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A Publication of The Salvation Army

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**Word & Deed Mission Statement:**

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

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Contributions related to the mission of the journal will be encouraged, and at times there will be a general call for papers related to specific subjects. The Salvation Army is not responsible for every view which may be expressed in this journal. Manuscripts should be approximately 12-15 pages, including endnotes. Please submit the following: 1) three hard copies of the manuscript with the author's name (with rank and appointment if an officer) on the cover page only. This ensures objectivity during the evaluation process. Only manuscripts without the author's name will be evaluated. The title of the article should appear at the top of the first page of the text, and the manuscript should utilize *Word & Deed* endnote guidelines. All Bible references should be from the New International Version. If another version is used throughout the article, indicate the version in the first textual reference only. If multiple versions are used, please indicate the version each time it changes; 2) a copy on a disk or CD, using Microsoft Word format; 3) a 100-word abstract of the article to be used at the discretion of the editor (e.g., on The Salvation Army's web page or in advertisements pertaining to the journal). Please note that neither the hard copies nor the disk will be returned to the author and that all manuscripts are subject to editorial review. Once articles have been selected for inclusion, the deadlines for submitting final material for the journal are March 1 and September 1. A style sheet is available upon request.

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# WORD & DEED

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# Theology in Context

This is the second issue of a Festschrift dedicated to two outstanding Salvation Army officers, Colonels Earl and Benita Robinson. In their various appointments they have been leaders in the intellectual life of the Army, and the May issue of 2004 and this issue have been dedicated to them in the form of a Festschrift. A Festschrift is a longstanding academic tradition by which colleagues are honored through essays that are related to the academic discipline of those so honored. Commissioner Phil Needham, the territorial commander of The Salvation Army in the Southern territory of the United States, conceived of this honor, largely because of his longstanding relationship with the Robinsons during his tenure on the International Doctrine Council. It was he who arranged for the topics and the writers of these two issues, and we are also grateful to Commissioner Needham for writing the guest editorial for the first issue of this Festschrift.

This was a surprise to the Robinsons and they knew nothing about this until they received their hardbound edition of the May 2004 issue with a cover letter from Lt. Colonel Marlene Chase, editor-in-chief and national literary secretary. Colonel Earl Robinson was asked to write the lead article without realizing that his article would set the stage for a series of articles that would reflect his own personal historical and doctrinal interests. And Colonel Robinson well began that issue with the lead sentence of his article: "Salvation Army doctrines are

'Wesleyan' in that they arise out of interpretations of Scripture taught and lived out by John Wesley." Those distinctives, well established by Colonel Robinson, continue to be central to the theological life of The Salvation Army.

The first issue of the *Festschrift* raised important historical, doctrinal and contextual questions about that theological life. The article by Roger J. Green was a natural follow-up to Colonel Robinson's article because it set forth the relationship between William Booth and Methodism. There have been times in the history of the Army when that relationship has been ignored, and there have been failures to realize how the very distinct heritage of Methodism influenced William Booth and Catherine Booth as well. However, Booth was not a generic Methodist. He was one who consciously followed Wesley in the doctrines that were critical to him, the chief of which was the biblical doctrine of holiness. Here Booth was Wesleyan, and that heritage and influence found its way into the doctrinal statements and commitments first of The Christian Mission and then of The Salvation Army. By way of the life and ministry of the Booths, our theological life was clearly and firmly established in both Wesleyan doctrine and a Wesleyan framework for a way of life and a commitment to our neighbor.

That leads to the question that the three remaining articles of the first issue addressed. What about the Wesleyan theological heritage first in Great Britain, the home of the Wesleys and the Booths, and then in other places in the Army world? The Army preaches the gospel and ministers in various cultural and social contexts, in many countries, and in countless languages and dialects. However, in spite of this diversity, the unity of the Army comes from our doctrinal life and witness. And, in a sense, those three articles challenge us to make our biblical and Wesleyan theological distinctives clear so that our people not only will know their historical and theological heritage, but will have a sense of identity that is so important as they relate to other Christians. Our contribution to the greater Body of Christ will be solid only insofar as we know ourselves, are aware of our heritage, and are faithful to our own unique life and witness. The writers of the three remaining articles, Major Christine Parkin, Colonel Bryan Gordon Tuck, and Colonel Gudrun Lydholm, speak from a wide range of ministry in The Salvation Army, and with experiences in many countries of the Army world. The questions that they raise about our Wesleyan heritage are important and need to be heard as we continue to forge our identity for the future.

This issue of *Word & Deed* continues the theme of our Wesleyan heritage. Once again, the writers chosen for this issue are clear about the importance of delineating our identity, while at the same time they raise critical questions about that identity. However, the underlying thesis of this issue of the *Festschrift* is that none of us works and lives in a vacuum. We are all subject to various influences in our lives that direct our thinking and our way of life by virtue of the fact that we are social beings who are shaped by the communities of which we are a part. So, it would be impossible to study Luther without studying the pre-Reformation that influenced him. It would be impossible to study John Calvin without studying the influence that Martin Luther had upon him. It would be impossible to understand Karl Barth without studying the theological heritage that both shaped and challenged his thinking. And so it is with William and Catherine Booth and their Christian Mission and their Army. It is inconceivable that one would study the Booths without careful attention to the Methodist and Wesleyan heritage and influence upon them and upon their theology.

The lead article is by Commissioner Paul du Plessis who, like many of the writers of the first issue of the *Festschrift*, comes to this subject with wide international experience in The Salvation Army. He develops an understanding of the world mission of the Army that arose out of a Methodist context and makes critical comparisons and contrasts to Methodism's initial missionary zeal and that of the Army. In his present appointment as Commissioner for World Evangelization this is a pressing concern for this writer.

The article is followed by Dr. Jonathan Raymond's careful analysis of the social context of the theology and ministry of the Army, again as a reflection of our Wesleyan heritage. The importance of social groups to the Wesleyan revival of the eighteenth century is coming under scrutiny again in Wesleyan studies. And the question of how faithful the Army has or has not remained to that heritage, tradition, and strategy should be constantly before us. The importance of ministering in a social context and of challenging social structures is raised in the articles by Major Barbara Robinson and by Lt. Colonel Max Ryan and his son, Captain Geoffrey Ryan. The community of believers to which Salvationists belong is a biblical and Wesleyan community of care for our neighbor in faithful response to our Lord to love God and love our neighbor. Barbara Robinson makes a clear case that the Booths were followers of John Wesley in their social

responsibility and their ethical practices. These articles clarify how this is done in practical and compelling ways.

In many ways the Booths and their Army were radical in the truest sense of the word—they went back to Wesley to reshape and re-energize the mission of a community of believers as that community moved into the future. As the Ryans have written in their article, “Booth was a child of Wesley, and the Army he founded and which we have inherited is heir to the radical legacy that Wesley left.”

The final article by Lt. Colonel Ray Caddy challenges some of the assumptions made in the Festschrift about the Methodist and Wesleyan heritage of the Army. However, this minority opinion is important to the discussion and the reader is encouraged to read all of the articles including this one and then continue to search for the truth on his or her own. The editors of *Word & Deed* are convinced that a compelling historical and theological case can be made for the Wesleyan context of our doctrinal life together. However, our hope is that all the articles taken together will assist readers in making informed decisions.

This issue left room for only two book reviews, and we are indebted to Major Gordon Sparks for reviewing a classic by Donald Dayton and a relatively new book by the prolific Thomas Oden. Both of these works will help the reader place the Army within its broader Evangelical context as well as within its Methodist context. Donald Dayton’s book discusses the Evangelical context of our life and ministry, and the reader should pay special attention to what Dayton writes about William and Catherine Booth. Thomas Oden’s book on Wesley is invaluable in making connections from Wesley to the life and ministry of the Church both historically and in the present. The reader will want to apply the truths and insights learned in this book to the Army.

We are grateful to have been a part of this honor to our fellow Salvationists. We pray that these two issues will be invaluable to our readers, and thank the Robinsons for their leadership in our life together.

RJG

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# Echoes of Methodism in The Salvation Army's Commitment to World Mission

*Paul du Plessis*

The Wesleyan and Methodist Missionary Society had been in existence for just 16 years when William Booth was born in 1829. But Methodist commitment to world mission had begun long before that.

John Wesley's "All the world's my parish"<sup>1</sup> could be viewed as more of a statement on his itinerant mission than a commitment to world mission. Although he had spent some of his early years of ministry as a missionary in America, Wesley displayed a rather ambivalent attitude to "the world."

## **Fanning the Methodist Flame**

It was another ardent early day Methodist who had fanned the flame of world mission in the Connexion. Thomas Coke had been an Anglican curate in Somerset. After an undignified confrontation with his parish in 1776, he had asked John Wesley, by now 73, for guidance.

Instead of calling him out into the "world parish" of Methodism, Wesley advised him "... to go on in the same path, doing all the good he could, visiting from house to house, omitting no part of his clerical duty." Nine months later Coke was ignominiously dismissed from the parish, and cast his lot with the Methodists.<sup>2</sup> In one of his earliest conversations with Wesley, he asked: "I have no parish, no church, Mr. Wesley. What shall I do?" "Go, and preach the gospel

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to the whole world!" was the old man's reply.<sup>3</sup>

Through Coke's vision and perseverance the world parish of which Wesley spoke became a reality. He was the pioneer administrator of Methodism's developing world mission. Wesley retained a priority for his native Britain.

Wesley built a strong, living and vital church in Britain. Coke let it loose into the world.<sup>4</sup> Something similar might be said for The Salvation Army. Booth built a strong British base. It was his first commissioner, George Railton, who spearheaded the move into the wider world.

Coke's concern for the Church's mission in the world was his underlying motive. For him the Church was a means to an end, and that end was the salvation of the world. Similarly it was his concern for the Church's mission that made him an eager advocate of Christian unity.

### Unilateral Action

The year 1777 brought a group of Calabar princes from West Africa to England to plead for missionaries to replace some who had died there. Thomas Coke, by now effectively Wesley's aide-de-camp, was enthusiastic. Ever the realist, Wesley was not. He believed there was too much to do in Britain to think about the world outside it.

A year later Coke circulated an appeal letter:

I wrote Mr. Wesley and asked his leave to enquire among the preachers whether two of them will venture on this important mission. He said he should not discourage any of the preachers that might choose to go, "But they should know," says he, "that they carry their lives in their hands. Without a very peculiar providence of God they will not live there six months."<sup>5</sup>

Countering Coke's arguments, Wesley wrote to a Scottish minister: "You have nothing to do at present in Africa. Convert the heathen in Scotland."

No doubt sensing Wesley's continuing resistance, by 1783 Coke liaised with a fellow lawyer and drew up the first published plan for evangelization, *A Plan of the Society for the Establishment of Missions among the Heathen*. This too was circulated without Wesley's knowledge or agreement.

Coke was demonstrating the qualities which combined to make him so effective in driving the world mission idea forward. Salvationist George Railton, a

century later, demonstrated this self-same willingness to "go it alone." Ardour and sometimes unilateral action evoked resistance to the point of hostility. Coke's passion fueled his actions. His concern for people, especially the underprivileged, spurred him into a relentless determination to turn vision into reality. He probably did not pause to think of the consequences of his action, or if he did, he considered that divine direction over-rode any human loyalty. Yet personal loyalty remained. Witness his letters to Wesley which concluded: "My dear sir, with very great respect, your most dutiful, obliged and affectionate son."<sup>6</sup> Railton, too, in spite of his disagreements with the Army's leadership, remained a loyal supporter of the Founder to the end.

Wesley was understandably angry at Coke's impertinence. It was a challenge to his authority. He directed a scathing attack on his young assistant: "You are too hasty, Dr. Coke," he said. "If you had consulted me instead of acting so precipitately on your own ... The time is not ripe." And that was the end of it.<sup>7</sup>

Wesley had apparently already determined to send Coke to America. Technically still an Anglican without authority to ordain a priest or consecrate a bishop, Wesley did ordain deacons. He also "set Coke aside" to superintend the work in America. The man who had disapproved of Coke's independent action was now acting independently. Coke's work alongside that of Asbury in establishing the church in America bears its own witness of success. Even there they acted independently in setting up a conference which did not include "old Daddy," as Asbury called the father of Methodism. And worse still, they named themselves bishops, much to Wesley's annoyance.<sup>8</sup>

Some accused Coke of impetuosity and ambition. Not least among the critics was Charles Wesley, seemingly piqued by the influence the young Coke was having on his brother. But was it not the passion for world mission which led to this assumption of authority? And was this not a necessary ingredient for success in establishment of a denomination's commitment to the wider world? Why was the elder Wesley reacting as he did? Was he genuinely sending Coke to a major task? Or was it rather that the wider world provided somewhere, as Semmel suggests,<sup>9</sup> to send off rebellious and independent-minded colleagues?

Without imputing reasons or claiming identical motivation, there was a Salvation Army echo a century later. Booth sent Railton to America, and in later life "excommunicated" him to the world.

### Plans for Mission

In 1792 William Carey published his *An Enquiry into the Obligations of Christians to Use Means for the Conversion of the Heathens*. The dissertation set down a biblical basis for mission, gave global statistics, and stated two simple principles necessary for success: prayer and mission agencies.

Nine years earlier, in 1783, Coke had set down in just two pages six simple and practical points, his legal mind clearly evident. It gave a committee powers to:

- receive donations
- accept missionaries or those to be engaged in civil employment
- provide education, including language training for prospective missionaries
- support missionaries while abroad
- print scriptures or parts of it
- do anything else necessary to accomplish its purpose.

It also undertook to publish an annual report.

The plan concluded with an impassioned statement:

... all real lovers of mankind: ... will acknowledge the amazing change which our preaching has brought upon the ignorant and uncivilised at least throughout these nations; and they will admit that the spirit of a missionary must be of the most zealous, most devoted and self-denying kind: nor is anything more required to constitute a missionary for the Heathen Nations, than good sense, integrity, great piety and amazing zeal. Men possessing all these qualifications in a high degree, we have among us, and I doubt not, but some of these will accept the arduous undertaking, not counting their lives dear, if they may promote the kingdom of Christ, and the present and eternal welfare of the Fellow Creatures ...<sup>10</sup>

Coke's plan had not excited Wesley. Rack suggests that Wesley was consumed by the incorporation of the conference, and that this explains his lack of support. At this point denominational governance was taking priority over world mission.<sup>11</sup>

A century later, in 1889, Booth presented his own plan: *The Mission of the Future*.<sup>12</sup> The Army, like many other Christian bodies, met in the Exeter Hall for an annual stimulus to world mission. Christendom and the missionary societies were under attack—criticism that had built on Charles Dickens's concern for the plight of England's poor. He had alleged that "whatever Exeter Hall champions,

is the thing by no means to be done.”<sup>13</sup>

William Booth wrote:

I would resolve the entire Christian Church into one vast Missionary Society—its avowed purpose being the subjection of the world to God, and I would organise and support and govern for this purpose. And I should say that the first thing that would be proper for it to do would be to divide the nations of the earth up into two distinct classes, viz the friends, and the enemies of Jesus Christ. ...<sup>14</sup>

He then proceeded to outline his principles for the Mission of the Future:

- bring (the heathen) back to God
- publish the salvation which God has prepared ... in Jesus Christ, and ... persuade (the heathen) to accept it
- [assess] results in some measure proportionate to the calamities it seeks to retrieve
- send forth men and women in numbers somewhat proportionate to the magnitude of the work to be done
- support its activities financially on a vastly more liberal scale
- disown all methods and all agencies that are not able to produce ... results
- adapt ... to the ... habits, conditions and circumstances of the different races
- make every nation produce the force necessary to its own conquest
- self-support and reproduction, with respect to finance
- men and women ... possessed of the spirit of true Christian enthusiasm.

By comparison with Carey’s document, Coke’s plan had been functional. If anything, Booth followed Coke’s organisational rather than Carey’s scriptural emphasis. But it goes beyond both with an emphasis on results, appropriate investment, adaptation and the emphasis on developing local missionaries. When Railton first made contact with the Christian Mission in 1872 he described it as “a native agency.”<sup>15</sup> Both Methodism and The Salvation Army have been committed to the deployment of national full-time workers and leadership. But the extent to which the Army has retained central control militates against this ideal.

If it was “incorporation” that distracted Wesley from supporting Coke’s plan, then the “Darkest England” scheme probably distracted William Booth from further commitment to world mission. Little more was heard of the

"Mission of the Future." Even when Booth was overseas, he was in search of the "overseas colony" for the British poor. The salvation of the local population seemed to come second.<sup>16</sup>

### The Rebellious First Commissioner

George Scott Railton was born of Methodist missionary parents who had met while working in Antigua. Thomas Coke had served there too. Watson describes Railton as: "An incurable romantic, (who) glimpsed ... Wesley's vision of one parish, the whole world."<sup>17</sup> As a youth he had been inspired when reading of Christian missionaries. Undaunted by any thought of failure, he had, at the age of 19, journeyed to Morocco, to win the Moors for Christ, carrying a flag inscribed: Repentance, Faith, Holiness. This rather eccentric effort was an echo of Coke's venture into post-revolutionary France, doing the seemingly impossible for Christ.

Railton's brother told him of William Booth's need for an assistant. Railton was soon at Booth's side. Like the well-educated Coke, Railton brought a blend of linguistic and literary skills. The young idealist, Railton, matched the seasoned campaigner, Booth, during the crucial years 1872-1880. During these years the Army's internationalism together with several other denominational features developed. As William Booth's first lieutenant, Railton had a leading part in framing policies; some he initiated.<sup>18</sup>

Bramwell Booth wrote of Railton: "From the earliest days, and even, I think before the idea had taken possession of any other mind, Railton's conception of the future embraced the idea of a worldwide war."<sup>19</sup> Here was the internationalist that helped shape Booth's commitment to world mission. But if Methodism had required African pleas to provoke missionary action, then it was the Indian-born Frederick Tucker who precipitated the Army's entry into the missionary field in 1882.

Railton had returned from the United States by then, ordered back to London much against his will. In contrast to Coke's resistance to Wesley's orders concerning America, Railton had given in to Booth's. If the John and Charles Wesley/Thomas Coke threesome had ended with a John Wesley/Thomas Coke partnership, then the William and Bramwell Booth/George Railton triad had evolved differently. Father and son had become the partnership of Salvation

Army leadership. Wisbey observes that Booth needed Railton to help administer the rapidly expanding Army.<sup>20</sup> But Bramwell had taken his position as second-in-command. Railton would nevertheless have been able to advise the General on the India invasion.

But strains appeared over the growth of what the highly principled Railton regarded as “diversionary operations” within the Army. Here was an echo of the uncompromising Coke. Railton disapproved of activities like the trade department selling items not essential to the mission. He also objected to the strong disciplinary measures being introduced, arguing rather for mercy and reform.<sup>21</sup> Booth soon sent Railton to South Africa.

He returned to London and was editor-in-chief when the Army held its first International Congress in 1886. He wrote:

*India, Australia, North America, the Southern States, the Cape and even China will no longer any more than France and Switzerland and Sweden be names to many thousands of us ... But I trust that these are not the only peoples as to whose condition we shall be troubling till we have done our best for them ... let this great International gathering ... compel you to devote the rest of your life to the exaltation of Jesus, the only capable Ruler of any individual or of any people!*<sup>22</sup>

Like Coke, Railton had a heart for the marginalized.

Command in Germany followed. Railton led a German contingent to the 1894 Jubilee Congress, marking William Booth’s conversion. He had become increasingly disenchanted with further “diversionary operations”—a match factory, the Salvation Army Building Association, and finally the newly launched Salvation Army Assurance Society which had acquired the charter of the Methodist and General Assurance Society. He expressed his disapproval publicly.

Marginalization, if not dismissal, was inevitable. The remainder of Railton’s service was a sequence of missions in various parts of the world, some of which brought him into contact with other denominations and even other religions. Bramwell reprimanded him for his excessive zeal in attending Catholic mass or Buddhist prayers! But he was back at the front line, a missionary. His death in 1913 on a train journey in his beloved Germany, an almost unknown evangelist, was poignantly like that of Coke’s a hundred years before.

Methodism’s missionary administrator had pressed the Conference to allow

him to fulfill a life-long ambition to go east. In 1813 they had reluctantly agreed. He would finally become a front-line missionary. But his dream was not to be realized. Before he arrived in Ceylon he died, being buried at sea.

Murdoch suggests that the Army's commitment to world mission was transference from failure in their work among the poor in London's East End.<sup>23</sup> Who can dispute the unknown motives of the subconscious heart and mind? But other influences abound: missiological, theological and historical among them. All must have played their part. But it is in the lives of committed people, Railton among them, that we discover the zeal which gave the Army a foothold in world mission. They were more than missiologists; they were missionaries, they were more than administrators; they were activists.

The passion they exhibited, the risks they took and the misunderstandings they endured were echoes of their Methodist forebears.

### A Missionary Society and an Army

Rader observes:

In the years after 1890, Booth went through a period of fervent post-millennial triumphalism. He was confident that the Army had found the key to solving society's intractable problems, and that his militant branch of the church had been raised up by God to lead the world into a veritable heaven on earth. How much he was influenced by the Bible, and how much by Britain's naval conquests and overseas expansion, we do not know.<sup>24</sup>

The Evangelical Revival had been one of the main impulses for the flurry of missionary societies at the end of the 18th Century. Evangelicals, seized with the desire to snatch sinners from hell by conversion, naturally wanted to extend that gift to the heathen. The abolition of slavery, with its strong emphasis on the value of all humankind, had added impetus.

Though the Conference had established a committee (perhaps as one way of restraining its enthusiastic overseas missions director, Coke), it felt there was no need to have a separate body. A variety of influences, not least the spawning of missionary societies, ultimately prompted Methodism to establish its own Wesleyan Missionary Society in 1813. It was an organ of the church, and not an independent society.<sup>25</sup>

Semmel reminds his readers that "the decision to turn the expansive energies

of Methodism to the foreign mission field must also be viewed in terms of the inner politics of the Connexion ...”<sup>26</sup> But there were loftier reasons. One of the laymen at the inaugural meeting of the society expressed what a 21st century Salvationist would accept:

The doctrines of Methodism bind this duty upon us in a special manner, since we believe that in the gospel is provided a full, free and present salvation from all the moral evils consequent upon the fall of Adam, and that wherever the gospel is faithfully preached, this salvation is in reach of all. ... And since the duties of the gospel are imposed on us all, its benefits are offered to all.<sup>27</sup>

Arminian commitment to “the whosoever” added challenge. There were no elect! All might be saved.

The age-old debate about there being enough heathens in England had surfaced as the Connexion considered establishing a society. “Foreign missions will have the same influence on religion as foreign commerce has upon agriculture and manufactures, and as Christianity flourishes abroad, so it will flourish at home.”<sup>28</sup> Wesley had gone to Georgia “to seek his own soul’s salvation.”<sup>29</sup> The reciprocal benefit of the home and foreign missions on each other remain evident. Is that one of the reasons why Booth and The Salvation Army opted for a single organization?

The closest The Salvation Army has come to constituting a separate body to administer the mission-instituted parts of the Army has been the establishment of the Overseas Department at International Headquarters. In 1888 the Booths appointed Colonel Alex Nicol as permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs. By 1912 the word “foreign” was abandoned and the Army designated international secretaries as officers in the Overseas Department, and more recently Zonal Departments, through whom the General and the Chief of the Staff direct the Army internationally.<sup>30</sup>

When Booth established his Army it was to become a closely integrated network of congregations both in Britain and abroad. Here we see a model of international “connexion.” Sandall writes:

It is the one Salvation Army that leaping the seas has spread from country to country—it is indeed native to the whole wide world. In no country do Salvationists differ in spirit or practice from their comrades in other lands.

There is no Salvation Army missionary society; it is The Salvation Army on all its missionary fields, as in the land of its birth. It is everywhere one, not only in organisation but in the purpose so succinctly put into words by the General when he besought his soldiers everywhere to "go for souls and go for the worst!"<sup>31</sup>

At their enrollment as Soldiers of the Army, Salvationists witness: "... that they freely enter into this covenant, convinced that the love of Christ requires the devotion of their lives to his service for the salvation of the whole world." Is this global commitment the loudest and most fundamental echo of all? Methodism had always viewed every Methodist as being a missionary.<sup>32</sup>

The Salvation Army is an international movement with its work so closely integrated and administered that in this regard it is probably unique in Protestantism. It is a 21st century echo of Wesley's ideal of everything being under his personal control and direction—"the world my parish."<sup>33</sup>

## Notes

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33. My thanks to the staff of The Salvation Army's International Heritage Centre and of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society Archives, School of Oriental and African Studies, London, for their assistance with research, and to Professor Norman Murdoch and Dr. John Townsend for their helpful suggestions on the manuscript.

# The Implications of Wesleyan Theology for a Salvationist Understanding of Community

*Jonathan S. Raymond*

The Salvation Army continues to evolve from sect to church. While many may prefer to characterize the Army as a movement, nevertheless it looks more and more like a church with a distinct theology and the normal characteristics of a faith community with roots in the Methodist tradition. Salvationist writers characterize the theological roots of The Salvation Army as primarily Wesleyan.<sup>1</sup> If that is a fair characterization, then we may ask, "What are the implications of a primarily Wesleyan theology for the promotion of a distinctively Salvation Army faith community?" If Wesleyan theology does have implications for Salvation Army community, then what are the implications?

This is an appropriate question for four reasons: First, to say "Wesleyan Theology" is not only to speak of the attempt to recover a special orthodoxy, one grounded in an intentional embrace of Christian antiquity, but also to speak to a special orthopraxy, likewise finding its roots in the community life of the early church. It is incomplete to focus on Wesleyan thought to the exclusion of Wesleyan life. In Wesleyan thought and life, there is a reciprocal, interactive influence of the one upon the other. The theology derives from an understanding of the social interaction of God and man and the consequences of that divine-human dynamic experienced in community life. That understanding is best reflected in the life, thought, and writings of the early church community and it can

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teach us much today in our pursuit of redemptive, restorative community life in Christ.

Secondly, when we say "Wesleyan Theology," we move beyond incomplete (not incorrect) concepts of salvation as redemption and eternal life to more complete ideas of salvation also as restoration to wholeness and holiness.<sup>2</sup> We understand the potential of progress in the recovery of the image of God in human life, and the realized hope of unity and community with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit and with each other. In this sense, Wesleyan theology concerns itself not only with "coming to faith in Christ,"<sup>3</sup> repentance, redemption from sin, and its implications for eternity. It also speaks to a deepening acquaintance with God, an emerging holiness of heart and character after the likeness of Christ, and the living in Christian community a life of ministry and mission in partnership with God.<sup>3</sup> The Christian life then is one of purposeful journey, with exposures to God's grace, and encounters with the triune God along the way. The exposures and encounters are often social. They are occasioned by others who participate in Christian community together and who are themselves a means by which God's grace is given to each one.

Thirdly, "Wesleyan Theology" does not derive from a monastic-like experience of isolation, solitude, and life just unto one's self. Rather, life is social and therefore relational. It affects and is affected by others. Wesleyan theology speaks to the importance of a nurturing community, a social context within which personal progress in holiness, usefulness, and loving good works is possible.

Fourthly, for at least twenty years, there has been an increasing interest among Salvationists in viewing the Army as a faith community, as a people, and therefore as a church. While the Army lacks a doctrine that addresses its ecclesiological existence, it has experienced a certain degree of ecclesiological introspection evidenced in an emergent literature and discussion of its own ecclesial matters. Two examples are worth noting. Phil Needham, in his writing *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology*,<sup>4</sup> paved the way for Salvationists to think of themselves as community in several new, interrelated ways other than as an Army at war. Needham suggested a self-understanding of the Army also as:

1. A new humanity ... chartered by Christ
2. A redemptive fellowship ... created by the Holy Spirit

3. A pilgrim people ... called to a journey
4. An Army of salvation ... commissioned for battle
5. A nurturing community ... encamped for renewal
6. A colony of hope ... committed to the future.

In 2000, fifteen years after the publication of Needham's seminal work, The Salvation Army's International Doctrine Council published *Servants Together: Salvationist Perspectives on Ministry*.<sup>5</sup> Therein, the doctrine council devoted the second chapter to a discussion of community including reflection on the Army as an incarnational community, as part of the Body of Christ, as a community of friends, as a community of saints, and as a community of hope. A careful reading of this work suggests that the relational theology of John Wesley was inherited by the Army through the doctrinal commitments of William and Catherine Booth. They continue to be evident in the perspectives and foci of the emergent literature of The Salvation Army on the topic of its collective faith commitments and life in community. While influence of a Wesleyan theological perspective, then, may be present in recent Army literature on community, the relationship between the two does not appear to be intentional. In other words, the Army writers do not seem to turn deliberately to John Wesley for guidance in thinking through theological matters of community.

### Turning to John Wesley for Guidance

It is well documented that both William and Catherine Booth were thoroughly Wesleyan in their theology.<sup>6</sup> They were Methodists from their youths. Their thinking, writing, and living was primarily Wesleyan in nature. This directly influenced the doctrines of the Army then and now. Salvation Army roots go deeply down into the rich soil of Wesleyan theology and praxis. We may seek a greater understanding of Army roots not for nostalgic reasons, but because they provide insights that may be key to institutional renewal. We may look to Wesley and a discovery of our roots as one way of being equipped for renewal.

Wesley was deeply interested in the roots of the Christian faith.<sup>7</sup> In his early life, he taught Greek at Oxford. He would have his students read the Patristics. He maintained throughout his life an intense interest in the writings and the life of the earliest faith communities, or what he and others in his day referred to as "primitive Christianity." Wesley had not merely an academic interest in Christian

antiquity. He was passionate about the real need for renewal in the Anglican church of his day. He believed that a greater understanding of primitive, ancient Christian communities could help to bring a great awakening and renewal to the Church of England, which he did.

To be in touch with Wesley was for the Booths to be in touch with the very heart and soul of the earliest Christian communities, their structures, processes, challenges, and ways of living and discerning truth. The genius of John Wesley's legacy to the Booths may be found not only in the orthodoxy of this theology, but also in the orthopraxy of community life that he promoted initially throughout England, Ireland, the colonies, and eventually throughout the world. Wesley raised up a people called Methodists. Most Methodists were members of the Anglican Church, but not all. Anyone could participate in the Methodist societies, but it was Wesley's desire that the Methodist movement within the Church of England bring much-needed spiritual renewal to the church. This included the poor who were culturally Anglican, but at that time lived on the margins of Christian faith and practice and of society overall. In this sense, Wesley viewed the poor of England like the saints of Christian antiquity, socially existing on religious and societal margins, but having great promise in the Kingdom of God.<sup>8</sup>

Throughout his life, John Wesley held an increasingly clear vision of Christian antiquity as a model for community life, particularly as a "nurturing community." He was interested in promoting biblically defined community and as his theology evolved, so did his practice of Christian community.<sup>9</sup>

### **The Relevance of Wesley's Theology and Praxis for Community.**

More comprehensive overviews of Wesleyan theology are found in the works of other Salvationist writers. Few, however, have presented a fully orbed view of his theology and practice together. Such an exercise merits far greater time and space, but a brief overview may be helpful here toward achieving an understanding of Wesleyan distinctives in Salvation Army theology and their implications for Salvation Army community. The doctrines of The Salvation Army reflect a Christian orthodoxy found in classical Christianity consistent with Christianity's ancient creeds and fundamental to the Christian faith by all Christians, at all times, everywhere. Wesley attempted a recovery and integration of early church themes and truths resulting in some special, distinctive emphases

and insights into God, man, and the God-man dynamic. Wesleyan distinctives exist in the optimistic Wesleyan themes characteristic of Army doctrines:<sup>10</sup>

**Humanity**—while we are fallen creatures born with a sinful nature, there is also something good in everyone; God's grace is constantly at work before (preveniently) one is born again.

**Salvation**—forgiveness and new life (atonement) is available to all (universal) by grace through faith as the beginning of life in Christ leading to holiness and fruitfulness (good works); repentance is based on convincing grace followed by saving grace, regeneration by the Holy Spirit, and the inward witness of assurance that one is saved.

**Holiness**—a full salvation based on an ongoing freedom to live continually by grace or turn away (willful sin); holiness of heart (perfect love) is part of an ongoing process and progress (journey, pilgrimage) of a restoration of God's image and maturity in holy living reflected in increasing love, trust, and joy.

The two most helpful insights and guiding truths of Wesleyan theology for Salvationists may be its emphases on 1) God's intent on creation's restoration, including the restoration of mankind, and 2) his strategy of doing so socially, that is to say relationally, through human interpersonal interactions. In short, the theology is both restorative and relational. God's great, divine project is the restoration of humanity and all creation to his first and only idea of how life ought to be for him and for us. Furthermore, God has an infinite number of means (of grace) by which to carry out his plan, but his first and favored means of grace is people whom he calls to love God and neighbor. God calls us to a loving engagement with him and with each other as a chief means to the ultimate end of restoration.

God is a social being. Humanity is created in God's social, moral image. Wesleyan theology is not merely about the restoration of each individual to a life of holiness and usefulness. It also concerns itself with the restoration of all people. As divinely intended, we are being restored continually as a community of faith after the social image of God. Wesleyan theology presents a world view that is social, ecological, and therefore interactive. God by nature is not only in social context, he is social context. He is trinity and is therefore inherently, internally a social being. This is part of the Good News of the gospel. God has not left us without resources in the grand scheme of restoration. He has given us each other in Holy Spirit-filled, Holy Spirit-led community.

While involved in the social realities of community, the Holy Spirit guides us beyond merely being saved from the sin of the past to being continually saved from the power of sin in the present and saved to the promise of together being more and more like Christ (holiness) in the present and future. As a people living together in obedience to God's commands, we progress together in the journey. His commands anticipate responses which are social in nature: love the Lord ... a social, interactive act of the will; love your neighbor ... a social, interactive act as well; make disciples ... again, this requires social interaction.

The genius of Wesley is that his relational orthodoxy is complemented by a relational orthopraxy. When people came to faith in Christ in response to Wesley's preaching, often in the out-of-doors, he followed a pattern set by the earliest Christian community: he promoted their ongoing participation in small, nurturing social contexts (small groups) often in one another's homes.<sup>11</sup> Their purpose was threefold: They were to 1) be responsive to each person's needs, 2) tap into each person's giftedness and God-given abilities as a resource for others, and 3) provide an accountability framework whereby each person could stay the course and remain faithful to the Lord and to one another in their daily living. Acts 2:42 gives further detail to the nature of their fellowship: They continually devoted themselves to various means by which God could impart his grace to them individually and as a people. The means of grace were 1) the apostles' teachings; 2) fellowship; 3) the breaking of bread; and 4) prayer. These were social, interactive means. They took place among and between others. They promoted growth in each one and in the church as a whole body. God's grace worked in them to occasion transformation both qualitatively and quantitatively. Acts 2:47 says, "And the Lord added to the church daily those that were being saved." A Wesleyan and hence Salvationist understanding of the phrase "being saved" would be more than redemption. It would connote restoration to holiness and usefulness in ministry and mission. By various socially grounded means of grace, the Lord promoted a social holiness in and among those of the earliest Christian community. To live in Christian community was to be immersed in the social means of grace from which derived a social ecology of holiness often referred to in Scripture in the Greek as *koinonia*.

It is the *koinonia* of the early church that Wesley's theology illuminated when practiced.<sup>12</sup> The Methodist society's forms and structures of class meetings,

bands, select groups, penitent groups, etc. were modeled after early church social contexts. They served to bring people into a *koinonia* of deep intimate fellowship and accountability with the Lord and with each other. They were the principal means by which Wesley sought to bring renewal to the Church of England and deep, lasting cultural change through a vision of revitalized, apostolic Christian community—a vital, renewed community of “new creatures in Christ.” Wesley saw this as God’s ultimate will for the unity of all Christians at all times everywhere in sacred, sanctified community. In Wesley’s thinking, Christian growth, individually and as a faith community, was normative. It was not just for the religious zealot. Wesley was not interested in creating another institution or organization, but in renewing and deepening the existing one, not for a few extremists, but for all who would pursue the disciplined life in the Spirit. His primary strategy for church renewal was to promote personal and social holiness through the *koinonia* of small, disciplined groups who practiced the many institutional and prudential ways and means by which God could pour grace into their lives and shape them into authentic, Christian community.

The intended consequences of Wesley’s vision and grand project was to raise up communities of authentic Christians whose collective acts of living their faith would result in the renewal, reformation, and restoration of others, of the church, of society, and of creation. The actual result of the Methodist movement in Britain toward the end of Wesley’s life resulted in profound societal reform that stands in stark historical contrast to France’s neo-paganism and its bloody, violent revolution during the same period. Renewed Christian communities, and the transformed lives of the members of those Christian communities, served as a kind of holiness leaven in the whole loaf helping the culture and the nation to be renewed and in part restored in its civility and humanity. Wesley’s orthodoxy overflowed into an orthopraxy that demonstrated that contexts of social holiness serve to transform people, whole communities, and nations. The same is said for the impact of Wesley’s Methodism fifty years later on the still relatively new American culture and nation. A large percentage of the American population identified themselves in some way with Methodism by 1850, and the hegemony of Methodism at that time is well noted by historians and theologians.<sup>13</sup> This alone may lead one to conclude that Wesley’s work laid a profound and powerful foundation for the spiritual, theological, and practical

origins of The Salvation Army through the character and calling of William and Catherine Booth.

The implications of Wesley's theological and practical work for Salvation Army community is also found in Methodism's preferential option for the poor.<sup>14</sup> Wesley promoted a kind of egalitarianism that was countercultural at the time. Like Jesús, he modeled an interest in and a pro-active bias toward poor, destitute people. The most profound practice of a preference for the poor is seen clearly in the composition of the Methodist Society's small groups. They were composed of persons from all social-economic strata of England, Ireland, Australia, Tasmania, America, and wherever in the British Empire there were Anglican churches and Methodist meeting houses. Moreover, the leadership of small groups was not determined by social class or personal economics.

Out of the small group fellowships emerged naturally a great tide of social service and compassion for the poor, orphans, widows, prisoners, and others who were best known and cared for by the members of the local Methodist fellowship. Not only did Wesley mobilize tens of thousands of small group social contexts (ecologies) of holiness at the local level promoting holiness and cultural transformation, his work also occasioned a sustained outpouring of compassion, volunteerism, and social welfare at the grassroots level. In and through countless expressions of authentic, Christian community, his theology of perfect love became real for his generation and subsequently for those to follow.

In the early days of The Salvation Army, the Booths appropriated the theology of John Wesley and the Methodists to wage a war against sin and hell. Theirs was a salvation of both pardon and healing. With time, their theology of a salutary, spiritual salvation (as opposed to merely forensic), and of holiness and restoration, included a social salvation through service to others. This was especially true of the Army's eventual compassion for the poor expressed in acts of mercy. They waged a war not only of spiritual salvation from the uttermost of sin to the uttermost of Christ-likeness, but of social salvation from the consequences of personal sin and societal evil as well. In time, however, the Army maintained much of the Wesleyan distinctives in its theology, but not necessarily its practice, and in many places around the world it lost its primary identification with its Wesleyan beginnings and roots in both theology and practice. One might say that in some cultural settings, the Army never intentionally embraced those Wesleyan

roots to begin with, but instead reflected the theology of the culture in which it operated.

### **Reclaiming a Full Heritage toward Community**

The question arises whether a Salvationist community can be established and/or strengthened by going beyond a Wesleyan orthodoxy of personal holiness to embrace in practice a Wesleyan orthopraxy of social holiness in community. To do so would be to reclaim and affirm its' full Wesleyan heritage and rise to a new level of faithfulness in making disciples by more thoroughly establishing them in the Kingdom. This question is posed out of a concern that The Salvation Army in its early days embraced only partially its Wesleyan roots, its theology (orthodoxy). It never really worked out and lived out its collective Wesleyan practice (orthopraxy) so helpful in Wesley's days to the development of strong Christian communities. The reasons for this may be the same as those attributed to the Booths in explaining why the Army does not have a doctrine of ecclesiology. The Booths were post-millennialists caught up with a great sense of urgency to help usher in the Kingdom. When converts came to faith through the evangelistic efforts of the Army, they were often swept into the Army's war against sin and often not established strongly in their faith through intentional discipling. In the context of a post-millennial enthusiasm for the Lord's return, the idea likely just did not occur to William Booth to establish enduring, resilient, effective communities through disciple-making social structures like those that John Wesley promoted in the previous century.

Moreover, the hierarchical structures of the Army may have worked against more egalitarian, participatory social arrangements like Wesley's class meetings, bands, and penitent small groups. While Wesley may have been authoritarian in his style of leadership, his passion was to restore the church to its primitive, early ways and means of being a community of scriptural holiness, faithful to the great commandment and Great Commission. In significant ways, then, Wesley and Booth may have differed in their mission and goals. Finally, both William and Catherine Booth may have been so strongly influenced by American revivalism and the importance of the will in occasioning an instantaneous consecration/sanctification crisis experience of holiness, that the result possibly could have been an emphasis on free will and a crisis experience of holiness over and above

that of process through the complementary, long journey of growing in grace and Christlikeness within the nurturing context of community.

The Salvation Army no longer pursues Kingdom ends of redemption and restoration in the light of the founders' post-millennial sense of urgency. As it evolves more and more into the posture of a church with an ecclesiology and a settled orthopraxy, its challenges are two-fold. First, it must not lose its evangelical fervor, but rather maintain a sense of urgency about the task of evangelism helping others to become established in the Kingdom. Second, it must intentionally create nurturing contexts of discipleship, the social ecologies of holiness. It must strengthen its capacity to function as a nurturing community of disciples who both grow in grace and the likeness of Jesus (the process of holiness) while encountering Christ through the in-filling of the Holy Spirit (the crisis of holiness). A Wesleyan orientation to community permits a synthesis of a traditional understanding of both evangelism and discipleship. A discovery of authentic, Christian community after the model of the early church conceives of evangelism and discipleship as a continuum, a progression, a journey and a pilgrimage.

One way of conceiving of evangelism in faithfulness to a Wesleyan perspective is to consider it to be concerted, sustained community effort to establish each other in the Kingdom. Evangelism is seen then as a faith community pursuing together on behalf of all members and participants a full salvation. The pursuit moves from a pre-conversion discovery of Christ, through coming to faith in Christ as Savior, experiencing him as friend, seeking the full in-filling of his Holy Spirit, and being compelled by God's love to ministry and mission, hence usefulness and partnership with Christ. It is the collective response to the great commandment to love one's neighbor as one's self and to do so in and through community. It is, paradoxically, the ongoing process of rejecting intentionally a debilitating individualism, a dying to self, and at the same time a finding of self through surrender to the best interests of the faith community.

### **Principles Guiding Practice**

When we look closely at Wesley's nurturing communities as continua of grace reflected in his continua of small group social contexts, we see the following principles that may guide us in the promotion of our own nurturing faith communities:<sup>15</sup>

1. **There is something for everyone**—regardless of where you were in your faith journey, the faith community is there for you with a small group opportunity to address your needs and potential for progress.
2. **Everyone's nature is perfectible**—by God's grace mediated and provided by God through the means of others. All people can and should reach toward perfection—the likeness of Christ in holiness—and expect to attain it.
3. **Human progress is possible through doing**—participating socially in the “means of grace” made available by the faith community in small groups, not by acting as isolated individuals. Community is something to be experienced—doing something, doing something that makes a difference, and finally knowing what difference it makes; being “doers of the word and not hearers only.”
4. **The spirit and practice of primitive Christianity can be recaptured**—in pursuing the models found in the earliest faith communities (and in Wesley's legacy as well). The church, like all human organizations, can drift from its divine moorings and get off course. It is possible to correct these deviations and return to a faithful orthodoxy and orthopraxy of authentic Christian community.
5. **Authentic Christian community is inclusive**—it includes the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized along with everyone else, and its inclusion is reflected in its leadership as well as its membership.
6. **The primary function of leadership is to equip others to lead and minister**—not to perform the ministry personally. Authentic Christian community by way of small groups builds leadership, shares leadership, and builds up the body of Christ, equipping the saints for the work of ministry.
7. **Social evil is not to be resisted, but overcome with good**—authentic Christian community promotes movements for social reform by creating change in systems by changing the individuals that make up the systems. This is true of correcting the ills of society in general and the problems within the organization of the church as well. Through the nurturing of small social groups, the members of the faith community are strengthened and equipped to help redeem victims of social injustice not by resisting evil, but by overcoming evil with good.

### **Small Group Strategies for Building Community**

The system Wesley developed by experience over time evidences a composite of serious, no-nonsense strategies<sup>16</sup> that hold promise for the creation of Salvationist community today. These strategies include:

1. **Interlocking groups** that reflect opportunity for every person. This is the intentional provision of a continuum of God's grace permitting progression in salvation from pre-conversion (prevenient grace), to conversion (justification) through maturity and purity of heart (consecration and sanctification), to ministry and mission (glorification).
2. **Developmental readiness** reflected usually in participation that begins in a group with a focus on behavioral (lifestyle) change followed by groups that focus on affective, inspirational, and if necessary rehabilitative change.
3. **Constitutional authority** that includes rules of participation for everyone at each level not made by individual leaders, but by a system that promotes progress and community.
4. **Total participation and mobilization** in which everyone actively participates (speaks, shares) in the weekly meetings of the group.
5. **Accountability by surveillance** and, if necessary, eventual exclusion for noncompliance. There is an active awareness of needs and progress and members are either willingly active in their participation or not. Those not actively participating are understood as non-cooperative and are "out." Participation is never occasional or reflected in casual attendance.
6. **Egalitarian leadership** that emphasizes small groups led by lay people (men and women) appointed, not elected; trained mostly by other lay leaders; whose qualifications were their faithfulness in the pursuit of their own spiritual journey. This stands in stark contrast to the idea that leadership is something that primarily the clergy do.

### **Fidelity to Wesley's Legacy and Army Mission**

Organized faith communities are susceptible to the same realities of other human organizations. Given enough time they experience disorder, disintegration, decay, entropy, and unraveling and drift into serious need for renewal. This situation characterized the Holy Catholic Church and led to the Reformation in

Luther's time, to lay renewal within the Church of England in John Wesley's time, and renewal efforts within many "mainline" churches today. Wesley's grand social experiment was an attempt to bring revival, renewal, and restoration to the Anglican Church through the mobilization of the laity into the community model of the earliest faith communities. It may be fair to say that his efforts fall more into the camp of the "restoration churches" than reformation churches.

To the extent that The Salvation Army is subject to the same forces of organizational drift, disintegration, or decay, it must look carefully at options for renewal. It must take seriously the principles and strategies for renewal that hold promise of blessing by God promoting a return to community vitality, ministry, and mission. At the heart of John Wesley's legacy is guidance for today that emphasizes: 1) small group social contexts as the essential, core elements of a nurturing community, 2) lay leadership that recruits and develops others for leadership, and 3) a sustained, optimistic expectation of progress and restoration in the journey together of all members of the community to holiness and usefulness in the Kingdom. In its Wesleyan roots and heritage, the Army may rediscover a theological fidelity and an orthopraxy of community. In the face of the ongoing challenge of renewal, the Army may turn to the practical, spiritual legacy of John Wesley that holds great promise for the Army's fidelity to its collective calling of ministry and mission in Jesus' name.

## Notes

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8. Kenneth Carter Jr., "Recovering Human Nature through Christian Practice," *Quarterly Review: The Ongoing Significance of John Wesley for United Methodism*, Vol. 23, No. 1 (Spring 2003), pp. 51–53.
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11. Wilson T. Hogue, *The Class Meeting as a Means of Grace* (Chicago: W. B. Rose, 1916). This gem serves as a handbook and guide to the old Methodist class meeting. It was written at a time when participation class meetings were still a popular innovation in many Methodist churches. See also D. M. Henderson, *John Wesley's Class Meetings: A Model for Making Disciples* (Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 1997). This work provides an up-to-date overview provides a comprehensive look at John Wesley's method of evangelism and discipleship, the foundational principles, and the group and leadership strategies used by Wesley so effectively to create a revolution of renewal within the Anglican Church and British culture in Wesley's day and for many years thereafter.
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13. See for example the section entitled "The Growth of Methodism" in Winthrop S.

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# The Wesleyan Foundation of Salvation Army Social Work and Action

*Barbara Robinson*

In the part of the world where I live, it is not uncommon for a town—even a very small town—to have two Ministerials. One represents the interests and issues of those churches we describe as “mainline”—the Presbyterians, Anglicans, Roman Catholics, Lutherans. The other group is made up of a broad array of self-proclaimed “Evangelicals”—Baptists, Pentecostals, Methodists, Nazarenes. Curiously, the Salvation Army officer is generally expected and welcomed at both. Double the “pleasure”—double the scheduling headaches!

For a long time I interpreted this “dual citizenship” as representing a kind of community pragmatism. After all, The Salvation Army is a dependable and solid community partner—and fires and floods are denominationally indifferent. We seek to respond to the needs of all “without discrimination.” So, it seems savvy for the churches—all of them—to have us on board.

It has taken me longer to recognize that there is more than practical self-interest behind this organizational popularity. There is theology involved! Ecumenism is a Wesleyan distinctive.

It could be argued that the most enduring strength of the theological tradition we inherit lies in its inherent capacity for theological bridge-building. John Wesley’s eighteenth-century evangelical Anglican synthesis or “middle way” was constructed by a fruitful interlocking of Protestant and Roman Catholic,

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Reform and Arminian, Western and Eastern church perspectives. If there is truth to the claim that the post-modern church is increasingly post-denominational, what Wesley pleaded for as “catholic spirit” or “lively Orthodoxy” can continue to serve us well.

Because this issue of *Word and Deed* is a Festschrift honoring the contributions Colonels Earl and Benita Robinson have made to Wesleyan studies within The Salvation Army, I presume that contributors can include some personal comments.

I admit that I came late to Earl’s enduring appreciation for John Wesley. As a young officer, I would never have described myself as Wesleyan. Wesley’s works were not emphasized either in the College for Officer Training curriculum or as standard texts in the theological colleges I subsequently attended. With the establishment of William and Catherine Booth College, Earl endeavored to correct this denominational neglect. His consistent advocacy for the retrieval of this tradition could not help but influence all those invited to teach in Winnipeg.

My early disregard for the Wesleyan tradition was, I believe, skewed by the way it was frequently recast in the 19th century. As is often the case, much of the vigor of the primary source material was diluted in secondary or derivative scholarship. The nineteenth-century revivalism in which William and Catherine Booth were nurtured was selective in its utilization of the Wesleyan heritage. While faithfully furthering Wesley’s preaching of “scriptural holiness,” other major pre-occupations of the English reformer—for example, his distrust of sectarianism and schism, his passionate call for liturgical and sacramental renewal and his forward-thinking environmentalism—were all but ignored. Conversely, themes which received relatively minor attention in the Wesleyan canon such as conjecture around the kinds of experience or “second blessing” believers might expect on their faith journey were elevated to the status of theological distinctives in a range of proliferating “Holiness” denominations.

Despite this deviation in ecclesiological emphasis, in matters of social responsibility and ethical practice there was an unmistakable affinity between Wesley’s thought and that of the formative Army—an affinity which continues to inform Salvationist social ministry today.

From the earliest days of Wesley’s renewal movement within the Church of England, those committed to his “method” of spiritual formation were expected

to visit the prisons, care for the sick and work sacrificially among the poor. There were theological reasons why this was so. Through this paper I wish to consider three of them.

In the first place, Wesleyan theology is characterized by a highly integrated understanding of the relationship between faith and works. For John Wesley, good works or "works of mercy" were the *inevitable* outcome of justifying faith. Any faith without works was not genuine faith at all.

The relationship between justifying faith and works was a contentious issue for eighteenth-century Anglicans. While article 11 of The Thirty Nine Articles of Religion of the Church of England, *Of the Justification of Man*, used language which reaffirmed the Reformation insistence on justification by faith alone,<sup>2</sup> many Anglicans insisted on some evidence of "holy resolve" or prerequisite "holy orientation" preceding justification.

Early intellectual mentors of Wesley, such as Jeremy Taylor and William Law suggested that the disciplined practice of piety expressed in good works would, in a sense, cultivate the ground of the heart, and from such prepared ground saving faith would grow. As a young priest, pre-Aldersgate, this seems to have been Wesley's own expectation—and agony.

For Wesley, this came to feel like "putting the cart before the horse." After his own exposure to the uncompromising "sola fideism" of Moravian teaching and his personal experience of spiritual breakthrough, Wesley preached a rather different ordering. The gift of faith created new life, and this life, like a healthy tree, naturally and inevitably produced the good fruit of charitable works. He was quick to point out that his perceived "new" emphasis was simply a restatement of classical Anglican theology. Article 12, *Good Works*, stated,

Albeit that good works, which are the fruits of faith and follow after justification, cannot put away our sins and endure the severity of God's judgement, yet they are pleasing and acceptable to God in Christ, and do spring out necessarily of a true and lively faith, insomuch that by them a lively faith may be as evidently known as a tree discerned by the fruit.

"Salvation by Faith" was the first of four sermons prefixed to the first volume of Wesley's published sermons. Written and preached in 1738, it was his response to the accusation that the Continental Protestant emphasis on justifica-

tion by faith alone minimized the importance of holy living. It was a sermon in which he paid tribute to "that glorious champion of the Lord of Hosts, Martin Luther."<sup>3</sup> Wesley clearly saw himself as a fellow defender of Reformation doctrine. He also saw himself as a mediator. Even at this stage he was determined not to yield ground to antinomian tendencies he detected in Pietist spirituality. There was no such thing as a passive, undisciplined, socially disengaged Christianity: He wrote, "We speak of a faith ... *necessarily* productive of all good works and holiness."<sup>4</sup>

John Wesley maintained that there was a circularity to the faith/works/holiness relationship. The performance of the good works born of faith acted as a catalyst to the growth in holiness. "The more the believer submitted to being used as an instrument of the Spirit, the more personal faith, the believer's connection with God was strengthened."<sup>5</sup> Faith produced works and works deepened faith and demonstrated holiness.

Wesley never deviated from this central conviction. Almost fifty years later he would write, "If I have not the faith that worketh by love, that produces love to God and all humankind, I am not in the narrow way which leadeth to life."<sup>6</sup>

Secondly, Wesley's language of salvation emphasized God's healing or world-mending action. Wesley's vision of Christ's work was comprehensive and cosmic. Salvation effected a healing and restoration with implications for the entire created order.

As a keen Patristics scholar and admirer of the Eastern fathers, and as an individual with a perennial fascination with the science of medicine, Wesley characteristically used therapeutic rather than judicial language to describe the salvation process. Sin was a disease, "a disease with terrifying symptoms: pride, wilfulness, self-deception, blindness and a vast array of other disordered tempers."<sup>7</sup> To deal with such a universal plague, "The great Physician of souls applies medicines to heal the sickness; to restore human nature totally corrupted in all its faculties."<sup>8</sup>

William and Catherine Booth adopted similar therapeutic language. The events of salvation and sanctification were more than legal or situational transactions. They were occasions of profound, transformative healing. "It is not a scheme of salvation merely—it is a scheme of restoration. He proposes to restore

me—brain, heart, soul, spirit, body, every fiber of my nature: to restore me perfectly, to conform me wholly to the image of his Son.”

This had both pastoral and practical implications. Catherine Booth, like Wesley a century earlier, habitually made the role of the pastor in the care of souls analogous to the role of the physician in the care of bodies. She asserted, “It is of no use coming to a spiritual doctor any more than to a physical doctor if you are not frank; you would only mislead him.”<sup>10</sup> The pastoral need of countless people was to be brought to a clear and uncompromising awareness of the seriousness of their unregenerate condition. Christian revelation was a matter of “the convicting truth as well as the healing truth, the sword as well as the balm; the running in of the Divine knife as well as the pouring in of the Divine oil.”<sup>11</sup>

Practically, because Wesley excluded nothing in Creation from God’s world-mending interest, the implications for activism in “this world” were immense. To have the mind of Christ was to care as he cared—for the cosmos. It implied a Christian responsibility to seek, not only the healing of hearts and minds, but the repair of unjust social structures and inequitable economic relationships. The Wesleyan Christian “mind” was a mind purposively engaged in scientific exploration for the well-being of the earth. Every act or endeavor aimed at repairing, rebuilding, or reconnecting the human community was a component of God’s saving intention.

A third Wesleyan principle foundational for Salvation Army social ministries was John Wesley’s conviction that class boundaries and injustice could be overcome by incarnational community involvement. Strategies to create equity and advocacy for social justice would *inevitably* become matters of concern when Christians found ways to genuinely know the poor.

John Wesley insisted that each and every Methodist was called to direct, personal involvement with those who suffered. He maintained that the reason many Methodists neglected this vital Christian duty, therefore negating this logical inevitability of practical caring, was because too many of them remained unaware of the social realities surrounding them. Consequently he entreated his congregations to give themselves to incarnational involvement with the poor and the sick—to open their eyes and hearts.

“One great reason why the rich in general have so little sympathy for the

poor is because they so seldom visit them. Hence it is that, according to the common observation, one part of the world does not know what the other suffers."<sup>12</sup>

This Wesleyan emphasis on participation in the daily lives and culture of the marginalized rather than impersonal philanthropic initiatives became another vital principle for the ministry approach of The Salvation Army. Appealing to the life of Jesus as the model for ministry, Catherine wrote, "He did not visit the poor, he shared his life with them in holy comradeship."<sup>13</sup>

What Wesley did *not* believe was that acts of practical assistance or social care should ever be confused with evangelistic strategy. Christians were to engage in works of mercy in obedience to the words of Jesus and his law of love. Period! For Christ-like formation, "works of mercy" were both "real means of grace"<sup>14</sup> and essential to continuance in a state of salvation. But anticipated evangelistic outcomes were never to define the kinds of care or spheres of social involvement for Methodist ministry.

In response to the argument Wesley encountered that "Experience likewise shows that the trying to do good is but lost labor. What does it avail to feed or clothe men's bodies if they are just dropping into everlasting fire?"<sup>15</sup> he responded,

Whether they will finally be lost or saved, you are expressly commanded to feed the hungry and clothe the naked. If you can and do not, whatever becomes of them, you shall go away into everlasting fire ... It is your part to do as you are commanded; the event is in the hand of God. You are not accountable for this: leave it to him who orders all things well.<sup>16</sup>

It could be argued that there is, at times, considerable disjunction between this Wesleyan attitude and that of The Salvation Army. The intense and focused revivalism of our formative period has often resulted in the use of language which implies the desirability of an ever-present evangelistic agenda within social ministries.

In 1884, Catherine Booth delivered the sermon, "Sham Compassion and the Dying Love of Christ," a succinct critique of trends in late nineteenth-century social policy and philanthropy. It must be acknowledged that the social context she addressed was very different from the one faced by John Wesley. While Wesley sought to overcome widespread indifference to the plight of the poor, Catherine believed that Victorian charitable intervention had run wild. She was

reacting to the late-century proliferation of charities—a flood of what she termed “schemes without a Savior” or “religions of bodily compassion” which ignored serious soul-need. She ardently believed that much of the Christian activism of the period would only result in “a more eternal weight of misery at the cost of a little present relief.”<sup>17</sup> Consequently, she frequently wrote in ways which seem at odds with the Wesleyan heritage she claimed to cherish.

Remember that in the light of the judgement which is coming on, it will appear worse than useless to have expended your energies and powers on doing that kind of good which will not last.<sup>18</sup>

One can conjecture that although John Wesley would have whole-heartedly approved of the Army’s holistic activity, he would have cautioned Catherine about dualistic theological tendencies that emerged in her writing.

For example, Catherine’s preaching that Jesus “flings aside contemptuously the thought that living well in this world was a real benefit,”<sup>19</sup> would have alarmed him. In such an assertion it is likely that Wesley would have detected a strand of the world-negation or anti-materialism that he regarded as highly dangerous in the logic of the Quakers and Quietists of his own period. Wesley, with his passion to proclaim that absolutely everything in Creation was the loved object of divine care and infused by grace, believed that the Quietists stood close to the edge of a heretical abyss. Too often it seemed that they disdained what the Lord chose to bless. Wesley came to admire the Quakers for their anti-slavery stance and pacifist integrity. But of their theology, which would come to exert a powerful influence on Catherine Booth, he wrote, “between me and them there is a great gulf fixed. The sacraments of baptism and The Lord’s supper keep us at a wide distance from each other; insomuch that, according to the view of things I have now, I should as soon commence Deist as Quaker.”<sup>20</sup>

The twentieth-century theologian Karl Barth was a lifelong admirer of the composer Mozart. He started every working day by listening to his music. For Barth, it seemed that Mozart’s music gave form to the “exact texture of God’s world, of divine comedy,” and as he listened he found himself “transported to the threshold of a world which, in sunlight and storm, by day and by night, is a good and ordered world.”<sup>21</sup> John Wesley would have resonated with Barth’s remarks. Christians lived in a fallen and damaged world. They were not immune from ter-

rible suffering and hardship. But God did not abandon His creation and neither should his followers. Grace had been generously and indiscriminately spilled out upon the cosmos and it remained a good and ordered world deserving of care and compassion.

During his tenure in office, General John Gowans called upon The Salvation Army to “save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity.” This succinct, three-pronged statement of purpose quickly became lodged in contemporary Salvationist thought and has acted as a helpful guide to mission.

John Wesley’s 1743 statement of what became known as “The General Rules” acted in a similar manner. They focused Methodist piety and framed ethical practice. Members of his societies pledged to:

1. **Do no harm**—“by avoiding evil in every kind.”
2. **Do good**—“by being in every kind, merciful after their power.”
3. **Attend upon all the ordinances of God.** “Such are, the public worship of God; the ministry of the Word, either read or expounded; the supper of the Lord: family and private prayer; searching scripture; and fasting, or abstinence.”<sup>22</sup>

This, for John Wesley, was orthodox or catholic praxis. These directives “His Spirit writes on every truly awakened heart.” With the single exception of Wesley’s deep commitment to corporate participation in “the supper of the Lord” they describe Salvationist spirituality. The injunction to “do good” remains foundational for Salvationist activism. We are therefore legitimate heirs of this dynamic eighteenth-century English churchman.

## Notes

1. The designation "Evangelical" is always a problematic term for historians. For a helpful discussion and definition which has become the standard see D. W. Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain* (London: Unwin Hyman, 1989), pp. 1-19.

2. Dennis Bratcher, ed., *The Thirty Nine Articles of Religion Church of England* (Anglican) version of 1571, Article 11, *Of The Justification of Man*: "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deserving. Wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort; as more largely is expressed in the Homily of Justification."

3. John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, Third Edition, 14 volumes (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2002), 5:16.

4. Albert Outler and Richard Heitzenrater, eds., *John Wesley's Sermons: An Anthology* (Abingdon Press: Nashville, 1991), Sermon 1, p. 44.

5. Manfred Marquardt, *John Wesley's Social Ethics: Praxis and Principles* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1992), p. 99.

6. Wesley, *Works*, 7:56 (Sermon 91: *On Charity*).

7. E. Brooks Holifield, *Health and Medicine in the Methodist Tradition* (New York: Crossroad, 1986), p. 15.

8. Wesley, *Works*, 6:64 (Sermon 44: *Original Sin*). See also Wesley, *Works*, 6:223 (Sermon 57: *The Fall of Man*). "But can the Creator despise the works of his own hands? Surely this is impossible! Hath he not then, seeing he alone is able, provided a remedy for all these evils? Here is the remedy for all of our diseases, all the corruption of our nature."

9. Catherine Booth, *Papers on Godliness: Being Reports of a Series of Addresses Delivered at St. James Hall, London, during 1881* (London: International Headquarters, 1890), p. 165.

10. Catherine Booth, "Assurance of Salvation," *Aggressive Christianity* (London: S. W. Partridge, 1880), p. 71.

11. Catherine Booth, "Witnessing for Christ," *Aggressive Christianity* (London: S. W. Partridge, 1880).

12. Wesley, *Works*, 7:119 (Sermon 98: *On Visiting the Sick*).

13. Catherine Booth, "Sham Compassion and the Dying Love of Christ," *Popular Christianity* (London: The Salvation Army, 1887), p. 76.

14. Wesley, *Works*, 7:117.

15. Wesley, *Works*, 5:307 (Sermon 24: *Sermon on the Mount*).

16. *Ibid.*

17. Catherine Booth, "Sham Compassion," p. 64.

18. *Ibid.*

19. *Ibid.*

20. John Wesley, "Letters to Mr. John Smith, June 25, 1746," *Works*, 12:78.
21. Karl Barth, *Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart* (Grand Rapids: Wm B. Eerdmans, 1986), p. 11.
22. John Wesley, "The Nature, Design and General Rules of the United Societies, May 1, 1734," *Works*, 8:270, 271.

# Wesleyan Influence on Radical Salvationism

*Maxwell Ryan and Geoffrey Ryan*

In Christian circles, apart from the word "love," the word "radical" may count as the most overused and loaded with more meanings and connotations than can reasonably be sustained by one word. To describe other Salvationists as radical immediately conjures up in the mind's eye words such as young, lively, fiery, passionate, etc. A righteous rebelliousness against the status quo coupled with a penchant for the new and innovative are what people generally mean. But are *rebellion* and *novelty* adequate to explain what it means to be truly radical?

The word radical derives from the Latin *radix* which means root. While it carries with it definitions of newness and extremity, in essence it means first and foremost "arising from or going to a root or source." One can say, therefore, that to be radical is to return to the old—back to the future so to speak. Not, however, as a vain attempt to relive the glory days of history or simply to repeat the mistakes of the past, but to get a firm grip once again on first principles and to immerse oneself in the original vision as close to the source as possible. To be truly radical, therefore, is to move intentionally back into the heart of the matter, to re-orient, refocus and re-emerge into a fuller, more informed and effective future.<sup>1</sup>

Strains of radical Salvation Army expression emerge from time to time, right up to the present, and they are inevitably compared to the early day Salvation

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Army. Often such radical Salvationists intentionally identify themselves with those early-day pioneers, their passion and their fervor. Radicals intuitively hearken back to their forebears, to the "rock from which [they] were hewn" (Isaiah 51:1, NKJV). In fact it seems an indispensable characteristic of true radicals. In this regard, the Booths and their band of early day "radical" Salvationists were no different, for The Salvation Army was a radical movement in this sense of the word. As the Army's pioneers sought to forge a practical expression and outworking of the vision that God had given them, they too looked back to their Methodist forebears in the same way.

William Booth's formative years of ministry were undertaken in various branches of Methodism. Though his theology of salvation and holiness was Methodist, it owed much to the thinking and methods of the American revivalists Phoebe Palmer and the Rev. James Caughey. They were an inspired blend of nineteenth-century American entrepreneurial invention and Methodist evangelism in the revivalist tradition. Booth the evangelist adopted their philosophy and methods wholesale.

As William Booth's awareness of the poor grew and his vision increasingly shaped itself around this constituency of sinners ("the most glorious work in the Booths' lives—their mission to the industrial poor," as Roy Hattersley puts it<sup>2</sup>), he once again looked, consciously or unconsciously, to Wesley for help. Realizing soon enough that many of the roughs and toughs who were being converted easily drifted back into their old ways and habits, Booth was glad to build upon Elijah Cadman's militaristic jingoism by organizing his recruits into an army, with corresponding authority and discipline. A hundred years earlier Wesley—through his class meetings—unwittingly laid the foundation for Booth's rag-tag army. While Booth was accused of everything from megalomania to the institution of a new papacy, due to his strict authoritarian approach and his iron discipline, he was only emulating Wesley who, for all his good qualities, can certainly qualify as the original micro-manager.

As evangelism professor George Hunter puts it, "When John Wesley was asked what made eighteenth century Methodism different from the polite, proper and powerless conventional religion of his land, he gave this simple explanation: 'The drunkard commenced sober and temperate. The whoremonger abstained from adultery and fornication, the unjust from oppression and wrong. He that had been

accustomed to curse and swear now swore no more. The sluggard began to work. The miser learned to deal his bread for the hungry and to cover the naked with a garment. Indeed the whole form of their life was changed.' Standing on Wesley's shoulders, William Booth counseled The Salvation Army to 'go straight for souls, and go for the worst.'"<sup>3</sup>

It would not be overstating the case to say that Booth's Army was radically Wesleyan in thought and in deed. Below is a verse of an Army "war song" written in 1879 by George Scott Railton years before the 1890 publication of William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, a seminal book that laid the foundation for much of the modern welfare state.

O the blessed Lord of light,  
 We will serve Him with our might,  
 And His arm shall bring salvation to the poor!  
 They shall lean upon His breast,  
 Know the sweetness of His rest;  
 Of His pardon He the vilest will assure.<sup>4</sup>

What did it matter to Booth that his contemporary, the well-known and powerful Professor Thomas Huxley, taunted Booth and his followers for their "corybantic Christianity"?<sup>5</sup> Booth knew that "salvation for the poor" was more than a pie-in-the-sky religious sentiment; it was reality for many who joined the turbulent movement he had birthed.

His hero John Wesley wrote in the preface to the first Methodist hymn book, published in 1739: "The gospel of Christ knows no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness."<sup>6</sup> Salvation for the poor included the whole of life, not just the religious ritual. Booth knew that it was useless to preach to a person whose belly was empty. Feed and clothe the people, shelter them and if possible find them work—this was all part of songwriter Railton's "salvation for the poor." Wesley's radical concept of social holiness—an integral part of early Methodism—was one of the major forces that motivated William Booth.

The publication of *In Darkest England and the Way Out* was the logical outworking of Booth's adoption of Methodist ideas of social holiness. Though the concepts have been modified through the years, in broad outline the book guides much of what the Army does today.

Seeds of the dual nature of Salvation Army service are revealed in a

Christian Mission report that stated: "The Mission distributed food and clothing, opened soup-kitchens and provided free teas. 'Maternal societies' for poor mothers were established and the poor were visited daily." But William Booth did not allow himself to be stampeded either into distributing food and clothing indiscriminately or into losing sight of the Mission's first objective.<sup>7</sup>

For John Wesley, whose life nearly spanned the 18th century, salvation was broader than having one's sins forgiven; it meant a new quality of life for the whole person. When he was a student at Oxford he and some like-minded friends formed what was derisively called "the Holy Club" by their detractors. These ardent Christians were aware of the need to make religion practical by meeting social need. The club did practical social work, which was the precursor of work done by the Methodists: visiting prisons, the poor, and workhouses, and establishing schools. They also provided food and clothing, visited the sick, gave free medical care, provided a loan fund and an employment bureau.<sup>8</sup>

Wesley's concept of social holiness is fleshed out by the entry in his *Journal* of 7 May 1741 in which he urges his people to open their hearts to the needy ... to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked, to employ the poor, and to visit the sick. He further instructed them: "1. To bring what clothes each could spare, to be distributed among those that wanted most; 2. To give weekly a penny or what they could afford for the relief of the poor and sick; 3. To employ all women who were out of business, and desire it, in knitting." In 1746 Wesley opened clinics and gave free medicine to the poor, and in London he established four centers for the sole purpose of helping the sick and infirm.<sup>9</sup>

Wesley had trenchant words about the evils of slavery, alcohol, smuggling, and plundering. He was outspoken on the evils of war and had straight words about politics. Though this did not endear him to the comfortable and privileged, the poor and oppressed welcomed him as their deliverer.

Historians agree that the social conditions in which Wesley and Booth lived were equally appalling. "In 1738, the year of Wesley's 'conversion,' Bishop Berkeley declared that morality and religion in Britain had collapsed 'to a degree that has never been known in any Christian country. Our prospect,' he continted, 'is very terrible and the symptoms grow worse from day to day ... The youth born and brought up in wicked times without any bias to good from early principle, or instilled opinion, when they grow ripe, must be monsters indeed.'"<sup>10</sup>

George Scott Railton, one of the better educated Salvationist pioneers, wrote about life in the East End of London in mid to late Victorian times. "To see little ones going to the public houses for father's beer, and sipping it on the way home; to know young men who are fast becoming drunkards and gamblers, and young women who laugh at shameless songs; to know old men and women tottering on the brink of the grave, who laugh and joke at the drunkenness and vice of their sons and daughters and neighbours ... to live amongst these children of hell—is it not enough to make anybody who wishes to get to heaven anxious to do everything to snatch them from ruin?"<sup>11</sup>

Wesley cited many examples of early Christians whose social work grew out of love. He was impressed above all else by the degree of love the first Christian communities enjoyed. What served as examples for his congregations were not the customs about outward appearance, but deeds and activities arising out of love, such as visiting the sick, sheltering the destitute, and helping those in distress.<sup>12</sup>

Even though Wesley died 38 years before William Booth was born, his ideas—even down to details of church organization—were adapted by his ardent disciple. Said Booth in a speech on his 60th birthday, "I literally worshipped Methodism. To me there was one God, and John Wesley was his prophet."<sup>13</sup>

Booth's practical mind could see that the Army's mission must be to the whole person, an idea that was memorably summed up in the phrase "soup, soap and salvation." As Richard Collier says in *The General Next to God*, "public fancy endowed the Army with a slogan which has stuck ever since."<sup>14</sup>

Booth and his fellow workers were convinced that an organized approach to Christian charity was essential. One of Booth's biographers writes:

It is important to know that at the time when William Booth set himself to solve the social problem, the very poor of East London, far from being neglected, were in danger of being submerged by the wasteful excesses of sentimental charity. It was to systematize charity, and to make charity masculine, practical, and scientific, that William Booth threw himself into the work. He saw that in spite of free lodgings, free meals, gifts of clothing, and gifts of money there was no *moral and religious progress*. He believed that religious progress tarried because sentimental charity tended to intervene between the chastisement of God and the repentance of the sinner. His scheme was not to give and not to relieve, but to rescue, revive, and rebuild.