

The Journal of Aggressive Christianity

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In This Issue

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Issue 8, Aug / Sept 2000

Catalytic Conversion

The Conquerors Column
[About the Future of The Salvation Army](#)
by Samuel Logan Brengle

[The Army is Starving](#)
by Elaine Gillingham

Blood and Fire
[John Wesley's Doctrine of Prevenient Grace](#)
by John Norton

Feature Article
[Image or Offering?](#)
by Graham Harris

Preaching Series
Part 1: Jonah
[Titanic - The Untold Story](#)
by Paul Henderson

The Primitive Salvationist
[On Primitive Salvationism](#)
by Stephen Court

[A Trip to Roman Palestine](#)
by Curtis Butler

Series Part 4: Daniel - Dead Meat or Dead Right?
[Drawing the Line](#)
by Chick Yuill

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

Issue 8, Aug / Sept 2000

This excerpt from the book "Ancient Prophets" is as relevant today as it was when it was first penned. Commissioner S.L. Brengle (1860-1936), of The Salvation Army, authored nine books and preached throughout the world on the subject of holiness.

What about the future of The Salvation Army?

by Samuel Logan Brengle

"The warnings, the exhortations, the example, the close and intimate instructions of our Lord given to His disciples ... show us the plain path in which we must walk, if the future of The Salvation Army is to be happy and prosperous and its great promise come to ample fulfillment. "And what were the example and teachings of the Master in these fleet, closing days?

"As He drew near the cross ... He told them plainly that He should be rejected of men and crucified....

"It was not an unusual sight in the Roman Empire to see a line of men following a leader, each bearing a cross on his way to crucifixion. This was the picture He would have them visualize. They were to follow Him, their Leader, each bearing his own cross, not seeking to save his life, but ready to lose it for His sake.... If The Salvation Army of the future is to prosper and win spiritual triumphs, we must follow the Master, not seeking first place or power, but glorifying in the cross....

"If the future of The Salvation Army is to be spiritually radiant and all conquering, we must not simply endure the cross, but glory in it. This will arrest the world, disarm Hell, and gladden the heart of our Lord....

"We must still prove our discipleship by our love for one another. It is not enough to wear the uniform, to profess loyalty to Army leaders and principles, to ... feed the poor.... We must love one another. We must make this the badge of our discipleship. We must wrestle and pray and hold fast that we do not lose this.

"The Army is so thoroughly organized and disciplined, so wrought into the life of nations, so fortified with valuable properties, and on such a sound financial basis, that it is not likely to perish as an organization, but it will become a spiritually dead thing if love leaks out. Love is the life of The Army.... But if love leaks out we shall lose our crown, we shall have a name to live and yet be dead. We may still house the homeless, dole out food to the hungry, punctiliously perform our routine work, but the mighty ministry of the Spirit will no

longer be our glory.... We shall still recruit our ranks and supply our Training Garrisons with Cadets from among our own Young People, but we shall cease to be saviors of the lost sheep that have no shepherd."

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Lieutenant Elaine Gillingham: Along with her husband Ian, Elaine serves as Corps Officer of the Brockville Community Church of The Salvation Army, in Ontario, Canada. She has been excavating the old salvation wells originally dug by General William Booth concerning dreams and visions. Burdened to intercede for her generation, Elaine is extending it to the next by bringing up her children to walk in the Spirit. This article is an excerpt from her chapter in the forthcoming SALVATIONISM 301, available at armybarmy.com

The Army is Starving

by Elaine Gillingham

"Pursue love, and desire spiritual gifts, but especially that you may prophesy" (1 Corinthians 14:1). "Desire earnestly to prophesy." (1 Corinthians 14:39) Also see 1 Corinthians 14:1-5; 24-33; 39; Ephesians 4: 11-16.

"All would hear the Holy Spirit if they listen to His voice" (John Gowans, THE SALVATION ARMY SONG BOOK # 324).

Just recently we in the Canada and Bermuda Territory enjoyed a fresh wind of the Spirit blowing through our midst. The wind came quite unexpectedly and left even more so. Like any wind it blew down some cobwebs, it stirred up some dust and leaves. In some places the wind was received and enjoyed for its refreshing breeze. In other places it was seen as a nuisance or disruption.

The wind came in the form of Commissioner Norman Howe. He came briefly to our territory to lead and with him he brought a 'word from the Lord.' The Lord spoke to him 3 words that he was responsible to proclaim throughout the Canada and Bermuda Territory. "Prepare for revival!" From Vancouver Island to Newfoundland the word was preached, "Prepare for revival." To young and old the word went forth "Prepare for revival." And a stirring took place within the ranks throughout the command.

From North to South and East to West people were buzzing, "Have you heard the word? Prepare for revival!!!!"

These three words alone, spoken with the unction of the Holy Spirit, brought hope and faith back to many lives. They were words of exhortation, encouragement, vision and instruction. These words were like fresh water being poured out on a dry and thirsty tree. God was saying to us in Canada, "I'm not

finished with you yet. I'm going to breath my life back into your dry bones. I'm going to "put sinews on you and bring flesh upon you, cover you with skin and put breath in you; and you shall live" (Ezekiel 37:6).

This is how prophesy is upon the life of the believer- it gives breath to those who feel like they are suffocating- it puts flesh back on what feels like it is bare and naked. It gives life where there is death. Prophecy literally builds up the Army of God- "precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little" (Isaiah 28:13). This is why Paul exhorts us to eagerly desire the gift of prophesy. Prophecy is essential to the health and growth of God's people. It is essential for the preparation of the Bride of Christ so that she becomes "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish" (Ephesians 5:27).

Has the Church reached the fullness of Christ? Is the Bride without spot, wrinkle or blemish? The last time I checked we were still a ways off from coming into the maturity that the Spirit breathes into Paul's vision. But we are on the road there. To enter into that fullness we need the prophets of God emerge and take their appointed place.

Obviously the Army is crying out for the prophetic gifting to be exercised. We know that the Holy Spirit has given the gift. It is a matter of the people of God earnestly desiring it and stepping out in faith to exercise the gift. There are very few times that I have heard someone speak in The Salvation Army that they have a 'word from the Lord'. I believe it took a lot of courage and faith for Commissioner Howe to travel our command prophesying God's word for this territory. By his action many were stirred to response and renewed in mission.

QUESTIONS:

1. Have you ever received a word from God that was to be shared with others? What did you do?
2. How do you know when you have heard from God?
3. What keeps people from speaking forth what they believe God has spoken to them?

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William Booth, founder of The Salvation Army, once said, "There is one God and John Wesley is his prophet." The influence of Wesley upon Booth's theology and beliefs, and subsequently The Salvation Army's theology and beliefs, is enormous. Wesley taught that although all persons begin life with a sinful nature, God restores each individual to the point where there is sufficient ability to believe. This was what he called Prevenient Grace.

Don't let the title scare you off - it is the core of our Christian faith, and it is worth the time to find out why it so enraptured Wesley and General Booth. The Apostle Paul wrote about it in Romans, "While we were still sinners, Christ died for us."

John Wesley's Doctrine of Prevenient Grace

by John Norton

On 24 May 1738 John Wesley listened to a reading from Luther's preface to Romans at a meeting on Aldersgate Street, London. He records in his journal, "I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for my salvation."^[i] The experience kindled an 'inextinguishable blaze' which ignited revival throughout eighteenth century England. John Wesley's radical commitment to evangelism and practical theology inspired the development of modern Methodism and the various branches of the holiness movement. Wesleyan theology holds a place of prominence in post-Reformation Christian thought. Wesley did more than just impassion eighteenth century religion, he significantly challenged the Reformed doctrines of election and grace. The concept of tension between grace and responsibility permeates Wesleyan theology. His ability to find an alternative to Pelagian heresy (Pelagius, ca. 360-420, taught that human nature is basically good) and Augustinian pessimism (Augustine, 354-430, taught that human nature is entirely bad) became the basis of much of his salvation theology. A theology claiming an initial act of divine mercy proved the capstone to a doctrine that allowed Wesley to claim to be a child of the Reformation while avoiding the extremes of Calvinism. Prevenient grace serves as the initial doctrine in Wesley's order of salvation, the core of his theology.

Wesley made contributions to almost every major issue of theology, ranging from the nature of hell to the nature of the church, although he never comprehensively defined his thoughts. Contemporary historians question the validity of admitting Wesley as a doctor of the universal church on grounds that he was not a systematic theologian. "For Wesley, theology has its true context in the preaching and fellowship of the Church."^[ii] However, R.L. Maddox argues convincingly that "responsible grace" is the central orienting concept in Wesleyan theology,

declaring Wesley systematic in his various theological judgments.^[iii] This “inescapable dialectic between grace and responsibility became the criterion by which Wesley judged the adequacy of the various theological positions of his day.”^[iv] Ironically, Wesley quoted Augustine to support his distinctive slant: “He that made us without ourselves, will not save us without ourselves.”^[v] This view, which fundamentally separated Wesley from Calvin, brought him to a new understanding of both divine grace and human responsibility.

Order of Salvation

Wesley admitted that the core of his theology lay in his order of salvation.^[vi] Therefore to allow Wesley to reveal himself we must present his thoughts through his own “ordo salutis”. This order of salvation begins with grace, leads to justification, and carries on into sanctification. In Wesleyan theology there continues a tension between grace and responsibility throughout the entire process of salvation.

Salvation begins with what is usually termed preventing grace... Salvation is carried on by convincing grace... Afterwards we experience the proper Christian salvation; whereby ‘through grace’ we are ‘saved by faith’; consisting of those grand branches, justification and sanctification.^[vii]

Wesley understood that by justification we are saved from guilt of sin and that by sanctification we are saved from the power of sin. Justifying grace leads to eternal life and sanctifying grace to a restoration of the image of God. The order of salvation, according to Wesley, refers to the process by which God works his grace in the hearts of his chosen.

The doctrine of prevenient grace, as the initial act of God’s mercy, is the point of divergence at which Wesley parts with both traditional Catholic and Reformed theology. This seemingly small issue of semantics produces Wesleyanism with its distinct emphasis and uniqueness. The concept of responsible grace clearly distinguishes Wesley from Augustine and Calvin.

Original Sin and Free Will

The doctrine of prevenient grace is developed out of Wesley’s fundamental understanding of original sin. Most criticisms of Wesley’s theology stem from a misrepresentation of his view on the effects of the Fall. “Although frequently misunderstood by his Calvinistic opponents. Wesley declared himself one with Calvin on the doctrine of original sin.”^[viii] Wesley was entirely convinced of the total depravity of human nature, including the will. Allan Coppedge suggests that Wesley considered the doctrine of total depravity as “the first grand distinguishing point between Heathenism and Christianity.”^[ix] Wesley supports the Church of England’s Article on Original Sin by quoting it in his “Appeal to Men of Reason”. Original sin - - is the fault and corruption of the nature of every man, - -whereby man is very far gone from original righteousness, and is of his own nature inclined to evil, so that the flesh lusteth always contrary to the spirit...^[x]

In keeping with Calvin, Wesley taught that humanity is entirely corrupt. Through Adam, the federal head of humanity, God imputes original sin and guilt to all. We are not born righteous with a problem called sinfulness but born entirely sinful and repugnant to God’s holiness. “God imputes Adam’s first sin to all

mankind...both that sin itself, and a degree of guilt on account of it, are imputed to all.”[\[xi\]](#)

Wesley suggests that the death resulting in Adam after eating the forbidden fruit was not necessarily physical but in fact spiritual. “Accordingly, in that day he did die: He died to God, - - the most dreadful of all deaths.”[\[xii\]](#) Therefore everyone descended from Adam “comes into the world spiritually dead, dead to God, wholly dead in sin...void of the image of God.”[\[xiii\]](#) The result of justification according to Wesley is new spiritual birth or life. “It is impossible for us to come out of our sins...till He who hath all power in heaven and earth calls our dead souls into life.”[\[xiv\]](#)

Wesley agreed with Calvin in asserting that humanity is totally depraved. The condition of man after the fall of Adam is such, that he cannot turn and prepare himself by his own natural strength and good works to faith and calling upon God.[\[xv\]](#)

And further,

Natural free-will, in the present state of mankind, I do not understand...[\[xvi\]](#)

In emphasizing the doctrine of total depravity Wesley reveals both his Reformed theological heritage and influence from Calvin.

Despite Wesley’s strong view of depravity many have misrepresented him as a pelagian.[\[xvii\]](#) Others, even his contemporary followers, have sometimes misrepresented his understanding of depravity in various ways. H. Orton Wiley in his systematic Christian Theology[\[xviii\]](#), while claiming to represent the Wesleyan perspective, distorts Wesley’s commitment to total depravity. Referring to the work of prevenient grace, Wiley states,

The fall did not efface the natural image of God in man... it did not destroy the power of volition which belongs to the will... Thus grace is needed, not to restore to the will its power of volition, nor thought and feeling to the intellect and sensibility, for these were never lost; but to awaken the soul...[\[xix\]](#)

This significant divergence from the doctrine of total depravity has more in common with Pelagianism, than Wesleyanism, as it ultimately affirms free-will. Wesley would suggest that all humanity, except by the grace of God, is utterly depraved of righteousness and “is of his own nature inclined to evil.”[\[xx\]](#) The flesh is not simply “bent toward sinning” but entirely void of the ability or desire to do good.

Wesley was convinced that humanity has neither the moral purity nor the power to achieve salvation on its own. “All the blessings which God hath bestowed upon man are of his mere grace...man having no claim to the least of his mercies.”[\[xxi\]](#)

With the Reformation theologians, Wesley could claim that salvation is fundamentally a free gift of God offered to undeserving humanity.[\[xxii\]](#) He was critical of Roman Catholic salvation theology which made justification dependant on infused holiness. Salvation is therefore always of grace only, apart from any human merit. Grace is the key to understanding Wesleyan theology and the divine order of salvation.

Resistible Grace

In 1740 Wesley preached his sermon on Free Grace at Bristol. He cried, “Verily, Free Grace is all in all... It is free in all and free for all.”[\[xxiii\]](#) This assertion parted

Wesley from traditional Reformed theology by arguing that grace - - the grace that leads to salvation - - was for everyone. Calvin had conceded that 'common grace' was given to all but that it only restrained the lost from gross sin for the purpose of holding society together.^[xxiv] Wesley, from the Arminian perspective, rejected common grace and argued prevenient grace. This grace given to all would serve to do more than just prevent societal chaos, it would give the opportunity for all to respond to the mercy of God. Wesley, although appreciative of Calvin,^[xxv] finally judged his emphasis on the sovereignty of God and irresistible grace as lacking in the practical reality of human responsibility.^[xxvi] In the doctrine of prevenient grace Wesley finds a compromise between our loss of free will and our freedom to respond to God. Wesley is able to avoid Pelagianism by affirming his twin doctrines of original sin and prevenient grace. Due to original sin we are naturally spirit dead and unable to move toward God or respond to him. "It is through the work of prevenient grace that" we are "given the power to respond or resist."^[xxvii] Grace creates within us the power to accept faith or to refuse it.

In Wesley's understanding, prevenient grace is that which enables people to feel or know right from wrong, today known as conscience. In psychological terms, prevenient grace can be compared to Freud's understanding of what he called the 'superego'. Freud understood conscience as the product of the superego, created by a childhood psychological response to societal pressures.^[xxviii] He believed that the superego took on the role of an outside authority figure and demanded compliance to norms even when the authority figure it represented was not present. However, according to Wesleyan thought, the conscience must be understood as a partial restoration of the image of God and due to a supernatural working of divine grace.

No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called natural conscience. But this is not natural: It is more properly termed, preventing grace... So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.^[xxix]

Freudian and Wesleyan interpretations of the conscience have little in common. As people respond to their conscience and the workings of Wesleyan prevenient grace they allow 'convincing grace' to lead them eventually toward repentance. Those who do not respond to grace are guilty in their own sinfulness, not as a result of God passing them in election, but as a result of their unwillingness to respond to divine mercy. We ultimately bear the responsibility if we do not respond to God's grace.^[xxx]

Without Wesley's understanding of sin the doctrine of prevenient grace seems to contradict itself. How is it possible for Wesley to suggest that "no man sins because he has not grace" and yet claim a belief in total depravity? Colin Williams explains that "Wesley has a double definition of sin."^[xxxi] Wesley's definition of sin, in the context of original sin, is total and holds that individuals can never cease to be sinners until glorification. On the other hand, Wesley also suggests that believers can be sinless if they consciously use the grace given to them. For Wesley, "sin is a transgression of the law."^[xxxii] Within these terms an individual can remain judicially sinless (guiltless) from the initial stage of

prevenient grace through to sanctification. There remains, however, the characteristic tension between responsibility and grace throughout Wesley's writings, thus producing his double definition of sin.

Wesley most clearly reveals his paradox of divine will and human will in his understanding of prevenient grace. The prevailing theme is however not limited to prevenient grace. Wesley's understanding of sanctification or "Christian Perfection" relies upon the conviction that we must work alongside the grace of God. In Wesley's sermon "On Working Out Our Own Salvation", he writes, Stir up the spark of grace which is now in you and (God) will give you more grace. Secondly, God worketh in you; therefore you must work... otherwise (God) will cease working.^[xxxiii]

Wesley is suggesting that there is a dual nature to all aspects of salvation, beginning with prevenient grace and on through to 'perfection in love'.

Grace Alone

John Wesley never apologized for offending eighteenth century formal religion in proclaiming abundant life for the holy and damnation for the reprobate. Christ remained for Wesley the supreme measurement of righteousness to which all men and women are compared by God. Failing divine judgment Wesley recognized that humanity is doomed. "Having nothing, neither righteousness nor works to plead, (our) mouth is utterly stopped before God."^[xxxiv] It is only by God's mercy that Christ has made atonement for our sin. The offering of prevenient grace reveals the boundless love of God given for all and in all. "Wesley understood the essential Christian message to be one of grace, but grace which both called for and empowered human response, thereby preserving human responsibility."^[xxxv] This inescapable dialectic became the gauge by which Wesley could pass judgment upon the differing ideologies of his time. Through reconciling grace and responsibility Wesley was able to preserve a biblical teaching of salvation. Wesley conceived God as one who could interact with humanity, allow a measure of free-will, and still preserve his omnipotent sovereignty. Orthodox Christianity remains unclear, however, in balancing the human and divine paradox of wills. It is little wonder that Wesley's followers proclaimed him prophet. Wesley would want to add, "Whatsoever good is in man, or is done by man, God is the author..."^[xxxvi]

^[i] J. Wesley, *Journal*, p.103

^[ii] C.W Williams, *John Wesley's Theology Today*, (New York: Abingdon, 1960) p.39

^[iii] R.L. Maddox, "Responsible Grace: The Systematic Perspective of Wesleyan Theology", *Wesleyan Theological Journal*, Vol. 19, No. 2 (1984) F: 7-22, p. 12

^[iv] *ibid.*, p. 13

^[v] Augustine quoted by John Wesley, *The Works of John Wesley*, 3d ed., Vol. I-X (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1979), VI, p. 513

^[vi] J. Wesley, *Works*, VIII, p. 46

^[vii] J. Wesley, *Works*, VIII, p. 472

^[viii] Allan Coppedge, *John Wesley in Theological Debate*, (Wilmore, Kentucky: Wesley Heritage Press, 1987) p.135

- [ix] ibid., p. 135
- [x] Quoted by J. Wesley, "A Farther Appeal To Men of Reason and Religion", Works, VIII, p. 52
- [xi] J. Wesley, Works, IX, p. 409-410
- [xii] J. Wesley, "The New Birth", Works, p. 67
- [xiii] ibid., p. 68
- [xiv] J. Wesley, Works, VI, p. 512
- [xv] J. Wesley, Works, VIII, p. 52-53
- [xvi] J. Wesley, Works, X, p. 229
- [xvii] "Pelagianism is the theology stemming from the thought of Pelagius, which emphasized human ability and free will..." M. J. Erickson, Concise Dictionary of Christian Theology, (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1986) p. 126
- [xviii] H. O. Wiley, Christian Theology, Vol. II, (Kansas City: Beacon Hill, 1941) was first printed in 1941.
- [xix] H. O. Wiley, Christian Theology, p. 356-357
- [xx] J. Wesley, Works, VIII, p.52
- [xxi] J. Wesley, Works, V, p. 7
- [xxii] J. Wesley, Works, V, p. 7-8
- [xxiii] J. Wesley, Works, VII, p. 373
- [xxiv] S. B. Ferguson editor, New Dictionary of Theology, (Downers Grove: IVP, 1988) p. 280
- [xxv] While Wesley openly attacked Calvin's doctrine of predestination he nevertheless was influenced by the French Reformer. In "Remarks on a Defense of Aspasio Vindicated" (Works, X, p. 351) Wesley wrote, "I believe Calvin was a great instrument of God; and that he was a wise and pious man..."
- [xxvi] R. L. Maddox, "Responsible Grace...", p.13
- [xxvii] C. W. Williams, p. 41
- [xxviii] H. Gleitman, Psychology, 2d ed., (New York: Norton, 1986) p. 418-419
- [xxix] J. Wesley, Works, VI, p. 512
- [xxx] R. L. Maddox, "Responsible Grace...", p. 13
- [xxxi] C. W. Williams, John Wesley's Theology Today, p.43
- [xxxii] J. Wesley, Works, IX, p. 409
- [xxxiii] J. Wesley, Works, VI, p. 512-513
- [xxxiv] J. Wesley, Works, V, p. 8
- [xxxv] R. L. Maddox, "Responsible Grace...", p. 13
- [xxxvi] J. Wesley, Works, VII, p. 374

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This most challenging article is written by the Dean of Studies of The Salvation Army College of Further Education, in Sydney, Australia. Major (Dr.) Graham Harris is responsible for the academic standards of the four schools that go to make up the Australia Eastern Territory's college. He holds a few master's degrees and a Ph.D., mainly in English and Religious Education. The Major teaches regularly in New Testament Studies and Christian Ethics. He has four children, and six and a bit grandchildren. His other interests are playing chess, squash and reading.

Image or Offering?

by Graham Harris

Charles Swindoll, in a reissued book, *The Bride*, has made the statement, "Don't work on your image, work on your offering."

When Swindoll made that statement he was speaking about showing readiness for Christ's return by living a sacrificial life. Swindoll went on to say: Consider your life as little more than an offering poured out to God, rather than a polished monument for men to admire^[1]

The Salvation Army has, arguably, the best image of any organization on Earth. The late General Frederick Coutts said to cadets, on several occasions, "You wear the most respected uniform on earth".

This excellent image seems to be the result of two combining factors; one is the consistent doing of good works and the other is the effective making known of some of those good works.

If anybody attempts to say that our good works are waning then they know more than is revealed in a reading of our current Year Book.

So, does Swindoll have anything to say to us? Perhaps he does. He emphasizes the basic commitment to doing what we believe wants us to, rather than to making those doings known. To do that must have some considerable implications for our "Public (or, in some territories and commands, what has come to be known as "community") Relations departments. We have come to depend so much upon these departments. In some parts of the Army world they are the major winners of support and dollars, which frequently go together. However, I wonder, could it be true that there has been a subtle shift from "doing" to that of "image"?

I have only had one major difficulty within the organization and it was painfully obvious that while privately there was great concern for me personally, officially, image was what mattered. I was roundly condemned for standing, publicly against a political evil.

The Army has not been historically “nice” about taking the axe to political, moral or social evils.

Commissioner S. Carvosso Gauntlett’s book, *Social Evils the Army Has Challenged* remains an exciting record of the Army working, very strongly, at its offering and not being, primarily, concerned with image. Each chapter of this work records our organization’s determination to deal with social and moral evils. There are also recorded in this work the objections of persons, “high” and “low” to this work. The forces of evil are portrayed as being ranged against the Army’s “Maiden Tribute” campaign, and the battle that was waged by Salvationists, and the popular press, against those who made profits from Japan’s “Licensed quarters” are recorded in this work. Also indicated is the fact that one non-Christian religion opposed our care for India’s criminal tribes but that a magnificent work was, nevertheless, undertaken. The fight certainly left Salvationists under the clear impression that their fight was a costly and, in some quarters, an unpopular one.

Nor is such only “ancient history” in the often unpopular moves that we have made. When Major David Brunt ran a rescue work in Sydney’s red light area what he and his team did was very unpopular with certain people. At one time, the major and each member of his staff had been beaten up at least twice. The bashings that they suffered did not only come from the underworld but for some highly-placed persons who were annoyed at having their human ‘toys’ taken from them. To those Salvationists “offering” was much more important than image. The problem for the Army is that as our unpopularity has increased so our work, and our opinion, on a whole variety of public and ethical issues, is sought. When we give that opinion on a specific moral issue (and that means really give a Christian view, and not necessarily one that is politically correct), there is the almost inevitable result that those who are otherwise-minded than we are will object. When that happens the Army must decide either to acquiesce and preserve the status-quo, or to take a stand, knowing that flack will certainly follow.

It is a matter of great regret that the Army has not always raised its voice, and maintained the strength of that voice against social and political evils, such as those in Commissioner Gauntlett’s work. No amount of breast-beating will excuse us for what we have not done. The tragic result of such non-action is that failure to make an “offering” may have seriously damaged our “image” also. This is a result on which the Army has no monopoly. The failure of some organizations to take a stand against the slaughter of Jews, during the second world war, when they knew what was going on, is one that is not only

reprehensible but one that has lost those organizations the respect of millions. There are similar cases presently happening in our world is patent. We should be making our voice heard against genocide and oppression. We will almost certainly know when “offering” is neglected for “image” such a result will follow. It most certainly is not intended but that can be the result.

The positive which may come out of past failure is that we learn the lesson and do not allow, in the future, what is ‘politically correct’ to silence our voice when similar evils are practiced or perpetrated. Our “offering” should always be to do that which is acceptable to God and not concern with our images in the eyes of others. In the first way lies popularity, with God, in the second the invidious position of some popularity – for the present – but at the possible cost of the support of God, and of those who can clearly see that acts do not agree with profession.

I believe that one of the basic problems we encounter and which contributes to concern over offering is that we tend to be governed by those who put the organization first rather than by those who put the prophetic voice first. It is natural for the manager to conserve and preserve the organization. It is natural for the prophet to speak for God. Where these two are in conjunction that is good. Where they diverge the latter should be the voice that prevails. Dr Roger Green delivered the first “Coutts Memorial Lecture” during a visit to Australia. During that lecture he warned against government by bureaucracy. I quote:

We have not traditionally given the teacher and the preacher ...the place of importance they have held in the historic Christian church. Indeed, our Lord himself fulfilled the office of teacher. Many times in our history, the teacher/preacher/scholar has been marginalized rather than given the place of central importance that the life of the church demands. It is time now to affirm that the teacher, the theologian, the preacher is the person at the center of our institutional life. [\[2\]](#)

That is something of particular poignancy to say to us. Why should we argue so strongly for the preacher/teacher/scholar to be at the center of our organization? The answer is, in part, that it is the persons who carry out the offices of preacher, teacher, scholar, who are more likely to speak with the prophetic voice. The basic responsibility of administrators is to preserve the organization – and the tendency there is to develop a bureaucracy that will conserve the image rather than exercise that work or talent which is germane to our growing body – our offering. To say that is not to indicate that administration is not important. It is. We have suffered greatly for poorly carried out administration. But, if there is a conflict what is prime; the declaration of God’s work, in the prophetic voice (our true offering) the latter must prevail or our silence will be most destructive. To quote again from Dr Green:

... the Army of the future will be pleased ,,, to place at the center of our institutional life the preacher, the teacher, the scholar – not for the aggrandisement of persons holding those offices – but because the Scripture as well as the tradition of the church has placed these people at the center of our life together.

[1] Charles Swindoll, *The Bride*, p. 156 [2] Roger J. Green, *Facing History: Our Way Ahead for a Salvationist Theology*. Being part of the F.L. Coutts Memorial Lecture, delivered in Sydney, Australia, Thursday, July 23, 1998.

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Preaching Series: Jonah - Part I

"Titanic - The Untold Story"

by Paul Henderson

We're looking at the book of Jonah. And the first big challenge for some people will be to find the book of Jonah. I have put a title to the series: "Titanic - The Untold Story" and I did that for two reasons.

One, both stories have a boat in them. And two, both chronicle how this journey affected the lives of the main characters.

Now before we dive right in to the book I need to spend some time telling you how I plan to approach the book of Jonah. Just like how the movie Titanic was based on both fact and fiction. Some people approach Jonah with the same mind set.

A Christian business man was listening to someone tell this hard to believe story and he turned to his Christians friends and said, "that's a Jonah if I've ever heard it!" What he was saying is, "that's a story I'm not sure I believe." Whenever we do that we fall into that place where some people tell us we should not take the book of Jonah literally.

The most common approach to the book of Jonah has been to allegorize the book of Jonah. They make the book of Jonah into a story, somewhere along the lines of Gulliver's Travels or Robinson Crusoe. They say the book is

not meant to be a historic account but rather it is a story that is told sort of as a parable. And we're to get the basic message out of the parable and carry that away, but were not to carry anything else away with us. Well, we have a real problem if that is the way we are going to approach this book, if this book is not a historical account or record of events that actually happened. I think you will see in the next few moments that we have a major problem, not just with Jonah, but with some other things as well.

First of all we need to understand that Jonah was an actual person. In the Old Testament you read about David, Josiah and Hezekiah- real people that in many ways have been proved outside of scripture to be actual people. When we come to 2 King 14:25 we see that Jonah is mentioned in the context of a historical setting. 2 Kings 14:25 says "He was the one who restored the boundaries of Israel in accordance with the word of the Lord, the God of Israel, spoken through his servant Jonah, son of Amittai, the prophet from Gath Hepher."

Now look at your Bibles if they are open to Jonah and notice how it describes this man in verse one.

Jonah 1:1 "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying 'Arise, go to Nineveh'". Same as 2nd Kings. There is no possibility that we are not talking about the same individual. Some people have said, "Well maybe it's two different Jonahs. Maybe the Jonah in the book of Jonah is different then the Jonah in 2 Kings." Oh right! They both have a father by the name of Ammittai, they are both prophets and they both minister to the same nation, and they're different people. There is no question that Jonah was a historic person, he lived during the time of Jeroboam the son of Josiah. Jeroboam was a real person, Israel was a real nation, Hammoth where he ministered was a real place, and it is unlikely that Jonah is the figment of someone's imagination.

Let me just stop here and tell you this, "If you don't want to believe in Jonah, You really don't have any choice." You say, "Well Paul that's kind of strong". Well, let me say it another way. If you don't what Jonah you can't have Jesus either! Oh wait a minute! I'm into Jesus in the New Testament, I'm into Jesus, I'm not sure I'm into Jonah. But you don't have that choice.

You see, five times in the New Testament Jesus refers to Jonah as a historic figure. Let's look at them.

Luke 11:29 "As the crowds increased, Jesus said, "This is a wicked generation. It asks for a miraculous sign, but none will be given it except the sign of Jonah."

11:30 "For as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so also will the Son of Man be to this generation"

11:32 "The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah, and now one greater than Jonah is here.

Who said that? Jesus said that. Jesus said that he was a real person and ministered to the city of Nineveh just like the book says. So if you don't want to believe in Jonah, you got a major problem because Jesus believed in him.

In Matthew Jesus even takes this to a deeper level. For in Matthew 12 Jesus says this, "For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a huge fish. Now watch this! The son of Man will be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."

Did you hear that? He said that the Jonah of the Old Testament is a picture of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Jesus said just like Jonah spent three days and three nights in the belly of a great fish, so I'm going to spend three days and three nights in the belly of the earth. And just as my resurrection is actual, so

Jonah is actual. He tied his own personal resurrection to the reality of Jonah in the Old Testament.

So as I said if you don't like Jonah, you go ahead and not like him, but you've got to believe in him- because you can't believe in Jesus and not Jonah. Because if Jesus didn't tell the truth about Jonah, how can you be sure He told the truth about eternal life? Jesus in order to be who he is, the Son of God, must be an unimpeachable witness. He must be accurate in every detail. Jesus said Jonah is real, that's enough for me.

I could spend the rest of our time telling you all the different views on this book but all I need is that My Lord said Jonah was a real person and this book is to be taken as a real historic story. And that's the way I plan to approach the book. I'm not going to tell you the allegory I'm going to teach the story. For the story is the power of the book. What happened to the prophet Jonah? Now that we have all this introductory stuff out of the way, and were all ok with Jonah...right? We're all together now right? Cause Jesus said we could be ok with Jonah.

Now lets look at the first three verses of chapter one, just the first three, that's all were going to talk about. But don't take great hope in that because I've thought a lot about these three verses.

Jonah 1:1-3 "Now the word of the Lord came to Jonah the son of Amittai, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city and cry out against it. For their wickedness has come up before Me. But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord. He went down to Joppa, and found a ship going to Tarshish, so he paid the fare, and went down into it, to go with them to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

The first thing you need to understand is that at the beginning of this book, this is not a normal prophecy. In fact there is only one word of prophecy in the whole book, and that's the word Jonah preached against the Ninevites. It's really the story of Jonah's involvement with God. And at the very beginning of the book we have Jonah's marching orders. The direction of Jonah, from Jehovah God. And the direction was clear in fact there are two imperatives in the word that God spoke to Jonah. He said, "Arise and Go!" These are imperatives; these are

commands. Did you notice God didn't say, "You know Jonah were thinking about doing a campaign over in Nineveh, what do you think about that." Or, "Could you give me some impute into the cultural significance of a Jew going to the Assyrians with

the message of hope." He didn't say any of that. He just came straight to Jonah and he said, "Jonah, You got this now, are you listening, I've got two things I want you to do, arise and go to Nineveh!"

How many wish God's will was as plan as that to us. You got up in the morning and a piece of paper falls from the sky and it says, "Arise & Go". And you knew what to do and where to go every day. Well, in that particular time there was no misunderstanding the direct will of God. God had called and commissioned Jonah to go as a witness as a missionary to Nineveh.

Before we get into his disobedience let me tell you why this was such a hard thing for the Prophet. Before Jeroboam came to the throne, the guy in 2 Kings, Israel had been plagued over and over and over from invasions by the Assyrians. And because of this there was great bitterness between the Jewish people and the Assyrians. Nineveh was the Assyrian capital city.

Nineveh was an incredible city. It had 600,000 inhabitants, which made it one of the largest cities in the world at that time. The people of Nineveh were idol worshippers and our book tells us that they were a very wicked people. So much so that the stench of their wickedness rose up all the way into heaven, entering the nostrils of God. And He said 'I can't deal with this any more'. Go and cry out against them. And the message that Jonah was to give them was, "You got 40 days to get your act together, and if you don't repent, and there's not a revival, you're history".

It's no accident that Jonah was reluctant to take this assignment, and was disobedient. Jonah hated the Assyrians. Hold your place in chapter one and jump over to the 2 verse of chapter 4. "So he prayed to the Lord, and said, "Ah, Lord, was not this what I said when I was still in my country? Therefore I fled previously to Tarshish, for I know that You are a gracious and merciful God, slow to anger and abundant in loving kindness, One who relents from doing harm."

What is Jonah saying? "The reason I didn't want to go over there and preach is that I knew they would repent, and You would not pass judgment on them. And I wanted them to fry! I don't like them. You want me to preach to them, I want to judge them"

God called Jonah to go and preach to the people he hated. And he said I'm not going! God ever asked you to do something you didn't want to do? Did he ever ask you to witness to that impossible person at work? You want them to get fired not saved. So you and I have a little understanding why Jonah was a reluctant participant. He got his instructions right, they were so clear. But the Bible says, that Jonah would have none of it. So we come to verse 3 and see the disobedience of Jonah.

This is really the foundation for the whole book. These first three verses really set the stage for what is going to happen. It says in verse 3 "But Jonah arose to flee to Tarshish from the presence of the Lord."

That in it's self is foolish isn't it. He's going to run away from God.

How do you run away from God? Twice in this verse it says he is fleeing from the presence of the Lord.

And the Psalmist says, Psalm 139:7 "Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there, if I make my bed in the depths you are there."

Can I just say something here? Some of you are running away from God and it's a thankless task. Everywhere you run to, He's already there when you get there.

I want you to notice some things about the disobedience of this man. First of all, #1) "Jonah was Deliberate in his Disobedience." He was deliberate! Now watch carefully. Jonah was in Joppa, God told him to go to Nineveh, and he headed out toward Tarshish. The interesting thing is that Joppa was exactly in the center. And Nineveh was this way and Tarshish was that way. When I say that Jonah was deliberate in his disobedience here what I mean.

When God told him to go and preach to the Ninevites one of his options was to stay where he was. He could have stayed in Joppa. Then we could have given him a little credit. At least he didn't go in the opposite direction that God wanted him to go. That's kind of like a medium problem. But Jonah didn't just stay where he was, He didn't just say, "No I'm not going". He said "I'm not only not going to go, I'm going to go as far away from Nineveh as I can get!" And Tarshish we are told was the most westerly place that was known to the people of Jonah's day. In Jonah's estimation, it was as far removed as possible from the city to which God had called him.

You see what's happening. God says go here, and Jonah says, "I'm not going to go there, and I'm not going to stay here, I'm going to go there!" We call that pretty rebellious. Once in while we see people do that today. God has a design and plan for their lives, and they not only don't do that. Instead, they go the opposite way. Jonah was deliberate in his disobedience. He understood his responsibility; he knew what God had called him to do. Then instead of doing it he turned and went the other

way.

The second thing I've written down is this #2) "Jonah was Deceived in his Disobedience."

That often goes along with our unwillingness to do God's will. Let me put it this way. There will always be a ship waiting to take you away from the Lord. Jonah got down to the place where he was going to leave, down to Joppa, and what do you know, there was a ship there! And it is going to Tarshish, as far away as you can get from God and God's design.

I can just hear Jonah now. He went 75 miles to Joppa from his home, where the harbor was. And of course ships didn't come and go on a schedule as they do today. It was more like when they finished their business one place, and then they left and went somewhere else. There was no published schedule of their routes. And Jonah gets to the harbor and there's a ship. And he says, "It must be the will of God! I mean there a ship here. This has got to be of God! I'm sure I'm doing the right thing. There's a ship here to take me to where I want to go." You know why you're laughing. I know why you're laughing.

Once you determine what you're doing to do, you can begin to interpret circumstances any way you want, can't you. The bottom line is Jonah had already decided what he was going to do. And he had taken a 75-mile

journey to prove the point. Then he got there and he began to interpret the circumstances in order to validate his own personal determination and decisions.

Then the Bible says, "He had the fare to pay." Can you see him now? "My goodness! Look at this! I have just exactly enough money. This must be of God."

I've heard this so often, especially in recent years. Could I give you an updated version of this? "Well pastor, if it wasn't the will of God we wouldn't have met." The problem with this is, Jonah had circumstance here, and he had the absolute clearly revealed word of God over here. He had a "thus saith the Lord" that was so absolutely clear nobody could misunderstand it. "Arise and go to Nineveh and cry out against it." But Lord there's a ship here waiting to go to Tarshish, it must be your will. NO! IT'S NOT!

"But Captain, we wouldn't have meet if it wasn't the will of God." Don't make God responsible for that. God has certain standards that are so clear, and you can't use your circumstances to get your own way! If you have a clear word from God, and aren't you glad we do have a clear word from God on many issues, If you have a clear word from God you can never interpret circumstances to support any other action than doing the will of

God. God's will and God's word are absolutely synonymous with each other.

Don't come to me and say, "I know you're not suppose to... commit...whatever, but I just sense God was in this". No, God wasn't in it! It's an almost blasphemous statement to say that He is. And the problem with Jonah was, he was deceived. Let me say something to you. When ever you decide not to go in God's direction the world will always have a ship waiting to take you anywhere you want to go. Can I get a witness? You know that, don't you? And he had the money to pay and he got on board.

The third thing about Jonah's disobedience was, #3) "Jonah was Doomed in his Disobedience."

The Bible says the ship was going to Tarshish and that Jonah paid the far. And someone has said, "You always pay in full to ride the ship of the world." Do you know what this book is about? It is about how much it cost Jonah to take this trip. It's about the fare Jonah pays. And Jonah paid a lot didn't he! He paid a lot to be disobedient. And some of you can say, "Pastor let me tell you, what I've learned about how much it costs not to do the will of God." I can tell you how expensive it is.

The interesting thing is the ship only went one way; there is no record of

the ship ever coming back. The ships that take you from the presence of the Lord are one-way journeys, until God intervenes and brings you back some other way. And Jonah got back all right, but it was a pretty interesting journey on the way home.

Also notice this, when Jonah went away from the presence of the Lord the journey was down. The bible says, "He went down to Joppa, he went down into the ship, they threw him overboard and he went down into the deep, then he went down into the belly of the fish, then the fish went down into the very depths of the sea." How many of you know that when you walk away from the presence of the Lord the journey is down. It's always down. Down down down.

Then let me add lastly. The fourth point is that, #4) "Jonah was Disciplined for his Disobedience."

Can I ask you to jump ahead with me one verse, to verse four? Now remember that Jonah's running away from God, right. He's in this ship and he thinks he's safe, he's on his way to Tarshish, and he's going to be so far away he won't have to think of Nineveh.

Did you ever think of God watching this from heaven? Here He is looking down over the banister of heaven saying, "Oh man, Jonah what are you

doing?" Then God went...Wwwww. "And the Lord sent out a great wind on the sea." Did you see that! God just went, Wwww. You can't run away from God. Because when you do your headed toward a storm aren't you.

There's both God news and bad news here. The bad news is, you don't want to mess with God, because He controls everything. There's no place you're safe if God's after you! He's the Hound of Heaven. Doesn't this show you how much God loved Jonah? He would employ the wind, and the sea, and He'd prepare a great fish, and all that He did, to bring this man back to himself.

God will do that! Because he's the God of the second chance aren't you glad. The book of Jonah is all about having a second chance. Jonah messed up the first time, but God's going to give him another chance- but not until he works him over a little bit. He has to do that, because if he didn't work him over a little bit he would do the same thing the second time around.

Those who are sailing on the comfortable, pleasant sea of life, feeling like their running from God, may discover that the sea begins to get a little rough. And the winds begin to blow. Because God will not tolerate it forever!

Isn't this really about God's incredible love for people who are stubborn and have to learn things the hard way? So God is going to take Jonah through a little process. But remember, this really reveals the love, and grace, and faithfulness of a sovereign God. He has called you by your name, you are His, and God takes care of His own. But when he says "Arise and Go," we best be on our way. Let's pray!

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On Primitive Salvationism

by Stephen Court

The 'primitive' in primitive salvationism is that which takes us back to the Movement's roots, the unadorned, unadulterated salvationism that shook the world. It means: 'pertaining to the beginning; original; not derivative;.. in its simplest form (WEBSTER'S DICTIONARY).

The 'Salvationism' in primitive salvationism is a largely lost conviction, a forgotten dream, a soured romance. It comprises the sum and substance of the surrendered and committed life of thousands of soldiers through history. But in its essence it has been diluted, drowned out by the voices of compromise, worldliness, and mediocrity. "Salvationism means simply the overcoming and banishing from the earth of wickedness" (William Booth, THE OFFICER. 1893). To the extent that we find this statement by the Founder quaint, unrealistic, or misguided, to this extent we have deviated from primitive salvationist norms.

For some of us, such a definition kindles awkward mortification; for some of us, residue of primitive conviction swirls deep within us; for some of us, flashbacks of the world-conquering dream grow more frequent and unsettling; for some of us, the embers of the first love flame burn hot enough that a renewed romance seems more than a remote possibility.

This company of soldiers who have inherited this primitive legacy deserve an explanation of primitive salvationism.

This is not a defence. A defence of primitive salvationism by necessity relies on Salvationist sources, official and unofficial. This is as futile as using the Bible in Christian apologetics with an atheist who does not accept the Bible's validity. Those with whom we argue don't even accept official SA documents as legitimate. Argument is in vain. Yet, an explanation is in order.

PRIMITIVE SALVATIONISM: Conceived in Prophecy.

Although The Salvation Army was born in the fire, it was conceived in prophecy. "Fully four years before the Christian Mission morphed out of

what was initially called the East London Special Services Committee, on January 23, 1861, a member named Baptist Noel truly prophesied to some 200 Christians:

If this work is done, we shall see some unknown Luthers and Whitefields excavated out of this dark mine, to spread the Gospel farther and wider than we have any idea. I believe we are on the eve of a greater work than England ever saw, and the East End of London is the right place to begin. (J. Edwin Orr. THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING. 1964. p62)

This was an accurate prophecy. Along with the Lawleys, Cadmans, and Dowdles, God raised up Railtons, Brengles, and Tuckers who, between them, began to spread the Gospel farther and wider than any of the 200 in attendance could have imagined.

The Hebrew word 'naba', translated 'prophecy' in the Old Testament, means to bubble up. Prophecy bubbles up and then gushes forth. The next bubbling gurgle came in late 1863, in an incident at a billet's home:

"Excuse me Mr. Booth. what is it that engages your thoughts so frequently and protracted as you pace the garden?" Mr. Booth, with face all ashine, answered, "My friend, I am thinking out a plan, which, when it is implemented, will mean blessing to the wide, wide world." (J. Edwin Orr. THE SECOND GREAT AWAKENING. 1964. p68)

Who can deny that this bubbling, that this movement has subsequently blessed the wide, wide world?

PRIMITIVE SALVATIONISM: Birthed in Fire.

Just one year after becoming a Salvation Army, the first Council of War was attended by 4,000 soldiers in the heat of revival fires. General Catherine Booth implored them:

The time has come for fire. All other agents have been tried: intellect, learning, fine buildings, wealth, respectability, numbers. The great men and the mighty men and the learned men have all tried to cast out these devils before you, and have failed. TRY THE FIRE. There are legions of the enemies of our great King. Fire on them. There are legions of strong drink, damning millions; of uncleanness, damning millions more; of debauchery, blasphemy, theft, millions more! Charge on them, pour the red-hot shot of the artillery of heaven on them, and they will fall by thousands! (Catherine Booth, in St. John Ervine. GOD'S SOLDIER: GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH. 1934. v1. p461)

Primitive Salvation Army revival spread like prairie fire. In New South Wales, Australia, The Salvation Army grew from zero Corps and five salvationists in December 1882 to 20,000 soldiers and adherents in 46 Corps by December 1884!

In New Zealand 5,000 conversions were recorded in the first nine months!

In Canada, the Army opened 73 Corps (10-83) in one year (1884)!

Globally, The primitive Army experienced amazing, 'great awakening' growth between 1881 and 1886. During this period there were more than 250,000 conversions. That's more than 1,000 each week! During this period five Corps were opened per week (from 251 to 1,552)! The next year was even better! In 1887 The Salvation Army exploded by 50%, from 1,552 to 2,328 Corps. That's about 15 new Corps each week! (notes from Major Ray Herron, AUSTRALIA SCHOL FOR YOUTH LEADERSHIP)

And as primitive salvationists attacked with Holy Spirit fire the various demons General Catherine described, society was transformed. Between 1876 and 1886 annual sales of alcohol in England fell 46,980,000 pounds! In one of Major Jack Stoker's appointments 13 pubs went bankrupt in the first three months after his arrival! By 1901 there were 30,000 converted drunks in the ranks of the Army in the UK!

ONE TRACK MIND

Part of the success achieved in primitive salvationism is attributable to single passion, to win the world for Jesus. Such was the effectiveness of their efforts that General Catherine Booth could assert the following and not get run out of town:

There is no record since the Apostles of a body that has so encompassed the Divine idea, all its members being taught to make all other objects and aims of life subservient to the one grand purpose of preaching the Gospel to every creature and striving to win every soul with whom they come in contact to its salvation (Catherine Booth. THE SALVATION ARMY IN RELATION TO THE CHURCHES. p31,32).

The one thing was not evangelism but world winning. While evangelism is certainly an integral part of that, so is discipleship. General William Booth affirmed: "The objects for which this Army exists. are, in brief, to seize the slaves of sin and not only set them free and turn them into children of God but as far as possible in each case to make them soul

winners" (William Booth, ORDERS AND REGULATIONS, 1879?. Intro).

World war against sin was the sole, abiding passion of the primitive salvationist:

And what is our work? To go and subjugate the world to Jesus; everybody we can reach; everybody we can influence, and bring them to the feet of Jesus. (Catherine Booth, AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY, p190)

My business is to get the world saved. If this involves the standing still of the looms and the shutting up of the factories and the staying of the sailing ships, let them all stand still. When we have got everybody converted, they can go on again. (William Booth, in answer to his own question, "Are all to be officers?" in Robert Murdoch. THE ORIGINS OF THE SALVATION ARMY. p141)

THE DARING, RECKLESS, DETERMINED STANDARD

We naively believe that today we can accomplish more than our primitive forebears because of the improvement in technology. After all, we possess the Internet, television, radio, and airplanes. Primitive Salvationists had none of these things. And yet the expectations for them were much higher than any of us would think of imposing on ourselves or others today. General William Booth instructed, "Under ordinary circumstances a daring, reckless, determined Commanding Officer can make himself known to 30,000 people in less than three days" (William Booth, ORDERS AND REGULATIONS. 1879? Section 1:17).

How do we measure up to the daring, reckless, determined standard of primitive salvationism? How likely is it that we'd see this report in a current War Cry?

My heart is cheered. We are making the devil mad. Victory will come! Look out for some martyrdom here in the near future- it is to come, for sure. Well, we are saved to die, and don't care much where our bones are buried. (Major Wells, California, in John Rhemick, A NEW PEOPLE OF GOD. p79)

Booth's rebuke to the churches of her day is appropriate for many parts of her Army today:

These people stand in these paths of traditionalism and routinism just where their forefathers left them occupying all their time admiring the wisdom and benevolence and devotion of their forefathers instead of

IMITATING THEIR AGGRESSIVE FAITH, and MARCHING ON TO THE CONQUEST OF THE WORLD. (Catherine Booth. PAPERS ON GODLINESS. p62)

MISSION-CRAFTED SYSTEM

Talk of systems and organisation seems vulgar in juxtaposition with discussion of passion and Fire. And yet, primitive Salvationist organisation was fundamental to its success. It remains a truth that we must structure to handle revival. Salvationist structure was even a part of its definition:

We are an army of soldiers of Christ, organised as perfectly as we have been able to accomplish, seeking no church status, avoiding as we would the plague every denominational rut, in order perpetually to reach more and more of those who live outside every church boundary. (George Scott Railton, HEATHEN ENGLAND, 1887, p145)

We did not just adopt military jargon. The Christian Mission actually became The Salvation Army, filled with soldiers organised as perfectly as possible.

The media preferred to call it a 'cold-blooded system' (NEWCASTLE DAILY CHRONICLE, 22nd May 1879). Of the first Orders and Regulations one reporter noted, "It is shrewd enough to have been written by Machiavelli. the book is clever in the most worldly sense" (NEWCASTLE DAILY CHRONICLE, 22nd May 1879). General William Booth didn't entirely deny it, recounting:

Beginning as I did with a clean sheet of paper, wedded to no plan. willing to take a leaf out of anybody's book. above all, to obey the direction of the Holy Spirit. we tried various methods and those that did not answer we unhesitatingly threw overboard and adopted something else.

And while the conclusion was the military model, primitive salvationists were quick to borrow from other systems:

We believe that all rational measures, all the measures which men use with respect to the world, if they are lawful and good, may be transferred by the sanctification of the motive, by the transposition of aim, to the Kingdom of God. Yea, we are bound to it. (Catherine Booth. THE SALVATION ARMY IN RELATION TO THE CHURCHES. p47,48)

Change, adaptation, and novelty were persevering principles of primitive

salvationism.

This was the target of much criticism by unbelievers of the day:

It requires "General" the Rev. William Booth to organise eccentricity into a system. The chief of the Salvation Army glories especially in the means by which he attracts the multitude. (NEWCASTLE DAILY CHRONICLE, 20th May 1879)

General William Booth defended this truth excitedly:

The success of The Salvation Army, humanly speaking, has largely resulted from the novelty of its plans and methods; and now we appear in danger of sinking down to the level of an ancient sect. If we do, I feel sure God will raise up some other people, who will go as much in advance of us in novelty, and daring, and reckless disregard of public opinion, and as much in the teeth of the prejudices of old-fogeyism, either amongst us, or outside us, as we ourselves did in these respects twenty years ago. We must wake ourselves up! Or somebody else will take our place, and bear our cross, and thereby rob us of our crown. I look to you to help me. (William Booth to Commissioner Dowdle, in George Scott Railton, COMMISSIONER DOWDLE. p96)

His call for help comes down the generations to us. Will we sit by and watch our crowns stolen, or will we step up and be the 'those amongst us' who rescue the prophesy and the Army?

AN UNLEASHED HOLY SPIRIT

Clearly primitive salvationism was a holiness movement with holiness as the theological glue that bonded it all together. It was the experienced blessing of a clean heart, of perfect love, and of eradicated inclination to sin that powered the movement. General William Booth was willing to tie the success of The Salvation Army to the work of the Holy Spirit in their midst:

The very spread of The Salvation Army does itself bear witness to the message we have proclaimed from the beginning- THAT THE HOLY SPIRIT WILL
COME DOWN ON ALL THE LORD'S PEOPLE IF THEY SEEK HIM. (William Booth, in John Rhemick, A NEW PEOPLE OF GOD. p121. emphasis Booth's)

General Catherine Booth saw the Holy Spirit's activity as a key cause of

criticism of the Army:

What unkind things have been said of The Salvation Army, because people have fallen on their faces under the convicting power of the Holy Spirit at our meetings; but you see, this is Apostolic. (Catherine Booth, with reference to 1 Corinthians 14, AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY, p55)

In response to criticism, General Catherine Booth asked, "How is it that wherever we go as an organisation signs and wonders are wrought" (Catherine Booth. PAPERS ON GODLINESS. p124)?

Commissioner George Scott Railton answered:

What is to be won for God must be captured from the devil. Not indeed, by human might or power, but the use of all men's powers under the mighty influence of the Holy Spirit are signs and wonders continually possible. (George Scott Railton. COLONEL JUNKER. p107)

Listen to this prophetic exhortation by our prophet of holiness, Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle:

It is this holiness that we Salvationists must maintain, otherwise we shall betray our trust; we shall lose our birthright; we shall cease to be a spiritual power in the earth; we shall have a name to live and yet be dead; our glory will depart; and we, like Samson, shorn of his locks, shall become as other men; the souls with whom we are entrusted will grope in darkness, or go elsewhere for soul nourishment and guidance; and while we may still have titles and ranks, which will have become vainglorious, to bestow upon our children, we shall have no heritage to bequeath them of martyr-like sacrifice, or spiritual power, or dare-devil faith, of pure, deep joy, of burning love, of holy triumph. (Samuel Logan Brengle. LOVE SLAVES. p72)

God forgive.

THOROUGH REPENTANCE

The prevailing problem then and today in evangelism is the tendency to ask Jesus into our hearts without repenting of sin. General Catherine Booth explained:

They try to believe; they want to follow Him, but they are kept back by the right hand and the right eye which the Holy Spirit has told them they must cut off and pluck out before He will receive them. They will not do it, so

they are ever learning, and never able to come to a knowledge of the truth. You must renounce evil in your will. You must will to 'obey the truth'. You must say 'yes Lord'. (Catherine Booth, 1891, PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY. p32)

The primitive Salvation Army fought through long battles while the Holy Spirit convicted men and women of the guilt with regard to sin, righteousness, and judgement and brought a godly sorrow which brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret. Many then outside the ranks, and ironically, many now within take offence at what conviction, godly sorrow, and repentance can look like. Here is an extended critical description of an all night of prayer by a newspaper correspondent during which all of these things occurred:

So great was the commotion in the centre of the room, so terrifying was the din, that this incidence (four rows tipping over), which would have thrown an ordinary congregation into uproar, passed almost unnoticed. Several figures are bent double near the platform, groaning and wringing their hands. The "Hallelujah Lasses" have surrounded them; the tall figure of the proprietor of the "Hallelujah Fiddle" gyrates around them; the sweep is dancing and shouting "Glory be to God;" and the "General" is smiling placidly and twiddling his thumbs.

Penitents! Are these penitents who kneel on the form and wring their hands? Or are they persons struck with the contagion of over- wrought enthusiasm?

As may be seen from what I have written, until penitents "throw themselves at the feet of Jesus," as it is called, a meeting of the Salvation Army is a tolerably sane affair. The fat is at once in the fire, however, when penitents come forward.

Half a-dozen crop-headed youths are praying vociferously, with their faces towards me. Did I say praying? It was vociferous shouting, with closed eyes. Their bodies sway to and fro; their hands are lifted, and brought down again with a thump on the form; they contort themselves as if they were in acute agony.

The converts retire to their seats with red faces. Let us follow one of them. He is a broad- faced, shock-headed youth, of about twenty. A few minutes since, he was foaming out of a well-developed mouth. Now he is dancing about the floor, shouting "hallelujah" and wringing the hands of all those who will yield their arm to him. Anon he will mount one of the forms, and shout his experience into the middle of a hubbub which condemns him to remain unheard. Then he will waltz round again, alternately laugh and cry, and go through a new course of hand-shaking. He has in fact been converted. (NEWCASTLE DAILY CHRONICLE, WEDNESDAY 21st MAY 1879)

Primitive Salvationism emphasised repentance of sin. In General William Booth's effective salvation tract, HOW TO FIND GOD, 5 of the 7 steps deal with sin. You can't get through it without completely repenting of sin. If all our converts experienced this heart searching process, whether or not it is accompanied by the manifestations described, we'd likely create more primitive salvationists.

CLAIMING THE INHERITANCE

Primitive Salvationism is our inheritance. This is our birthright; ours to claim. Primitive Salvationism today is characterised by these same features. Our God is the Resurrection Specialist! He can do it again! He can do it even better the this time!

We have two choices, both dealing with our role in prophesy. Either we can sit by and allow the warning prophesies of The Salvation Army to transpire, or we can determine to fulfill the conditions that will make this last prophesy true:

The decree has gone forth that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and that He shall reign whose right it is, from the rivers to the ends of the earth. I believe that this Movement is to inaugurate the great final conquest of the Lord Jesus Christ. (Catherine Booth, in J. Rhemick. A NEW PEOPLE OF GOD. p202,203)

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Captain Curtis Butler lives in Gitwinksihlkw, northern British Columbia, Canada. He and his wife Cindy have served this native village as Salvation Army Corps Officers since 1994. Curtis reports that the fishing is heavenly. This and more by Butler are newly published in Salvationism 301, available now at www.armybarmy.com

A Trip to Roman Palestine

by Curtis Butler

Acts 8:26-35
2 Timothy 2:15

Suppose for a moment you are a visitor to Jerusalem in Roman Palestine of the mid first century CE. It is morning, during dry season. The Mediterranean sun shines brightly. You decide it is a good day to go to Gaza to see what is new by way of caravan imports from Egypt. So early in the morning you begin the seaward walk down from Jerusalem to Gaza. Another person is walking that same road and you join his company but no words are spoken between you. Suddenly you hear a man's voice coming from over a rise in the road. That voice says something that is obviously in sentence form, not gibberish, and it is obviously in another language. You turn to your travelling companion and ask for a translation. He hunches his shoulders indicating that he doesn't understand your English. It should occur to you now that you are a stranger in a strange land. You are a foreigner in a land where conversing in English is alien. How then do you converse with your travelling companion so that you can understand what the 'voice' on the road was saying?

Would it help to know the English translation? (Read Acts 8:32,33) If you look in a biblical concordance you would find that this passage is from a Greek translation of Isaiah 53:7-8 (LXX). Now do you understand what is going on? To read this section in the context of the rest of chapter 8 you would find out that;

- *the 'voice' is that of a black man from Ethiopia in Africa
- *he was probably a Jew on pilgrimage
- *was returning home from Jerusalem
- *he was the court treasurer for Candace, queen of Ethiopians
- *your travelling companions name was Philip (a greek name)
- *Philip is a Christian, and in the context of the book of Acts, we also know he is a deacon in the Church

Now that you know names, social roles and have some minimal information about geography and time line can you interpret the passage in Acts 8:32-33? Or view it this way. If people knew only your name, social role, some of your statements, geographical and chronological information, would they really understand you? If they had some minimal information about some esoteric book you might be reading, would that enable them to understand that book and why you might be reading it? What more would they have to know?

The previous questions cover the who, what, when, where and how of the situation. But they do not address the 'why' question. To find out the 'why' - what is meant in the lives of people, requires information from the social system of the time and place of the original audience. The social system includes;

- a) Culture i.e. the accepted ways of interpreting the world and everything in it by a particular group.
- b) Social structure i.e. the accepted ways of marrying, having children, working, governing, worshipping and understanding God.

As Christians, in order to engage the cultures around us we must first apply the discipline of serious study to the scriptures. Bible study is hard work. Interpretation of the scripture, the art of hermenutics, is serious and potentially dangerous. Jesus cautioned, "Are you not in error because you do not know the Scriptures of the power of God?" (Mark 12:24). The person content with 'a thought for today' is really not interested in seriously engaging the scriptures. Therefore they are not equipped to engage the cultures around them for Christ. There are those who would loudly proclaim, 'you just need to believe God will give you the words'. This approach I like to call 'the immaculate perception'. No need for serious, disciplined study here, just whatever I perceive the text is saying from my cultural bias is true. These 'simple believers' who disclaim the need for hermeneutics are the most suspect interpreters of all. We must ask questions of the text in order to understand the cultural context. This is called the hermenutic of suspicion. However, many Christians are more likely to imply a suspicion of hermenutics than a hermenutic of suspicion.

Our travelling companions on the human road in the year 2000 are diverse and complex. How do we understand who they are? How do we deliver the good news that will transform their lives? Could we learn from Philip to walk along side

them and listen? Then, as their fellow traveller the opportunity will be ours to learn and to share with them the wonder-filled message about a lamb that was slain for the salvation of the whole world.

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Major Chick Yuill is currently the Divisional Commander of the Central North Division, The Salvation Army United Kingdom Territory. He is the author of several books. This is the fourth in a series on Daniel - others include chapters [one](#), [five](#), and [six](#).

Daniel - Dead meat or dead right!

"Drawing the line" - Daniel chapter 3

by Chick Yuill

UNDERSTANDING THE ATTACK

Popular strategy -

Satraps, high officials etc

Sound of trumpet

Attractive

Multi sensory age

Email

Pagan philosophy

Th god Nabu

Behind the trappings

Music

MTV

movies

Political unity

Using religion to shore up

Nebuchadnezzar = Nabu protect my borders

Be involved but be alert

Politicians will use religion - keep it tame

Hitler and the German churches

The soul of Germany - you can leave that to us.

Personal authority

Nebuchadnezzar had put them where they were

He expected to have authority over them

We respect proper authority

But no one rules us

Petty jealousy

On of the meanest aspects of human nature

It destroys churches

It brings down pastors

Spoils working relationships

Satan will use it

TAKING A STAND

No cover-up

Nothing for which to defend themselves

No hidden sin

If you take a stand, Satan will search for hidden secrets

Like running for political office - press searches every weakness

No doubt

God is absolutely reliable

He never fails us

No guarantee

But no guarantee of what he will do

John Paton was a missionary in the New Hebrides Islands. One night hostile natives surrounded the mission station, intent on burning out the Patons and killing them. Paton and his wife prayed during that terror-filled night that God would deliver them.

When daylight came they were amazed to see their attackers leave. A year later, the chief of the tribe was converted to Christ.

Remembering what had happened, Paton asked the chief what had kept him from burning down the house and killing them. The chief replied in surprise, "Who were all those men with you there?" Paton knew no men were present--but the chief said he was afraid to attack because he had seen hundreds of big men in shining garments with drawn swords circling the mission station.

George Atley was killed while serving with the Central African Mission. There were no witnesses, but the evidence indicates that Atley was confronted by a band of hostile tribesmen. He was carrying a fully loaded, 10-chamber Winchester rifle and had to choose either to shoot his attackers and run the risk of negating the work of the mission in that area, or not to defend himself and be killed. When his body was later found in a stream, it was evident that he had chosen the latter. Nearby lay his rifle -- all 10 chambers still loaded. He had made the supreme sacrifice, motivated by his burden for lost souls and his unswerving devotion to his Savior. With the apostle Paul, he wanted Christ to be magnified in his body, "whether by life or by death."

No compromise

There comes a point at which you cannot back down

Martin Luther - Here I stand, I can do no other

FACING THE FIRE

God will be present

Fourth man in the fire

Pre-incarnate manifestation of Jesus

That is the great promise of pentecost

You will be protected

Intense pressure - 7 times

No smell of burning

Not a hair of their heads

The gospel will be proclaimed

That is the ultimate goal of all that we do
That is what matters for all eternity

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