

The Journal of Aggressive Christianity

Issue 7, June / July 2000

In This Issue

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Issue 7, June / July 2000

General Duty

The Conquerors Column
Souls are Dying!
Set yourself to win them!
by General Catherine Booth

Exclusive Interview with
General Eva Burrows

A General Epistle
Gifts of the Spirit
by William Booth

Column: The Primitive Salvationist
An Army Epitaph
by Stephen Court

On Small Groups
Wards
*Orders and Regulations of The Salvation Army,
1914*

The Suggested Standard
The Corps Ward System
by John Norton

Death Be Not Proud
by John Donne

Guest Article
Evangelical Anemia
by Wally Court

Tuesday, 20 May
"Newcastle Daily Chronicle"
An Exhibition of Idols
by Our Special Correspondent

Souls are Dying! Set Yourself to Win Them!

by Catherine Booth

"Son, go work today in my vineyard" (Matthew 21:28).

"And the Lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled" (Luke 14:23).

It seems to me that no one can study the New Testament without arriving at the conclusion that it is a fundamental principle, underlying the whole, that His light and grace is expansive. That is, God has, in no case, given His light, His truth, and His grace to any individual soul, without holding that soul responsible for communicating that light and grace to others.

Real Christianity is, in its very nature and essence, aggressive. Jesus has not given us anything to be used merely for ourselves but that we hold and possess every talent which He has committed to us for the good of others and for the salvation of man. This is a fundamental principle of the New Testament.

How wonderfully this principle was exhibited in the lives of the apostles and early Christians! How utterly careless they seemed to be of everything compared with this. This was the first thing with them everywhere! Paul, at the very threshold, counted nothing else of any consequence, but willingly, cheerfully gave up every other consideration to live for this. And he speaks of other apostles and helpers in the gospel who had been nigh unto death, and laid down their necks for the work's sake. He traveled, worked, prayed, wept and suffered, bled and died for this one end.

And so with the early Christians, who were scattered through the persecutions and went everywhere preaching the Word. How earnest and zealous they were, even after the apostolic age. We learn from ecclesiastical history how they would push themselves in everywhere. They made converts and won real, self-denying followers even in kings' courts. They would not be kept out and could not be put down, and could not be hindered or silenced.

"These Christians are everywhere," said one of their bitterest persecutors. Yes, they were instant in season and out of season. They won men and women on every hand, to the vexation and annoyance of those who hated them. Like their, Master, they could not be hid. They could not be repressed, so aggressive, so constraining was the spirit which inspired and urged them on.

Because You Are Your Brother's Keeper

It becomes a greater puzzle every day to me, coming in contact with individual souls, how people read their Bibles! They do not seem to understand what they read. Well might a Philip or an angel come to them and say, "Understandest thou what the readest?" Oh! friends, study your New Testament on this question, and you will be alarmed to find to what an awful extent you are your brother's keeper--to what an awful and alarming extent God holds you responsible for the salvation of those around you.

The Word puts upon us the obligation to save men. In fact the world is cast upon us--we are the only people who can save the unconverted.

Oh! I wish I could get this thought thoroughly into your minds. It has perhaps been one of the most potent, with respect to any little service I have rendered in the vineyard, the thought that Jesus Christ has nobody else to represent Him here but us Christians--His real people. These poor people of the world who are in darkness and ignorance, have nobody else to show them the way of mercy. If we do not go to them with loving earnestness and determination to rescue them from the grasp of the great enemy, if we do not by the power of the Holy Ghost, bind the strong man and take his goods, who is to do it? God has devolved it upon us. This is an alarming and awful consideration.

We are called by the Spirit. The very first aspiration of a newly born soul is after some other soul. The very first utterance after the first burst of praise to God for deliverance from the bondage of sin and death, is a prayer gasped to the throne for some other soul still in darkness. Is not this the legitimate fruit of the Spirit? Is not this what we should expect? The Spirit began at once to urge you to seek for souls.

It is also frequently the last cry of the Spirit in the believer's soul before it leaves the body. The last expressed anxiety has been for some prodigal soul outside the kingdom of God.

When the light of eternity comes streaming upon the soul, and its eyes get wide open to the value of souls, it neither hears nor sees anything else! It goes out of time into eternity, praying as the Redeemer did, for the souls it is leaving behind.

Oh! if Christians were only true to the promptings of this blessed Spirit, it would be the prevailing impulse, the first desire and effort all the way through life. It is not God's fault that it is not so. Satan gets people to yield to considerations of ease, being out of season, being injudicious, and so on, and they lose opportunities of dealing with souls, and so the Spirit is grieved and grieved.

Having the Holy Spirit is the life of your soul. You want this spirit, the spirit that yearns over the souls of your fellowmen, to weep over them as you look at them in their sin and folly and misery, the spirit that cannot be satisfied with your own

enjoyments or with feeling that you are safe or even that your children are safe, but that yearns and can never rest satisfied until it is brought into the kingdom. Such are the urgings of the Spirit and if people would be obedient to them, they would never lose these urgings. Now, my friend, you are called by the Spirit to this work. Obey the call; do it. Never mind if it chokes you, do it. Say, "I had better die in obedience than live in disobedience." Oh! These everlasting likes and dislikes. "I don't like to speak to that person"; "I so dislike writing that letter." "Oh! you don't know what might be the consequences." Never mind the consequences, do it. God will stand between you and consequences, and if He lets you suffer, never mind, then suffer, but obey the voice of the Spirit.

How many souls would have been saved if all those who have had these urgings had obeyed them? It is the Spirit of the living God that is urging you to come out and seek to save the lost. Will you obey these urgings? Will you give up your reasonings? Will you give up your likes and dislikes and obey? If you will, then He will come to you more and more, till like David, you will feel the interests of His kingdom to be more to you than meat or drink, than silver or gold. You will become like Him who said, "The zeal of Thine house hath eaten me up" (John 2:17).

Go to the closet until you get filled with the Spirit, and then go and let it out upon them. Finney says, "I went and let my heart out on the people." Get your heart full of the living water and then open the gates and let it flow out.

Look them in the face and take hold of them lovingly by the hand and say, "My friend, you are dying, you are going to everlasting death. If nobody has ever told you till now, I have come to tell you. My friend, you have a precious soul. Is it saved?" They can understand that. "Do you ever think about your soul? Are your sins pardoned? Are you ready to die?" Your rich neighbors and your servant girls and men alike can understand that. Begin in that way and see what God will do through you.

You go and put your hand to the plough and He will give you strength to push it along.

Reprinted from The Gospel Trumpet. -

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

Interview with General Eva Burrows

JAC: For those who haven't yet read GENERAL OF GOD'S ARMY, please tell us a little about your conversion.

EB: Like most officers' children, I gave my heart to the Lord Jesus when I was a child - sincerely, simply and enthusiastically. But I date my true conversion and total decision for Christ to when I was eighteen. Following a period of teenage rebellion and non-attendance at the Army, I had gone to university and amazed myself by accepting an invitation to the Christian Union. At an Intervarsity Fellowship vacation Bible camp where we studied Paul's letter to the Romans, I became aware of my deep need for forgiveness and salvation. It was actually at a Youth Councils soon afterwards that I made the BIG decision at the mercy seat, not only to surrender my life to Christ, but to promise to serve Him all my days. A wonderful night, a life-changing decision, the best I ever made in my life. It wasn't long afterwards that I became a soldier and applied for Officership.

JAC: Although an Australian citizen, you consider yourself an African officer. Please explain.

EB: Yes, I'm a 'fair-dinkum Aussie' and happy to be so, but my time of service in Africa made such an indelible impression on my life that I feel part of myself is African. I went to Rhodesia (now Zimbabwe) when I was a young Lieutenant, 23 years old, and gave myself wholeheartedly to the African people, believing I would be there the whole of my life as a missionary officer. The Salvation Army appointed me away after I had been there 17 very formative years, and it was like a grief experience. 'Identification' is an important principle of my life, and I believe I identified with the African people, feeling their aspirations, hopes and longings --- spiritual, educational and cultural.

JAC: What is the secret to the fast Salvation Army growth in parts of Africa?

EB: When the Salvation Army went into Central and East Africa in particular, the continent was awakening to the Christian faith. Together with the proclamation of the good news of the Gospel, the missionary officers gave credibility to their message of God's love by providing clinics and hospitals to meet health needs, schools to give new opportunities for education and progress, and farms to teach improved methods of growing crops. The African people responded with enthusiasm. Our schools and colleges in particular have been seed-beds for the growth of committed young Salvationists and our Army in general.

It was our joyous style of worship that particularly suited the Africans for whom the drum and vibrant singing and dancing are among the basics of life. Marching to the drum-beat and the rhythm of the timbrel is natural for African Christians, and gives living expression to their faith. In Africa, the Salvation Army is known as an exuberant, militant, evangelistic force within the Christian church.

JAC: Education has been a large part of your Officership, from Institutes in Africa to ICO in England. There are various schools of thought as to the proper place of formal education in the Army. What is the proper role?

EB: Depends in which part of the world you are serving. We often say, 'Where there's a need, there's the Salvation Army.' When the Army went to India and Africa and certain two-third world countries, one of the great needs was for education. There was little or no government provision, so missions including the Salvation Army became deeply involved in the national educational system. We have not been so involved in Western territories, apart from Newfoundland (Canada). However even there the government is now taking control of all denominational schools, though helpfully the Army is permitted to provide school chaplains to retain the Christian influence.

The expense of maintaining an educational program with today's sophisticated school curricula could not be justified in SA Western territories. Beside that, we would be far too late in seeking to enter this complex field. However we should take every opportunity when offered to us to provide Christian education in schools as does happen in Australia.

JAC: You are the first General to have earned a degree at university (BA, Med). It seems you have started a trend! Do you see post-graduate education as necessary for SA leadership at any level of The Salvation Army in the 3rd millennium? Why?

EB: NO. I have never considered a university education an essential for SA leadership. However in the present environment where higher education is more readily available to talented young people, it is likely that more officers and Army leaders in future will have studied at university, and even taken post-graduate degrees. In fact in all parts of the Army world, officers are being encouraged to take further studies for their own personal, intellectual and spiritual development, and for greater competence in ministry. A well-furnished mind is a great asset. I add, that a General needs more than a series of letters denoting academic achievement after his/her name to be an effective leader. Often termed our 'scholar General'. Frederick Couetts never attended a university!

JAC: What books have had the greatest impact on you over the years? Why?

EB: As a young Christian, 'My Utmost for His Highest' (Oswald Chambers) and the devotional writings of Stanley Jones gave me spiritual stimulus. 'Mere Christianity' and other C. S. Lewis books were helpful as I became grounded in

the faith at university. Brengle, Sangster and Coutts were guides in my pursuit of holiness. As an officer, the writings of the Scottish theologian, A.M. Hunter, were invaluable as also ideas from reading the sermons of great preachers like J. S. Stewart. In recent years I have found the writings of John Stott very challenging especially 'The Cross of Christ' and 'The Contemporary Christian'. Guiding me to a more reflective and contemplative spiritual life has been Richard Foster with such books as 'Celebration of Discipline', 'Prayer' and Henri Nouwen. I have a full shelf of the great Christian classics in paperback, which became a wonderful world of new reading after coming to London from Africa in 1970 e.g. Julian of Norwich, my favorite saint Theresa of Avila, and de Caussade. I have never ceased to find Salvation Army history enthralling and challenging.

JAC: Who are your heroes? Why?

EB: Absolutely Jesus, first before all; my exemplar in all things. Moses and King David in the Old Testament. In Army history, William Booth, Booth-Tucker (India) and Weerasooriya (Sri Lanka) and Lieut.-Colonel Lillian Nhari OF a wonderful African officer in Zimbabwe.

My principal at Howard Institute, Lieut.-Colonel Phil Rive OF, was mentor and role-model to me as a young missionary officer. His understanding of African culture and language, his deep spiritual insight and his humanity set me a pattern to follow.

My mother has always been the most admired woman in my life -- wonderful officer, fine preacher, loving mother of nine children and people person. After her comes Catherine Booth whose strong convictions and unflinching commitment to justice I have sought to emulate.

JAC: General Catherine Booth went on record, stating, "The great fundamental principle of The Salvation Army is a the law of adaptation." This comment has been used by many salvos at many times toward diverse ends. You yourself are responsible for significant change in the administration of The Salvation Army worldwide. What is the proper understanding of this fundamental principle for us today, in light of tensions between priestly v. prophetic roles?

EB: In Africa I never gave much thought to the Army's 'law of adaptation', because the whole of life was adaptation in practice ... adapting to another culture, to new ways of looking at life, to another language, and how to communicate effectively to another race. However after being appointed to the International College for Officers in London, I began to study in an enlightening way the organization, administration and styles of leadership of the Army. What you might call the Salvation Army culture.

My reading included all the writings of the Army Mother, and I was challenged by her sermon "Adaptation of Measures", and linked it with Bramwell Booth's chapter on 'How the Buttons Came Off'. The 'holy liberty' which the Holy Spirit gave to the Army to adapt and diversify and change is the holy liberty we must always allow to impact the Army in its aim to be relevant to the times and to the people

whom it serves. Traditional ways must be questioned, cherished ideas may have to pass away, brooding on past victories will only stultify the present, but prophetic leadership will learn what is the 'new thing' God wants the Army to do, and have the courage to do it. (Isaiah 43: 18-21)

JAC: What is the most significant part of your ministry today?

EB: In retirement I continue to have a wide variety of opportunities for a preaching ministry in many parts of the world, both within and without the Salvation Army. I consider this a great privilege. I appreciate the fact that I have more time for preparation, now that I am free from the demands of administrative leadership. I have enjoyed the challenge of new types of teaching ministry such as Bible Study Camps, Holiness Conventions and even a Council of War! As a director of the International Bible Society. I have delved more into the place of the Word in mission and ministry, world-wide

JAC: What are your dreams for The Salvation Army?

EB: I dream of an Army that is spiritually-vibrant, Biblically-strong, culturally-sensitive, evangelistically-passionate, community-concerned and Holy Spirit-empowered. Such a Spirit-filled Army will be ready to sacrifice and serve in obedience to Christ's commission, and through a strong prayer life be open to the changes the Holy Spirit is ready to initiate in our strategies for the future.

JAC: What is God teaching you these days?

EB: To enjoy His presence more than ever in my life as I spend more time with him in heart-to-heart fellowship. I am constantly overwhelmed by an awareness, not of how much I love God, but of how much He loves me. He is teaching me to be more reflective about His Word, as He leads me to new and deeper insights into grace and truth. He is teaching me a more simple trust in His over-ruling providence in all things, including the Salvation Army. I am still a keen learner in God's school.

JAC: Can you tell us of any memorable preaching you have heard, and what made it outstanding?

EB: As a young officer in London at the beginning of the fifties, I had the privilege of hearing the famous preachers of that era: Dr Sangster whose spell-binding oratory reached to the depths of ones heart; Dr Martin Lloyd-Jones whose Biblical teaching kept me on the edge of my seat for 45 minutes, and the Rev. John Stott who has never ceased to challenge me by the clarity of his Biblical, evangelical preaching. I have heard him time and again over four decades. The fine Methodist preacher, Dr Colin Morris, whose fierce social justice sermons stimulated everyone to action. Unfortunately I have not heard many American or Canadian preachers, but I consider Dr. Billy Graham the most powerful preacher

of the 20th century. with Dr. Robert Schuller the most influential television preacher. At the Millennium Congress, I look forward to hearing Dr Lloyd Ogilvie whose books I have found inspirational.

I consider General Albert Orsborn the most memorable and eloquent Army preacher, with General Brown a great communicator of the gospel, and General Coutts a profound teacher of the faith. In recent times, I have greatly benefited from the preaching of Commissioners Lim Ah Ang, Edward Read, Earl Maxwell. They have the gift of reaching and winning the heart with the message. And I add my present corps officer, Major Peter Mylechreest.

JAC: What is your most memorable spiritual experience?

EB: I have experienced many great spiritual moments, 'God-moments', in my life. As diverse as an Easter morning sunrise in the Himalaya Mountains, the cross-shaped mercy seat lined with seekers even before I began my final message at the 1990 International Congress, a silent retreat quite recently when glory filled my soul without a word being spoken. But the greatest of all was that moment at the mercy seat when I gave myself wholly to God, and He gave Himself to me.

JAC: Please comment on the state of aggressive Christianity in the 21st century. How relevant is primitive Salvationism?

EB: I respond positively to the term 'primitive Salvationism'. To me that refers to the original, elemental, pristine qualities of our early Salvation Army --- the spontaneous joy in the faith, the zeal for soul-saving, the willingness to risk everything for Christ, the audacious attacks on the strongholds of Satan, the readiness to adapt, the relevance of the message, the strong social conscience. These are qualities for all centuries from the first to the twenty-first. Through the Holy Spirit we must reclaim them as we enter the twenty-first century.

JAC: Our first General often wrote letters to his soldiers with teaching for daily life and warfare. Would you take this opportunity to offer a millennial message to soldiers around the world?

EB: So often I find the message for the moment from God's Word, I do so for salvation soldiers in this millennium moment from Jude 20 - 23.

'Continue to build your lives on the foundation of your holy faith.' That Foundation is Jesus Christ, so live in obedience to His will.

'Continue to pray as you are directed by the Holy Spirit' for the Holy Spirit purifies your desires, your motives, and helps you set the right priorities in prayer and witness and service.

'Stay within the boundaries where God's love can reach and bless you.' That should be a Salvationist's natural environment, and there you are kept true and faithful. Thus strengthened by faith, prayer and love, we are called to service. It is our Christian duty and responsibility to seek and save the lost.

'Show mercy to those who are wavering in the faith. Save others by snatching them as from the very flames of hell, itself.' So, go to it! Let God's mercy, love and grace reach others through you, as you seek to build the Kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in this new millennium.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

Gifts of the Spirit

by William Booth

GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT

(by William Booth, in the WAR CRY March 14th 1885)

My Dear Comrades:

A good deal of attention is being given just now to what are known as the extraordinary 'gifts of the Spirit'; that is, the ability to do something which is beyond the power of man to do without the direct operation of God. Such gifts as these were, without doubt, possessed by the Apostles both before and after the death of our Lord. They had the gift of tongues; that is, they received suddenly the power to speak languages which they had never learned. They had the gift of healing; that is, they cured the sick, opened the eyes of the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, and restored the dead to life instantaneously without the use of ordinary means. They wrought miracles; they caused to happen that were contrary to the usual course of nature. These were very remarkable gifts, proving that God was with them, because no man could do these things unless God was operating directly through him.

These gifts were useful, inasmuch as they called attention to those who possessed them, declared that the mission of these Officers was Divine, and justified men everywhere in believing what they had to say. For this reason they were important to the world, and their possession today might be a great blessing to mankind. There is not a word in the Bible which proves that we might not have them at the present time, and there is nothing in experience to show they would not be as useful today as in any previous period of the Church's history. No man, therefore, can be condemned for desiring them, and the recent remarkable signs and wonders wrought amongst us not only demand, but shall have our most profound and sympathetic consideration.

But it has occurred to me that, while desiring these extraordinary gifts, some of us may be neglecting forces and powers already existing within an amongst us that are equal to- perhaps greater in value than- those thus coveted.

The Apostle exhorts the early saints to 'stir up the gifts that were in them.' These gifts were imparted by God and were important to the War- but they lay dormant, and therefore useless; and the Holy Ghost urges their possessors to stir these gifts, to wake them from slumber and get them to work in helping to save the world.

My comrades, I feel there is room for the same exhortation today. By all means let us aspire after higher gifts, but by all means let us use those we already possess. How true it is that to him that hath- that is, who uses what he has- shall be given; and from him that hath not- that is, who uses not what he possesses- that which he already has shall be taken away! Neglect the ability you already have for glorifying God and saving men, and that ability will shrivel up, and waste away.

It must never be forgotten that all real healing, whether of body or soul, whether accomplished in a moment or in a year of time, whether done apparently without means or through the use of means, is alike affected by the direct operation of the power of God; IT IS GOD WHO SAVES.

And it must be remembered that all gifts- ordinary and extraordinary- alike come from God; and that there is a danger of straining after those that seem to be extraordinary, while those already possessed lie unused and therefore useless.

For instance, a man may be longing after the 'gift of tongues', and neglecting the tongue he already has; thinking how much good he could do if he could suddenly speak the German language, while all the time he is comparatively neglecting the use of English, which he can speak. Does any one say, "What a wonderful thing it would be if I could suddenly speak in a foreign tongue!" Let such a one stop and think what a wonderful thing it is that he can speak at all. Think, my comrade, if you have never possessed the power of speech, and were to have it suddenly bestowed, what a remarkable miracle it would appear. Suppose you knew something about it before; how you would desire it! How you would promise God to use it for His glory and the Salvation of souls if He would give it to you!

And, then, think how you would feel if some man of God came along and laid his hands upon you and commanded you in the name of the Lord; and suddenly the gift came and you were enabled to pour out a flood of language- as you can now! How amazed, how delighted, how grateful you would be! How you would go about acknowledging and publishing the wonderful gift! And yet in reality it would not be a whit more a gift, or more remarkable, than is the ability to talk that you possess today. Oh, BRING THIS GIFT TO GOD, and praise Him for it, and set about using it for His glory.

Again, if God were to come to you offering to bestow upon you these extraordinary gifts of which we are speaking; if He said, "I will give you the power to heal the sick; upon whomsoever you lay hands, they shall be healed of whatever sickness they have; at your commands devils shall be cast out, and by your faith mountains shall be moved. But it can only be on the condition that these gifts shall not be allowed to be idle. They must be exercised, and exercised solely for My glory and the Salvation of men; not to gratify your pride or feed your ambition, or make money, or give pleasure, or in any shape or form promote your own honour and glory and bigness"; what would you say? Would you not cry out,

"Far be it for me, Lord, that I should desire Thy gifts to spend them on my selfishness and lusts.

"If Thou wilt give them I will not sell or use or barter them for either money or pleasure or fame or anything else; but on the contrary I will faithfully and constantly employ them for Thy glory, and to induce men to save their souls and to love and serve Thee."

But how is it, my comrades, with the gifts He has already imparted- with the hands and feet and brain and heart and money and influence you already possess? Are you using these for yourself, or are they laid on the altar, purified by the Blood and consecrated in the burning flame of a holy, spiritual, enthusiastic devotion to the interests of your Saviour and the Salvation of the Blood-bought world?

Far be it, my comrades, from me to say one word that would stay the longing of any heart for the extraordinary gifts already mentioned. I long for them myself. I believe in their necessity, and I believe they are already amongst us. By all means let us have the perfection of the Divine method of working. The poor infidel world should be made to see all of God that is possible, in order that it may believe. But at the same time I cannot help being influence by the closing verse of 1 Corinthians 12, the chapter especially devoted to the consideration of extraordinary gifts, in which the Holy Ghost explains that there is "a more excellent way"; that is, a more valuable gift than any of these extraordinary ones.

This the apostle explains to be the possession of, the being filled with, that burning passion of love which filled the breast of Jesus Christ; and that his was the greater gift, because capable of accomplishing vaster results; a force that can do more for the advancement of the War and the Salvation of souls from sin and misery and hell, which can do more for the creation of peace and joy and Heaven than all the other gifts put together without it- a force which is not only in harmony with, but partakes of the very essence of that power which fills and sustains and gladdens the universe; for surely the nature of Jehovah Himself is love.

My comrades, let us covet, let us seek earnestly- nay, let us never rest until we possess, in all its fullness this celestial passion.

Believe me,

Yours full of expectation for greater things,
William Booth.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

An Army Epitaph

by Stephen Court

AN ARMY EPITAPH (for heaven)?

The Salvation Army returned to its first love, returned to its first mission, and fought courageously on the most dangerous fronts to rescue the perishing from the claws of Satan. These new and improved primitive salvationists stood in a prophetic stance against the world, and in some cases against the rest of the Church but experienced nation-changing revival on every continent such that the Army tri-color became almost a second national flag for many of these redeemed countries.

God did it with unknowns. Granted, He raised up and delegated massive spiritual authority to the few, but the comprehensive explosive moves of the Holy Spirit were generated and accompanied by prevailing prayer and bold evangelism by warriors whose names will never be known outside of the pages of the War Cry.

In the days of great persecution, as political systems and economic restrictions came down on Christians of every stripe, judgment personified, great harvest also came. Heaps of people recognized the futility of their hoarded resource based philosophy and turned to Jesus. Great stadia were filled to capacity. Great signs and wonders became so routine that TIME Magazine finally terminated its new 'Miracles' section because they were so commonplace.

It all started from repentance. When General John Gowans called all salvationists to turn from sin and complacency, the revival within the Army began. It turned an army of parade soldiers into the most dangerous fighting force assembled in heaven or on earth since creation.

As economies crashed the distinction between soldier and officer grew antiquated because the unemployed Christian soldiers could now invest all of their time, as their officer comrades, in the Salvation War. This magnificently accelerated the advance of these new salvationists in their fighting. Adherency was obliterated and only those who followed the old Rustavi 1 regulations of tithing, uniform wearing, sold-out for life commitment could call themselves a Salvationist. This caused a brief blip in the growth as a whole generation of 'salvationists' was decimated, leaving in droves for community churches where the comfortable membership rules more closely resembled the soft salvationism they had retained for their whole lives. But the blip proved fruitful too. This purified the Army so that God could unleash His Really Big arsenal through them,

until, shortly thereafter, a new term had to be coined to distinguish historic revivals from what God had now begun: 'Soulquakes' now described the mass conversion of whole people groups on a scale heretofore unknown to humanity. Soulquakes became the strategy of the primitive salvationists, who, in a fashion reminiscent of the old boom marches that spread revival through India so many years ago, they blitzkrieged a whole region and left their warriors to lead the Corps that inevitably formed out of the Soulquake!

The Territorial Commander of the new Mongolia Territory, where, as a result of a Soulquake 62% of the population was captured for Jesus in just 9 months of heart-to-heart fighting, and fully one-third of which became recruits in The Salvation Army, said of his young crew:

'My Salvationists are lost to the war. They are becoming Salvationist warriors because they know no other and no better means of winning it. They knew nothing but defeat, despair, disillusionment, bondage, and hopelessness. Jesus has given forgiveness, family membership, eternal life, and a commission; a commission to dare, to live, to fight, and to die for their new Savior, Jesus Christ, and the salvation of the world. If we continue as we are, we will have the mission accomplished before Christmas!' (Mongolia TC, cited in *War Cry*, world edition, circulation 1,26 billion, June 22, 2K3).

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

Wards: From the 1914 O&R

The Why and Wherefore of The Salvation Army Orders and Regulations: 1914, p81-82.

1. What is a Ward?

The town or neighborhood where a Corps exists is divided into a number of districts. Each of these districts is called a Ward, and comprises all the soldiers living in that district.

2. Who is responsible for these Wards?

Two local officers, a man and a woman, who are called ward sergeants.

3. What are the duties of the Ward Sergeant?

(a) If ward meetings are being worked by the corps, the ward sergeant must meet the soldiers of his ward, once a week, in a room agreed upon by the C. O.

(b) The ward sergeant must keep a record book, in which he will mark the attendance of each member of his company. In this book he must also record whether any are sick, backslidden, or removed, with any other information helpful to the ward.

(c) He is responsible for the visitation and care of the any of his Soldiers who are sick or in sorrow, or who are growing cold, or in any way need looking after for God and The Army.

(d) He must collect the Cartridges, and hand them to the Treasurer, who will inform the Ward Sergeant of the total amount.

(e) He must visit and generally look after the Converts residing within his Ward, and do all in his power to help them on to Soldiership in The Army.

(f) Each Ward has a Local Officer, who is known as the Ward Publisher. He is responsible to the Publication Sergeant for the sale of Army literature in the Ward to which he is appointed, and for keeping the names and addresses of all customers.

4. What is the order of Service at the Ward meeting?

At the ward meeting each soldier is expected to speak and be spoken to about his soul, or to pray and be prayed with.

5. Then one of the objects of a Ward Meeting is that all shall have opportunity of taking part?

Yes; something should be done in which all can take part. Everything must be short, lively, and on fire with the Spirit of God, so that all may be cheered up and encouraged to go ahead. Two or three verses from the Bible should be read; but there must be no long talking about anything.

6. May sinners come to the Ward Meeting?

Yes. Each soldier in the ward must be encouraged to bring a sinner or backslider to these meetings; and all should pray and believe for their salvation.

7. Is the conduct of these Ward Meetings confined to the Ward Sergeant?

No.

8. Will the C. O. attend?

The C. O. will, as frequently as convenient, conduct ward meetings; he will also arrange for united soldiers' meetings, when all the wards will meet together.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

The Corps Ward System

by John Norton

The Salvation Army Ward System, prevalent today in the strong Korea Territory, and in use a couple of generations ago in Canada in such places as Vancouver Temple (with CSM Wilf Smith), provides the best structure for winning a city.

The purpose of the Salvation Army Ward system is to provide pastoral care and concern for the members of a corps. While it is the responsibility of the corps officers to provide pastoral care for all in the corps, it is often impossible for the officers to attentively meet all the needs of all of their people. The Ward system allows for ward sergeants to help take some pastoral responsibility for some of the people in the corps.

Corps members will usually be assigned to smaller groups, called Wards, by the geographic location of their homes (although local circumstances do not always make this possible). A ward sergeant, appointed by the corps officers, is given the responsibility of visiting and taking care of all persons who reside in their assigned Ward. The ward sergeant should recognize that while his/her primary responsibility is to those in the Ward district who are members of the corps or have come under Army influence, the responsibility in the Ward extends to all persons who reside in the Ward for the purpose of evangelism and outreach especially towards those who do not regularly attend their own church.

A ward sergeant should feel free to visit all who reside within his/her Ward, especially noting those who are sick, elderly, lonely, or in special need. The ward sergeant should ensure that corps members (as assigned by the Corps Census Board or added to by the corps officer) are regularly and systematically visited. The ward sergeant will want to note all soldiers, recruits, adherents, friends, and children within their Ward ensuring their general progress toward spiritual maturity, sustained holy living, and service to God in the Army. The ward sergeant must seek to care for individuals while paying attention as well to the whole family and their situation.

The ward sergeant should report to his/her ward sergeant-major (or corps officer) regarding all concerns for any individual and then respond accordingly to their advice or directions. Serious concerns should be reported directly to the commanding officer as soon as possible. The ward sergeant should remember that his/her ward sergeant-major and corps officers are responsible also for the spiritual care of all under them and will visit unannounced any persons in their ward at certain times. Such visits should be welcomed by the ward sergeant as a positive influence on his/her ward but should not be seen as replacing the sergeants own regular visitation of such persons.

A ward sergeant will always be assigned an assistant. This individual should always be seen as a potential future leader or ward sergeant. As such the assistant should be encouraged, trained, and given opportunity to develop skills necessary for leadership and pastoral care.

A ward sergeant must remember that he/she may be asked to change his/her ward to another district or may be asked to give up his/her service as a ward sergeant. Any change initiated by the commanding officer should be received positively and seen as an opportunity to support the development of the corps in a different area of ministry.

The ward sergeant should remember that all persons in his/her ward are given for a period of time by God for his/her responsibility. As such, the ward sergeant must respect all persons in the ward remembering each individual has their own unique abilities and situation. The ward sergeant should pray regularly for all the names listed on the ward list and for all who come under his/her influence. Often encouragement is the greatest gift a ward sergeant can give.

SPECIFIC DUTIES AND GUIDELINES

1) **Awareness of Ward Members.** It is important for ward sergeants (and their assistants) to be aware of the attendance patterns of people within their Ward. If a member is not present at a Sunday meeting or Bible study, he/she should receive a visit during the following week.

2) **Pastoral Concern for Ward Members.** Ward sergeants must be concerned for the spiritual, emotional and physical well-being of people within their Ward. If a member seems to be going through a difficult time, the ward sergeant must attempt to discern the problem and seek to help wherever possible. This may mean praying with and for the member, referring the member to a corps officer for counseling, helping to get medical attention or material aid, etc.

3) **Remembrance of Birthdays.** Birthdays should be acknowledged with a special greeting or note. This is a good opportunity to make an extra visit.

4) **Spiritual Accountability.** Ward sergeants should regularly inquire as to the spiritual condition of members who have professed salvation. This will include pertinent questioning and discernment.

5) **Evangelism of Unsaved Ward Members.** If a ward member has not yet experienced salvation, a primary goal of the ward sergeant is to encourage the member to accept Jesus as Savior.

6) **Reporting.** Ward sergeants are obligated to inform their ward sergeant-major (or, replacing a ws-m, the corps officer) of any concerns arising out of pastoral visitation. The corps officers are themselves responsible for each member of the corps and must be kept informed of the well-being of members.

7) **Visitation Record.** A visitation record must be filled out following each visit and submitted to the ward sergeant-major (or corps officer) on a regular basis.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Issue 7, June / July 2000

"Where, O death, is your victory? Where, O death, is your sting?"
1 Corinthians 15 : 55

Death Be Not Proud

by John Donne

Death be not proud, though some have called thee
Mighty and dreadful, for thou art not so,
For those, whom thou thinkest thou dost overthrow,
Die not, poor death, nor yet canst thou kill me.

From rest and sleep, which but thy pictures be,
Much pleasure, then from thee much more must flow,
And soonest our best men with thee do go,
Rest of their bones and soul's delivery.

Thou art slave to Fate, chance, kings and desperate men,
And dost with poison, war, and sickness dwell,
And poppy or charms can make us sleep as well
And better than thy stroke; why swellst thou then?

One short sleep past, we wake eternally,
And death shall be no more; Death thou shalt die.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

Evangelical Anemia

by Wally Court

(Toronto writer Wally Court presents an imaginary conversation between a young, modern-day 'church-going' Salvationist and the distinguished American social psychologist Dr. Leon Festinger.)

Dr. Festinger's studies of language and behavior led him to conclude that when people know various things that are not psychologically consistent, an inner tension is created that can only be eliminated by either changing one's behavior or beliefs. The internal conflict created by such dissonance is often discussed in terms of conscience, guilt, and rationalization.

Are you suffering from evangelical anemia? So was Sally Ann until a visit to the celebrated American behavioral psychologist Dr. Leon Festinger put her and her Corps back on the road to heavenly health.

'Come right in, Sally Ann. Dr. Festinger will see you in a moment. I'm sure he'll be able to help you. Cognitive dissonance is his specialty. In fact, he's the world authority.'

SA- 'Cognitive dissonance! What's that? All that's wrong with me is that I'm always tired and I'm losing weight. My own doctor says all my vital signs are down, except my blood pressure, which is up. He didn't know what was wrong. He said I should see a psychologist.'

'Cognitive dissonance can do that to you. A lot of people who try to combine two psychologically inconsistent concepts wind up physically and mentally tired and confused. There, the doctor is free. Doctor Festinger, this is Sally Ann.'

Dr.- Good morning Sally Ann. First off, let's chat for awhile. What is your religious affiliation?

SA- 'The Salvation Army is my church. I'm a Christian.'

Dr.- My dear, The Salvation Army is not a church. A church is a building used for public worship, but an army is a large, organized body of men and women armed and trained for warfare- in this case, spiritual warfare.

SA- 'No matter. That's the place where I worship.'

Dr.- Hold on now. Worship is a form of religious practice with a formal creed and ritual. Salvation involves the saving of man from the power and effects of sin, and war is a state of open and declared armed, hostile, conflict.

As an evangelical organization, The Salvation Army goes a significant step beyond the ritual of worship by emphasizing the winning or reviving of personal commitments to Christ with a militant, crusading zeal.

SA- 'Well, our congregation holds its services at the temple over on Main Street.'

Dr.- Congregation? Service? Temple? My dear, no wonder you're tired and confused. A congregation is an assembly of persons who meet for worship and religious instruction; a temple is an edifice for the worship of a deity; and a service is a form followed in worship or religious ceremony.

I can remember when Salvationists were grouped in corps and met in citadels. In my dictionary, a corps is a group of associated persons acting under common direction; a citadel is a fortress that command a city; and a meeting implies the act of coming together in unstructured commonality.

By the way, what is your officer's name?

SA- 'Officer? Do you mean my pastor?'

Dr.- No, I mean your officer. I grant you that both pastors and officers have been ordained, but a pastor is a spiritual overseer; an officer has also been commissioned to command. And while both have been educated and ordained to perform religious rites, a commission is a formal written warrant conferring rank and authority, and granting the power to perform various non-religious acts and duties.

While we're at it, confirmation is a Christian rite admitting a baptized person to full church privileges, whereas a commission includes not only the privileges but also specific and significant responsibilities.

SA- 'Well, his name is Captain George Mitchell, but he's on vacation.'

Dr.- No vacation, my dear- furlough. A vacation is a scheduled period during which normal activity is suspended; a furlough is a leave of absence from duty granted by a superior officer.

I think I've heard enough. You have one of the worst cases of cognitive dissonance I've ever experienced.

When our behavior and language is in conflict with what we profess to believe, we cannot help but experience some degree of inner discomfort, emotional anxiety, and loss of stamina.

We try to mediate this anxiety by denying the evidence of declining attendance and lackluster evangelism; by suggesting that the evidence doesn't apply to our contemporary suburban 'community church' or by claiming that we have taken corrective action to match our message to the perceived needs of the public.

You obviously regard The Salvation Army as a church and that's fine as far as it goes.

But The Salvation Army is more than a church and your commitment and responsibilities as a commissioned Salvationist go far beyond that of the average church member.

Changing the terminology and patterning your behavior to suit your idea of what the Army is, and the degree of commitment you are prepared to give, is bound to create some internal conflict. You're also sending false messages to the public about what the Army is all about.

I think that if you make a conscious effort to bring your behavior into line with The Salvation Army's traditional principles and strategies, you'll find your vital signs will all perk up, and your vitality will quickly return.

SA- 'Thank you doctor. I'm beginning to feel better already. However, before I go, I'd like to ask you a question.'

Dr.- Certainly my dear. What is it?

SA- 'Are you saved?'

Dr.- Saved? Do you mean have I experienced spiritual salvation and been preserved from damnation?

SA- 'Precisely.'

(All definitions drawn from the Concise Oxford Dictionary and Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary).

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.

An Exhibition of Idols

Reported in the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle", England
Tuesday, 20 May, 1879

Last issue of JAC we carried the article "An All Night Meeting at The Salvation Army" which was reported in the "Newcastle Daily Chronicle."

(By our Special Correspondent)

Sensational religion is no uncommon thing in England. All evangelistic movements are sensational. Your nineteenth century apostle isn't content to preach the gospel simply and grandly, as St. Paul did; but must tickle the public curiosity, startle commonplace propriety, and frighten into a feeling of religion all such people as are insensible either to reason or ordinary persuasion. Lorenzo Dow, an American revivalist, stationed a Negro in a tree under which he was preaching, and told him to blow his hardest as soon as he heard any mention of "the last trump." The Negro carried out the terms of the contract splendidly. Dow worked up his audience to a pitch of excitement, described the terrors of the last judgement, and exhorted all his hearers to prepare for it as if it were to take place that moment. "When the last trump shall sound -," he exclaimed. "Boom" went the big instrument over-head; and the terrified audience fell on its knees. Here was a splendid opportunity for exhortation, and Dow made the most of it. Similar tricks are not uncommon; but most revivalists rely more on the supply of curious attractions than on the production of terror. Converted sweeps and converted clowns are the most common ornaments of revivalist platforms. They may be met with in almost all parts of England now and then, clowns and sweeps seeming to have a sort of taste for getting converted and taking to the stump. Though, however, we have been used to hear of a sweep preaching, and of a clown burning his motley in the market place; it required "General" the Rev. William Booth the organise eccentricity into a system. The chief of the Salvation Army glories especially in the means by which he attracts the multitude. If one had not heard him say so, the fact would be apparent enough from the little book which is called "Orders and Regulations," and from which I had occasion to quote yesterday. In that work I read that a stranger entering a town on any Saturday afternoon "would be at once awakened by the sight of large bills announcing 'Samson's Wife,' or some other equally extraordinary personage, to appear at a circus the next day. Proceeding on business into the town, he would find in almost every back street either a board standing outside some shop, hanging on some wall, or a card of a most striking kind in some window, urging

him to attend the same circus, and a week-night place of meeting, with an extraordinary name, such as 'The Salvation Barracks.'" It will thus be seen how clearly the eccentricities of the army are part of a system. Indeed, the "Orders and Regulations" explain a very great deal of the frenzy and incoherence which one sees at the meetings. For instance, we are told that shortly after our stranger entered "the Salvation Barracks," "the second verse of a hymn would be given out with an extraordinary remark, and the singing would be of the loudest and wildest description, the chorus being again repeated many times, but always led off by the leader. In the course of singing the next verse many shouts would be heard, and some would stand on forms and wave their arms." On reading such things I am convinced that it is easily possible to waste a good deal of hard thinking. Here have I been trying to find psychological reasons for peculiarities which are readily explained by the "orders." When a man jumps up in the middle of a hymn, waves his arms about, and cries "Hallelujah," it is natural to think that there is something extraordinary the matter with him. It is hard to believe that the reason for his behaviour goes no deeper than to add to the peculiarities of the service. Yet this is the conclusion one is unwillingly forced into by the "Orders." There is, of

course, a great deal of common-sense in this way of working. As the "General" said yesterday, eccentricities gather audiences, for which reason there was yesterday an exhibition of "idols." The announcement of this event was made to the army in such extraordinary terms that I cannot help quoting them. In a pink bill referring to the present week's "Council of War," the "General" says:- "We purpose to back up the stories of victory that will be told by officers and men from all parts on the Monday afternoon by the exhibition of idols which have been cast away by the rescued slaves of sin. There are many who would gladly deliver up pipes, tobacco-pouches, snuff-boxes, cigars, boxes of lights, dog-collars, packs of cards, dominoes, feathers, artificial flowers, chains, ornaments, and their cast off badges of the days of slavery. It would be a very proper thing for any who has given up smoking for Christ's sake owing to the efforts of any corps, to beg a pipe for some unconverted smoker, if their own has already been thrown away or destroyed, and they might thus not only present a fair evidence of their own decision, but perhaps help to deliver some one else from the same bad habit. In the same way, it might be very useful for all who have been in the habit of reading a newspaper on Sunday, to present an old copy should one be in their possession, or to beg a copy from some sinner next Sunday, and present it on Monday. At any rate, if every officer will do his part, we shall have such an exhibition of idols as may arouse the attention of the whole country to the need for full devotion to God and souls." The notion of exhibiting borrowed "idols" is, I think, quite unique.

It was disappointing, after all, to find that the exhibition of "idols" was nothing more than an attraction; and a very cheap one at that. Hurrying to the circus with a complacent feeling that something good was to be seen, I found my way continually obstructed by "Hallelujah" processions. This was, indeed, a great day. The noise of boisterous singing resounded through the town from noon to night. Some of the streets were as thronged as they are in the race week. The new

banners floated as cheerfully in the breeze as if they were proud of their duty and of that very terrible motto, "Blood and Fire." How wicked it was to burlesque all this religious fervour. Yet a party of girls from the neighbourhood of the Postern and the Back Row formed themselves into a procession, appointed a leader who walked backwards beating the time, and marched to the Circus singing as lustily as if they had been "Hallelujah Lasses" of the genuine kind. "Those who came to laugh remained to pray," says Goldsmith, speaking of the persuasive influence of his village parson. So it might have been; but the Back Row pantomimists could gain no entrance to the "Salvation Barracks." The line was drawn at burlesque. The Circus, however, was full without them - so full that, in spite of my protestations that I wanted to have a close view of the "idols," I was despatched to the gallery. If ever there was a motley audience, it was to be seen here. My close neighbours were mostly of the bullet-headed, closed cropped type, who appeared to be better acquainted with a certain high-walled barracks near the Manors than with the interior either of a circus or a chapel. Let me say for them that they behaved extremely well. Some of them were earnest, and some of them were amused; but they were all orderly. They were fair types of the majority of the men who join the Salvation Army. That body is largely recruited from much the same class as the militia. No doubt many of the recruits are thoroughly acquainted with their drill. The exhibition, however, was not attractive merely to the bullet-headed class. It had drawn many highly respectable people, so that the audience was disposed something in this way - members of the army in the ring and round the platform, respectable curiosity seekers in the boxes and stalls, and rank outsiders in the gallery. The platform itself was occupied by the great officers of the army - the General, his wife, and his two sons; the "Hallelujah giant"; the converted sweep; the pious Swede; the Bishop Auckland pitman; and "Hallelujah Lasses" from various parts of the country. It was a great gathering. "Commanding officers" and others had come to relate their "War Memories"; and when the preliminary singing had been gone through, and the necessary collection had been made, the ball was opened by a gentleman who had much to tell about hard fights, and savage persecutions, and ultimate victories. Persecution is a great topic with the field officers of the Salvation Army. They court it; they glory in it; and it seems to give the appropriate seal to their ministry. One would think that more wonders had been worked on their behalf than for the sake of the apostles. Every retailer of "war memories" had some extraordinary story to tell; but it required the "converted sweep" to work the audience up into a general shudder. It is dangerous to oppose the sweep. Folks die after it. I didn't count the number of his victims; but they were many. Let one story suffice. "I was preaching in one place," said the sweep, "when a great fellow squared up to me with his big fists, and threatened to knock a hole into me; but the Lord knocked a hole into him. He died in three days." It was really enjoyable to hear the "Hallelujah fiddle," after listening to such records of victory. But one could have enjoyed that fiddle at anytime. It was jerked about; it was bobbed up and down; it was made to perform all sorts of gymnastics. Never was poor fiddle so hardly entreated; but for all that, it was fairly played, and was made to perform a rattling music-hall tune to the words:-

There's nothing like religion;
It makes one shout and sing;
It makes one feel so happy;
Religion's just the thing.

Not very inspired words, certainly; but they were taken up by a large part of the audience as if they expressed a soul's longing. My readers will no doubt be anxious to hear of, as I was to see; the exhibition of "idols." What would be the trophies of war? Would the burglar give up his "jemmy;" the garotter his bludgeon; the pick-pocket the knife which so delicately makes it's way to your trouser linings? Well, almost. At any rate, the swell-mobsman had given up his false whiskers.

Copyright © 2000 Journal of Aggressive Christianity

To comment on this article write to JAC@armybarmy.com

Please include your name, address, and email address. Your comments may be published.