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Editorial Introduction

by Captain Stephen Court

WELCOME TO ISSUE 35.

Greetings in Jesus' name, friends. Thanks for joining us for an exciting issue of Journal Of Aggressive Christianity.

We're tackling some big issues here, unapologetically. We're not afraid to present some contrary views, but our trusty editorial team has balanced them with some strong supporting pieces.

So, Commissioner Needham offers us a paper he presented in January to the National Council of Leaders on MEMBERSHIP. It offers a way forward a little different from JAC's life-covenant position for soldiership in the context of a well-argued, thought-provoking explanation.

Major Chick Yuill throws a dart at us in way of response to the question, 'Why Do Theology?' It is a detailed argument, presented at the UK's Theological Symposium. Get ready to think.

We're pretty psyched about the rest of the line-up, too, but I thought I'd warn you on these first two.

Finally, we've included a public pitch for the vision of outposts in 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years (MMCCXX). There is contact information therein by which you can respond and participate.

We're thrilled to offer a new search feature for the 34 past issues of JAC, empowering you to obtain desired content at the click of a button. This resource should speed up the war.

And for those of you who read fast, you can catch some of the armybarmy warriors on our daily blog at armybarmy.com/blog.html.

Enjoy. And may God pour out favour on you as you hide in Him.

The editorial staff

MEMBERSHIP

by Commissioner Phil Needham
National Leaders Conference, Philadelphia, PA – 1-10-05

My assignment today, as I see it, is to do three things:

- Identify and briefly explore possible answers to key questions we need to ask about how we approach the membership question today.
- Suggest some recruitment and membership strategies to which the answers to those questions lead us.
- Stimulate your own thinking and provide some fuel for the group discussion that will follow.

I sincerely hope that this discussion will reveal some promising directions or re-directions for us in our approach to membership.

How we answer the membership question is crucial. There is little meaning in discussions and decisions about both the Message we preach and the Mission we undertake if we are not on track with the matter of Membership. Who will proclaim the Message and who will carry out the Mission? The Members, of course. The Message may be well articulated, the Mission movingly defined, but what will it all amount to without flesh-and-blood Members who embody it and live it out convincingly. In fact, I would go so far as to say that a crucial question, if not *the* crucial question, for the continuing effectiveness of our mission is the membership issue. An organization, no matter how well staffed by qualified employees and funded by the community, cannot do the mission. Only people can. Only people married to Jesus and to our mission. Another way of saying it is that our mission is incarnational rather than professional. It's people laying their lives on the line for what Jesus has called them to be and do.

So. This leads me to ask, and to invite us to answer, what I consider to be the three key membership questions:

- What are we inviting people to *join*?
- What are we inviting people to *become*?
- What are we inviting people to *do*?

I think we need clarity here, because there's a lot of confusion out there -- or at least there's some serious disparity between pronouncement and practice with respect to membership.

The whole question of membership in The Salvation Army has been addressed by the General on an international level. Following extensive dialogue and consultation, he has decided that membership in The Salvation Army would consist of three possible options – soldiers, adherent members, and friends.

This, of course, is a membership *structure* with defined membership categories. It is an adaptation based on our best attempt (in this era and taking into consideration national and cultural diversity) to reach a suitable outcome. It is based

on both our ecclesiology and the ways in which, and the extent to which, certain people around the world are willing to identify personally with our movement. We have decided that whereas soldiership is the kind of membership we would most like 'prospects' to embrace, or at least eventually arrive at if they join us as friends or adherent members, there are reasons why some Christians do not feel they are ready to take this step, and we want to extend to them membership and participation as 'adherent members'. We also recognize that there are some who have not come to faith but they are on a spiritual journey and desire association with and ministry by a corps, and we want to extend to them an affiliation as 'friends' in which various forms of fellowship and ministry take place.

In this paper we will not be looking at these categories of membership per se. They represent an organizational solution to the difficult question of how to reach some definitions that are applicable and helpful for the Army around the globe. Soldiership, of course, is the form of membership that best captures what it means to be a salvationist. Adherent membership also allows for a substantial level of identification and participation, based on a strong profession of faith and agreement with our mission. The category of 'friends' provides a ministry link with people whom we hope to lead to faith. One way to look at the three categories is to see them as a continuum toward the most 'radical' form of affiliation (soldiership) – though I suspect that many of our best and most effective salvationists will not finally move from adherent membership to soldiership.

What we will focus on in this paper is what membership in the Body of Christ in general and membership in The Salvation Army in particular mean. Along with the theological perspectives, we will look at biases that have been shaped by our salvationist history. We will seek, of course, to be faithful to Scripture throughout and open to any challenge based on Biblical teaching.

We will attempt to do none of this in a mission-field vacuum. We live in the North American mission field of the early 21st century. This is the context in which we must address the membership issue. Obviously, there is not time to explore this in detail, but I do want to say something about the problem of the North American church culture and the evolving North American culture. I say this because in recent years we salvationists have sometimes been guilty of trying to imitate the church culture, or trying to become 'churchified', when the culture we are trying to imitate is proving its ineffectiveness in reaching and keeping new people (people not already church-culture practitioners).

I draw some insights on the matter from Reggie McNeal's incisive book, *The Present Future: Six Tough Questions for the Church* (Jossey-Bass, 2003). He begins the book by showing that the church culture is collapsing. (He does not mean the Church, or Biblical Christianity.) He writes:

The current church culture in North America is on life support. It is living off the work, money, and energy of previous generations from a previous world order. (p. 1)

McNeal marshals the demographics to prove his point. The further you go down the generational food chain, for example, the lower the percentage of each succeeding generation reporting church attendance. A growing number are even leaving church to preserve their faith (the so-called post-congregational Christians). (pp. 2-4)

No longer can the church rely on the American culture to prop it up, says McNeal. Not that there was ever a consistent correlation between American and Christian values, our American mythologies to the contrary! We can say, however, that there is definitely a widening gap between the church culture and the culture of America. McNeal identifies the two dominant responses that churches have made to this gap. (pp. 6-10)

One response is to adopt *the refuge mentality*. Here a self-preoccupied congregation lives inside the church bubble complete with its own entertainment industry. The focus is on churching the unchurched rather than connecting people to Jesus, changing their behavior and making them more like us.

Another response to the gap between church and American culture says McNeal, is *the sell-out approach*. Close the gap by appealing to the very values that the Christian counter-culture opposes. Accommodate the culture of faith so that pre-Christians can make an easy transition and not feel their conversion has disadvantaged them in any way. Come one, come all – this is the church for *everyone*. (No matter what you believe or how you live.)

Neither of these responses is worth pursuing. Nor is staying as we are. McNeal says that the churches of North America are, for the most part, thoroughly modern. They are products of the mindset and manners of modern culture. The problem is that modernity is being replaced by postmodernity. The church culture is therefore increasingly disconnected from the dominant culture, less able to answer the questions that are actually being raised. Postmodernity is here to stay for a while, and it will do no good for the church to continue as if modernity were still the dominant mindset.

How does this affect our approach to membership? It requires that we take a very close look at our church (Army) culture and ask if it really is (as Brengle would say) a holiness culture. It requires that we ask what we are really asking those who join us to become. It requires that we look closely at the extent to which what we are asking members to do advances the mission to which God has called this Army. I believe if we address those issues prayerfully and courageously, we will find people who join us for the right reasons, and we will nurture a membership of missionaries who live out this faith in the streets and an Army that is able to connect within the culture of those it is trying to reach.

Let's address the first key membership question:

WHAT ARE WE INVITING PEOPLE TO JOIN?

Chosen to Be a Soldier (Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army, 1994 ed) makes an interesting statement about us: 'Instead of proclaiming itself as a church [The Salvation Army] has throughout its history stressed its wish to remain "an integral part of that universal fellowship of Christian believers known as the Church of which Christ is the Head".' (p. 65) Implicit in this statement is a non-competitiveness over membership and a commitment to advancing the Kingdom of God (rather than 'our corps'). This seems to lead to an approach to membership that ties it to mission (advancing the Kingdom of God) rather than church club growth. We are inviting people to become Kingdom-of-God people through Christ, to join Jesus' company, not a new club. We are identifying ourselves, not as the perfect church, but as one part of that large company (or body) seeking by grace to discover and live the Kingdom of God together by living with Jesus.

In light of this rather non-institutional view of who we are, the statement about soldiery that comes later (p. 78) would probably be puzzling to the novice: 'Only those who are fully determined, by God's help, to be true soldiers of The Salvation Army for life can rightly take the holy vows involved in the swearing-in ceremony.' Wow! 'True soldiers of The Salvation Army *for life*' '*Holy vows*' It sounds like the soldier being sworn in is entering the Roman Catholic priesthood! And if, over time, he decides to become a Methodist – well, he has violated a holy vow!

The question I want to raise is this: 'Do we really have anything to gain by asking for such absolutist commitment to our organization, especially in a postmodern age when fewer and fewer people see lifelong commitment to any organization or denominational as anything they would sign up for?' Do we really have the right to ask anyone who becomes a soldier to 'do church' from here on only within the Army's church culture?

What are we asking people to join *for life*? And what *for now*? For life: a Kingdom-of-God family. For now: this corps. For life: a mosaic church of many cultures and expressions. For now: *this* corps, *this* community of faith, *this* unique incarnation of the Body of Christ. The future of that person's affiliation is in God's hands. Be at peace.

McNeal expresses an interesting opinion about why the church as a whole (i.e., denominations) is no longer growing in North America. He thinks the church-culture market is already saturated. There's almost no one out there that wants to join our church club. The culture of congregational life has no appeal to the majority. And the percentage of disinterest probably increases when they consider that really strange, quasi-military hangover from the Victorian era called The Salvation Army. (In fact, I really wonder about those attracted mainly by an interest in our quaint Army culture.)

So what *do* we have to offer a prospective member, if not our salvationist culture? What are we inviting him to join?

Quite simply, **Jesus' company**. A group of people committed to living with Jesus. Not the Jesus of our own particular church culture. *Jesus-in-the-streets*. The Christ of the human road. The Christ who lives in the world where we live, the Christ who preached and lived street theology. The Christ of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd-century Christians, who were not permitted officially sanctioned and protected church clubs. *His company*.

Jesus-among-the-marginalized. The Christ of the slums. The Christ our early Army followed to the least and the lowest. The Christ who is Lord of the poor as much, or perhaps more, as of the rich. The Christ who didn't mind wearing a workingman's clothes. A Christ our salvationist forbears dressed in workingclass culture. We are inviting people to join *him*.

What happened along the way? Did the culture created to reach and teach the working classes become itself sacred? Did we sanctify salvationism? Did we embrace our internal salvationist culture too much and allow it to crowd out the Christ of the human road? Is the culture of the Army now in competition with encounter with Christ?

What *is* true salvationism, after all? Is it our peculiar practices, language, government – our Salvation Army culture? Or is it our love for Jesus, so strong that we'll do anything for him, anything to make him known, anything to let him live his life in us. Aren't we, quite simply, *Jesus people*?

Whether people are interested in a Christian subculture called The Salvation Army is quite beside the point. Whether they want to be with Jesus is not. Those who want to be part of a club of like-minded, socially connected, well-behaved church clubbers are not who we want. We want those looking for a family with open arms, open boundaries, presided over by a welcoming Savior.

Here, I believe, is the recruitment mindset we want. We are inviting people to:

Jesus' company, not a religious club. Making Jesus the central, all-consuming figure around which our fellowship gathers in worship, discipleship, and service. Talking more about him, less about 'our corps'.

Family, not a denomination. Inviting people to become a part of one (as in a family), rather than one of many (as in a club). The corps as one woven fabric of relationships, not a closet collection of individual outfits.

Variety, not uniformity, so that a wider range of people can feel at home in our corps and we don't exclusively sanctify one particular cultural expression or club behavior.

A holiness culture, not a church culture. Intentional cultivation of a holiness lifestyle, downplaying the more superficial characteristics of our salvationist culture.

Incarnation, not disengagement. Offering membership in a faith community that is both relevant (connected into contemporary culture) and resistant to its idolatries. A down-to-earth, Kingdom-of-God fellowship.

Creativity, not conformity. Inviting people, not so much to join our Army, as to help create it. 'In the emerging church the people shift from being consumers of church to producers of church.' (Karen Ward, *Christian Century*, 11-30-04, p. 23)

A role, not a status. Offering a place in the corps family where the member can contribute to the life and mission of the family. 'There's a place for every warrior.' (Enrollment of soldiers and adherents, Atlanta Temple Corps, 11-04)

This is what we are inviting people to join. A family gathered around Jesus. Let's talk about what we're inviting them to *become*.

WHAT ARE WE INVITING PEOPLE TO *BECOME*?

The answer is: **Jesus' disciples**. The answer is: fellow travelers on a spiritual journey with Jesus. We are inviting them to a radical, new life. We are inviting them to be salvationists in the *deepest* sense of that word.

Sometimes we salvationists ask ourselves if we have compromised a legacy, or are in danger of compromising a legacy, of radical holiness. How many of our corps appear to be on an intentional journey together with Jesus? Have some, or most, of our corps moved closer to McNeal's description of church membership today as 'club membership'?

The great majority of people don't want to join our club, but many of them are looking for a spiritual journey worth pursuing. If we could not be so hung up on our salvationist club culture and preserving our peculiarities, if we could instead abandon ourselves to the pursuit of a holiness culture, we would, I believe, attract true seekers who want to join for good reason.

What I'm talking about is a membership mindset that aims to make disciples of Jesus, not members of a denominational club. We are inviting people not so much to join as to journey.

Now, how do we cultivate this mindset? Here are a few suggestions:

Be clear **what we are recruiting for**. Recruit people to a community (family) that will help them forward to a life worth living and a destiny worth dying for, not to a corps that needs to grow, not to help the Army achieve expansion, not to an organization going after its 'positive market share'.

Present **membership as a spiritual journey**, traveled in the company of others. The corps is a moving caravan of fellow travelers seeking to move forward in grace toward Christlikeness, toward their calling as disciples of Jesus Christ, toward wholeness. The corps is a company of mutually helpful companions on the journey. (e.g., *Easter to Easter: A Journey with Jesus*) Let's build corps families that take the journey seriously, practice the spiritual disciplines joyfully, and minister to one another helpfully. Invite prospects to a journey, and I believe many will come. The spiritual hunger out there is enormous.

Preach and teach holiness, not as some mysterious spiritual plateau achieved only by the elite spiritual cognoscenti after negotiating a series of theological hurdles with definitional precision and just the right kind of grace, but rather as a practical down-to-earth invitation to follow Jesus day by day, asking for grace for each new set of instructions, all the while wanting only to be like him and asking for the Spirit's help. As Wesley said, be patient about the 'experience' of it, and just get on with *living* it, and the 'blessing', and the blessings, will follow.

Teach **discipleship as a marriage of the interior and the incarnational life**. Encourage both the meditative and the activist side of following Jesus. Help members become good at Bible study, prayer, and worship. Help them also to become good at ministry, service, and witness. No exemptions. Some naturally excel in the interior life, others in the activist. All of us need both. A recent survey of church members revealed that 92% believed their ministry or service positively affected their spiritual growth. None said it had a negative impact. (Eric Swenson, 'What You Get from Giving', *Leadership*, Spring 2003, p. 38) Discipleship is not merely an intellectual journey, not even merely a private spiritual experience. It is a marriage of the interior and the incarnational. The corps must nurture and facilitate both if it is to have members who are authentic disciples.

Encourage **spiritual mentoring/guidance**. In our early days, we had a system of mentoring new converts and we used the system. Over time, we got lax. The result is that, frankly, we have a large percentage of both freeloaders and Pharisees in many of our corps. These are members who have not been discipled.

The *freeloaders* avoid responsible membership. They're along for the ride – for them, a free ride. Well, we need to offer them the ride of their lives. Right now they're on a self-absorbed pleasure cruise, which always ends up back at the same place. Start them on a journey, which never ends at the same place or with the traveler the same. Make the freeloaders discontented with their contentment. Help them see they're here for a real journey but just don't know it yet, or are letting something paralyze them. Help them get unstuck. Mentor them.

The *Pharisees* also need mentoring. They're stuck, too. They love the rules which they have learned to hide behind. They have mastered the science of how things are supposed to be done in this Army, and they will tell you. Of course we know that they're afraid of the exposure of their own hypocrisy and the pain driving their perfectionism. Help them see how much fun Jesus can be and how rewarding the risk of the next leg of the journey can be. Mentor them into the joy of a grace-filled life.

The mentoring, of course, calls for **accountability**. We can't expect our members to take discipleship seriously if we don't hold them accountable for their journey. If their own journey with Jesus is important, accountability is crucial. If you want members to grow in grace, give them guidance and hold them accountable. This is the only way for them to become disciples.

And finally, helping members become disciples requires that we **train them to live the disciple life in the world**, not only how to participate in the life and work of the corps. Usually, our training focuses almost exclusively on the latter. If we are inviting members to become active disciples, then we must recognize that the great

majority of their disciple life is lived *outside* the corps. *There* is where they must make the greatest difference if the mission is to succeed.

They're on their own out there. What are we doing to prepare them? Being a disciple of Jesus Christ means being in the world in a totally new, transforming way. What are we doing to help them change their world for the Kingdom of God? What are we doing to help them make their jobs a calling, their relationships righteous, their actions holy, their families loved and cherished?

They're living in the world, on the streets, in the neighborhoods. We must prepare them for it. Their journey goes far beyond the walls of the corps. We must help them to be Jesus' disciples in the world. We must help them travel well. We must help them to become what they were meant to be.

And we must help them to do what they were meant to do.

WHAT ARE WE INVITING PEOPLE TO DO?

The answer is quite simply: **the mission.** Jesus' mission.

McNeal says that 'the North American church is suffering from severe mission amnesia. It has forgotten why it exists.' (McNeal, p. 15) He goes on to say that 'God is pulling end runs around the institutional...church to get to people in the streets. (Sound like the unchurched street Army of Victorian England?) God, claims McNeal, is inviting us to give up our religious club and join His street movement. (Remember when we called *ourselves* a 'movement'?)

The obsession with membership numbers is part of the club mentality. How nervously do I look at the statistical reports to see the number of new soldiers and adherents we've added – or lost? Membership may well be declining, and at a faster rate than attendances. What is the answer? The answer, I believe, is partly in what we have already said: invite people into Jesus' company more than into our corps, and invite people to a journey with Jesus more than to membership in a club. The final part of the answer is to invite people to participate in a mission that changes the world, and them as well.

The Salvation Army's historic approach to membership is missional: *membership is soldiership*. The focus of membership is the battle on the field rather than the bunch at home, the frontlines rather than the fellowship hall, mission rather than maintenance.

Before going on with this idea, however, we must recognize and guard against two dangers. The first is that the concentration on mission can lead to the neglect of one's spiritual journey. Activism becomes workaholicism, an addiction to which we salvationists seem prone, especially when we're losing focus but continuing the work.

The second danger is that the work may be directed away from the field and focused on the institution itself. This leads to the seemingly endless elaboration of processes and procedures and the elevation of the unimportant to positions of unmerited importance. The result is an organizational culture that preserves the language and imagery of warfare, but only symbolically. A lot of work still goes on, but it's within the organization rather than on the frontlines.

How do we keep the mission as the real target of our energy? We go to what we said earlier. **We go to Jesus in the streets.**

Go back to the first century. People were fast becoming disillusioned with institutional religion when Jesus began his ministry. So he took to the streets, town-to-town, and to the hillsides, and on the boats, and at raucous parties. And when as a good Jew he did go into the synagogues and the Temple to worship, he never failed either to upset the apple carts of institutional piety or to say something outrageously against the institutionalized theology and expectation. He preached and lived street theology, and thank God those early Christians were outlawed by the Roman government so that they couldn't start building big churches for a couple of centuries and designing a church club culture before we spread in the streets and homes and businesses and established an indelible memory of authentic mission.

And what about this Salvation Army of ours? In Victorian England the masses had become disillusioned by the respectable church club culture – and wouldn't be caught dead within those hallowed walls. And our Salvation Army took Jesus, not the church culture, to the streets, and the slums, and the pubs, and the hovels. Yes, we created a culture of our own because we needed to connect with the people at ground level. We needed to speak their language and sing their tunes. They needed a family to belong to, and every family has its own culture. We created one and it was brilliant. A church with brass bands, for heaven's sake. And uniforms...and raucous songs with gospel messages...and meetings on the corners outside those pubs and alongside those gutters of public drunkenness and despair. They created a mission culture.

Over the years this culture we created in the beginning for the sake of our mission became itself sacred. We thought this Victorian workingclass, quasi-military religious culture was what accounted for our success, or at least was what we had to preserve to be what we were. Not true. What accounted for our success and what preserves our true character as a Salvation Army is our taking it to the streets, whatever 'the streets' may be for us today. As we began to substitute the celebration and preservation of our salvationist culture for our engagement with people in the streets, we became less a mission and more a club. We tried to domesticate the stable-born, street-savvy, incarnational Christ. Even our social services became more building-oriented: 'You come to us, meet our conditions, and we'll help you. We don't do the streets anymore.'

Of course, I'm exaggerating some. Some. But I do think McNeal is right when he says the church needs 'a missional fix', and it will come only by the church dying to itself and coming alive to God's mission. (McNeal, p. 18) Our Army is not immune to this critique, but we sure are in the best position to lead the way back! If we're ready to die to ourselves.

McNeal speaks of a '*missional spirituality*'. (pp. 26-27) On the mission field we engage people in their entire social context. We see not only their personal brokenness but also the brokenness of their communities. As the Booths discovered, the Army of Salvation needed a larger scheme. They created it and called it the Darkest England Scheme.

Missional spirituality means not only that we invite our members to work for personal transformation, one life at a time, but also that we invite them to work for **community transformation**. This is particularly crucial when our mission takes place in communities that are corrupt, crumbling, and crime-ridden. (Urban Mission Training Center, Atlanta)

Mission is a humbling experience. It cannot be undertaken by those who claim to have all the answers. Only by those willing to be humbled. The wonderful thing is that this humbling is the doorway to our destiny. A servant spirit is the key to our calling. Like the Suffering Servant of Isaiah, the Lord formed us in the womb to be His servant. (Isaiah 49:5) So we invite our members to go to the mission field with a humble spirit, imitating their Servant Lord. We invite them to **servanthood**. (See *Servants Together: the Ministry of the Whole People of God*, 2002, I.H.Q.)

We also invite them to enter into **a covenant**, which in the *Soldier's Covenant* is expressed primarily in terms of the soldier's relationship to God and secondarily to The Salvation Army. The prospective soldier is asked, not primarily to 'join the Army', but to fulfill his covenant with God as this relates to his decision to become a salvationist. Most (almost all) of what he is covenanting has to do with his own confession of faith (the doctrines), his spiritual journey, his relationships, and his actions, concluding with commitment to participation in the life and ministry of the corps, to the Army's principles and practices, to loyalty to leadership, and to courage in the face of opposition and persecution. The covenant concludes with a statement of commitment to Christ and to 'His service for the salvation of the whole world....' -- a strongly missional statement.

We have already pointed out the increasing hesitancy of people to commit for life to a particular church or denomination. This is not to say that they are not willing to commit to *Jesus* for life and eternity. We should invite them to make what *Chosen to Be a Soldier* calls 'a sacred covenant'. It is with Jesus for life, it is also with the Army and its mission for now. I believe that the only salvationists who can do the mission are those who have entered into that kind of covenant.

Let us not forget, then, that all salvationists are in a covenant for mission, though some haven't yet discovered it. *What our members do is mission.* Forget the false dichotomy of those gifted for maintenance and those for mission. We are all called to mission, and the business of the Body of Christ is to prepare and equip all its members for their mission in the world, no matter what their particular function in the congregation.

Furthermore, I believe every congregation/corps *itself* is called to be a *demonstration community in the world*: a demonstration of the power of the Kingdom of God to transform life and build communities of compassion. This is what our Army has done when we've been at our best. This is at the heart of our calling. This is why, for us, **membership is mission**. This is why, in the words of our Southern Territorial Mission Statement, all salvationists are called to be 'radical followers of Jesus Christ who love inclusively, serve helpfully, and disciple effectively in the communities where they live.' And this is why the corps itself must be a demonstration community to show *that* it works and *how* it works.

How does a corps do this? We already have an array of Salvation Army service opportunities wherever we have a corps. How many corps members serve in those programs? When one or a few corps members get a vision for a new outreach ministry, how many corps members would support them and surround them in prayer? All our corps have worship and other congregational activities. How inviting and inclusive *are* they?

Here's an important question: What is the 'critical mass' of corps members involved in mission below which the corps ceases to be an authentically missional corps or mission fails to pervade and define the whole. A corps with a small percentage of missionaries who basically operate independently from the whole is just that: a corps with some missionaries. It is not a missional corps. Every corps should ask itself the question: How essential to our whole purpose and character is the mission in which our members are involved? Membership is about the journey, and the journey leads into the world, in mission with Jesus.

How do we nurture this understanding of what salvationists are called to do with their lives? Here are some suggestions:

Present membership more as joining a mission than a church. Interpret who we are more in terms of our missional passion and strength than in terms of cultural peculiarities. (I.e., interpret who we *really* are rather than our idiosyncrasies. Why would someone want to join such a strange lot as we are unless they happen to be attracted to unique subcultures. They will join us, rather, not only because of their spiritual hunger and their longing for a spiritual family, but also because they fall in love with our heart for mission, our bedrock belief in salvation for the whosoever, our passion for a gospel that aims to transform the world, our godly inclusiveness. *This* is what we are about, and *this* should be our 'sell' to those considering affiliation.

Another important step is for *corps membership to be significantly involved in compassionate outreach*. Examples:

- Salvation Army community services (emergency lodge, casework follow-up, character-building ministries, ARCs, etc.)
- New acts of compassion initiated by corps members or a corps team.
-

It is important that these things be evaluated in the annual corps review. Include in the section assessing soldiers and adherents the question: 'How many, or what percentage of, soldiers and adherents are involved in mission?' 'What does the corps do to train and equip its members for mission?'

Another important step also relates to the annual corps review. Help corps **evaluate all their activities in terms of mission effectiveness or support**. Examples:

- How many teenage girls won to Christ, disciplined, given direction and self-worth through our G.G. program (or any of our character-building programs)?
- How many children and teens in our community center have we brought to faith and to membership in a community of faith?

Because most of us won't be in our same appointment for ten or fifteen years, **resist Satan's temptation to achieve 'success' by nothing but quick wins, quick fixes, and quick cash**. Let's encourage, help, and resource our corps officers to nurture and build a membership in mission. The main payback for us, the richest harvest, may actually materialize during the term of our successor. Be at peace.

Keep the focus on servanthood as guiding our action on every level. Frequently (not occasionally) and persistently (not tentatively) teach it, demonstrate it, reward it. This will be the only way we earn the right to be heard in the world. We must accept that our Servant Lord is a subversive figure in a world bent on self-aggrandizement. The credibility of our mission to advance the counter-cultural agenda of our Servant Lord rests on the authenticity of our own servant life. The way of Jesus is too radically different to stand on argument; it must stand on demonstration.

Let me say something about *the servanthood of us headquarters officers*. As I have heard one of my mentors, Ken Callahan, say so often: 'People tend to lead in direct relation to how they experience being led.' If we want servant leaders on the field, we will have to give them servant leadership from headquarters. This will require, for example, not allowing our need for approval and our unhealthy need to be needed to cause us to fail to release field officers for mission because we want them close by under our watchful care (that is to say, our control). Unfortunately, some headquarters officers can't seem to resist their need to control field officers. It is the expression of their own insecurity and lack of self-confidence. They give no real slack, badger field officers about getting all the safe stuff right, and force them to pay all attention to organizational maintenance. What I've observed is that this approach de-incentivizes for mission.

I'm not suggesting we abdicate our supervisory responsibilities. I'm inviting a kind of supervision that releases people for the important things to which they have been called and that encourages them to use power to empower and release others for mission. This is servant leadership.

Perhaps the best place to end this paper is on this note. As followers of our Servant Lord, servanthood is our life, and as we invite people to join us we invite them into a family of servants who are on a journey to learn how to be better at it everywhere – and especially on the mission field.

Theological symposium - Why do Theology?

by Major Chick Yuill

I have chosen the title 'Why do theology?' because I am fairly sure that there are more than a few Salvationists who would question the worth of a week set aside to study and discuss theology. 'Surely', they would assert, 'The Salvation Army exists for the very practical work of telling the Good News about Jesus and caring for the needy in His name.' They would whole-heartedly agree with the person who said that General John Gowans' three-pronged dictum - 'Save souls; grow saints; serve suffering humanity' - is all the theology we require. You will not be surprised to hear, given my presence at this symposium, that I most definitely disagree with such sentiments.

The simplest definition of the word theology, deriving as it does from the Greek 'theos' meaning God, and 'logos' meaning word, teaching or study, is that theology is the study or teaching about God. And the simplest answer to the question 'Why do theology?' is that thinking about God is an intrinsic and inescapable part of being human. If you spend any time in the company of children or with a group of men in a pub, you will soon be aware that they think about God. It may be as unsophisticated as the testimony of our neighbour over dinner that 'somebody up there is looking after me.' It may be as confused as the lady on the top of a Glasgow 'bus who, lamenting to her friend on how bad things were, concluded her musings with the unforgettable sentence, 'If God could only see what was happening to His world, he'd turn in his grave!' It may even be the insistence that God is unknowable or that He doesn't exist at all. But, none-the-less, it is a kind of theology and it is very much part of our humanity.

The theological task

But there is a more profound - or, at least, a more relevant answer for our purposes at this symposium - to the question 'Why do theology?' We must 'do theology' because theology is the vitally necessary task of reflecting on the faith we hold, exploring our belief system, and prayerfully discerning how those beliefs are integrated into and expressed by our individual commitment as disciples, our corporate life in community as the Body of Christ, and our intelligent and intelligible communication of the faith to a watching world.

Of course, we recognise that, as is the case with every intellectual and academic discipline, there are those whose abilities, education and full-time commitment to study give them a justifiable claim to greater authority in matters theological than that possessed by those of us who have to give our time and attention to a variety of tasks. To such individuals we must listen with both respect and attention. But theology is too important to be left to the theologians. Their task is not to be the sole possessors of a truth that is too exclusive or too esoteric to be understood or possessed by the wider church. Quite the opposite, in fact. As Heinz Zahrnt so clearly expressed it:

Theology, more than any other discipline, must never become merely a field for experts. Just as in Switzerland there is only a small professional army whose sole task is to train a large territorial militia, so theologians should also form only a small professional army in the Church, with the task of creating a large body of theological territorials. (Heinz Zarhnt The Question of God Collins 1969)

Professor Zarhnt's analogy is particularly apt for The Salvation Army and for this symposium. Theology is far from being an indulgence for academics or a luxury for those who are too much at ease in Zion. It is the responsibility of all those who care about how we interpret and communicate the eternally relevant message of the gospel in the language and thought forms of our day and how we fulfil our mission to reach a lost world for Jesus Christ in the first decade of the twenty first century.

Before we proceed further, it is worth taking some time to identify the factors which gave rise to a systematic approach to theology in the early centuries of the Christian Church. Our brief analysis will inevitably be an over-simplification, but it will be an over-simplification of a truth which will help us to discover the nature and purpose of the task which faces us today.

Refuting heresy

It may seem strange to say, but the church has reason to be grateful to heretics! They have forced believers to think deeply about gospel truth and how it is best expressed in order to avoid the confusion of the faithful or the corruption of the gospel. There are few greater stimuli to good theology than the existence of heretical teaching. The great councils of the early church and the resulting formulations of creedal statements were largely a response to false doctrines and dangerous misinterpretations of the truth. Similarly, the great discoveries and emphases of the Reformation arose out of the need to combat the failure of Rome to remain faithful to such central truths as justification by faith.

Polemics is an inevitable aspect of serious theological reflection, and that fact encourages me to suggest that we should not be afraid of honest disagreements at this symposium if such should arise. For out of our struggles may well come a deeper apprehension of our faith. Furthermore, it should embolden us to dialogue with the post-Christian society in which we live and to wrestle with the often uncondusive assumptions of the prevailing culture. For those, too, may well help us understand more deeply what we have taken for granted. We might even find that what we have believed to be sound orthodoxy has been little more than the unquestioned assumptions of our own prevailing sub-culture.

Teaching converts

The Christian Church discovered very early that it is vital to instruct new believers in the faith. Failure to do so means that, at best, they never become mature disciples and that, at worst, they backslide completely into their old way of life. From the second century Christian missionaries and teachers developed

catechisms in which converts were instructed prior to baptism. Constructing such catechisms was inevitably a theological exercise. Often they would be imparted to the converts on a question and answer basis and this kind of catechismal teaching persisted for many centuries. I still remember my Dad regularly quoting in prayer or conversation from the catechism he had learned as a child at school, even though his formal education had ended at the age of fourteen.. 'What is man's chief end in life?' he would ask, before immediately responding, 'Man's chief end in life is to glorify God and enjoy Him for ever.' Learning by rote may no longer be fashionable in educational circles but clearly it was an effective way of fixing theological truths in the minds of unsophisticated people.

One of the recurring complaints one hears from Salvationists is that we have not been good at discipling converts. Few of us would argue that such a criticism is entirely undeserved. For that reason alone, serious theological thought must have an important place among us in order that we can teach the profound truths of the gospel in a simple and accessible manner to new believers. It is only those who have grasped the truth at a deep level who can then take what they have understood and interpret it in a form that those who are not theologically sophisticated can understand.

Summarising biblical teaching

Evangelical Christians believe that the Scriptures are the inspired Word of God and that, in the words of our first Doctrine, 'they only constitute the divine rule of Christian faith and practice'. In the light of that conviction, it is not difficult to understand why a great deal of theological energy has gone in to summarising the great themes of the Bible. Take a few moments just to flick through the main sections and the chapter headings in almost any book on Christian doctrine and you will find that it deals with such themes as the nature and inspiration of Scripture, the attributes of God, the sinfulness of humanity, the person and work of Jesus Christ, the Trinity, the atonement, justification by faith, sanctification, the purpose of the Church, judgement and 'last things'.

Indeed, our eleven articles of faith take exactly that approach; they are a summary of Biblical themes. It has to be noted, however, that it is a less than systematic list. It is the doctrinal statement of a mission movement whose emphasis was on evangelism and individual conversion and who had little or no concern for matters of ecclesiology. Consequently there is nothing relating to the theology of Church. In addition, it reflects the Arminian-Calvinism controversy of the time; hence, the insistence on continuance in a state of salvation being dependent on continued, obedient faith in Christ. And, interestingly, it is entirely silent about the central truth of the gospel - the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Presumably the silence arises not out of any doubt of that fact, but simply because it was not a matter for controversy amongst those who rallied to the ranks of the early Army. It did not need to be stated because it could be taken for granted.

The theology of recovery

This brief excursion into the past brings us to the heart of this paper. Why do we need to do theology today? Is it not enough simply to refer to our eleven doctrines and then get on with the business of being The Salvation Army in the twenty first century? Surely Booth, Brengle, Railton and those other luminaries of the past have provided us with seminal volumes which settle matters for us once for all? There is nothing more to be said.

Of course, I am guilty of over-simplifying the matter, some would even say caricaturing a perfectly valid approach. Everyone who gives the matter serious thought knows that the language of our forefathers is not the language of today. The challenge, they will tell us, is to restate the simple but eternally relevant doctrines of our founders in ways that are accessible to those who live in the present age. Indeed, one of the main theological initiatives among us in recent years has been the move to what has been called 'neo-primitive salvationism'. It is a movement with which I have considerable sympathy. It is important that we constantly recover our founding vision, that we understand our origins and history, and that we remain obedient to our calling to play our part within the whole Body of Christ. It is for that very reason that I have been privileged and eager to be part of the ROOTS movement which has become significantly more than just an annual conference and which is now impacting the Army across the world.

However, I have to confess that I have grown somewhat uncomfortable with this approach to doing theology, not because it is wrong per se but because it is inadequate, it is only half the answer to our question. Simply recovering and restating the truths of the past will not provide us with an adequate theology for the present. Let me explain some of the reasons for my disquiet.

1. Firstly, such a theology of recovery tends to be based on the unspoken assumption that our forefathers in the faith were right in every particular. But that is simply not the case. William Booth, for example, was absolutely correct in his insistence that the call to holiness and the privilege of sanctification are integral to a true understanding of the gospel and vital to mature discipleship. However, there were times when he came perilously close to articulating a doctrine of perfectionism. We do him no honour by ignoring that fact. Nor do we denigrate his memory and influence in any way by recognising his frailty and doctrinal errors.
2. Secondly, this emphasis on a theology of recovery often results in the compilation of a list of the distinctives or non-negotiables of The Salvation Army. Some of these might be tangible manifestations such as uniform-wearing, but most are theological emphases. I have two problems with these lists. In the first place no two compilers agree with each other, leaving me with the feeling that the choice of non-negotiables owes less to a distinctive theology than to the perspective and prejudices of the particular writer. In the second place, the primary characteristics of Salvationism - an emphasis on evangelism, on holistic ministry, on the generosity of God's love in offering

pardon to all who will receive it, on the call to holiness, on the invitation to be part of a renewed community - are nothing other than the characteristics of the entire Christian Church at its best. I cannot help but think that it would be far better for us to recognise that God raised us up in a particular historical and cultural setting to fill a particular place within the whole Body of Christ. The task is to discern the distinctives of the gospel and to get in line with them rather than seeking to justify our existence by emphasising our difference from the rest of the church.

3. Thirdly, in its most extreme form there is a real danger that such inward-focussed, backward-looking theology can lead us into what might easily be perceived to be a kind of cultic arrogance. I fully agree that God raised up The Salvation Army at a particular place and time to fulfil a particular need in His Church and in His world. I fully agree that our ministry is by no means done and that we still have work to do. But there is a movement afoot that takes us where we have not gone before. I have recently heard the phrase used in theological discussion, 'God invented Salvationism.' That seems to me to be a very different thing from saying that God raised up The Salvation Army. The latter statement says simply that we exist at God's initiative to do His will. The former implies that for 19 centuries - before the Army came on the scene - something was missing from the faith delivered to the saints and the gospel entrusted to the church. I would humbly but fervently plead that it would be far more balanced spiritually and theologically to say simply that we give emphasis to certain aspects of the whole truth held by the whole church and that it is only within the wider Body of Christ that our ministry can be properly exercised.
4. Fourthly, a theology of recovery will by its very nature seek to recover or at best restate the doctrinal propositions of a previous generation, propositions which were forged in a very different ecclesiastical context and in a very different prevailing intellectual culture. Our eleven articles of doctrine remain as true as when they were set down by our founders. Of course, we do not in any way deny them or reject them. They remain a vital part of the tradition - and I use that word in its best and fullest theological sense - of this part of the Body of Christ that is The Salvation Army. But they were formulated in modernity and consequently they represent a rationalistic, propositional presentation of Gospel truths and themes.

We are now living in post-modern Britain. The rationalism of modernity is no longer trusted. That may be a cause of regret to those of us who still have modernity in our bones, but it is a fact with which we will have to come to terms if we are to communicate the gospel of Jesus Christ to the culture in which we now live. As Mike Breen has said, 'Absolute truth, apologetics and didactic teaching mean little to those born after 1964.' (Quoted in 'Christianity & Renewal' issue of June, 2004) The reality is that we need to find new approaches to theology that will complement the doctrinal statements of the past. In short, I contend that we need to move beyond a **theology of recovery** to a **theology of discovery**.

The theology of discovery

Before we embark on a discussion of what it might mean to embrace what I am calling a **theology of discovery**, I want to make it very clear that this is no mere intellectual pastime for those with a taste for such esoteric pursuits. It is no exaggeration to say that failure to undertake this task might well consign much of the Church to the margins of society in twenty first century Europe. John Drane, in his excellent volume, 'Cultural Change and Biblical Faith', highlights the dangers facing us if we cannot learn to be church and do theology in a new way. His insights are worthy of an extended quotation:

Popular culture...has not adopted some grand philosophical vision, but is simply aware of the deficiencies of inherited ways of doing things, foremost among which is a sense that the Enlightenment worldview has led to an unhealthy dismissal of anything spiritual, and that the church - far from being the solution - is actually part of the problem. This in turn sheds further light on how the church has ended up in such serious decline while the culture is far more openly religious or spiritual than it has been for some considerable time. Could it be that by its uncritical embracing of the culture of modernity, not only did the church historically accept some notions that were actually Christian heresies, but it also embraced the methods of modernity to such an extent that, at least in the West, Christians are actually incapable of imagining how to contextualise the gospel in a different cultural frame of reference? Is the church's predicament less a crisis of religion or spirituality, and more a crisis of culture, stemming from the fact that at a time when fewer and fewer people still find meaning within the culture of modernity, that is the only frame of reference in which the church knows how to operate?

(John Drane Cultural Change & Biblical Faith Paternoster Press)

I have no doubt that John Drane is right. We need to do theology and to do it in the context of a new frame of reference. We need a theology for a post-modern world, a theology which takes proper cognisance of the tradition of the church generally and the tradition of our own denomination in particular, but a theology which is cast in a new mould. Such a theology, I suggest, will require us to be continually looking in four directions.

There is a story to be told

It is commonly and correctly stated that post-modernity, in the wake of its distrust of reason and science and its scepticism towards claims to absolute and objective truth, has rejected the concept of a 'meta-narrative', a big, over-arching story that holds life together. But that is not the whole truth. In the West, this is the age of story. It is not without significance that, despite the advent of multi-media entertainment and the long-predicted demise of the printed word, the novel remains a powerful force among thinking people. It is equally significant that, at a more popular level, the cinema is the great teller of stories, stories which are so often woven around the great themes of life and death, fall and redemption, love and

relationships. Even the Harry Potter movies are an indication of a longing among adults as much as children for a story with a hint of magic that will take us into a world of wonder and mystery.

Douglas Coupland's book, 'Generation X', the title of which gave rise to the popular usage of that phrase to designate the generation born after the 1960s, tells of three friends who move to the Arizona desert to discover some sort of meaning in life. Two brief excerpts succinctly express what so many feel even if they cannot articulate it:

'It's not healthy to live life as a succession of cool, isolated little moments. Either our lives become stories or there's just no way to get through them...this is why the three of us left our lives behind and came to the desert - to tell stories and to make our own lives worthwhile tales in the process.'

'Most of us have only two or three genuinely interesting moments in our lives, the rest is filler...at the end of our lives most of us will be lucky if any of those moments connect together to form a story that anyone would find remotely interesting.' (Douglas Coupland *Generation X* New York St Martins Press)

In a world where little seems to make sense, people are longing for a story that will intersect with their personal story and bring meaning and direction to life. The implication of this fact for us is that the telling of the gospel story must take priority over and provide the foundation for our theology. The theological task for the church in our age is not primarily to produce a series of doctrinal propositions in updated language. Rather, it is to reflect upon the gospel story and to discern where it intersects with our culture at large and with the lives of individuals.

The point at which theology normally intersects with the wider world is in the area of apologetics. From the time of the Enlightenment and throughout modernity, apologetics has been based on seeking to demonstrate to the world that the gospel is rationally defensible. Some years ago Stephen Gaukroger wrote an excellent little book defending the faith called 'It Makes Sense'. It is the perfect title for a book of apologetics to a modern world and it remains a useful volume. However, the time has come for someone to write a book entitled 'It doesn't make any sense!' At least it doesn't make the kind of sense that is validated simply by rational investigation. In fact, the opposite is true; it is only the biblical narrative with its majestic sweep of creation, fall, redemption and the ultimate victory of good over evil that makes sense of life.

Robert E. Webber describes the change from modernity to post-modernity and the resulting shift in theological emphasis that is needed:

'In sum, the issue of modernity has revolved around reason. Does reason show the Christianity of the New Testament documents and the early Christian tradition to be true? ? Do we affirm Christianity because reason validates it? The rise of post-modern thought in the nineties has changed the entire discussion. Postmodern philosophy has challenged the use of reason as a test for truth...'

(Robert E. Webber The Younger Evangelicals Baker Books)

Webber goes on to quote from William Placher to demonstrate that post-modernity, far from being the destructive force many have assumed it to be, actually enables us to be more true to the gospel story by simply 'telling it like it is' so that the biblical narrative becomes both the provider of meaning and the judge of reality:

'Suppose we do not start with the modern world. Suppose we start with the biblical world, and let those narratives decide what's real, so that our lives have meaning to the extent that we fit them into that framework. That is, after all, the way a great many Christians - Augustine, Aquinas, Luther, Calvin - read the Bible for a long time. If we do that, then the truth of the biblical narratives does not depend on connecting them to some other real world. They describe the real world.'

(William C. Placher Unapologetic Theology: A Christian Voice in a Pluralistic Conversation Westminster John Knox.)

There is a culture to be understood

In insisting on the importance of story, however, we are begging an important question: How do we tell the story in a language and in a manner that can be understood? The answer to this question brings us to the second area in which we need to do our work. We need to do our theology in the context of our culture. Otherwise it will not only be cast in language and thought-forms that are out-moded, but it will also fail to address and relate to the issues that concern our neighbours. Let me suggest just four ways in which our culture has changed and which will significantly impact how we do theology in the twenty first century.

From farm to feel-good

For generations western society was founded on an agricultural economy. Life was marked by the rhythm of the seasons; you either worked on the farm or eked out a living making goods in your cottage; few people ever travelled far from home. But in the middle of the Eighteenth century the change known as the Industrial Revolution began to take place in first of all in Britain and then in other parts of Europe and North America. The invention of new machines paved the way for mass production and led to the creation of large cities as people relocated to find work. The Industrial economy thus created was to hold sway for the next 200 years.

But, since the middle of the twentieth century, heavy industries have been in decline. Increasing automation has meant that fewer people are required to produce the goods our society needs, and, with the advent of mass communication and computerisation, the Industrial economy has been overtaken by an Information economy in which knowledge increasingly generates wealth. And - such is the pace of change - that in turn is now being superseded by what might be called, if not an Experience economy, then certainly an Experience culture.

A visit to the cinema is more than just watching a movie; it is an all-encompassing audio-visual experience with wide-screen image and surround sound. Eating out is no longer just an opportunity for good food; it's an eating experience in a themed restaurant in which the décor, the music, the images, and the dress and role-playing of the staff all contrive to transport you to an exotic world of taste and touch. This is a world of virtual reality, of interactive games, in which ever more sophisticated technology will give us ever more convincing experiences. As one observer has put it, 'We are entering not a visual culture (that was ushered in by television), but an immersive one.'

From co-worker to consumer

Under the old Agricultural economy people were co-workers; you shared the toil and you shared the produce. everyone had a common interest in the production and consumption of food and other resources. With the move to an Industrial economy, that immediate relationship changed. Now you worked in the factory, the shop, or the office to play a small part in the manufacture of goods which you might never own for yourself. But the money you earned enabled you to buy the things you needed and wanted for a satisfying life. The co-worker has become a worker-customer.

The technological advances of the last fifty years have brought the hitherto undreamed of reality of mass-production which, in turn, gives the opportunity for mass-consumption. When I used to accompany my parents to the local grocer's shop as a child there were basic food items and nothing more. Now, when I go shopping with my wife (a practice in which I indulge only when absolutely necessary!) I enter a super-market with over 20,000 product lines on the shelves. The mental paralysis of people like me when faced with such a choice has led to the latest stage in consumerism - customisation. The message to the consumer today is, 'We'll not only give you a choice - we'll package and adjust it to match it to your needs.' The current advertising slogan of one cell-phone company in Britain today is 'More of what you want, less of what you don't want!'

From paragraphs to pictures

Every couple of months I spend a morning with Alastair who is our youth work specialist and together we compile a newsletter. I come up with the words and Alastair sets them out on the page, complete with appropriate clip-art and other visual material. We divide the labour as we do largely because of the difference in our ages; Alastair is twenty five years younger than I am. I grew up in a book culture and, consequently, I think sequentially in a logical and linear way. Alastair is a child of a much more visual consumer culture of the last thirty years. He has grown up in a world of rapidly changing and rapidly moving images, the world of the internet and MTV. Whereas I automatically think in paragraphs, he much more naturally thinks in pictures. The difference in our approach reflects precisely one of the differences between modernity and postmodernity.

From ethics to aesthetics

Throughout much of the Twentieth century, under the influence of Sigmund Freud and psycho-analysis, the focus moved from external morality to what might be described as internal reality - the subconscious, the deep hidden drives and appetites that lie behind the apparently free choices we make.

But the emphasis has shifted once again. If post-modernity has rejected an external morality, it has also forsaken the search for an internal reality. The fragmentation of the self that is seen most starkly in the way in which celebrities constantly seek to reinvent themselves with a never-ending series of image changes has made that quest pointless. Now the concern relates to style, appearance, packaging. This is the age of cosmetic dentistry and surgery, of personal trainers and the pursuit of the perfect body and eternal youth, of style gurus and the cult of celebrity, of finding and expressing your worth and identity through the expensive brand names attached to the things you own. More than we would care to admit, we have all been caught up in the journey from ethics to aesthetics!

When we take those changes together there are some themes that immediately become obvious in the prevailing culture. The over-riding concerns - some might even say obsessions - of our culture centre on experience, personal choice, identity and self-worth. And all four are bound up in a deep desire to belong, a search for true community. These are the issues that our theology must address rather than some of the things that have exercised us in the past. There is a little point in doctrinal debates about the precise nature of the inspiration of Scripture, for example. Its inspiration, its God-breathed quality, will become obvious only as we tell the story effectively. It is time to stop discussing the material from which the bars are constructed and to uncage the lion. That will make people sit up and take notice far quicker than a lesson in metallurgy!

Nor, I dare to suggest, is there any point in continuing to fight theological battles that belong to a bygone era. I know and you know, for example, that neither baptism nor communion possess in themselves the power to confer salvation upon those who participate in those ceremonies. But that is no longer the issue. The question we must answer today - and I leave each of us to answer it for ourselves - is whether it is wise, in an age which values experience and in which people encounter truth through the imagination as much as through the intellect, to dispense with any powerful symbol which might convey biblical truth and spiritual reality to the earnest seeker.

Before I leave this point let me add that those obsessions of post-modernity that I have identified - experience, identity, personal choice, self-worth and a longing for community - will need to inform and influence our theological concerns and studies if we are to highlight those aspects of the gospel story that will be both applicable and appealing to the wider community. We need to keep in mind the wise

counsel of Archbishop William Temple when he said that the Christian Church is the only society on earth that exists primarily for the benefit of non-members. The church at large - and, dare I say The Salvation Army in particular - needs to do theology largely for the benefit of non-members.

Which brings me to the third element of a *theology of discovery*...

There is a conversation to be held

All too often, I suspect, theology is understood simply as paraphrasing the words and summarising the themes of the Bible so that they are understandable and accessible to the age in which we live. Good theology - real theology - however, goes much deeper than that. Of course, good theology takes Scripture as its primary source and its supreme authority. But it also needs to take heed of what the church has taught and believed throughout the centuries and to address itself to the needs of the contemporary culture and the great issues which face us in our generation.

Consequently, theology happens when a three way conversation takes place - a conversation which involves

- the revelation and message of the Bible on which our faith is founded,
- the theological heritage and tradition of the church (including that part of the church to which we belong)
- and the thought-forms, philosophical trends and issues of the historical-cultural context in which we, as the Body of Christ must worship, work and witness.

Let me briefly address each of those in turn.

The revelation and message of the Bible

There is just one point I want to make. Some might fear that by insisting that theology needs other reference points we are diminishing the place of the Bible. On the contrary, I have a very high view of Scripture as the inspired, authoritative word of God. It is, as our first doctrine states, 'the divine rule of Christian faith...' And that is precisely the point. Theology is not the same as 'the faith' once and for all delivered to the saints. The faith is primary. It is the belief that God has acted uniquely in Jesus from Nazareth and the subsequent commitment of all that we are to that conviction. Theology, on the other hand, is a vital but secondary activity. It is our intellectual reflection on the faith. I say it with great respect as one who has been both a Cadet and a doctrine teacher in this place: anyone who has taught Christian doctrine to Cadets will be very aware that it is not only possible but common to encounter good people who have faith and who hold to the faith but who have a very weak - sometimes even heretical - theology.

The theological heritage and tradition of the church

If the Bible is the foundation of our theology, then the theological heritage and tradition of the church represents the manner in which the truths of Scripture have been passed down through the ages. And we, in our

generation, continue in that great tradition of those who believe that Jesus Christ is Lord. Rightly, therefore, we give enormous weight to the great creedal statements of the church and, indeed, to our own eleven articles of doctrine. As we seek to do theology we will constantly draw on the corporate and collective wisdom enshrined in the creeds and in the writings of those who have gone before. They will be signposts on the route, ensuring that in our reflective theological conversation we do not stray too far from the pathway of the faith.

However, we will also heed the insightful counsel of Stanley J. Grenz. I quote: *'The assumption of an unaltered corpus of doctrine articulated for all time by the Christians of the early centuries, while in a sense true, nevertheless oversimplifies a complex phenomenon. All expressions of the faith, including the early creeds and all claimants to the status of being the eternal corpus of doctrine, are culturally conditioned. They were formulated in the linguistic and philosophical frameworks of the age in which they were written. Consequently, our understanding of the heritage of the church as a norm for theology must be nuanced.'* (Stanley J. Grenz *Revisioning Evangelical Theology* InterVarsity Press)

If real theology, as I have claimed, does not consist simply of paraphrasing Scripture, then equally so it is not just a matter of repeating or even re-writing the doctrinal statements of the past for our age. The conversation has to begin again in every age.

The thought-forms, philosophical trends and issues of the historical-cultural context

Let me give you just two examples of how the conversation with contemporary culture impacts and influences the theological task - one from the history of the church and the other from the current theological work being done in our own movement.

At the heart of the gospel lies the great truth of the atonement. How to share that truth has been a challenge to the church for 2000 years. How is it possible that the death of one man on a Roman cross outside of Jerusalem changes the relationship of countless men and women with God generations later? In the early centuries of the church the most effective way of explaining and illustrating that truth was to speak of the death of Christ as a ransom. What could be more accessible to a culture which knew all too readily just what captivity and ransom meant? However, for Anselm in the 11th century, the setting is very different. His 'conversation' with a culture that valued chivalry and honour meant that he spoke of the atonement not as a ransom, but as the satisfaction of God's offended honour. Still later when feudalism was superseded by more established governments and judicial systems, the church explained the wonder of the atonement by using the image of penal substitution. What we are witnessing is nothing other than theology in conversation with culture and in the service of mission.

The second example I take from the theological reflection provided by Karen Shakespeare for the report produced by the Gender Issues Commission earlier this year. Karen writes succinctly and perceptively:

'Theology is also influenced by the culture and context from which it arises and in which it is lived. Historically, the culture of British society has supported a patriarchal model for the theology of gender. The assumptions of modernity encouraged a gender separation in which men were seen to be logical, unemotional and suited to public life and leadership and women found their role in relational activities, most often in the home or in a 'caring' profession. The Salvation Army, whilst affirming the equality of all in doctrinal and policy statements, has in practice demonstrated a theology which privileges men and assumes an essentially different role for women, especially those who are married. In the post-modern world, which no longer accepts the assumptions of modern culture, there is need to re-assess and possibly re-think our theological understanding of gender.'

(Karen Shakespeare Gender Issues Commission 2004)

The point is well made. The issue of gender is one part of the theological conversation which has only just begun.

But is time for me to move speedily to the fourth and final direction in which we need to look for a theology of discovery. It will bring us to the place at which we need to appreciate the word discovery in its double sense, discovering the truth for ourselves and also - drawing on the older meaning of the word - revealing, dis-covering, uncovering the truth for others.

There is a community to be built

We said earlier in this paper that theology was not the preserve of the academic elite. We now re-emphasise that point as we say that the work of theology must be done by, must impact and influence the nature of, and must issue from the church as a whole and the church as she is formed in the local setting. If we are to do theology effectively, **there is a community to be built**. The story can only be properly told, the culture can only be properly understood, the conversation can only be properly held by the church as a visible, alternative, relevant but challenging mission community set firmly within the context of the wider surrounding community.

The practical bottom-line on why should Salvationists do theology in the twenty first century is this: most of our corps, as they are presently structured, cannot, will not, and, in truth, should not survive as effective mission units for more than a few years. We can tweak and adjust as much as we like, we can borrow ideas from this place and that, we can ride the latest band-wagon but it will make little difference. Most of our corps, as they are presently structured, are based on the assumptions of modernity and reflect little of the theology of Christian community as embodied in the New Testament.

It is time to discover what it means to be the people of God - the people of salvation - in post-modern Britain. We were called by God to be a radical answer to

a desperately needy society. That remains our calling. Play it safe and we will be nothing more than a footnote, albeit a glorious one, in the pages of history. Risk everything and the best days of this part of the church may be ahead of us.

The culture around us has not the remotest interest in the abstruse questions of abstract theology. It has no appetite for absolute truths declared from the safety of the academic ivory tower or the denominational ghetto. It has no comprehension of an apologetic which simply repackages the old rationalistic arguments of modernity. But it *is* looking for a place where the mundane and the menial are touched by the miraculous, where people matter and where they are allowed to explore faith even if such an exploration creates a messiness and a fuzziness so that it is difficult at times to judge who really belongs and who is just looking. It *is* looking for a place where there is the possibility of an encounter with God in which the mystery of the divine and the meaning of life intersect. It *is* looking for a place where the frailty of humanity and the authenticity of following Jesus stand side by side. In short, it is looking for a place where faith can be learned and lived and where theology can be grasped by the intellect and the imagination.

It is only in such communities of faith that theology can be made credible, understandable and desirable. The creation of these communities will require all the intellectual rigour, all the imaginative vision-casting and all the sheer guts we can muster. As George Scott Railton once wrote in a different context, ‘It will cost you everything, but it will be a good bargain at that.’ The alternative, if we fail to pay the price and take the risk, is too terrible to contemplate.

Conclusion

This has been a longer journey than I anticipated when I began to write this paper. I thank you for your attention and I hope that I have made some little contribution to this symposium and, even more importantly, to the ongoing work of doing theology. However, I always think that our attempts at theology must cause much laughter in heaven. So I can think of no more appropriate conclusion to my presentation and no better prologue to the rest of this symposium than C.S. Lewis’s wonderful poem,

‘The Apologist’s Evening Prayer’:
From all my lame defeats and oh! much more
From all the victories that I seemed to score;
From cleverness shot forth on Thy behalf
At which, while angels weep, the audience laugh;
From all my proofs of Thy divinity,
Thou, who wouldst give no sign, deliver me.

Thoughts are but coins. Let me not trust, instead
Of Thee, their thin-worn image of Thy head.
From all my thoughts, even from my thoughts of Thee,

*O thou fair Silence, fall, and set me free.
Lord of the narrow gate and needle's eye,
Take from me all my trumpery lest I die.
(C.S. Lewis Poems Fount Paperbacks)*

Being what we are

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

IN his excellent new book, *Turning points*. Major Allen Satterlee writes that the Army is 'most like the platypus, that creature that defies classification because it is neither mammal nor fowl. It has fur and appears mostly mammal. But then there are those webbed feet and the eggs it lays. The platypus is not terribly bothered by the problems we humans have in classifying it. It simply is what it is. We in The Salvation Army need to quit wringing our hands about what is different about us and rejoice that God has allowed us our own distinct identity'.

I say 'Amen' to that and am sorry that in some quarters there are Salvationists who seem to have an identity crisis. I believe that we should keep our nerve and humbly dare to be different if, as it appears, that is what God intended.

In recent years there has been an increased tendency in some places to refer to our corps as churches. Now of course, from the beginning Salvationists have believed that they have been part of THE Church and a lively limb of the Body of Christ. But generally they have not taken on ecclesiastical terms and titles, so why do so now?

I mean no disrespect to Christian friends outside the Army if I say that at least in Australia, the very secular part of the world where I live, the word 'church' does not conjure up a very good brand image. I wish it were otherwise, but here 'churchianity' has little general appeal, particularly to the young, although spirituality is far from dead in our post modern society.

As a reason for change of terms some may cite the fact that many see the Army only as a social agency and do not realise that our buildings are not only centres for welfare but places of worship. Then, without taking on a lot of ecclesiastical baggage through the use of church terms, that notion might be corrected by a notice describing the building as a 'place of worship and service.'

I visited a corps where the upwardly mobile young corps sergeant-major preferred to be known as 'the senior elder' whatever that might mean to the secular mind. I wondered whether there were sociological reasons behind a preference for church terms. Perhaps 'going to church' sounded a little more respectable than 'going to the Army'!

Personally, I prefer dynamic Army terms strange as they may appear to some. Rather than abandoning our image we should build on it. People think of the TSA as a 'people's army' down to earth and 'there when they're needed'. If we are confined to our citadels and oblivious to the big world outside then we are not what people expect of us. Even more important we are not being true to our God-ordained mission. But thank God for many corps which are reaching out and drawing people into an accepting community.

In retirement I have knocked on hundreds of doors while our band has been playing in the streets, without one rebuff. The acceptance – even by those awakened from their Sunday morning slumbers – has been incredible. If I had been dressed in mufti and representing most other groups there would have been a lot more explaining to do!

I have often prayed that we Salvationists may be as good as people think we are. Apart from the grace of God most of us know that we are very ordinary indeed. But we have a 'goodly heritage' which can commend us to people and help us in our ministry. It is true that many who admire the Army do not consider joining us but there is little evidence that changing uniforms for vestments or bands for bells would bring more recruits.

Some of the most enthusiastic people I know are people who are new to the Army and see it with new eyes but there are others, long in the service, whose Salvationism has not gone stale but who are still enthusiastic about the movement despite the fact that it has faults - being made up of people like some of us.

Rather than being pale, carbon copies of other groups we should be ourselves. The Universal Church should not be characterised by dull sameness. We may well admire other expressions of Christianity but we don't have to ape them. There is a diversity of gifts and we can rejoice in those God has graciously given to us in the Army.

The Monk and The Frog

by Phil Wall

The story is told of an old hermit monk who was working in the fields, As he was doing so he came across a remarkable, precious stone that was obviously worth a great deal of money. He took it back to his simple hut, thrilled at his find and excited at the possibilities it presented him with.

Later that day, a weary traveller happened on by and as was his custom the monk offered him hospitality in his simple dwelling. As he was preparing some food over the fire the traveller noticed the monk's bag on the table and caught sight of the wonderful, precious stone contained within. Over the meal the traveller asked about the stone and the monk took it out of the bag and showed it to him. Such was the beauty of the stone and its obvious value, that the visitor couldn't help himself and asked the monk if he could have it as a gift. The monk reflected for a moment, shrugged his shoulders and replied 'Sure, why not' he said, 'you are very welcome'.

The traveller thanked him and left hastily with his new prize possession lest the monk change his mind. A few weeks went by and the monk carried on his normal peaceful and simple life. Then one day he heard his name being called and when he looked up saw the same traveller walking towards him. He welcomed him warmly and enquired as to the reason for his visit. 'I have come to return your stone to you' he said as he placed the stone back in the monk's hands, 'for I am after something far more valuable from you'. The monk was somewhat taken aback as he couldn't think of anything he owned that would be of more value. But then the traveller continued, 'I want whatever it is within you that enabled you to give me the stone without hesitation when I asked you for it'.

This brief story has some powerful lessons for us as leaders as we begin a new year.

None of us who have followed the events can have avoided being moved and disturbed by the tragedy that has taken place in Asia over the last few days. My words are utterly inadequate to provide any kind of commentary on it or describe the horror that has occurred. The best we can do is to provide any support we can and to assure those affected of our thoughts and prayers.

However, as I reflected on some of the commentary that has been given by the media, it did raise a challenging issue of leadership. Much has been said in the last few days about the slowness of response by some governments who initially seemed inert in reacting. I often dismiss such comments as shallow cynicism, for which of us would really know what to do in the face of such a calamity? Yet the phrase 'leapfrogging' began to be used to describe the phenomenon that has taken place in relation to the financial aid being given. A few commentators noted that governments have been embarrassed into responding more generously as they have witnessed the response of the general population. A 'leapfrogging' process had begun to occur

as each new benchmark of public generosity seemed to force governments to respond in kind.

As I thought about this it occurred to me that this is something of a damning indictment on leaders that all of us should hope doesn't ever occur within our own leadership sphere. We should strive to ensure we are never faced with the need to 'leapfrog' our people when it comes to our generosity of spirit.

Those, like the monk, who choose the path of generosity, are always at risk of being taken advantage of. They risk loss, hurt, disappointment and that awful feeling of being 'used'. However, one of the marks of many of those who have made the greatest impact upon our world and probably our individual lives is a spirit of generosity. Too often in the corporate world 'leapfrogging' has become a leadership principle - 'Oh well, if we have to' is the frustrated utterance of an exec who has similarly been embarrassed into responding with token generosity because of the example of those further down the food chain. Surely we are better than that. We are a long way from being monks, but like him, our generosity will often return to us in a way that powerfully enriches our own life and the lives of others.

The second question the story raises for us is in relation to the aspirations and dreams of the traveller. He began with a vision that in truth was far too small. Short term, immediate return was his hoped for result, but having encountered the freedom of the monk's generosity his sights were lifted and his vision grew.

Is it possible that this New Year could provide us with the opportunity to give ourselves permission to dream bigger dreams, to lift our sights above the mundane, the predictable, the short term (read quarterly results) and that awful non-goal of what is 'reasonable'? In these days of bland benchmarking and best practice the truly exceptional and distinct are those who have the courage to step out from the crowd and dare to not just dream but act upon their dreams.

Emily Pankhurst had no 'best practice' to measure her passion for equal rights for women; Martin Luther King had no benchmark to inform his dream of racial equality; people derided Branson when an ex DJ decided to start an airline; many laughed and called Gates insane when he articulated his vision to have a PC on every desk. Nobody's laughing now.

The open handed generosity of the monk gave the traveller permission to dream bigger dreams. Every significant venture, be it commercial or social, began with such a dream. May 2005 be a year when we choose to be 'bigger' leaders - more generous in spirit, more courage in our dreams.

'Some dream at night of changing the world, others stay awake and do it'.

Building Up The Temple

by Heather Wright

Did you ever read the book of Haggai? It's good stuff. The Lord sends his prophet Haggai to the Governor of Judah (Zerubbabel) and also to the High Priest (Joshua) with a message. It's not a pleasant message, in fact, it's rather convicting. This is what the Lord thought of the plans they had been making:

“Why is everyone saying it is not the right time for rebuilding my Temple? Is it then the right time for you to live in luxurious homes, when the Temple lies in ruins?”
Haggai 1: 2-3 TLB

Hmm... strong words! I can imagine how it all went down. Haggai arriving at the meeting place to be ushered into the sumptuously decorated chambers and seated in a plush reclining chair around a highly polished mahogany table (worth a fortune) and offered the finest refreshments. Only to hear the discussion ‘Yeahhh...we just don't feel the timing is right financially on this whole Temple-rebuild project. Let's reschedule a meeting for next quarter to re-visit the proposal.’ Then everyone goes home to their mansions with the four car garages and tennis courts and room for a pony...in other words, we have the resources, but we'd rather spend them on ourselves and live it up selfishly with our pony than to give our tithe to the Lord for His holy Temple to be rebuilt.

This is a BIG DEAL. The Temple that they were putting off building was where our Jesus spent a whole lot of time when He arrived on the scene. He performed healings in this Temple, the blind were given sight, and the crippled were restored. He taught the people in a way that they could understand, which must have been refreshing, because in that day, only those born into certain roles were taught to read, understand and think for themselves, so when the people came to the Temple for worship, the guy giving the ‘message’ was like a Harvard professor preaching to a class of Grade 6 students. The Temple is where Jesus had verbal skirmishes with the ‘self-important’ – the Pharisees, Sadducees and teachers of the law. It's where Judas Iscariot felt the burn of conviction and cried out to the chief priests that he had betrayed an innocent man and then thrown down the thirty pieces of silver. It is the Temple that was destroyed upon Jesus' death; the curtain separating the Holy of Holies, torn in two.

THIS is the Temple that Zerubbabel the governor and Joshua the priest were hemming and hawing about building.

They were dragging their feet because up until that point they were using the resources that God gave them to live enjoyable, comfortable lives. So, the Lord does what He always does when He wants to bring a message to His people. He sends a prophet to give the Word, and an apostle to lead them into carrying it out. The Lord sends Haggai to the people and begins to prepare Nehemiah to come and spur them on. He was raising up people in the community not only to go and speak out the

plans that He wanted to come about, but also equipping and sending out those who would implement the vision and work to make it possible.
First the prophet and then the apostle.

What does that speak to us today? Consider this: that the Temple WE are building is not one of dead rock, but out of believers:

“and now you have become living building-stones for God’s use in building His house.” 1 Peter 2:5

We hold back, not solely in our money, old clothes we could be giving away or the extra room that we could invite someone to stay in but when we don’t live simply. We don’t give the Word of God our full attention, rushing through a skimpy devotional just to be able to say ‘well, at least that’s done’.

We don’t spend the time in prayer – just doing all the talking and not pausing to listen because we don’t expect God to even say anything to us anyway and besides, we’d rather go watch TV...we are holding back.

We are building up our own household of sinful flesh rather than denying ourselves and giving our all to be a living building-stone in the eternal Temple of the King of Kings. We drag our feet because we too are using the resources God gave us to live out comfortable lives.

We can look back at Joshua and Zerubbabel and at their reluctance to change, but we can also look ahead to all that God would do through the Temple that He wanted built. Our position in history affords us the knowledge that the Temple simply HAD to be built, and WOULD be built, even if that meant a little self-denial on the part of the people.

The same message holds true for us today. We have a reluctance to be self-sacrificial and to deny ourselves, but we can’t even begin to imagine all that God will do through His living Temple, the Church – and through each individual building-stone.

*“Building up the Temple, building up the Temple,
building up the Temple of the Lord
Boys won’t you help us? Girls won’t you help us?
Building up the Temple of the Lord.”*

SA Mission

by Cadet Stephen Bell

“A large and mighty Army comes, such as never was of old nor ever will be in ages to come.... And the LORD is at the head of this Army....” Joel 2 (NIV)

Introduction

Implementing what I believe my mission to be in The Salvation Army 21st century will not be easy, but no one said it was going to be. I am here to declare war, and the earth is my battlefield¹, along with my brother and sister Salvationist soldiers—and all of us realize that this is going to be hard work. How am I going to implement my Salvation Army mission in the 21st century? I’m going to declare war and bring my friends with me: and my friends will be warriors who are as strong as the congregations they have helped build.² I want to raise up corps who are willing to become true expressions of Salvationist theology.³

These corps will be filled with diehard Salvationists who will be willing to do *anything* to see one more person come into Christ’s fold. These are people who will be willing to become informed Salvationists and then turn to serve the un-servable. With the help of God, I hope to raise up soldiers who, from the top of their voices, will declare that they exist to storm the gates of darkness and bring them down.⁴ These gates of darkness are made of poverty, carnal Christianity and Satan’s hold on others who have not yet experienced the saving power of Jesus Christ. But *my* mission is that of Catherine Booth’s: to tell The Salvation Army that we are here to bring salvation to the masses⁵—to help The Salvation Army bring the world to Christ—and nothing less.⁶ My mission is to bring old-time Salvationism into the 21st Century, implementing its foundations in a modern setting. To mirror the words of Gen. Gowans, I’m here to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity. Just as the Booths did.

In order to get others to embrace this old-time mission, like any army, I must first encourage people to look at our roots, our recruitment, our training, our deployment, and how we are putting all of these things into action to create nothing less than holy warriors for Christ’s Kingdom. We must be willing to change when change is needed, but we must not change for the sheer sake of personal agenda.⁷ To quote William Booth, “the methods of our future [concerning our mission] will have to differ from those of our past.”⁸ With this in mind, our mission will cause the enemy’s walls to fall⁹; it will cause the strongholds of the LORD to be raised¹⁰, and as Christ our living

¹ John Rhemick. *A New People of God: A Study In Salvationism*. (Des Plaines: The Salvation Army, 1984), 217.

² Clarence E. Bradbury. *Leading Renewal In Salvation Army Congregations In Canada*. (Toronto: McMaster University Press, 2001), 8.

³ Rhemick, 224.

⁴ Robert Johnson. “Soldiers of Our God Arise” from *The Salvation Army Song Book*, #696.

⁵ Rhemick, 217.

⁶ Catherine Booth. “Our Commission,” *All the World*, v. 1., no. 6 (April 1885), 83-85.

⁷ The Salvation Army. *Servants Together: Salvationists Perspectives On Ministry*. London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2002), 11.

⁸ William Booth. “The Mission of the Future,” *The War Cry* (April: 1895), 6.

⁹ Joshua 6:16-17.

¹⁰ Psalms 27:1

commander continues to set free the captives and alienated¹¹, we The Salvation Army will not only sing of His love and justice, but declare it through *every action we make* in the new century.

Growing Saints With Salvationist Distinction

Although The Salvation Army is a branch of the church^{12/13} working with many expressions and denominations¹⁴, we are still called to *distinction*. I believe if we embrace these distinctions and encourage others in The Army to do the same, our organization will become stronger. The stronger our organization is, the stronger our overall mission to the world will be in the 21st century. This, of course, makes our efforts more effective than ever.

For example, if we say that we all believe in the Great Commission of Matthew 28, that is *one* string to hold up our plan. However, if we agree on more things than just this to incorporate into the plan for world salvation, service and sainthood, then we have many more strings to make this plan more stable. A string of many cords is not easily broken.¹⁵ One phone line can easily become jammed; a thousand phone lines working at once can help for a smooth operation. The more lines and strings we have, the more support our mission has. In short, the more shared blood and fire DNA we have, the stronger we become.¹⁶ For too long we have fought, having differences of opinion concerning who we are and what we stand for, but the 21st century will be the time to release the true Salvation Army distinctive mission DNA into the receptive Salvationist community and let it spread through the whole body. This will be done through telling The Army's story in meticulous completion—our *entire* mission. And this mission (and the subsequent missions which come from it) will come from our doctrines. Our mission, our distinctive markings, are found in our doctrines—it is the one thing that holds Korea, New Zealand, Canada and Sweden together. It is the commonality on which to springboard the mission we create.

Primitive Salvationism

We are called to go journey back to our roots. We are called to bring 'Primitive Salvationism'¹⁷ into the new century. This consists of mission-focused, charismatic-flavoured heroism¹⁸—as we starve for social justice, lost souls and the growth of God's people.¹⁹ By "charismatic-flavoured", we are recognizing the Spirit-generated freedom and power exuding from early Salvationists and from contemporary Salvationists around the world. We must become in touch with the Spirit in a powerful

¹¹ John D. Waldon, ed. *Creed and Deed*. (Oakville: Triumph Press, 1995). 125.

¹² Shaw Clifton. *Who Are These Salvationists: An Analysis For the 21st Century*. Alexandria: Crest Books, 1999), 10.

¹³ Rhemick, 224.

¹⁴ *Servants Together*, 40.

¹⁵ Ecclesiastes 4:12

¹⁶ Stephen Court. *MMCCXX*. (Vancouver: Publishing Pending, 2004.), 2.

¹⁸ Geoff Ryan. *Sowing Dragons: Essays in Neo-Salvationism*. (Toronto: The Salvation Army Press, 2001), 60.

¹⁹ Court, *MMCCXX*, 3.

way once again, covenanting with YHWH not just as individuals, but as an entire Salvationist body, and in turn, we must once again come to our God expecting.

Serving the Suffering

The Army is called to the poor and downcast, above all else. Although this may sound narrow-minded and seclusive, we must remember that there are more than 5.1 billion people who live on less than Canadians do who are on welfare²⁰ (who are actually in the top 15% of the wealthiest people on the planet). As a matter of fact, there are more than a billion people who live on less than a dollar a day.²¹ We are to share Jesus' bias for the poor and harassed on whatever front we fight. Much like 614 has incorporated into its ministry, we the officers can request of DHQ and THQ for a more simplistic lifestyle in order to identify with the people whom we are called to serve. For our sacrificial identification can move us into places where other denominations may not set foot.²² It is then that the poor and suffering will listen. Why? Because as Catherine Booth believed, the Gospel is then declared at the level of the recipients and not at the level of religious leadership.²³ Commissioner Shaw Clifton is the first to point out that this simplicity is one of the distinctive characteristics of Salvationism.²⁴ We will do well to even get to all of these people in time.

Community

Christianity requires face-to-face community.²⁵ This includes getting into each other's lives, carrying each other's burdens,²⁶ sharpening one another,²⁷ spurring on one another, caring for each other, supporting one another²⁸ and holding one another accountable.²⁹ This is a much more rigorous community that most of us are used to, but is something that must be sustained in the 21st century. God has designed us to desire community; we as a people, both Christian and non-Christian have a yearning to belong³⁰—and what a better place to be able to do it than in The Salvation Army community! This will not be a community who will continue to shoot their wounded, but will bring leaves of healing and restoration to those in need.³¹ There will be no more alienated people, but all people will involved in the social covenant of Christ.³²

²⁰ Available from <http://www.globalrichlist.com>.

²¹ P.A. Rader. "The Salvation Army and Missiology". (Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry. Lecture at Asbury College, April: 2000), 9.

²² Ibid., 10.

²³ D.J. Sears. *An Overview of the Thought of Catherine Booth*. (Winnipeg: University of Winnipeg, 1995), 103.

²⁴ Shaw Clifton. *A New Love*. New Zealand: Publishing Pending, 2004.

²⁵ William Booth. *The Doctrines of The Salvation Army: Prepared For the Training Homes*. (Toronto: Printing and Publishing House, 1892), 103.

²⁶ Galatians 6:2

²⁷ Proverbs 27:17

²⁸ Acts 2:42-47

²⁹ Ezekiel 34:10

³⁰ Jimmy Long. *Generating Hope: A Strategy for Reaching The Postmodern Generation*. (Grand Rapids: IVP, 1997), 13.

³¹ Revelation 22:2

³² Waldron, 136.

Recruitment

We will need to identify and recruit leaders who are willing to live and die for Christ³³ and we're going to need thousands of them. And they have to be mind-blowing, blood and fire Salvationists who have been raised from the healthy corps we have read about above. As William Booth said,

"We want soldiers who understand the hearts of men, who are acquainted with the devices of Satan and the delusions and excuses and hiding-place of sinners, and who know how to pour on volley after volley of red-hot truth upon rebels, until they run, or yield or fall at the feet of the conquering Savior."³⁴

We must envision an army of leaders like this. Also, all of them are not to be officers; many of these are to be warriors and soldiers, as mentioned by Booth above. But all of them will need to be trained for the specific front in which they will be fighting. This may mean learning the language of the people wherever you are, just as Paul spoke Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek and Latin. This is why Paul could be a Jew to a Jew and a Gentle to a Gentile to win some: he knew where they were, he knew about them³⁵, he knew their language and then he moved in to bring them to Christ (which we will be touching later in "Global Education"). If you can speak Chinese you will not only do well in China but in Toronto as well. If you are fluent in Japanese, perhaps Vancouver—but above all things, we must work collectively to learn how to understand all cultures in order to save them from hell and bring them into a good-standing relationship with God. This will also mean that we must be aware of other religions—the same way Paul was aware—in order to persuade others³⁶ and show that Jesus is the only way to salvation.³⁷

Global Education

Beyond the doors of St. John's and Winnipeg, we must create a global system in which all people will be able to afford teaching by teachers who are willing to work for free (or minimal cost). This will resemble the Acts 19 model used by Paul. He began by going around telling people about the Lord for a few months (v.8) and started a school for the converts (v.9-10). This school included miracles, healings and deliverance (19:11, 12), power confrontations (19:27), mass population evangelism (19:10), service to the Lord (20:19), a modeling of humility and hard work (20:19, 35), cell church evangelism (20:20), the will of God (20:27) and a night and day fighting to the point of tears (20:31). Out of this, many, many churches were started by these students, including those in Hierpolis, Laodicea, Colosse, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis and Philadelphia.³⁸ I think a good way for me to start up such a school would be via the internet. All officers who teach could put their courses on the

³³ Geoff Ryan. *Sowing Dragons: Essays in Neo-Salvationism*. (Toronto: The Salvation Army Press, 2001), 48.

³⁴ Cyril Barnes. *The Founder Speaks Again*. (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1960), 23.

³⁵ Acts 17:28

³⁶ Acts 18:9

³⁷ John 14:6

³⁸ Peter Wagner. *Blazing The Way: A New Look At Acts*. (Woodard: Simon and Schuster, 1995), 159.

internet and let people view them for free. This way, more Salvationists would have access to teaching they otherwise would never have. They could view this material in Vancouver, St. John's, Manitoba or Yellowknife and not have to fly out to WCBC. With this new information, this *could* lead to self-sufficient corps, and maybe even a stronger willingness for people to come become officers—and best of all, it would all be free.

Raising Young Saints

We are also called to *whole* of community, which includes the raising of the young to become hot blood and fire Christians.³⁹ We are to be in agreement that there is a responsibility to all Salvationist parents to give training to their children. But the question remains: *what sort of training?*⁴⁰ The answer can only be: *constant training*. We are to raise our children up to expect great and awesome things from our Living God. We must never let them loose the faith they acquire in their early stages of their faith development. These should be children who expect to heal, speak prophetic words to adults and each other, preach, evangelize and sing—even at their early age. We're to start their Christian training as soon as they can say the word "Jesus". And this training must be rigorous. The stronger the faith and expectations these children have in God, the stronger their faith will become. However, the longer we wait to teach and train these children, the more vast the gulf becomes; but these gulfs must be bridged if anything practical is to be done.⁴¹

Conclusion

William Booth closes his mission ideas in *In Darkest England and the Way Out* by saying "Unless God wills that I should work out the idea of which I believe He has given me the conception, nothing can come of its any attempt of execution but confusion, disaster and disappointment."⁴² In short, unless God builds our house of mission, our labour is in vain.⁴³ Christ must be our cornerstone on which all other foundations are laid—and it is from this house that our stronghold for mission will be made.⁴⁴ And from this stronghold we will release our recruited soldiers who will, in turn, know their mission, who will be willing to be trained, be sharpened, who will have culturally transcending and descending tactics, and who are more than willing to be deployed anywhere at any time.

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³⁹ Catherine Booth. "The Training of Children". (London: Queen Victoria Street, E.C. Printing and Publishing Offices Ltd, 1884.), 92.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 92.

⁴¹ William Booth. *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. (London: Queen Victoria Street E.C. Printing and Publishing Ltd, 1890), 74.

⁴² Ibid, 289.

⁴³ Psalm 127:1

⁴⁴ Ephesians 2:20

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A Devotional Study – Ministry to the Poor

by Patricia King

STUDY INCLUDES:

- A. Prophetic Encouragement
- B. Devotional Teaching
- C. Weekly Scripture Meditation
- D. Prayer Directives
- E. Personal Application
- F. Resource Corner

A. PROPHETIC ENCOURAGEMENT

Do you hear the cries of the poor, the destitute, and the broken? Many are calling out for help and for deliverance. Their cries come before Me, says the Lord. I am about to fill My people with a great measure of compassion for the poor, for is this not even part of My own nature? Large amounts of relief will be given through My church in the coming months to the poor in war-torn nations and to those in areas of drought, famine and hardship.

Those who are poor and needy in spirit and soul will also be touched for I care for those who are in need. The orphans, widows, single parents, elderly, homeless, and those without employment will be remembered for I will turn the heart of My people towards them. Open your eyes to see the afflicted and the needy. They are even in your midst. Open your eyes to their needs and reach out ... reach out.

B. DEVOTIONAL TEACHING

The heart of Jesus is so towards the poor. That is why He came to earth...to deliver those who were poor in spirit, soul and body from the influence of sin. He is so compassionate and He desires us to be also, for we are to be just like Him.

Prior to the fall, there was no such thing as poverty. Everything flourished for Adam and Eve while they enjoyed unbroken fellowship with God and the bounty of the earth that surrounded them. There was no sickness, no pain, no lack, no oppression – only fullness and abundance.

After the fall, however, the consequence of sin began to fill the earth. Things like plagues, pestilence, famines and droughts began to plague mankind. The earth was filled with the consequence of sin. Man was paying a cruel price for the choices he made. He had separated himself from God and His goodness.

Even in this situation though, God reached out to man in kindness and mercy. When man cried out to Him for help, He responded. He never turned His back on someone who believed for His aid.

In the same way, the Lord has remembered us with such extravagant love and kindness, He also wants us to remember the poor around us. When we remember the poor, we partake of His nature. Jesus said, "Freely, you received, freely give." (Matthew 10:8b)

God will give us everything we need to sow into the lives of the poor, the downtrodden and the suffering. If you need compassion, ask for it. If you need finance to help them, ask for it. If you need miracle working anointing, ask for it. Everything you need to minister effectively will be given to you, if you believe. He will equip you with everything you need.

C. SCRIPTURE MEDITATION

1. Week One: Isaiah 58:6-12
2. Week Two: James 1:27; Job 31:9-23
3. Week Three: Matthew 25:31-46
4. Week Four: Psalm 146; 2 Cor 9:6-11

D. PRAYER DIRECTIVES

1. Pray for a heart of compassion to rise up in the Body of Christ towards the poor.
2. Pray especially for this Christmas season for the poor to be remembered.
3. Believe for miraculous breakthroughs for the poor and the afflicted.
4. Pray for a blessing to come mightily on organizations that are caring for the poor and needy.

E. PERSONAL APPLICATION

1. Invite the Lord to show you someone in your community who needs encouragement and blessing. Ask Him to give you a strategy to reach them.
2. Prepare a special Christmas hamper of food and gifts for a poor family in your community and bless them with it.
3. Pray about blessing Extreme Prophetic with a financial gift to help us support the homeless, orphans and widows this Christmas. We have some goals to reach out to many. You can donate on line.
4. Visit someone who is lonely and minister love and friendship to them.

F. RESOURCE CORNER.

For fuller teachings on God's provision, the following resources of Patricia King will help you:

- a. There's Always Enough (book) by Heidi and Rolland Baker.
- b. Be a Hero (book) by Wesley Campbell and Steve Court.

c. The Goodness Revolution (tape) by Patricia King .

Check out our Christmas Specials (Up to 50 % savings) and these resource items at www.store.extremeprophetic.com

And Remember

God loves you with an everlasting love!

*PATRICIA KING
Extreme Prophetic Television
patricia@extremeprophetic.com
www.extremeprophetic.com*

"The One, The Three, and The Army"

by Major Richard Munn

Are you a liberal, evangelical or charismatic? Surprisingly, how you process and experience the Trinity will reveal your inclination. What follows is a topical study that will assess the refraction of Trinitarian light from the perspective of Natural Church Development.

Source Text: *"The Threefold Art of Experiencing God – The Liberating Power of a Trinitarian Faith,"* Christian Schwartz, ChurchSmart Resources, Carol Stream, IL, 1999

Part I: The One, The Three and The Army – Mission Trifecta

For most Christians understanding the Trinity is one of the most sophisticated, difficult, and abstract topics of theology. And yet, the confession of God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit is what distinguishes Christianity from all religions.

Pushing the doctrine of the Trinity away from life into the scholar's study has had terrible consequences. The widespread lack of understanding of the God who reveals himself in a threefold way, is the main reason for the shocking paralysis of vast sectors of Christianity.

A new understanding of the Trinity not only leads us toward a new view of God, it also guides to new experiences with God. It leads to a deeper recognition of our strengths, our limitations and the image of our adversaries – imagined, or real.

Let's start with the three central revelations of God.

Father – Creation Revelation

The "creation revelation."

God reveals himself as Creator by leaving the marks of his handwriting on creation. One does not have to be a Christian in order to encounter this type of revelation.

➤ Psalm 19:1-3 "The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of his hands. Day after day they pour forth speech; night after night they display knowledge. There is no speech or language where their voice is not heard.

➤ Romans 1:19-20 "What may be known about God is plain [...] because God has made it plain [...] For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities--his eternal power and divine nature--have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

Jesus – Salvation Revelation

The “salvation revelation.”

Jesus is the one in whom we definitely see God for who he really is. In Christ, God becomes human. His salvific mission is personified.

- Colossians 2:10 “In Christ all the fullness of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority.”
- John 14:9-11 “Anyone who has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, 'Show us the Father'? Don't you believe that I am in the Father, and that the Father is in me? The words I say to you are not just my own. Rather, it is the Father, living in me, who is doing his work.
- Acts 4:12 “Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved.”

Holy Spirit – Personal Revelation

The “personal revelation.”

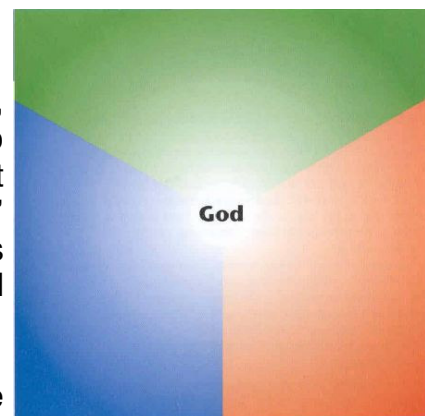
This is the occasion where what God does for us objectively in Christ becomes a subjective reality. Through the Holy Spirit, the “Christ for us” becomes the “Christ in us.” Through the Holy Spirit, God pours his love into our hearts.

- Romans 5:5 “Hope does not disappoint us, because God has poured out his love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us.”
- 1 Corinthians 6:19 “Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God?”

Believing Is Experiencing

The classical Trinitarian formulas might appear dry, strange, and even irrelevant. However, the God who can be experienced in a threefold way is a most practical theological topic. When we set ‘the Trinity’ free from the abstractions of theological formulas, its explosive power can revolutionize both our personal lives and our corps.

The center of the Christian faith is not humans, or the church, but God. People perceive this one God in different ways. Just as light falling through a prism fans out into a wide spectrum of various colors, human beings perceive the one God in various ways.

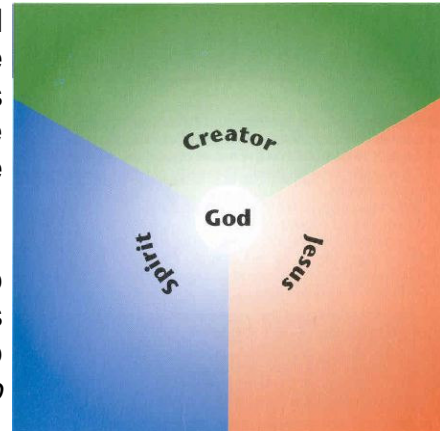


Three Ways Of Experiencing God

God reveals himself in three different ways. What we now call the “doctrine of the Trinity” was originally nothing more than a category of experience. The early Christians recognized God as Creator, experienced Christ as God through prayer, and sensed the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives.

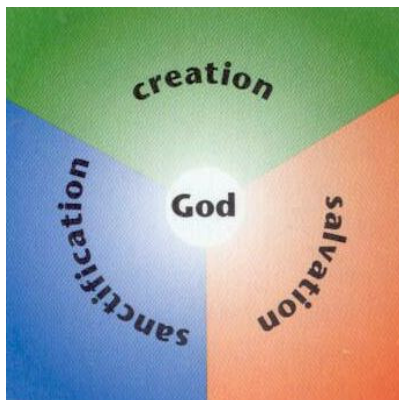
In other words: they *experienced* God in a threefold manner—and as a result they *thought* about the Trinity. The same holds true today. The crucial point is not that we believe in the Trinity, but rather that we believe in a Trinitarian way; in other words, that we experience God in a threefold manner.

The threefold revelation of God is normally referred to by the terms “Father,” “Son,” and “Holy Spirit.” This is expressed in the diagram through terms that refer to the relationship these three entities have to us, *not to each other* – Creator, Jesus and Spirit.



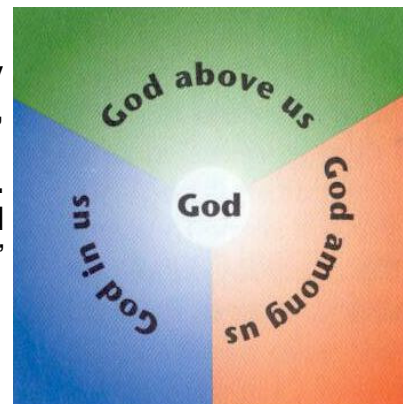
God’s revelations always aim at establishing a relationship. In all three revelations we encounter the one God, but each time we encounter him in a different way. Whenever just one of the three dimensions is neglected, we have an incomplete experience of God.

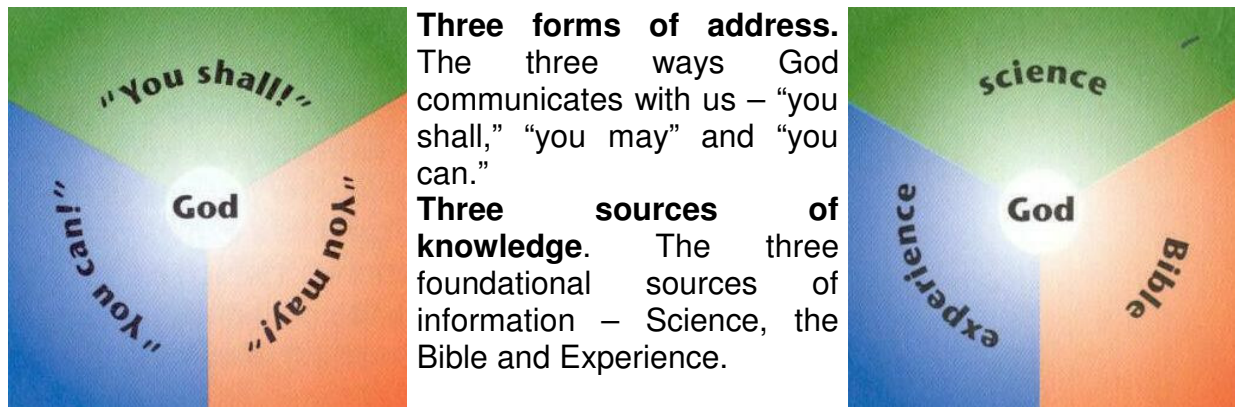
The Mystery Of The Trinity



Three works. The primary works of God – creation, salvation and sanctification.

Three manners of being. The ‘places’ where God meets us – “above us,” “among us” and “in us.”





Should our view of God become reduced to only one of the three ways in which God reveals Himself, we also reduce our possibility of experiencing God.

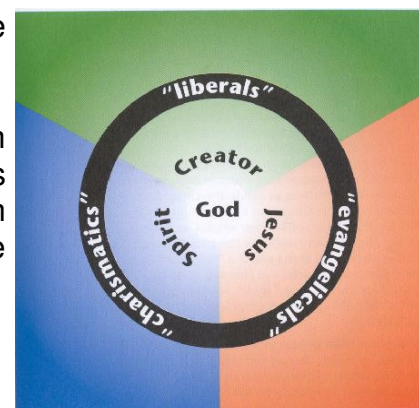
A Segmented God

In worldwide Christianity there are three main groups who, positively seen, can be considered as advocates for one of the three ways in which God has revealed himself.

- **“Liberals”** advocate for the creation revelation. They concentrate on themes such the environment, peace, and justice. They put a strong emphasis on the political dimension of the Christian faith as well as themes like art, liturgy, sensuality and science.
- **“Evangelicals”** advocate for the salvation revelation and emphasize the necessity of a personal relationship to Jesus and the absolute claim of Jesus. Evangelism is of utmost importance.
- **“Charismatics”** advocate personal revelation. To experience the reality of the power of the Holy Spirit is highly valued. This is a life-changing power in daily life. They are interested in the gifts and manifestations of the Spirit.

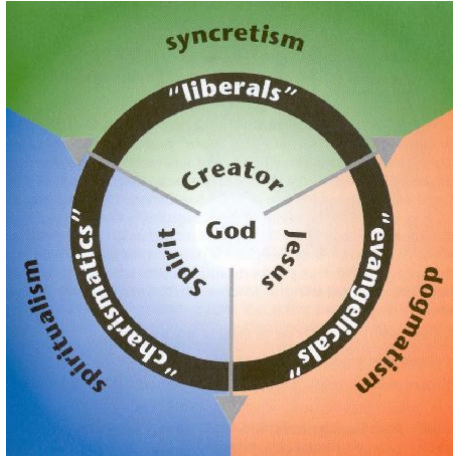
Problems between the three groups always arise when one of the three concerns—regardless which one—is isolated from the other. Once God has been *segmented* into three persons, each group can choose their own favorite God”

- Liberals choose the Creator
- Evangelicals choose Jesus
- Charismatics choose the Holy Spirit.



The more these three concerns are isolated from one another, the more intense the conflict between these three groups gets.

How Heresies Develop



The danger of syncretism. Syncretism means mixture of religions – one does not have to be a Christian.

The danger of dogmatism. The specific danger for evangelicals is dogmatism: the correct doctrine of Jesus finally becomes more important than the personal relationship to him.

The danger of spiritualism. The specific danger for charismatics is spiritualism: spiritual experiences become more important than the standards of Scripture.

All three light color tones inside the circle represent the biblical position. Moving outward – beyond the integration of the three colors – creates a lop-sided view of God. Our goal is to move closer and closer to the center of the circle to unite all three revelations of God as one.

Points to ponder:

- Do you have an uneven relationship with God?
- Where do you need to journey for greater revelation – Creator, Christ or Spirit?
- Are you prideful in your particular tendency, looking down on others who do not share your perspective?
- Are you 'charisphobic?' Do you despise 'liberals?' Are you watering down the cardinal truth – 'you must be born again?'
- Where are the growth areas for your corps?

Part II: The One, The Three and The Army – Thesis, Antithesis and Synthesis

Source Text: *"The Word and Power Church,"* Doug Banister, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, MI, 1999

Dialectical philosophy asserts that movements of thought are constantly in flux as an originating thesis is countered by an opposing view. Through compromise and adaptation a synthesis results. This then becomes the thesis, and the process begins again.

The vigorous fusion between the best of evangelicals, charismatics and liberals results in a synthesis that clarifies and sharpens The Salvation Army.

Think of the liberal, evangelical and charismatic traditions as three rivers flowing through the centuries. The three rivers merge into one mighty torrent of spiritual power. Fusing the strengths of the 3 traditions together results in *word and power and deed communities of faith*.

The following 3 theses are substantiated by scripture passages highlighting that particular legacy. These scriptures contain reference to all 3 members of the trinity. Any time this occurs in the Bible it is particularly poignant.

I. Evangelical Thesis

- Expository preaching
 - An emphasis on the authority and sufficiency of scripture
 - A realistic affirmation that the kingdom of God is not fully here
 - A belief that spiritual growth is a process
 - A belief that the Word must be studied in community
- Matthew 3:16-17 “As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and lighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, “This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.”
- John 3:5 “Jesus answered, “I tell you the truth, no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit.”
- Acts 7:55 “Stephen, full of the Holy Spirit, looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God.”

II. Charismatic Thesis

- An emphasis on prayer
 - A hopeful affirmation that the kingdom is herein part
 - A belief that God speaks today
 - An emphasis on participatory worship
 - A belief that the Spirit must be experienced in community
- 1 Corinthians 12:4-6 “There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but the same God works all of them in all men.”
- Luke 10:21 “Jesus, full of joy through the Holy Spirit, said, “I praise you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and learned, and revealed them to little children. Yes, Father, for this was your good pleasure.”

➤ Acts 10:37 “You know what has happened throughout Judea, beginning in Galilee after the baptism that John preached--how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power, and how he went around doing good and healing all who were under the power of the devil, because God was with him.”

III. Liberal Thesis

- An emphasis on academia and multi disciplinary scholarship
- The Kingdom of God revealed in creation and science
- A belief that God speaks in multiple ways
- An emphasis on liturgical worship
- A belief faith must be expressed in social justice and social action

➤ Genesis 1:1-2 “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters.”

➤ Genesis 1:26-27 “Then God said, "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness, and let them rule over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air, over the livestock, over all the earth, and over all the creatures that move along the ground." So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.”

➤ Matthew 25:24-36 “Come, you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance, the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me.”

Synthesis – Word and Power and Deed – A Prevailing Army

Word and power and deed communities of faith draw together the best of the liberal, evangelical and charismatic traditions. To neglect one is to be uneven. To integrate the 3 is whole and strong.

- The Salvation Army doesn't want to be a comfy suburban evangelical club, yet neither does it want to be a 2-dimensional non-profit agency.
- Zealous worship can be energizing, but it will soon become flaccid without the iron backbone of biblical authority and the incalculable contribution of the marginalized.
- Here's a unique combination: I'm told 'liberal-charismatics' are new on the scene in the UK.

So, what does characterize us? How can we synthesize truth? I suggest the following:

- Preaching with an emphasis on the authority of scripture and sound scholarship
- Acknowledgement that spiritual growth is a process embracing all people at every stage of faith development
- A belief that the Word can best be studied and applied in the context of relationships
- Congregations of faith deliberately positioned within communities – urban, suburban and rural.
- An emphasis on prayer and personal accountability
- An assertion that the kingdom is both here in part and a belief that God speaks today
- A ruthless non-negotiable interdependence between participatory worship and social action
- A belief that the Spirit's gifts are valid, normative and can be best experienced in the context of relationships.

How about this for a mission report? What a vibrant triad!

- 1 Corinthians 2:1-4 “When I came to you, I did not come with eloquence or superior wisdom as I proclaimed to you the *testimony about God*. For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except *Jesus Christ and him crucified*. I came to you in weakness and fear, and with much trembling. My message and my preaching were not with wise and persuasive words, but with a demonstration of the *Spirit's power*.”
- The testimony of God
- The crucifixion of Christ
- The Spirit's power

Would our ministry reflect such healthy balance!

Final Fusion – Passionate Spirituality

- Deuteronomy 6:4-5 “Hear, O Israel: The LORD our God, the LORD is one. Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.

The *Shema* – asserting the revolutionary truth of monotheism - is immediately followed by an exhortation of unmitigated passion. What a stunning crescendo!

The bible commands passion. Passions are the power of life. Scripture teaches that love, which is the greatest passion, is the essence of our faith.

Our bible heroes model a passionate spirituality – David and Debra, Peter and Paul. Our heroes consistently exhibited passion – Augustine, Francis of Assisi, Wesley, Whitfield, the Booths and Graham. The list could go on.

Jesus himself is the perfect example of a deeply passionate spirituality. Not only that, the very religion of heaven is astonishingly passionate.

The scriptures declare that the great sin is a hard and passionless heart. If true spirituality is fervent spirituality, we should be ashamed by how passionless we are. If true spirituality is passionate spirituality, we should crave it.

Passion fuses together the One, the Three and the Army. It is the only logical response.

Ready to be fused? Someone get a blowtorch.

MMCCXX

by Captain Stephen Court

The vision is to see outposts in 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years.

Introduction

Welcome to MMCCXX. It is a vision to see outposts started in 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years. We are blessed that several gifted leaders around the world are going to lead this scheme.

This is not a theoretical paper. It is a revolutionary document to mobilize warriors from around the world. Please read with this intent in mind.

There are several elements that we must consider...

DNA

The stronger the shared DNA of this venture the more effective the efforts will be. If, at the minimum, we all agree in the great commission, God can use us to accomplish these plans. But if we agree on more, the process accelerates.

What we're looking to share is the most virulent ('dangerous and potent') strain of the Salvationist virus that will spread the fastest around the world.

These seem to be vital components:

- *Primitive Salvationism*- mission-focused, charismatic-flavoured heroism. This phrase, 'invented' by Commissioner Wesley Harris (although I won't blame him for he definition), conveys a sense of the essential elements of the effective first generation Salvation Army. I think many will agree on 'mission-focused' and 'heroism' (the latter definitely required for many of the cities we are destined to invade). The other term requires quick unpacking. By 'charismatic-flavoured' we are recognizing the Spirit-generated freedom and power exuding from early Salvationists and from their contemporary heirs in various denominational attire around the world. Most successful mission-oriented churches in the world align themselves with early Salvationists in terms of charismatic flavour.

Normally, I would add covenant into this mix, since I see it as key to freeing God up to trust us with all of His power. But I am not sure how it will look when non-Salvationists come alongside. There will likely be some kind of covenant.

- *Poor-* We're called to the poor. Don't worry- this is actually a massive target group, since, according to globalrichlist.com, there are more than 5.1 billion people who live on less than Canadians who are on welfare (who are in the top 15% wealthiest people on the planet). We're convinced that we need to share Jesus' bias for the poor on whatever front we fight. This demands some incarnational simplicity in our efforts, identifying with the poor whom we serve. Both Commissioner Shaw Clifton and Lieutenant Rowan Castle include simplicity as one of the distinguishing characteristics of Salvationism. It may be as accurate in the developing world as it is inaccurate in the developed world.

Regardless, we must live simply in the neighbourhoods we invade. And we'll do well to aim for the down and out.

Global and local interests demand our integrity with this issue. Some of the benefits of such a posture include: intimacy with a God who has a bias toward the poor; identification with the people; good stewardship of God-lent resources; integrity; cost-effectiveness; and, the ability to sleep at night.

- *Community-* One of the catch phrases on our front is 'authentic Christian community'. We believe that when we pervasively tap into this it will be contagious. "See how they love one another" will be the startled observation.

We replace bald-spot Christianity (staring at the back of someone's head for an hour every week) with face-to-face Christianity, in which we actually get into each other's lives, carrying one another's burdens, sharpening one another, spurring one another on to love and good deeds, caring, supporting, holding accountable. It is a much more rigorous Christianity than most of us ever experience.

Not only that, but God has designed us to desire community. We want to belong. Most in the West don't ever sense the reality in its pure forms but we craft some human version (clubs, teams, etc.) or get caught up in a demonic counterfeit (cult, secret society, etc.). The real thing is attractive at a soul-level for people with whom we live and interact.

- *Tent-Making-* We're training our people locally to prepare to go and get jobs in other cities and to start cells. This offers contacts, sustainable income, and flexibility, while facilitating incarnation. It gives us freedom to experiment without financial restraint. It will provide us with creative access to some countries in which we will need to adapt story to existing culture and history.
- *Prophetic Relevance-* We're coining this term to depict comments advising both cultural relevance on each front and the protection of a prophetic stance (our calling, individually and corporately, to speak God's message to the world and to the Church). We do well not to abdicate one for the other. Paul was

Jewish when it helped and he was Roman when it helped. There is definitely a social justice component as well, our people learning to engage in good deeds to meet pressing needs, so they will not be unfruitful (Titus 3:14).

On fronts less free to the Gospel, relevance will be emphasized above prophetic stance. In free countries (most of the countries now occupied by The Salvation Army) relevance becomes a tactic we choose to use as deemed circumstantially efficacious. We're relevant as it serves prophetic purposes.

Prayer

Prayer is more important than we realize. Those of us who buy in to MMCCXX will be pressed to mobilize our prayer networks for committed coverage of the warriors, softening of the fronts, blessing to the Generals for the next 20 years who will help drive us into new countries and deploy leaders, raising and training warriors, finances, etc. We will want to recruit IHQ and THQ intercessory networks, 24/7 Prayer rooms, corps lists, and so on. In Vancouver, we've been going 24/7 in The War Room for more than half a year so far (this is a room dedicated to non-stop prayer in which people, signed up for three-hour shifts, intercede and worship as directed by God and guided by prayer-aids). This vision was birthed there.

Recruitment

We'll need to identify and recruit leaders. We'll need thousands of them to invade 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years. "We want soldiers who understand the hearts of men, who are acquainted with the devices of Satan and the delusions and excuses and hiding-places of sinners, and who know how to pour in volley after volley of red-hot truth upon rebels, until they run, or yield, or fall at the feet of the conquering savior" (William Booth).

Some will be officers and some will be soldiers. Others will be friendly to the Army and captivated by the vision and the radical mission-drenched exploits of the 21st C Salvos. In that regard it is a big tent. But we need people of proven character and ability who share the DNA. These people will be in relationship with us-discipling/mentoring/directing.

Paul seems to have had criteria for those being sent:

- Fellow travelers with Paul;
- Spiritual sons, or brothers;
- Kindred spirits (Phil 2:9);
- Genuine concern for the welfare of the local church;
- Demonstration by their lives of what a disciple looks like (1 Cor.4:17)

We're trying locally to spin out 2,000 such warriors via The War College and Warrior Academy and some other interesting initiatives. You may be able to do it other ways.

Training

The training will be tailored to the specific front to be invaded. I don't need to learn Kazakh to invade the heavily Chinese Vancouver suburb of Richmond. But I could probably use it in Kazakhstan.

We don't need to re-invent the wheel and will do well to catch up on the tactics of Christian agencies hitting many of the currently closed countries in imaginative ways. Study of the Old Testament cultural tactics of the Jews will suggest for us boundaries and limits to our cultural integration. Study of religions and cultures we will encounter will be essential.

We will likely be putting together a training course called SALVATIONISM 501 for invading warriors. Stay tuned...

Deployment

Biblical expansion is guided by God and connected through relationship. God has identified some leaders (and will identify more) responsible for regions who can coordinate plans of attack.

Paul's example with Aristarchus, Gaius, Timothy, Luke, Trophimus, Tychicus, Titus, Silas, Erastus, Tertius, Lucius, and others is that he *sends* them with his *endorsement*.

System

Global: We're not re-inventing the Biblical Church or The Salvation Army. MMCCXX is based on relationships. The apostles build the foundation and raise up and bless local leaders. We can breathe life into the Biblical system the Army has adopted.

This will be a more a movement than a network, once the network starts moving. The movement will be composed of warriors aiming at fulfilling the vision of seeing outposts in 2,000 cities in 200 countries in 20 years.

The Ephesian model of Paul is instructive (Acts 19). After evangelising in the synagogues for three months (v8), Paul established a war college at the lecture hall of Tyrannus attended daily by the disciples for two years (v9,10). The curriculum included:

- service to the Lord (20:19);
- modeling of humility and hard work (20:19, 35);
- large crowd and cell preaching and teaching (20:20);
- the whole will of God (20:27);
- night and day fighting, with tears (20:31);
- major miracles, healing, and deliverance tactics (including handkerchief healing!-19:11,12);
- power confrontations (such that Artemis was discredited- 19:27);
- and mass population evangelism (“all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord”- 19:10).

In his ACTS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT Commentary (BLAZING THE WAY: Acts 15-28, 1995, p178), Peter Wagner suggests the impact and the identity of these disciple students. He figures that the Corps in Hieropolis, Laodicea, Colosse, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, and Philadelphia were all started by Paul’s war college warriors. These are all Corps around Ephesus and in Asia, the origin of which is unknown. Colossians 4 is one source for the possible pioneer roster includes soldiers like Tychicus (Colossians 4:7), Onesimus (v9), Aristarchus (v10), Epaphras (v12), Archippus (v17), and Philemon (Philemon 1:1). “Paul was... taking gifted believers whoever they might be, with whatever education they might have, providing for them the conceptual and practical tools they need, and sending them out to extend the kingdom of God” (Peter Wagner, BLAZING THE WAY, 1995, p159).

The opportunity for us is to network similar centres existing today and to replicate them.

It needs to remain decentralized, with each of us having autonomy to do what God leads us to do on our own fronts. We can voluntarily submit to one another and we can voluntarily speak into each other’s local situation. Accountability distills to Salvation Army principles.

Local: By ‘outposts’ in the original vision we mean simply ‘expression of The Salvation Army’ (local Body of Christ expressions). We’re strong believers in cell-based Christian community. The largest churches in the world are, without exception, cell-based. It is an Army model, too, (well, you can trace it further back to Wesley and class meetings, or even Peter’s 33AD Salvos meeting ‘house-to-house’) once named the ward system. It is Biblical, community-enhancing, accountable, honest, intimate, contagious, and simple (in that you don’t need buildings and big budgets).

We’re also very committed to having a War Room. Obviously many new starts will be very hard-pressed to get it going non-stop but the War Room ought to be the hub of all activity, especially for corps-starting types who are inclined to be very active.

General William Booth said, “Pay 10,000 more times attention to the children, but don’t neglect the adults.” We’d love to see a commitment to training the children so

that the army is complete and the invasion is sustainable. We've started the Warrior Academy with that purpose in mind (and with the intention of replicating in scores of cities- for more information, contact me). This is one model that can be used effectively.

ACTION

Network catalysts for mobilisation around the world.

- We are connecting key leaders on every continent and are accelerating the process by years. Together, we can craft Holy Spirit-powered units featuring the best international combinations to expedite the mission. This also helps coordination, so that we don't waste the most valuable resources on duplication.

Develop the key elements for training and deployment

- We'll research existing effective models and adapt them for the 21st century war. Key leaders will be trained in these skills, disciplines, tactics, and strategies before deployment. We will compile a training course for invaders.

Recruit MMCCXX Venture Capital to kick-start missions

- Many of these ventures will require an injection of money to initiate and, in some covert operations, sustain mission. While some of the plan will be accomplished through conventional officer forces, and significant advances will be achieved through tent-making and the subtle work of foreign professionals, financial resources will expedite the prosecution of the war.

Notes:

There are 191 UN member states. Add the Vatican and Taiwan and you get the common total, 193. But if you add the following places- Puerto Rico, Bermuda, Greenland, Western Sahara, Northern Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and England- you get 201 (subtract UK and you have 200, as of today. Who knows what will happen in the next 20 years?). Pray into your involvement: This should help us get our heads around something our hearts are embracing.

Criminal Jesus

by Aaron White

Jesus was a criminal. He was arrested, tried by the legal system of the day, deemed guilty by a selection of the public, and was tortured and executed by the state authority. That he was innocent, the victim of an unjust legal system, does not change the fact that he was, in his time, a convicted and punished criminal. He suffered a criminal's death between two thieves whom he spoke to and with whom he identified. One of the criminals was promised a place with him in paradise that very day.

I have met more than a few prisoners in my time. My job allows me to go down into the cells to visit prisoners awaiting trial, to take them messages from family and friends, to see what I can do to help them. Now, for those who have not been fortunate enough to visit a jail, let me tell you what you are missing. It stinks. Literally. It smells terribly of unwashed feet, bad gas, sweat, metal, antiseptic and fear. There are usually a lot of people in a very small amount of room and everyone is nervous, even when they are pretending to be cool and calm. It is not a place I would choose to spend any amount of quality time.

There are certain prisoners who have been through the system before and know what to expect. Then there are those who are seeing life from behind the bars for the first time, and they are in a state of near panic. It's dangerous, scary, smelly and awful. The person behind bars feels very vulnerable, and very alone.

I'm not sure how deeply it has hit home that Jesus actually chose to identify fully with the criminal, with the prisoner. We talk of Jesus' incarnation - his putting on of human flesh - and we are all generally familiar with the story of his death, but I wonder if repeated hearings have dulled the brutal shock of it. The King of Kings did not just descend to earth to live a human life. He descended and became a criminal, rejected, humiliated, beaten, imprisoned, killed. He chose that way, so that no one could ever scream out, "God doesn't understand!"

Jesus went through the worst, and identified with those the rest of the world thought were just good enough to spit on. Even more than this, Jesus said that whenever we see a prisoner, we see him. Whenever we visit someone in prison, we are in fact visiting the Son of God (See Matthew 25: 31-46). Through those bars, behind that Plexiglas window, in the face of the frightened, the convicted, we are somehow meant to see the face of our Lord. This is powerful grace.

Jesus' love did not stop at the edge of the prison cell. Where are the boundaries of our love?

Empowering the Next Generation

“It’s time to equip children in ministry”

by Stacey Campbell

(previously published in KARIOS magazine, July-August 2004)

He stood at the front of the church, shuffling his sermon notes covered with pictures, and boldly began his testimony. “I became a Christian when I was two years old,” he said. He described how he became a Christian and ended with a plea for anyone listening who hadn’t do so, to give their life to Christ. He was five years old and this was his first public sermon.

This preacher could not yet read (which is why his sermon notes were in pictures), but that didn’t mean he couldn’t preach. He was part of a preaching class I lead for 5-9 year old boys in our church. Every boy in the class learned how to prepare a sermon and was then required to preach it Sunday morning in front of the whole church. Next they had to preach to their peers at the Christian school. After that, we took them to preach to the lost at the food bank.

The Lord had told me that I needed to raise preachers because this coming generation would be one that God would use to change society. He also told me to train missionaries. So, when the preaching class was over, I began a cross-cultural missions class for 6-10 year old boys. We were taught by Samoan missionaries in our church how to evangelize the lost, while still respecting the culture.

The boys listened and were enthralled as the Samoans told them how they used to be head-hunters and cannibals till the white men came with their Bibles. They taught the boys how to honor the chief of the village first before speaking to the others, because that was such a big part of their traditions.

The Samoans made lava lavas and ‘shark-tooth’ necklaces with the boys and when the boys did an re-enactment of the missionaries going to another culture in front of the whole church on a Sunday morning, the even burned a facsimile of an idol as part of it (and nearly burnt the church down in the process!) It was a memorable experience.

The deepest impact came, though, when we took the boys to a native reserve for a weekend, camped and preached the gospel, cross-culturally, just like ‘real’ missionaries. Some of the boys in that class received the call from God for their lives. God told them they would be missionaries and world-changers.

These same boys are now in their late teens and early twenties and the call is still there. One of them is in Zambia right now, gleaning information that will help him change nations. Another is in university studying so he can go overseas. He was the same boy who started outdoor prayer meetings at his public high school, and helped with a church plant on the native reserve when he was in middle school. But the

seed for these later exploits came when they were still children, 10 years of age or younger.

Empowering Children

God wants the children of our churches empowered, not babysat. George Barn's book, 'Transforming Children into Spiritual Champions' underscores this fact with myriads of statistics. Let's consider just a few of them:

- the probability of someone embracing Jesus as his or her Saviour was 32% for those between the ages of 5 and 12; 4% for those in the 13 to 18 range; and 6% for people 19 or older. In other words, if people do not embrace Jesus Christ as their Saviour before they reach their teen years, the chance of them do so at all is slim (p.34).
- by the age of 13, your spiritual identity is largely set in place. The spiritual condition of adolescents and teenagers changes very little, if at all, as they age (p.34).
- the research reinforces one simple but profound truth over and over again; if you want to have a lasting influence on the world, you must invest in people's lives; and if you want to maximize that investment, then you must invest in those people while they are young (p.42).

If you read the whole of this book you will be impacted with the fact that it is absolutely critical to 'get them while they are young'. Imagine if the church believed this and set her energies to reaching children:

- + BEFORE they formed unhealthy world views based on what they saw on TV.
- + BEFORE they got addicted or into immorality.
- + BEFORE they chose their life careers.
- + BEFORE they heard about Jehovah's Witnesses or New Age cults. Think of how much time, energy, and effort could be saved.

We would not need to spend near the amount of money on reactive measures, ie-counseling, career changes, deliverance, divorce and/or re-marriage, etc. Instead, our budgets would be targeted on proactive initiatives – like evangelism, missions, and Christian education.

However, most churches in North America do not seem to understand this yet. Not only are the bulk of our church budgets spent on adults; so too, our teaching is geared toward adults, not children. Actually, our very teaching paradigms are faulty, whether for adults or children. We largely teach to the head, trying to input cognitively, versus practically. Math facts can possibly be taught this way, but in order to disciple children in their faith, you will need to do a whole lot more than simply recite Bible stories to them.

Personally, I woke up to this fact when I taught a two year old Sunday School class several years ago. It was a class that I experienced first hand the holes in our North

American teaching paradigm. When we input cognitively, not practically, we make the transition to a daily life of faith very difficult.

The Need for Discipleship

The way we often recite Bible stories, with no very little modern application, causes children to view their faith as something historical, not as something that is vibrant and meaningful to daily life. When we tell children that Jesus did miracles, past tense, and don't teach them to pray for and expect miracles, we are setting them up for a faith that is distant, hazy, and largely irrelevant. If we are going to teach on miracles, we need to disciple them into doing them, the same way that Jesus taught His disciples to do them.

Discipleship, however, requires disciplers. I want to encourage every reader to consider discipling at least one child in the your area of expertise, be it business, or hospitality. You would be surprised at how great the yield is when you invest in children. I spent my afternoon today with a group of young people (ages 11-18) who are working to put on school assemblies to fundraise and educate their peers on the massive problem of children at risk.

Raising Up an Army of Children

We are working to create a model that can be multiplied by any child at any school, with the dream of raising an army of kids who will change the world for children everywhere. Later I talked on the phone with an 11 year old friend of my son, who was quoting Matthew 5 to me and explaining how he prays every night for 'God dreams' so he can tell them to his friends. He was telling me that he had one of those 'God dreams' just last night about gong to Iraq to witness for Jesus.

I was moved as I listened to the kids today. They have so much passion, so much vision, so much faith. Can a nation be changed in a day? Can a generation? Based on what I heard and saw just today, the only response I have is, "YES!".