

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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## **Editorial Introduction** by Captain Stephen Court

Greetings in Jesus' name, friends. Welcome to JAC 52.

Anthony Castle kicks us off with a poetic rant called 'REVOLUTION NOW'. Pray it through.

Captain Michael Ramsay continues his teaching on covenant with 'When God is Bound'. This is hardcore. There is a lot to chew on.

Cadet P.L. throws 'Too Much To Handle' at us, and Major Daryl Crowden has an article called 'Resettling in Rwanda - Back to Life'.

Xander Coleman offers 'Three Reasons that Evangelism is Hard'.

Holiness v. Holiness.

David Whittoff and Captain Andrew Bale offer two different takes on holiness. The former suggests that incremental sanctification is the realistic expectation. The latter espouses a traditional Salvation Army approach. JAC holds to a traditional SA position.

The Dream

Commissioner James Knaggs, TC in Australia Southern, delivered 'The Dream' on October 5 at Aggressive Christianity Conference in Melbourne.

35 Salvationists of that territory contributed chapters suggesting personal spins on the 35 component visions of The Dream in a book that is just released called 'ONE DAY....' We're providing The Dream here, a short response to it, and then three excerpts from The Dream by Captains Rowan Castle and Danielle Strickland, and Xander Coleman.

The Dream is an important revelation for the advance of the Salvation War in that territory and beyond. Feel free to pick up copies of the book at Australia Southern Territory Trade.

Commissioner Wesley Harris wraps up JAC 52 with 'Barmy Army'.

Enjoy JAC 52. Read it. Study it. Blog it. Share it. Apply the lessons. Revolution now.

God bless The Salvation Army.

Stay close to Jesus. Much grace.

The Editors

## **Revolution Now**

by Anthony Castle

Poverty, abuse, slavery...  
The lost have not changed.  
Sin, death and darkness  
The enemy has not changed.

We stormed the Forts of Darkness.  
What of its captives?  
We marched around the world.  
Were we victorious?

Our oath, devotion 'till death.  
Our warcry, "The world for Jesus".  
We were infamous, but now respectable.  
Once we hunted the kingdom of darkness, now we go to church...

No more.  
The Revolution now begin.

We cannot remain still, unmoving, unmoved.  
The Revolution now begin.

We cannot wait for the money, the permission, the people.  
The Revolution now begin.

We cannot allow for any obstacle:  
Not inconvenience or suffering.  
Not hunger or poverty.  
Not disapproval or persecution.  
Not fear or death.  
The Revolution now begin.

We cannot remain silent. We cannot keep talking.  
The Revolution now begin.

It can't be coming soon. It must be now.  
Revolution come. Not tomorrow but today.  
We must make it. We must do it. Be it.  
Revolution begin.  
Now...

## When God is Bound

by Captain Michael Ramsay  
[www.sheepspeak.com](http://www.sheepspeak.com)

### ...a look at Genesis 15: 7 – 21.

In our world today, people seem to be entering into covenants less and less and the ones that we are engaging in then are being taken less and less seriously. Of the 'till death do we part' vows that couples take before God, half are broken. Covenants are not being taken any more seriously by those in the church than they are by those in secular society. This is distressing. For the Salvationist this should be even more alarming. I have heard testimony of some soldiers drinking, smoking, gambling, and seen many who are obviously flirting with that 'which can enslave the mind and body.' I think we try to walk away from our vows too easily; I am not convinced that God actually lets the ties of covenant fall as easily as some might like. I am not convinced that simply declaring oneself 'un-wed' in the courts or renouncing our soldiership vows necessarily releases us from these covenants with God. There are no consequences for taking vows but there are consequences for breaking vows.

In NE Saskatchewan here, we are plunging into this very foundational topic of covenant<sup>[1]</sup> If you open your Bible (on-line or hard copy) and look at Genesis 15:7 – 21, you'll see a covenant possibly even more extreme than our soldiership agreement. This agreement is a very significant one for us all in that it relates back to the good news of Chapter 12, where God has already promised Abraham that all nations of the earth will be blessed through him and, as well, it looks forward to Chapter 17 where the symbol of circumcision is introduced (17:11). This sign of the covenant may be less noticeable than wearing a uniform; however, it is no less extreme!

One thing that is interesting of this ceremony and of the earlier promise God made to Abram that all the nations of the earth will be blessed through him is that the promise includes us here and now even though neither we nor our nation existed at the time of this agreement (cf. John 8, Mark 3, Luke 3, Romans 2). Genesis 12:3 is the first time that the Gospel, the 'good news' (that all the nations of the world will be blessed through Abraham) is presented in scripture and it is here in Chapter 15 that God ratifies the promises about inheriting the promised land with a contract (v.18) and a strange and significant, symbolic covenantal act.

Now before I go any further, I should probably take some time to explain exactly what a covenant is and was. The Hebrew word for covenant here, *berit[h]*, is the most common term translated 'covenant' in the Hebrew Bible: it appears 286 times, making it quite an important word<sup>[2]</sup> This word in all likelihood is also associated with the older Akkadian word 'biritu', which means literally "to fetter", "to shackle" or to "bind" and when it is used in the sense it is here, it designates the beginning or the end of a contract.<sup>[3]</sup> The image then is of two people being fettered or bound together by this covenant<sup>[4]</sup>

This particular contract, in the text before us today, is only one of three in the entire Hebrew Bible where God himself is bound<sup>[5]</sup> - the others are with Noah, (Gen. 17, Num. 25:12) and the David (II Sam. 23:5, Pss. 89:3, 28-29; 110:4).

The word image for us here is clear. It is that of God, in this contract, actually shackling himself to a promise to Abram and in so doing, of course, not only is God bound to the promise but He is bound to the consequence of a broken covenant – which in this case, if we are correct in our understanding, is more extreme than either our wedding vows or our soldiership pledge – the consequence of breaching this covenant is possibly even death (cf. Jer 34:18-20).<sup>[6]</sup>

Now let's take a look at this whole contractual ceremony here because it is peculiar in Scripture. In verse 9, it is recorded that God asks Abram to bring him a number of different dead animals of varying (and mostly forgotten)<sup>[7]</sup> significance and has him cut many of them in half and Abram does.<sup>[8]</sup> And Abram stays by these bodies guarding them from other animals that want to eat them (v.11) and then he falls asleep into a 'deep and terrifying darkness (v.12).'

Abram is terrified as the Lord approaches him and says, verse 13, "know for certain that your descendants will be strangers in a country not their own, and they will be enslaved and mistreated for four hundred years. Wow, this is 'good news'! (sarcasm) – Abram is terrified (v. 12) and the Lord meets him with the comforting words of, 'your descendants will be slaves for 400 years.'

This is great (sarcasm) and there is even more: look at the contractual ceremony here. After God tells Abram that his family will be slaves - and then those who enslave them will be punished – and at the same time that all this is happening, another people will be allowed to run wild in the promised land until their sin reaches its absolute full measure (v. 16), there will be 400 years of sin and 400 years of slavery and now, verse 17, "when the sun had set and darkness had fallen, a smoking firepot with a blazing torch appeared and walked between the pieces [of the dead animals]. On that day the Lord made a covenant with Abram... (vss. 17,18)"<sup>[9]</sup>

And this is interesting: the 400 years of sin and slavery are signs of the covenant or contract. They are not the contract itself. This section highlights a portion of the covenant and that portion states that Abram's descendants will eventually possess this land that he is on.<sup>[10]</sup> And what is the sign that they will possess this land? The sign is that they will be in slavery for 400 years and none of this sign will Abraham see ever actually see.<sup>[11]</sup>

Further, remember how we said that this is one of the few times in scripture where you will find that it is actually God who is bound by the covenant. Here it is ONLY God who is bound by the covenant. It is God (represented by a smoking firepot with a blazing torch<sup>[12]</sup>) who walks between the halves of the dead animals here – not Abram. This is interesting because in so doing, God says that he will pay the consequence for the broken covenant. He says that he is bound and that he will pay for it and - if our

interpretation of the ceremony is correct – He will pay for it with His own life. This is quite the serious ceremony and this ceremony has parallels in ancient customs and literature but only in Jeremiah (34:18-20) in the Scriptures is this type of a ceremony mentioned and there it says:

"...all the people of the land, which passed between the parts of the calf; I will even give them into the hand of their enemies, and into the hand of them that seek their life: and their dead bodies shall be for meat unto the fowls of the heaven, and to the beasts of the earth."

If the covenant fails after this ceremony, the one bound by it here, dies.<sup>[13]</sup> This is serious and this is like the ceremony that God is voluntarily taking upon Himself. And it says that Abram does believe Him (and the LORD reckoned it to him as righteousness, v.6) EVEN BEFORE the Lord goes to these great lengths to bind himself to His promise.

So then Abram believes God, even before God covenants up to even His own life. Abram believes God that he and Sarai will have children and that they will inherit the promised land, and then God makes this deal that may EVEN risk His own life, and then Abram, at his wife's insistence... has sexual relations with his wife's slave (16:3). And she becomes pregnant.

This is reminiscent of earlier in Genesis isn't it?<sup>[14]</sup> Back in Eden itself Adam takes matters into his own hands at his wife's prompting and she blames the serpent (Gen 3) and sin and death enter the world and here Abraham takes matters into his own hands and Sarah blames God (16:3) after God has just entered into this most serious covenant.

God has put a lot on the line. In the contract he may be bound, to die, if it is not kept...and instead of relying on God, Abram, a hero of Hebrews 11's walk of fame, takes matters into his own hands...just like Adam, just like the People of Babel a couple of Chapters previous (Gen 11:1ff), and just like too many of us, I fear.

Well, what about us? Are we any more faithful<sup>[15]</sup> to our covenants than Abram with God's life on the line? Do we really avoid all that may enslave the mind, body, and spirit, or do we rationalize that our indulgences are fine whereas other people's indulgences may or may not be? Do we keep our vows before God about forsaking all others UNTIL DEATH DO WE PART or do we pretend that God releases us from those vows as soon as we no longer wish to be bound?

Years ago, before I ever met my wife, I met a lady at a place I used to frequent. I felt the Lord prompting me to give her \$500; she, I was led to believe, needed it to go up north and gain the custody of her infant son. I gave her the money – and that was a lot of money for me in those days –but I give this stranger the money at what I feel at the time is the Lord's prompting and she tells me she will meet me there again on a certain date with the money and – well – the time comes and goes and I continue to go to that place

a few times over the next months still with faith but I confess each time this faith is intermingling with more doubts until it get to the point that I am thinking of calling friends of mine and tracking her down on my own, in my own strength, and retrieving the money. My thoughts drift from faith to frustration...

I also think of a friend of ours –he is a godly man and the Lord taught me a lot through him. Before I ever met him, he felt the Lord telling him to witness to one of his employees, to tell him the good news of Jesus Christ. He believes the Lord but he does not tell his employee and the next day, he hears that his employee is dead.

An example from the Bible again: remember the Israelites with Moses on the edge of this land promised to them by God. Ten of 12 spies come back saying that they are afraid; they don't have faith and they won't receive the land (Deut 1; Num 14). The Lord is angry and tells them that because they did not act in faith their generation will not inhabit the land; so the people get up early the next morning and say, "We know we have sinned, we'll go do it now"...but it is too late...God is not with them...and they are defeated by their enemies. There are consequences.

And Abram, righteous Abram, now has chosen to act on his own instead of trusting God. God pledged his life so that we may have faith and faithfulness (Romans 1-3) but we are faithless many times over and what is the consequence of our faithlessness? God dies. God dies.

God is fettered and bound in this covenant for Abram. As a consequence of Israel's sin in the dessert a whole generation dies outside of the promise and as a consequence of our sin today, God dies: Jesus dies on the cross.

We didn't need to make our covenants before and with God and God didn't need to make His promises to us. He didn't need to make this promise to Abram. Abram believed Him before He put his life on the line. But God did make this promise and the thing about God is that, even if we are unfaithful to our promises, He remains faithful (Romans 3:3,4).<sup>[16]</sup>

And look ahead in our text from Genesis with me, God is not unfaithful, and in Chapter 21, verse 2, it says, "Sarah became pregnant and bore a son to Abraham in his old age, at the very time God had promised him." So now here it is- even though Abram may not have acted in a manner consistent with faith, ONLY God was bound here and as the covenant is fulfilled, God lives!

God promised children to Abraham and God provided children to Abraham. God promised that his decedents would inhabit Canaan after 400 years of slavery, and God provided that they inhabited the land after 400 years of slavery. Like the Apostle Paul says emphatically, centuries later, in his letter to the Romans, "What if some did not have faith? Will their lack of faith nullify God's faithfulness? Not at all!... ( Romans 3:3,4)" No way. No! No! No! God is faithful even and especially when we are not!

God promised Israel that they would inhabit the land and, even though they were faithless at the border, God still fulfilled his promise a generation later. My friend who did not pray with his employee the night before he died, went on to be a pastor and never forgot the lessons the Lord taught him that night in the whole time I knew him anyway. And my other friend, the lady I met, just when I had almost given up hope that she would ever find me and return the \$500, she did and that's not the end of the story. Years later I almost came to tears. I came out of my house and there she was with her son. He was now 5 or 6. She knew our tenants and was visiting them. The Lord let me meet her son – the Lord let me see how He used His \$500 to help a child be raised by his mother. She, in her excitement at seeing me, grabbed her now school-aged son and said, "This is the man from the story I told you..." THIS child KNOWS the stories of the MIRACLES of GOD. Even though, after I believed I had my doubts, The Lord used even me to do His will. And he rewarded me in such a way that day that I will never forget it.

And isn't that the same for all of us? Jesus died on the cross because of our sin. Jesus died because of our faithlessness but God is faithful to His promises and Jesus is alive. Jesus rose from the dead! Jesus defeated death. He died for us and he rose again. Nothing we do can change that! Now all we need to do is not reject him; we can do that by remaining faithful and holy and by upholding our covenants.

So then let's not be like that generation of Israelites who rejected his invitation to the promised land and died in outside of the promise. Let's not be like those who confess 'Lord, Lord' with their mouths but do not live up to their obligations. Covenants are important and God will hold us to our vows so instead of being faithless, let us be thankful for to God for his sacrifice, respect our covenants, and inherit the promise of eternal life.

[www.sheepspeak.com](http://www.sheepspeak.com)

[1] Michael Ramsay's sermons on these topics are available on-line at [www.sheepspeak.com](http://www.sheepspeak.com)

[2] G.E. Mendenhall. "Covenant." In *The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible*, edited by George Arthur Buttrick. (Nashville, Tennessee: Abingdon Press, 1962), 715.

[3] G.E. Mendenhall, P. 715.

[4] Michael Ramsay, "Berit[h]." In *the Journal of Aggressive Christianity*.

[5] G.E. Mendenhall, P. 718.

[6] Death is the penalty meted out to those who violate this ceremony the only other time it is recorded as being enacted in the scriptures: Jeremiah 34:18-29. See Sarna, *Genesis*, PP. 114-115, Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, 446. cf also, Anet, p.532 and John H. Sailhamer *Abraham and the covenant (15:1-21)*.

[7] Terence E. Fretheim, *NIB*, P. 446.

[8] John H. Sailhamer *Abraham and the covenant (15:1-21)*

[9] The fire and the smoke are interesting symbols here. They cast the reader's mind ahead to the fire and smoke with which God leads the Israelites out of Egypt and to this same promised land. Those who have been studying Acts along with us in NE Saskatchewan or online ([www.sheepspeak.com](http://www.sheepspeak.com)) will also note the pillars of fire that settled above the people's heads in Acts II, which may or may not be making reference to the Exodus and by extension this earlier passage as well.

[10] The Holiness Code in Leviticus (esp. Lev 25), as well as the prophecy of Amos (esp. 3-4) and numerous other portions of scripture testify that yes indeed the Lord was faithful in fulfilling this agreement but as the covenantal talks are re-opened with future generations who are looking for a permanent territorial blessing for their offspring, it is granted to them albeit with conditions (pertaining to caring for the poor and the land) which they did not fulfill (cf. Gen 18:19; 26:5; Amos 3:1-2; Lev 25:2; 26:34-35; cf. also N.T. Wright, "Romans and the Theology of Paul," *Pauline Theology*, Volume III, ed. David M. Hay & E. Elizabeth Johnson, (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1995): 37.) The blessing to the nations (12:3) that was offered through Abraham stands fulfilled to this day. Remember also that the messianic prophecies to David are not tied to the physical land (2 Samuel 7) in that, of course, they are ultimately also fulfilled in Christ. Also pertaining to the descendants of Abraham, we should neither forget that God that he can raise up decedents of Abraham from stones if need be (cf. John 8:31-41; Hebrews 11:8-12) and indeed he does graft all the nations into the promises of Abraham (cf. Matthew 3:9, Luke 3:8, John 8, Romans 11). There is also a certain irony in this covenant in that ultimately, of course, the promise is fulfilled that all nations of the earth will be blessed through Abraham (12:3) is ultimately fulfilled when God (Jesus) dies.

[11] Compare this to Moses' sign that the LORD is speaking to him (Exod 3:11-12) and the sign of the Lord's faithfulness re: the provision of his people around the Sabbatical Year and the Year of Jubilee (Lev 25:19-20).

[12] This does cast our minds tangentially ahead to the pillar of cloud and the pillar of fire with which God will later lead the Israelites around the desert.

[13] Jeremiah 34:18-20

[14] Cf. Chapter 11. This is the chapter where Abram is introduced. He is introduced - ironically enough - after the people from the city of Babel are dispersed for (pridefully) taking matters into their own hands.

[15] I am using the term 'faith' in the rest of this document in a manner that is consistent with the so called 'New Perspective on Paul'

[16] Cf. N.T. Wright, "Romans and the Theology of Paul," p. 37. See also NT Wright, "The Law in Romans 2."

## **Too Much to Handle**

by Cadet P.L.

If you have spent anytime either as a member of the Salvation Army, or with people who have been a part of the Salvation Army, you have likely come across the following phrase: “I didn’t realize that you’re a church!” Or perhaps you have come across one of these other com-mon reactions: “Can a government social services provider really be a church as well?” “Don’t you guys just recycle old clothes?” Or perhaps finally, “Don’t you just help poor people?”

Over the years many Salvationists have begun to doubt themselves, their essence and their place in the Global Church as a result of these kinds of questions. For example, the ques-tion, “Is the Salvation Army a church?” has been raised in the minds of many in and outside the Army. While at times these discussions can be interesting, the reality is that we are unquestiona-bly a “church” in the most biblical sense of the word. We are also however, a social services provider on behalf of the government, we do feed and clothe the poor, and we do operate a vari-ety of services internationally that seek to aid people and their needs. And of course, we do re-cycle clothing and bring new life into your old furniture, but that doesn’t mean that this takes away from our number one priority: to see new life breathed into people and their families.

The Salvation Army has both the blessing and the curse of being able to be many things to many people. For some that has caused a sense of disorientation; for others the diversity has fed their spirit of ingenuity and has led to a plethora of ministry models worldwide. Unfortu-nately, the disorientation has led some to want to become more like the Western World’s vision of what a church should be; and yet it has led others to quite the opposite desire for further rec-ognition as a secularized social services provider. The unnatural division however, between serving a suffering humanity and proclaiming the good news that some have sought after can only harm us. Our very essence as a Salvation Army is that we are a body of Christian believers, growing in our own walks with Christ and seeking after the physical and spiritual salvation of the lost. There can be no separation between the tasks of sharing and demonstrating Christ’s love.

If you were to consider the life of the person of Jesus Christ you would note that there is no distinction as to which moments he was “ministering” and which moments he was not. Better yet, there is no real distinction as to when he was the “church” and when he was not. Christ lived a holistic life of teaching in the synagogues (Mathew 4:23), challenging the wealthy in the marketplace (Mark 10:17), feeding and clothing the poor (Luke 1:53), caring for the sick, preaching on the street corners, caring for the widows and children and loving everyone whom he met (Mathew 4:23). Now there is a great holistic example for the Army to follow.

If we are to remain the Army, we were first called into existence to be, we must not draw artificial lines between being a church and serving suffering humanity. There cannot be a dis-tinction, or we have lost the very thing that has been our reason d’être thus far. We are at our core a Christian community mobilized and unified by the principle that we

desire to see souls saved, saints grown and suffering humanity served. We are an Army of Salvation. That is not a 40 hour a week job, nor a career path, nor a matter of church membership and nor is it a profession that simply requires training and certification; it is a life style: A life style to which all officers and soldiers of the Salvation Army have joyfully and humbly committed themselves.

While it sometimes remains difficult to explain ourselves to a curious public and a Global Church, it becomes a lot easier to explain who the Army is if we live and demonstrate who we are by our actions and choices.

## **Resettling in Rwanda – Back to Life**

by Major Daryl Crowden

*In north-eastern Rwanda The Salvation Army is working with people who have been made to leave their lives and homes in Tanzania and start from scratch on a barren hill. International Emergency Services team leader Major Daryl Crowden, who previously wrote about the difficulties faced by these returnees, reports on the transformation taking place in the lives of people living in a village supported by The Salvation Army.*

**CHANGE is taking place in the village of Gituro. Three weeks ago when we arrived there were 70 small mud-and-stick shelters. People were wandering aimlessly; a few were tending haphazard gardens of sweet potato; most were desperate to go home. These Rwandan returnees knew that their Tanzanian homes were gone, for good, and that there was no going back – but they were not prepared to settle and make Gituro their home. No one wanted to accept that this depressing camp on the top of a desolate hill in north-eastern Rwanda was home.**

That was then. Today as I walk around the village in the heat of the day there is activity: and it's not all activity initiated by us, the members of the Salvation Army team. I counted five new traditional, round, mud-walled, grass-thatch huts. Two are decorated in traditional patterns of ochre colours. A couple of families have entered a trade agreement with a local 'builder' to construct houses (mud and thatch) and kitchens.

The threadbare orange-and-silver tarpaulins received on arrival are disappearing as families search out cane and grass to thatch their shelters. Soil is being prepared and sown with new crops of maize, cassava and sweet potato (sweet potato is good because it bears fruit in three months). Ground is being cleared and swept clean. Traditional mud stoves are being constructed, replacing the circle of rocks that was used as a temporary cooking area. As a result, less wood is needed because the new stoves are much more efficient.

Children are making toys out of our building off-cuts and the sounds of laughter and crying pervade the camp. When they're not following me around trying to get the courage to shake hands with *mzungu* [white person] they are helping pit diggers empty buckets of dirt or taking turns to pump water.

So, why the new optimism? Sitting in the shade of the community shelter – an eight by five metre wood-and-tin structure built by The Salvation Army in partnership with the locals – I shared my thoughts and asked what they thought had changed.

'We have realised this is home,' I was told. 'There is no going back ... we must settle and establish ourselves. We have realised this, and accepted it, because you have installed a permanent pump and we have water here ... you are digging and building permanent latrines ... you have made this shelter for us. We have heard many promises, but you have given.'

Just four weeks into the water and sanitation project, we are thrilled with the progress. Today – Tuesday 17 April – the little community on the hill received guests. The Salvation Army's regional leaders for Rwanda, Majors Stephen and Grace Chepkurui, the Nyagatare District Mayor and other Government officials joined us to officially open and dedicate the water pump and community shelter. During his opening speech the mayor pronounced Gituro to be a 'Salvation Army village'. He has ordered the allocation of land to the Army for future community development.

Until today the women and children walked seven kilometres to collect stagnant, brown, contaminated water. This afternoon the guests were taken, behind the Rwandan national and Salvation Army flags, 600 metres to a source that is delivering clear, clean, safe water. After the guests planted some trees around the village we celebrated with the villagers over a soda and a biscuit in the shade of their new shelter.

It was exciting to hear them report to the mayor that there are no families in the village collecting water from the livestock dam now. 'Why would we go two hours to share with the cows,' said one, 'when we have water so close?'

In parallel with this water project, The Salvation Army is funding the digging and building of 70 pit latrines, one for each family. To date there are 39 pits underway, with 20 of them completed to the depth of 10 metres. Bricks are being made on site by the returnees with the help of some local experts and, if the project continues at the current rate, within the next six weeks the villagers of Gituro will have new and adequate sanitation.

In a region that has lost at least 19 people to water-borne diseases in the past six months, these projects are literally life-saving and community-transforming. Through these simple and relatively inexpensive projects the people of Gituro have increased potential to rise above their circumstances. Rather than just existing they can begin to redesign a living for themselves.

If transformation of lives and alleviation of poverty are two of The Salvation Army's mission intentions then we have done a good thing so far in Gituro.

As I leave this beautiful country and her generous people I do so having learned more about myself and the potential of humanity to both destroy and rebuild. I have been reminded about the power of hope. I thank God and The Salvation Army for letting me be their hands for this time and this people.

*Funding is still being sought to help provide for the long-term needs of community members in Gituro and other locations.*

## Three Reasons why Evangelism is so Hard

by Xander Coleman

*All scripture taken from NIV unless otherwise indicated*

*Dare ye still lie fondly dreaming,  
Wrapped in ease and worldly scheming,  
While the multitudes are streaming  
Downwards into Hell?  
G.S. Railton (SASB 693)*

In the early days of The Salvation Army there was an expression used which stated that; 'every soldier is an evangelist'. In other words, everyone was supposed to tell people about Jesus and get them saved. It's a noble idea, but I have to say that most of the time I do not see this happening.

I am aware of the fact that everyone has different spiritual gifts and some people just don't have an evangelistic gifting. I also see that as a good point and that it is important to serve in your area of gifting. However, when I read in Scripture where Jesus saying, "Go and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you," (Mt 28:19-20) and "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation," (Mk 16:15) I'm pretty sure He's not just talking to those disciples with the gift of evangelism. What I understand Jesus to be saying in those verses is that all His followers are supposed to tell people about Him, and to teach them to follow His commands. In Acts 1:8 He even promises that He'll send His Spirit to help us out – "You will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you, and you will be my witnesses...to the ends of the earth". Our mission as The Salvation Army hasn't changed. God still calls us all to be evangelists. There are too many people around us going to hell for us to stand by silently! If you're anything like me, you may find evangelism difficult. All the way through high school and beyond I ignored this command of Jesus to witness because I thought it was just too hard. I dare say a good deal of people may be currently headed to hell because of my disobedience. Here are three of the reasons I sucked at evangelising in my high school.

**1. I did not know any unsaved people.** This is not actually strictly true. I knew plenty of unsaved people, but I didn't have significant relationships with any of them. I didn't balance spending enough time with Godly friends so as not to be corrupted by the world (see 1 Cor 15:33 – take the time now to look it up...I'll wait), and having significant friendships with unsaved people so as to get them saved. I leaned too much on the former, so I never hung out with anyone who was going to hell. You can't punch someone unless they're within arms-reach of you. I kept 'sinners' so far from me that any impact I wanted to have on people for Jesus was impossible.

**2. I did not really believe in hell.** Ok, so this is not exactly true either. I did, theoretically speaking, believe in hell. I just never made the connection that my unsaved friends...I guess I mean acquaintances...are going there. I don't really know much

about what happens when we die, but I do know that Jesus talked more about hell than He did about heaven, and that, because of sin, we are all condemned to hell. The only way to avoid hell is through repenting from sin and calling upon Jesus to save. I never made the connection between the unsaved people who go to hell and the unsaved people who I knew. The idea of them spending eternity in misery and pain never crossed my mind (Lake of burning sulphur is used more than once to describe it). It's not a pleasant thought, but it's the truth. I had no sense that I would be saving them from anything, so I didn't really care. We are called 'saved' because we are saved from something. They are called 'unsaved' because they are not saved from it. Eek! That thought sure gives me a sense of urgency in evangelism!

**3. I was afraid of people.** Okay, so this one was true. See, I'm not a complete liar! In high school I was so afraid of what people would think of me if I talked to them about Jesus. I'll let you in on a little secret...THIS IS STUPID! It's like a doctor feeling silly about telling a patient that she has cancer, so just not telling her! You have a whole school or College or workplace that is full of people who have an illness more lethal than cancer! Cancer just kills the body, but sin damns people to something worse than death. I don't really know what I was afraid of. Being rejected? The relationships that I had with unsaved people weren't significant so what would that matter? Having a reputation for being weird or 'religious'? I'm pretty sure people thought that already, and what's wrong with having a reputation for being a red-hot zealot for Jesus anyway? I also used to be afraid that something I said would drive people away from Jesus - not draw them to Him. The thing is that if I'm prayed-up and following the Spirit's leading, and walking in love and the power that Jesus promises (remember Acts 1:8?) then it's not my problem, I just have to be obedient. Anyway, they're going to hell. I can't make the problem much worse! So...I don't know if any of these problems ring true for you. If they do, take heart! They're not too big for God. He wants to help you to obey Him!

**Firstly**, get to know some unsaved people. Just start hanging out with them at lunch time or whatever. My suspicion is that you kind-of know some unsaved people already. Hang out with them more. Love the hell out of them (literally) because 'love never fails' (1 Cor 13:8).

**Secondly**, ask the Holy Spirit to give you a revelation of hell. Think about the unsaved people you have just made friends with (or who you already know). Think about what eternity will look like for them. This might cause you to cry. That's a good thing – many heroes of the faith are reported to have wept over the lost! Ask God help you to feel the same way about the lost as He does. Ask Him to give you a sense of urgency about their salvation.

**Thirdly**, be bold. The best way to deal with fear is to face it head-on. Ask God for more love because 'perfect love drives out all fear' (1 John 4:18). Most fears are irrational and God wants to set you free from them. This will often look like you choosing to speak about Him despite your fear! Courage is not the absence of fear, but the choice to go on despite it!

God wants the whole wide world to be saved – ‘not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance’ (2 Peter 3:9), and for some strange reason, He chose to use you and me to do it. And we don’t do it alone, but we have received power when the Holy Spirit came upon us to be witnesses for Jesus our communities and our country and to the ends of the earth. GO!

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## Two Takes on Holiness

### 1. The Privilege to Be Wholly Sanctified

by David Whitoff

We talk a lot about holiness in the Army, and more so in certain communities. It can be the answer to everything or an amorphous spiritual destination that the believer should come to but is never expected or compelled to try for. I say amorphous because, more often than not, holiness goes largely undefined or is equivocated so much that no one really understands what it means or in what sense it is being used, let alone how the word *should* be used. All this to say, I felt it was time to take a look at the biblical evidence about holiness, specifically the “entire sanctification” and “second blessing” theology of Salvationists. A look at the terms concerning this topic should be discussed first to avoid equivocating and so that everybody understands just what is being talked about.

First, we need to define the word “holy.” It can be described as “apartness, holiness, sacredness.”<sup>1</sup> This answer is somewhat of a Sunday school answer; we all probably know this already. More important than how it is defined in a theological wordbook is how it is actually used in Scripture. Deut. 7:6 says, “For you are a holy people to the LORD your God; the LORD your God has chosen you to be a people for His own possession out of all the peoples who are on the face of the earth.”<sup>2</sup> In this verse God simply calls them a “holy people.” In Col 3:12 we read, “So, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience.” These two verses, along with others (Heb 3:1, 1 Peter 2:9, Eph 4:1), demonstrate one way in which the term “holy” can be used: these verses refer to status. The nation of Israel was a holy nation by status, by God’s decree. In Col 3:12 believers are simply called “holy and beloved.” This is another reference to our status as believers. By Christ’s sacrifice, we can be called holy and given that status. This aspect is not related to what we do. This status of holiness is related more to *justification* than to *sanctification*. This aspect of the word “holy” is God’s work, not our own.

The second aspect of holiness *is* related to sanctification. This is the aspect of holiness that we *do* have a part in. Second Cor 7:1 says, “Therefore, having these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God.” Similarly, in Romans 12:1 it says, “Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship.” These verses emphasize the joint work we have in holiness. This aspect of holiness is the *process* of sanctification. We join God in this work as we are “perfecting holiness” in our lives.

With these two aspects of holiness in mind, we should be sure never to confuse or mix them. To apply a verse that is speaking about decreed (status) holiness as mandating active holiness is a hermeneutical mistake. Without a doubt, we should live up (active

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<sup>1</sup> R. Laird Harris, *The Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament*, Moody Press, Chicago 787

<sup>2</sup> *New American Standard Bible : 1995 Update*. LaHabra, CA : The Lockman Foundation, 1995, S. Dt 7:6

holiness) to what He calls us (status holiness), but a passage means only what it means, not what we want it to mean.

Having said all of this, we can now get to the issue of entire sanctification and the second blessing. Entire sanctification has been called “Christian perfection,”<sup>3</sup> but I have run across Salvationists who abhor that term, so I will not use it (it seems to be a term that Wesleyans in general use, but I think Salvationists are concerned that Christian perfection sounds too close to Perfectionism). Entire sanctification, as understood by Salvationists, can be described as the state of the believer after experiencing the second blessing. The second blessing is that moment<sup>4</sup> when, after much prayer and dedication<sup>5</sup>, the Holy Spirit comes upon the believer a second time to bless the person with entire sanctification: the “stump”<sup>6</sup> of sin is removed and this causes the person to no longer willfully sin;<sup>7</sup> the person also has greater love for God and man. But where is the Scripture to back up such a carefully delineated theological doctrine? There are a few passages I want to deal with that have been used to support this idea, and then I will take a look at the Acts 2 story of Pentecost that Brengle uses to support the second blessing.

First, one might be inclined to use 2 Cor 7:1 to support the idea of a second blessing. It uses the phrase “perfecting holiness.” But by taking a look at the construction of this verse from an exegetical standpoint, the word which is translated “perfecting” is a present progressive participle. Thus it emphasizes the *process* of holiness with a view toward the end. The verse emphasizes the progressive nature of holiness. There is no indication that this word “perfecting” means a single event in the life of a believer.

Another verse cited is Matt 5:48 which says “Therefore you are to be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.” I have heard Salvationists claim that because God commands us to be perfect, the second blessing must exist, otherwise we could not obey this verse! Two problems arise with using this verse for that purpose. First, simply because God issues a command does not mean that we can fulfill it.<sup>8</sup> That is the essence of our fallen nature. If people were able to meet every command of God, then there is the possibility that one could be perfect and therefore not need a savior. It leaves us with a kind of Pelagian neutrality towards God. God commands us to be perfect, and so that should be our *aim* by Christ’s power. But God is not laughing at our feeble attempts when He commands us to be perfect. His call to perfection is based in His character. We need not fear though, because based on our standing in Christ, we have a clean slate, and more than that, we have Christ’s righteousness.<sup>9</sup> The second problem is that Matt 5:48 requires perfection, and the second blessing allegedly only prevents intentional sin. So the believer would still not be perfect. The conclusion that the second blessing would fulfill this command is thus flawed.

<sup>3</sup> Melvin Dieter, *Five Views on Sanctification*, Zondervan, pg 36. He describes entire sanctification by a host of other terms as well; “perfect consecration to God; perfect love to God and others” pg.18.

<sup>4</sup> Brengle, *Help to Holiness*, Salvation Army, Atlanta, pg. 5

<sup>5</sup> Ibid, 8, 11

<sup>6</sup> Ibid, 8

<sup>7</sup> Dieter, *Five View of Sanctification*, pg. 15

<sup>8</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, Inter-Varsity Press, England, pg. 750-51

<sup>9</sup> Grudem, *Systematic Theology* 725-26 See specifically Romans 3:20-21

The next verse I want to deal with is 1 Thess 5:23 which says, “Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you entirely; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved complete, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Again, this verse has been used to say that God wants us entirely sanctified (through the second blessing) *now*. However this verse is describing the second aspect of holiness (that joint work of God and man) and is emphasizing God’s role in our sanctification. This verse looks at the process, not moment, of sanctification. We must be careful not to read our understanding of “entire sanctification” into this verse’s use of it. Similar to Matt 5:48, the verse is talking about complete or entire sanctification (in a non-technical, non-Salvationist sense). This is sanctification that goes beyond only willful sin but also unintentional sin. This verse looks at the process of sanctification with a view towards its completion *at Christ’s return*. This verse makes no distinction about willful or unintentional sin.

From 1 John 3:6a it is argued that there must be a second blessing. This verse says “No one who abides in Him sins.” But the sense of this verse is that no one who abides in Christ *keeps on sinning*<sup>10</sup>. Also, if this verse advocates a second blessing, then most believers are not in Christ since most have not experienced this blessing! The verses in 1 John 3 exhort believers to no longer sin like they used to when they followed the devil and the ways of the world. First John 1:8, speaking to believers, shows us that we will have sin in our lives, in one form or another, until glorification, when it says, “If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us.”

Finally I turn to the Acts 2 narrative. Brengle makes the case in his second chapter of Helps to Holiness that the disciples received this second blessing at Pentecost. He claims that they were already believers and that the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost was their complete cleansing. I disagree. Commentators are notorious for misinterpreting the works of the Holy Spirit in Acts. Acts highlights the *first* coming of the Spirit on many different peoples. This unique working of the Spirit makes for difficult interpretation. Concerning the apostles; though they followed Jesus and were believers, until Christ physically left them, they did not have the Spirit. He told them that He must go, or the Helper would not come (John 16:7). So then, Pentecost cannot be a second blessing of the Spirit because they never had a first! Some may argue that John 20:22 is the first blessing on the apostles. But if this is the Holy Spirit truly coming, it contradicts John 16:7. I feel this passage should be taken symbolically or prophetically as speaking of Pentecost. Perhaps it is an indication that the Spirit is coming soon (and that he will be leaving them soon. It should also be noted that the behavior of the disciples after John 20:22 is not dramatically different, but changes only after Pentecost).<sup>11</sup> Now, when a person places faith in Christ they receive the Holy Spirit (2

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<sup>10</sup> *ibid*, 751

<sup>11</sup> More information on this passage can be found at [http://www.thegracetabernacle.org/studies/gtsn\\_john20.html](http://www.thegracetabernacle.org/studies/gtsn_john20.html). I found the site to be informative on this passage.

Cor 1:22;<sup>12</sup> 1 Cor 6:11). In the situation of the disciples, they believed in Christ before the Spirit could come. Thus, when Christ left them they received the Spirit just as we receive it at conversion now. Their experience was a bit more flashy (fiery?) at Pentecost, but this can easily be attributed to the nature of that event. It was a larger event to show without a doubt that the Spirit was now coming onto believers. Also, if the apostles were blessed a second time at Pentecost, why does Peter need to be rebuked as Galatians 2:11-14 tells us? With all of this in mind, Brengle's use of Pentecost to support a second blessing theology is incorrect. Pentecost was in no way a second blessing.

In conclusion, I find no evidence in Scripture for any kind of specified second blessing. Other verses also indicate to us the continued fight we have in our lives with sin (Proverbs 20:9; Ecc 7:20). I believe the term "holiness" is used in Scripture to refer to the status of believers and to the *progressive* nature of holiness in believers. I believe that all believers will continue, to greater or lesser degrees, to progress in holiness as they work out their sanctification with the Lord until they die and are glorified or until Christ returns.

So by all means, seek to give up more of yourself to the Lord. Pray for greater holiness. Pray for greater love from God and for people. Pray that He would keep you from sin. But remember that there is always more of you to give to him, greater holiness to experience, more love that He can give, and still sin and temptations that we need protection from. Entire Sanctification (again, in the non-technical sense) is realized at death or at Christ's return. This is our glorification, when believers are made new. The application for believers now is to work out their sanctification each day with the Lord through prayer, bible study, fellowship etc. It is a continual journey of reliance on a Holy God to continually perfect us. May we pray for greater holiness each day.

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<sup>12</sup> This is Paul speaking, who was not present at Pentecost, nor were Silvanus and Timothy. As such, they are not speaking about a second blessing themselves. This is descriptive of the Spirit sealing all who believe.

## **Two Takes on Holiness**

### **2. Holiness the Baggage Handler**

by Captain Andrew Bale

A man was walking across the concourse of a busy mainline station. Wanting to know the time he stopped a stranger carrying two very large suitcases and said ‘excuse me sir do you have the right time?’ The man put down the two very large suitcases and pulled up his sleeve to reveal a very impressive watch. ‘What time zone do you want he responded, Greenwich Mean Time, American Eastern Time, Pacific Time, Australia, Central Europe?’ The man asking the question replied ‘Wow that’s amazing’

‘Amazing – that’s nothing watch this!’ The stranger then proceeded to demonstrate all the other features of this amazing piece of horological technology. The watch featured a DAB radio, Ipad, satellite TV, Global positioning navigation, electronic dictionary and thesaurus. The watch also doubled up as a mobile communicator and could even produce a short burst of electrical energy powerful enough to light a small fire. The man was so impressed he offered to buy the watch, the owner explained that such a watch would cost an enormous amount of money in fact it would cost everything the man had. The man wanted the watch so much and quickly handed over all he had, strapped the watch proudly on his wrist and went to walk off. ‘Hang on a moment’ said the previous owner of the watch holding up the two large suitcases ‘don’t forget the batteries’.

Holiness is an incredible blessing, one that promises so much. Like the watch in the story above it is a blessing that will cost anyone who wants it everything they have. The problem with holiness is that over years of neglect the theology that drives it has become cumbersome and complicated, making the experience seem, to many people, impractical and too difficult to obtain. Many people hear about holiness, begin to accept the truth about what it promises to deliver even get to the point where they are willing to pay the price to receive it, when the ‘batteries’ make the whole transaction suddenly seem less desiring.

The truth is that holiness is a very simple doctrine which when understood and correctly applied will revolutionise the life of a believer beyond all recognition. In addition holiness is an essential component of Christianity which remains ‘the privilege of all believers’ and something without which ‘none shall see the Lord’.

One of the most debilitating diseases that attacks the faith and optimism of the Christian soldier is sin. When sin is active in our lives we are unable to preach the gospel with any real conviction. When sin is active in our lives we become shy and withdrawn in worship. When sin is active in our lives we try and cover our tracks with a cloak of compromise and hypocrisy. The situation becomes even sadder when we realise that the power of sin is nothing more than a malevolent confidence trick.

“For sin shall not be your master, because you are not under law, but under grace.”  
(Romans 6:14)

“Jesus declared.”Go now and leave your life of sin.” John 8:11

“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin.” (1John 2:1)

There is a strange spirit abroad at present within The Salvation Army which, theologically speaking, wants to have its cake and eat it.

Talk about ‘sin in the camp’ discuss personal and corporate sin, point out the Army’s failings and foolishness and people become very passionate and argue in defence of the Army’s righteousness. Talk about holiness, about purity, about victory over temptation and sin and people quote the following part of the bible verse above “if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defence—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.” Or they quote the following from the same letter “If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)

On the one hand Salvationists seem to shrink from accusations of apostasy and rebellion declaring that all is far from bad within our ranks. Yet with the same breath they decry the possibility of purity and victory over sin. Too proud to retreat and to scared to advance they simply camp precariously in no-man’s land pinned down by the enemy’s big guns.

Holiness is the thin line drawn by the Holy Spirit between the fact that sin, though probable, does not have to be obligatory. Yet even with this truth most Christians and Salvationists (who really ought to know better) prefer to live within a cycle of sin/repent/sin rather than try and understand the theology of holiness.

Holiness is becoming increasingly fashionable – everyone seems to be talking about it - and as a result holiness is being misrepresented. The front end of holiness is well presented like the watch in the story that opened this article but the back end is as already stated, cumbersome and complicated. Let’s make sure we understand what holiness is by stating very clearly what it is not.

- Holiness is not self control
- Holiness is not self discipline
- Holiness is not self denial
- Holiness is not a desire to be one with God
- Holiness is not growth
- Holiness is not maturity
- Holiness is not Christ likeness
- Holiness is not spiritual formation!

Holiness may result (indeed will result) in a manifestation of all of these things but none of them either separately or collectively are holiness.

Holiness is what happens when God creates within us a new heart and a new mind.

The heart is the seat of our emotions (our feelings, motives and desires) and our mind is the seat of our intellect (our will, our ability to understand and decide). The human heart and mind are what make Christian service impossible.

The closest that humanity has ever got to holiness without a new heart or mind is probably best illustrated in the life of the rich young ruler. Here was a man who had kept the commandments since his youth. When the disciples heard Christ dismiss his efforts as incomplete they were astounded and exclaimed 'who then can be saved'. Jesus replied 'with man this is impossible'.

When Jesus talked to Nicodemus he spoke to him about the importance of being 'born again'.

When David wrote his classic repentance prayer in Psalm 51 he asked God to 'create' in him "a pure heart."

In Ezekiel chapter 11 God promises to replace old hearts 'of stone' with new hearts 'of flesh' and later in the same book (Ezekiel 18:31) he commands the Israelites to repent *and* to 'get a new heart and a new spirit.'

In Romans 8:7-8 Paul says 'The sinful mind is hostile to God. It does not submit to God's law, nor can it do so. Those controlled by the sinful nature cannot please God.'

Holiness happens when God gives us new hearts and minds in which he can (according to Ezekiel) actually move us to follow his decrees and keep his laws. Human hearts, as already shown from scripture, cannot follow God whereas holy hearts have a natural desire to obey. Holiness is the result of a conditional covenant between God and man; God promises and provides us with a new heart and a new mind on the condition that we consecrate ourselves. Consecration is that simple action whereby we give up all that is sinful and doubtful and surrender everything we have left to God.

We must want a new heart and mind; we must prove that desire through our willingness to repent of all sin, renounce all that is doubtful and consecrate everything that remains to God. Holiness, like all aspects of Christianity is fuelled by faithful obedience. Only if I believe God's power to work the change, faithfully obey God and speak to others about what he has done can holiness manifest itself in my life.

Like the man at the train station buying the watch is an instant transaction. We might wander around the concourse for days, weeks, months - even years - but holiness happens when we surrender all to possess the miracle. There may be a process that leads us to the point of consecration but the taking up our cross is a deliberate act of the will and takes but a moment.

If you want holiness then ignore the bunkum that the modern church tries to weigh it down with. Leave the bulk batteries behind and you will find that holiness runs on the silent, invisible and perpetual energy of Pentecost. If you want a life that 'lives above

feeling' if you want a life that is 'more than conqueror' then simply meet the conditions of the covenant and experience the peace, joy, optimism and purposeful productivity that holiness delivers.

“The most impossible of all  
Is that I e'er from sin should cease;  
Yet shall it be; I know it shall;  
Jesus, look to thy faithfulness  
If nothing is too hard for thee,  
All things are possible to me.”  
(Charles Wesley)

## The Dream

by Commissioner James Knaggs  
*With comment by Stephen Court*

'I have a dream that one day The Salvation Army will, in its entirety, be what God wants it to be...

'...that every soldier, young and old, would be sanctified through and through...and out of the passion of their love in Christ, would be an undeniable force for God's love in the world.

'...that this love would be seen between each soldier to demonstrate that God has sent his son into the world not to condemn it, but that the world, through him, might be saved...and by this would all people know that we are his followers and represent him.

'...that our love would be seen through intentional and overt acts of mercy and justice, all the while in humility before God, not needing to publish our works, only doing them to glorify God.

'...that our mission would have such integrity that every expression of our ministry would be marked not so much by a red shield or even a crest, but by the love of God for people.

'...that every corps would embrace the gospel for everyone in their community, not discriminating by culture, language, social status, or age...and that the helping ministries would be woven into the fabric so that even under a nuclear microscope we could not distinguish between spiritual and social.

'...that every social program would be inviting to any one in need to be helped towards eternal affect, still maintaining our resolve to dispense such love indiscriminately and unconditionally...and that their connections with the corps ministries become seamless to the point that they would become a type of corps in their own right.

'...that we would have effective ministries to eradicate homelessness, human trafficking, prostitution and other indecencies currently common in our society.

'...that our social program strategy will be based upon the needs of people in the context of Biblical mandate, not necessarily the offerings of government contracts.

'...that headquarters' support units would be understood as such, not diminishing their purposes for accountability, but wholly in the context of authentic support and encouragement.

'...that programs such as Salvo Stores and Employment Plus would also become saving stations for the lost and fully integrated into the mission of the territory.

'...that Salvo Stores and the Trade become responsible outlets for Fair Trade goods.

'...that our commercial department at THQ become a resource and focal point for facilitating our increasing efforts in Fair Trade.

'...that the Family Tracing Service be expanded to find those souls who have been lost to the Army, assisting in bringing them home, where they belong.

'...that we would never have another day in our existence where someone was not brought to Christ.

'...that our soldiers' roll would only be an increasing reality as would our worship and discipleship meetings.

'...that the proliferation of new ministry openings would be so common and normal that we would have to appoint personnel just to keep track of it, most often after the fact.

'...that those gifted with creative ministry gifts would have every opportunity to employ these very skills in the work of the Army.

'...that our worship would be filled with creative means to celebrate God's provisions and presence among us.

'...that our 24/7 Prayer Initiatives will be adopted by individual corps throughout the territory all the time.

'...that we would establish Lighthouses of Prayer to cover our neighbourhoods with grace.

'...that we would have numerous prayer destinations where people could go for prayer retreats, learning opportunities and resources.

'...that our systems would be less restrictive and more imaginative to accommodate the new things God wants to do among us.

'...that as a movement, we would be marked by holiness in corporate and individual praxis.

'...that there would be such an outpouring of the Spirit upon us that we would be courageous and effective witnesses in our families, communities, cities, Australia and the world.

'...that our compassion would be large enough to be understood as authentically global throughout what we do at home and abroad.

'...that our people would be quick to respond to the voice of God for whatever he calls them to.

'...that our officer training programs would be taxed by the unusual response of the called to serve as officers in The Salvation Army.

'...that our local officers would be so empowered to understand their foundational role in the corps ministries and fully embrace the priesthood of all believers.

'...that our women would have appointments and responsibilities commensurate with their gifts, abilities and experience.

'...that our young people would be filled with the spirit and recognised as contributors in the fight.

'...that our children would be welcomed as authentic soldiers with proper opportunities to celebrate the presence of Christ in their lives and in their environments.

'...that an extraordinary forgiveness and healing of past sins and hurts would prevail upon all people victimised by our practices or inattention.

'...that God would see that we love Him supremely through Christ and that our reliance on the Holy Spirit completes His hope in us.

'...that God would see that we love Him absolutely and are expressing our love for Him by our active love for others.'

Comment (by Stephen Court):

So, what? Where do we go from here?

There are a few options ahead. We can decide that this Dream and the ONE DAY... a nice read, somewhat stirring, and put it down on a shelf alongside many dusty covers that haven't made much of an impact in the routine of our lives.

We can add another tagline to our territory. We can make posters and print brochures of the dream and stick it on the walls of our halls and our fridges. And then a decade from now we can wistfully hearken back to the Dream when we see the odd orphaned sun-faded bulletin on a lonely YP hallway, or visually stumble across the spine of this book while searching for the latest, greatest tome on our bookshelves.

Or, we can submit to it. We can receive it as from God. We can position ourselves downstream in the river of his grace so that the Dream can flow over us and through us, saturating our insides and carrying us along to supernatural fulfilment.

Can you imagine what will happen if we embrace option three? How our lives will change. How our corps will change. How our cities will change. How our society will

change. How our world will change. We're at least as intrigued as you are as to the possibilities. We're committed to fanning into flame the gifts of God. We want God to go deeper and wider on this and spin off regional visions and local visions and micro-visions, orchestrating a symphony of divine creativity in and through us

We'd love to hear about your journey of discovery, miraculously co-labouring with God, in this case co-crafting with God to paint the colours of the Dream on the canvas of the lives of billions of people.

Are you up for it?

Live the Dream.

Sign up, in your prayer corner, today.

## **One Day... Outpouring of the Spirit**

Excerpt by Captain Rowan Castle

'...that there would be such an outpouring of the Spirit upon us that we would be courageous and effective witnesses in our families, communities, cities, Australia and the world.'

Brothers and sisters, we are The Salvation Army—mobilised and unified towards the common cause of the salvation of the world and it is the Spirit's coming that empowers the believer for this task. Acts 1:8 says, 'But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth.'

What is the catalyst for this outpouring? What is God waiting for? Surely the God who so loves the world that he sacrifices his only son is not reluctant. Surely he is not preoccupied. Is there some special time for revival? Of course not, what he waits for is you. He waits for a heart, mind and spirit totally surrendered and available to him. He waits for people who value the salvation of souls and the growth of his kingdom more than personal pride, gain and acceptance.

Much has been said, written and discussed on the topic of evangelism and it sometimes seems that evangelism is something that was possible once but is now rare. Our history as a movement suggests that we were once a revolution of evangelical zeal, methodology and results. Our status as such has now been lost in the face of enormous societal change. Questions of 'Who are we now' and 'What is our purpose' have haunted Salvationists of late as we simply fail to believe that we can experience a revival akin to our early days (e.g. 1878-1888 in England).

We cannot afford to give into the enemy's lie that when it comes to our witnessing we have had our day. Yes, the early days of the Army, and the world in which they lived, have come and gone but we can never afford to accept that the power and truth of Acts 1:8 are also gone. We can never dismiss the promise of Jesus: '...you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses...!'

That same power is available to you today and the key word is 'you'. Not 'we' or 'us', or even 'the Army'—but you! You can know the Spirit's power. You can be God's witness to the end of the earth. It starts with your consecration to God and ends in his power made manifest in you. There is no program, invitation, permission, better time or better person than you.

So this is what I understand about being a courageous and effective witness. First, some people say 'yes' and some people say 'no'. Our witness must be courageous. There is a risk of failure, rejection and frustration—people will accept Jesus, but others will reject him.

In Mark 4, Jesus promises a one in four ratio; in Luke 17:17, Jesus only gets one out of 10, and in Luke 10:16 Jesus reminds us that it is him who is rejected—not us. Some may say 'no', but we keep going for those who say 'yes'. Second, people love to hear the good news. Romans 1:16 says, 'I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes.' I am constantly amazed (though I shouldn't be surprised) at how people respond to the gospel when it is heard. This good news to which we are a witness is music to humanity's ears.

And finally, the world is crying out for holy people — a people cleansed from sin and filled with love; a people full of grace and free from hypocrisy; a people whose capacity for acceptance stamps out the fear of judgement; a people who are consecrated, fully surrendered and available to God...a people who know the outpouring of the Spirit in their lives.

### Brainstorm

Who is there in your life you can take a risk with today?

If you wanted to tell someone about Jesus what would you say? Maybe you could take a few moments to think about what you would witness to. Take some moments each morning to listen to what God says about the people in your life that don't yet know him. Maybe listen on their behalf and see if God has a message for them.

Be radical, hit the streets and start your adventure as an evangelist by asking people if they know about Jesus. It can work!

## **One Day... Eradicate Indecencies**

Excerpt by Captain Danielle Strickland

'...that we would have effective ministries to eradicate homelessness, human trafficking, prostitution and other indecencies currently common in our society.'

When Jesus taught his disciples to pray he told them to pray, 'Our Father who art in heaven... Your Kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.'

That's a powerful prayer—and an even more amazing thought. For years the Christian church and, dare I say even The Salvation Army, has had a 'survivor' posture. We thought if we huddled together and stayed 'holy' inside the church, perhaps we'd be safe from the evil that permeated every aspect of the world. After all, the 'devil prowls around like a lion'.

Perhaps spurred on by the 'pre-millennial rapture' theory (if we hang on tight Jesus will zap us out of here before the real disaster), we bought the lie that the world would infect us with sin, and missed the essential truth of the gospel message—the Kingdom is for now. Jason Upton (a worship leader) used to say that everywhere he went people were praying for an open heaven. He suggests heaven has been open since Jesus returned—what we should be praying for is an open earth.

Infectious holiness—one that is radically based in the gospels—is one that infects the earth. We are called to be light and salt. We are born to be influencers—world changers and shapers. Catherine Booth used to tuck her children into bed every night and remind them that they were going to change the world. I wish as spiritual children of that mother we'd turn our ear to overhear! We are called to advance God's kingdom (where every wrong is put right) on the earth.

The Word says that the gates of hell cannot stop the advancing kingdom of God on the earth. Every great revival was accompanied by great social reform. Our own radical history was a social scheme birthed out of laying hold of the kingdom and bringing it to earth.

Every great social reformer had tasted heaven. Even Gandhi admitted that in his amazing social movement to free India all he really did was put the words of Jesus into action.

What I like about this dream is that it's aggressively kingdom-focused. God doesn't just want to make a dent in poverty; he wants to eradicate it. He doesn't want only one prostitute welcomed into community and redeemed; he wants the oppression of prostitution to be removed. He wants the systemic realities of evil (the human slave trade, economic prejudices, war and refugees) to be dismantled and righteous ones raised up in their place.

When economics expert Jeffery Sachs writes about the end of poverty he believes that with applied effort we can see extreme poverty wiped out in this current generation.

Mohammad Yaris, after receiving the Nobel Peace Prize this year (2007) for his amazing micro-enterprise bank for the developing world, said he believes his grandchildren will have to go to a museum to see extreme poverty.

These are dreamers, but how beautiful the dream, for it's not a new one, it's an ancient one—the dream of Heaven itself. This dream is echoed in the pages of scripture and in the prayers of the saints for generations. It's time to see clearly now.

This kingdom vision says, 'Your kingdom come, Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven'. And it is happening right now. God's kingdom is coming—join in! I believe, with Commissioner Knaggs, that this generation of Salvationists will rise up and fight for the advance of the kingdom of heaven.

It looks like the Spirit of the Lord upon every willing and obedient soldier empowering them to preach good news to the poor, bind up the broken captive, release the prisoners and heal the blind.

It looks like government advocacy, brothel chaplaincy, rescue homes for trafficked victims; it looks like every quarters becoming a mission station for the poor; and it looks like every soldier living in direct contrast to the ways of the world, leaving behind lives of excess for simplicity in order to celebrate kingdom generosity! It looks messy, dirty, colourful and free. It looks like long days and short nights full of prayer and then the obedience to get up off our knees to advance the war. It looks like right now. Can you hear heaven's heartbeat in the rhythm of the Dream itself?

This is good news. Join in. We are not fighting flesh and blood but principalities and powers in the spiritual realm. William Booth said Salvationism was simply this: the banishing of wickedness from the earth forever.

God grant it. Now to live the Dream.

Brainstorm:

Some campaigns already started:

The fair trade principle:

In action right now. The Salvation Army in Australia recognises its potential (both as an example and a consumer) to consume fairly. In our coffee, tea and chocolate consumption, we can make a difference in the lives of some of the world's poorest people. As an organisation we are convinced it's time we led the way to new economic strategies to help relieve poverty in the world. What if every Salvationist determined to buy fair trade? We could make a huge difference in the way people live (both those in

the developing world and the developed world) and give the world the truth, 'there is nothing like an Army cup of tea!'"

**JUSTLose:**

The thing that causes the most slavery in the world is our excesses (coffee, chocolate and sex are three of them, but there are many more). Those same things that enslave people physically are the very things that enslave us as well (obesity and desire). We are rising up as the people of God to say 'No' to excess so that others can be literally freed. Join the campaign today!

What if 100 Salvationists led teams of ten to confront the cultural disease of excess? Could we free thousands and effect change the world over?

**JUSTPray:**

Freedom Fridays: Salvationists called to fast and pray every Friday at noon, asking God for his help to end the sexual slavery of thousands of young women and children.

**JUSTLive:**

Salvationists hearing the call of our roots to re-establish the 'slum sisters and brothers' movement of our beginnings—called to incarnate themselves among the poor, as Jesus did. Imagine the worst 100 post codes being invaded by light-bearers and God's people bringing hope into the darkest places! How about mobilised grassroots movements that determine to shape the policies instead of react to them (affordable housing, addictions, indigenous communities, refugees and poverty rates both within Australia and around the world).

Every Salvationist home open to the 'stranger' and 'alien'—a refugee family relocated and embraced by the community of God.

## **One Day... Mobilising Young People in the Fight**

Excerpt by Xander Coleman

'...that our young people would be filled with the Spirit and recognised as contributors in the fight.'

At its inception, The Salvation Army was inherently a youth movement—an army of young people. Primitive Salvationists recruited young people who were fresh and energetic to take the Army across the world. It was seen as commonplace for cadets to be commissioned at 16 years of age, or commissioners to be as young as 23.

Commissioner George Scott Railton lead a group of seven young women to invade the United States of America—only one of whom was over 20-years-old! The Army was not afraid of putting young people in leadership positions because it had nothing to lose and everything to gain for the sake of the kingdom of God.

Things have changed a lot since then. Young people have nowhere near as much prominence in Army ministry. True, they still have entire departments dedicated to them at territorial and divisional levels. But it seems that throughout the past century youth ministry has come to mean ministry to youth rather than ministry by youth.

You see dry bones? In Australia, our generation of young people are plagued with influences such as binge drinking, drug abuse, internet pornography, sexual promiscuity, teenage pregnancy, broken families, abused children, divorced parents, depression, suicide. If ever there's been a generation that needs good news, it's this generation.

We would be naive to assume that these issues exist exclusively outside our ranks.

And yet, out of this broken generation, God seems to be raising up a remnant of the faithful—and not just faithful because they show up every Sunday. Faithful in surrendering their lives to him; faithful in praying for his kingdom to come on this earth; faithful in trusting in his promise; faithful in holiness, in evangelism, in passion, in commitment, in covenant, in truth—an army of young people who are seeking after him.

God is pouring out his spirit on young men and young women who will receive it, who will surrender their lives for his kingdom. That old prophecy is stirring, echoing, growing louder, 'your sons and daughters will prophesy'. Can you hear it?

The prophets are stirring, have you heard them? Check out *The Vision* by Pete Greig—part poem, part prophecy, part distant hope, part realised dream: [www.24-7prayer.com/cm/resources/28](http://www.24-7prayer.com/cm/resources/28).

The first fruits are emerging—have you seen them? Teenagers testifying to freedom from the power of sin; teenagers from this territory leading corps outposts in foreign

lands; teens moving to rough neighbourhoods so they can share God's love with the residents; teenagers writing books on holiness for other teenagers.

Young people have so much to offer! As a good friend of mine says, there is no junior version of the Holy Spirit. If a young person is gifted in preaching, let her preach. If a pre-teen is gifted in leading worship, let him lead worship. If there are gifted evangelists, prophets, healers, givers, leaders, pastors, teachers — let them do it! May our young people be holy, filled with the spirit of God, anointed for ministry and mobilised. An army of young people! 'And this vision will be. It will come to pass; it will come easily; it will come soon. How do I know? Because this is the longing of creation itself, the groaning of the Spirit, the very dream of God. My tomorrow is His today. My distant hope is His 3D. And my feeble, whispered, faithless prayer invokes a thunderous, resounding, bone-shaking great "Amen!" from countless angels, from heroes of the faith, from Christ himself. And He is the original dreamer, the ultimate winner. Guaranteed.' – Pete Greig, *The Vision*.

#### Brainstorm

How do we make it happen? How can we mobilise our young people?

What sort of role models are we for our young people? Are we modelling holiness, mission-focus and sensitivity to the spirit?

Research shows that to develop, all children need someone unconditionally committed to them. Spiritually, how can you commit to a young person's development?

Do you think we expect too much of our young people? Too little? Why?

## **Barmy Army**

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

'GOD BLESS our Army brave and true and all the barmy things we do!' That may be a bit of doggerel but it contains more than a grain of truth. Our course, when we speak of 'the Army' we are not merely referring to headquarters in London England, or anywhere else. 'The Army' is a collective term. The Army is us, and sometimes our biggest foes may be within our ranks rather than outside them.

Sometimes there may be criticism of the way in which people have led the Army. But equally, there may be criticism of the way in which the Army has sometimes led its leaders when Salvationists have voted with their feet and gone in the wrong direction.

I give way to none in my love for the movement in which I have served for most of my life. It has faults because it has people like me in it (!) but I still think that there is nothing better. I believe that God called it into being and that he is still pleased to use it for His glory. I passionately want the Army to be what it is at its best and pray that it may be saved from any foolishness on the part of those of us who comprise it. I'm 'army barmy' and pray for our sometimes 'barmy Army'.

Sometimes we have been foolish in that we have not dared to be different. We have been afraid to innovate. My favourite quotation from William Booth is, 'There must be continuity of principle but adaptation of method'. Another favourite word of wisdom from the past is from Russell Lowell, 'New occasions teach new duties. Time makes ancient good uncouth'.

But if it is foolish to shrink from trying new approaches it is also foolish to jettison tried and trusted methods simply because they are old.

The late Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth, granddaughter of William and Catherine Booth, told me that uniform was not introduced in the Army because of some edict from headquarters but because of the desire of many Salvationists to show whose side they were on. And so, through the years, our testimony has not only been audible and credible but visible as well.

Now it seems that a few among us cannot get out of uniform quick enough. The extreme folly must be when some taking part in a door-knock collection leave off the uniform which makes them instantly recognizable and don civilian clothes – even ragged jeans – instead.

Salvationists have good reason to be 'humbly proud' of the movement to which they belong. In many parts of the world the public is ready to heap praise upon us and sometime we should pray to be as good as people think we are. Certainly, we should seek to be as good as God wants us to be and not lose out through folly or unfaithfulness.