to church life were seen as merely functional in relation to mission of evangelism, and the existence of separated denominations was not seen as a hindrance to the mission, except insofar as "sectarian" attachment to one's own traditions might become a barrier to innovation in mission.³⁰

“...separate from, going before, coming after, and all round about...”

With this set of ecclesiological assumptions in place we can discuss the matter of the Army’s ambiguous ecclesial status. William Booth did not want his organization to become entangled in churchly trappings, and insisted that the Army was a missionary agency. In many ways, he could claim that there were precedents in the various voluntary societies that had existed alongside the churches in England since the late seventeenth century. The notable difference was that members of those societies were also members of some regular church body; otherwise the lines between specialized voluntary society and denomination would be blurred. Booth wanted to carve out a unique space for the Army on the ecclesiological map. It was to be an autonomous mission, independent of all the churches, both as an institution and in terms of the church membership of its soldiery.³¹ As noted above, like the leaders of other “offshoots,” Booth claimed that the Army was not competing with denominations or engaging in “sheep stealing.” Their original goal was to convert people and send them to the churches, but their converts were not comfortable in the churches, nor were they well received.³² The story of rejected converts comes from the early history of the Christian Mission, meaning that, from an early date, the Mission’s converts made their spiritual home in the Mission and not in the churches. Thus, Harold Hill argues that “the point at which the Mission became the de facto community of faith for its adherents probably came earlier rather than later, probably 1867,” and that by 1878 it was functioning as a denomination, although Salvationists continued to deny such a characterization.³³

The Salvation Army may have been functioning like a denomination in 1878, but its status would seem to have been far from settled in the mind of William Booth, given the negotiations that he undertook with the Church of England in 1882. The fact that these discussions even took place (and had been preceded by discussions with other bodies)³⁴ is evidence of the lingering questions about the Army’s ecclesial status, both inside and outside the movement. On the Army side, the question of permanent autonomy from other churches was still undecided. The talks did not progress very far, bumping up against several issues, the first of which was Booth’s autocracy, followed by questions concerning

doctrine, sacramental ambiguities, women in leadership, emotionalism, and irreverence in worship.³⁵

Throughout the negotiations, Booth had continued to maintain that he was not founding another church, but an Army. By the time the talks fell apart Booth had become even more confident that he must protect the Army's autonomy and independence in order to ensure its future effectiveness. His own autocratic authority was non-negotiable, since it was "necessary for the effectiveness of our War."³⁶ Of course, a redoubled emphasis on his movement's identity as "an Army" did not resolve the movement's ambiguous ecclesial status. The negotiations were an opportunity for Booth to bring theological clarity to his understanding of the Army, but as Roger Green has noted, his "lack of an ecclesiology" hindered him as he faced this important juncture.³⁷

William Booth wrote his 1883 "New Years Address to Officers" announcing the discontinuation of sacramental observance while the talks with the Church of England were unraveling.³⁸ In his oft-quoted and somewhat tentative statement about sacraments, one of the reasons he proposed for ceasing observance was that "we are not professing to be a church, nor aiming at being one, but simply a force for aggressive salvation purposes."³⁹ However, the fact that Booth also recognized that the Army was functioning as a church home is evident in the fact that he simultaneously announced that he was planning to introduce a "formal service for the dedication of children," to enable parents to "introduce their children to The Army."⁴⁰ As Norman Murdoch notes, "While rejecting the church's sacraments, the army [sic] was producing its own."⁴¹

It is no coincidence that in the same "New Year's Address" Booth dealt directly with the question of the Army's ecclesial status. Although he admitted that some people were "very much perplexed" and "quite anxious and agitated" about the Army's relationship to the churches, Booth claimed he felt no anxiety about the matter.⁴² He told the story of being at a meeting of church leaders when he was struck by an epiphany, "as if a voice from heaven had said and is still saying, that we are to be an Army, *separate from, going before, coming after, and all round about the various existing Churches.*"⁴³ The churches, he concluded, should relate to the Army as something akin to the Fire Brigade. "You cheer them on, encourage them, subscribe to their funds, go to their assemblages and bless them. We say, 'Do the same with us.'"⁴⁴ Booth was

setting forth a vision of the Army as missionary “first responders” who were on the front lines of relieving misery and furthering the coming of God’s kingdom.

Thus, by 1883 Booth had crystallized his vision of the Army as a body “separate from, going before, coming after, and all round about” the churches – part of the universal Church and working alongside denominational churches, but standing apart as a unique body. However, Booth wanted the Army to be seen not only as “separate,” but as “separate but equal,” and some of his statements in this regard add further ambiguity to the Army’s status. Eason and Green draw attention to Booth’s 1888 claim that the Army had “six thousand two hundred and seventeen clergymen and clergywomen.”⁴⁵ Bramwell Booth quotes his father making a statement that goes even further.

The Salvation Army is not inferior in spiritual character to any Christian organization in existence. We are in no wise dependent on the Church...We are, I consider, equal every way and everywhere to any other Christian organization on the face of the earth (i) in spiritual authority, (ii) in spiritual intelligence, (iii) in spiritual functions. We hold ‘the keys’ as truly as any Church in existence.⁴⁶

Eason and Green rightly note that this “was not the language of a mission seeking to funnel converts into the larger church.”⁴⁷

In spite of the tensions in his statements, Booth seems to have seen the Army as a peculiar and unique kind of body, perhaps something like a religious order, as Harold Hill has argued.⁴⁸ Nevertheless, it was different from a religious order in that the Army was fulfilling the functions of a church for its soldiery and understood itself to be on an equal footing to the established churches. When given a chance to resolve this tension by becoming an agency of the Church of England Booth rejected the possibility, but did not take the logical step of embracing a denominational status. The sacramental question must be understood as a reflection of this broader ecclesiological ambiguity, since he explicitly justified the non-observance of sacraments as part of an attempt to avoid the trappings of a church.⁴⁹ Even still, this autonomous mission could not avoid fulfilling the functions of a church for its members, as the introduction of funeral and dedication rites demonstrates.

So where does this idiosyncratic ecclesial body fit within the tangled mess of the nineteenth century Wesleyan family of churches? Booth claimed that his movement was “a continuation of the work of Mr. Wesley,” though he noted that they had gone on “a great deal further, on the same lines which he travelled.”⁵⁰ The Salvation Army’s ecclesial position was indeed “a great deal further” than Wesley’s, given the latter’s protracted struggle to maintain Methodism’s status as a movement within the Church of England. However, as Earl Robinson has noted, many of the Army’s ecclesiological ambiguities were inherited from Methodism’s eventual, if reluctant, separation, and the resulting lack of clarity in Methodist ecclesiology.⁵¹ Thus, similar issues can be seen in the ecclesiology of other Wesleyan bodies, particularly of the revivalist type. In William Booth’s case, a functionalized understanding of the church and its mission made the question of ecclesial identity a superfluous issue. The Army was fulfilling the mission of the Church universal, and Booth believed it was doing so more effectively than the churches. Therefore why would it not be seen as equal to the churches? And if institutional forms are wholly subordinate to missionary purposes, why would Booth’s effective organization seek integration within another ecclesial institution? This line of thinking is not a great leap from Cooke’s omission of the Church from his *Christian Theology* text. Furthermore, other offshoots are characterized by similar concern for avoiding theological controversy, building unity around the religion of the heart, following the personal leading of the Spirit, even if it meant going against ecclesial overseers, and subordinating institutional forms to the mission of reaching new converts. And while the Army’s status was more clearly extra-denominational than these other offshoots, they all began as “missions” working loosely alongside established churches, before eventually starting off on their own. Early Salvationists sought to make that arrangement permanent, preserving their status as an extra-denominational mission in perpetuity. They failed to grasp that the church is necessarily institutional, and thereby succumbed to an idiosyncratic form of institutionalization without realizing it. In the end, they did become an “offshoot” sect, as Cardinal Manning predicted in his 1882 article in *The Contemporary Review*. I will close with his word of warning.

Nevertheless, we have a conviction that the Salvation Army will either become a sect, or it will melt away. This world is not the abode of disembodied spirits...The history of

Christianity abundantly proves that neither the human intellect nor the human will can alone perpetuate any teaching without change. Nor can human authority or human obedience perpetuate itself without an organization. But what is such an organization but a sect...?⁵²

Endnotes

- ¹ Several important studies of these developments were written in the middle of the twentieth century. See John Kent, *The Age of Disunity* (London: Epworth Press, 1966); Robert Currie, *Methodism Divided: A Study in the Sociology of Ecumenicalism* (London: Faber, 1968); John C Bowmer, *Pastor and People: A Study of Church and Ministry in Wesleyan Methodism from the Death of John Wesley (1791) to the Death of Jabez Bunting (1858)* (London: Epworth Press, 1975).
- ² Currie, *Methodism Divided*, 54–55.
- ³ Hugh Bourne, *History of the Primitive Methodists Giving an Account of Their Rise and Progress up to the Year 1823* (Bemersley: Printed for the author, at the Office of the Primitive Methodist Connexion, by J. Bourne, 1823), 20–26.
- ⁴ William O’Byran, “Some Account of the Rise and Progress of the Missions Belonging to the Arminian Bible Christians,” in *A History of the Methodist Church in Great Britain*, ed. John A. Vickers et al., vol. 4 (London: Epworth, 1988), 329.
- ⁵ See Melvin Easterday Dieter, *The Holiness Revival of the Nineteenth Century* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1980).
- ⁶ Roger J. Green, *War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth* (Atlanta: Salvation Army Supplies, 1989), 31–32.
- ⁷ Catherine Mumford Booth, *The Salvation Army in Relation to the Church and State* (London: The Salvation Army, 1883), 29. For more on Catherine Booth’s ecclesiological views, see John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2012), 119–151.
- ⁸ William Booth, “What Is The Salvation Army?,” *The Contemporary Review* 42 (August 1882): 181.
- ⁹ See the discussion of this issue in Randy L. Maddox, “Opinion, Religion and ‘Catholic Spirit’: John Wesley on Theological Integrity,” *The Asbury Theological Journal* 47, no. 1 (1992): 63–87.

- ¹⁰ “Warned by the failure of John Wesley in maintaining his unsectarian position, we are striving to avoid what we think were his mistakes.” Booth, “What Is The Salvation Army?,” 181.
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, 181–82.
- ¹² Glenn K. Horridge, *The Salvation Army, Origins and Early Years: 1865-1900* (Godalming, UK: Ammonite Books, 1993), 9–11. On the rise of extra-denominational revival efforts Richard Carwardine, *Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America 1790-1865* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 189–90; and John Kent, *Holding the Fort: Studies in Victorian Revivalism* (London: Epworth Press, 1978), 100–128.
- ¹³ William Booth, “Wesleyan Methodist Conference,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 176.
- ¹⁴ See the papers collected in Philip Schaff and Samuel Ireneaus Prime, eds., *History, Essays, Orations, and Other Documents of the Sixth General Conference of the Evangelical Alliance, Held in New York, October 2-12, 1873* (New York: Harper Brothers, 1874), especially Charles Hodge, “The Unity of the Church Based on Personal Unity with Christ” (139-144), R. Payne Smith, “Christian Union Consistent with Denominational Distinctions” (145-149), and Gregory T. Bedell, “Spiritual Unity not Organic Unity” (150-153).
- ¹⁵ John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 130–31.
- ¹⁶ William Cooke, *Christian Theology, Explained and Defended*, 2nd ed. (London: Bakewell, 1848).
- ¹⁷ William Cooke, *A Catechism: Embracing the Most Important Doctrines of Christianity, Designed for the Use of Schools, Families, and Bible Classes* (London: Methodist New Connexion Book-Room, 1851), 64–72. It should be noted that major Wesleyan Methodist theologians such as Richard Watson and William Burton Pope included substantive discussions of the Church in their systematic theology texts.
- ¹⁸ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *The Christian Faith in Outline*, trans. D. M. Baillie (Edinburgh: W. F. Henderson, 1922), 10.
- ¹⁹ Green, *War on Two Fronts*, 56.
- ²⁰ See Philip W. Davisson, “Sweeping Through the Land: Postmillennialism and the Early Salvation Army,” *Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry* 5, no. 2 (May 2003): 29–50.

- ²¹ Norman Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 5–20.
- ²² William Booth, “The General’s New Year Address to Officers,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 190.
- ²³ *Ibid.*, 196.
- ²⁴ Donald W. Dayton, *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism* (Metuchen, NJ: The Scarecrow Press, 1987), 143–71.
- ²⁵ William Booth, “The Millennium; or, the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 60. This echoes Wesley’s late statements in Sermon 63, “The General Spread of the Gospel,” §16ff, in *Outler, Works*, 2:492ff.
- ²⁶ Booth, “The Millennium; or, the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles,” 61–62.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 64–66.
- ²⁸ *Ibid.*, 69.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 71.
- ³⁰ See George Scott Railton’s claim that the Army was not a “sect” because they avoided like “the plague...every denominational rut, in order to perpetually reach more and more of those who lie outside every church boundary.” George Scott Railton, *Heathen England*, 3rd ed. (London: S. W. Patridge & Co., 1879), 145.
- ³¹ It should be noted that there were exceptions to this non-membership policy in some Scandinavian and Eastern European contexts. See the discussion of the Russian and Norwegian cases in Tom Aitken, *Blood and Fire, Tsar and Commissar: The Salvation Army in Russia, 1907-1923* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2007), 188–91; and Gudrun Maria Lydholm, *Lutheran Salvationists?* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2017).
- ³² William Booth, “How We Began,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 24.
- ³³ Harold Hill, *Leadership in the Salvation Army: A Case Study in Clericalisation* (Milton Keynes, UK: Paternoster, 2006), 44–46.
- ³⁴ On discussions with both the Congregationalists and Methodists, see Norman Murdoch, “The Salvation Army and the Church of England, 1882-1883,” *Historical Magazine of the Protestant Episcopal Church* 55 (1986): 33.
- ³⁵ Randall T. Davidson, “The Methods of The Salvation Army,” *The Contemporary Review* 42 (August 1882): 192–99; Murdoch, “The Salvation Army and the Church,” 46. See

Roger Green's summary of the negotiations in Roger J. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth: Founder of the Salvation Army* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 140–45.

- ³⁶ Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), 69–70.
- ³⁷ Green, *Life and Ministry of William Booth*, 144.
- ³⁸ See Andrew Eason's summary of the move toward non-observance in "The Salvation Army and the Sacraments in Victorian Britain: Retracing the Steps to Non-Observance," *Fides et Historia* 41, no. 2 (Summer-Fall 2009): 51–71. The most extensive theological treatment of this issue is found in R. David Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of the Salvation Army: A Study of Holiness Foundations* (Alexandria, VA: Crest Books, 2016).
- ³⁹ Booth, "The General's New Year Address to Officers," 192. Catherine Booth was more ardent in her rejection of sacraments and strongly influenced William on this question. See Read, *Catherine Booth*, 178-204.
- ⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, 193.
- ⁴¹ By June of 1883, a funeral service had been introduced. Murdoch, "The Salvation Army and the Church," 44.
- ⁴² Booth, "The General's New Year Address to Officers," 190.
- ⁴³ *Ibid.*, 191. Emphasis in original.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ Cited from a May 12 1888 *War Cry* article in Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green, eds., *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 172.
- ⁴⁶ Booth, *Echoes and Memories*, 68.
- ⁴⁷ Eason and Green, *Boundless Salvation*, 172.
- ⁴⁸ Harold Hill, "Four Anchors from the Stern," *The Practical Theologian* 5, no. 1 (2007): 26–41.
- ⁴⁹ In an 1895 interview Booth stated: "We came to this position originally by determining not to be a Church. We did not wish to undertake the administration of the Sacraments, and thereby bring ourselves into collision with existing Churches." Cited in Harold Begbie, *The Life of William Booth: The Founder of the Salvation Army*. (London: Macmillan, 1920), I: 432.
- ⁵⁰ Booth, "Wesleyan Methodist Conference," 173.
- ⁵¹ See Earl Robinson, "The Salvation Army—Ecclesia?," *Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry* 2, no. 1 (November 1999): 10. See also Albert Outler's classic essay, "Do Methodists Have a Doctrine of the Church?," in *The Wesleyan*

Theological Heritage, ed. Thomas C. Oden and Leicester R. Longden (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1991), 211–26.

- ⁵² Henry Edward Manning, “The Salvation Army,” *The Contemporary Review* 42 (September 1882): 341.

Benedictus: Paul's Parting Words on Ministry

PART THREE: THE TRUST

Lyell Rader

Eight centuries before the Christian era, a priestess lit a flame, using a concave mirror, at the altar of Prometheus. A relay of runners brought the torch to Athens for the first Olympic games. Not long ago, David Beckham carried a torch from Athens to England, the first of 8,000 runners to bring the flame through the streets and lanes of England to the present Olympiad. Legend has it that today's flame is the same as burned in Athens those centuries ago. In the letter we have been studying Paul is passing a torch as well – to Timothy and to us.

As for you, always be sober, endure suffering, do the work of an evangelist, carry out your ministry fully. As for me, I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come (4:5-6).

The torch is passed by teaching.

Lyell Rader retired from Salvation Army officership as a lt. colonel and now resides in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.

Hold to the standard of sound teaching

Hold to the standard of sound teaching that you have heard from me, in the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus (1:13). Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth (2:15). All scripture is inspired by God and is useful for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, so that everyone who belongs to God may be proficient, equipped for every good work (3:16).... The word of God is not chained (2:9b).

The overriding concern in the Pastoral Epistles is in “healthy” or “sound” teaching. Timothy is to teach in a way that fosters health.

He is to keep on a straight course the message of the truth. “Every part of Scripture is God-breathed and useful one way or another – showing us truth, exposing our rebellion, correcting our mistakes, training us to live God’s way. Through the Word we are put together and shaped up for the tasks God has for us” (Message, 3:16).

How are we doing at the teaching task? Not well. Young people in particular are leaving the church in droves. It is a tide drifting away from the faith of childhood, many ending up in no faith community at all and having little prospect of returning. This trend away from organized religion dates back to the early 1990s.¹ The past decade has shown a slow, overall erosion of the strength of America’s congregations. Persons 65 or older constitute more than a third of the members in a majority of old-line Protestant congregations, and the same is true in almost a quarter of evangelical Protestant churches.²

A quarter of Americans under 30 identified as Evangelical in the middle 1980s. By 2008 that number was below 20 percent and dropping.³ Ross Douhat writes of his own Roman Catholic Church:

[The sex abuse scandals] dealt a deadly blow to the Church’s prestige in many quarters, undercut its potential witness to the questing and the unconverted, and weakened its already weakened influence over many Catholic hearts. And they ensured

that the American Church experienced the first decade of the third Christian millennium not as an Easter or a Pentecost, but as a limping agony, a long and bitter Lent.⁴

A critical element in our losses is our weakness in holding the pattern of health-giving words of the gospel. Donald Burke, president of Booth University College in Winnipeg, laments:

Although we affirm Scripture's importance, biblical literacy among Salvationists (and other Christians) is diminishing rapidly. The Bible plays a decreasing role in most sermons, partly because it is mistakenly viewed as being irrelevant to life in the 21st century. Sunday school curricula often trivialize Scripture in an attempt to be fun or trendy. Bible study groups spend less and less time studying and function more like group therapy sessions. The result is that we can no longer assume a shared knowledge of the Bible.⁵

Renewal will require our best efforts. "Be diligent," Paul says to Timothy, "exert yourself to meet the test as gold purified in the fire as one who has no reason for regret or embarrassment, keeping the message alive."

Phyllis Tickle writes in her provocative *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*:

In dealing with Americans under fifty, [both Protestant and Roman Catholic churches are] dealing in large measure with scriptural innocents whose very ignorance is pushing them in one of two directions. Either innocence of scriptural experience is propelling them to seek ever more eagerly for structured engagement with it, or else a total lack of prior exposure is propelling Scripture itself farther and farther into the attics of life where all antiques are stored for a respectful period of time before being thrown completely away.⁶

Guard the good treasure entrusted to you

Guard the good treasure entrusted to you, with the help of the Holy Spirit living in us. . . . The saying is sure: If we have died with him, we will also live with him; if we endure, we will also reign with him; if we deny him, he will also deny us; if we are faithless, he remains faithful – for he cannot deny himself. Remind them of this and warn them before God that they are to avoid wrangling over words, which does no good but only ruins those who are listening (1:13-14; 2:11-14).

The word translated “good treasure” is a deposit entrusted to someone. In ancient times, a man might deposit money or possessions at the temple (which served as a bank) or friend, to be held in trust for his children or loved ones. It is said there was no more sacred duty than to safeguard such a deposit. The deposit here is the health-giving words of the gospel.

God guards the deposit as well: “I know the one in whom I have put my trust, and I am sure that he is able to guard until that day what I have entrusted to him” (1:12b). Paul is old now. He can see in his nightmares the stone pedestal and the executioner’s axe. He has done what he could. Now God must take over the deposit of his ministry and his life. Perhaps, there must always be a double-guarding; we do what we can and commit the rest to Him.

The deposit was under assault. The integrity of the message was at stake. William Barclay writes:

In those early days the Church was an island in a sea of paganism. On every side the most perilous of infections threatened it. The people who were in it were only one remove from their heathen background and origin. . . . The tarnishing atmosphere was all around them.⁷

Paul’s language is vehement: “profane chatter” (2:16), “stupid and senseless controversies” (2:23) and “myths” (4:4). Such talk, he says, spreads putrefaction and decay like gangrene (2:17). This damaging influence seems to have had three characteristics (among others) which have counterparts today.

First, it fostered a two-tier congregation (2:16-19). Paul was at pains to cultivate casteless congregations, all standing on level ground before the cross (Ga 3:28). These new teachings introduced an intellectualism which promoted a few to a tier above the common folk. Secondly, it was long on talk and short on walk (2:14; 3:5). Thirdly, it seduced those who wished to follow their own desires (3:6-7; 4:3).

The inheritance of the gospel comes to us as a lived document, expressed in culturally varied ways among the denominations of the church. These ways of understanding and practicing the faith are rightly held accountable to Scripture. But they too deserve to be respected and guarded. In his preface to the classic *Mere Christianity*, C.S. Lewis makes this demurral:

I hope no reader will suppose that “mere” Christianity is here put forward as an alternative to the creeds of the existing communions – as if a man could adopt it in preference to Congregationalism or Greek Orthodoxy or anything else. It is more like a hall out of which doors open into several rooms. If I can bring anyone into that hall I shall have done what I attempted. But it is in the rooms, not in the hall, that there are fires and chairs and meals. The hall is a place to wait in, a place from which to try the various doors, not a place to live in.⁸

Elton Trueblood makes a similar point, speaking in particular of the Quakers, the only denomination who share our sacramental views:

There is nothing wrong with the continued existence of historic communions, provided each one is humble enough to realize that it has something to learn from the others and is willing to make some effort to do so. But such mutual learning is possible only if each group makes publicly available its own spiritual treasures.⁹

Distinctive elements of our “historic communion” are listed in a recent publication of the International Doctrine Council lists these:

We believe that the practices of The Salvation Army have much in common with the practices of other churches, but that being raised up by God for a distinctive work, the Army has been led of God to adopt the following combination of characteristics:

- Its emphasis upon personal religion and individual spiritual regeneration through faith in Christ leading in turn to a commitment in mission to seek to win others to Christ;
- Its commitment to the unceasing proclamation of the gospel and its insistence that this gospel is for the whosoever;
- Its teaching concerning sanctification and holy living;
- Its teaching that the receiving of inward spiritual grace is not dependent upon any particular outward observance;
- Its worldwide tradition of service (arising out of the compassionate love of Christ for all persons) without discrimination or preconditions, to the distressed, needy and marginalized, together with appropriate advocacy in the public domain on matters of social justice;
- Its willingness to obey the “great commission” of Jesus Christ, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, by ongoing expansion of Salvationist witness and service into new countries....
- Its preference for non-liturgical and flexible forms of worship, seeking to encourage spontaneity, for example in prayer and in spoken personal witness and testimony;
- Its tradition of inviting public response to the presentation of the gospel message, and its use of the mercy seat for this and other spiritual purposes;
- Its focus, in self-expression, on the biblical military metaphor of living in the world and of serving God as soldiers of Jesus Christ...
- Its requirement that adults and children wishing to become full members... and thereby wishing to make a commitment to formal membership of the Body of Christ on earth, should publicly confess their faith in Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord... and the adults entering into formal doctrinal and ethical commitments...

- Its wearing of distinctive uniforms as a witness to belonging to Christ and as a signal of availability to others;
- Its encouragement into Salvation Army fellowship of those who do not wish to enter into the full commitment of soldiership, but are willing to become adherent members as a step in the journey of faith;
- Its recognition of the equal place within the Body of Christ of men and women in all aspects of Christian service, ministry and leadership including the holding of ecclesiological authority;
- Its readiness to use all forms of musical expression in worship and evangelism, and its encouragement in many cultures of the indigenization of worship expressions and styles.¹⁰

What you have heard... entrust to faithful people

What you have heard from me through many witnesses entrust to faithful people who will be able to teach others as well... In the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is to judge the living and the dead, and in view of his appearing and his kingdom, I solemnly urge you: proclaim the message; be persistent whether the time is favorable or unfavorable, convince, rebuke, and encourage, with the utmost patience in teaching (2:2; 4:1-2).

The language is versatile: teach (1:11,13; 2:2; 2:24; 3:10,16; 4:2), hold (1:13), guard (1:14), entrust (2:2), remind (2:14), explain (2:15), correct (2:25; 3:16), train (3:16), proclaim (4:2), convince (4:2), rebuke (4:2), encourage (4:2). The urgency is clear.

In a study of unprecedented scope, involving over 11,000 adults, teenagers and pastors in six denominations, the Search Institute concluded (perhaps, we knew this) that, in general, U.S. Christians don't have mature faith (measured in two dimensions – love of God and neighbor); Christian education is the most important vehicle within congregational life for helping people grow in faith but most congregations don't have effective educational programs; and

family religious experience has more influence on young people's faith than does Christian education.¹¹

For Paul the task of entrusting has two movements.

We imprint

Note Paul's strong, directive words: proclaim, convince, rebuke. The words of the Hebrew creed, the Shema, were learned in childhood by Paul and Timothy and repeated every day: "Listen, Israel: Yahweh our God is the one Yahweh. You shall love Yahweh your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength." The text continues, "Let these words I urge on you today be written on your heart. You shall repeat them to your children [impress them on your children] and say them over to them whether at rest in your house or walking abroad, at your lying down or at your rising..." (Deu 6:4-7, JB).

It is a graphic metaphor: the words written on your heart are to be imprinted on the hearts of your children. The Hebrew term means to pierce, to impress. In Paul's day teaching was mainly by repetition and memorization. Such directive teaching is needed to set in place the building blocks of faith. Stephen Macchia, President of Vision New England, tells of his discovery that, although his family belonged to a fine church, his children were missing some of the basics of faith. He and his wife devised a family Bible memory book. It included a list of the books of the Bible, the seven days of creation, the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the twelve disciples, the 23rd Psalm, Psalm 121 (a family favorite) and other selected passages.¹²

We evoke

Note Paul's softer words: gentleness (2:25), patience 2:24; 4:2), encouragement (4:2). The last of these is related to the name Jesus gives to the Holy Spirit (Jn 14:16, etc.), the Paraclete who comes alongside to help. The learner is not a pot to be filled but a personality to be engaged. The teacher may speak many words, but the learner will have the last one.

Evocative teaching accompanies the student, appreciates her temperament, respects her thoughts, honors her experience, takes seriously her questions. Here are two stories to illustrate the point.

Michael Jinkins, President of Louisville Theological Seminary, recalls a conversation he had one day after worship in his small rural church. He was just a child. The preacher had used the text, "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof" (Mt 6:34). On the way to the car he asked his mother what it meant.

"Hmmm, I guess it means that Jesus doesn't want us to worry about the future," she said. "There's enough for us to worry about today."

Jenkins reflects:

The longer I spend at the graduate level of theological education the more convinced I am that primary theological education is best done when it invites us into the project of deciphering, unraveling, interpreting, figuring things out. My mother probably had no idea how important it was that day that she took the time to read that text with me. She certainly had no idea how important it was to start her lesson with, "Hmmm, I guess...." But 50 years later, it's what I do with students on a pretty regular basis.¹³

The second story is about a bright lad who was a problem at school, bored and rebellious. He could have become a social discard had it not been for an observant teacher who saw his promise. Under her guidance, he made rapid advances. "I just wanted to learn and to please her," he said. It was not the same at church. One Sunday the lad brought to Sunday School a shocking magazine photo of starving children in Biafra. He confronted the pastor. "If I raise my finger, will God know which one I'm going to raise even before I do it?" "Yes, God knows everything," answered the pastor. Then the boy pulled out the photo and asked, "Does God know about this and what's going to happen to those children?" "Steve," said the pastor, "I know you don't understand, but yes, God knows about that." The answer badly underestimated the boy's intellect. He was unsatisfied. He walked away from the church and never returned. His name was Steve Jobs.¹⁴

What you have heard entrust.

Paul concludes with the request that Timothy come soon (4:9) and with greetings all around. At the end (4:22), as at the beginning (1:2), there is a blessing: "The Lord be with your spirit. Grace be with you."

Barbara Brown Taylor tells of the death of her elderly father. The family gathered in the Emergency Room cubicle. In the declining hours, one would kiss his forehead, another dip a pink sponge on a stick in water to wet his mouth. He was dazed from a seizure, but he knew who they were. At one point Taylor's

husband got up and went over to the bed, leaning down to say something in the father's ear. They had long loved each other. Her husband knelt on the linoleum floor by the bed, fit his head underneath the father's hand, reached up and put one of his hands on top of the old man's hand to make sure it did not slip off. Then he held still as the father's lips moved. After he stood, he leaned over to say something else in his ear. "What was that?" Taylor asked when he came back to slump beside her again. "I asked him to bless me... to give me his blessing."¹⁵

The old apostle would have liked that.

Endnotes

- ¹ "Young Adults Turn Away from Religious Adherence," *Christian Century*, May 16, 2012:17.
- ² William McKinney, "Crunching the Numbers," *Christian Century*, April 18, 2012:26-29.
- ³ Ross Douthat, *Bad Religion: How We Became a Nation of Heretics*, 2012:138.
- ⁴ Douthat, 135.
- ⁵ Donald Burke, "Are We Biblically Illiterate?" *Salvationist*, August 2011:18.
- ⁶ Phyllis Tickle, *The Great Emergence: How Christianity is Changing and Why*, 2012:116.
- ⁷ William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible, Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, 1960:4.
- ⁸ C.S. Lewis, *Mere Christianity*, 1952:11-12.
- ⁹ D. Elton Trueblood, *The People Called Quakers: The Enduring Influence of a Way of Life and a Way of Thought*, 1966:ix.
- ¹⁰ *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ: An Ecclesiological Statement*, 2008:5-9.
- ¹¹ Eugene C. Roehlkepartain, *The Teaching Church: Moving Christian Education to Center Stage*, 1993.
- ¹² Stephen A. Macchia, *Becoming a Healthy Church*, 1999:88.
- ¹³ Michael Jinkins, "Formative Moments," *Christian Century*, February 22, 2012:22-23.
- ¹⁴ Gordon MacDonald, "The Soul of Steve Jobs," *Leadership*, Winter, 2012:20).
- ¹⁵ Barbara Brown Taylor, *An Altar in the World*, 2009:208.

Constructing a Practical Hermeneutic

WILLIAM BOOTH AND THE SACRAMENTS

Rob DeGeorge

Introduction

In a New Year address to its members in 1883, William Booth (1829-1912) implicitly¹ declared that The Salvation Army would abandon practicing the sacraments as an ecclesiastical body.

Now if the sacraments are not conditions of salvation; if there is a general division of opinion to the proper mode of administering them, and if the introduction of them would create division of opinion and heart-burning, and if we are not professing to be a church, nor aiming to be one, but simply a force for aggressive salvation purposes, is it not wise for us to postpone the settlement of the question, to leave it over to some future day, when we shall have more light, and see more clearly the way before us?

Meanwhile we do not prohibit our own people in any shape or form from taking the Sacraments. We say, "If this is a matter of conscience...but in our own ranks, let us be united, and go our own way, and mind our own business."²

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Although a few studies have explored the theological and historical aspects of this proclamation³ none have considered the scriptural hermeneutic associated with this decision, and with some good reason. As a well-accomplished revivalist and denominational leader, William Booth used the Scriptures and a wide array of theological sources in his preaching and writings, yet never fully systematized his own thinking but rather “drew upon these sources either to derive his theology or to lend support to his theology.”⁴ In his New Year’s address, the General of The Salvation Army offered no overt scriptural claim for his decision, but rather cited soteriological and ecclesiological impetuses that appeared, on the surface, as a merely practical solution to a complex theological issue. He, thus, offered the following: 1) “Sacraments are not conditions of Salvation;” 2) division over “proper mode of administration;” 3) the Army “is not professing to be a church” but rather an “aggressive force for Salvation purposes” and by implication is not required for an immediate “settlement of the question” of observance.⁵

Instinctively practical, Booth was “a person whose empirical observations and experiences were important in his theology,”⁶ but unequivocally effused that as he saw it, his “Salvation [Army] framework” was fashioned by “all those leading truths which are the common property of all orthodox Christian communities.”⁷ Still, it has been argued that his revivalist concern for evangelism saw “ministry as a spiritual offensive” and, thus, “occasioned the development of a theology of action rather than reflection.”⁸ Comments such as those given in an interview in which he detailed the principles upon which the Army operates underscores this charge of scriptural ambiguity. Booth indicates in his “yearning for success” and his “impatience as to the feeble progress that the Kingdom of Heaven makes in its extension in the world,” he admits that concerning, “the subtleties and intricacies of theological creeds we leave to those who have the time, learning, and ability to deal with them.”⁹ It is not surprising, then, that it would be suggested that Booth’s position on the sacraments is predicated on an “inadequate exegesis of the Scriptures... caused by the lack of systematic theological study” which has led to institutional confusion for the Army especially concerning the scriptural grounds for its stance of non-observance.¹⁰

While Booth does not appeal directly to Scripture in his New Year address, it should not be assumed that Scripture did not play a significant role in the decision. Indeed, the Scriptures would constitute the supreme authority for

Booth and serve as the foundation point for his theological positions: “Our creed is the Bible, our work is to publish the Gospel, and we welcome as co-workers all who hold the Word of God as the standard of faith and practice and whose hearts are in sympathy with revival work.”¹¹ Confessionally, the primacy of Scripture would be stated in the Army’s first doctrine from its initial conception under the name, Christian Mission: “We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and are the only rule of Christian Faith and Practice.”¹²

On the other hand, Booth’s move away from sacramental practice has been tied to spiritual affinities with the Quakers in both the biographies of the Booths and The Salvation Army.¹³ Rightmire describes a potential parallel in Booth’s work, *The Seven Spirits* (1907) to Quaker “inner light hermeneutic,” but acknowledges that Booth “did not claim affinity with Quaker thought,” but suggests that these similarities were “mediated” through his wife, Catherine.¹⁴ Still, maintaining these Quaker affinities, Rightmire attributes the absorption of these “parallels” for The Salvation Army to George Scott Railton (1849-1913), Booth’s right-hand man, who wrote a pamphlet in 1881, entitled, “George Fox and His Salvation Army Two Hundred Years Ago.” Rightmire notes that in the list parallels between the Army and the Quakers that, “[i]t is noteworthy that there is no mention of sacramental parallels.”¹⁵ It may be that Railton’s perspective of shared affinities was more romantic than actual. In an enflamed retort, Charles Fox rebuked Railton’s assertion of theological descent from the Quakers and identifies the Army as “a depraved offspring of Moodyism.” Fox takes issue not only with the espoused affiliation, but also with what he considers blatant contradiction of doctrine, especially in the area of practical methods, the work of the Holy Spirit and holiness.¹⁶ Fox contradicts most if not all the parallels Railton sought to draw with special emphasis on the immediacy of conversion and sanctification, the methods of evangelism and preaching used by the Army, the autocratic nature of the organization, as well as conceptions of biblical authority and the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁷ In particular, questioning whether Salvationists would be willing to follow Christ in the way of the Quakers he queries their ability to, “go to a Quaker’s meeting, to abandon tithes, ‘sacraments,’ etc, etc, and become a Friend, would he obey him then? Let any of them reply!”¹⁸ Fox’s response, at the least, challenges the notion that the Booths, Railton, or the theological expression of The Salvation Army writ

large was perceived as demonstrating significant or clear observable affinities with Quaker theology as late as 1882, especially as it pertained to the sacraments.

If, then, the Quakers did not provide an explicit theological or doctrinal foundation for the Army's non-observance, it may be sufficient to assert that the observation of a common cause or root¹⁹ provided a theological lens through which to evaluate the place and function of the sacraments within Christian obligations. However, the implicit statement here is that the Army had not yet abandoned sacramental practice, nor was abandonment perceived to be a potential reality at this point (a year before Booth's New Year Address). In this respect, Eason's thesis that the orthodoxy of the sacraments and the complaints of Anglicans of unconfirmed Salvationists partaking of the Lord's Supper may have greater strength as, in short order, it "became a pressing problem for Salvationist leaders" in the year leading up to Booth's New Year Address.²⁰ But further, it may signal that one might need to look elsewhere for the source of Booth's understanding of the Holy Spirit and the place of methods (practical or sacramental) in his hermeneutic, to which we now turn.

Social Influences on Booth's Theological Development

As a youth, William Booth's world was filled with poverty and political reform as well nonconformist senses inspired by the Oxford Movement and the rise of Anti-Ritualist/Anti-Catholic sentiment within evangelical Protestantism.²¹ As a contemporary of the Chartist revolution, Booth, in his youth, saw the needs and liberties of the poor championed by Thomas Cooper (1805-92) and Fergus O'Conner (1796-1855) through practical and sometimes militant means.²² It is not certain if Booth ever heard Cooper preach, but the proximity of Cooper to Nottingham (he was based in Leicester 27 miles south) during this phase of the Chartist Revolution was highly publicized in the newspapers. Cooper's last engagement in the Chartist movement came in a series of sermons in August of 1842 that led to the Battle of Mapperley Hills, a few miles outside of Nottingham (when William was thirteen), which led to a worker's riot when Cooper was arrested, tried and sentenced to two years of imprisonment for seditious conspiracy.²³ More directly, Woodall argues that the influence of Fergus O'Conner, Nottingham's own Chartist leader, impressed upon William the practical ability to change the social injustices of those suffering in industrial

poverty and that O'Conner's own *National Land Company* scheme may have been the inspiration for Booth's, *In Darkest England* (1890).²⁴ Affinities with the Chartist movement found both in Cooper and O'Conner's methods for political reform, including persuasive oratory and militant forcefulness in its insatiable concern for the 'salvation' of the poor undoubtedly left an indelible impression upon William and is easily identified in the methodology of the Christian Mission and The Salvation Army.²⁵ In his section on "The Bible," Booth uses language that strikes an eerily Chartist tone when he implores Salvationists to read the Bible in order,

...to realize that the deliverance of men from the guilt, the power, and the indwelling of sin and of their being brought back to God, is the great object for which the book was written. That deliverance is the great purpose of the Word to-day. It is for us, then, as Salvationists, to give more heed to our "Charter of Salvation."²⁶

Although the direct extent of the Chartist influence in Woodall's argument is often qualified due to the lack of evidence, she identifies Booth as a teen, "committed to 'doing something' about the social conditions of poverty among the most needful, and thus cultivated an interpretive hermeneutic that emphasized practical methods with direct impact on individuals."²⁷ Further, a widespread resistance to the return of *popish* ways spurred doctrinal accommodation to prevailing attitudes concerning the sacraments. For the Methodists, Wesley's commitment to the sacraments as a means of grace was modified in contemporary theologies to reflect symbols or signs that were "effectual" and practical.²⁸ Meanwhile, for Booth, practical means were being adapted to take on almost "sacramental" significance in the revivalist methods of James Caughey (1810-1891). In several biographies, the impact of Caughey on William Booth's interpretive hermeneutic is evident. Caughey's methods struck a chord familiar with the Chartist sympathies that heightened an awareness for the individual. More formalized religious persons resisted methods which singled people out from the rest of the congregation who would object, "Could not God convert them in any part of the chapel as well as at the communion-rail," to which Caughey replied of the need "to be made acquainted

with their particular state of mind” in order that the “test of coming forward” might lead to a very public and eternal decision to “leave the ranks of sin” that will “not unfrequently [have] a very powerful influence upon those who are yet undecided.”²⁹ While most would not view his approach, as some did, as “scriptural methods,” Caughey was convinced that results were indicative of God’s stamp of approval and that to question their use “would be as wise, perhaps, as to question the propriety of the angel passing by all the streams and pools in Palestine, and honoring only Bethesda, as a place for healing the ‘impotent folk.’”³⁰

William Booth was taken with the “example of Caughey” and journaled great success as a result.³¹ W.T. Stead, the renowned social reformer and close friend of the Booth’s,³² discloses in his biography of the General that it was this first experience of observing Caughey that this “wonderful effect” of “straightforward conversational method of teaching the truth of the gospel, and the common-sense practice of pushing people up to the point of decision, made an immense impression upon his mind.”³³ Indeed Booth, he states, would later attribute this initial experience as a pivotal moment.³⁴ Stead declares, “it revealed to him that in the spiritual as in the material world that God works by law and not by caprice, and that if harvests are not reaped, it is the husbandry that is at fault.”³⁵ However, Stead did not share Booth’s convictions concerning the work of the Spirit and the authority of the Scripture. Booth, expanding on this same reflection more than forty years later in *Twenty-One Years Salvation Army*, makes clear the relationship of his methods to scriptural authority by the affirmation of the witness of men through reason and the Witness of the Spirit:

I saw clearly as if a revelation had been made to me from Heaven that success in spiritual work, as in natural operations, was to be accounted for, not on any mere abstract theory of Divine sovereignty, or favoritism, or accident, but the employment of such methods as were dictated by common-sense, the Holy Spirit, and the Word of God.³⁶

This passage is crucial to Booth’s understanding because it captures three important elements of his thinking concerning the use of methods. First, he speaks of a direct revelation for his understanding. Second, this direct revelation

is in concert with reason and the Holy Spirit, an articulation of the certainty of truth he learned perhaps from William Cooke. Third, Scripture stands in communion with reason and the Witness of the Holy Spirit as the legitimating authority of Christian praxis, not doctrine, creed or theology in which are but mere abstract theory.

The conception that Booth was only practical and had no concern for theological studies, however, is simply a caricature that is not grounded in the evidence. Booth's vision for the importance of theological studies was within the framework of their service to practical ends. In a letter to his son, Bramwell (1856-1929), Booth encourages him to "have among other things a knowledge of systematic theology," but articulated this for the sake of future ministry in order to "hold your own with the preachers and the public you must have the information and skill in controversial theology."³⁷ Nevertheless, practical or not, Booth's hermeneutical framework was distinctly Wesleyan in shape, and his concern over Calvinist doctrine was the impetus that led him to remove himself from theological studies in 1852 with the Congregationalists, and was further part of the concern for Bramwell's studies in the letter mentioned above.³⁸ Thus, William's decision to withdraw from ministry in 1854 to pursue theological studies with William Cooke (1806- 1884) is not insignificant, nor did he think so himself as he stated in a letter to Catherine in January of 1854:

The plot thickens, and I hesitate not to tell you that I fear, and fear much, that I am going wrong. My present intention is to tear myself from all and everything, and preserve in the path that I have chosen. They reckon it down here the maddest, wildest, most premature and hasty step that ever they saw a saved man to take.³⁹

Booth spent six months, as Begbie states it, "all at once a humble student... surrendering himself to the domination of a Rev. Dr. William Cooke, theologian."⁴⁰ An interesting description, if not accurate, that depicts a somewhat unwilling student in Booth who struggled to subdue his revivalist passions and found himself "unhappy, and almost as unsettled as ever." For Booth, the inability to overcome the fixating thought of the "perishing... while he turned the pages of text-books was like madness in his brain," thus, "the call to active

work interrupted his studies.”⁴¹ Booth’s time with Cooke, however short, was still formative as it was well regulated by a rigor of daily study that included writing, grammar, rhetoric, logic, theological studies, original languages, and sermon preparation.⁴² It is here, I suggest, Booth grounded much of his hermeneutic in scriptural categories which he expanded to include a practical methodology. For Booth, Cooke’s exposition of the sacraments, Scripture and the Witness of the Holy Spirit will be particularly instructive.⁴³

Sacraments, Scripture and the Spirit in William Cooke Sacraments

William Cooke, in his *Christian Theology Explained*,⁴⁴ frames his exposition of the sacraments as scriptural rejection of Formalism to displace the espoused sacramental theology of Edward Pusey and others of the Oxford Movement who asserted that baptism was an “act of God” that placed the believer in a state of salvation.⁴⁵ His refusal of the sacraments as necessary to salvation was drawn from scriptural arguments (1 Peter 3, Rom 2, John 3 and Titus 3) and consigned baptism to an “old . . . and apostolic tradition” implanted into the Church of Christ.”⁴⁶ Although it might not be possible to be certain whether this perspective is directly attributable to Booth through Cooke’s instruction, it is at least certain that Booth would have encountered it during this time and reinforced any anti-ritualist conceptions he most likely held. Further, Cooke’s presentation of the sacraments would have been standard Wesleyan teaching at the time, thus affirming Rightmire’s assertion that Methodist doctrine had drifted away from perspectives that affirmed “presence” in the means of grace than has been acknowledged by Army biographers and doctrinal statements that simply state the memorial position of the sacraments as Wesleyan orthodoxy.⁴⁷

In accord with Christian orthodoxy, Cooke describes the sacrament of baptism as an “important institution of Divine origin” and affirms “it is of imperative obligation, and a visible expression of weighty truths.” Yet, it is significant that Cooke declares that Jesus, in John 3, is speaking of “divine and spiritual change,” derived from the Holy Spirit, not in the act as the Formalists from Oxford who “contend earnestly for the efficacy of external ceremonies.”⁴⁸ Appealing to John 3:5, Cooke saw “no conclusive evidence that our Lord referred to baptism at all in this passage.” The intent here was to stave off the interpretation that salvation was dependent on participation in the sacrament. By asserting that the biblical

writer's interpretive formula of "giving in the same sentence, first a figurative, and then a literal and exegetical representation of the same subject," he makes clear that the spiritual meaning of salvation is in view over physical necessity of form for salvation, a perspective that left an indelible impression on Booth and his Army.⁴⁹ On this premise, Cooke claims to follow the principle of intra-textual interpretation as he declares, "we allow the Spirit to interpret his own meaning, and all is clear and harmonious and in perfect accord with every other Scripture."⁵⁰ However, it could be argued that Cooke's "literal sense" is being stretched here. Taken to its practical and spiritual end, it is easy to see how, for Booth, the expression of the ceremony form becomes not only expendable, but its elimination is made to be in "perfect accord with every other Scripture." Cooke says as much himself when describing faith in practical terms:

Religion is always described as an 'experimental' blessing, realized in the heart, by the agency of the Holy Ghost, and therefore to make its essence consist in any external forms is at once to deny the most explicit testimony of Scripture and to contradict the most obvious principles in the philosophy of the human mind.⁵¹

The focus for Cooke was that God's power "is displayed in what is accomplished in the *inner* man, not in what is performed in the *outward* man; and its agency is the Holy Ghost."⁵² By placing emphasis on the ceremony for salvation, as Pusey and others did, the Church would be encouraging doctrinal errors that produce "deceitful hopes" and dependence on external forms, "instead of seeking for the attainment of experimental blessings and personal holiness."⁵³ For Cooke, the location of devotion was in the Spirit not in the ceremonies themselves, but because the physical becomes consecrated by extension of the consecration of the Spirit he could preserve Protestant orthodoxy for Christian obligation to the sacrament. Certainly, then, if the physical served in extension to the spiritual, which is "the superior part of our nature...in experimental and practical devotion to God,"⁵⁴ the believer through sanctification would take on a personal sacramental disposition (a notion Booth would develop after his decision for non-observance in 1883 in accordance with other Holiness movements).⁵⁵

Witness of the Spirit

In the Wesleyan teaching of entire sanctification there is an emphasis on the spiritual over the physical. This was made more explicit in Cooke's lessons on the Holy Spirit which taught the witness of the Spirit as,

[D]irect and immediate...not the testimony of a minister, or an angel, or merely the promise or declaration of the written word, but the testimony of God himself...It is the personal presence of the Holy Ghost in actual contact with the human soul. It is a species of inspiration, as really and properly such, as that which was given to the prophets and Apostles.⁵⁶

This inspiration was useful for legitimating all forms of Christian expression and duty as scriptural in both the public and private arenas but in particular for the methods employed, "for the use of religious means is our duty, and God honors them by making them occasions when he bestows his blessings... [b]ut [methods] are only means of grace, and not the grace itself. The witness imparted, the assurance enjoyed is inspired by the Spirit itself" (1 John 3:24, 4:13, 5:6,10).⁵⁷ For Booth, revival methods took on a scriptural authority of inspiration with the ability to communicate an inner substance through direct contact with the Spirit. Ironically, methods would serve as a substitute for the "dead ceremony" of ritualism, yet, professed a sacramental physicality as a means of grace that went theologically unnoticed.⁵⁸

In Cooke, Booth could find a rational spirituality that married reason and the witness of the Holy Spirit as the foundation for a practical hermeneutic. In his discourse on "The Witness," Cooke describes three classes of truth: reasoning (lowest probability to moral certainty), bodily senses (testimony of experience) and a self-evident consciousness (Witness of the Holy Spirit). These, he asserted, "shine by their own light" and form a *substratum* on which the knowledge of all other truths are built... but [the third] the testimony of the Holy Ghost ... is not conjecture, but assurance; not probability, but certainty. It belongs to the highest class of evidence which our nature can perceive... [and] all other evidence *must* be subordinate and inferior to this."⁵⁹ For Booth, the practicality of methods allowed him to appeal to this manner of truth on the basis of the superiority of the Witness of the Holy Spirit, a methodological advantage for

his work with the poor to whom access to legitimate formal religion was not a regular part of daily life. This implicit appeal to the scriptural nature of practical methods for the power of truth would allow Booth to demonstrate as “real” the means of conversion over sacramental observance as legitimate and not temporary like the regular church-goer who have “paid formal service to God”... those who have been “outwardly conformed ... to the law of God... [who] may be prone to deception.”⁶⁰ Booth would assert for the poor, “the universal consciousness of right and wrong makes it perfectly clear to the rudest of minds that to become one of the Lord’s people is to enter upon a new life.”⁶¹ Thus, in Cooke’s description of truth in the witness of the Spirit, practically speaking, “is [in] the evidence of consciousness.” The turn inward to consciousness shifts reality to a *felt* truth, whereby the *seal* of the Holy Spirit is mediated in practical terms as an “impression felt and seen by the believer... as an experimental privilege.”⁶² And while the Holy Spirit reveals by “immediate impression,” our spirit, through reason demonstrates truth by inference, argument, experience, and observation. Reason is for *intellectual perceptions* and *external actions*, and consists of emotion, “the testimony of our reason is our own witness, but the testimony in our consciousness is the witness of God; if therefore, we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater.” Both, the Holy Spirit, through consciousness, and our spirit, through reason, unite in declaring truth to the believer that, indeed, “now we are the sons of God”⁶³

As matter of authority. Booth would regularly appeal to the connection to these substratum of truth to Scripture, he declares, “From what I have read in the Bible, from what I have heard from my comrades, and by the light God has given me by His Holy Spirit in my own heart, I now see and believe that it is possible for me to be delivered from all inward and outward sins, and that I can be made holy in this life.”⁶⁴ Roger Green’s comment here is instructive as it begins to draw the line between Booth’s understanding of the foundations of truth and their interrelationship to scriptural authority:

The influence of the Bible as the source of revelation, and the influence of his own practical experience through relationships with his “comrades” and events in his own life which confirmed what he had learned from Scripture and assisted him in formulating judgments about proper Christian conduct. His reference to the “the light God has given me by His Holy

Spirit in my own heart” does not constitute a separate source of authority for Booth, some kind of personalized privatized inner voice, Quaker style, apart from the Bible or apart from his own experiences in life.⁶⁵

It should not go unnoticed that Green does not correlate Booth’s pneumatology to the Quakers, but by rejecting a “separate source of authority” he locates it firmly in the Methodist and evangelical tradition of *sola scriptura*. Further, that the correspondence of Cooke’s language concerning the knowledge of truth was shared between William and Catherine is demonstrated in a letter from Catherine to William on or near the time of his study with Cooke, she writes in a moment of personal struggle, “I always find it best to appeal to my consciousness; I know the religion of Jesus is a reality just as I know I live, and breathe and think, because my conscious testifies it... But I forget to whom I write; you know all this better than I do.”⁶⁶ To this end, Cooke’s influence on Booth may simply have been to reinforce concepts with which he was already fluent.

Scripture

William Cooke, in his *Christian Theology Explained*, follows a doctrine of Scripture that, while may not be representative of all the various Methodists groups in Victorian England, was at least the example *par excellence* of Wesleyan theologians from 1845 – 1870.⁶⁷ Consistent with evangelical theology he declared the Scriptures to be verbally inspired “the unmixed infallible truth,” and the “final standard to decide ALL religious questions.”⁶⁸ Thus, we are bound to believe and obey the doctrines of the Christian faith as presented in Scripture. Whether these doctrines are implicit or explicit “our obligation to believe them depends not upon the question—*are we able to fully comprehend and explain them, but upon this question, ‘are they contained in the Scriptures?’*... If they are ... they are given by divine inspiration, and ... we are required to believe them.”⁶⁹ However, because Cooke taught a distinction in the inspiration for historical texts and “a higher degree of divine influence [as] requisite for the revelation of doctrines, prophecies, promises, and religious duties,”⁷⁰ there was room for Booth to conceive of the sacraments as historically conditioned ceremonies that did not exact the same authority of inspiration as others.

On the other hand, the Scriptures were not simply a repository for truth and rules, but rather the Scriptures were a mechanism for conversion. The Bible, he states, is “the instrument God employs to enlighten, to save, and bless our benighted and ruined world; and next to the gift of Christ and the Holy Spirit, is the greatest boon He has conferred on mankind.”⁷¹ For Booth, the Bible does many things: it functions, it tells God’s stories, speaks with authority, reveals truth, shows humanity the person of God, fills the world with knowledge of God’s glory, determines certainty, reveals God’s character, the nature of man, points to sin, it prepares the way for truth, tenders promises, and prescribes Christian duties. Christian ministry was a significant expression of Christian duties for Methodists who saw faith and action as the two sides of the coin of true religion. Cooke saw Christian ministry as the primary means, scripturally ordained by God, in which believers should “industriously employ the time [God] has given ... for the conversion of sinners and edification of believers... it is the means which God has specially appointed for those important ends.” He does this by, “rais[ing] up men suitably qualified, calls them to it by His Spirit and providence, [and] favors them with the promise of His presence and blessing.”⁷² In this statement, Cooke has provided a foundation upon which Booth could understand that Scripture and the Holy Spirit are imploring him with divine approval to employ any means and methods “for the conversion of sinners and the edification of believers.” Methods, by extension of divine approval, give physical and tangible opportunity for the Bible to be “a light shining from the throne of God on our dark world... [where] truth erects her throne, and bestows the blessings of her reign.”⁷³

The influence of Cooke’s mentoring upon his student is evident in the way Booth doctrinally describes the Scripture. His section on “The Bible” reads like a short catechism akin to Cooke’s which emphasized the need to read the Bible, to understand its great truths, to engage the duties of Christians required in the religious ordinances⁷⁴ and to receive the blessings it bestows. Yet, Booth takes it a step farther with a similar conclusion by indicating that the Salvationist will “study the spirit as well as the words of the Holy Book, with a view to our realization of the blessings it offers, and the discharge of the duties it enjoins.”⁷⁵ For Booth, the witness of the Spirit is a form of divine inspiration mirroring that which penned the Scriptures, and if the person is to “realize” the truths of the Bible through the “spirit as well as the words,” the Salvationist becomes a living “Charter of Salvation.”⁷⁶ In part two of his section on the Bible, Booth exhorts

Salvationists to be “living pictures of the principles and practices” of Scripture. Each is to be a living picture of “practical godliness,” of “experimental religion” and of “that love for souls which the Bible calls.” For Booth, the witness of the Spirit is such that each Salvationist should, “[b]e living examples not only of the letter of the Bible—that is important—but what is far more important still, be living examples of its spirit and its power; so that out of you there may flow liberty, light, and love to all men.”⁷⁷ While this is strikingly similar to what Cooke outlines the Scripture itself does,⁷⁸ it paints the picture that the Witness of the Spirit is an extension of the same Divine Inspiration responsible for drafting the Word of God, and by extension transforms sinners into living biblical documents. If this is so, it is not a large leap to discern how Booth might believe that the methods flowing forth from these “living Bibles,” were created by and become extensions of this same inspiration.

Conclusion

Armstrong rightly states that “there have been a variety of theological and biblical interpretations and a myriad of pragmatic historical rationales proposed since Booth’s proclamation in 1883 that have led to a particular mode of discourse” within the Army to justify its position.⁷⁹ This study has sought to demonstrate that Booth’s decision to abandon sacramental observance was grounded in a scriptural-practical hermeneutic rooted in the influences of his social context as well as the theological presuppositions of the Methodist traditions in which he was affiliated. Through the revivalist James Caughey, Booth established the primacy of practical method for the sake of conversion and sanctification. In theological training with William Cooke, Booth developed a theological category for scriptural authority that set the witness of the Holy Spirit as the “highest evidence” of truth. Whether Booth was newly exposed to these concepts through Cooke, or was simply given a means to articulate ideas already in use, this expression of divine inspiration helped Booth discern a sense of scriptural authority through which he could readily appropriate and discard methods (including rituals and ceremonies) that advanced the ministry of the gospel:

I cannot accept any obligation as binding upon my conscience,
neither will I seek to bind any upon yours, to do, or believe, or

teach anything for which authority cannot be furnished from the Word of God, or which God Himself does not reveal to us by His Spirit, as our present duty.⁸⁰

In this statement, Booth articulates an implicit practical-scriptural hermeneutic. The priority of the Witness of the Holy Spirit and its corresponding divinely inspired influence, as taught in Scripture, is the substance of the appeal for Booth's determination for that which is the obligation and privilege of duty for Christian ministry. For Booth, this duty was the immediate salvation and conversion of the lost, and he aptly applied this practical-scriptural hermeneutic to this scriptural duty:

We have always aimed at immediate and definite results, believing that the Gospel of Christ, properly preached in the demonstration of the Spirit, and with power, ought to prove, must prove, visibly, as well as in the heart, its Divine efficiency. What indeed, can be the use of preaching, unless it secures some immediate result?⁸¹

Although it seems Booth himself did not voice the desire of the wholesale dismissal of sacramental observance before his New Year Address as others close to him did,⁸² it was clear that he was certainly not against it if other methods could be used to greater effect among the poor whom he sought to convert, "[T]hey may not be apt at quoting Scripture, but if they convey the great truths of revelation in homely words to the heart, do they not really carry out the purpose of the Bible as fully as if they used its language."⁸³ And for Booth, despite the issues of politics concerning the state of the relationship with the Church of England⁸⁴, the crux of the matter concerning the sacraments and his own methods was whether the Christian duty of ministry conveyed in living color the principles of the Bible to hearts of men for their immediate conversion. Faithfulness to this scriptural mandate and the evidence of its results⁸⁵ legitimated his hermeneutic, allowing him to declare, "The [Christian] Mission is one huge living testimony to the power of Christ to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him—to save instantly, to convert, to create anew, to make clean."⁸⁶

Convinced that he and his methods were scripturally sanctioned, Booth was not altogether concerned with criticism. He understood that the move away from tradition and formal religion was difficult,⁸⁷ and accepted that his methods, “will always repel people of ‘taste,’ while they continue to be flavoured with the power of the Holy Ghost, and the simple straightforward truth of God, deeply rooted in willing hearts, and bursting forth in irrepressible exuberance, under the directest [sic] rays of the Sun of Righteousness.”⁸⁸ Such blanket approval and authority of the Divine enabled Booth to perceive his ministry and Army in scriptural terms which precluded the necessity of formal ceremonies as the “full and glorious apostolic programme of saving people in a moment... and that those who have laboured in it, have always done so in unwavering confidence, that the power of the Holy Ghost was sufficient to accomplish this miraculous effect in the heart of the very vilest sinner.”⁸⁹

Although Rightmire demonstrates that Begbie’s account placed redemption over formalism in the “ultimate decision” of Booth⁹⁰, it is instructive to consider the undergirding principles in Booth’s statements, especially as they correspond to the discussion above. First, noting that “there must be no baptismal service that can delude any one into a vain hope of getting to Heaven without being ‘born again’” is a direct reference to a scriptural principle (John 3) to which Cooke dissected at length to dismantle Pusey’s notion that baptism placed one in the state of salvation.⁹¹ Second, “there must be no Lord’s supper ‘administered’ by anybody in such a way as to show anything like a priestly superiority of one over another” reflects not only the scriptural principle of every saved person belonging to the priesthood of all believers, but also reflects the sharp criticism levied by Cooke against the priesthood’s power, authored by human hands rather from Scripture, “to give or withhold salvation.. [which] promotes pride, arrogance, and oppression—and enslaves those who depend on it.”⁹²

Cooke will state that while the sacrament, “is a symbol of the most important truths and doctrines, and the seal of God’s gracious covenant with man,” its importance for the believer is emphasized in that it “significantly represents both the necessity and efficacy of the Holy Spirit’s influences, in renewing the heart of man.” And though Cooke will also affirm the significance of the sacramental “formula” as a “public and perpetual expression” of the doctrine of the Trinity, it is easy to see where such a practical hermeneutic could be located given its appeal to scriptural authority with such articulate theological terms.⁹³

Finally, Begbie's final quote of Booth's reasons returns his rationale to the primacy of the practical measures learned through Caughey, Finney and others that underscores the significance of the scriptural ordinance of Christian duty reinforced by Cooke several years into his revival ministry, "There must never be a sacramental service at the end of the meeting so as to prevent the possibility of inviting sinners to the mercy-seat...so that the life and death pledge may be acted upon immediately."⁹⁴ The emphasis here, is not the certainty that Booth was motivated or inspired by Cooke for the prominence of Christian duty within his theology, but that his practical sense for the impact and success of practical measures experienced and appreciated from American Holiness Revivalists was legitimized by a scriptural authority found under the training of Cooke that emphasized the primacy of the Witness of the Holy Spirit as the mediator of truth concerning the place of the sacraments and revivalist methods for the conversion of sinners.⁹⁵

In the end, Booth's 1883 decision to forgo answering the question of the sacraments is informed by scriptural categories he strengthens and expands while under the direction of William Cooke. His opening appeal outlines a hermeneutical framework authenticated by Scripture and the highest degree of truth in Scripture, i.e. the appeal to divine inspiration through the impression upon the conscience by the Holy Spirit. Booth's view of the sacraments, while citing concerns of division and right administration, is grounded in a practical-scriptural hermeneutic that places other "new methods" on equal footing by appealing to Scripture and the Witness of the Holy Spirit to validate claims as to what is necessary for "our present duty to Him, or to our generation," and is made explicit when he declares, "We will not condemn the churches for their traditions, neither should they condemn us for 'new methods.'" This practical-scriptural hermeneutic is the final appeal on the matter, as well, when in closing Booth offers his most definitive statement of the address concerning individual practice of sacraments, he states, "[W]e do not prohibit our own people in any shape or form from taking the Sacraments. We say, 'If this is a matter of conscience, by all means break bread.'"⁹⁶

By appealing to the Witness of the Holy Spirit, Booth could avoid direct interpretation of passages "in" the Bible (which he never offered) while maintaining the authority of Scripture through a direct "inspiration" of the Holy Ghost to the believer as to the significance of the sacraments to Christian Duty. Reason and experience could play a necessary role by determining if observance

served to edify or diminish other Christian ordinances and duties such as fellowship, gospel mission, enhanced unity, etc. For Booth, the sacraments were seen as forms that could go either way, but given the context of the negotiations with the Church of England, the rise of Ritualist debates around the time of his New Year Address, and not knowing where the Army would ultimately land as an organization, he was inclined to leave the matter definitively undecided yet believing his resolution for the Army to “go [their] own way” was made on sufficient scriptural grounds.

Endnotes

- ¹ Although some will object to my using the term “implicitly,” I use the term here because Booth does not actually declare the abandonment or the position of non-observance but is rather implied by his statement. See following reference for specifics of the statement.
- ² William Booth, “The General’s New Year Address to Officers,” *The War Cry*, 17 January 4, 1883. See Appendix 1 for the full text of this address.
- ³ The most comprehensive treatment on this subject is found in R. David Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations* (Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press, 1990); a few other works treat this specifically, although in limited fashion: Andrew M. Eason, “The Salvation Army and the Sacraments in Victorian Britain: Retracing the Steps to Non-observance,” *Fides Et Historia* (Sum/Fall 2009): 51–71; Brian Reid Armstrong, “The Lord’s Supper in Contemporary Salvation Army Worship” (DMin Mjr Project, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, 2003); Harold Hill, *Leadership in the Salvation Army: A Case Study in Clericalisation* (Bletchley, Milton Keynes, U.K.: Paternoster, 2006), 50-61; Roger J. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth: Founder of the Salvation Army* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 143-151; Roger J. Green, *Catherine Booth: A Biography of the Cofounder of the Salvation Army* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1996), 229-241.
- ⁴ Roger J. Green, “The Theology of William Booth” (PhD diss., Boston College, 1985), 21. It is noteworthy that Timothy Larsen in his work concerning Victorian use of the Bible, he chooses Catherine Booth over William as the representative of the Wesleyan-Holiness movement. While this is in part intentional to incorporate significant women into the discussion, it cannot help but to wonder if this was in part due to William’s imprecise explication of Scripture whereas Catherine used Scripture explicitly and profusely making

- clear that “the Bible was central to her public ministry.” Timothy Larsen, *A People of One Book: The Bible and the Victorians* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 7, 105.
- ⁵ Booth, “New Year Address.”
 - ⁶ Green, “The Theology of William Booth,” 76.
 - ⁷ Harold Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army*, vol. 2, (London: Macmillan & Co., 1920), 175, [brackets mine].
 - ⁸ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 71.
 - ⁹ Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth*, vol. 2, 175.
 - ¹⁰ Armstrong, “The Lord’s Supper,” 3, 4.
 - ¹¹ William Booth, “Mission Committee Report,” in Robert Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army: 1865-1878*, vol. 1, (London: T. Nelson, 1947), 93.
 - ¹² Doctrine 1, Christian Revival Association Doctrines 1865-66 reprinted in Norman H. Murdoch, “Evangelical Sources of Salvation Army Doctrine.” *Evangelical Quarterly* 87, no. 3 (1987): 237.
 - ¹³ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 107-125; Booth-Tucker, Frederick St George De Lautour, *The Life of Catherine Booth: The Mother of the Salvation Army*, vol. 1, (London: The Salvation Army Printing Works, 1892), 302; Minnie L. Carpenter, *William Booth, Founder of the Salvation Army* (London: Epworth Press, 1942), 77; John D. Waldron, *The Quakers and the Salvationists* (Atlanta, GA: Salvation Army Supplies, 1990); Edward McKinley, “Quaker Influence on the Early Salvation Army” in *The Salvation Army, Heritage of Holiness: A Compilation of Papers on the Historical Background of Holiness Teaching*, (New York: Salvation Army Literary Board, 1977), 47–56.
 - ¹⁴ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 120-121.
 - ¹⁵ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 119.
 - ¹⁶ Charles Fox, *George Fox No Precursor of the Salvation Army, So-called, (formerly the “Christian Mission”), and That Sect No Quakers: Its Foundation Tried and Discovered to Be on the Sand: With a Lamentation and Warning to All “Friends.” In Answer to G.R.’s [i.e. George S. Railton’s] Official Pamphlet “George Fox and His Salvation Army 200 Years Ago,” or “Life” of G.F. With Two Appendices for the Further Manifesting of the Truth* (Edinburgh: R.M. Cameron, 1882), 26.
 - ¹⁷ Fox, *George Fox No Precursor*, 9-31 in particular.
 - ¹⁸ Fox, *George Fox No Precursor*, 26.
 - ¹⁹ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 121.
 - ²⁰ Eason, “Retracing the Steps to Non-observance,” 53.

- ²¹ John Wolffe, *The Protestant Crusade in Great Britain, 1829-1860* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1991). See especially chapters 4, 5, 6.
- ²² Timothy Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt: Honest Faith in Nineteenth-Century England* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 75. It is an interesting coincidence [?] that Thomas Cooper, the leader of the Chartist revolution, was considered a militant leader and gave himself the moniker of “General” (as did William Booth) at the height of his involvement in the movement. Similarly, Cooper was engaged at an early age (14) with Primitive Methodism and became a preacher within the Wesleyan movement. Larsen notes that his preaching was “popular and electric,” but confrontations with denominational authorities led to his withdrawal.
- ²³ Larsen, *Crisis of Doubt*, 77.
- ²⁴ Ann M. Woodall, *What Price the Poor? William Booth, Karl Marx and the London Residuum* (Aldershot, Hants, UK: Ashgate Publishing, 2005), 25-32. Begbie also describes Nottingham’s place in the Chartist revolution with some admiration: “it seems as if Nottingham gave birth to the idea.” Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, vol. 1, 5.
- ²⁵ W.T. Stead, *General Booth: A Biographical Sketch* (London: Isbister and Co, 1891), 25-26; Stead in his biography claims that Booth declared himself for the Chartist cause as a young boy, but his source for this claim is not noted. Begbie further notes that William, as a young man, took notice of these Chartist concerns, Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, vol. 1, 5.
- ²⁶ William Booth, *The Founder’s Messages to Soldiers During Years 1907-1908*, (London: The Salvation Army Book Department, 1921), 61.
- ²⁷ Woodall, *What Price the Poor*, 31; In 1888, Booth discovered that the homeless were sleeping out on the bridges of London and was displeased with his son who had not made provision. Bramwell’s response was two-fold 1) that the Army could not accomplish everything needing done in the world and 2) that there needed to be caution in “indiscriminate charity”... to which Booth responded “angrily”... “Oh, I don’t care about all that stuff...I have heard it all before. But go and do something! Do something, Bramwell, do something!” Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, vol. 2, 77.
- ²⁸ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 38, 39; see 31-40 for a more detailed reconstruction of the historical context.
- ²⁹ James Caughey, *Helps to a Life of Holiness and Usefulness, or, Revival Miscellanies Containing Eleven Revival Sermons and Thoughts on Entire Sanctification* 7th ed. (Boston: James P. Magee, 1852), 216-217.
- ³⁰ Caughey, *Helps to a Life of Holiness*, 218, 217.

- ³¹ F.S.G.D. Booth-Tucker, *The Life of Catherine Booth: The Mother of the Salvation Army*, vol. 1, (New York: Fleming H. Revell, 1892), 139-143.
- ³² It is sometimes purported that W.T. Stead was the ghost-writer behind *In Darkest England*, yet, the evidence is not clear. While acknowledging Stead anonymously, Booth states in the Preface to the work that “I am alone responsible” for the proposals presented. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out* (London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1890), 3. However, Begbie laments that Stead was given the manuscript to rework himself as it seemed that had more of Booth’s own voice been heard the work itself would have had more historical impact. To what extent Stead modified the manuscript we will never know, but Begbie gives the impression it was at least substantial. Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.2, 49-50.
- ³³ Stead, *General Booth*, 26- 27
- ³⁴ Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth, the Founder of the Salvation Army*, vol. 1, (New York: Macmillan and Co., 1920), 9.
- ³⁵ Stead, *General Booth*, 27.
- ³⁶ William Booth, *Twenty-One Years Salvation Army* (London: Salvation Army Publishing and Printing Offices, 1891), 8.
- ³⁷ Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 367.
- ³⁸ Green, Roger J., *The Life and Ministry of William Booth: Founder of the Salvation Army* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 57; Stead, *General Booth*, 39-42; Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol. 1, 367.
- ³⁹ Reprinted in Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 203; I have removed an editor’s note concerning an offer made by the Reformers to join them in ministry. Thus, it is difficult to surmise what Booth specifically means by “gone wrong.” It could refer to his own theological thinking which cemented his resolve to “tear myself from all and everything” or it could refer to his decision to reject the standing offer in favor of theological studies.
- ⁴⁰ Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 203, *italics mine*.
- ⁴¹ Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 205, 207; Stead, *General Booth*, 43-44.
- ⁴² Green, *Life and Ministry of Booth*, 68.
- ⁴³ I want to acknowledge Dr. Roger Green for his suggestion of William Cooke as a subject of investigation with respect to Booth’s theological development.
- ⁴⁴ Although Cooke’s, *Christian Theology* (1863), is considered his definitive work on theology, however, the work used here published in 1848 would most likely be the text Booth would have used.
- ⁴⁵ Cooke, *Christian Theology: Explained & Defended*, 2nd ed. (London: Partridge & Oakey, 1848), 439.

- ⁴⁶ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 440. Rightmire argues that the Booth's shared in this belief, although he attributes this parallel in thought to Catherine and that she derived it from Augustus Neander (1789-1850). Rightmire, *Salvation Army and the Sacraments*, 61.
- ⁴⁷ Carpenter, *William Booth*, 77; The Salvation Army. *Handbook of Doctrine*, (St Albans, UK: Campfield Press, 1969), 183-188; The Salvation Army, *Handbook of Doctrine* (New York: The Salvation Army Supplies & Purchasing Department, 1923), 168-175; The Salvation Army, *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* (London: Salvation Books, 2010), 269-274.
- ⁴⁸ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 441.
- ⁴⁹ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 442-443. This hermeneutical perspective can be found in Booth's teachings, as discussed by Rightmire, *Salvation Army and the Sacraments*, especially chapters 2 and 3, as well as elsewhere throughout its denominational literature. In particular, Rightmire affirms the place of Cooke's *Christian Theology Explained* as a primary textbook for Booth that held sway in his development during a period of time where sacramental heritage among Wesleyans was thin. Whether directly tied to Cooke or the milieu of nineteenth-century Methodism, Booth, like his wife Catherine, stressed the scripture's spiritual understanding of "communion with God" and the "inward guidance of the Holy Spirit" over and against the "barriers" of the physical sacraments which "actually hinder the masses from experiencing grace," 53-54, 59. For Booth, a scriptural interpretation of the spiritual over the physical would become a center piece of Salvation Army theological understanding. A small pamphlet entitled, "The Sacraments: The Salvationists Viewpoint," was published by The Salvation Army in 1965 and reprinted twice (1984 and 1987). In this brief work the emphasis of the spiritual meaning over the physical necessity of the form is emphasized as it expounds the emphasis of John 3 as figurative for the "inwardness of spiritual experience." Further it states, the Apostle Paul's use of baptism is as "an illustration...[because] the ethical and spiritual emphasis... is what matters most." Thus concluding that, "[w]hile water baptism may have provided Paul with the illustration... the symbol had a diminishing significance and the emphasis was increasingly on the spiritual facts[.]" The Salvation Army, *The Sacraments: The Salvationists Viewpoint*, (London: Campfield press, 1987), 32-33. While this publication represented the sanctioned perspective for close to forty years, General Shaw Clifton further reified the perspective, "Here then is Salvationist sacramentalism in a nutshell. It is closely interwoven with our understanding of mature spirituality, the sanctified life in the secular world and the blessing of a clean heart ... [n]o part of our personalities is beyond the purifying touch of God, the Holy Spirit; ... that God

will work through such a life to impart grace to others, making of that life a sacrament; and that grace will be imparted to that life by all or any means chosen by God since the whole of the created order is sacred to the sanctified believer, making *redundant* the need to single out some particular element as a uniquely special agent of grace.” Shaw Clifton, *Who are These Salvationists: An Analysis for the 21st Century* (Alexandria, VA: Crest Books, 1999), 61-62, *italics mine*.

- ⁵⁰ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 443.
- ⁵¹ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 444.
- ⁵² Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 444.
- ⁵³ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 445.
- ⁵⁴ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 449.
- ⁵⁵ Rightmire, *Salvation Army and the Sacraments*, 130-160, especially 159.
- ⁵⁶ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 399-400.
- ⁵⁷ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 400.
- ⁵⁸ Rightmire, *Salvation Army and the Sacraments*, 95.
- ⁵⁹ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 400-401.
- ⁶⁰ Cooke refers to deception as the contradiction of the Witness of the Holy Spirit with the witness of spirit of the man. The “sincere Christian is not ordinarily in danger of mistaking the Witness of the Holy Ghost for a natural impulse, or an enthusiastic emotion. But unconverted men are in danger, yea in great danger of mistaking some spurious impression for the testimony of the Holy Spirit. For, whatever impressions I may feel, if at the same time my conduct is habitually opposed to God’s word, my judgment and conscience must pronounce such impressions delusive.” Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 412.
- ⁶¹ George S. Railton, *Heathen England and What to Do for It* (London: S.W. Partridge & Co., 1877), 136.
- ⁶² Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 401-403, 405; Cooke grounds his claim in Old Testament examples, such as the “light of God’s consciousness” and “shinning of God’s face” as evidence of this divine favor (ps 11:7; Num 6:25-26), 405.
- ⁶³ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 411.
- ⁶⁴ William Booth, *A Ladder to Holiness: Being Seven Steps to Full Salvation*, as cited in Green, *Theology of William Booth*, 33.
- ⁶⁵ Green, *Theology of William Booth*, 33.
- ⁶⁶ Begbie, *Life of the General*, vol. 1, 173-174.
- ⁶⁷ Larsen, *People of One Book*, 91.
- ⁶⁸ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 48.
- ⁶⁹ William Cooke, *Series of Tracts on Christian Theology*, (London: John Bakewell, 1844), 3.

- ⁷⁰ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 48.
- ⁷¹ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 55.
- ⁷² William Cooke, *A Catechism: Embracing the Most Important Doctrines of Christianity, Designed for the Use of Schools, Families, and Bible Classes*, (London: Partridge & Oakey, 1851), 66, 68.
- ⁷³ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 55-56.
- ⁷⁴ Ordinances included: family worship, private prayer, social prayer, Christian Ministry and sacraments. Cooke, *Series of Tracts*, 61-66.
- ⁷⁵ Booth, *Founder's Messages*, 58-67; Booth, William. *Letters to Salvationists on Religion for Every Day*, (London: Salvation Army Book Department, 1902), 158, 162; cf. William Cooke, *A Catechism*, 72-76; William Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 55-56, 64-66.
- ⁷⁶ Booth, *Founder's Messages*, 61. In his section on the Bible, Booth uses language that is strikingly Chartist in tone when he implores Salvationists to read the Bible in order "to realize that the deliverance of men from the guilt, the power, and the indwelling of sin and of their being brought back to God, is the great object for which the book was written. That deliverance is the great purpose of the Word to-day. It is for us, then, as Salvationists, to give more heed to our 'Charter of Salvation.'"
- ⁷⁷ Booth, *Founder's Messages*, 66-67, *italics mine*.
- ⁷⁸ Cooke, *Christian Theology*, 55-56.
- ⁷⁹ Armstrong, "The Lord's Supper," 4.
- ⁸⁰ Booth, "New Year Address"
- ⁸¹ George S. Railton, *Heathen England*, 133.
- ⁸² Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 42-48.
- ⁸³ Railton, *Heathen England*, 141-142.
- ⁸⁴ Although Eason attributes a coolness on Booth's part to the Anglicans aspirations of making good communicants of Salvationists, it is important to note that such disagreements were not uncommon among nonconforming and dissenting groups with the Church of England during the Anti-Catholic/Anti-Ritualist conflicts so that the implication that this was the "tipping point" may be overstating the significance of this one aspect of the event. "Retracing the Steps to Non-observance," 67.

- ⁸⁵ An often overlooked fact, Booth was considered to be one of the foremost revivalist preachers of the Second Great Awakening in England (1859-1866) or the *1859 Revival*. Orr notes that William was an essential figure having been responsible for the conversion of thousands. In one account in Cornwall, Booth was said to be responsible for the conversion of 7,000. However, his success was often critiqued for the methods he employed and his disregard for church order when entering the circuits of other preachers uninvited or unannounced. In J. Edwin Orr, *The Second Evangelical Awakening in Britain* (London: Marshall, Morgan & Scott, 1949), 92, 113, 127, 137, 143, 167, 169, 196, 197, 215.
- ⁸⁶ Railton, *Heathen England*, 138-139.
- ⁸⁷ Begbie (and others) reference Booth's lament and misgivings over his decision to abandon sacramental purposes in later years. It is interesting that in the short account in this volume, Begbie mentions Booth's second-guessing not less than three times. Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 425, 428, 431.
- ⁸⁸ Railton, *Heathen England*, 180.
- ⁸⁹ Railton, *Heathen England*, 137-138.
- ⁹⁰ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 207; Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 426, 428.
- ⁹¹ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 440-443.
- ⁹² Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 445, 446.
- ⁹³ Cooke, *Christian Theology Explained*, 440-446.
- ⁹⁴ Begbie, *The Life of the General*, vol.1, 426.
- ⁹⁵ Cooke, *A Catechism*, 66, citing Mark 16:15, 2 Cor 5:20, 1 Cor 12:28 as proof texts.
- ⁹⁶ Booth, "New Year Address."

Book Review

Andrew S. Miller III

R. David Rightmire's *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army: A Study in Holiness Foundations* (Crest Books, 2016).

For years, Salvation Army scholarship has lacked a key ingredient. We have had a variety of historians, theologians, ethicists, musicologists, and other critical scholars devote their discipline and craft to analysis of the Army. The missing ingredient in Salvation Army studies has been critical engagement amongst Army scholars. David Rightmire's new and expanded edition of his doctoral dissertation, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army: A Study in Holiness Foundations* (Crest Books, 2016) provides a much needed dose of analysis and criticism in Salvation Army studies.

To be frank, we simply don't debate each other enough. Maybe we are too holy for such conversations, but we need confident thinkers like Professor Rightmire to hold a mirror up to our own theological personality to get a view of how we look. The answer, specifically as it relates to sacramental reflection, is often disjointed, inconsistent, and anecdotal, and some responses even flirt with heresy. I am not saying that The Salvation Army's position on sacraments is heresy, but Rightmire's thorough analysis shows that some of our writers and leaders have dipped their toes in the waters of heresy to find a way to describe our non-practicing sacramental observance.

I have seen Rightmire's study on the sacraments now in three forms, first as his PhD dissertation at Marquette University, and second as the published version of that dissertation, *Sacraments and the Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations* (Scarecrow Press, 1990). I read every page of the published version multiple times and often wondered why other writers didn't reference this work, which was the only comprehensive study of the subject in existence. The limits of

circulation from an academic press hampered its accessibility. Those limitations are now loosened by the publication of this expanded edition.

Salvationists are often looking for a quick soundbite to explain our sacramental distinctions within the body of Christ, and generally a short pamphlet or 500 word article can “do the trick” to help accomplish that task. Here’s the problem: Over the 134 years since 1883, these non-comprehensive soundbites have lacked theological cohesion. Rightmire’s new version of his earlier work is an answer to this “soundbite” problem and gives us a clear example of how to analyze the praxis of Salvation Army theology.

The beginning of the book uses the same blueprint and basic content from *Sacraments and The Salvation Army* that I scrutinized as a seminary student. It’s easy to notice the fact that the style has been updated and his research refreshed by new data and sources. It’s in this section that you will see Rightmire interacting with other historians about the best way to think about the early Army and its theological understanding. Here Rightmire grinds to his thesis that the Army and its founders abandoned the use of the sacraments because its holiness theology called for “closer communion” with Christ marked by baptism with the Spirit. Later he shows this as the ontological dimension of entire sanctification experienced through calls to experience sanctifying grace (“perfect love”). This emphasis eclipsed sacramental practice in worship. The Army, during the life of William Booth, was so centered on this reality and the need for personal experience of sanctification that external forms, meant to help as a means of grace, were thoughtfully discarded.

Rightmire buttresses this conclusion in Chapter Four by showing affinities with Spiritualist theology. He dovetails this conversation in Chapter Five by presenting how the wider holiness movement exalted pneumatology over ecclesiology and sacramental theology. Chapter Six logically flows from the previous chapter illustrating how the Army embraced this shift specifically with the Army’s historical and theological evolution toward a “pneumatological priority.” This shift is demonstrated in part by Samuel Logan Brengle’s expansion of the early Army’s holiness theology.¹ Chapter Seven remains fairly unchanged from the earlier version of this book as Rightmire dissects Army writings and its “self-understanding” of sacramental theology.

The tonic for the lack of dialogue within the Army comes in Chapters Eight through Ten as Rightmire comprehensively evaluates the work of dozens of Salvation Army writers. He looks at books, chapters, monographs, magazine articles, and pamphlets to present the Army’s kaleidoscope of theological verbiage

on the sacraments. There is likely not a circulated word about The Salvation Army and the sacraments that Rightmire does not acknowledge.

In Chapter Eight, he gives thorough analysis to Clifford Kew's *Closer Communion: The Sacraments in Scripture and History*, the Army's official response to World Council of Churches publication *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*, and Phillip Needham's *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology*. The chapter details Salvationist articulation in the 1980s and 1990s and appropriately documents and analyzes the 1996-1998 International Spiritual Life Commission's (ISLC) contribution to the sacramental conversation within the Army. The ISLC Report itself is discussed as well as Roger Green's "Minority Report" which called upon the Commission to move toward sacramental observance. Shaw Clifton's responses to Green, most notably contained in his book, *Who Are These Salvationists?*, is given substantial and critical examination in Rightmire's important eighth chapter. Clifton's argument and demonstrative claims are rightly and appropriately contested. It would have been helpful to see the same level of critical engagement brought to Green's report as well. As someone who was not "of age" to participate in the conversation of the ISLC, I was delighted to learn that Green's report existed. *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army* has given me a fuller understanding of the context of conversation happening in the Army around the turn of the century.

Chapter Nine helpfully leads the reader through Salvation Army sacramental self-understanding from 2000 to the present day. On a humorous note, Rightmire shows throughout the book the "seemingly immortal" words of Albert Orsborn, "My life must be Christ's broken bread" as it accompanies a high percentage of sacramental discussion as a favorite "soundbite." Professor Rightmire provides helpful theological dissection of that hymn and its efficacy (see 199, 222, 237, and 265). The following books receive significant discussion in this chapter: Philip Layton's *The Sacraments and the Bible: Measuring the Salvationist Viewpoint Alongside Scripture*; Vibeke Krommenhoek, Johnny Kleman, and Antero Puotiniemi's *The Sacramental Army: A Salvationist View of Sacramental Living in a Nordic Context*. Both works are shown to be lacking in theological clarity and, in Layton's case, contain significant hermeneutical blunders. In this chapter, among other topics, Rightmire provides a review of the sacramental reflection of the 2010 *Handbook of Doctrine*. Finally, the recent proposals that encourage reintegration of sacramental practice by David Taylor in *Like a Mighty Army?: The Salvation Army, the Church, and the Churches* and Phillip Needham's chapter "Non-Practice of Sacraments in

The Salvation Army: Re-Considering the Decision 130 Years Later” both receive strong critical engagement by Rightmire.

Since the subtitle of this book is “A Study in Holiness Foundations,” Rightmire provides a unifying final chapter on doctrinal continuity concerning holiness theology. After tracing emphases of key authors like Brengle, Coutts, Yuill, Needham, Clifton, and others, Rightmire concludes, “The ontological dimension of entire sanctification, which implicitly informed Booth’s rationale for abandoning the sacramental practice, is missing in more recent Army literature and doctrine” (264). It is from this survey of holiness and sacramental writings that he points out the drift toward the heresy of ancient Docetism for the Army can exult the spiritual over the material. This final chapter provides discussion and insight that is rare in Salvation Army studies. It should be noted too that Crest Books’ publication of a book containing such thoughtful criticism is a healthy sign for the Army.

Rightmire, a historical theologian, unleashes the tools of his trade for the good of the Army and its self-reflection. He has not been a participant, per se, in these discussions. After reading this study there is a sense that we might ask, “Where is your *War Cry* article on the sacraments or your report to an international symposium?” If he had been involved in such discussion through the years of his academic career, it would have softened his ability to present Salvation Army scholars with the gift of this book. The strength and weakness of *The Sacramental Journey* is rightly connected to Rightmire’s discipline within historical theology. For example, I would have loved for Professor Rightmire to have included a postscript that started with this line, “In light of my decades of scholarly discipline on this subject, I encourage The Salvation Army to _____.” Naturally I am looking for that call, but Rightmire’s thesis has a laser-like focus on helping us, the Army, see how we have talked about the sacraments even when such talk has gone “off the rails.” Now that Rightmire has held up a mirror to our sacramental theology, I pray that we will have the courage to act on what we see.

Endnotes

- ¹ I am honored that my master’s thesis on William Booth’s eschatology made its way in this update as a footnote on page 146.

Book Notes

Reviewed by Roger J. Green

Yamauchi, Edwin M. and Marvin R. Wilson. *Dictionary of Daily Life in Biblical & Post-Biblical Antiquity, 4 Vols.* Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 2016.

This four-volume dictionary is a remarkable achievement by two Old Testament scholars. This dictionary was many years in the making as these scholars worked meticulously on various aspects of daily life in the ancient world. In each volume there are multiple topics in alphabetical order. Each topic is treated within the following historical contexts: the Old Testament, the New Testament, the Near Eastern World, the Greco-Roman World, the Jewish World, and the Christian World. Depending on the extent of the articles some of those divisions are further divided into various regions such as Mesopotamia or Egypt to explain and elaborate upon the contexts. This is an invaluable resource for all preachers and teachers of the Word of God. Understanding the religious, cultural, social and political contexts of various biblical topics is indispensable for the enrichment of all biblical texts. These four volumes should be a “must” for all libraries both within the context of Salvation Army training of officers and other libraries such as those associated with Christian colleges and seminaries. And even libraries affiliated with institutions that are not Christian will benefit from the extraordinary scholarship and research exhibited in this dictionary.

Sunberg, Carla. *Reflecting the Image: Our Call to Mirror Christ to the World*. Kansas City, MO: Beacon Hill Press, 2015.

Until recently, Carla Sunberg was the president of the Nazarene Theological Seminary. She recently was elected as the 43rd General Superintendent of the Church of the Nazarene, and along with five other General Superintendents will provide spiritual and administrative oversight to the denomination. Dr. Sunberg uses both Scripture and personal experiences to explain what it means for the individual Christian as well as the Church to move closer and closer to Christ in holiness, and ultimately to reflect the image of Christ. This book will be especially helpful to Salvationists because we are one with the Nazarenes in holding to the vital doctrine of holiness, and we explain the doctrine in similar biblical ways. *Reflecting the Image* will be extremely helpful to all who wish to be faithful to the biblical doctrine of holiness, and can be used for preaching, for personal devotions, and for group studies. Discussion questions at the end of each chapter are useful for reflection on the chapters and for application of the truths of the chapters to personal lives.

Tillsley, Bramwell H. *It is Written: The Collected Works of Bramwell H. Tillsley*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: The Salvation Army, 2016.

This book of collected works is divided into six sections of topics that have been developed by the fourteenth General (International Leader) of The Salvation Army. This is a compilation of General Tillsley's past writings, and so many of the readers of this book will be familiar with this material from reading past issues of the *War Cry* and previous books of the General, or from hearing General Tillsley preach. This book brings those topics together into one invaluable source. Commissioner William W. Francis noted this in his *Foreword*: "*It is Written* is a valuable and inspiring collection of writings that combine the author's lucid style and careful scholarship, without becoming ponderous and pedantic. To the contrary, the reader is swept along by the dynamic, transforming possibilities of what Peter described as '(God's) very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate in the divine nature, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires'" (2 Peter 1:4). Any study of the central biblical doctrine of holiness will be enhanced by reading this book.

Victorian Slum House, PBS, 2017

I generally reserve these Book Notes to written texts. However, occasionally a visual source becomes available that is worth highlighting, and this is such a source for anyone interested in the history of The Christian Mission and The Salvation Army. The Christian Mission was founded in 1865 in East London (referred to in disdain as the East End in the 1880s, but known only as East London when The Christian Mission was founded). We tend to romanticize life in East London in 1865 and even when The Christian Mission evolved into The Salvation Army in 1878. But this carefully researched and historically accurate PBS special shows what life was like in East London in the second half of the nineteenth century. It accurately unveils the squalor, the filth, the rat-infested living and working conditions of the poorest of the poor who lived in East London at the height of the industrial revolution. Some people worked up to twenty-two hours a day. Thousands of people were starving every day. Both the work and the working conditions were deplorable. Children played in open sewers, made all the more hideous by the remains of dead animals and occasionally of dead people. Suicide was often the way out, as was alcoholic intoxication of both adults and children. Much of this series takes place right on Whitechapel Road and on other streets where The Christian Mission began. These were the people and this was the neighborhood where the Booths were called to minister. These, Booth said, were “Our People.” And by the thousands, in spite of the most hideous conditions imaginable, many of these people found the Lord, lived lives of holiness, and became Christian Missioners and Salvationists. They are our spiritual ancestors who raised their sights from their miserable conditions and looked in faith to Jesus. This is worth remembering.



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