

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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## **Editorial Introduction - Issue 50**

by Captain Stephen Court

Birthday Greetings in Jesus' name! JAC@50! Who knew?

We praise God for JAC. What a joy it was to pull together the JAC@50 issue. Here were the ground rules:

Suggestions were welcomed from the blogosphere and the result is a wide selection of representative articles from issues 11-40 as well as a few fresh ones for 50. We gave you a taste of the JAC archives in issue 49 with highlights from issues 1-10. And we figured issues 41-49 are too fresh in people's minds to reproduce here.

In the tradition of provocation a couple of editorial creations slipped in, starting with The King's Gifts and the Emperor's Clothes (issue 11) and ending with the Unofficial Sacramental Position of the JAC Editorial Board (issue 40).

But the meat of the issue goes a bit like this:

Commissioner Harris, our most consistent contributor, offered Change and Challenge back in issue 12. Captain Matt Clifton had a piece in issue 14 called In Darkest Ambiguity and the Way Out. Then Captain Richard Munn wrote the first of a few articles on women in leadership back in issue 16. 17 was our dream issue and Captain Doug Hammond's dream is one I hope that everyone reads. You won't regret it.

Captain Stephen Poxon was a great contributor in the early days and representative of his articles is Pilgrim's Progress, from issue 18. General Eva Burrows asks Why Help The Poor in issue 21.

Issue 22 was highlighted by John Cleary's Chosen To Be a Soldier.

Representative of the Feature Forum format, find here issue 26's Five Books that Shaped My Life. And representative of a whole slew of JAC-exclusive interviews is one with Major Friday Ayanam from issue 32.

Lieutenant Rowan Castle declared his Warfare Manifesto in the pages of issue 36. Major Harold Hill blessed us with an introduction to his now-released book called Leadership In The Salvation Army in issue 37. Major Geoff Ryan's Miller Lecture, The Salvation Army as a Prophetic Movement? is reproduced from issue 39.

And JAC@50 has a few fresh articles as well! Newly minted Captain Pamela Maynor gave the Valedictory Address for the Heards of the Good News in USA Eastern Territory. Lieutenant Steven Bussey has a research piece called Me, MySpace, and iPod: tales of culture. And Graeme Smith contributes Parade Ground Army.

Now, you can access all of the articles from all of the issues, but it is great to celebrate the treasure that JAC has become. Enjoy. Consider. And use the contents to help you fight win the world for Jesus.

God bless The Salvation Army.  
The Editors

## **Issue #11 – ‘The King’s Gifts and the Emperor’s Clothes’**

by Captain Stephen Court

*"Eagerly desire the greater gifts" (1 Corinthians 12:31).* This culminated his discussion of apostles, prophets, teachers, miracles, healing, helps, administration, tongues, and interpretation of tongues (14:27-30). These are some of the King's gifts.

The Salvation Army is a holiness movement. Holiness is essential to our success. Holiness presumes implicit obedience to God. If, at any point, we are disobedient, then we are no longer holy.

Inasmuch as we do not eagerly desire these gifts, to that extent we are disobedient and have ruptured fellowship with God. Insofar as we deny the King's gifts, to that degree we are wearing the emperor's clothes, we're naked and we're fooling ourselves that we're clothed in the righteousness that characterizes The Salvation Army.

### **WHY DENY?**

Gifts represent the power of God. Frequently a manifestation of the power of God has effected opposition. Gifts represent the presence of God. Sometimes the presence of God is uncontrollable and so has provoked fear. Gifts represent the grace of God. Occasionally this is bastardized such that it spawns pride. In our concern to avoid these human responses, opposition, fear, and pride, The Salvation Army has retreated from obedience to God's command. It has bullied us into rupturing our fellowship with God, into forfeiting our holiness. In denying the King's gifts, we've put on the emperor's clothes.

We desire unity. Inauspiciously, unity is often won at the lowest common denominator. So as not to exclude the 'weaker comrades' we compromise on the gifts of God. To desire unity is good, but not at the expense of desiring gifts.

Some time after General William Booth walked the earth spiritual authority somehow underwent declension to a spirit of control. A spirit of control is offended when gifts evincing the presence of God take matters out of our hands.

Opposition, fear, pride, unity, and control take their places in battle array against healing, helps, administration, tongues, and interpretation of tongues primed for an engagement that will determine the Army's destiny.

### **IS IT ARMY?**

This is the first question most Salvationists ask when confronted with something outside their experience. Despite what our more recent history of excommunicating officers with more visible gifts and forbidding the use of some gifts in public meetings might suggest, these more 'outstanding' gifts are certainly Army. General William Booth explains:

*"For this reason they were important to the world, and their possession today might be a great blessing to mankind. There is not a word in the Bible which proves that we might not have them at the present time, and there is nothing in experience to show they would not be as useful today as in any previous period of the Church's history. No man, therefore, can be condemned for desiring them, and the recent remarkable signs and wonders wrought amongst us not only demand, but shall have our most profound and sympathetic consideration" (GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, in the WAR CRY. March 14th, 1885).*

## **EAGER DESIRE**

I know several people in my Corps who are looking for work. One is particularly eager to find a job. He has more than 50 resumes out and calls on prospective employers weekly. He eagerly desires work. John Wesley comments on the gifts: *"they are all worth your pursuit" (on 1 Corinthians 12:31, NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY- THE SALVATION ARMY Edition).*

According to Wesley, pursuit is eager desire with legs on. If we eagerly desire something we will pursue it. We will continue to call on the prospective employer to ask for a job. We will continually call on the King to ask for His gifts. If we don't eagerly desire the gifts, then we act in disobedience to God, and break fellowship, waiving holiness.

## **ARE WE FOR OR AGAINST?**

General Clarence Wiseman argues that we must not seek personal aggrandizement from gifts (LIVING AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT. p5). This is definitely a real temptation. But such a truth, used at the service of arguing against tongues, is no more a reason to forbid its exercise than to note that excellent musicianship also brings with it the temptation to personal aggrandizement and so conclude that cornet solos should be forbidden in public meetings.

Wiseman admits, *"Not a few Christians have found release from personal inhibitions and new freedom and joy in the Lord through the exercise of the gift of tongues, and no one would wish to deny them this liberating experience" (LIVING AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT. p8).* In 1907, General Booth noted, *"It appears that two or three corps are divided on this question of tongues and it will be a good thing if abiding evil does not ensue" (in Wiseman, LIVING AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT. p6).* Agreed. What is abiding evil in this case? Surely it is that these corps shut out the Holy Spirit so that they can maintain a fleshy unity. On the gift of healing, General Bramwell Booth explains: *"For we have not merely recognized that the healing of the sick by the power of God has from the beginning been associated with the office of prophets, priests, teachers, and apostles, but it has always seemed to us in perfect harmony with the views and experience of the Army itself that God should heal the sick after this fashion... We have insisted that in fact God does raise up the sick in answer to our prayers; and numerous*

*instances... of this healing ministry have occurred throughout our history" (ECHOES AND MEMORIES. p71).*

Turning specifically to tongues, he continues: *"We have to be suspicious of any voices or gifts which make men indisposed to bear the Cross or to seek the salvation of others; and although some of our people have received what is spoken of as the gift of tongues, we have almost invariably found that one of the consequences has been a disposition to withdraw from hard work... I believe that these things, as I have witnessed them, are divine in their origin" (ECHOES AND MEMORIES. p71, 72).* General Bramwell Booth's handling of the issue is a model for us today. First, he recognizes that the gift of tongues is from God. Second, he only disciplines those who slack in their duty. The discipline itself has nothing to do with the tongues; it has everything to do with those who are slack in their duty. Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle takes a different approach to Wiseman and Booth. He argues that the gift of tongues is the seventh of nine gifts mentioned and that it will eventually cease (RESURRECTION LIFE AND POWER. p180. He intimates on page 183 that prophecy and tongues may already have ceased. This is not an official Salvation Army position). Brengle mentions the order to suggest that it is not important. However, its importance results not from its priority in Paul's list but in the fact that it is a gift of God. And while it is true that tongues will cease, it is also true that prophecy will cease, and every other gift of God- but not until Jesus comes back.

General Wiseman asks, *"What should be the Army's attitude toward the gift of tongues? Surely the answer is that it should be the attitude of Paul" (LIVING AND WALKING IN THE SPIRIT, p6).* Tongues have their place in the Bible and therefore should not be ignored. Wiseman reminds us that Paul said, "Forbid not the speaking of tongues," adding the cautionary word, "Let all things be done decently and in order" (1Corinthians 14:39, 40). The arguments of Generals Booth, Booth, and Wiseman, and of Commissioner Brengle, if not their final decisions, lead consensually to the conclusion that we are for the exercise of all the gifts.

## **ANSWERING THE WRONG QUESTIONS**

And finally, Brengle falls into the same trap that the Army has been stuck in on the issue of sacraments, answering a question no one is asking, defending a position that no one is challenging. For sacraments the mistake is that the Army argues that it is not necessary for salvation. The vast majority of Christians will grant this point. On tongues, Brengle argues that it is love that is important, not tongues. Of course, no Christian is going to argue that the gift of tongues is important and that love is not important!

With humility, we have to recognize that our heroes didn't have the complete understanding of everything Christian. That goes for two of my heroes, Brengle and Wesley. Wesley can only guess at what the word of knowledge is: *"perhaps an extraordinary ability to understand and explain the Old Testaments types and prophecies" (THE NEW TESTAMENT COMMENTARY- THE SALVATION ARMY EDITION, 1 Corinthians 12:8). BY ALL MEANS, TO SAVE SOME*



Wesley does agree with Scripture that tongues are for unbelievers (1 Corinthians 14:22), "to engage their attention, and convince them the message is of God." One of the difficulties in the Army's more recent tradition is that we cannot engage sinners' attention and convince them the message is of God through the use of tongues in public meetings if we cannot use tongues in public meetings. Now, in my experience, seeing people saved is hard enough as it is. But to limit us from exercising a God-given gift for the purpose of publicly convincing sinners is to handcuff our soldiers in their battle with satan. No wonder he has the upper hand.

Tragically, since Scripture is not received by Salvationists on this issue, General William Booth leaves us with this exhortation:

*"By all means let us aspire after higher gifts. Far be it, my comrades, from me to say one word that would stay the longing of any heart for the extraordinary gifts already mentioned. I long for them myself. I believe in their necessity, and I believe they are already amongst us. By all means let us have the perfection of the Divine method of working. The poor infidel world should be made to see all of God that is possible, in order that it may believe" (GIFTS OF THE SPIRIT, in the War Cry. March 14th, 1885).*

If we do not accept the King's gifts, we are stuck wearing the emperor's clothes.

## **Change and Challenge**

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

As a corps officer I once had a songster leader who was a dentist by profession. With a wry smile he used to quote a line of a hymn: "Change and decay in all around I see". He could say that again! A humorist has remarked that the moment Adam and Eve were turned out of the Garden of Eden, Eve may have remarked, "My dear, we live in changing times!" In fact, of course, all times are changing. Where there is life there is change; that has always been the case and always will be so. What is new is the rate of change which has been accelerated by many factors including scientific and technological advances.

During my lifetime the world has been affected by the introduction of television, computers, space travel and many other developments which have had far-reaching effects. H. C. N. Williams, a former provost of Coventry Cathedral, England, has said that history may be seen to flow like a great river carrying the commerce and communication of human society and providing the means for cleansing and refreshing humanity as it flows on its course. Then from time to time the river changes its level and flows in confusion and at a greater speed down the rapids from one level to another. Its course is broken by jagged rocks and there are whirl pools and a great deal of froth.

The period through which we are living is like the river flowing down the rapids. Whereas in the past there may have been times when change was gradual and predictable now it is speedy and unpredictable. Some find change intimidating and, so to speak, are liable to clutch the bank and try to avoid the rapids. Others face the challenge of change and determine to ride the rough water, keep their balance and avoid the rocks that would wreck their best intentions. Not every change may be for the best but the trick is to find the best in every change.

In the midst of change, in some parts of the Army a lot of people seem to have an identity crisis and are unsure about the mission of our movement. But in our history we may discover 'His story' and abundant evidence of God working through his people. It appears that God has not made us just another religious denomination but something else as well. Our social and evangelical work are two sides of the same coin of caring. Our mission is not only to the soul of a person but the whole of a person - and indeed the whole of society. Church growth need not be 'churchy growth'. It may incorporate our 'distinctives' and can and should embrace our social as well as our corps work.

Loren B. Mead in, *The once and future Church*, describes the polarity in the Church's understanding of its mission. Is it the conversion of the world or the serving of the world? Part of the glory of the Army is that it has embodied both of these concepts as contained in the teaching of Jesus. We are out to save and serve the world and whatever happens we must maintain that critical balance through all the changes taking place in and around our movement.

Some changes will come whatever we may or may not do and we must be ready to adapt and adopt accordingly. In other cases we should have the courage to be agents of change, moving ahead with cautious courage and prayerfully seeking for insight and foresight - knowing that one day people will judge our actions with the advantage of hindsight! But in all this we should not become addicted to change for the sake of change. There is wisdom in the old adage, "If it ain't broke don't fix it" and it may help to sober some who have become high on change and can't resist altering any thing which has been even when it is perfectly all right!

As we face new situations our attitude will make all the difference. The founder of the Bata shoe company spoke of sending two representatives to different parts of Africa to check out possibilities for business development. After a couple of weeks one wired back to say that there were no prospects because no one wore shoes anyway. The other representative said that the market was wide open. Nobody had shoes therefore they all need what the firm had to offer!

Turning out an old trunk I came across a plaque bearing some words I wrote years ago: "Think positively, act decisively, live creatively". As I 'ate my own words' I found that they didn't taste too bad and were not unrelated to what may be required in these days.

It is natural that we will sometimes fear change because it leads into the unknown. But there is no need to think that the bend of the road is the end of the road or that God who has helped us in the past will fail to undertake for us in the future. We have his promise that he will not let us down, so why worry? We might well make our own the prayer of Reinhold Niebuhr, "Give us the serenity to accept what cannot be changed, the courage to change what should be changed, and the wisdom to know the difference".

## Issue #14 – ‘In Darkest Ambiguity and the Way Out’

by Captain Matt Clifton

I hold in my hands the work of a prophet and visionary. Its intricate foldout captivates me. Its dedication to its author’s wife brings a tear to the surface. Its preface and chapters arrest my heart and head with images of darkest despair and the frightening audacity of a prophet’s hope.

More than any other, this work is responsible for the Army of 2001. In the territory where I serve as an officer of just eight weeks, that Army is variously in the first war cries of glorious victory and the last, tragic sputters of defeat. Any Salvationist with a heart for the Army’s future will want to know why that Army has, in places, struggled and declined. An answer to that question must examine the impact of William Booth’s visionary text, ‘In Darkest England and The Way Out’, on the Army’s mission. I offer this analysis to those comrades, reflective as it is of my own relentless search for authentic Salvationism.

The Salvation Army’s missiological framework to October 1890

*“Angelos, I think it would have been much better if The General had left Socialism alone. I don’t like his sort. However, if he can make Christianity and Socialism fit, I shall pronounce him the finest genius of the age.”*

A devil, Diabolos, in conversation with an angel, Angelos [Pearson, 1891]

Later to become The Salvation Army, The Christian Mission was founded in 1865 with the single objective of saving souls. Booth’s targeting of the poor with this objective can be traced back to his indignance at their absence from the churches, which he had noted as far back as 1846 [Collier, 1968:24]. The Mission’s energies were fully consumed by evangelism until after The Salvation Army was founded in 1878. It began to dawn on some in Booth’s Army that preaching was ineffective unless the physical needs of the poor were attended to [Green, 1986:50]. Thus organised social relief began in diverse ways in several countries through the mid-1880s. The perceived importance of this aspect of the Army’s mission increased in Booth’s thinking. He established a social reform office to systematise the work, culminating in the publication of ‘Darkest England and the Way Out’ in October 1890. Booth had become deeply dissatisfied with existing efforts to relieve the needs of the poorest in society, whom he identified as the ‘submerged tenth’ of England’s population, living in the cities with a living standard below that of even a London cab-horse [Booth, 1890:20-23]. After describing the intensely bleak and deprived conditions of the poor, Booth delineates a vast scheme aimed at eradicating the problem completely. Its core idea is the possibility of reformation of the whole person via three pragmatic stages. Booth’s workers would reach out to the poor in the cities and address their immediate needs through the various enterprises of The City Colony. Some would be fully reformed here, but most would need the further opportunity of agricultural work in The Farm Colony. Emigration overseas to The Colony Across The Sea would cater for the huge numbers anticipated.

It should be noted that no other church or organisation had similar ambitions in mind. In chapter four, Booth is scathing about the efforts of every other agency: government, charities, prisons, trades unions and secular reformers. He exhibits a total disinterest in lobbying for governmental provision on the basis that social reform is possible only on the foundations of Christian faith [Booth, 1890:34-35].

Prior to publication of the scheme, the Army's missiological emphases were as follows:

- **Salvation** - Soul winning as the prime objective
- **Social reform** - Meeting the social needs of the poor as a means to conversion
- **The poor** - Evangelising those neglected by the churches
- **The whosoever** - Salvation and holiness for all
- **The world** - The salvation of the whole world

The place of social reform as a means to conversion and moral regeneration is repeatedly affirmed in the book, exemplified in chapter five: 'I must assert in the most unqualified way that it is primarily and mainly for the sake of saving the soul that I seek the salvation of the body.' [Booth, 1890:45]. By now, social reform is necessary: 'But what is the use of preaching the Gospel to men whose whole attention is concentrated upon a mad, desperate struggle to keep themselves alive? You might as well give a tract to a shipwrecked sailor who is battling with the surf that... threatens to drown him.' [Booth, 1890:45]. However, Booth sows confusion by simultaneously describing a dual mission: spiritual and social salvation as a 'war on two fronts' [Green, 1986:72]: 'As Christ came to call not the saints but sinners to repentance, so the New Message of Temporal Salvation, of salvation from pinching poverty, from rags and misery, must be offered to all.' [Booth, 1890:36]. Booth applied his thinking by signing the Social Trust Deed on 30 January 1891, establishing the Field and Social departments that remain to this day. Although Green goes so far as to say that Booth's missiological framework was definitely dualistic [1986:53], a survey of Booth's writings including 'Darkest England and the Way Out' does not place him firmly in this category: social reform is more often understood as a means to save the soul {1}, this being 'the only real, lasting method of doing him any good.' [Booth, 1890:45].

### **What did the scheme achieve in relation to the Army's mission?**

*"Diabolos, I advise you not to oppose General Booth's scheme, for it would be to labour in vain; the contents of that book will be practically carried out. The scheme is Christ-like, and it will surely succeed."*

[Pearson, 1891]

In terms of social reform only, the scheme was a partial success{2}. However, success may be properly defined only in relation to the Army's mission. Booth's assessment in the 1911 International Social Council (ISC) aligns with the emphases listed earlier:

- Salvation
- Social reform
- The poor

- The whosoever
- The world

*'The first benefit I will mention is the Salvation of thousands of souls... The world has been further benefited by the removal of misery on such an extensive scale as had never even been dreamed of as possible... Think of the multitudes who, by our operations are daily saved from starvation, vice, crime, disease and death... The world has been further benefited by the knowledge of salvation throughout every part of the habitable globe.'* [Booth, 1911:20-21]

Clearly, the scheme had furthered the Army's mission. However, from the start, Booth feared that engaging his Army in social reform would detract from soul winning: 'But please read, mark and learn. There must be no neglect of Salvation Work pure and simple for Social operations.' [Booth, 1890b:9]. His fear was realised: 'There has been a great lack of direct aim at the true goal of our Social Work... consequently the work, being superficial, has in some cases only had superficial and temporary results.' [Booth, 1911:18]. William Beveridge's analysis of 1910 queries the regenerative achievements of the scheme. He identified, for example, that the sheer numbers of men being helped prevented the 'sustained individual influence' needed for permanent change [quoted in Gauntlett, 1990:30]. The vast scale of the undertaking was Booth's enormous risk: 'If the individual is merely helped from day to day, you would probably increase the evil with which you are attempting to deal.' [Booth quoted in Gauntlett, 1990:30]. Furthermore, Booth's tendency to see social reform as legitimate alongside as well as towards soul winning (strongly reinforced by the departmental structure) arguably diluted the zeal for conversions. Certainly in the second ISC of 1921, Bramwell Booth urges his leaders to restore the correct emphasis: 'Again I say that a great danger is facing us... the dear old General did not start out merely to do charitable and philanthropic work... I ask you to rise up in the power of the Spirit, and let us make our Institutions what it was originally intended they should be.' [Booth, General Bramwell, 1921:35-36]. In both the 1911 and 1921 Councils, each General feels the need to stress that the Social officer is as much interested in the soul as the Field officer is [Booth, 1911:53-77; Booth, General Bramwell, 1921:34-36]. The scheme proved a turning point in the Army's respectability, and this may have seduced officers into shaping their work for an admiring society{3}.

## Conclusion

Could the Army's mission have been achieved without the scheme? The answer must be no, for reasons which have already been highlighted. Firstly, eternal salvation for the 'submerged tenth' was directly obstructed by temporal misery. That misery had to be removed as a means to salvation for 'the whosoever'. Secondly, it is hard to see how the salvation of the world could have been credibly envisaged without the suitably audacious scale of the scheme. Thirdly, no other church or organisation had the same objective. Only Booth's Army was mobilised for the immense task.

However, the scheme's flaws endangered the mission. Firstly, the implementation proved too ambitious and individuals received only superficial help. Secondly, Booth's missiological ambiguity, together with his tendency to dualism, diverted his officers from their evangelistic focus. Thus arose the temptation to stoke the fires of respectability. The scheme may therefore be celebrated, and its necessity to the mission affirmed. Nevertheless, the pivotal lesson of 'Darkest England' is that of the need for clarity of purpose and fidelity to our sacred calling<sup>{4}</sup>. While many variations on the theme are heard from the platform and read in mission statements, our quintessential passion is for soul winning. The one ambition of the authentic Salvationist is to move hearts from depravity to holiness. Notwithstanding his ambiguous presentation, a study of the Founder can draw no other conclusion.

### Today's Army

The scope of this article does not permit a detailed evaluation of today's Army. I encourage the reader to make their own observations of the Army of their experience, and offer to that end the following comments in respect of our continued efforts in social services:

Where our mission has been described as twofold, and social service elevated to the status of core purpose, the seductive option of offering soup and soap without salvation has been legitimised and the importance of our social services magnified in the view of the public. There are territories where the Army is understood to be a charity first and a church/mission second, if at all. There are communities where it is assumed that a Salvationist on the doorstep is fundraising for social services, not sharing the gospel. There are Army centres where client-facing staff are not Christians, evangelism is restricted or forbidden by the funding body and clients come, are helped and go without hearing the gospel. In these places, ambiguity of purpose has led to the severing of our vital, evangelistic nerve.

To these situations may be applied the key insight from examining 'Darkest England'. It is surely this: the core purpose of providing social services is to facilitate the salvation and growth in holiness of the person in need. As with anything occupying the energies of officers and soldiers, their existence is justified and their effectiveness evaluated on these criteria alone. This is no legalistic rigidity, but an absolute driven by clarity of purpose, fidelity to our origins and sacred calling, and a consuming passion for the salvation of the lost.

### Notes:

{1} An important article in 'All The World', 1889, entitled 'Salvation for Both Worlds', outlines the dualistic missiology described by Green. 'Darkest England and the Way Out' reinforces this idea on page 36. However, the book gives greater emphasis to the primacy of soul winning [Booth, 1980:preface, 45, 85, 104, 110, 218, 256, 284]. Other writings at this time and later reinforce this emphasis [examples include Booth, 1890b:9; 1894:8; 1911:56, 76; Sandall, 1953:xiv; The Salvation Army, 1914:62]. This missiology was communicated to the public through vivid images such as that on the front cover of 'The War Cry', 16 May 1891. A sword-wielding warrior astride his horse overcomes a beast with four heads. To kill the beast (sin), its heads must be cut off (social problems such as drunkenness, 'sweating' (cruelly cheap labour), poverty and crime).

In the academy of the East End slums, Booth pioneered a missiology that prefigured theological heavyweights of the following century: 'This is the origin of their task – as a community to confess Him... Jesus Christ is in totality and fullness the content of its task... The ministry of the community is essentially and in all forms and circumstances the declaration of the Gospel.' [Barth, 1962:796-797, 844-845]; 'There exists, therefore, a Christian responsibility for secular institutions... the crucial point is that an interest in the conditions of the world is found only within the context of the whole proclamation of Christ.' [Bonhoeffer, 1965:323].

{2} Existing outreach in the City Colony was expanded and a successful Farm Colony operated in Hadleigh, Essex. Due to insufficient finances, the Colony Over The Sea was never properly commenced, although some emigration did occur. For further details beyond this essay's scope see Fairbank, 1983:149-156; Gauntlett, 1990:27-36.

{3} The scheme's high profile brought public respectability where there had previously been antagonism, evidenced in reports and letters published in *The War Cry* during this period. The Chief of the Staff under Bramwell Booth, Commissioner Edward J. Higgins, deals with the attendant problems in his address to the 1921 ISC [Higgins, 1921:147].

{4} The issue of clarity of purpose benefits from much greater experience than mine in Clifton, 1999:147-163.

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## **Issue #16 – ‘The Officer Women Leader – A Husband’s Perspective’**

by Major Richard Munn

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### **Introduction**

One of the truly distinctive features of The Salvation Army is the role of women in leadership. The boldness and freshness of this singular feature is as relevant, if not more so, as it was 130 years ago.

For the dynamic to be fully implemented takes forthright thinking from both men and women. It is the liberty of thought specific to husbands that I will address. It is the freedom of thought characterized by William and Bramwell Booth and other pioneers of our movement. Here were husbands who were not only comfortable with their wives in leadership, but actively encouraged them.

### **Scriptural basis**

The creation story depicts man and woman together as overseers of the land and all animal life. They tilled the soil and guarded the garden together. The word 'helper' (NIV) or 'helpmeet' (KJV) consists of two ideas - '**help**' meaning 'share the same tasks' and '**meet**' meaning 'do it as equals.' It is only in the curse following the fall that the original order is distorted to the husband 'ruling over' the wife.

The order established at the dawn of creation still exists as valid. The task following the fall is for husbands and wives to honestly examine the sharing model at the same time incorporating and utilizing individual God-given talents and gifts. It is the recapturing of the original biblical working relationship between husbands and wives that makes The Salvation Army use of shared ministry so magnetic.

The Ephesians 5 classification of relationships is an important New Testament principal that can set the tone for shared ministry. The principal is clear - "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" - with the particulars immediately following for husbands and wives.

For the husband to love his wife "just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her" involves the 'self-emptying' described by Paul in Philippians 2. The Officer husband who loves his wife as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for it takes upon himself the form of a servant, humbles himself, and dies to self by living for the best interests of his family and ministry.

The Revelation image of Christ as the Bridegroom in relationship with the church as his bride is also important. Christ washed the feet of his bride, equipped and prepared her for ministry and then promised she would do greater works than him.

### **Marriage Model**

The title of 'headship' given to the husband reflects the idea of 'source' rather than 'domination.' In other words the husband takes the leadership in love. It is in this sense that the husband of the woman officer leader takes the initiative in establishing the marriage model and consequently the tone for shared ministry. The marriage is not a battle for supremacy - a rivalry between strong opponents - but rather, a co-operative symbiotic venture where what is done for one is seen as done for the whole.

Headship does not mean domination. Rather, it means accepting responsibility for whatever we believe the call and the expectation of God upon our lives together."

### **Masculinity**

The caricatured fear for some husbands is that 'if I go in for this sharing stuff I will lose my masculinity.' Anthony Campolo addresses the issue with characteristic bluntness. He lists the fears men (we can substitute with 'husbands') have about women leaders as twofold. One: Loss of status in the eyes of other men. Two: Loss of sexual potency.

William David Spencer, husband of Aida Besancon Spencer - both ordained ministers of the gospel - speaks eloquently to these misconceptions. "Far better for males to serve our wives as Christ did the church.... enabling her to become that lovely shaped and polished jewel glorious with lustrous good works in the human bracelet that adorns the hand of God. And women.... will turn back a great appreciation on their husbands who will live a life a sultan would envy. That certainly has been my experience."

The crucial difference between being 'macho' and being 'masculine' is what distinguishes the husband officer who is secure enough to liberate his wife for shared leadership. The beautiful thing is that in doing so he becomes more masculine and his own ministry is enhanced and complimented. At the same time his wife is fully emancipated to minister in freedom and power according to her own giftedness.

By sharing in leadership the artificial pressure to manipulate and control the success of wives, children and ministry is eliminated.

### **Femininity**

Female leadership should not deny femininity, just as it should not deny masculinity for male leaders. Men need to accept women leaders without a reduction in femininity. For a woman to function as a leader must not mean that she become 'like a man.'

This is also an issue for the husband and wife leadership team. The woman leader should not take the caricatured male role and transfer it over to herself. The genius of shared leadership is in the complimentary nature of the two genders. That is why it is so important to have a male presence and a female presence on committees and boards. The rational masculine tendency is beautifully complimented by feminine intuition. One bereft of the other leaves an imbalanced committee.

## **Marriage types**

Canada's "**Faith Alive**" magazine found in a 1985 survey that 'shared leadership' marriages ranked higher on the satisfaction scale than 'husband-led' marriages and significantly higher than 'wife-led' marriages. Sadly, pastors' wives were rated as the group whose marriages were least satisfying. The conclusion of the survey is important with regard to husband and wife officer leaders: "Those who claim a shared spiritual leadership or mission seem to be happiest and most fulfilled in life."

## **Conclusion**

Husbands and wives are both 'heirs of the gracious gift of life' says Peter. On this basis he warns husbands rather somberly to 'treat your wives with respect so that nothing will hinder your prayers.' One has to wonder how many male officer prayers over the years have been hindered through lack of consideration and respect for their wives.

Husband officers can have the unique privilege of encouraging their wives towards the noble task of christian leadership secure in the knowledge that such a role is both scripturally sound and psychologically healthy. In building up their wives for leadership husbands tap into a recognized principal: "Treat a person the way you want that person to be and he or she will become that." When husbands relate to their officer wives as genuine, god-gifted, god-ordained leaders they will become that, to the good of all concerned.

In practical terms this can mean shared preaching, shared days of recreation, shared titles, and shared decision making. When one has a guest, the other serves. When one has preached, the other prepares the meal. When one has a project of significance, the other assists. This is common sense and common courtesy. It is 'one flesh.' It is the 'body of Christ.'

The exceptional opportunity for shared leadership in The Salvation Army means that for husband and wife officers it is not you **or** me, but you **and** me. The home becomes an oasis and fortress, not a desert or battleground. The heart of the matter is that when officer husbands assume their Godgiven responsibility and empower their wives to reach full leadership potential for Salvation Army ministry they will be helped to reach theirs also.

This is the beauty of shared leadership.

## **Issue #17 – ‘Dream Army’**

by Captain Doug Hammond

*(At the time of the writing of this article in early 2002, Captain Doug Hammond served with his wife as Northern KwaZulu Natal Project: Mission Officers in South Africa.)*

In June 1999 my wife and I had been called for an interview with the Territorial Commander of the Southern Africa Territory. There were a number of issues that needed to be discussed, many of which were routine. Near the end of our time together we were discussing what the future might be for us in South Africa. We'd served six years in the Territory, never even having an appointment in our home Territory of Canada. At one point the Colonel turned to me and asked, "Tell me what your dream appointment would be." I was somewhat surprised at the question and stumbled as I tried to answer. My wife and I had enjoyed Corps ministry for six years, but we also had seen other areas of ministry in South Africa that we had interest in. As I was trying to pull my words together to make some sense the Colonel interrupted me and said, "No you don't understand. You are talking to me about appointments that you've seen somewhere before. I want you to tell me what would your appointment be if you could make it up from scratch."

I was surprised by his first question, but completely at a loss with how he had followed it up. Never in my two years as an accepted candidate, two years as a Cadet, or six years as an Officer had anyone ever asked me to dream up what kind of appointment I might like. Many had asked, "Would you like to be a Corps Officer? Serve overseas? Be involved with youth work?"

In fact, asking me where I'd like to fit in the existing ministry of The Salvation Army. Long ago my wife and I had made a commitment that we'd go wherever our leaders appointed us, that was how we understood the wonderful calling we were a part of. I guess I never really thought "dream appointments" were part of the package. I have no idea how I answered the Territorial Commander that afternoon, I just remember leaving his office feeling very disappointed that I'd not been able to give him an answer. On the way home I expressed my frustration to my wife that I'd felt so inadequate in responding to him. At first I blamed "the system" that had somehow tricked me into no longer being able to dream dreams. After all at one point I could remember being quite creative - nothing of a CS Lewis vintage - but I could solve problems, express thoughts clearly. But today I could not answer a simple question given to me by our leader. Then I thought it was his fault. He had no right to ask such a question! He knows my loyalty to our mission and that my focus is on being ready at a moments notice to respond to directives. His question was just unfair.

In the end I realised that my frustration was rooted in the fact that I was just disappointed in myself. I'd been caught not dreaming. When was it I stopped dreaming? How did it happen? Why did I let it happen? I decided that when I got home I'd sit down to write a letter to the Territorial Commander. I expressed to him my frustration at not providing a better answer to his question. During that afternoon I also spent some time dreaming of an appointment that I'd never heard of or seen. In my dream I was mixing together the needs in South Africa (as I understood them), the mission of The Salvation

Army (eg. Save sinners, make saints, and serve suffering humanity), the past experience of my wife and I, along with the gifts and abilities God had blessed us with. It was a refreshing and exciting experience to dream a dream.

Today my wife and I are stationed in Northern KwaZulu Natal as Project:Mission Officers, an appointment that, I guess, came out of a dream. The basic mandate given to us is to identify mission potential in KwaZulu Natal, and then support, equip, and encourage in those ministries. This appointment has provided me with some of the greatest privileges of my Officership. We are given opportunity to travel to remote and isolated areas of the country which are often facing extreme difficulties. Many of our Officers and Local Officers face the challenges associated with poverty in the communities in which they serve. Crime, unemployment, despair, hopelessness, hunger, malnutrition, fear, haunt their communities. To work with some of these Officers and Soldiers, that not only serve faithfully year after year, but do it with joy, is a constant encouragement and challenge to me.

This past weekend I was given a wonderful opportunity to visit with Envoy Emmanuel and Rosemary Mdluli who are stationed at the Inkonisa Corps. I'd spoken with the DC who had asked that I visit the Mdlulis to offer some support. They are a young couple with four children who have been serving full time with The Salvation Army for five years. They have only been in their present appointment for one year where they oversee six Corps, all in isolated communities which are very difficult to reach with public transport (the Mdluli's have no car). It took some time to contact the Envoy, although he has a cell phone there is no reception for it at his home deep in a rural area. When you call you have to leave a message for him. Every few days he will climb a hill close by his home where he can pick up reception on his phone, and there he will receive his messages. If he can afford to make a call he will phone you back, if not you have to wait till he has an opportunity.

I'd eventually reached him and made the arrangements for the visit. He was reluctant to give me directions since he was certain I'd get lost. My new appointment has taken me to many new communities, some rural, and some deep in township areas. I found it difficult to believe I could not find his community, but agreed to meet him at a petrol station on the highway. My assumption was that when I picked him up we'd travel about 10-15 minutes to get to his home. I mean how far could he live from a place I kind of considered the end of the world? In fact we had to drive another hour to get to the end of the world, and then another half an hour on a dirt road to reach his home of Mdluli. After a brief greeting with his wife and family Emmanuel and I set off to spend the day visiting soldiers from the Corps.

Saturdays has become a time for funerals in KwaZulu Natal with the high rate of HIV/Aids infection. There were some who were out at funerals, but we were fortunate to greet several as we traveled up and down the mountainous area on dirt paths sometimes having to hop over rocks. It is a wonderful experience to find yourself in an environment that is so far removed from your home culture, and then to be greeted by people with an enthusiastic "Halleluhah!". You're quickly reminded that all the things that

you thought made you a stranger to a community - the language, culture, skin color - were nothing compared to what bound you together as brothers and sisters in God's wonderful family. To be able to visit with such people is indeed a dream come true for me.

The added blessing of the day was to walk the routes Envoy Mdluli covers every week while visiting his people. The hardships of the community are certainly covered up by the beauty of the countryside. Anyone just driving through would not know the stories of poverty, death, and despair that the Envoy shared with me about his people. In each home we were greeted with such enthusiasm, and it was obvious that the people really did love their Umfudisi (Officer). My limited Zulu made it difficult to carry on much of a conversation but we were able to communicate through the Envoy even though he finds English difficult. I could not help but be impressed by the way this humble servant would treat his people with such respect. Signs of poverty could be seen everywhere we visited. Not many of the people we saw had shoes, and much of the time we sat on mud floors. Yet as we greeted each of them Envoy Mdluli had the ability to make them feel special.

As we walked from home to home I had the opportunity to hear more about the Envoy and his wife. They had both had jobs in Durban with a home in the townships. Although the area they lived might not have been attractive by western standards, it did have running water, electricity, access to public transportation etc., many services that rural Africans can only dream of. They had three children and were, by many African standards, doing very well for themselves. Emmanuel had grown up in a non-Salvationist Christian home but had backslidden. His wife was the daughter of Officer parents and after marriage had wanted to continue attending The Salvation Army Umlazi Corps.

According to Zulu custom she had to ask her husband's permission. Emmanuel had no objection, and even transported his wife to the services from time to time. One Sunday as he was waiting for his wife at the back of the hall, he started to consider the challenge that the speaker was making to the congregation. The Holy Spirit touched him that day and he gave his heart to Jesus. Later that year he was enrolled as a soldier and both he and his wife served faithfully at the Umlazi Corps when they both felt the call to full time service.

Due to their limited formal education they knew they would need some time to prepare for Training College; however, there was an urgent need for an Officer couple at another Corps in Umlazi Township and the Mdlulis were asked to fill in as Envoys. For four years they worked hard at their appointment, but found it difficult to meet the educational criterion for College. As he shared with me that afternoon it was obvious he'd been disappointed at not making it to Training College, and at his present appointment there is little chance he'll have the time, or opportunity to continue his studies. But as you speak with him he will never complain. The only time he will speak about hardships are when you directly ask him – and even then his answer will be brief,

and to the point. What he really loves to talk about is his ministry, the people, the opportunities, the blessings.

After a very fulfilling day we returned to his home where his wife had been preparing a meal for us. Several times he mentioned to me how wonderful their house was and how fortunate they are to have running water. It was very true that they had a small, but very nice home that had been built in 1998 and seemed to be quite modern. As it was getting dark I noticed he was not turning the lights on, and his wife was working on a parafin stove. When I asked him about electricity he laughed and said "No we have all the fixtures" he pointed to the light fixtures on the ceiling "but the house has never been hooked up for power.". After a few minutes something seemed to bother him and he turned to me and asked "I hope you won't mind using candles.". Hospitality is important to Zulus, as with most Africans, and it had occurred to him I might find it difficult to adjust. I assured him that I stayed in many homes that had to use candles and there was no problem. But I had thought to myself that it was interesting he had never even thought about it earlier. All he spoke about was how great it was to have running water. Spending time with someone so positive, while they are living with such hardships was refreshing.

As we sat down to a great meal I wanted to learn as much as I could about Emmanuel, his family and his ministry. His wife walked back and forth to the kitchen, and never sat with us (a common Zulu custom), but I was curious to see how she felt about living in the rural areas. At one point as she was clearing some dishes I asked "Rosemary are you happy here?". That moment was the first time I'd seen her stop working all day. She immediately stopped what she was doing, turned to me and said "I'm very happy here." The more time I spent in their home the more their attitude impacted me. Here was a couple that had given up a lot for their calling, had faced many disappointments, and now were in an appointment that holds hardships few Officers would ever have to face, yet there was no word of complaint. I'm now familiar with many of the difficulties such rural appointments face. The giving at all of the six Corps combined would not nearly cover his allowance. He would receive a grant from THQ that would offer him some income, but the extra expenses such as travelling to such remote areas would eat into a portion of that.

I was certainly enjoying the opportunity to sit and discuss the ministry with Emmanuel. Although he also seemed to be enjoying it, there were times when he seemed awkward. Finally I asked him how he and his wife had adjusted to living with out electricity in their home. It was becoming obvious that he was not very comfortable whenever I asked him about any of his personal difficulties. As he turned to me he seemed to pause trying to sort out the English words he needed to express himself. He said, "Captain, we feel very happy to be called to the work of God. We've decided to not think about anything that might take our attention away from what God wants us to do. We know God called us here for some reason, and that he has given us all we need to do the work even though we never went to College. If we start looking at some of these little problems we could miss an opportunity for God." As he spoke I'd remembered his sense of excitement as we had been visiting that day. It was obvious he was, "happy to be called to the work of



God." Here was a couple just thrilled at the thought of being called by God for a special task.

I don't know if I will ever forget that moment. Sitting here I can remember almost every detail of the room, with just a couple of candles lighting up the room, the expression on his face, and the two of us sitting there I felt so privileged to be able to enjoy the hospitality of such focused servants. I said to him, "I think it is wise to not allow yourselves to talk about things that can get you discouraged..." But he interrupted me. "No Captain, it is not that we don't talk about it, we don't think about it." Wow! Here was a couple so overwhelmed by the wonder of being used by God that they refused to allow anything to distract them. As I was drifting off to sleep that night I remembered a time that I felt like that - a time when all the hassles seemed so insignificant compared to the idea that God had a special plan to use my life. I don't know what happened to that time, but I was sure thankful for the reminder the Mdluli family gave me, of what a wonderful thing it was to be called by God.

I could write a whole lot more about my weekend at the Inkonisa Corps. The Sunday service was exciting and the Mdlulis continued to encourage me with their leadership and spirit. As I drove away I'd remembered that the DC had asked me to visit the couple to offer encouragement, and yet I'd received from them much more than I ever could have offered. And then on the way home I began to think - to dream. What would happen if every Officer could make such a commitment? The commitment of Emmanuel and Rosemary. To commit themselves to not think about anything that might distract them from the mission God was calling them to. What would happen if every soldier were to make that commitment? "We will not allow ourselves to think about anything that will distract us from saving sinners, making saints, or serving the needs of suffering humanity." Perhaps that was the kind of dream Paul was trying to pass on when he wrote words like, "What is more, I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have lost all things. I consider them rubbish that I may gain Christ and be found in him ..." Or, "Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize..." I'm also reminded of the passage in Hebrews 12: "...let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily engages, and let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us." What kind of Army would it be if every soldier were to make that commitment, to not even allow a thought that might hinder our mission to dwell in our minds. It makes an exciting dream.

Perhaps it is a dream, but I've already learnt it is a dangerous thing to stop dreaming. I've also learnt that sometimes when we allow ourselves to dream, God makes them a reality. When we are so focused on what it, it is impossible to even imagine there is more. So on my drive home I allowed myself to dream about a Salvation Army like that - with Officers and soldiers single minded in their devotion to their individual callings. And I take the first step toward that dream as I make a commitment to nurture that discipline.

## **Issue #18 – ‘Pilgrim’s Progress’ (with apologies to Bunyan)**

by Captain Stephen Poxon

*“...And all the time the Lord went before them, by day a pillar of cloud to guide them on their journey, by night a pillar of fire to give them light, so that they could travel night and day. The pillar of cloud never left its place in front of the people by day, nor the pillar of fire by night”*

(Exodus 13: 21,22, New English Bible).

*“Guide me, O thou great Jehovah, pilgrim through this barren land...*

*Let the fiery cloudy pillar lead me all my journey through...”*

(William Williams, SASB 578, from verses 1 & 2).

One of my favourite Army songs, to which I was introduced by none other than General John Gowans at Westminster Central Hall, London, a couple of years ago, is SASB 383; “Songs of salvation are sounding...” I like the tune, I like the note of praise that is resonant throughout, and I like the sequentiality of the words in that they tell the gospel story in a nutshell.

What appeals to me most, though, through all of that, is the penultimate line of the chorus; “Sinners to Jesus now clinging”. These are truly marvellous words, and I would go so far as to say that they describe exactly what The Salvation Army is, so far as I understand it. That is to say, for all our pomp and ceremony, this is what we have always been, and this is what we need always to be – a bunch of sinners, clinging to Jesus for dear life and any hope of glory. What say we abandon the ribbons on our caps and have new ones made up with those five words embroidered on them? What say we order some fresh notepaper that is headed, “The Salvation Army, A Christian Church and a Registered Charity, Sinners to Jesus Now Clinging”?

For me, the appeal of those words lies in the reminder of our daily need to abide in Jesus (both individually and corporately, as a Movement). The Lord said, in John 15:5, “Apart from me you can do nothing” (NEB). I have no dilemma in re-phrasing those words as “Apart from me, The Salvation Army can do nothing”.

Outside of his mercy, we remain utterly lost and dead in sin (Ephesians 2:1-10). Maybe Lieut.-Commissioner Arch Wiggins understood our state of absolute dependence when he wrote, in SASB 171, “Thou canst the breath of man bestow or canst behold (see also Psalm 104:29). In other words, we can’t even breathe by ourselves, without God’s grace!

What a starting point in our pilgrimage that is – the realisation that we are unable to inhale without help! As individuals, we cannot take in oxygen and release carbon dioxide unless God decrees it so, breath by breath. Arguably more importantly, as a Movement, we cannot absorb any of the breath of God without first acknowledging our need of same. The lungs of The Salvation Army remain flat and lifeless unless we plead with God – sinners clinging to Jesus – for him to breathe life into us. Job knew full well

the life-imparting qualities of God's breath (see Job 27:3 & 37:10) – not to mention Adam! (Genesis 2:7), and The Salvation Army must be similarly aware, and careful to practice deep breathing all the time.

Exodus 13:17-22 gives us the account of the Israelites departing from Egypt. They move from one place to another, from Egypt through the wilderness towards the Red Sea, from Succoth to their camp at Etham, all the time following the guidance of the Lord as revealed in instructions to Moses and as shown by the cloudy and fiery pillars. Throughout their journeys, they remained utterly in need of instruction, and grace abounding was theirs as God saw fit to manifest the pillars (or "the Angel of the Lord" – see Exodus 14:19) to lead and direct. Who is to say that such help will not be given to every corps or centre or headquarters or individual if it is sought? Who is to say that The Salvation Army need be without such thrilling intimacy with The Divine Navigator? In our planning, in our deciding, in our goings out and comings in, I have to believe that we too can experience a level of care and control that will see us safely through our wanderings.

I took my little boy to see a collection of fleas once. They were long since dead (one hopes!), and encased in glass as part of a large collection of insects, scorpions, spiders, butterflies and moths.

Being a voracious reader, I bid young Alistair remain still while I read the accompanying notes about the history of fleas, and was astonished to discover that the little creatures only started to become a problem for humankind when cave people took to settling down, and establishing permanent homes. Until that time, man had been relatively untroubled by flea bites. To paraphrase the official information at the flea exhibition, it was only when men and women decided to stay put that the parasites moved in! Apparently, our more nomadic ancestors came and went without a bite to report. Is this not some kind of parable for The Salvation Army? All the while we keep on the move – following the pillars – we can expect to live adventurous lives of exciting holiness and obedience. When we think we know best and choose to stay in one place (because it's more comfortable, as were the caves), we can expect to have our lifeblood sucked out of us.

If God is calling his Salvation Army to follow him, here, there and everywhere, then follow we must, for parasites find it much easier to feed on and irritate that which is stagnant (for which read dying). It might not be comfortable to follow a moving God (in fact it will probably be extremely uncomfortable at times, according to Matthew 8:20, in which we read of a transient Jesus), but if the alternative is to abandon his leadership and huddle ourselves away in our little caves of personal preference and routine, then I don't see we have any choice. We follow, and live, or we go our own ways, and slowly but surely, the life that we have drains away.

## **Issue #19 – ‘Why Help the Poor?’**

by General Eva Burrows

*(this is a condensed version of an address delivered by General Burrows at the opening session of the Third Asia-Pacific Regional Workshop on Banking With The Poor held in Brisbane, 21-25 November 1995, used with permission)*

This is a subject about which I feel passionately, yet at the same time realistically- with a strong compassion rather than sentimentality. Nevertheless, as I have traveled the world, my indignation has often been aroused by the sights and sounds of human need.

I had the privilege once in Calcutta to meet Mother Teresa at one of her feeding centres for the poor and outcast of that teeming city. When I asked her how she coped with all the fame and adulation she receives, she replied, “It means nothing to me. But one thing I have done which I believe is important. I have helped people to talk to the poor and not just about the poor.”

This is a simple but very significant statement which indicates ‘the poor’ are not just some conglomerate group which can be dismissed as an economically nonproductive sector of society that we are unfortunately stuck with. They are fellow human beings- real people, individuals- for whom we have a concern and responsibility.

That is the first and most basic reason why we should help the poor- because they are fellow human beings, flesh and blood people like ourselves. We cannot turn a blind eye. In this global village, our planet, we are realizing more and more that we are interdependent. We are like a global family, albeit a dysfunctional one. We must accept that we are our brother’s keeper. Some people misquote the words of Jesus who said, “The pr you will have with you always.” They use this to denigrate the poor. But Jesus was not acquiescing to the permanence of poverty or maligning the poor. Rather He was indicating that those who have plenty will have an opportunity for generosity in helping those living in poverty.

Do we have any idea what it means to be poor? Poverty diminishes people. Extreme poverty is deeply demeaning. I have seen people competing with dogs on the rubbish heaps of many large cities of impoverished lands.

You may have seen the poor, but have you ever imagined how it must feel not to be able to provide food for your hungry children; not to have a shirt on your back; not to be able to help your dying child because you lack access to medicine; not to be able to send your child to school when you know that some education is the only hope of success for that child and for your family?

Despite the phenomenal economic growth of many Asian countries, there are still 800 millions lacking basic human needs like food, shelter, work, and minimal health care. Yet I have been deeply impressed in the many countries of Asia I have visited to the ingenious methods that the poor use to rise above their hopelessness.

In Delhi I saw a shanty dweller family pulling through cotton wool and bandages that they must have scavenged from hospital dustbins. There were using it to fill pillows to sell to their neighbours. In Colombo I remember an umbrella repairman, remaking and selling umbrellas with his own recycling techniques. In Manila there are men who cart unimaginably large loads on bicycles to earn their daily bread. In hovels in Calcutta I have seen women slaving over pots of boiling fat making small cakes for selling at the street market. These people deserve our help in the most positive ways.

The plight of the poor, unemployed, and downtrodden always aroused the fighting compassion of William Booth, the founder of The Salvation Army. Speaking once to a group of parliamentarians in London toward the end of the last century he used as his illustration the cabhorse which was the main means of transportation around the city in those days. "What happens," he asked, "when a cabhorse collapses on the roadway? Men do not gather around the fallen creature and say, 'you stupid animal, you got yourself there, get yourself up! Nor do they gather round and academically analyse the environmental difficulties that caused the horse to fall down'. "No," said William Booth, "men of goodwill gather round, put straps under the horse's belly and lift it back on its feet. They will then make sure it has three things- food to eat, shelter, and work. And if you do that for a horse, why will you not do it for a man, who is made in the image and likeness of God?" The Salvation Army still operates under what may be called The Cabhorse Charter. Translated into contemporary terms, it means that every human being deserves:

- a reasonable standard of living;
- a reasonable standard of accommodation;
- an opportunity to use his abilities in satisfying work.

Another reason why we must help the poor is the need for social justice- one of the great themes of humankind's thinking about society, and a divine requirement of all religions. There is injustice when a small fraction of the population grows richer by the year, while others ache and suffer for lack of the most basic necessities. There is injustice when there is gross inequality in how a nation's resources are distributed.

Our difficulty with social injustice comes when we try to move beyond our intuitive ideas to put it into practice. But we must try.

We must recognise that a socially just policy can no longer be considered simply a supplement, an adjunct to economic policy. Indeed, economic and social policy are inextricably interrelated. In the context of an increasingly integrated world economic system, we can see that social justice and the social solidarity and cohesion it brings are essential for successful economic development. You can have- indeed, must have- a sound balance between economic policy and social justice strategy. In fact, we might say that the exclusion of large sections of a nation's population from full social and economic participation is very wasteful of human resources.

How do we give the poor the opportunity to rise above their grinding poverty? If lack of normal access to credit is a crucial reason why the poor remain poor, how can we give

them access to credit that will enable them to create a productive and sustainable lifestyle?

I believe that Banking With The Poor is one such way. It has proved that the poor are good credit risks, especially when organised into self-help groups. Repayment of micro loans is excellent. Women especially have proved reliable borrowers, and evidence great success in their simple business ventures. This success breeds success and new confidence, and it encourages others. By facilitating micro-enterprise of the indigent poor, and encouraging domestic financial institutions to provide for their credit needs, Banking With The Poor supports economic growth and financial independence in countries where the poor have been looked on only in negative terms.

It has been said of Mother Teresa that she merely loves, feeds, clothes the poor, and treats the dying and does not provide them with the means to fight for their rights- that she treats the symptoms only, and not the root causes.

Well, I don't think the Mother Teresas of this world are really cut out for that. But you are. You are the people who can tackle root causes, who can ensure that economic plans are linked to socially just development strategies, who can play a more balanced, positive, proactive role to sustain and develop your nation's social, human, and natural resources.

## Issue #22 – ‘Chosen to be a Soldier’

by John Cleary

Chosen to be a Soldier,  
Chosen by God.  
Chosen to be a Soldier,  
Washed in His Blood.  
Chosen to be a Soldier,  
Lost ones to save.  
Chosen to be a Soldier  
In the Army brave.

How long is it since any of you have sung that chorus in a meeting. When you sang it, was it as part of a ‘good old Army’ nostalgia trip, or as a central expression of identity.

‘Then who wouldn’t be a soldier,  
An Army soldier, a valiant soldier,  
Every soldier goes to war,  
That’s what we’ve enlisted for,  
And we don’t want any dummies in the Army’

How about the confidence, almost arrogance of that lyric? Yet it is utterly innocent and free of guile. Here is a vision of belief and confidence. This is a song written and sung by a winning team... A team sure in its vision certain of its goals and convinced in its world redeeming relevance.

Who would write such a song today without a whiff of irony and scepticism?

‘Of this Great Church of the Living God, we claim and have ever claimed, that we of The Salvation Army are an integral part and element – a living fruit bearing branch in the True Vine’. (Bramwell Booth)<sup>1</sup>

This statement of Bramwell Booth is quoted at the head of Chapter Ten ‘The People of God’ in Salvation Story Study Guide (SSSG). It contains the major dilemma facing the Salvation Army today. Who and what are we - a Church or a Movement? Part of the Universal body of Christ, yes, but what kind of part? - A fully-fledged denomination, or part denomination, part para-church agency? Depending on the answers to these questions, another set of questions arises. What is the nature of membership in the Salvation Army, and what does it mean to be a Soldier? These questions and others were among those addressed in The International Spiritual Life Commission Report, reproduced in SSSG<sup>2</sup>. In recognition of the unresolved nature of these questions SSSG states, “There are differing understandings of what the Army is, not only outside our

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<sup>1</sup> *Salvation Story Study Guide*; IHQ, London, 1999;p89

<sup>2</sup> *Salvation Story Study Guide*; IHQ, London, 1999; p113-9

ranks, but sometimes within them. We need clarity about our identity and our mission without which we cannot be effective.”<sup>3</sup>

The Spiritual Life Commission, recognising change was happening by default across the organisation, recommended that means be explored for recognising believers, who do not choose to be soldiers, as members of the Body of Christ in the Salvation Army. It is in recommendation nine, and can be found in Salvation Story Study Guide.

Things are changing rapidly; soldiership no longer has the resonance it once had. Some would be happy to see the concept drift away like many other distinctives of The Salvation Army, as a symbol of an age that has past and a time that was different. Yet I wish to suggest that soldiership is much more than a useful device whose time has past, and that in fact how we deal with the concept of soldiership will be critical to the future of this part of the Church we call The Salvation Army. I wish to further suggest that if there were not such a concept, someone, somewhere in the church would be busy developing something remarkably like it.

### **The Dilemma. Why is Soldiership an issue?**

First there are Cultural reasons.

The external culture has changed. When the Salvation Army was created the military was high fashion, and life was lived on the streets. Life was lived in communities, not in nuclear families. People loved to belong. This was the highpoint of the great lodges, such as the Masons, the Oddfellows, the Ancient order of Buffaloes, The Rechabites and many more. For young people, organisations like the Scouts and Guides were being established. You were defined in society by your participation in all those sorts of groups that gave you access to networks of support and influence, because you needed them to survive.

Such was the climate that organisations could put strong fences around membership. People had to meet certain criteria before they could be admitted. And people were very much prepared to sign up and endure what today are seen as the most eccentric of rituals to obtain the goods which that society promised. Hence the paraphernalia of freemasonry and all the other lodges.

People used to believe in order to belong. They were so keen to belong they were prepared to jump through the most demanding and even eccentric criteria for membership.

How times have changed.

The Military, except in certain circumstances, is not the aspirational it once was. Two world wars and the threat of nuclear destruction have seen to that. Today life at its most successful is represented by privatised wealth, held behind the closed doors of the

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<sup>3</sup> *Salvation Story Study Guide*; IHQ, London, 1999; p94



nuclear family, fed on a personalised multi-media diet of vicarious risk delivered by a tube into your living room. A diet whose richness is determined purely by your capacity to pay. Life in community is seen as an extra, or even a burden, in the pursuit of private, personal fulfilment.

The end of life is no longer the good of the group or community, in which your good is also guaranteed. It is now the good of the individual to which the community must be subservient. If the organisation does not meet your personal needs you leave and find another or maybe none. You are conditioned by the media to 'try before you buy'. We will no longer accept the merits of an organisation on face value. Today people wish to belong first, to decide whether the organisation meets their personal needs, and then to commit themselves. But that commitment is always conditional on the organisation's capacity to deliver the goods. People are consumers; organizations like the church are commodities. Now people demand to belong in order that they might believe.

In summary, People used to believe in order to belong. Now they belong in order to believe.

This sociological shift adds greatly to the burden of organisations like The Salvation Army who exercise strong entry control through criteria such as soldiership, before the privileges of full membership can be offered.

To this general cultural burden is added an additional 'post-modern' sensibility - distrust of institutions. Institutional religion is on the nose. Irrespective of the rights and wrongs, the events of recent months surrounding the scandal of the clergy and child sexual abuse, serve simply to demonstrate how deep that institutional distrust is.

It is interesting to note that historically in Australia, The Salvation Army has been singularly exempt from that contempt. The Salvation Army seems to have escaped the odium associated with institutional organised faith. I think this is because we have been seen to be first identified with the suffering, and not concerned with theological correctness and point scoring. The public function of the uniform has here served us well. This faith of the public however cannot be taken for granted.

Organisations, like churches, are now just commodities in the rich supermarket of communities. The Salvation Army is one that stands out. However, its distinctive brand, whilst recognisable and as loved as Vegemite, is one which very few people have a taste for.

These are some of the broad cultural issues confronting the issue of membership in The Salvation Army.

### **Internal Issues**

I wish to suggest however that, partly as a result of this pressure, and the general changes resulting in the way we think about The Salvation Army as part of the Church

Universal, a number of issues are being exposed which centre on this question of membership and are of central significance to the future of the movement.

I am not the first to raise these questions. This is but one contribution to a continuing debate. Nevertheless, a debate must be held and resolved quickly because the future of the Army as a distinct part of the body of Christ is at stake.

The pressure is beginning to tell already. As local corps, in an attempt to make themselves relevant to their local community, have begun to de-emphasise the movement's distinctives, so they are exposing the issue. If a corps begins to call itself a community church, why should it be setting radically more difficult hurdles to membership than any other local community church? Soldiership and uniform become direct impediments to the evangelical enterprise of making the congregation as familiar and comfortable as possible to the local community. If, the argument goes, we can make ourselves more attractive by doing away with our branding as a corps and call ourselves a church, why don't we do away with the other brand distinctives such as soldiership and uniform. Moreover, in this context who can argue but that they are right?

In the past couple of years several corps officers have approached me concerned about how to deal with aspects the issue. It is usually expressed in terms of alcohol and Adherency. First is the number of young people growing up in the Salvation Army who wish to be identified as Christians yet do not wish to undertake the disciplines of Soldiership and uniform wearing, because they wish to drink alcohol, and do not see a scriptural problem with it. Then there are those, who wish to regard the Salvation Army as their Christian home in the full sense, and yet they are denied membership, because membership is tied to soldiership, and as people who in the normal course of life drink alcohol or smoke, they are barred from its benefits. Adherency does not meet their needs, for though it satisfies the organisation's desires to count heads in a meaningful way, it goes nowhere to satisfying their desire to be acknowledged as fully participating members of the community of faith called the Salvation Army.

Colonel Earl Robinson highlighted the dilemma in the Officer Magazine of Feb 2002. Let me quote:

"A friend of mine decided to change her place of worship from The Salvation Army to a local Baptist church when she married a person of that denomination. She chose, however, to retain her name on the soldiers' roll of her last corps rather than change church membership. That did not make any difference to the areas of ministry into which she was invited in the new church – as a member of the choir, the worship team, and in taking up other areas of leadership. She was apparently fully recognised as a member of the Body of Christ in that congregation and able to be involved fully at her new place of worship, even though she did not become baptised by water or sign any documents about new allegiance.

That is somewhat different from what has normally occurred in The Salvation Army...”!

Indeed, you might say he is putting it modestly. If the husband had come over from the Baptists he would have had to jump through a number of hoops in order to participate. He would have had to satisfy not just the ordinary criteria of membership in the Body of Christ called the Church. He would have had to have satisfied the criteria of ‘super-Christian’ and meet the base line standards of soldiership such as total abstinence to enjoy the privileges of Salvationist membership.

The problem has arisen in part because The Salvation Army has begun to acknowledge ‘de Jure’ what has been for the best part of a century the practice ‘de facto’ that we are no longer a para-church movement with specific aims and objectives to be achieved within the Body of Christ, but are now acknowledging we are a denomination with the responsibility of meeting the holistic needs of a worshipping community. Needs and aspirations that stretch well beyond the specific mission imperatives of a para-church movement.

As St. Paul declares, within the body of Christ there people with all sorts of gifts, evangelists, prophets, teachers, - not all are cut out to be soldiers. Specialist criteria of membership so appropriate to the aims of a para-church movement are neither practically nor theologically acceptable for a denomination, which by definition must be a reflection of the whole body.

Once we own we are a discrete denomination, the issue of membership becomes critical. If this membership issue is not resolved we could not only find ourselves short on members, we could find ourselves heading into the dangerous waters of exclusivism and sectarianism and ultimately heresy within the wider church.

This is in part the reason why I suggest William and Bramwell never wished to see us as a distinct denomination and also why Salvationist leadership, even up until the present, are rather shy on the issue.

In his book ‘Who are These Salvationists’ Shaw Clifton spends some time with the question. He points out that it has been very hard to pin down the movement on the issue. He says the acknowledgement is as late as 1998 publication of Salvation Story and even here it has to be inferred. However if you check ‘Chosen to Be a Soldier’ first published in 1977 says ‘For practical purposes the Salvation Army has increasingly come to be the church of its own people and of large sections of the people’<sup>4</sup>

## Historical Background

The technical word for this discussion in church terms is Ecclesiology. A very useful term for this debate in the context of The Salvation Army. According to the Salvation

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<sup>4</sup> *Chosen to be a Soldier*, IHQ, London, 1977 p64

Story Study Guide, "The term comes from the Greek word *ekklesia* (the church) and *logos* (word, mind, or doctrine). The word *ekklesia* is comprised of two other Greek words: *ek* (out of) and *kaleo* (I call). The word was used in the pre-Christian period to indicate the summons of an army for battle."<sup>5</sup>

Why have we got ourselves into a pickle? We have come to see membership and soldiership as the same thing. Was this always the case and should it remain so? Why do we see membership and soldiership as the same thing?

The truth is the issue of membership of the Body of Christ was never properly sorted out. It is part of that group of issues like the sacraments, which we have held in suspension. Historically it was never sorted out by that other great para-church organisation from which the Army sprang, Methodism. John Wesley established the movement called Methodists as a para-church organisation within the Anglican Church.

According to David Bebbington in 'Evangelicalism in Modern Britain' the whole issue of ecclesiology was confused.

'The relegation of principle relative to pragmatism was evident in church order. Methodism, as some of its nineteenth century defenders delighted to insist, was totally flexible on this subject. Wesley and his adjutants initially had 'no plan at all'... Above all, Methodists did not have to be Christians. Admission as full class members was open to all who sought the forgiveness of sins and not just to those already converted. ...There was no correspondence between joining the Methodist organisation and entering the true church. The organisation was merely an environment suitable to gaining converts.'<sup>6</sup>

So, should we just let the whole thing go? Simply establish criteria for membership and let soldiership quietly slip into history. Another solution could be to remove from soldiership its distinctive demands and simply allow soldiership the same criteria as membership. This amounts to the same thing, consigning the concept of soldiership to the shrine of memory.

### **Priesthood of All Believers**

My answer to this rhetorical question is no, no, a thousand times no, a thousand bands and a thousand drums, no! Conceptually, Soldiership is brilliant. It is a practical recognition of the priesthood of all believers delivered with style and real substance. It came out of a Wesleyan theology that had confidence in the dynamic and continuing love of the creator for the whole of creation. It enabled an ecclesiology, which was flexible and responsive to the moment. In fact it was an ecclesiology which was in the true sense radical, going back to the root of the word *ecclesia*.

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<sup>5</sup> *Salvation Story Study Guide*; IHQ, London, 1999; p92

<sup>6</sup> Bebbington D, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain*, Baker, Michigan 1989, p66

The idea of uniforms was not unique to Booth and the movement as is pointed out by Ken Inglis in his book 'The Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England':

'Booth was by no means the first crusader in Victorian England to dress his followers in a uniform and organize them as an army. The 'Shakespearean Association of Leicester Chartists' under Thomas Cooper, the 'Hallelujah Bands' from which Booth gained some recruits, and the temperance organisation known as the 'Blue Ribbon Army', all preceded the Salvation Army, and may each have helped inspire it'.<sup>7</sup>

Nor was the idea of an activist corps acting as the spearhead of vanguard of widespread social change unique. It was an idea explored and developed by social thinkers as diverse as Marx and Lenin, in the concept of the 'Vanguard of the Proletariat', and Hitler in the militarisation of the whole of society.

What William Booth recognised instinctively rather than intellectually was the power of such an idea wedded to the deep theological power of the priesthood of all believers. And what power it unleashed. Here was a concept that took you from the gin palace via the mercy seat to a new life, with steps for guidance at every stage along the way. Within days you were converted from a life of pointlessness and powerlessness to involvement and activism in a world-redeeming mission, in which you had an identifiable place. The details today seem excessive and extravagant. Those early soldiery manuals which to us in Corps Cadets in the early 1960's appeared so quaint, now stand in the light of history as brilliant examples of practical guides to rebuilding lives of the sort that the 'Aerobics for Jesus' generation is only just beginning to comprehend. This is work of intuitive genius. It has power. Such power and commitment is desperately needed in today's church for today's world.

How do we recover the genius?

First we need to grasp fully the implications of what Earl Robinson is suggesting. The implication of what Earl Robinson is saying is that if you wish to express your commitment to the body of Christ through The Salvation Army, then you should be able to be a member on the same basis that you can be a member of any other part of the body of Christ called the Church Universal. The Spiritual Life Commission did not grasp this nettle; perhaps because they are afraid of what this will do to the concept of soldiery, 'no-one will become soldiers any more!!' Well perhaps they won't become soldiers because you are no longer teaching what soldiery is. Perhaps the approach that needs to be taken is – that soldiery is a sub-category of membership, it is a special calling within membership.

This helps us in a couple of ways. It restores or regularises our position with regards the rest of the church universal over the nature of membership in the Church. Repent, believe, be born again. Once you do that you are in, you are a member, like any other section of the body of Christ of which we are but a part.

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<sup>7</sup> Inglis K, *The Churches and the Working Classes in Victorian England*. P181

To those people who fear that in going down this path we will lose the concept of soldiership, I suggest if we stick to the concept of soldiership as membership, soldiership is dead anyway, in all but name, completely dead.

Introducing a concept of membership as distinct from soldiership regularises our position with the wider church and opens the possibility of a revival of soldiership within the concept of membership.

In church order terms, Salvation Army structures are very similar to the Episcopal structures of the major denominations such as the Catholic and Anglican, and some Methodists. The structure works through several orders of ministry: Bishops, Priests, Deacons, and People. This is directly comparable to the Salvation Army structure where functionally you could compare Bishops with D.C.s and above, and Priests with Officers.

This seemed to be the rationale carried into effect when ordination was introduced as a term used for officer commissioning in the late 1970's. What was at that time left unaddressed was the issue of lay orders of ministry. Traditional Episcopal structures recognise an order between full priesting and lay membership, and that is the order of Deacon. The deacon is a lay person who has taken certain vows and makes certain commitments in time and resources to the church short of full priesting. The parallels with soldiership are not hard to draw.

The soldiers of The Salvation Army are a fighting diaconate. A diaconate far larger and more successfully deployed over the best part of a century than any comparable model within the protestant tradition. In the Catholic Church it fits comfortably with such lay orders as the Christian Brothers. The Anglican Church recognised this over 100 years ago, when in an act of direct imitation they established 'The Church Army' as a distinct order within Anglicanism.

We have to find a way of reviving soldiership.

Perhaps one way towards this is to formally recognise what de-facto has been the case for almost a century. We are a distinct denomination and need to accommodate the needs of a far wider group of communicant members than a concept like Soldiership does. Soldiership will be killed if it continues to be tied to membership. Why? Because you will be forced to hold your reasonable demands on soldiers to that of the lowest common denominator of your members. Similarly membership will continue to decline if it is pegged as soldiership because less people will see soldiership as necessary to the living of an ordinary Christian life. Both of these propositions are unarguable, they are happening before our eyes and will continue to do so unless the position is changed.

Would it not be great if a C.O. could know of her soldiers at the start of the year, that she had a committed portion of their time given in stewardship to the Army? That the soldiers had said from the beginning of the year 'my spiritual work and worship will be in

and through the Salvation Army and to that end I will commit to the Army X hours a week. That's giving soldiership meaning, that's giving the corps officer a real force, that's giving a movement back the ability to wage war.

## **Uniform**

Clearing up the issue of membership also helps with another issue, uniform.

Some are saying that the uniform is a sacrament. However, I want to say that the Salvation Army is a non-sacramental organization for very good reasons that have to do with the human tendency to wish to make objects sacred. We sacralize symbols. We turn things into Gods, or images of Gods and hence render them untouchable. This is why the early Army declared itself non-sacramental. In sacramentalizing things, we allow their symbolic value to gain primacy over their practical utility. To sacramentalize the uniform is to fix the movement in aspic. It will become impossible to change or modify or relate to the real world because it is meant to represent the unchanging values of the eternal world. This is nonsense.

The uniform was created for very practical reasons. It was:

1. Non-discriminatory. Class distinctions disappear. Rich and poor look the same.
2. Cheap
3. Practical
4. Durable
5. Distinctive
6. Attractive.

How many of those would you tick with regard to Salvation Army uniform today? Cheap? No. Practical? No. Durable? Yes, at a price and if only worn once or twice a week. Distinctive? Absolutely. Attractive, well perhaps to some, but certainly not to the bulk of the public who generally regard Army uniforms as quaint relics of a different age. This list may not score very high on the early Army quotient for uniform.

Is there anything wrong with uniforms per se?

What does every kid wear every day. – Logo's, almost everything they wear is branded from the Nike shoes, the tee shirt, the windcheater, to the Levi jeans. Kids love uniforms.

The Salvation Army's Australian Employment Agency, Eplus, wear contemporary office uniforms with a Red Shield logo. The staff is pleased to wear them. The badge is not the issue. It is the style and type of uniform that is the issue. The question is what sort of uniform, and for what purpose? Even such conservative public institutions as the Military and the Police up-date their uniforms more often than The Salvation Army.

Our uniforms are our most immediate symbol of social engagement. That is what the public see when they think Salvation Army. Our uniforms need to be tied back to their foundational relevance to the world.

If you were serious about uniform you could go to the Commissioner and say, 'Commissioner we think uniform is important for the Army and we love it. We want to ensure that it continues to be worn by the maximum number of soldiers and is identified on the maximum number of occasions. We wish to establish a standing committee on uniform.' The brief would be to review the uniform every five years according to a set of criteria similar to those outlined above and come up with appropriate changes.

If this is considered too adventurous the Army could leave the 'dress blues' untouched for IHQ approved changes, and institute a practical 'undress' uniform that would do for the real work and witness of the movement.

Uniforms must once again become evidence of engagement not symbols of separateness.

Again, as with soldiership, these changes are happening now and will accelerate by default. The leadership of the movement can either get in front of the game and guide it, or simply let it run and pick up the bits later. To do the latter would be a sign of utter corporate failure.

## **The Future**

People need to be attracted back into communities of belief. However, they will not enter communities with strong barriers to entry. The commercial experience of the past half-century has taught them that their ultimate allegiance is not to the group but to the self. The most appealing religious fashion of the moment is not found in community but in self-realisation. Its most extreme Christian expression is found in the so-called 'prosperity gospel'.

Churches built around community values are going to have to struggle profoundly with this dilemma. For The Salvation Army with its super-Christian criteria for membership and not particularly attractive compulsory dress code, further states that to enjoy the full benefits of belonging you have to jump through a series of unappealing hoops which other churches do not put in the path.

We will have to respond by opening many of our traditional units. This will inject a healthy dose of realism into our evangelical enterprise. Bands and Songster brigades for example, have long since ceased to be the front line of our evangelical enterprise and have become tools of pastoral ministry. Opening them to wider participation will enhance that role and allow reorientation towards more effective evangelical weapons.

We are going to have to give people good reason to take on the disciplines of soldiership. That discussion goes to a much wider agenda than can be encompassed here. But just to touch on it by way of ending this part of the discussion. The issues, which caused Catherine and William Booth to shape The Salvation Army out of the Christian Mission, have not changed.



The old parish structures that Booth regarded as insufficient to meet the evils of his time, are even less relevant today. The great issues of Godlessness, and the saturation of the cities in squalor have not diminished, they have now moved from the east end of London onto a world stage.

The Wesleyan spirit of evangelical revival was indissolubly linked to a passion for social reform. The holy life was one lived in and for the world, as Wesley once said, 'There is no holiness but social holiness'. It was this connection that gave the early Army its energy and drive. It also produced its joy and confidence. The devil's kingdom could be brought down, literally. The 'Forts of Darkness' could be identified in every town and suburb. They were not just the brothels and gin palaces, but the structures and institutions that drove people to the gin palaces. As Salvationists worked for the eternal salvation of their neighbours, they also fought beside them for the reform of the sweatshops, prisons and streets in which they lived and worked.

Today on the world stage all those issues confront us. And all are overshadowed by the daunting prospect of Global Environmental destruction. Issues of Child Prostitution, Industrial Exploitation, lack of access to Law for ordinary folk, discrimination, industrial disease, poverty, hunger. All are written on a global scale and all can be traced back to the same issue of material greed, which underpinned the Darkest England Scheme. Similarly they can all be overcome by the same world-redeeming change of heart that is central to the mission of the Salvation Army. But what is needed is an Army. A passionate priesthood of all believers. A fighting diaconate flowing out of the membership.

What's the use of being a soldier if you are not fighting a battle? The sexual exploitation of children was a historic seminal issue for the early Salvation Army. In February 2002, Child Exploitation was on the cover of Time Magazine. It is a major issue of international concern. Yet, on this issue today Salvation Army is nowhere to be seen.

Yet, The Salvation Army has the structures and machinery to deal with such issues better than any other church including the Catholic Church. We can marshal forces worldwide. In our structure the General tomorrow, could raise this as a major issue, have territories determine it as a priority, and get Divisional commanders to co-ordinate through their officers to get soldiers involved in local branches of the Campaign to End Child prostitution. If there are no local branches soldiers in the local corps can help establish one. This is core Salvationist methodology applied to a core Salvationist issue.

No other church could do it. They would have to spend months working through local committees diocesan committees, state committees, national policy bodies, and finally national assemblies, to get such a policy response up and running. And then someone at a local area could decide they don't like the cultural or political leanings or personal style of someone running a group in their area and say, 'we're not going to have anything to do with them.'

The whole rationale of the Army's structure is designed so that it may respond quickly to spiritual and physical crises around the globe. The creation of that capacity was the chief motivation for the transformation of a Mission into an Army. Its effect was to unleash such power through the priesthood of all believers as to create the shock troops of a world-redeeming crusade. The battle's just begun.

I opened with an old chorus let me end with one. The tune may be dated but the lyrics are as profoundly relevant as on the day they were written.

The World is needing us, Christ is leading us  
Comrades let us be true.  
His love constraining us, prayer sustaining us,  
Faith will carry us through.  
His service calling us none appalling us,  
Deeds of Valour we'll do.  
For souls are needing us, Christ is leading us  
Comrades we will be true

## Issue #26 – ‘Five Life-Shaping Books’

*JAC asked a number of people to describe five books that most helped shape their life.  
(beside the Bible of course!)*

### **Major Janet Munn**

**Beyond the Curse** by Aida Besancon Spencer.

This book is a biblical study of all the controversial passages in Scripture that have been used to keep women out of leadership and ministry in the Church. The author does a clear, powerful and convincing study of the original languages, cultures and contexts and applies interprets the author's intent with that understanding. It is a book that set me free.

**Intercessory Prayer** by Dutch Sheets

Dutch Sheets analyzes the role of the believer in partnering in prayer, according to the Word of God, to accomplish God's will on the earth. This book has been a fire-starter in my own heart, to pray aggressively, believing God absolutely desires to answer, and in fact has chosen to limit Himself, in partnership with the Body of Christ. This teaching is an anointed anti-dote to the "whatever is going to happen will happen" mindset -- that is a lie from the devil.

**Life Together** by Dietrich Bonhoeffer

A revolutionary look at Christian community and the non-negotiable of close interaction and relationships with fellow believers. Bonhoeffer's spiritual authority and authenticity shout through this book. It left me greatly challenged in my individualistic tendencies.

**The Writings of Catherine Booth**

The co-founder is as relevant and sharp today as ever. Her forceful communication and argument are inspiring, convincing, compelling, challenging. No wonder she has been a world changer. I re-visit her writings on Female Ministry consistently.

**Healing** by Francis MacNutt

Francis MacNutt is a former Roman Catholic priest who realized quickly after his ordination, that the needs that confronted him, far exceeded his power to help. The Spirit of God enrolled him in the School of Healing, by direct tutoring from the Spirit, and with continual practical experience. His stories of great need, personal desperation and the power of God manifest, have been ongoing sources of encouragement for me to persevere in the healing ministry.

## **Colonel Dennis Phillips**

The five books that have most of all shaped my life are:

Genesis  
I Samuel  
Job  
John  
II Timothy

But, I think the assignment was, "other than the Bible", and from there I was challenged to restrict it to five, yet, here they are, and I present them in the chronological order in which they appeared in and impacted my life:

### **1. QUIET TALKS ON PRAYER** (S. D. Gordon)

This book was already old and dog-eared when it was handed to me during the year I was preparing to enter training (1959). S. D. Gordon introduced this young officer-to-be to the wonder of prayer, and his writings prompted me to take the first steps in a life-long pilgrimage (which I am still on) in pursuit of a holy prayer-relationship with God.

Remember, I was getting ready for cadetship, that necessary step to becoming an officer, and it was one of those times in my life when I was particularly sensitive to spiritual things. So, my 20-year-old mind took it quite seriously and literally when I read, "For if a man is to pray right, he must first be right in his motives and life." During that time, I drew up my first "Ten Most Wanted" list of souls to be saved, most of them my own family, and although it took 33 years for one of my brothers to come to Christ, every one of those ten people came to the Lord, and I attribute my quantum leap of faith in prayer to the detailed instruction given in this text.

### **2. CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE** (Richard Foster)

In 1980, while serving as territorial youth secretary, I was invited to lead the Asbury College Salvation Army Student Fellowship Retreat and was advised by the Student Fellowship President, Kenneth Luyk (now training principal in the USA Southern Territory) that the theme of the retreat would be based on this book.

Reading it changed my life.

Through all the years of my youth and early officership, I heard senior officers speak of the impact Brengle's books had had on them, and I longed for such a spiritual-literary experience. It came with the reading of Celebration of Discipline. The first time, it took me a year to read its 200 pages because I was driven to process each chapter (sometimes one paragraph at a time) into my life. As with a great novel, my full attention was piqued upon reading the first page: "We must not be led to believe that the Disciplines are only for spiritual giants and hence beyond our reach, or only for contemplatives who devote all their time to prayer and medication. Far from it. God intends the Disciplines of the spiritual life to be for ordinary human beings: people who have jobs, who care for children, who wash dishes and mow lawns. In fact, the Disciplines are best exercised in the midst of our relationships with our husband or wife, our brothers and sisters, our friends and neighbors."

"Wow", I said to myself. "This book is for me". And although each chapter is overwhelmingly rich and worthy of mention, I take time (space) here to draw attention only to Chapter 11, "The Discipline of Worship". Dr. Foster's recommendations for one to prepare for worship have made Sunday mornings rich and precious for this itinerant who has worshipped everywhere from Pasadena Tabernacle to the distant mountains of Haiti. Meaningful worship has little to do with how good the preacher is or how large the congregation may be. It's all about one's preparation to meet with God and be changed by the very essence of His presence.

### **3. LEAP OVER A WALL** (Eugene H. Peterson)

If the most creative novelists of the 20th/21st Centuries were brought together, they could not come close to conceiving a plot as wild, imaginative, daring, adventuresome, sexy, emotional and dramatic as the story of David, and Eugene Peterson masterfully draws out all of the above in *Leap Over a Wall*. I have referred often to Chapter Two in which Mr. Peterson vividly re-tells the story of David's selection to be king. He was the least of the 8 brothers. (Maybe I identified too strongly here in that I, too, was "the least of 8 children" - 6 of whom were brothers, but I relished the picture of David having been virtually forgotten and overlooked by everyone except God.)

The House of David, yes the one Jesus was prophesied to rule over, is to be honored and held in holy regard; yet, we find in King David many of the same life-situations we also face, though centuries apart. Though chosen by God and set apart for Kingly responsibilities, David demonstrated an ordinariness that emboldens us "ordinarians" to realize a stumble does not have to mean a fall, and even a fall does not have to mean one is down forever. We learn from David that it isn't what we do for God, but what God does for us. God's providence prevails.

### **4. WHAT'S SO AMAZING ABOUT GRACE** (Philip Yancey)

God's timing is perfect, and He placed this book in my hands at the very time in my life when I needed it the most. Without naming the time or the place, let it suffice to say I needed to learn how to forgive. And while Philip Yancey "covers the waterfront" on the subject of Grace, it was the chapters on forgiveness that I read and re-read (and am still reading) that delivered liberation to my conflicted soul. Yes, I had been hurt - terribly so - by people who should have known better. And my human response was to somehow get even, but there is nothing in the life of Jesus or the entire New Testament to justify such behavior. But how does one forgive when one is not even asked for forgiveness. How does one forgive when justice has been swept aside and innuendo and fact-less slander prevail? Ah, that was when, like having a spiritual massage, I read, "Forgiveness is achingly difficult, and long after you've forgiven, the wound lives on." (Note: I've never had a massage, but I understand that while a massage can make one feel good eventually, there is a lot of pain in the process.) "Forgiveness is an unnatural act", says Yancey for the sinful and carnal nature within us seeks recompense and revenge. But Jesus spent more time in the brief "Lord's Prayer" on the subject of forgiveness than anything else. "Forgive us our sins, as we forgive those who sin against us." How about this for a translation, "Lord, I want you to forgive me the same way I have forgiven others". Okay, I understand the dynamics, but how does one

become a forgiving person? Well, you have to read the other chapters to get your arms around God's grace, which, as we've often said, is sufficient.

#### 5. **PRAYER, FINDING THE HEART'S TRUE HOME** (Richard Foster)

This book came to me just before we moved to the Caribbean Territory in 1998. Again, God's timing was perfect, for one discovers a whole new relationship with God while serving on the mission field. While serving in the USA, prayer was certainly good, helpful and inspirational, but on the mission field, prayer becomes one's life-line, an absolute necessity to cope and survive. At one point, Dr. Foster explains the "Selah" so often seen in the Psalms. It is meant as a signal for a meditative interlude. Well, reading this book required many "Selah's", for one must not just read through it. One must pause and ponder every point and each paragraph. I promise, this book will take you to places of prayer you have never imagined. In fact, just writing about it here, I am encouraged to pick it up yet once again and return home to the heart of God.

#### **Commissioner Wesley Harris**

The hardest part of responding to the JAC editor's request is in making a choice of only five books which have meant much to me and seeing so many other volumes on my shelves reproaching me on account of their being overlooked!

From no fewer than fifty books on preaching from which I have at least learnt how much more I need to learn, I would select ***Heralds of God*** by J. S. Stewart. The chapter headings indicate the substance of a book which had a profound impact on me as a young officer. They are, 'The preacher's world', 'The Preacher's theme', 'The Preacher's study', 'The Preacher's technique' and 'The Preacher's inner life'. More than twenty years after obtaining the book I felt a strong urge to write and tell its author how much it had meant to me. In response he sent a handwritten letter to say how my note had cheered him in his retirement. I treasure that letter from one of the greatest preachers of the 20th century.

Another book which has long had an honoured place on the shelves which have accompanied me around the world is ***The House of my Pilgrimage*** by my boyhood hero and my encourager when I was a corps officer, General Albert Orsborn. He was an orator in the grand style now somewhat out of fashion but many of my generation were blessed and inspired by his preaching as well as by the enduring legacy of his songs. I particularly enjoyed the book's earlier chapters telling of early struggles, song writing and contacts with some of the early leaders of the Army.

I have long made a practice of pencilling my own indices at the back of my books and transposing the entries into a filing system for ready reference. Among the books thus marked would be a few by Stephen Covey and John C. Maxwell including the latter's ***Developing the leaders around you***. His emphasis on multiplying leaders and not just attracting followers is something to be noted.

Philip Yancey is a currently popular author described by Professor J. I. Packer as 'a journalist, a gadfly and a prophet rolled into one'. His, ***What's so amazing about grace*** can certainly provoke new thoughts about old truths and I for one need books that can do that.

I get the impression that some Salvationists think that all good books come from *outside* the Army. That is not true although with our Movement unfortunately producing fewer books than at other times in our history the perception is understandable. However, some good books by Army writers are still coming off the presses. The huge circulation of volumes by Henry Garipey has been very encouraging. Then I would mention, ***Who are these Salvationists*** by Shaw Clifton, which carries the weight of true scholarship without being an unduly heavy read. It should be required study for those who imagine that any change in the Army would be for the best. This book has some sign posts we would do well to consult.

### **Captain Danielle Strickland**

Obviously this is a hard question to answer. I have included five books (besides the Bible) that have deeply impacted my life. For all of them there are ten others that have helped shape me. I love to read and perhaps above all other influences reading remains the way that I acquire knowledge that changes me. I love that God created words.

**Chasing the Dragon:** the life story of Jackie Pullinger. I read this book as a new Christian and it inspired me to go the distance with God. It also created a hunger to see the hand of God at work in supernatural ways in my ministry. This book shaped me into a person sold out to mission, wanting to work for and among the poor, and it gave me a thirst for God's supernatural power.

**No Future Without Forgiveness:** by Bishop Tutu. This book both amazed and inspired me. It helped me to understand the power of forgiveness not just on a personal level, but also on a national one. It gave me a glimpse into the work that God is doing on an international level in our world - during my lifetime. It also helped me to see light at the end of the tunnel in a world that will be cleaning up the debris of racial hatred and civil wars for years to come. This book continues to challenge and shape my thoughts on the future of our world.

**Pope John Paul II: the biography,** by Tad Szulc. The story of Pope John Paul's life rocked my world, not to mention my prejudices. As the strong story of faith and surrender to God unfolded I was challenged to live a life that would be as committed and sold-out to the gospel. I was convicted of a deep prejudice towards Catholicism that I didn't even know existed. This book was instrumental in changing my mind and exposing the places in my heart that needed to be free. This also helped me appreciate the deep faith of Catholicism and her place in the world - and our place along with her. I

found my love for the bride deepen and widen to embrace rather than exclude my Catholic brothers and sisters.

**Intercessory Prayer**, by Dutch Sheets. Before this book I was very unclear about Intercession. I was often quite perplexed about what people were doing when they prayed fervently (including wailing and travail). I struggled within the Word to get a grasp of what intercessory prayer meant and how I could enter the party. This book changed that. It gave me a practical and Biblical explanation of Intercessory Prayer- the importance of it and the form of it and the freedom of it all. It inspired me to not only pray but also to equip, mobilize, and unleash the prayer warriors that I knew. This has impacted my heart and changed my ministry for the better.

**Life Together**, by Bonhoeffer. The classic on community. This book (along with others by Tom Sine who I would say is the contemporary classic on community) has shaped my life in major ways. Bonhoeffer challenged by core belief that my 'devotions' had to be done in isolation from anyone else... now I understand that my time with God can be both individual and communal. I now spend my morning devotions reading and praying with my family as a unit of one together before God. Both Bonhoeffer and Tom Sine have challenged me to live the Gospel out in rough, and poor neighbourhoods, to live the opposite of the world, to challenge the status-quo. Bonhoeffer did it by his words but also his life (going back into the fire of Nazism) and Tom Sine by his practical examples in his books (*The Mustard Seed Conspiracy*, and *Mustard Seed versus McWorld*). Both have brought me to a place today where I live in an inner city, in order to live out the Gospel and see His Kingdom come.

### (then) Commissioner Shaw Clifton

Selecting only five books was quite a problem. I list my representative choices in publication date order.

The first is a collection of Anglican prayers, ***The Priest's Prayer Book*** compiled in 1921 by R.F. Littledale and J. Edward Vaux. It was published by Longmans, Green and Co., London. I picked it up second hand in Bromley, England in March 1992 since when it has been a source of real blessing to me, for I make much use in my private devotional life of the prayers of others. The section on "Private Prayers for Bishops" was especially meaningful during my five years as a Divisional Commander, and since. Another section, "Notes on the Practice of Holiness", remains timeless with its simple, direct insights. This volume is a delight to handle, with its smooth calf leather binding and gold leaf pages. It also gives off that heady aroma so beloved of second hand book store junkies.

The second is ***Extracts From General Booth's Journal 1921-22***, published by Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd., London, in 1925. Reading these daily journal entries by Bramwell Booth has brought me into contact with a holy mind, a thoughtful, intelligent, visionary Army leader, and a deeply principled, passionate man of God. The



book came into my possession when Lt. Colonel Ethne Flintoff, then the Social Secretary in Pakistan but now leading the work in Bangladesh, gave it to me as a Christmas gift in Lahore in 1998. It is one of my most treasured books. It is revisited often.

Number three is a collection of First World War poetry by the great G.A. Studdert Kennedy entitled ***The Unutterable Beauty*** (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1927). In these pages I find pathos, anguish of heart and soul, earthy eloquence and sometimes unbearable poignancy. It came into my hands in Worthing, England in 1986 and forms part of a small, but prized, collection of war poetry volumes on my shelves.

Book four may seem to some a surprising choice. It is the Army's ***Handbook of Doctrine*** published in 1940 by International Headquarters, London. Though written five years before my birth, it resonates with me still. It was when reading Chapter X on "Entire Sanctification" that I was led into the blessing of a clean heart. This happened some years ago on an early morning commuter train going from Romford, Essex into London's Liverpool Street Station. I felt as though cocooned from my fellow passengers, and when they alighted I could hardly get to my feet in the empty train, such was the Lord's silent, invisible but unmistakable embrace. At the time I was serving at IHQ as the Legal and Parliamentary Adviser. This 1940 edition of the *Handbook* represents Army literature at it best, written when we still knew how to write for a verdict in the heart, even in our teaching and instructional material.

Finally, the fifth volume is Jim Garrison's ***From Hiroshima to Harrisberg – The Unholy Alliance*** (SCM Press Ltd., London, 1980). It opened my eyes as never before to the folly and waste of war. All that human energy, creativity, genius and funding poured into weapons of mass destruction in America, and eventually elsewhere, with millions still without food, shelter, clothing, education or housing. Something is wrong deep in the human soul. Garrison's account of the coming of these weapons engendered in me a deep hatred of war, not such as to make me a pacifist outright but sufficient to take me to the very brink of that courageous outlook. "We lay all carnal weapons down to take the shining sword." How heartily, but thoughtlessly, we sometimes sing Catherine Baird's anti-war anthem (SA Song Book 1986, Song 705).

### **Captain Stephen Court**

One of the joys of being the editor is that I can make up neat features like this one. Another of the joys is being able to succumb to the temptation to jump into the fray with my own two cents' worth! After reading the submissions, I couldn't resist.

I've read a bunch of the books included by these greathearts commended above. But I am happy to say that I've got a fresh list! While I've benefited by 20<sup>th</sup> century writers (such as Ravi Zacharias, Commissioner Ed Read, Peter Wagner, Jack Deere, Major Chick Yuill, and Charles Colson), I've chosen books by my heroes.

In 1777, John Wesley wrote an apologetic of his doctrine of holiness called **A PLAIN ACCOUNT OF CHRISTIAN PERFECTION**. He took the high road in the extremely charged debate of the day, allowing John Fletcher to scale the polemical heights in his **CHECKS TO ANTINOMIANISM**. His simple 'question and answer' format was imitated by General William Booth in Booth's potent little 1903 book, **THE DOCTRINES OF THE SALVATION ARMY** (subtitled, "Prepared for the use of Cadets in Training For Officership"). Wesley patiently answered every critic's question, every skeptic's doubt, and every cynic's disparagement with historically documented explanation of this Biblical doctrine. Now, **A PLAIN ACCOUNT** stands in for Fletcher's **CHECKS**, and for Samuel Logan Brengle's practical guides, especially **HELPS TO HOLINESS** (a book I carried along with my Bible on a bicycle to our neighbourhood park, where I sat, determined not to leave until I experienced the holiness described therein). **A PLAIN ACCOUNT** is precious not only as a defence but as a promise of what is possible.

The year after Wesley was promoted to Glory was born a man who would walk in his huge shoes. Across the ocean, Charles Finney stoked the fires of revival through the eastern United States. His preaching was so hardcore and so manifestly accompanied by the power of God that multitudes were transformed and cities were turned upside down. His **LECTURES ON REVIVALS OF RELIGION** (1835) is an account of the preaching that changed a nation. The sister volume is the stubbornly named, **AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY BY THE REVEREND CHARLES G. FINNEY, 1792-1875** (1876). Together they tell a divine story that rips the placid satisfaction right out of you.

It wasn't two years after Finney was promoted to Glory that Catherine and William Booth made a name change that has changed the world. While John Wesley was the grandfather of The Salvation Army and Finney was dubbed 'the Presbyterian Salvationist' by the Booths themselves, my next choice, **PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**, was by the Army Mother herself (I'm hesitant to use that term, as she was the General and the Founder, too, but she *is* the only one who was the Mother). I could have chosen any of a few books by Booth. They are merely collections of her preaching. They are merely fire on paper! Flames flick from her words off the page to practically lick your clothes. Each sermon oozes spiritual authority. Almost every paragraph shouts out to you with the urgency of the war. This hero makes no concessions, no compromises, and no political 'correctitudes'. She put (and continues to put) a holy fear in me of the kind that doesn't cause cowering and retreat but impels total exertion to spread the dread. This helped shaped my life- I named a cyber journal after it (JAC) and an annual conference (ACC- Aggressive Christianity Councils).

Catherine Booth was promoted to Glory in 1890. Not coincidentally, Commissioner George Scott Railton was excommunicated from the halls of primitive salvationist power in the same year (was it coincidental that this was the year of the death of primitive salvationism?). While not famous as an author, GSR battled as effectively with the pen as he did with the Bible. Backing up every page of **HEATHEN ENGLAND** was a life of unleashed resolve that GSR modeled for the world. My buddy called me this winter from training college to get suggestions for references. I recommended **HEATHEN ENGLAND** and **TWENTY-ONE YEARS' SALVATION ARMY**. He emailed a week later

noting that my name was the last one written in the CFOT borrowing cards (And I've been an officer for ten years!). And that is tragic, because the book is literally revolutionary, recounting, as it does, contemporary history of the primitive salvationist war. The stuff he was writing was happening outside his window. The heroics that lace these pages are enough to gouge a hole in your casual, comfortable Christianity and leave in its place a wrenching hunger for the guts to live and fight for death and glory as our 19<sup>th</sup> century comrades did, and for the God of Railton to show up again today.

Railton outlived William Booth by a year. Booth has yet to get his due as an author. He wrote some unknown classics such as SERGEANT-MAJOR DO-YOUR-BEST, SEVEN SPIRITS: Or, What I Tell My Officers, HOW TO PREACH, PURITY OF HEART, all less famous than IN DARKEST ENGLAND AND THE WAY OUT. But my last choice is **VISIONS**. It is a collection of visions Booth had, the most renowned being 'Who Cares?' Not only is VISIONS eloquent, it persuasively depicts the divine. Booth doesn't settle with capturing your imagination- he grips it with a stranglehold. The undercurrent is that Booth is all about the prophetic. He hears from God and conveys the message to us. Most of us have neglected this reality in our salvationism (Catherine prophesied that this movement shall inaugurate the great final conquest of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ). We can more easily marginalize modern classics by Rick Joyner like FINAL QUEST and THE CALL. But Joyner lines up right behind Booth's VISIONS for prophetic impact. And while I love the visions and the writing, I embrace the Army's experience and calling with the prophetic.

## **Issue #32 – ‘Interview with Major Friday Ayanam’**

*(at the time of the interview, 2004, Major Ayanam was a key leader in the Nigeria Territory)*

JAC: Major, please tell us about your conversion and sanctification.

FA: I made an open declaration and accepted the Lord Jesus Christ into my life on the 18th of August 1985. It was in a Corps Cadet Camp during the long vacation holidays. The last meeting has always been the highlight of the Camp where appeals were made to either give up a sinful habit or declare for full time officership. I was there when the power in the Word of God arrested me. I left my seat with the intention of going outside when I could not stand the heat of God's spirit. Unknowingly, I ended up at the mercy seat in tears, asking God to look upon me with mercy, because I have been pretending to be what I was not. He did that and I felt the load and burden of sin taken off me. I became very light, felt a sense joy that has never been. I was happy all the way back home rejoicing and praising God for an experience that I did not know and nobody had ever told me that is what happened until two years later. Through my ignorance, I started struggling to live a Christian life. It was a time of rising and falling, an experience that was very boring, but through constant reading of the Bible and meditation and association with Christian brethren who were heavenminded, God visited me on the evening of 16th June 1999. I was with my wife in my room, The spirit powerful presence was sensed. It was time for the fire of the Holy spirit to 'burn up every trace of sin in order to bring the light and glory in' I was sanctified and baptised in the Holy Spirit. Praise God.

JAC: What are the strengths of The Salvation Army in Nigeria (and what are the challenges)?

FA: I would love to say the strengths are the desire to know the living Christ in his total presence, the powerful practical prayer life and the desire to serve God under a difficult environment of bribery and corruption, rejecting the corrupt delicacies place at our disposal in order to please God. The challenges are : taking the gospel up north, the HIV/AIDS pandemic, developing Women in leaderships, doubling our membership, making soldiers disciples and being self sufficient etc

JAC: Who are your heroes, and why?

FA: My heroes includes my Corps Officer - Major AE Akpaah (R), A Corps Officer indeed with a difference. He made a big difference in my life. His messages and practical influences brought me up. He is a hero. Late General Frederick Coutts : I was named after this great man of God, and from all I gathered from people and books I read about him, his humility, his practical influence upon lives and his Christlike character etc. He is truly a hero, my hero. Journal of Aggressive Christianity, Issue 32, August – September 2004 34 General Eva Burrows: She commissioned me as an Officer. My first meeting with her was great and I was excited to see a woman that was

indeed a General of God's people. A woman with a big heart for the Lord. Colonel Margaret Hay : She, of-course made the impact lately. However, meeting her for the first time was indeed meeting an embodiment of great spiritual giant with the ability to turn around a wimp and caused the dead, frustrated, tired and weird soul to receive life again. She is a true hero. Nelson Mandela : Talking about liberation for a people, endurance under affliction and perseverance under frustrated environment, here is a man who has lived for the common cause of saving suffering humanity. He is my hero.

JAC: Who influences you?

FA: My Corps Officer as mentioned above. Samuel Brengle Books on Holiness and Bill Hybels books on various topics.

JAC: What part does the West have in the future of The Salvation Army?

FA: The truth that the gospel was first received from the West and the Salvation Army actually came from the West, they became the head. Spiritually they must continue the legacy. The Bible reflect the problem the body has when the head is sick. The Head must understand that it is the head. The part the west has is to put her house in order, return to the basics, and never forget the Mission God gave to the Salvation Army. If the West is confused, they should call a solemn assembly, seek the face of God, and God will return with his healing and restoration.

JAC: What unites us The Salvation Army?

FA: Our common goal- Souls of Men. Our two-fold Mission is unique and we must walk in the path He has marked for our feet. No deviation. AC: Your warfare includes regular doses of the supernatural. Can you give us some examples of God-glorifying miracles of which you have been privileged to witness?

FA: I have witnessed sight restored to the blind, the lame walking, a dead child restored back to life, an insane girl becoming conscious, a paralysed man revived, a dumb man speaking again to the glory of God. Our God is still in the business of healing his people.

JAC: What are some of the positive effects of miracles in your midst? *Journal of Aggressive Christianity, Issue 32, August – September 2004 35*

FA: The positive effects of miracles does a great deal of good: 1. Brings many people to believe and trust God, 2. Reveals the awesomeness and reality of God in the midst of his people, 3. Confirms my call to Officership - Isaiah 61:1-4 etc 4. Create an awareness of God's presence in men and women who are available for Him to use.

JAC: What part should the supernatural play in our warfare around the world?

FA: The supernatural should play a leading role, particularly in the Salvation Army where the Founders prophecy is fulfilling in the 21st Century. Men holding (speaking and preaching) the word of truth, but denying the power thereof. Living the practical Christian life proves that God is a live and working among his people. He must increase and I decrease.

JAC: If you could give one exhortation to readers worldwide, what would it be?

FA: Jesus is the same yesterday and today and forever. He has not and can never change. Thank you very much for this privilege!

## **Issue #36 – ‘Warfare Manifesto’**

by Lieutenant Rowan Castle

We are going to win people to the kingdom through the telling of the gospel, acts of kindness, intercessory prayer, prophetic word and miraculous manifestations of the Holy Spirit.

We are going to whole-heartedly pursue holiness - Never doing the wrong thing and always doing the right thing. Cleansed from sin and full of love.

We will spend our lives in this Kingdom effort to win the world, never knowing wealth, comfort or home until the day of Jesus' return.

We want to be an army that leaves the barracks, positions itself on the frontline and fights to win

We are going to learn what it is to love others as we love ourselves

We want to identify ourselves and fly our colours 24/7

We want to experience less of church in a building and more God on the streets

We want to cease the entertainment of saints and begin their mobilization

We want less talk and more miracles

We want less reasonable thinking and more reckless obedience

We want less number crunching and more victory

We want less attenders and more missionaries

We want no more control mechanisms, only discipleship

**Issue #37 – ‘Leadership in The Salvation Army’**  
**A Case Study in Clericalisation**  
 by Major Harold Hill

Officers of my vintage were simply commissioned but after 1978 officers were ordained as well. What does that mean? And does it matter? My endeavour to answer these questions led to a four-year research project and some conclusions which I shall attempt to summarise in this article. The answers lie at least in part in the process of institutionalisation which affects all enterprises, including movements of the Spirit, in the course of which roles which begin as simply functional gradually assume significance as status. In this The Salvation Army has recapitulated in microcosm the history of the church as a whole.

While the charismatic founder may be kept honest by a closeness to the *mysterium tremens et fascinans* and a single-minded commitment to a vision, the second and subsequent generations tend to keep a closer eye on the political implications. A Moses could exclaim, “Would that all the Lord’s people might prophesy!” A Joshua’s instinct is to complain, “Eldad and Medad are also prophesying,” and to urge, “Make them stop – they’re not authorised.”<sup>8</sup> Against that trend, there has also been, especially in the Judeo-Christian tradition, a counter-cultural, prophetic tradition of protest against the institutions of power. Jesus of Nazareth stood in this prophetic tradition. Jesus and the community which grew up after his death appear to have valued equality in contrast to the priestly hierarchies of received religion.<sup>9</sup> There were evidently varieties of function within the early Christian community, but not of formal status.

### **Division into Clerical and Lay States**

Over the first few centuries, however, as the Church institutionalised and developed structures to order its polity and conserve its message, and as it accommodated to Roman society and to traditional religious expectations, it developed such distinctions, between clerics in orders and laity.<sup>10</sup> By early in the second century the early charismatic offices had been superseded and a three-fold structure of one bishop, presiding over a council of presbyters and supported by deacons was becoming common. A second factor in the clericalisation of ministry was the adoption of the “priestly” language, a second-century development which became entrenched with the progressive development of the idea of the Eucharist as sacrifice which only a priest had power to perform. With Augustine (died 430) an “indelible character” was attributed to priesthood. A third factor was the incorporation of church and priesthood into Roman society and the state. From the “Christianising” of the Empire under

<sup>8</sup> Numbers 11:26-27.

<sup>9</sup> Matthew 20:25-28, Matthew 23:8-10.

<sup>10</sup> Walter Brueggemann, *The Prophetic Imagination*, Minneapolis, Fortress Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 2001, p.22) says “it is clear that the militancy and radicalism of the earliest churches was soon compromised” and cites John Gager, (*Kingdom and Community: The Social World of Early Christianity*, Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1975) for the argument that “if they had not changed to embrace culture to some extent, they would have disappeared as a sectarian oddity.”



Theodosius in the fourth century, it eventually came to be assumed that all people in the state were “Christian”; by the end of the first millennium the boundary between the world and the church was seen as lying at ordination rather than baptism. Even from the third century on it was apparent that all these developments had reduced the “laity” to a passive role. We can call the cumulative process “clericalisation”.

## Reaction and Counter-reaction

Many times in the history of the Church when there has been a renewal of mission, some reaction against clericalism has been involved. Usually the movements involved have either been suppressed or have in their turn become clericalised. Monasticism was amongst the earliest such movements, from the mid-second century on. Originally a lay movement, it became clericalised with a caste system whereby manual labour was performed by lay monks but clerical roles by priests.

The later middle ages in Europe were a period of huge social and economic change, affecting the church along with everything else. The laity became less willing to accept a passive role and there were many religious revivalist movements, some of which became officially accepted while others were denounced as heretical. Both in officially endorsed orders like the Franciscans and in others eventually excluded like the Waldensians, an initial all-lay ethos was eventually clericalised, with priests or clergy coming to dominate them.

The Reformation movements all involved a degree of rejection of clerical superiority. Luther dismissed “*characters indelebiles* ...” as “mere talk and man-made law.”<sup>11</sup> However most the reformers remained wedded to the concept of “Christendom”, in which the State and the Church were essentially the same thing and “the clerical office – whether under the name of *ministerium* (the ministry) or *sacerdotium* (the priesthood) – continued in being as something constitutive for the existence of the Church.”<sup>12</sup> In E. L. Mascall’s words, “what Protestantism did to the religion of Western Europe was simply to substitute a clericalism of the Word for a clericalism of the Sacrament.”<sup>13</sup> It was the “radical reformation”, the Anabaptists and their sectarian successors, who tried to make a fresh start and return to the polity of the primitive church. “It was not that the Anabaptists had no clergy; it is more accurate to say that they had no laity.”<sup>14</sup> As marginalised and persecuted, their situation more closely resembled that of the early Christians.

The immediate precursor of The Salvation Army was the Methodist movement of the eighteenth century. John Wesley unwittingly created what was virtually a parallel church though he was a priest of the Church of England, and refused to allow his lay

<sup>11</sup> Martin Luther, “An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation”, 1520. *Works of Martin Luther*. Philadelphia, A.J. Holman Coy., 1915.

<sup>12</sup> Emil Brunner, *The Christian Doctrine of the Church, Faith and the Consummation: Dogmatics*, Vol III. London, Lutterworth, 1962, p.98-99.

<sup>13</sup> E.L. Mascall, *The Recovery of Unity: A Theological Approach*. London, Longmans, 1958 p.5.

<sup>14</sup> Larry Martens, “Anabaptist Theology and Congregational Care”. *Direction Journal*, Spring 1992, Vol. 21 No. 1, pp.3-14.

preachers to administer the sacraments or call themselves “Reverend”. After his death the preachers claimed both rights and Methodism clericalised. However, both traditions, the “lay” and the “clerical”, persist in Methodism to the present day. Most of the subsequent schisms in the movement – and most of the reunions also – have been concerned with this polarisation.

In retrospect it may be seen that Bryan Wilson’s analysis of the process of clericalisation in Protestant sects applies to the broad history of the church as a whole:

What does appear is that the dissenting movements of Protestantism, which were lay movements, or movements which gave greater place to laymen than the traditional churches had ever conceded, pass, over the course of time, under the control of full-time religious specialists.. Over time, movements which rebel against religious specialization, against clerical privilege and control, gradually come again under the control of a clerical class... Professionalism is a part of the wider social process of secular society, and so even in anti-clerical movements professionals re-emerge. Their real power, when they do re-emerge, however, is in their administrative control and the fact of their full-time involvement, and not in their liturgical functions, although these will be regarded as the activity for which their authority is legitimated.<sup>15</sup>

The history of The Salvation Army is open to analysis in these terms.

### **Beginning with the Booths**

William Booth inherited the ambiguities of Methodism. He left a Church, the Methodist New Connection, but retained his clerical rank. He denied any intention of founding a “sect” or denomination (“I constantly put from me the thought of attempting the formation of such a people”<sup>16</sup>), but ended up doing so. As Ronald Knox remarks of Zinzendorf, “it is an old dream of the enthusiast that he can start a new religion without starting a new denomination.”<sup>17</sup>

The chief formative influences on William and Catherine Booth were Methodism and American Revivalism. Wesleyan influence on Booth can be seen in his emulation of Wesley himself and in parallels between the situation, ethos and doctrines of Methodism and Salvationism. It can also be traced in a degree of ambiguity about the nature or importance of ordination, in his conviction of the importance of lay-participation, and paradoxically, in his equally strong conviction of the value of authoritarian rule. Herein lay the tension, still in evidence, between the Army’s commitment to the “priesthood of all believers” and its hierarchical structure. From the American revivalists, such as Charles Finney, James Caughey and Phoebe Palmer, the Booths not only learned about evangelical methods and concluded that there was more freedom in their use outside the control of denominational structures, but also

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<sup>15</sup> Bryan Wilson, *Religion in Secular Society*. London, C.A. Watts, 1966, p.136.

<sup>16</sup> G.S. Railton, *Heathen England*. London, 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1878, p.22.

<sup>17</sup> Ronald Knox, *Enthusiasm*. OUP, Oxford, 1950, p.403.

had confirmed their convictions both about the importance of lay-participation and about the value of strong government.

Booth's engagement with a tent mission in Mile End Waste in July 1865 is reminiscent of the Arab inviting the camel to put his nose into the tent on a cold night – soon the camel wholly occupied the tent. By 1867 a revivalist group drawn from a variety of evangelical backgrounds had been transformed into a proto-sect with its own headquarters, a number of preaching stations, systems for processing converts and for poor relief, a membership document, a first annual financial statement, and paid staff as well as volunteer workers. By 1878, this mission had evolved into a highly centralised organisation, a people with a distinct and common identity, and its own full-time, employed leaders, analogous to clergy (although like Wesley's lay-preachers, Booth's evangelists were forbidden to style themselves "Reverend"<sup>18</sup>). Under its new name of Salvation Army, the mission was poised to embark on a decade or more of exponential growth. With Divisional and Territorial Commands from 1880 it was possessed of an episcopal hierarchy.

### **Clerical Roles**

The clerical class in the church has come to be associated with specific functions – the administration of the sacraments, pastoring of the flock, the preaching and teaching of the Word and the government of the church. What can we say then about the roles of Booth's Missioners, the Evangelists, later Officers, under these headings?

### **Sacraments**

The monopoly of the sacramental function became the distinctive mark of the emergence of priesthood in Christianity. The Christian Mission and, until 1883, the Salvation Army, practised infant baptism and celebrated the Lord's Supper, and it is apparent that officials of the mission led these rites. The discontinuance of the practice could also have implications for the "clerical" role of officers. Booth's explanation in *The War Cry* simply said that (1) sacraments were not essential for salvation; (2) that if he insisted on having them there would be "grave dissensions" within the Army; (3) that the Army was not a church; and (4) that the question could be left until we shall have more light on the subject. (5) In the meanwhile Salvationists were free to take the sacrament at other churches, and (6) should feed on Jesus continually and ensure they had been baptised with the Holy Ghost. (7) Finally, having warned against dependence upon mere forms, he announced a form of service for the dedication of children.<sup>19</sup> Additional reasons subsequently offered, in addition to the dangers of formalism and contentious Biblical hermeneutic, have included the danger of strong drink to people converted from drunkenness, avoidance of controversial subjects, resistance to women administering the sacraments, the avoidance of anything smacking of a separate priesthood and the value of a distinctive non-sacramental witness.

<sup>18</sup> Christian Mission Conference Minutes, 1870.

<sup>19</sup> *The War Cry*, 17 January 1883, p.4, col. 2.

David Rightmire's study goes behind these presenting arguments and places the Army's early theology in the context of Victorian society, the Wesleyan revival and the nineteenth century holiness movement. He makes the point that by the mid-19th century Wesleyanism had lost touch with its founder's sacramental theology, maintaining the forms but subordinating other means of grace to the Word. The American holiness revival teaching of Caughey, Finney and Phoebe Palmer, already mentioned, also "emphasised a pneumatological ecclesiology that needed little continuity with historical institutions." Rightmire's argument is that once the Booths' "Holiness" or "Second Blessing" theology was fully developed, it provided a spiritualised substitute for sacramental theology.<sup>20</sup>

It is interesting to compare the course of The Salvation Army's relationship with the Church of England with that of its Wesleyan original. Methodism grew out of the established Church and the question was whether it could be contained. Salvationism was an independent entity and would have had to be grafted on to the Anglican stock – a more difficult exercise. With Methodism, the preachers, who had not hitherto been permitted to officiate at the sacraments, assumed this role. Salvation Army evangelists and officers, who had enjoyed this privilege, relinquished it.

The history of the Salvation Army also illustrates the maxim that if the sacraments did not exist it would be necessary to invent them, to adapt Voltaire. Forms and ceremonies have been substituted. The Directory or catechism for children in 1900 set out "The Army's Five Ordinances" as (1) The Dedication of Children, (2) The Mercy Seat,<sup>21</sup> (3) Enrolment under the Army Flag, (4) Commissioning of Officers and (5) Marriage according to Army rules."<sup>22</sup> To these might be added the uniform (surely "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace", as well as the nearest the Army comes to a medium for excommunication), and the recent practice of "installing" officers in certain commands.

All of this also indicates that although sacramental observances are usually taken as the initial catalyst for the process of clericalisation in the Church, the Army's clericalisation gathered momentum after their abandonment (apart from the substitute sacraments described above), suggesting that clericalisation is a sociological process independent of a theological base.

## Pastoring

Pastoring of the flock was not the original function of the Christian Missioners – they were above all itinerant evangelists. The gradual assimilation of evangelist into pastor

<sup>20</sup> R. David Rightmire, *Sacraments and the Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations*. Metuchen, NJ, The Scarecrow Press, 1990.

<sup>21</sup> Booth took over from his American revivalist exemplars the practice of the "altar call" when penitents were invited to kneel at the front of the hall. At first a simple form or row of chairs sufficed to kneel at, but despite protestations that the place itself was of no merit, the "Mercy Seat" became sacred furniture. A 1908 article on "The Proper Use and Care of the Penitent Form", described the new style introduced at the recently opened West Green Citadel in London. "The floor surrounding the Mercy Seat is slightly raised and enclosed by heavy red cords, which are easily removed when the form is in use." (*The Field Officer*, September 1908, pp.327-8.)

<sup>22</sup> *The Salvation Army Directory, No II*, London, 1900, p.62.

in the role of the individual Salvation Army officer has paralleled the gradual metamorphosis of the “para-church” sect into denominational church. That trend has been accompanied by the gradual loss of the individual and corporate sense of responsibility of the ordinary members or soldiers to exercise the pastoral role. Within the early Salvation Army there was strong emphasis on the “lay”-pastorate, with the appointment of Visitation Sergeants with pastoral responsibility. With pastoral care undertaken by those with a more settled existence, the Evangelists or Missioners, and subsequently the officers, were itinerant. Itinerancy was a tradition inherited from Methodism, with frequent changes of pastorate for clergy, combined with the more limited role of the evangelist. Appointments tended to be for a matter of weeks only or months. Railton wrote that, “we refuse to allow our officers to stay long in one place lest they or the people should sink into the relationship of pastor and flock, and look to their mutual enjoyment and advantage rather than to the salvation of others...”<sup>23</sup>

In time, officers became under increasing pressure to exercise a pastoral role in addition to the evangelical one. Bramwell Booth’s 1899 book on officership included a section on “Shepherds and their Flocks”.<sup>24</sup> Whatever Railton’s fear of a pastor-flock relationship developing, it was inevitable; nurturing of new converts would establish expectations for continuing care.

### ***Preaching and Teaching***

Clergy have usually assumed the magisterial role, the responsibility for teaching, in the Church. Although the *Orders and Regulations for Officers* prescribed instructing and drilling the troops as a significant officer-role, Booth saw preaching as the definitive clerical task (“one who had nothing else to do but preach”<sup>25</sup>) and we have seen that in his movement there was no thought of reserving this task to any special group. The reverse was his intention.

It should be noted however that whatever the theory, the Evangelists and then the Officers became the main speakers and preachers as time went on. A rearguard action against this practice has been fought ever since. In 1928 Bramwell Booth wrote to an officer in charge of a corps he had visited, advising him to, “Rope in your own people in so far as it is at all possible to take part in platform [i.e. preaching] work if the soldiers and locals felt the responsibility of speaking to the people the words of life and truth they would fit themselves for this work. This would relieve you of some of your platform responsibilities, and thus enable you to tackle other work.”<sup>26</sup> But many officers still jealously guard their prerogative in this respect, to the neglect of the gifts of their soldiers.

<sup>23</sup> G.S. Railton, *Heathen England*, p.144.

<sup>24</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, *Servants of All*. London, 1900, pp.93-9.

<sup>25</sup> George Scott Railton, *General Booth*, London, Hodder & Stoughton, 1912, p.17.

<sup>26</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth*. London, Rich & Cowan, 1932, p.492.

### **Government and Leadership**

On the fourth point, government, only the full-time, employed evangelists or missionaries attended the Council of War in 1878, whereas lay-delegates had attended earlier Conferences. Murdoch avers that this action disenfranchised the laymen of The Salvation Army and “stripped them of the right to participate” in the organisation’s government.<sup>27</sup> At the same time as the Mission metamorphosed into The Salvation Army, it constitutionally reverted to Wesley’s original Methodist model of benevolent dictatorship. The government of the movement was clearly concentrated in the hands of a leading group, though always as a delegated authority derived in the end from the General himself. This remains the case today. The role of an officer is to command, to direct the government of the organisation at a particular level. The post-1877 polity certainly left the way open for the elevation of an “officer class” in the all-lay Army.

In sum, then, of the four clerical roles of officiating at rites, pastoring, preaching and government, it would seem that Christian Missioners became Salvation Army officers with only the fourth of these fields unambiguously as their largely exclusive prerogative. Their other roles were in the process of development – though also in the direction of a clerical monopoly. However, Officers were not yet clergy in any generally recognised sense at this time, any more than the Army itself was regarded as a church.

### **What the Founders Said**

Here we find an essential ambivalence as far as clericalism is concerned – and as far as being a church is concerned. The pragmatic origins of ministry and polity have meant that the Army has championed the concept of the priesthood of all believers and rejected the clerical role, while at the same time it has claimed ministerial status for its officers whenever that has seemed advantageous. Thus it has inherited and carried forward the ecclesiological contradictions of Methodism referred to earlier.

### **All Lay, All Priests**

Like Wesley before him, Booth did not see his Evangelists as clergy. He complained in 1877 that some had resigned because “they rub up against some Baptist or Primitive preachers and get ministerial notions.”<sup>28</sup> Railton quotes Booth, addressing young officers, as saying,

I have lived, thank God, to witness the separation between layman and cleric become more and more obscured, and to see Jesus Christ’s idea of changing in a moment ignorant fishermen into fishers of men nearer and nearer realization.<sup>29</sup>

<sup>27</sup> Norman Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army*. Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1994, p.91.

<sup>28</sup> *Christian Mission Magazine*, July 1877, p.172.

<sup>29</sup> George Scott Railton, *op.cit.*, p.17.

William Booth wanted to disabuse his officers of the notion that there is any “exclusive order of preachers” or that ministry was confined to a particular class of individuals who constitute a sacred order specially raised up and qualified... on the ground of their ancestors having been specially set apart for it, and authorised to communicate the same power to their successors, who are, they again contend, empowered to pass on some special virtues to those who listen to their teaching... I deny the existence of any order exclusively possessing the right to publish the salvation of God... I honour the Order of Preachers; I belong to it myself... but as to his possessing any particular grace because of his having gone through any form of Ordination, or any other ceremonial whatever, I think that idea is a great mistake.

And I want to say here, once and for all, that no such notion is taught in any authorised statement of Salvation Army doctrine or affirmed by any responsible officer in the organisation... the duty in which I glory is no more sacred, and only a few degrees removed in importance, from that of the brother who opens the doors of the Hall in which the preacher holds forth... As Soldiers of Christ, the same duty places us all on one level.<sup>30</sup>

Booth clearly rejected any apostolic succession or clerical character as needed to authenticate his officers’ functions. Not only were officers not “clergy” but soldiers in effect *were*. In an 1898 address he hoped that soldiers would not shirk their duty “by any talk of not being an officer.”

You cannot say you are not ordained. You were ordained when you signed Articles of War, under the blessed Flag. If not, I ordain every man, woman and child here present that has received the new life. I ordain you now. I cannot get at you to lay my hands upon you. I ordain you with the breath of my mouth. I tell you what your true business in the world is, and in the name of the living God I authorise you to go and do it. Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature!<sup>31</sup>

### **“Ministers Who were Not Ordained”<sup>32</sup>**

At the same time as we have these, and many other, very clear statements that The Salvation Army is an essentially lay movement, we find the growing assumption that officers do enjoy a distinctive and special role – or status. The specialness of the officer role was emphasised on two counts; firstly because of the need to foster and encourage the *esprit de corps* of officers in order to promote the effectiveness of the Army’s leadership, and secondly from the desire to secure recognition of the officers within the wider community. Both would inevitably contribute to the process by which function would assume status.

Although not claiming any ordination for their officers, the Booths regarded them as in every way equal to the clergy of other denominations. Sandall reports a statement by

<sup>30</sup> William Booth in *The Officer*, June 1899, pp.202-3.

<sup>31</sup> *The War Cry*, 22 January 1898, p.9, col.3.

<sup>32</sup> The phrase is Catherine Bramwell Booth’s: *Bramwell Booth*, p.221.

William Booth, made in 1894: "The Salvation Army is not inferior in spiritual character to any organization in existence... We are, I consider, equal everyway and everywhere to any other Christian organization on the face of the earth (i) in spiritual authority, (ii) in spiritual intelligence, (iii) in spiritual functions. We hold 'the keys' as truly as any church in existence."<sup>33</sup> While these claims were made of the Army as a whole, the exercise of "authority" and the holding of the "keys" could be taken as peculiarly clerical or leadership roles. Booth was in no doubt that the Army would rise or fall on the quality of its leadership. His first *Orders and Regulations*, written particularly for officers leading a growing movement, noted that "The work must, of course, depend mainly upon the officers..."<sup>34</sup> Bramwell agreed with this, writing, "Officers ... they are the spinal column of the affair and their tone and spirit is its spinal marrow."<sup>35</sup>

In a circular to senior commanders, William Booth spoke of the role of officers as akin to a priesthood: "Indeed, the fact is ever before us – like Priest, like People; like Captain, like Corps."<sup>36</sup> "More and more as I have wrestled with the [new] regulations this week," he wrote to Bramwell in 1903, "it has been borne in upon me that it is the Officer upon whom all depends. It has always been so. If Moses had not made a priesthood, there would have been no Jewish nation. It was the priesthood of the Levites which kept them *alive*, saved them from their inherent rottenness... and perpetuated the law which made them."<sup>37</sup>

Such a statement suggests that Booth's own views were changing. Ervine comments that "This was a far different note from any that he had hitherto sounded. Priests had never previously been much esteemed by him who was more ready to admire prophets than priests... The Soldier-Prophet was about to leave his command to a Lawyer-Priest. A younger William Booth would have known that this was dangerous, but Booth was old and solitary and tired, and old men want priests more than they want warriors."<sup>38</sup> Robertson attributes this change to Booth's anticipation of a possible leadership crisis during the "period of routinisation" by his Supplementary Deed of 1904 (which provided for the deposition of a General adjudged unfit for office and the election of a replacement by a High Council). "Further, he came to the conclusion that the priesthood of all believers, although already effectively dropped in practice, had to be attenuated as an ideal."<sup>39</sup>

In an address to Staff Officers, reprinted after his death, William Booth said  
 The Salvation Army also claims possession of certain authority – authority received from God and man adequate for the work required from it, and equal to that of any other Christian organisation in existence, if not superior to that of many which pass under that name. I claim such authority for myself as an

<sup>33</sup> Robert Sandall, *History of The Salvation Army*. London, Nelson 1950. 2, p.126.

<sup>34</sup> *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army*, London, 1878, p.8.

<sup>35</sup> Letter of 24 February 1899, in Catherine Bramwell Booth, *op.cit.*, p.218.

<sup>36</sup> William Booth, *Letter to Commissioners and Territorial Commanders*. 1900, p.15.

<sup>37</sup> Harold Begbie, *Booth*. II, p.306.

<sup>38</sup> St. John Ervine, *God's Soldier, General William Booth*. London, Heinemann, 1934. II, pp.777-8.

<sup>39</sup> Roland Robertson, "The Salvation Army", in Bryan Wilson, *Patterns of Sectarianism*. London, Heinemann, 1967, p.80.



ambassador of Christ, and I claim it also on your behalf. I claim for the Army all the authority necessary for the ruling of its people, their admission to its ranks or their exclusion from it... When I am asked to state the grounds on which the Army claims authority over the consciences and conduct of men, I reply that we do these things not on the authority of man, or of any outside organisation of men, but by the authority of God Himself.<sup>40</sup>

In his memoirs Bramwell Booth echoes similar sentiments.

In this, we humbly but firmly claim that we are in no way inferior, either to the saints who have gone before, or – though remaining separate from them, even as one branch in the vine is separate from another – to the saints of the present. We, no less than they, are called and chosen to sanctification of the Spirit and to the inheritance of eternal life. And our officers are, equally with them, ministers in the church of God, having received diversities of gifts, but the one Spirit – endowed by His grace, assured of His guidance, confirmed by His word, and commissioned by the Holy Ghost to represent Him to the whole world.<sup>41</sup>

In the First World War Bramwell Booth forbade officers to volunteer for military duty, saying:

It seems to me that the consecration of their lives to the things of Christ, which all our officers have made, is inconsistent with their voluntarily drawing the sword in earthly warfare. There can be no doubt that they are as truly ministers of Christ's gospel as were the apostles themselves, and as ministers of God they are covenanted to approve themselves in patience, in affliction... And so I say I cannot approve their taking the sword, or any other carnal weapon.<sup>42</sup>

These examples, and many like them, would support the view that the Army and its leaders progressively tended to claim a clerical role and status for officers. So, we have seen that The Salvation Army, in attempting to maintain a sectarian equality of believers, resisted the idea that its officers were clergy like other clergy. At the same time, partly because of the autocratic temperament of its founder, it adopted a military, hierarchical structure which served to expedite the process of clericalisation.

The conditions of officers' service would constitute their professional milieu in a way that could not be true of non-officer, volunteer Salvationists. The mystique of the Call to officership, the spiritually intensive nature of officer-formation in training and the sessional group bonding with peers, the extent of personal commitment involved in the Covenant and Undertakings, the ranking system, the distinctive functions and roles of officers and the intensity of the all-absorbing work, together with the sense of corporate identity and *esprit de corps*, gave officership a character which could be described as clerical compared with that of the rank and file.

<sup>40</sup> *The Officer*, September 1915, p.579.

<sup>41</sup> W. Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories*. London, Hodder & Stoughton, [1925] 2<sup>nd</sup> edn. 1977, p.82.

<sup>42</sup> *The War Cry*, 19 September 1914, p.7. (Cited by Shaw Clifton, PhD thesis, *The Salvation Army's Actions and Attitudes in War Time 1889-1945*, Kings College, London 1989, p.215.)

This ambiguity over the status of officers arose in part from the Methodist theological roots, as we have noted, and in part from the fact that traditional ecclesiastical and canonical distinctions were of little interest or relevance. Salvationists were, as far as they were concerned, *sui generis*, needing no external ecclesiastical validation or referencing. Pragmatic decisions beget principles. The Founders set out to do just whatever appeared the most practical thing to do next. Rather than intentionally taking the historic pattern of the church as a model they fought against it as repugnant to their view of the ministerial role of Christians in general. For all that, they could not avoid bringing with them from their church background ways of thinking about how the church should be organised. The irony is that they ended up with a similar model of clergy and laity and an episcopal system of government under different names. It is difficult *in practice*, leaving aside ecclesiastical distinctions of legitimacy and apostolic provenance, to distinguish officership from the clerical status in any other church.

## Transitions

Sociologists refer to the period of “routinisation”, during which initially radical sectarian movements gradually accommodate to the world around them, and “denominationalise”. While Robertson considered that The Salvation Army had resisted this process and therefore dubbed it an “established sect”,<sup>43</sup> in the longer view it may be seen that the Army in the western world has conformed to type in this respect.

Although it was Donald McGavran’s twentieth century phrase,<sup>44</sup> the phenomenon of “redemption and lift”, was remarked upon by John Wesley nearly two hundred years earlier.

The Methodists in every place grow diligent and frugal; consequently they increase in goods. Hence they proportionately increase in pride, in the desire of the flesh, the desire of the eyes, and the pride of life. So although the form of religion remains, the spirit is swiftly vanishing away...<sup>45</sup>

Salvationists, originally archetypal “working class”, have participated in the general rise in standards of living in western countries, with increased opportunity for education and diversified occupations. The children and grandchildren of those who had experienced the miracle of changing beer into furniture did not necessarily enjoy a vital conversion experience of their own or inherit the same evangelical imperative.

A concomitant of this development was a change in mindset from “mission to maintenance”; from a crusade to change the world to a preoccupation with the interests and needs of existing members. It is not without significance that the international statistics for numbers of corps and officers in 2004 were little different from those at the death of Bramwell Booth in 1929.<sup>46</sup> (The recent growth in soldieryship

<sup>43</sup> Roland Robertson, *op.cit.*, pp.49-105.

<sup>44</sup> Donald McGavran, *Understanding Church Growth*. Grand Rapids, Eerdmans, 1970, pp.262-275.

<sup>45</sup> Quoted by J.H. Plumb, *England in the Eighteenth Century*. Harmondsworth, Penguin, 1950, p.97.

<sup>46</sup> 1929: 15,163 corps and 25,427 officers. 2004: 15,339 officers and 25,716.

statistics derives from a new, third world, growth spurt, offset by steep decline in the European homelands.) A diminution of evangelical fervour was also matched by a decline in commitment to sectarian “perfectionism” of the kind represented by the Army’s Wesleyan holiness theology, and the beginnings of a more conscious pluralism of theological outlook.

These changes have also been reflected in a moderation of the Army’s opposition to “the world”: only an embargo on alcohol, tobacco and gambling survives where once wearing a feathers on ladies’ hats, make-up and jewellery, and attending dances, organised sports events or the cinema were equally reprehensible. The Army no longer provides an all-embracing social milieu for many Salvationists, and the movement no longer maintains what Bryan Wilson called “a totalitarian rather than a segmental hold” over its members.<sup>47</sup> Higher education is no longer regarded with suspicion.

At least in much of the “western world”, this process of routinisation occupied perhaps the first sixty years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. As far as the theme of this essay is concerned, the end result of this was that the Army became another “mainline” denomination, in which the officers were regarded, and regarded themselves, as clergy, and the soldiers thought of themselves as laity. Despite a strong and continuing tradition of soldier involvement in “the work”, the officers became the professional religious class. Thomas O’Dea summarised the tendency thus:

there comes into existence a body of men for whom the clerical life offers not simply the “religious” satisfactions of the earlier charismatic period, but also prestige and respectability, power and influence... and satisfactions derived from the use of personal talents in teaching, leadership, etc. Moreover, the *maintenance* of the situation in which these rewards are forthcoming tends to become an element in the motivation of the group.<sup>48</sup>

## Into the Second Century

Although we have observed a denominationalising tendency in the period reviewed above, the Army’s official rhetoric remained sectarian. The inevitable tectonic tension between these two continental plates moving in opposite directions began to surface as the movement entered its second century in the 1960’s. This again conformed to the usual pattern of such movements in their life-cycle, as indeed had happened with the early Church itself. A period of consolidation and reflection begins. The movement becomes more self-conscious, and begins to clarify and rationalise what it had been doing, as well as adjusting to the fact that it is now operating in a world strangely different from that in which it had taken shape. Roger Green, referring to various late 20th and early 21st century initiatives in Salvationist theological discussion, comments that “these are still tenuous efforts for a denomination yet in its primacy. The Army is

<sup>47</sup> Bryan Wilson (Ed.), *op.cit.*, p.24.

<sup>48</sup> T.F. O’Dea, *The Sociology of Religion*. Englewood Cliffs NJ, Prentice-Hall, 1966, p.91.

only now coming into an understanding of what it means to have a corporate theological life.”<sup>49</sup>

## The Debate

As far as our theme is concerned the Army entered upon a period of internal debate, expressed for the first time in its history in articles and correspondence, at first in *The Officer* and later in such territorial publications as *The Salvationist* in the UK and *Word and Deed* in USA. We can trace the coming out into the open of the polarities, “lay”, and “clerical”, between the view that office is simply functional and the belief that office confers a status or character, inherited a century before from Church history through Methodism and inherent in the Army as a sociological and ecclesiastical phenomenon.

The debate took place in two phases. For the first twenty-five years – roughly from 1960 to 1985 – it concerned function and status. In the following twenty years, following the introduction of the “ordination” of officers, this terminology naturally shaped the arguments offered. At the risk of caricaturing the variety of views, we can sample here only a few of the contributions made to the debate.

As representative of the “functional” school we can take the unambiguous statement by Australian Commissioner Hubert Scotney:

The distinction made today between clergy and laity does not exist in the New Testament... The terms layman and laity (in the current usage of those words) are completely out of character in a Salvation Army context... It is foreign to the entire concept of Salvationism to imagine two levels of involvement. Any distinction between officers and soldiers is one of function rather than status.<sup>50</sup>

Against that we can cite Colonel William Clark (IHQ), who claimed that by a direct call from God into the ranks of Salvation Army officership, we have been given particular spiritual authority... Whatever our role ...happens to be for the time being... we are primarily spiritual leaders... Our spiritual authority lies not only or chiefly in what we do, but in what we are... Our calling is to be a certain kind of person and not ... to do a certain kind of job... The “ordained” ministry of the Church – to which body we belong by virtue of our calling, response, training and commissioning – is a distinctive ministry within the body of the whole people of God, different from that “general” ministry of the Church which is defined in the New Testament as “the priesthood of all believers”.<sup>51</sup>

In 1978 General Arnold Brown announced that the commissioning of officers would in future include use of the word “ordain”. This innovation evidently passed largely unremarked until Captain Chick Yuill of Scotland drew attention to it in 1985.

May I suggest that we need to re-emphasise the truth that there is no real distinction between officers and soldiers, that the difference is simply of function... If that little word ‘ordain’ has crept in because of a subconscious

<sup>49</sup> Roger L. Green, “The Salvation Army and the Evangelical Tradition”, *Word and Deed*, May, 2003, p.61.

<sup>50</sup> *The Officer*, July 1969, p.452.

<sup>51</sup> *ibid.*, July 1976, pp.289-90.

desire that other Christians should realise that we are as 'important' as the clergy of other denominations, ... in the end it matters not a jot where we stand in the estimation of any who would compile a league table of ecclesiastical importance.<sup>52</sup>

Cadet Stephen Court of Canada took the same line:

There is no difference between the two functions [officer and soldier], there is no distinctive, and so there are no grounds to justify ordination by this argument. The emphasis on ordination and the professional nature of officership only serves to widen the artificial gap existing between officers and soldiers. Note I use the term "soldier" rather than the insidious term "laity".

He concluded by warning against "the gradual abdication of our characteristic birthright in 'favour' of a mainstream church identity."<sup>53</sup>

Against those, we can quote for example the following vigorous support for ordination from a retired officer, Brigadier Bramwell Darbyshire:

In spite of all the stuff about the priesthood of all believers, ordained and commissioned officers are different from non-officer Salvationists. They are not cleverer, wiser, more loved of God than their fellows, but they are special, set apart for Jesus in a way that involves sacrifice and often great inconvenience to their families... No one is more grateful for the Army's dedicated lay staff than this old warrior; but let's get it right. They may be as much involved as officers, but there is for an officer a sacramental dimension and if we lose sight of this the Army is finished.<sup>54</sup>

Others again used the term "ordained", but on their own terms, as implying only a "functional" role. Major Raymond Caddy of IHQ defended it in these terms:

...one of its meanings is closely tied to the idea of organisation which underlies all military structures... means to categorise, to place in a particular ranking... the specific ranking, then, has something to tell us about function. ...this is the classification of people as ministers of religion... to carry out certain roles. These duties are restricted to people of that rank, otherwise there is no point in separating them from the rest.

He went on to distinguish two kinds of ordination in the Church, one of all Christians, and the other to the exercise of certain spiritual gifts (see Romans 12, 1st Corinthians 12), vocations given so that the Church may be governed and served... Particular ministries are recognised and encouraged when the Army commissions or warrants its officers and local officers. However, every Salvationist is ordained to the greater vocation of Christian. There is no higher calling than this.<sup>55</sup>

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<sup>52</sup> *ibid.*, October 1985, pp.438-40.

<sup>53</sup> *ibid.*, May 1993, pp.214-5.

<sup>54</sup> *The Salvationist*, 18 April 1998.

<sup>55</sup> *ibid.*, 20 May 1989, p.5.

The debate widened to a general discussion of what roles and functions were appropriate to an officer. These tended to follow the culturally conditioned expectation of clergy in general. Officers were to lead, pastor, preach, teach and disciple, and equip the saints for ministry. Some saw the officer as being assisted in ministry by non-officers; others saw that the officer's role was to assist non-officers in their ministry. Some writers addressed officer conditions of service, such as appointability, as the distinctive mark of officership. A few called attention to officers' representative role, as head and focus of their community of faith. Some people, while rejecting any spurious status equivalent to priestly character for officership, felt that an entirely functional description could not justify a separate officer role. They therefore looked for an internal, Salvation Army validation, a combination of the officer's own personal sense of calling and the objective fact that Salvation Army officer ministry was an existing reality to be taken into account. Major Cecil Waters urged a return to an unabashedly Salvationist argument from simple pragmatism.

We will go on looking for a definition of officership unless and until we recognise that officership exists firstly as a convenience by which we organise the Army and secondly as one function, among many, to which we feel "called of God. [It was] impossible to define a concept of officership which is plainly and clearly distinct from that of soldiership. [He concluded] (a) That it would seem that the Army needs full time workers... Most, but by no means all, these workers are officers. (b) That we believe we may be called to be such workers – and this call may refer to officership (rather than employee or envoy status). (c) That to be so called and so engaged is sufficient to sustain our work, our spirit and our identity. I believe we need look for nothing more special than this."<sup>56</sup>

## Official words

### Ordination

Of official statements on this matter the first was General Brown's introduction of "ordination" in commissioning. The Chief of Staff's 1978 letter to Territorial Commanders stated:

It is the General's wish that a slight modification should be made to the wording of the Dedication Service during the Commissioning of cadets, in order to emphasise the fact that Salvation Army officers are ordained ministers of Christ and of His Gospel.

After the cadets have made their Affirmation of Faith, the officer conducting the Commissioning should then say: "In accepting these pledges which you each have made, I commission you as officers of The Salvation Army and ordain you as ministers of His Gospel." In countries other than English-speaking, and where the word "ordained" has no exact equivalent, a translation should be used which will give the nearest possible meaning to the English-language expression.<sup>57</sup>

<sup>56</sup> *The Officer*, July 1992, p.317.

<sup>57</sup> Letter of 30 May 1978 in IHQ Archives.

That the decision did not command universal support might be suggested by the fact that it was reviewed in 1988 and 1892, and the rubric was eventually amended by General John Gowans. A 2002 Memo from Chief of Staff John Larsson instructed

The commissioning officer will say to each cadet in turn: "Cadet (name): Accepting your promises and recognising that God has called, ordained and empowered you to be a minister of Christ and of his gospel, I commission you an officer of The Salvation Army."<sup>58</sup>

The significant changes here would appear to be that (1) the cadets were to be commissioned individually rather than collectively, and (2) "ordination" was now seen as something already done by God rather than in this ceremony by a representative of the organisation.

### Response to the Lima Document

In 1982 the World Council of Churches *Faith and Order Paper 111 on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (Lima<sup>59</sup>), was circulated amongst churches for comment. The Salvation Army's response was included in *Faith and Order Paper 137* of 1987, and also published by the Army itself as *One Faith, One Church*, in 1990. While the intention had been that churches would look for areas of agreement, the majority ended up by drawing lines around their own particular distinctives and the result pleased no-one. Catholics felt the document was Protestant in emphasis; Protestants felt "left out".

The Army identified with Lima where it could. Its main concern seems to have been to defend its non-sacramental stance, and even in its response on Ministry, it appeared somewhat preoccupied with the sacramental issue.

About the question of how Salvation Army ministry is perceived in relation to traditional Church belief about ordination, it appeared to be less sensitive and therefore, missed significant areas of difference. It was vague about the meaning of the language of ordination, which it had recently adopted, and confused the concept of indelible character of orders with the Army's own expectation that officers would commit to life-long ministry. The Army identified with the theology of the "radical reformation" but that it also sought to be included in the fold of "mainstream" ecclesiology by claiming that it was just like everyone else but with different terminology. Or in the case of "ordination", the same terminology.

It concluded that rather than "the highlighting of differences," the Army would prefer to see the churches demonstrating their existing unity in mission and evangelism. It believed that differences in faith and order in the church are issues only to theologians, of lesser concern to lay Christians and of no interest whatever to those outside the church.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>58</sup> IHQ Archives.

<sup>59</sup> Named for the city in which took place the final conference producing the document.

<sup>60</sup> *Faith and Order Paper 137*, p.256.

## Community in Mission

Their work on the Lima document evidently alerted the Salvation Army's leadership to its lack of a coherent ecclesiology and the difficulties inherent in maintaining a merely reactive mode. The book *Community in Mission, A Salvationist Ecclesiology* was commissioned from an American officer, Major Philip Needham, and published in 1987. Needham's basic premise is that "a Salvationist ecclesiology stands as a reminder to the Church that its mission in the world is primary, and that the life of the Church ought largely to be shaped by a basic commitment to mission."<sup>61</sup> His ecclesiology deals pre-eminently with the ministry of the Army as a whole, and only *inter alia* with that of the officer corps in particular.

Within the elaboration of this theme, Needham clearly confined the concept of "ordination" to a "functional" role within the movement – and claimed that its significance was best expressed in the word "commissioning", used of both officers and soldiers taking up specific tasks, while "ordination" was commonly used in connection with "ministries that require theological training, specialised skills, pastoral leadership and a full-time vocation..."<sup>62</sup>

## The work of the International Doctrine Council

The Doctrine Council, inaugurated in 1931, has been responsible for producing successive editions of the *Handbook of Doctrine*. None of the pre-1969 editions mentioned the doctrine of the Church, a concept without interest to the early Salvation Army, and even from 1969 this was discussed only under Trinitarian doctrine, as a Ministry of the Holy Spirit. No reference was made to a "separated ministry". The 1998 edition, *Salvation Story*, explains that "One very important change since the Eleven Articles were formulated and adopted is the evolution of the Movement from an agency for evangelism to a church, an evangelistic body of believers who worship, fellowship, minister and are in mission together."<sup>63</sup>

With reference to Ministry, a paragraph explains that all Christians are "ministers or servants of the gospel... share in the priestly ministry... In that sense there is no separated ministry." However the section goes on to say:

Within that common calling, some are called by Christ to be full-time office-holders within the Church. Their calling is affirmed by the gift of the Holy Spirit, the recognition of the Christian community and their commissioning – ordination – for service. Their function is to focus the mission and ministry of the whole Church so that its members are held faithful to their calling.

They serve their fellow ministers as visionaries who point the way to mission, as pastors who minister to the priests when they are hurt or overcome, as enablers who equip others for mission, as spiritual leaders.<sup>64</sup>

<sup>61</sup> Philip Needham, *Community in Mission*, London, 1987, pp.4-5.

<sup>62</sup> Philip Needham, *ibid.*, p.65.

<sup>63</sup> *Salvation Story*, London, 1998, p.100.

<sup>64</sup> *ibid.*, p.108.



Like *Community in Mission*, this does establish clearly the principle that the ministry of particular persons arises out of the ministry of the whole Christian community, and attempts to explain and justify how this happens in practice.

The Council's most recent work is ***Servants Together***, arising from the 1995 International Council of Leaders' recommendation that

The roles of officers and soldiers be defined and a theology of "the priesthood of all believers" be developed to encourage greater involvement in ministry (for example, spiritual leadership, leadership in general), worship, service and evangelism.<sup>65</sup>

The book for the first time puts the Army's ecclesiology in its historical context. It clearly establishes the principle that there is no distinction in status between soldiers and officers, although it then struggles to establish what is unique about the role of the officer. Significantly, and indicative of the Army's growing pluralism, it does allow that a variety of opinion is held on the subject. As an official response to the debate of the previous forty years, *Servants Together* entrenches the Army's traditional ambiguity about the nature of its "separated ministry".

If we were to attempt to sum up the progression to be found through the sequence beginning with the introduction of ordination in 1978 and culminating in the publication of *Servants Together* in 2000, at the risk of over-simplification we might suggest that in the 1970's the pendulum had swung as far as it could in the direction of a status for officers, and that the subsequent works show a move to correct an imbalance and restore a functional point of view – while retaining the movement's traditional ambiguity about the question.

### **Officers who may not be officers**

The ambiguity about the status of officers – whether they are clerical or lay – has further implications for Salvationists who have performed "officer" functions without being accorded full officer status. These include not only non-commissioned and warranted ranks and soldiers, but more surprisingly the women officers, particularly the married women, of the Army.

### **An officer by any other name...**

In every army in the world, it is the non-commissioned officers, the NCOs, who see themselves as the real leaders of the army. The Salvation Army's unpaid, volunteer "local officers", originally the "elders" of the Christian Mission, evolved to become a paid, full-time parallel structure to officership. From 1893, some were appointed as "Envoys", equivalent to Methodist local preachers on a circuit, and from the 1930's these sometimes acted as Corps commanding officers. By the 1940's these voluntary workers were supplemented by full-time paid Envoys who held officer appointments in both corps and social work but without officer training or commission. Finally, by the

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<sup>65</sup> *Servants Together*, London, 2002, p.127.

1960's some were warranted as "Auxiliary Captains", working under officer conditions but still without officer status, though some later went on to hold substantive rank. The phenomenon of people doing identical work but accorded differing status is fraught with inequities and runs counter to the principle that officership is simply functional.

Although we have referred to the trend for officers to become clergy and soldiers to think of themselves as laity, there has always been a counter-movement, a consistent tradition of soldier initiative and participation in the Army's work. There has always been some tension between the view that soldiers are "cannon-fodder", with lives co-extensive with Army programmes, and the belief that soldiers are the front line of evangelism in the world, engaged in *real* "full-time service", and to be resourced by officers rather than used. The former approach is always a danger in a clericalising context.

In the "Western world" Army, the second half of the twentieth century saw some attempt to accommodate to the more democratic temper of the times with some consultative machinery on both the local level, with Corps Councils, and territorial level, with a variety of "laymen's advisory" groups. It is interesting that General Clarence Wiseman, an initiator of the latter, had second thoughts on theological grounds – "to have segregated groupings is really in violation of the concept of the priesthood of all believers... thereafter Officers came officially on to the [Canadian] ACSAL."<sup>66</sup>

Two weaknesses have dogged all such attempts at spreading the ownership of policy. Firstly, as Peter Price has observed of the Catholic Church: "The consultative structures of the Church are still only 'recommended' and 'advisory'. They do not necessarily facilitate Lay participation in real decision-making. Such participation as well as its authority are dependent on the individual Bishop or Parish Priest, and may be dismantled at will."<sup>67</sup> Secondly, the default, officer-centred position into which the organisation so readily lapses, attributing omnicompetence to commissioned rank, means that too often business decisions are made by commercial amateurs, with a commensurate loss of credibility in the eyes of Salvation Army soldiers.

A growing late twentieth century trend has been the employment of soldiers in ministry roles – as youth workers, pastoral workers and corps leaders, as well as in social work and administrative roles. This has been particularly the case in western countries with declining officer strength and has provoked further debate about the respective roles and status of officers and soldiers. This has paralleled a similar controversy in the Roman Catholic and some other churches.<sup>68</sup> The difference between the Church and The Salvation Army lies in the fact that the Army does not in theory reserve spiritual ministry and leadership roles for a sacerdotal class. The similarity lies in the fact that in

<sup>66</sup> Minutes of the 1971 International Council of Leaders, p.54.

<sup>67</sup> 'Vatican II: End of a Clerical Church?(1)' in *Australian Ejournal of Theology*, [http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ejournal/aet\\_1Price.htm](http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ejournal/aet_1Price.htm)

<sup>68</sup> See for example, Mary Ann Glendon, "The Hour of the Laity". *First Things*, 127, November 2002, pp.23-29, or John T. Pless, "Vocation: Where Liturgy and Ethics Meet". *Journal of Lutheran Ethics*, Vol.2 No.5, May 13<sup>th</sup> 2002.

practice, because of its hierarchical structure, the Army has tended to behave in the same way as the Church, and change in this area therefore occasions similar tensions.

### **A Monstrous Regiment of Women**<sup>69</sup>

If a question is whether Salvation Army officers are, or are not, clergy, the question may have even more point in the case of women officers, given that ordination of women was not generally accepted in the 19th century. Equality of the sexes has always been one of the Army's boasts. "In the Army," wrote Florence Booth, "we know no distinction, because of sex, which is calculated to limit either a woman's influence or her authority, or her opportunity to serve, by sacrifice, the Kingdom of God."<sup>70</sup>

Over many years, Salvationists regarded the struggles of other denominations over this question with a certain smugness, not always justified, and on two grounds. The first was theological, in that Salvation Army commentators did not always understand the difference between involvement, even leadership, in ministry and a claim to Christian "priesthood". The second reason for some modesty on the question is that the Army's practice has not always matched its precepts. In fact, over much of its history the Army appeared to retreat from its early promise of gender equality. Single women officers were disadvantaged in comparison to their male peers; married women found their officership merged with and subordinated to that of their husbands.

The reason for this was probably simply male chauvinism and the increasing conservatism of a movement institutionalising and tending to be on the defensive. It might be suggested that this touches on our clericalising theme as well. Whatever the Army's rhetoric, the men thought of themselves as clergy, and in the world to which the Army was accommodating it was not yet trendy to think of the women as clergy as well. While the stand taken by the Booths was ground-breaking in the nineteenth century, they found it difficult to apply the principle of gender equality across the board, quite naturally because they were prisoners of their own times and assumptions. Theological principles are not easily imposed on resistant cultural norms. Andrew Mark Eason's *Women in God's Army* explores and analyses

the cultural and theological foundations upon which the organisation was established. Reflecting views that were similar to those of their male counterparts, most Army women espoused beliefs and accepted roles that were incompatible with a principle of sexual equality. A female officer's moral and spiritual functions in the home, combined with her other domestic tasks, either called into question or placed constraints upon her public ministry... Within the public realm, a married or single female officer was usually confined to responsibilities consistent with the notion of sexual difference. She was encouraged to possess a femininity defined in terms of self-sacrifice, weakness, dependency and emotion. This construction of womanhood allowed women to

<sup>69</sup> I cannot claim this seriously inappropriate pun on John Knox as my own; Lt. Colonel Bernard Watson has anticipated me, for a chapter heading in his centenary history of the Army. (*A Hundred Years War*, London, Hodder & Stoughton 1964, p.28.)

<sup>70</sup> *The Officer*, August 1914, pp.509-10. (Florence was wife of Bramwell Booth.)

challenge sinners publicly from the platform or engage in social work, but their overall ministry remained a modest one... Her ideal role was one of service and submission rather than leadership and authority.<sup>71</sup>

The Salvation Army, having in some senses pioneered equality, evidently lost its momentum fairly early in its history, while continuing to believe its own rhetoric. It has only recently begun to address the issues again, firstly as a result of the work of a commission established by General Eva Burrows and its recommendations as implemented by General Paul Rader in the 1990's, and secondly as an outcome of the International Commission on Officership, under General John Gowans.

### **The International Commission on Officership**

General Paul Rader set up an International Commission on Officership, on the recommendation of the 1998 International Conference of Leaders held in Melbourne. Its purpose was "to review all aspects of the concept of officership in the light of the contemporary situation and its challenges, with a view to introducing a greater measure of flexibility" into officer service.<sup>72</sup>

Most of the recommendations deal with "officer conditions". To that extent the commission was a response to the ways in which the original expectations of both the officers and the Army as a whole have drifted out of synch with the changing times and world-view of newer generations. However, the findings of this commission and ensuing changes also bear upon the matters at the heart of this paper – the character of officership, and the question of whether officership is perceived as a functional role or a clerical status.

Of the matters traced in this paper, some recommendations had to do with the role of women and the equality of their status with that of men officers in the matter of allowances, women's appointments and the need for gender balance on Boards and Councils. These largely affirmed, furthered and encouraged reforms already in train. Only with local, territorial exploration, and will to progress, will changes be made.

Secondly, some recommendations bore directly on the status-function dichotomy we have observed through the Army's (and the Church's) history. Under this heading we could place those referring to Covenant and Undertakings, open-ended or short-term commissions, diverse models of spiritual leadership and tent-making ministry.

Concerning the status of officership there was an inherent tension between two of the Commission's terms of Reference: to strengthen the ideal of life-time service and to explore the possibilities of short-term service. The first would shore up the "clerical" assumptions behind officership; the second would permit a greater degree of flexibility based on an "all-lay" ethos. General Gowans opted for the former, perpetuating the two-tier model, both tiers performing the same ministry roles but only one with the

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<sup>71</sup> Andrew Mark Eason, *Women in God's Army*. Waterloo, Ontario, Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2003, p.152.

<sup>72</sup> Norman Howe, "The International Commission on Officership, A Report", *The Officer*, August 1999, p.19.

status of officership, with Lieutenant becoming a warranted rank to replace those of Envoy and Auxiliary Captain. Gowans was unable to commit the Army to a solely “functional” model, and the movement continues to try to have it both ways.

The Commission was not set up to address the issue of clericalisation, so it is not surprising that it did not resolve the tensions between The Salvation Army’s theology and its ecclesiology apparent throughout its history. It was intended to suggest solutions to practical, organisational problems arising from the tensions between an institutional structure, its evolving constituents and its ever changing milieu. In particular, it sought to modify those service conditions which were bringing pressure to bear on officers and making it harder to recruit and retain officers in some territories. However, those conditions and tensions are to some extent the result of and inseparable from the process we have described as clericalisation. Pragmatic rejigging of regulations without recognising and adequately taking into account the underlying sociological and ecclesiological processes involved, is dealing with symptoms without addressing causes. Such measures may meet the need of the hour, or of a decade or two, but do not go far enough to help regroup the Army for the battles of the coming century.

## Conclusions

The Salvation Army had three options regarding clerical status:

### **1. There *are* priests/clerics/people in orders in the Church, with a status distinct from that of the laity, but we *do not* have them in The Salvation Army.**

This would mean The Salvation Army’s acceptance of an “all lay” status for its soldiers and officers and a second class clergy status for its officers, acknowledging itself to be something like an order or an *ecclesiola in ecclesia* rather than a “church” or “denomination”. For Booth it was not enough that his officers should be regarded as Deacons and Deaconesses, members of an inferior order.

### **2. There *are* priests/clerics/people in orders in the Church, and we *do* have them as officers in The Salvation Army.**

The adoption of “ordination” by Arnold Brown, and the claim that the Army’s commissioning had always been equivalent to ordination, amounted to this position. This seemed to be an attempt to endorse officially what Salvationists had come to accept in practice over many years, without being very clear about what was meant by it. The confusion that has grown up on this issue within The Salvation Army is, as has been suggested, partly a result of ambiguity about church order inherited from Methodism, and partly from a desire to be accepted by other Christian denominations as one of them.

**3. There are *no* priests/clerics/orders in the Church, and The Salvation Army does *not* aspire to any. All Christians are “lay”, in the sense that all belong to the people of God, without distinction of status.**

Booth in fact made it clear on more than one occasion that this was his theoretical position; his theology required it. However, the Army's ecclesiology was shaped instead by Booth's autocratic temperament, the need for organisation, the twin demons of militarism and bureaucracy, the susceptibility of human nature to pride and ambition, along with historically conditioned expectations. All these meant that the leadership function, as always, appropriated to itself a dominant role and assumed a regular status. The difficulty lies in the tension between the Salvation Army's hierarchical institutional structure and the “Priesthood of all Believers” ethos inherited from its radical Protestant antecedents. In a word, The Salvation Army has “clericalised”.

I suggest that the tendency to clericalisation has had two related adverse effects on the Church, and, on The Salvation Army.

- Firstly, clericalism fosters a spirit incompatible with the “servanthood” Jesus taught and modelled; it is inimical to the kind of community Jesus appeared to call together.
- Secondly, clericalisation by concentrating power and influence in the hands of a minority, disempowers the great majority of members of the Church. It can therefore diminish the Church's effectiveness in its mission of evangelising and serving the world. It might be possible in fact to argue that the effectiveness of function is in inverse proportion to status claimed.<sup>73</sup>

How might the effect of clericalisation be moderated? We might consider this question under three headings, concerning firstly the vocation of the officer as an individual, secondly the role of the officer, and thirdly the relationship of the officer to the organisation.

### **1. The Officer's Vocation**

Over the years the Reformation concept of all believers having a calling has been narrowed to a clerical focus, into which the Army has bought. A newer generation is less willing to accept this. To maintain officer recruitment the Army therefore has a choice of what in the Catholic Church is called the “restorationist agenda”, attempting to set the clock back, and emphasising the status of officership, or the alternative is to give full value to the vocation of officership as one ministry option without, by implication, devaluing other callings.

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<sup>73</sup> This analysis refers particularly to the Army in the post-Christendom, post-modern, western world. The present growth spurt in the developing world may relate to the fact that less individualistic societies, with a generally stronger culture of belonging and a traditional respect for authority, still relate more easily to the hierarchical, military structure of the Army.

## 2. The Officer's Roles in the Organisation

The debate referred to already and the book, *Servants Together* show that a variety of attempts to define the officer role over against that of soldiers all came to grief over the basic presupposition, derived from our rejection of any hint of sacerdotalism, that there was nothing done by an officer that could not be done by a soldier. It is necessary to fall back on Cecil Waters' dictum that officership is simply the way in which we choose to organise the Army; it has no sacred dimension in itself. It is about leadership.

Given the military metaphor on which the Army is structured, and the necessity of leadership in any human endeavour, it is necessary to ask how we can ensure leadership without the abuse of power to which a hierarchical system is especially vulnerable. Without structural safeguards, all talk of "servant leadership" too easily becomes an instrument of spiritual abuse; systemic privilege and power must be circumscribed. It is true, however, that servant-leader behaviour flows only from servant-leader attitudes, and attitudes are notoriously unamenable to legislation. They have to be caught as well as taught, by the example of what Paul called "working together", by way of contrast with "ruling over".<sup>74</sup> Both structural and attitudinal change is required for this to happen.

## 3. The Officer's Covenant and Undertakings

The Undertakings signed by the officer commit the individual to a number of conditions intended to ensure his or her full availability to the service, equivalent for example to celibacy for the Catholic priesthood. I would argue that the conditions of officer service have helped create status, in so far as they have set officers apart from other Salvationists. We have seen that this was deliberately fostered, along with all the other devices used to create morale and *esprit de corps*. In my view this has now become counterproductive, in that these conditions no longer serve that purpose for people who are already officers and make more difficult the recruitment of their replacements.

The other significance of the Undertakings is that with the officer's explicit renunciation of any legal claim to remuneration or other benefits of employed status, they are the cornerstone of the Army's sharing the "employed by God" status enjoyed by the clergy of most churches. We have seen that this has until now served to safeguard the Army against legal action by its officers. However, it is an anachronism left over from the Theodosian polity of Christendom, and coming under increasing pressure in secular societies.

Rather than trying to hang on to a *soi disant* clerical status which is irrelevant to the needs of the modern world, we could accept that officers are employees, their covenant no different from that of soldiers in the Army's service. At the same time, we could accord officer rank to anyone in a leadership roles normally exercised by an officer. This rationalisation would end the two-tier structure whereby some officers are more equal than others and the anomaly whereby a "mere" soldier can be the leader and focal

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<sup>74</sup> 2 Corinthians 1:24

representative of the Army in a whole community. Rank and status would lose their pseudo-theological rationale.

Leadership is indispensable to the effectiveness of a movement. It is not suggested that structure be abolished; the nature of human affairs is that structures will happen anyway, and their having some continuity, accountability and legitimacy may be necessary to help mitigate the effect of unrestrained personal power. As O’Dea says, “charismatic authority is inherently unstable and... its transformation into institutionalised leadership is necessary for the survival of the group.”<sup>75</sup> But if institutionalisation is inevitable, the prophetic critique, the Reformation’s *ecclesia semper reformanda*, is equally necessary. This section of the Conclusion has attempted to propose some small changes in how the vocation of officership is viewed, in how the role of officership is expressed and in the conditions of officer-service, all with a view to moderating the clericalist tendency. Such comparatively minor modifications to Salvationist culture, some structural, some attitudinal, might at least contribute to the process of re-founding, necessary to the future of The Salvation Army.

However, these suggested changes do not amount to any more than “tinkering”, while it may be that the challenges facing the Church today are of the same order as the implications of global warming for the environment.

## Postlogue

The range of ways in which The Salvation Army in the West is attempting to come to terms with post-modern society could be compared with various contemporary trends in motor car design. At one end of the spectrum there are those manufacturers fashionably “retro” in style, deliberately evoking the design cues of long-past glory days as a market ploy for the present but technologically thoroughly advanced – the recent S-type Jaguar, harking back to the classic Mark II of the 1960’s would be a prime example. At the other end of the spectrum is the handful of curious “green” hybrid petrol-electric or hydrogen-powered vehicles, showing that manufacturers are trying to plan ahead for the day the oil runs out. And in between, the majority of the industry continues to make incremental model changes from year to year as fashion dictates in the hope of improving their market share.

Likewise, in the Salvation Army, there are the “retros” who seek to reawaken the radical passion of the 1880’s – witness an “Army-barmy” website, a “War College” in Vancouver, an on-line *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, a fashion for “Roots” conventions, a growing network of “614” communities. Such activists have been described as “neo-primitive salvationists”<sup>76</sup>

At the other end of the spectrum there is the secret army of those who have gone AWOL, of those who would prefer to disavow the whole military metaphor as inimical to

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<sup>75</sup> Thomas O’Dea, *The Sociology of Religion*. p.49

<sup>76</sup> Shaw Clifton, “What on Earth is Neo-Primitive Salvationism?” The Coutts Memorial Lecture given at the Salvation Army College of Further Education, Sydney NSW, July 2003.



the spirit of the age, for whom every convention is up for grabs and every received truth open to re-negotiation; who believe that the “oil is running out” for the institutional church. They are of that great company from every denomination who have taken their faith with them when they have left the church.<sup>77</sup> Many are “church-burnt” and are unlikely to return to the ranks under existing conditions. They nevertheless represent enormous potential for some future form of the Church, because they are attempting to work out in practice what it means to be Christian in a secular society without any of the traditional supports or conventions, or are in some cases involved in new, experimental forms of Christian community or ‘emergent church’. Behind the lines is always a dangerous place to do the fighting, and casualties are likely to be high.

And in between, the majority of Salvation Army units try to maintain market share, sometimes by soldiering on and trying to hold the line against change, and sometimes by borrowing whatever seems to be working somewhere else – usually from some fashionable US megachurch, or trying to implement the current gospel of “church growth” or “natural church growth” – or attempting to become a generic “community church”.<sup>78</sup> Despite huge effort and some outstanding successes, they tend in the main to be either just holding their ground or are retreating. The casualties are high here too.

The kind of leadership or officership required by each of these models is likely to differ markedly. For the third of these models the present conception of officership could continue to do duty, still with its tension and ambiguity on the question of status and function. However, retaining such a theological hybrid may continue to give rise to the same kinds of inconsistency and inequity we have observed in the past, and limit the ability of the Army to harness fully the resources of its non-officer personnel. The neo-primitive Salvationists, on the other hand, might just possibly stake out the original conception of a “lay” Salvation Army and, for the time being at least, resist the process of clericalisation. Status is of less significance in the trenches than on the parade ground. The “Underground Army” is unlikely to have officers of any kind, and be less interested in questions of accountability or apostolicity.

In these days of exponential change, when a cultural generation in the West is reckoned at less than seven years, it would be foolish to assume that the present fragmentation and individualism experienced in western life, including religious life, will not swing back towards a desperate search for certainty and authority, for which a restorationist theology, or perhaps neo-primitive Salvationism, might be tailor-made. But there is also the possibility that only the underground church will survive the coming storm.

If we recall that almost every revival of Christian religion in the past has involved a reaction against priestly presumption and a renewal of lay power and activity, it may be that the Salvation Army’s best hope is to rediscover this aspect of its original genius.

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<sup>77</sup> See Alan Jamieson, *A Churchless Faith*. Wellington, Garside, 2000; Alan Jamieson, *Called Again: In and Beyond the Deserts of Faith*, Wellington, Garside, 2004; or such websites as <http://www.dechurched.com/>.

<sup>78</sup> See for example, John Larsson, *How Your Corps Can Grow*, London 1988, or Tim Beadle and Joel Matthews, *Let the Son Shine Out: Let God’s Church Find its Place in Your Community*. Toronto ONT, 2000.

This is the age of irregulars, not of parade grounds or set piece battles. Like William Booth, one hundred and forty years ago, it would be necessary for The Salvation Army to admit that it did not know where it was going, but that would not matter. The institutional Church always seems to be bound by the answers to the previous age's questions. It might be better, David Pawson's words, to "find out what the Holy Spirit is doing and join in."<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>79</sup> David Pawson, freelance British house-church leader, speaking in Queenstown, NZ, 9 January 1986.

## Issue #39 – ‘The Salvation Army as a Prophetic Movement?’

by Major Geoff Ryan

### What does prophetic ministry really mean?

The terms “prophet” and “prophetic” are loaded terms. They are loaded with meaning often far removed from their original intention and divested of much depth and nuance and occasionally even integrity. They have become blunt instruments in the hands - or mouths - of whoever wants to use them. It is therefore important to clarify terms of reference right from the beginning.

I would like to suggest that there are two main ways by which “prophetic” is used in Christian circles these days. One is favoured by conservative evangelicals, particularly Charismatic/Pentecostal Christians and one favoured by the more mainline, what might be considered “liberal”, branches of the Church.

One conservative, evangelical view on the prophetic is that of the prophet as a future-teller, often reduced to the role of a fortune-teller. In such an understanding, the prophet is much concerned with the future and things to come, the end times and apocalyptic visions. The prophetic ministry is primarily concerned with what is to come to pass, what will be and what has not yet happened. The present is a concern only in so far as it impacts what is to come in the future, distant or close at hand.

Certainly there are aspects of “future telling” in the prophetic role, however, as Walter Brueggemann points out in *The Prophetic Imagination*: “While one would not want to deny totally those facets of the practice of prophecy, there tends to be a kind of reductionism that is mechanical and therefore untenable. While prophets are in a way future-tellers, they are concerned with the future as it impinges upon the present.” (p. 13)

In this conservative understanding of the prophetic ministry, value is placed on the impartation of power - the prophet is “gifted” by God with special insight usually termed a “word from the Lord”. As Steve Thompson writes in his book, *You May All Prophecy!* “When I use the word prophesy in this book, I am describing receiving and giving a specific “word” to a person or group of people.”(p. 9)

This understanding of prophetic ministry concentrates power in the hands of the prophet. With such insight from God, the prophet’s direct access to God provides a mandate to speak into anyone’s life and situation with impunity. Validation of authentic insight, or “second sight”, is largely subjective and often not held to the same standards of discernment that the Church has traditionally applied to such gifting.

While such a view of the prophetic does contain aspects of biblical prophetic ministry, there is an inherent danger, which lies in all branches of intense charismatic Christianity. Highly emotionally motivated and often accepting only of experiential

validation, the Christian life can be reduced to the realm of feelings (“the worship was anointed today” or “God showed up”) and personal experience (“God told me...”). A high level of subjectivity is tolerated, in which people are loathe to challenge those in authority (those anointed as prophets) lest they are considered un-spiritual. The most troubling result of such an understanding of the prophetic is that issues that traditionally and biblically concerned the prophets, such as social justice, the poor and marginalized, economic inequity, etc. are not deemed priorities. To be “prophetic” takes on a new meaning and purpose that is almost entirely “spiritualized”, the majority of the time concerning itself with issues of personal piety and private sinning.

Meanwhile, the liberals “settled for a focus on the present.” (Brueggemann: p.13). The concept of the “prophetic” is reduced almost exclusively to righteous indignation at societal injustice and therefore, a response through social action. To be prophetic means to be a critical thinker, pointing out what is “not working” and what is “wrong”.

This understanding of the prophetic also contains aspects of biblical prophetic ministry - however concerns itself primarily with criticizing and attacking and tearing down, rather than shifting perceptions. It is about revolution rather than revival. The great danger here lies in replacing a holy God’s concern for justice with human-centred social justice, good works and even social engineering. The destructive ideologies that characterized the twentieth century were all utopianisms that sought to improve the world through means that were justified by end results. This view of the prophetic flies dangerously close to this flame. True prophets also address the internal spiritual condition of people and not only the external social conditions of the society. They are grounded in God and his word and not political thought systems.

So, what does it mean to be a prophet and to have a prophetic ministry? How is this distinct or different in any way from priests and the priestly function? Why should it matter to Salvationists in the 21st century, living in an era long after the advent of Jesus, who resolved within himself this tension, by being both prophet and high priest?

In one very simple definition, a priest is someone who talks to God on behalf of the people; a prophet is one who speaks to the people (society, culture, the church) on behalf of God. *In The Prophetic Imagination*, Brueggemann defines prophetic ministry in the following manner:

*“The task of prophetic ministry is to nurture, nourish, and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us” (p.13).*

*“It is the task of prophetic ministry to bring the claims of the tradition and the situation of enculturation into an effective interface. That is, the prophet is called to be a child of the tradition, one who has taken it seriously in the shaping of his or her own field of perception and system of language, who is so at home in that memory that the points*

*of contact and incongruity with the situation of the church in culture can be discerned and articulated with proper urgency” (p. 12).*

Brueggemann’s definitions will be our basic construct for this discussion of the prophetic and its relevance to us today. I want to state at the outset that I believe The Salvation Army was raised up by God to serve a prophetic role in culture and in the Church. However first we need to look at the prophetic tradition in the Bible, commencing in the Old Testament, in order to give ourselves some background understanding and context.

### **The Prophetic Tradition in the Bible**

As far as anyone can tell from the Scriptures, the first record of God endorsing “religion” is found in the book of Exodus (starting at chapter 19 until the end of the book and continuing on into Leviticus). Not long after Moses has led the people out of Egypt, he is summoned to Mount Sinai by God to receive the Ten Commandments, as well as a host of instructions regulating the separate life of God’s chosen people. While Moses is gone, the people, tiring of waiting and dealing with an abstract God that only their leader had access to, collected all their jewellery and, in imitation of the surrounding peoples, fashioned an idol and declared it their god (Exodus 32).

Up to this point, Israel had no formal religion. What they did have was a man who approached God on their behalf and approached them on God’s behalf. No rituals or traditions, no teaching, no system of observance - no religion, in short. This was in stark contrast to the surrounding cultures among whom they moved, the Egyptians and the other peoples they encountered as they fled Egypt. In these cultures, the gods had “incarnated” themselves in forms and rituals that gave structure and meaning to their adherents’ lives. Dealing with the pure abstract for any sustained period of time is virtually impossible for humans. We serve a God who is Spirit (ergo abstract) yet who defines himself relationally in reference to us as his creations. However, our need to codify things in concrete terms is too strong to deny. God acknowledges this right at the beginning in Exodus by providing a complex and all encompassing religious system in order to satisfy this need in his people and to provide a concrete way through which they can maintain a relationship with him and deal with their sins. God’s ultimate acknowledgement of this need in his creation is Christ’s incarnation several thousand years later. It began however with Moses at the foot of Mount Sinai.

God instituted all this for the benefit of his people. It was about us, not him. God is self-sufficient and self-contained and needs nothing outside of himself- he never lived in that golden box known as the Ark of the Covenant. These were all symbols whose function was to serve our needs until the time when the fulfillment of these symbols arrived.

*“Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a new Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. These are a shadow of*

*the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.” (Colossians 2:16,17)*

The Temple was built in Israel and a system of Temple worship instituted. The Temple became the focal point of the nation, the heart of the people - a permanent symbol of God's accessibility. However, it was always intended to serve a symbolic function, as Solomon's dedicatory prayer makes clear:

*“But will God really dwell on earth? The heavens, even the highest heaven, cannot contain you. How much less this temple I have built!” (1 Kings 8:27)*

Over time, however, Temple worship became corrupted. The priesthood, a religious order whom God had called into existence starting with Aaron, was to serve the function of regulating and maintaining the spiritual life of the nation through the faith system that God had ordained. However, what was meant to symbolically represent and concretely contextualize a spiritual (abstract) reality became itself the focal point of people's devotion and worship. The Temple and the worship centred in it, were idolized and subsequently became corrupted - the “means” became the “end”. This is one of the inevitable outcomes of faith and religion divorcing. One of them, generally religion, is elevated above and beyond the other. The history of religion through human history is a sad litany of this imbalance. Nearly all of the more unsavoury chapters in the history of the Church can be traced to moments when true faith and its helpmate religion, become disconnected. Religion assumes the dominant role in place of faith and a vital relationship with a living God. Once this takes place, anything and everything can be justified in the name of God. The Crusades, the Inquisition, the Nazis marching into war with “God With Us” etched on their belt buckles and more modern-day examples such as the conflict in Northern Ireland.

To counter what had happened with the Temple worship and among the priesthood, God rose up a “second stream” or a second team - the prophets. Some of these men were themselves priests; many were not. To effect a “holy tension” in order to realign his people and refocus them on himself, God required that the prophets concentrate their message on areas neglected by the priests. The priests, perhaps inevitably, given our need for making the abstract tangible and our weakness for power, focused their efforts primarily on ritual and formalism, external observance and ceremonial religion. The prophets were tasked to go to the heart of things.

The prophets pretty much had one message: Get your heart right with God and everything else will follow. If the heart is not right, then everything else is becomes skewed and ultimately pointless in God's eyes. If your relationship with God is not sorted, then your programs are empty; if your heart is not right (internal) then your worship (external) is unacceptable. They spoke of relationship, with God and with others. God speaks to his people through their relationships with others and their love and devotion to God are to be expressed by serving those whom they are in relationship with. True worship and religious expression are validated by a social imperative, and a person's relationship to God is integrally linked to their relationship with others, in particular those whom God called “the least”.

*“Stop bringing meaningless offerings! Your incense is detestable to me. New Moon, Sabbaths and convocations - I cannot bear your evil assemblies. Your New Moon festivals and your appointed feasts my soul hates. They have become a burden to me; I am weary of bearing them. When you spread out your hands in prayer, I will hide my eyes from you; even if you offer many prayers, I will not listen. Your hands are full of blood; wash and make yourselves clean. Take your evil deeds out of my sight! Stop doing wrong, learn to do right! Seek justice, encourage the oppressed. Defend the cause of the fatherless, plead the case of the widow.” (Isaiah 1:13-17)*

*“Is not this the kind of fasting I have chosen: to loose the chains of injustice and untie the cords of the yoke, to set the oppressed free and break every yoke? Is it not to share your food with the hungry and to provide the poor wanderer with shelter – when you see the naked, to clothe him, and not to turn away from your own flesh and blood.” (Isaiah 58:6,7)*

*“This is what the Lord Almighty, the God of Israel, says: Go ahead, add your burnt offerings to your other sacrifices and eat the meat yourselves! For when I brought your forefathers out of Egypt and spoke to them, I did not just give them commands about burnt offerings and sacrifices, but I gave them this command: Obey me, and I will be your God and you will be my people. Walk in all the ways I command you, that it may go well with you.” (Jeremiah 7:21-23)*

*“For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” (Hosea 6:6)*

*“I hate, I despise your religious feasts; I cannot stand your assemblies. Even though you bring me burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them. Though you bring choice fellowship offerings, I will have no regard for them. Away with the noise of your song! I will not listen to the music of your harps. But let justice roll on like a river, righteousness like a never-failing stream.” (Amos 5:21-24)*

*“With what shall I come before the Lord and bow down before the exalted God? Shall I come before him with burnt offerings, with calves a year old? Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, with ten thousand rivers of oil? Shall I offer my firstborn for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul? He has showed you, O man, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God.” (Micah 6:6-8)”*

The tension created by these two “streams” was intense. The prophets felt compelled to denounce the false sense of security that the people had gained by trusting in the Temple and its service. They were speaking an often unpopular message that made the people uncomfortable and that challenged the religious (ergo State) power system.

The prophets did strange things in order to get the people’s attention and to get

God's message across. They were the original sensationalists (revivalists) and "out-of-the-box" thinkers. Hosea was told to marry the town whore; Ezekiel lay on his side for 390 days and cooked bread using human waste as fuel; Jeremiah invested in real estate in a city on the verge of capture. Saints and sinners alike misunderstood the prophets and, though meeting with some success, most met the same fate: *"Was there ever a prophet your fathers did not persecute? They even killed those who predicted the coming of the Righteous One."* (Acts 7:52) Extreme counter-culturalism was met by death, more often than not.

As we enter into the New Testament period in Israel, the priests had truly triumphed. During and after the exile years, the prophetic voice slowly died out. The prophets, concerned as they were with issues of true faith in a God of justice and equity and the implications of these ethically and morally in society, were linked to the periods when Israel was sovereign and had her own kings. As Israel came under foreign domination and lost control over the life of the nation, the prophets fell silent. Some scholars speak of the 400 years of silence when no prophet was heard in Israel. By the time the Romans arrived, the national power was concentrated with the Sadducees (priests) and the Pharisees (religious legalists). There was no one exercising a prophetic ministry.

Then John the Baptist appears (John 1:19-23), a prophet in the classic Old Testament mode, and speaking much the same message. John was followed by Jesus:

*"When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, 'Who do people say the Son of Man is?' They replied, 'Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets.'" (Matthew 16:13,14).*

In their mission, both John and Jesus were firmly in the prophetic line, at odds with the religious establishment, in tension with the priests and seemingly dismissive of ritual convention. Both met the same fate as the other prophets.

Jesus' most quoted Old Testament verse was *Hosea 6:6: "For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings."* A key passage to the understanding of Jesus as prophet is his encounter with the Samaritan woman in John 4:1-38. In this encounter, as with pretty much all his encounters with people, he drew them toward the centre, the essence of the law. He summed up the Ten Commandments, the heart of the Old Testament law, in a succinct way:

*"Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength. The second one (commandment) is this: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' There is no greater commandment than these two."* (Mark 12:29).

Jesus' encounter with the Pharisees and teachers of the law in Mark 7:1-23 is paradigmatic, a pivotal encounter between the prophetic focus on the essential heart



of things and the priestly obsession with ceremonialism. *"You have let go of the commands of God and are holding on to the traditions of men,"* asserted Jesus. *"Nothing outside a man can make him 'unclean' by going into him.* Rather, it is what comes out of a man that makes him 'unclean', he later states, clearing drawing the lines of perspective.

Jesus, however, was also a priest - the great high priest (Hebrews 4:14-16; 5: 1-10, 7:1-28; 8:1-6; 10:1-18). This tension between the inward and the outward, between relationship and ceremony, symbol and reality, shadow and substance, priest and prophet runs throughout the Bible, from the foot of Mount Sinai until the coming of Jesus who ushered in the new order (Hebrews 9:10) and who combined perfectly these two aspects of true faith and mission.

### **The Prophetic Tradition and The Salvation Army**

God raised The Salvation Army up as a prophetic movement. Theologically and culturally we were positioned prophetically in contradistinction to the dominant culture, both culturally and religiously.

Our early theological convictions ranging from our non-observance of the sacraments (communion and water baptism), empowerment of women for ministry, our bias toward the poor, our use of non-sacred music and even our choice of venues in which to hold meetings (music halls, etc) can all be understood as prophetic in the context that has been defined here.

From early on, The Salvation Army viewed itself as a prophetic movement. The first Officers Training College in London was called "The School of the Prophets". Booth was known as the "Prophet of the Poor" (the title of a 1905 biography by Thomas Coates). Samuel Logan Brengle's official biography is titled "Portrait of a Prophet". Booth's favourite Scripture passage was Isaiah 58 - he referred to it as "The Charter of The Salvation Army".

Our relationship to the other, established churches was initially one of great tension which, even though it has eased considerably through the years as The Salvation Army grew and established credibility, was defined by the prophetic stance we adopted in relation to the perceptions and practices of the other churches. We felt that we had something to say to the wider church; something to remind them about (the poor); something about which to bear witness (ritualism and the sacraments); areas needing challenging (female ministry). One could say that we viewed our Christian brothers and sisters as primarily priests, and ourselves as primarily prophets.

In time, though, we settled down. We "came in from the hills" and built Temples of our own. We hankered after the status of priests and the certainty of established ritual. Most denominations still tend to hold the Army at arm's length, mainly due to our theological understanding of sacraments, and refuse to grant us the

ecclesiastical legitimacy that many feel is important. Yet we continue to strive hard to establish ourselves as priests and, in fact, to function as priests. We have worked hard to throw off the “prophetic mantle” of our early years.

I believe that God called The Salvation Army into being for a prophetic purpose and that this is who we are - it is in our DNA. If the Army is to now to emerge into robust adulthood as a movement, 140 years after our birth, having moved from a glorious (and rambunctious) infancy and through an awkward adolescence, then we need to understand, accept and embrace our true identity as a prophetic movement.

But how is this to be expressed today, in the post-modern milieu of the early 21st century? What does God want us to say to his people?

I hold two convictions that shape my thinking theologically and my actions missiologically. One conviction is about the prophetic role of the Church in culture and society, and the other is more particularly about The Salvation Army’s prophetic voice within Church culture. Both, I believe, are convictions that strive to “evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us.”

### **Speaking prophetically in the world**

I have a conviction that there is only one credible message left for the church to speak in the world today. That is, there is only one message that might capture the attention of the world, one message that the world might possibly listen to. That message can be encapsulated by combining Galatians 3:26-28 and Colossians 3:11:

*“Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.”*

Everything that the church has historically done, every good work, in order to make the Gospel attractive and to lend weight and credibility to our faith (which is dead without actions, as James said) can be, and has been, replicated by the world. Hospitals, schools, various expressions of social service and assistance ranging from shelter beds to counselling to addiction programs to youth centres - all such initiatives have their genesis in the Church.

Before governments realized their responsibility in these areas, before private charities and non-profits emerged, it was only the Church that educated children, took care of the sick, and helped the fallen. While the church continues to do this (in particular The Salvation Army) and should continue to do such things, as expressions of Christ’s love, it’s capacity to enhance the Good News and it’s usefulness in giving credence to our mission, are diminished greatly from the time when we were “the only game in town”. The “competition”, for lack of a better term, is so intense in these areas that that the uniquely Christian aspect of practical, charitable service is all but lost.

Paradoxically, words have become increasingly emptied of meaning as well. The Internet and E-mail, globalized mass media and mass culture are all expressions of a world in which there is simply too much information for people to process. Too many words, in fact. The straightforward and unadorned proclamation of the Good News has never had it so bad. A post-modern, media and technology-savvy generation requires that in any presentation, content has to fight for attention against image and sensation. Experientially based, sensation driven theologies are a better draw than the dry, intellectualism of the rationalistic Christianity of the recent past. In the wider cultural sphere, anyone can say anything these days, with equal credence, given the context of a tolerant, pluralistic culture committed to moral relativism and ethical subjectivity. Words are cheap.

So what we say - even if it is heard - will likely not be listened to. And if what we do - even if it is noticed - will not be linked with our message, what is left? What remains that is uniquely Christian, that the world cannot replicate and that no one else is saying with any degree of validation? I believe it is that message of reconciliation that Jesus left with the church:

*"All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: Be reconciled to God." (2 Corinthians 5:18-20).*

In a world that is fractured along a thousand fault lines of ethnicity, religion, racial and tribal loyalties, nationalism and economics; where in a thousand villages and cities around the globe the juggernaut of Globalism meets the backlash of Tribalism; where skin colour, tribal affiliation, religious practice or geographical happenstance are determining factors in whether or not a person will live to their 21st birthday; where over thirty wars are raging at present globally, each because of seemingly non-reconcilable issues of race, religion or economics - what is the message that needs to be spoken prophetically into such a world?

I like to think that a typical Sunday service at my corps 614, in Regent Park, Toronto, implicitly embodies something of this message of reconciliation. Our neighbourhood, our "parish", is the rough part of our city - challenged economically, struggling with social problems and crime and containing about 100 nationalities within a 15-minute walking radius. Regent Park itself, the oldest and largest housing project in Canada, covers 69 acres - about one square mile. Running east to west, is Dundas Street, the only through street in the whole neighbourhood. It divides north Regent from south Regent, or "Northside" from "Southside".

In the spring of last year, a young man was shot and killed on a Friday evening, a half a block north of where we hold our Sunday services. The family had an Army

connection through an uncle in another city so I was asked to conduct the funeral. At the uncle's request this was a private family affair, with no friends or acquaintances from "the Park" invited. However, we were asked to organize a memorial service to which his friends from the neighbourhood could be invited and so we planned one for the following Saturday. The only building we had available to hold the memorial service was the city-owned community centre that we rent each week for our Sunday meetings (we have no building of our own). The community centre is situated half a block south from the site of the shooting.

The boy was shot about 3 yards north of Dundas Street, just inside north Regent. He was a "Northside" boy, as the tattoo emblazoned on his lower stomach proudly proclaimed. The community centre we use is situated half a block away from where he was gunned down, about 20 yards south of Dundas Street, just inside south Regent. Nobody showed up for the memorial. It seems that we had disrespected the memory of this boy by holding a memorial for him on the Southside. This situation would seem ridiculous if it had not involved the death of a young man.

In such a context, add to the mixing pot of ethnicities in our community, who often continue to grind their tribal and political axes here in their new home, the pressure from the increasingly gentrified adjacent communities, where a trendy, upscale housing market has emerged from the ruins of the old slum community, and the potential for conflict and the need for reconciliation quickly becomes obvious. Our neighbourhood is, in many ways, a microcosm of the larger world.

Yet, each Sunday evening at 4:30 p.m. our mongrel of a church meets and worships and fellowships. One hundred plus people of all ages and different skin colour. It is a veritable polyglot of racial backgrounds, all babbling different languages and dialects and representing all strata of society from wealthy professionals through middle-class and petit bourgeois to working poor, welfare Moms and the homeless. Straight and gay, addicted and abstinent, profane and pious – I am convinced that Sunday church at 614 Toronto represents the most disparate and eclectic group of people gathering anywhere in our city.

And so it should be. Commissioner Phil Needham, explaining of true community, true church, writes in his book, "Community in Mission":

*"The Church is not a grouping of individual Christians; it is a community in which Christians share in one another's struggles and hopes. In the fellowship of believers, Christians bear one another's burdens (Galatians 6:2), weep together, rejoice together (Romans 12:15), lift one another up in prayer (Romans 1:9; 2 Corinthians 9:14; Ephesians 1:16; Philippians 1:4; Colossians 4:2; etc), and love one another as Christ loved them (John 13:34). There is togetherness in this fellowship that goes far deeper than mere camaraderie. The pledge which the Spirit empowers the Church to carry out is the pledge of members of the community of faith to be with one another in every circumstance." (p. 15)*

This was the message of the early church. This, I believe, lay at the heart of what Jesus was getting at during the Last Supper, Passover meal. This is why Paul was compelled to traverse the ancient world planting churches and instituting "Love Feasts" in order to get the message across about the reconciliation that Jesus had effected through his crucifixion.

In reconciling man to God and man to man, Jesus reversed the effects of the Fall, the moment when our relationship with God was severed (Genesis 3:1-24) and the subsequent murder of Abel by Cain (Genesis 4:1-16). When relationship with God is ruptured, then we cannot sustain relationship with each other because the two are inexplicably linked. Jesus' last command to his church was intentionally this: *"Love one another. As I have loved you, so you must love one another. All men will know that you are my disciples if you love one another."* (John 13:34,35)

If The Salvation Army is called to be a prophetic presence in the world, then this starts with the recognition that our world - both our individual Monday-to-Friday-to-Sunday-morning worlds as well as the larger global family - is profoundly conflicted and deeply divided. From this starting point, we must speak and act a biblical reconciliation that transcends the boundaries and barriers that not only plague the world, but those also bind us in the church.

One American preacher remarked that 11 am on Sunday mornings is the most segregated hour in American life. Though we live in apartment buildings with people of different race and ride elevators with people of colour and work in workplaces with people of various ethnicities, every Sunday morning when we go to worship God, people divide into their own particular racial groupings. We build black churches, Hispanic churches, Chinese churches, churches for the wealthy, churches for youth - all sorts of mono-cultural churches, some ethnically based, other based on age or interests or income and status. By so doing, we model ourselves after a world in which people only associate with people "like themselves" and we fail to model the Kingdom of God, an inclusive Kingdom of the whosoever, where differences are cause for celebration, not division. In today's world, the mission statement of every Christian faith community should be: *"Here there is no Greek or Jew, circumcised or uncircumcised, barbarian, Scythian, slave or free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."*

For example, here in Kentucky we are on the edge of the American south, a place where the black-white issue has never been truly resolved, either in society or within the church. In spite of the great strides made by the Civil Rights movement over three decades ago, the tensions run deep and hard. In the words of a friend of mine who is a Salvation Army officer born, raised and presently serving in the Southern Territory, the "spell has never been broken". Look around the room at your fellow Salvationist students. Racially and economically do you reflect the cities and towns where you are from? Or do we reflect that statistic that says that less than 1% of churches in North America are reaching people "unlike themselves."

If the church - the church "large C" and the "small C" local congregation - is meant to be an outpost of the Kingdom of God, reflecting what heaven is like, then what vision of heaven are we speaking of? What vision will capture the imagination of a weary and divided world unable to rise above its irreconcilable differences? The book of Revelation gives us a vision worth striving for: "*I looked and there before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and in front of the Lamb.*" (Revelation 7:9).

The Salvation Army is complicit, both at national and international levels, of not speaking this message clearly or distinctly enough. We need to change and strive to "encircle the world with our arms", in the words of William Booth, and challenge the Church to do the same. As we have entered the new millennium, the witness of the church is lost in the babble, one voice among a myriad, all speaking much the same thing, as far as Joe Public is concerned - one great choir of cacophony.

Can we sing a different song, though? Can we sing a new song in this strange land of the 21st century even though we are a church in exile? Apart from the Roman Catholic Church, the Salvation Army is virtually the only truly international church that benefits from a centralized authority. Can our voice sound in the halls of ecclesiastical authority? Can the witness of our internationalism be used of God to speak prophetically to the Church and the world beyond our church walls? We are, after all, an Army that numerically (statistically) is overwhelmingly brown and yellow and not white, based on soldier and officer strength. We have a hope to offer and it is a realistic hope to counter the Bosnias and Rwandas and Middle East of the world. It is the hope that in Christ we can truly be reconciled with our Creator and his other creations. It is a message that the world should be able to come and see how this works every Sunday.

The last time I was at Asbury I heard the venerable John M. Perkins speak. He told a story of an Indian friend of his who is a Christian and a philosopher. Speaking of the church and its present fascination with power and experience, the friend told Dr. Perkins that anything that a Benny Hinn or an Oral Roberts or any other Christian miracle-worker can do, he can find a "Fakir" (a local Indian holy man) who can do the same thing. Pretty much everything - except one thing, that is. There is one thing the holy men cannot do. They cannot make a high-caste Indian love a low-caste Indian. That takes the power of the Gospel!

### **Speaking prophetically in the church**

I have a conviction that the other main reason God had in raising up The Salvation Army was as a prophetic voice within the church - to live and speak as constant reminders to the Church of Jesus Christ not to forget the poor. I believe that the only true theological distinctive of The Salvation Army is our calling to the poor. From the outset of our history, this was the motivation for our mission and today it is the only

raison d'être for our continued existence. William Booth's personal convictions on this matter are quite clear.

*"God shall have all there is of me. There have been men with greater brains than I, even with greater opportunities, but from that day when I got the poor of London on my heart and caught a vision of what Jesus Christ could do to change them and me, on that day, I made up my mind that God should have all of William Booth that there was."*

*"To help the poor, to minister to them in their slums, to sympathize with them in their poverty, afflictions, and irreligion, was the natural outcome that came to my soul through believing in Jesus Christ."*

Why was God moved to rise up The Salvation Army? There were two main determining factors. The state of society (the world) and the positioning of the churches relative to society. Booth was shown a London where a full one-tenth of the population was "submerged" in poverty, vice and sin. His subsequent efforts through mission stations and corps and social endeavours ranging from the "Cab Horse Charter" to his treatise "In Darkest England and the Way Out", focused on this submerged tenth. The churches of the day had no interest in reaching them and left to themselves, they would never darken the door of any place of worship. This was Booth's world. The question for us is that 140 years later what, if anything, has changed?

I want to quote last year's Miller Lecture speaker, Dr. Jonathan Raymond, from an article that ran in "Word & Deed" in 2002 entitled: "Creating Christian Community in a Fragmented World."

*Throughout the twentieth century...War, civil strife, genocide seemed ubiquitous and normative simultaneously...Today, the asset of 358 people (billionaires) in the world is greater than the combined income of 45% (2.6 billion) of the world's people. The share of the global income of the poorest 20% of the world's population has dropped from 2.3% to 1.4% since the late 1960's. Booth's "submerged tenth" is now nearer a thirtieth."*

Submerged tenth to a submerged thirtieth - hardly an improvement! If the needs of the poor and marginalized, locally and globally, are greater now than they were in Booth times, what about the "positioning" of the churches? By this I mean, the Church's capacity and willingness to engage with the poor?

A quick perusal of any Christian (evangelical) bookstore will reveal that the vast majority of resources on offer in the areas of evangelism, mission, church planting, church models, children's ministry etc are not dedicated toward ministry with the poor and marginalized, urban or otherwise. Browse the web and research the major conferences to be held this coming year in "evangelicaldom" and note their subject matter and the demographic they appeal to. Who are our "heroes" in the realm of

Christian leaders? Which churches do we read up on and seek to imitate as models of ministry? What do you think the percentage split is among Salvation Army officers who, in the past five years have visited either Saddleback or Willow Creek Community Churches versus those who have checked out the Sojourners Community in Washington or JPUSA in Chicago? Apart from a few Catholic orders and independent missions, I cannot name one evangelical, protestant church that is focused on and committed to reaching the poor.

I have two quotes on the wall of my office at 614, and they serve as constant reminders to me of the mission of the church as I understand it:

*“Jesus was not crucified in a cathedral between two candles, but on a cross between two thieves on the town garbage-heap; at a crossroads so cosmopolitan that they had to write His title in Hebrew, Latin and Greek; at the kind of place where cynics talk smut, and thieves curse, and soldiers gamble. Because that is where He died and that is what He died about that is where the church should be and what the church should be about.” (George MacLeod)*

*“Meanwhile our churches, like secular associations, are concerned with fund-raising, beautiful buildings, large numbers, comforting sermons from highly qualified preachers, while they display indifference to the poor, and to the pariahs of society – drunks, whores, homosexuals, the poor, the insane, and the lonely. Jesus himself would find no place in our all-too-respectable churches, for he did not come to help the righteous but to bring sinners to repentance. Our churches are not equipped to do that sort of thing.” (John White)*

The “dominant culture” of the protestant church in North America is one inextricably linked to wealth and power. The gospel of prosperity, preached so explicitly on TV screens, is ubiquitously present throughout modern-day North American evangelicalism. For years evangelicals have lauded Paul (David) Yongi Cho for having the largest church in the world (Full Gospel Central Church in Seoul, Korea). We read his books and invite him to speak at mainstream, evangelical conferences. Yet Yongi Cho is a proponent of this theology. We all sing songs from the Hill Song conglomerate out of Australia and read books by Darlene Zschech, the high profile worship leader of Hill Song. The Hill Song organizations are proponents of the prosperity gospel. Even Bruce Wilkenson’s “Prayer of Jabez” that swept through the evangelical world like wild fire a few years ago, is essentially implicit prosperity teaching - asking for God’s blessing, something most easily quantified in material terms.

This has always been an underlying dynamic in North American Protestantism, woven into the fabric of the stories of our culture - the “great American dream”, driven by the Protestant work ethic, singing as we worked: “I’ve got a mansion just over the hilltop / In that bright land where we’ll never grow old /And some day yonder we will never more wander / But walk on streets that are purest gold”. (Ira Stamphill)



Implicit in the assumptions of our model churches (such as Bill Hybel's Willow Creek Community Church or Rick Warren's Saddleback Community Church) are a corporate ethos that views the pastor as CEO (there is a book on the market by a Laurie Beth Jones entitled "Jesus CEO") and that elevates success indicators such as rapid growth and size, quantifying "success" in the same way, and using the same terms, as any corporate structure. The Church Growth Movement and more lately, the Natural Church Development method, are examples of business tools, backed by sociological methods, applied to the Church. The meta-narrative, told countless times, is of a small group of friends who gathered together to start a new kind of church, usually in someone's living room and within eight years it has grown to several thousand members and... The narrative is interchangeable with Apple or Microsoft or any number of the dot.com enterprises that sprung up starting in the 1990's.

According to the Brueggemann: "The contemporary (American) church is so largely acculturated to the American ethos of consumerism that it has little power to believe or act...our consciousness has been claimed by false fields of perception and idolatrous systems of language and rhetoric" (p.11).

Not long after returning from almost a decade of service in Russia, while holidaying at a Salvation Army facility, I overheard some friends talking about a Corps Sergeant-Major in a local corps who drove a new Mercedes-Benz. I joined in the conversation by asking why would a Christian be driving a Mercedes? Further, I wondered why would a Salvationist Christian be driving a Mercedes? My question was met with a combination of annoyance, anger and eye-rolling sufferance at the recently returned, self-righteous missionary. You see this local officer was seen as an example of success. He held a relatively powerful position in a relatively powerful corps in the city. He came from a well-known Army family. His possession of a luxury car such as a Mercedes-Benz was somehow seen as a validation of The Army and a kudo for the corps that he attended. I viewed the situation as incongruous with my understanding of the Gospel and more particularly, the calling of The Salvation Army, but I was alone in holding this opinion.

Wealth and power go hand in hand. Attending a Christian conference in the southern United States last year, I was struck by how many of the songs used in the contemporary worship had the motif of Jesus as King. Along with this, the lyrics were rife with allusions to war, battle and conquering. They seemed full of imperialistic imagery. Many of the prayers offered up were those in which we were "taking back what is ours" and "claiming places that we could put our foot on". As an aside at the end of one fervent prayer, a friend leaned over and remarked that in the course of the weekend he had heard more references to Satan than he had over the past year. Intentional and deliberate? I do not believe it was. If anything is to be read into it, it possibly represents an unconscious reaction to the ethos of projected power, connected with the war that the United States is presently engaged in - a war that has been couched in theological language and rooted in deeply religious worldviews.

If nothing else, 9/11 has put religion firmly back on the map in the increasingly secular West. An act of terrorism that was profoundly religiously motivated was met and matched with a theological rhetoric (examine President Bush's speeches immediately before and after 9/11) and two action-orientated responses: a military action and an urging for us all to "go shopping" to help stimulate the economy.

In their attacks, Al Quaeda targeted political (military) and financial symbols. The White House, the Pentagon, and the World Trade Centre. The effects of what happened on that day continue to reverberate in The Salvation Army. A financial crisis was precipitated in all the American Territories and in my home Territory of Canada and Bermuda. In the few short years since 9/11, we have been plunged into a financial crises that has so far seen the amalgamation of six Divisions, the closing of one of our Training Colleges, the selling of three Divisional camps, budget cuts across all Divisional and Territorial Headquarters Departments by up to 30%, the closing of numerous corps, and it is not finished yet.

In a church that is strives for success, hungers after power and can never get enough money, what happens to the poor, to the "last, the lost, the least"? There is an adage that that "terrorism is the war of the poor and war is the terrorism of the rich". The "wretched of the earth" (Franz Fanon) seem to be aligned with Al Quaeda, the PLO, and the popular people's movements. The church seems to be aligned with the globalism, capitalism, consumerism, materialism and military might. Something is very wrong.

In their book *Political Holiness: A Spirituality of Liberation*, Pedro Casaldaliga and Jose-Maria Vigil, make the following case for an alternative view of the mission of the church:

*"In Jesus, God emptied himself in kenosis. God did not become generically human, but specifically poor, 'taking the form of a slave.' (Philippians 2:7). He 'lived among us' (John 1:14), among the poor. He did not come into the world in general - which would itself have been an 'emptying' - but into the world of outcasts. He chose that social level: on the margins, among the oppressed, with the poor. The kenosis of the 'in-carnation' did not consist simply in taking on 'flesh'... but also in taking on 'poverty', the poverty of humankind.*

*The church, as a whole, if it wished to be increasingly evangelical and more effectively evangelizing, will have to go through this exodus and into this emptying process. It will have to insert itself - with its human and material resources and all its institutional weight - into the social situation of the poor majorities, among the greatest needs of the poor, on the periphery of this human world divided into rich and poor. The mystical body of Christ has to be where the historical body of Christ was."*

## **Conclusion**

Brueggemann concludes that the church's loss of identity through the abandonment of the faith tradition is the internal cause for our enculturation and acquiescence in the face of opposing values of the world. Consumer culture is "organized against history...there is a depreciation of memory and a ridicule of hope, which means everything must be held in the now, either an urgent now or an eternal now." Any community that is "rooted in energizing memories and summoned by radical hopes is a curiosity and a threat in such a culture". The Salvation Army is definitely a curiosity, but are we a threat? "When we suffer from amnesia, every form of serious authority for faith is in question, and we live unauthorized lives of faith and practice unauthorized ministries," concludes Brueggemann.

The question is are we as a people of God living "unauthorized lives of faith" with reference to the life of faith and the journey of mission that God planned for us? Are we practicing "unauthorized ministries", away from the poor, in ghettos of our own sociological and cultural comfort zones - playing at being priests, when we should be shouting as prophets?

Do we, within our ranks of missionaries, "nurture, nourish and evoke a consciousness and perception alternative to the consciousness and perception of the dominant culture around us", or do we acquiesce and sing the songs scripted for others in the church and not our own songs, even in exile?

Do we truly understand who we are as a people, and whom we are called to as a church? Are we truly children of the tradition in the Army who have taken seriously the prophetic calling of our movement in the shaping of our own fields of perception and system of language? Can we, with proper urgency, discern and articulate the points of incongruity of our church in the culture of society and the culture of the wider church, regardless of the cost?

I believe that if the Salvation Army is not willing to re-engage the world prophetically and speak prophetically within the Church, then there is no practical use for us as a distinct people of God and no compelling reason for our continued existence.

May we heed the words of the Spirit to the Churches in Ephesus and Sardis:  
*"You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have fallen! Repent and do the things you did at first...I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your deeds complete in the sight of my God." (Revelation 2:4,5; 3:2)*

May God challenge The Salvation Army to live up to our founding vision as prophets!

#### End Notes

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## **Issue #40 – ‘The Unofficial Sacramental Position of the JAC Editorial Board’**

by Captain Stephen Court

*the unofficial sacramental position of the editorial board (minus one of the two members) of the Journal of Aggressive Christianity.  
(complain to [revolution@mmccxx.net](mailto:revolution@mmccxx.net))*

I had an interesting experience at a territorial symposium recently. The inevitable (in our territory) pro-sacrament proposal came and was nearly approved to be forwarded to the TC and Cabinet. When asked if there was any dissent to the various proposals, I sheepishly stuck my hand in the air and admitted I had some problems with the pro-sacramental proposal.

Asked to explain, I bored a few people with what follows (I've tidied up a couple of contradictions I made there, and added some bonus material, too!):

### **Origins.**

But to kick things off, let me testify that this issue never arises in my corps, in which new converts join Christian community and become disciples within the context of primitive Salvationism. The issue seems to emerge from two sources: Christians transferring over to The Army from churches, and corps officers who are more influenced from outside The Army than from inside.

For the first problem, let me suggest that The Army assert a position more akin to America than to Canada relating to immigrants. If you move permanently to America you are expected to become American in lifestyle and culture and practice. If you move to Canada we bend over backwards so that you can live whatever way you want. The result is that American culture is enriched and Canadian cultural fabric is shredded. The Army has suffered tears in its cultural fabric by celebrating the lack of cooptation of incoming transfers.

For the second problem, let me suggest that corps officers read Horizons and The Officer and Salvation Army books and websites. There are a couple of great resources I can recommend to start- The Orders and Regulations and the Handbook of Doctrine. Good stuff.

### **The Argument.**

The Salvation Army is non-sacramental for two main reasons: 1. Biblical; 2. Missional.

#### **1. Biblical.**

Although Scriptural, the sacraments are not Biblical. By this I mean that though practised as recorded in Scripture, they are no more the intentions of God for us than

that we argue and split up our evangelism (as Paul and Barnabus), cast lots for another apostle, worship solely at the Temple, stare at a physical pole with a snake on it, carry around God's presence in a little box, devote things by literally killing every living thing, or being obliged to chop off foreskin to remind us that we belong to God. What is Biblical in each of those instances is not Scriptural: don't argue but wait on God and, in the meantime, love one another; ask God; worship Him everywhere, recognize that we are the temple of God; look up at Jesus and not the snake (which, inevitably, like every other physical practice given by God, proved a snare to the people of God or proved obsolete as superceded by spiritual reality); carry around God's presence in our lives; devote things by giving them over to God (and not destroying every living thing); and circumcising our hearts (this is a deeper argument than it sounds, most eloquently put by Colonel Eugene Pigford in SALVATIONISM 201).

Water Baptism.

The 'command' to baptize Matt 28:19-20:

Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

That sounds convincing. However, we need consider these verses in light of other Scripture. Two parallel texts speak to this issue:

Matt 3:11 "I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."

Acts 1:5 For John baptised with water, but in a few days you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit.

'BUT' makes the water obsolete. The water was a promise of the Holy Spirit to come. It could be argued that to continue to dunk in water after the Holy Spirit has come is to insult Holy Spirit.

The purpose of baptism was to publicly announce that the individual was associating with the Christians. It also nicely symbolised the death and resurrection experienced by a believer in Christ at conversion. That's it. And the resurrection part was purely a happy coincidence (or a neat addition by God!), since water baptism is not even originally a Christian ritual.

Luke's Acts text (2:38) is not a theological treatise. You can't nail theology and practice

based on Acts since there are so many different methods used in Acts (if you do, you could as easily assert that tongues invariably accompanies the arrival of the Holy Spirit, that martyrdom is the chosen church growth method, and communism is the certified means of church life...). Theology is not Luke's purpose. In this text Peter commands that they repent and be baptised because the Jews in the crowd needed to associate with the Christians.

By getting dunked we are publicly associating with that dunking group, whatever that group might be. Today, this is obsolete, as wearing a Christian t-shirt (I was wearing 'God rocks and Jesus is better than disco' on my shirt during this impromptu presentation) or uniform (as I am reminded so powerfully every time I go outside my doors) is magnitudes more effective in associating with Jesus Christ publicly to sinners than getting dunked once in front of six sinner friends (I'm being optimistic) we were able to coerce out to the holiness meeting with promises of Swiss Chalet (Canadian restaurant and SA fave) and a swim afterward.

Oh, yeah, and Paul indicated that there is one baptism (Ephesians 4:5). I imagine he's referring to Spirit, not water, in light of his assertion in Romans 8:9 that without Holy Spirit you aren't even a Christian.

Communion.

The 'command' to take communion:

Luke 22:19 And He took bread, gave thanks and broke it, and gave it to them, saying, "This is my body given for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1 Corinthians 11:24-26 And when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "This is My body, which is for you; do this in remembrance of Me." In the same way, after supper He took the cup, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood; do this, whenever you drink it, in remembrance of Me." For whenever you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until He comes.

That's a pretty spotty command. Remember the context. They were celebrating Passover. There was an elaborate ritual surrounding it, pointing back to the commands of God to the people of Israel to avoid suffering from the last plague on Egypt (Exodus 12). So, in the context of that initial evening, Jesus' instruction for us is that whenever we eat Passover bread and wine we should do it remembering that Jesus is our Passover Lamb! It's an excellent illustration. However, in The Army we rarely celebrate the Passover. It is an annual holy day. At most, it happens once a year.

In the Luke text, Jesus tells the disciples to do this in remembrance. Does that mean that they are supposed to take bread, give thanks, and break it (like Jesus just did)? That is the simple meaning of the text. That's what they did. There is nothing ritualistic in that text.

### The Other Account of the Last Supper:

*John 13:12-17 When He had finished washing their feet, He put on His clothes and returned to His place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" He asked them. "You call Me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them.*

At the same last supper, Jesus washes their feet, asks if they understand, asserts that this is an example for them, "you also should wash one another's feet. I have set an example that you should do as I have done for you. ... you will be blessed if you do them."

If anything comes out of the last supper, it is definitely foot washing.

Here Jesus projects the actions of a private supper into the future, casting them as an example which, when followed, will bring blessing. If there is anything we are to imitate from this last supper, it is to wash each other's feet.

The two Protestant sacraments are, *potentially*, and largely for the reasons suggested above, superstitious. As such they are, *potentially*, not only in contrast with but also in contention with Christianity. Not only are we staunch non-sacramentalists, but we are also staunch non-superstitionists.

### **Missional.**

The Salvation Army has a prophetic calling to the world. Most of us haven't forgotten that. But we also have a prophetic calling to the rest of the Body of Christ (for which we are the Fist- of the Body of Christ).

In obedience to this latter calling, we maintain a non-sacramental testimony, willingly 'sacrificing' (or, at least, foregoing) the 'privilege' of practising them as a reminder to our cousins of every stripe and colour. For a Salvationist to compromise by indulging in them necessarily waters down the corporate testimony and prophetic integrity of The Salvation Army, while, at the same time, letting down every non-Salvo believer in the whole world, to whom we are to be a prophetic testimony.

As one Body (the universal church), the Body still practises the sacraments. Within the Body, the tiny part called The Salvation Army is a living, breathing reminder to the rest of the Body that the sacraments are helps at best, and that, in and of themselves, they don't necessarily convey any blessing that is not available without them. The testimony continues outside of the Body. Whereas much of the Body finds itself in the priestly tradition, into which the rituals of sacraments fit smoothly (priests administer these



sacraments, etc.), The Salvation Army has was born in the prophetic tradition.

The prophetic tradition speaks out to society of sin, of God's love, and of the way from one to the other. The focus is on the prophetic, not the priestly. Fittingly we have stripped off some/all of the priestly trimmings from our praxis (those that remain are mostly accretions, like sacraments, to be shed).

### **Other Reasons...**

Practical.

It is not helpful for us to identify, before our people- the sinning public- with the liberal (apostate?) churches that hog the real estate downtown and most of what passes for Christian warfare on our front.

It is not helpful for us to identify with the visible church for great commission purposes, as the visible church happens to be rejected by the majority of citizens in every country (based on church attendance).

Number 8 serge is a bear to dry clean after mucky harbour dippings.

### **Conclusion.**

The neat thing at the symposium was that, after my diatribe, the leader of the group proposing the pro-sacramental stand suggesting retracting the proposal and having this argument taught to soldiers everywhere.

Now, that is a great idea.

## **Issue #50 – ‘Heralds of the Good News Valedictory’**

by Captain Pamela Maynor

Seated before you today are 38 commissioned ‘Heralds of the Good News’. As your eyes rest on each of our faces, you may be wondering what exactly we have faced over the last 2 years. Perhaps you can tell from the bags under our eyes that we’ve had some sleepless nights; perhaps you notice some gray hairs and wonder what challenges we’ve endured; or perhaps you can tell from our smiles that the last two years have been the best two years of our lives, because before you today you see more than a session; more than a group of friends or students; today you see a family – brothers and sisters from completely different walks of life, who sincerely love each other and have grown to appreciate God’s specific calling on our lives. We have in common a commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to paraphrase our theme verse from the apostle Paul in 2 Timothy 1: 11, it is of this gospel that we have been appointed Heralds – Heralds of the Good News!

I have reflected on the essence of our Session name, and recognize three specific qualities that we as Heralds aim to portray. Firstly, as Heralds we:

### **Relish the Teaching**

Just as we have been Officer’s in Training for the last 2 years, Heralds of Medieval times had apprentice or probationary Heralds called a Pursuivant. Pursuivants served an apprenticeship of between four and seven years to learn the skills of Heraldry. How we as Heralds have relished, valued and enjoyed our teaching received at the Training College. We have needed this time, for it has equipped us with skills, experience and knowledge necessary for Heraldry.

Captain Kim’s personal library of over 3000 books has taught us the value of knowledge and reading. Major Ferreira’s infamous conducting skills have taught us to give God the best of our talent. Major Green, whether arriving dressed as an elf or Santa himself, taught us to enjoy life, for it is truly a gift from God.

And so the list could continue, as we thank God for each staff member who has invested their lives to equip us for ministry. We thank our training principle, Territorial Commander and Leaders of The Salvation Army who made it possible for us to be taught, and helped us fulfill God’s calling on our lives.

Our mothers, fathers, families, friends, mentors – many of you seated here today have also added to our teaching. God used you in our lives to help us reach this moment, today. We relish all that you have taught us.

Heralds of the Good News not only Relish the Teaching, but we also:

### **Rouse the Soldiers**

During battle, a Herald's duty was to rouse the soldiers. Heralds would loudly proclaim the good news of victory in an attempt to wake up and stir the soldiers in the crowd. Can you imagine hearing their voices across the field of blood stained armor and battered soldiers? Can you hear them shouting: "Don't give up! Victory is at hand! Pick up your shield and fight again!"

This, dear friends is the role of a Herald – to Rouse the Soldiers. A Herald is "One who with authority makes a public proclamation" (NIVSB, 1837) - and we have a lot to proclaim! Our authority comes from Christ, and with our feet steadily rooted, we will open our mouths to crowds of fallen and beaten soldiers and speak words of Good News! "Don't give up soldiers! Stand firm! Don't loose hope warriors! Lift high your shield and look to Him who has called you!"

With such a message, how can we remain silent?

As Heralds, we Relish the Teaching, we Rouse the Soldiers, and thirdly we:

### **Represent the King**

By the thirteenth century, Heralds wore the coat of arms of their Master. This coat of arms distinguished who the Herald represented – and with large design and bright colors, this official coat was meant to be seen at a distance.

As Heralds, we proudly wear our Master's coat of arms. It bears two S's – for we are Saved to Save and Saved to Serve! The bright red surely could represent the blood our Master shed and reminds us daily of the privilege it is to be called His Herald. We've heard His voice speaking to us – and so rather than counting the cost of representing Him for the rest of our lives, we count the privilege. We stand tall on the battlefields God appoints us to, and amidst the raging war, we boldly represent the King. Again, we say with Paul in 2 Timothy 1: 11 "And of this gospel I was appointed **a herald**"

### **Conclusion**

In every account I have read regarding Medieval Heralds, their primary function related to a tournament or battle. Stories of inactive, desk-bound Heralds are just not found. The training received is preparation for battle – it must be used to Rouse the Soldiers and to ultimately Represent the King. And so, perhaps your eyes could take a closer look at each of us today. Perhaps now you might be able to look past the bags under our eyes and gray hairs. Perhaps you can see our shields in hand, or the brightly colored coat of arms covering our chests. Can you see our feet that are fitted with shoes ready to run across battle fields? Can you hear our warmed up voices – ready to proclaim from the top of our lungs the message of God's Good News? The Oxford Dictionary defines a Herald as "a person viewed as a sign that something is about to happen". Fellow Comrades, you know something's been happening, and something new is going to be happening.

General Clifton and Commissioners Moretz – I am honored to represent the Heralds of the Good News. Our horses are waiting outside, or in the case of most of us, 15 passenger vans. As Heralds of the Good News we are ready to partner with you, fellow soldiers across the Territory, to represent our King on the battleground He sends us to.

## **Issue #50 – ‘Me, MySpace, and iPod’**

### **Tales of a Culture Stuck in the Mirror Stage of Development and Its Moral Implications by Lieutenant Steven Bussey**

*See original internet blog posting, complete with images at:  
<http://stevebussey.blogspot.com/2007/06/me-myspace-and-ipod-tales-of-culture.html>*

*"Self-help is no help at all. Self-Sacrifice is the way, my way, to saving yourself, your true self. What good would it do to get everything you want and lose you, the real you? What could you ever trade your soul for?"*

Mark 8:36f. (MSG)

*"The seed of vanity is too deeply sewn in their young hearts for me to dare to cultivate it."*

Catherine Booth (on fashion and parenting) in Catherine Booth: A Sketch by Mildred Duff

## **INTRODUCTION**

A few weeks ago I came across the book, *Generation Me* by sociologist Jean Twenge. In it, she explores the psyche and culture of the newest generation to have come-of-age, what some have referred to as millennials (also generation-y, net-gen, screenagers, myspace generation, etc. etc. ad nauseum). I bought this book because of its' subtitle: "Why today's young Americans are more confident, assertive, entitled - and more miserable than ever before."

What I find interesting about this book is its' recognition of a growing narcissism in today's culture. What Twenge is discussing in her book is manifesting itself in several of our societies traditional institutions: family, school, the workplace... even the pews of our local churches! As a result, her research is something which is uncomfortable, but necessary to engage if we are going to know how to effectively engage in ministry to today's youth.

After working with several teens and young adults over the past ten years and recognizing a shift taking place marked by a rapid growth in a mindset of entitlement, I began searching for resources to help me understand this growing trend. Besides Twenge and a few other social theorists, I didn't find much. As a result, I have decided to write this paper which I have entitled, "Me, MySpace, and iPod: Tales of a Culture Stuck in the Mirror Stage of Development and its Moral Implications." In this paper, I propose that we are currently living in a culture that has mass-marketed the idolization of self. We have created a series of technologies that has inundated us with media mirrors that fuel what I call "hyper-narcissism." Unfortunately, this image has been bought and consumed on a mass-scale. In many ways, we could say that our society - Christian and non-Christian alike - have "drunk the Kool-Aid" and joined the cult!

## **THE MEDIUM IS MASSAGING THE ILLUSION**

It seems as though so many youth today are living in a fantasy world - a simulacrum of self-absorption - an illusionary world which we are convinced is real. As the French sociologist, Jean Baudrillard satirically proclaims: "Objects in mirror are closer than they appear!" (Baudrillard, *America*; 1) Youth sojourn in today's world convinced that they are all that exists because they are living in a consumer economy that caters to their every whim - whether this be voting for your latest music idol, personally reviewing movies, choosing the latest sandwich at fast-food chains, or participating in hand-crafted religious worship experiences. Everywhere youth go they are saturated with one message: "we are here to serve you."

Time Magazine even picked up on this at the end of 2006 when their person of the year ended up being ourselves. On the cover is a computer with the word, "You." A quick viewing of the article identifies how we are living in an age where everyone has a "voice" in our society. I would argue that this is a good thing, but when everyone is expressing their voice on any and every issue... at what point does this all simply become noise? When all that a person does is speak their opinion, at what point do they begin to listen to the opinion of others?

We live in a culture where iPods are marketed as blank canvases where a person paints self-portraits via music and media which provide a window to their soul. Even the human body has become a canvas to communicate self through tattoos and piercings. As the late Marshall McLuhan once said, "the medium is the message." The medium (whether flesh or machine) projects to the world and back to us who we think we are - psychologically and socially. He goes on to suggest later in life that the medium is also the message - that it coaxes us to live with the psychological and social repercussions that come with a new form of technology (McLuhan, *The medium is the message*). We have been 'massaged' into believing in the very marketable idea that our iPod gigabytes contain (Pod) the essence of self (I)!

### **MAGIC MIRROR - OFF THE WALL DEVELOPMENT**

This has fueled this self-absorbed trend. Think about it: MY-Space, YOU-Tube, FACE-book, Second LIFE... These are some of the most popular social networking sites on the planet. At what point do we begin to see this as a giant golden calf - the creation and idolization of self?

The Queen from our popular myth, Snow White articulates the heartbeat of our culture today when she states: "Magic Mirror, on the wall, who is the fairest one of all?" Unfortunately the Queen lived in the protective cloisters of her palace where people would tell her all that she wants to hear. When the mirror doesn't tell her what she presupposes is true, she competitively sidelines morality to champion self - she literally wants the heart of her fairest competition. Why? Because the ultimate response that she wants to hear from her magical technology that she is the fairest of them all. Does this sound like a familiar syndrome we encounter in today's culture? In what ways does our hyper-narcissism undermine the moral fibers of our being? In what ways does this self-consumption convince us that we are the only god we need?

In Dante's *Divine Comedy*, he outlines seven deadly sins and recognizes narcissism or vanity as the original and most deadly of sins. He defines it as "love of self perverted to hatred and contempt for one's neighbor." Dante illustrates this with the image of a bourgeois woman admiring herself in a mirror held by the devil - whom he suggests is no less than Lucifer himself - assigned to fuel vanity and pride.

Another illustration of this radical form of ethical egoism is the Greek myth of Narcissus. This was the story of a young man who one day took a drink from a river only to see what he was convinced was ultimate beauty (naturally... himself!). He gazed into the river and was so consumed by the mirroring of his own self-reflection that it eventually destroyed him. It is no coincidence that the definition of narcissism is "inordinate fascination with oneself; excessive self-love; vanity."

In 1984, the MIT scholar, Sherry Turkle wrote an interesting book entitled, *The Second Self*. She was studying the relationship of children to technology. She uses the mythic story of Narcissus and links it to the work of French psychologist Jacques Lacan who speaks of the "mirror stage" of development. She states, "Mirrors, literal and metaphorical, play an important role in human development. In literature, music, visual art, or computer programming, they allow us to see ourselves from the outside, and to objectify aspects of ourselves we have perceived only from within" (Turkle, *The Second Self*; 155).

Turkle proposes that our constructed technologies serve as a conduit for identity development: "But of the computer we ask more. We ask not just about where we stand in nature, but about where we stand in the world of artifact. We search for a link between who we are and what we have made, between who we are and what we might create, between who we are and what, through out intimacy with our own creations, we might become" (Turkle, *The Second Self*; 12). In many ways, there is a direct relationship between who this generation understands "ME" to be, and what our iPods and MySpaces reflect back to us. At what point though, do we begin to ask whether this generation is developmentally stuck in an infantile stage of development?

### **IDENTITY CRISIS: WHO MIMICS WHOM?**

Challenges emerge when identity is in a continual entropic (i.e., changing) state. In today's culture, some propose that one's identity is composed of multiple possible selves (see Markus & Nurius, "Possible Selves" *American Psychologist*, 1986). Kenneth Gergen suggests that "...as we become increasingly conjoined with our social surroundings, we come to reflect those surroundings. There is a populating of the self, reflecting the infusion of partial identities through social saturation. And there is the onset of a multiphrenic condition, in which one begins to experience the vertigo of unlimited multiplicity" (Gergen, *The Saturated Self*; 49).

Gergen therefore suggests that people eventually end up not really knowing who they are at all. As Oscar Wilde said, "Life imitates art far more than art imitates life." In other words, when all that we do is interact with the world in a narcissistic way, not only do we become blind to others, but we also really begin to become confused about who we are, which eventually leads to becoming anything, everything... and eventually nothing. Therefore, hyper-narcissism does not fuel individuality, rather the individual simply becomes a mimic of all that surrounds them.

If you go back and look at the iPod campaign from a couple of years ago, you will notice how the individuals are colored black (shadowed), the iPod is white (like a canvas) and the backdrop is a multiplicity of colors. In fact, many campaigns would combine several of these images together in a way reminiscent to Andy Warhol's depiction of the silk screened Mickey Mouse. Warhol was the king of pop - producing mass-produced art. I would like to suggest that iPod's promotional campaign about individuality actually is a campaign for mass-concession - willing consent to popular culture. At what point does this move from a healthy means to navigate through the social spheres of everyday life to something that becomes hegemonic and dangerously self-contradictory? I fear that we might be crossing that line in today's culture... and that the Church is not standing as a prophetic voice, but rather the champion salesman! (See my article *Lolli-pop Spirituality: Why Youth Are Crashing From Sugar-Coated Christianity.*)

One could easily propose that our culture is in a state of identity crisis. It is rather ironic that the Socratic mandate to "know thyself" has become so difficult in the hall of mirrors that we live in today. Amusement parks historically have had halls of mirrors where people are invited to enter into a labyrinth of optically reflective materials. These rooms are intended to stretch and distort people's reflections of self... and often leave people either laughing or crying as they get lost in their journey through the maze. I wonder whether this is an apt metaphor for where we find ourselves in today's culture? Could it be that the distorted mirrors which surround us have acutally confused our journey to understand who we are? These distortions particularly become deceptive when we begin to try to understand who we are in Chirst.

When a person becomes convinced that they are all that exists, it is no surprise that a spirit of entitlement eventually ensues. People who are stuck in the infantile mirror-phase of development will obviously often resort to acting spoiled. It's no surprise that one of the most popular dolls sold to tween girls these days are called "Bratz." Jean Twenge's book picks up on this. She says, "Many young people also display entitlement, a facet of narcissism that involves believing that you deserve and are entitled to more than others... The rise in narcissism has very deep roots. It's not just that we feel better about ourselves, but that we even think to ask the question. We fixate on self-esteem, and unthinkably build narcissism, because we believe that the needs of the individual are paramount. This will stay with us even if self-esteem programs end up in the dustbin of history..." (Twenge, *Generation Me*; 70f.). Journalist Martha Irvine referred to today's youth as the "Entitlement Generation." Beverly Smallwood, exploring the dangers of our culture's sense of entitlement states that, "A dangerous cancer is eating away at the soul of modern society, causing distress in our homes and



workplaces alike. What is it, and what is the antidote?" It seems that our society simply proposes solutions that add fuel to the fire - more self-esteem classes, therapy sessions where people reflection on Maslowian 'self-actualization' ...even popular films recognize the problem but lack solutions.

### **ABOUT FACE: THE TRUTH ABOUT NARCISSISM**

This begs me to ask the hard, but important question: what are the moral and theological consequences of this radical form of egotistic practice? How does this effect how we live in this world, what we value, what we pursue? What are the repercussions of self-absorption (or self-love) in relationship of oneself to the other (particularly the marginal other)... or more importantly, the relationship of humanity to God?

I am always encouraged by the work of C.S. Lewis. Regarding his book, *Till We Have Faces*, he uses a retelling of the ancient greek mythological tale of Cupid and Psyche to address distorted and true beauty, justice and love. Lewis uses this relationship as a metaphor for the relationship of self to God: "The idea was that a human being must become real before it can expect to receive any message from the superhuman; that is, it must be speaking with its voice (not borrowed voices), expressing its actual desires (not what it imagines it desires), being for good or ill itself, not any mask, veil, or persona" (CS Lewis in a letter to Dorothy Conybeare, 1964).

As long as we continue to buy into the idea of burying ourselves in our own process of creating things in our image we will continue to distance ourselves from our true Creator in whose image we have been made (Genesis 1:27; 2 Corinthians 3:18). Just looking at the story of the Tower of Babel jumps out as a powerful reminder of what happens when we try to build things which deify self (Genesis 11). When we pursue such a goal, it will inevitably result in confusion, division and then eventual destruction of what we create, those with whom we are in community, and eventually ourselves.

There is great potential for selfless, Christ-like altruism in today's culture. Encountering God and loving others unconditionally, I would argue, provides the proper framework within which to understand the deep and profound question, "Who am I?" Jesus says, "If your first concern is to look after yourself, you'll never find yourself. But if you forget about yourself and look to me, you'll find both yourself and me" (Matthew 10:39 MSG).

I am not proposing that everyone destroy their iPods or never utilize a social networking site. I am rather suggesting that we keep things in perspective - that we don't get lost in the labyrinth of our mirror-driven technoculture. As Catherine Booth understood so aptly in the 19th Century, what we wear directly interacts with who we are. This is why she was set to ensure that she not cultivate vanity in the hearts of her children by pursuing simplicity in the clothes they wore (see the quote at the beginning of this paper).

My prayer is that we recognize that our mirrors can be strongholds... and that the destruction of the hold these mirrors have on us will not bring about seven years of bad

luck - as the traditional legend goes, but rather a freedom from the bondage that has held this generation in its grip for way too long.

*"Heaven is not here, it's There. If we were given all we wanted here, our hearts would settle for this world rather than the next. God is forever luring us up and away from this one, wooing us to Himself and His still invisible Kingdom, where we will certainly find what we so keenly long for."*

Elisabeth Elliot Keep a Quiet Heart

What are your thoughts? I would love to interact with others who have also been wrestling with this issue.

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Labels: C.S. Lewis, entitlement, generational theory, media culture, youth culture

*posted by Steve Bussey at 9:26 AM, Friday, June 29, 2007*

## Issue #50 – ‘Parade Ground Army’

by Graeme Smith

*“... it is as though the pilgrim [Church has] ... accumulated too many possessions on the way, found the weight too heavy to carry and so settled down to look after and protect the overloaded rucksack. The pilgrim Church became the settled Church, the static Church. The pilgrim people, unable to cope with marauding bands, settled down to protect themselves, threw up stockades, then high walls. The pilgrim Church became the parade ground Church, the beleaguered garrison of Christ the King. Within its high walls the loyal troops performed their outmoded arms drill and manoeuvres in the parade ground, assured that as long as they kept up the drill and obeyed orders without question, they could be sure of ultimate victory.”*

Gerard W Hughes, God in All Things

When I first read this I was amazed by the similarity between his picture of the ‘parade ground Church’ and The Salvation Army. In fact if you re-read this passage exchanging Army for Church, it would read almost like a history of The Salvation Army! What has happened to us? We seem to have a siege mentality and we’ve had it so long that our supplies are running out.

In his famous Vision of the Lost letter published in the War Cry in June 1885, the Founder said the following:

*“You have enjoyed yourself in religion long enough. You have had pleasant feelings, pleasant songs, pleasant meetings, pleasant prospects. There has been much of human happiness, much clapping of hands and firing of volleys—very much of Heaven on earth.”*

Is it just me or does this sound a little like the voice of a modern day Amos? Booth seems to be saying that even back in 1885 that people had started to lose the vision for the lost that had resulted in the birth of The Salvation Army. Could it be that in echo of Amos’ prophecies against God’s chosen people, Booth was saying 122 years ago that the Lord already despised the gatherings of Salvationists because they had turned away from His mission for them?

If so how much more is this the case today? In much of the western world The Salvation Army has got stuck in a rut. It perpetuates the style and practices of late 19th and early 20th century Britain, but has forgotten both the reason for why the activities were so effective and that it was all about the battle to win souls. To paraphrase Hughes, we have become a parade ground Army, and history is full of examples of that sort of Army being massacred by the enemy.

In many places our soldiery drive to our Citadels in their cars, by-passing the very people we were called to reach, and leaving that job to an elite band of paid professionals, many of whom profess no active faith in Christ. We then wonder why God has ceased to bless us and why our congregations are dwindling.

However, it is possible for us to recapture the vision. All around us in varying styles are examples of the Army reclaiming the ground it has lost. The most obvious methods might be different, but they do have things in common. They have thrown off their overloaded rucksacks, knocked down their high walls and ventured out into the world. They have regained the vision of the early Army and have become combat troops rather than purely ceremonial ones.

So what are we going to do? Are we going to continue to enjoy the pleasantness of the experiential worship meetings, all the while safe in our concrete bastions of religiosity? Or are we going to join those who have caught the vision and understood that in reality the Army's call is to be on the move, constantly seeking to destroy the work of the evil one both in the lives of the individual and society as a whole.