

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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## **Editorial Introduction**

by Captain Stephen Court

Greetings in Jesus' name, friends. Welcome to the April/May 2008 edition of Journal of Aggressive Christianity. To change gears from the popular Vanity Fair issue immediately preceding we thought we'd tackle some less popular issues such as liberalism, empire, and hell.

Major Harold Hill starts things off with a piece that is featured in the Tri-Territorial Theological Forum's second book in its Exploring Our Foundations series, Sacrifice, Salvation, Discipleship (available from a Trade near you). It is called "Sacrifice in (reasonable) Service" and he engages the old Army maxim, 'better to burn out than to rust out'.

Captain Grant Sandercock-Brown then weighs in to assert, "I Am Not a Fan of Liberalism." It is fairly self-explanatory but surprising to some who only know and love the friendly columnist from The Officer only by his regular one-page contributions to that magazine.

Sandercock-Brown is the author of a brand new book from a middle-aged dad to a teen-aged daughter that addresses all the regular difficult issues in an insightful manner (also available at a Trade near you).

Nathanael Homewood exhorts us to 'Subvert the Salvo Empire' in an incendiary piece sure to spur some debate in the corridors of warriors.

Major Priya Morgan attempts a synthesis of Brengle and Coutts, asking, 'Does Holiness Have to Have a Brand Name?' Holiness is an important topic with which each Salvo should wrestle. Where do you stand?

Captain Michael Ramsay directs us to, 'Be Bold for the Gospel' in an article based on Philippians.

Cadet Peter Hobbs, on this April 1st, addresses 'Foolish Worship'. And in a reprint of an article we're guessing barely any of you have seen, Commissioner Catherine Bramwell-Booth teaches us on the 'Development of Character' from the 1925 International Training Council lectures.

Matt Kean is wondering why everyone seems so, 'Afraid of Hell'? Read this in conjunction with the following article.

Captain Andrew Bale wraps up #54 with, 'No Retreating, Hell Defeating', a piece every JAC regular should read a couple of times.

All together, there is a lot here to instruct, challenge, and inspire. Enjoy. But don't keep all the joy to yourself. Share this issue with ten friends. And keep fighting as Holy

Spirit-empowered, fearless, zealous warriors of our great God and King.

The editors

## Sacrifice in reasonable service

by Major Harold Hill

### Two true stories

An officer accompanied his young son to school for a teacher/parent interview. The teacher suggested some project the father could do together with his son. The officer was floored when the boy asked, “Is it all right if I get someone else’s father to help; mine would be too busy.”

An old soldier of a country Corps died. The family went and knocked on the Quarters door. The young officer said, “Sorry, I’m on furlough. I’m not able to come.” (It’s OK...The family contacted the previous CO, who drove half-way across the country in order to be with them in their bereavement and conduct the funeral.)

Regarding the first story, we have in the Army a long tradition of the “better to burn out than to rust out” kind. The *Orders and Regulations* prescribed suffering as part of the officer’s commitment: “The F.O. must choose not only the Salvation of Souls as the end of his existence, but that suffering, without which they cannot be saved. He embraces not only the end, but the means by which alone this end can be accomplished.”<sup>1</sup> Bramwell Booth confessed in a letter that “This feeling that you are a poor sinner loaded with guilt if you stop work for ten minutes, even in a railway train, is really dreadful.”<sup>2</sup> Most of us received some initial conditioning in Sunday School, when we learned to sing, “Jesus first, myself last, and others in between.” Sometimes family came last, with “myself”, rather than in between, with “others”. So the first story rings true.

Now, looking at the second story, we have a less-trumpeted tradition of this kind too. Mrs General Bramwell Booth, when in charge of the British Territory in the 1920s, was dismayed to learn of an officer who stated that “as a Field Officer she would be in little home where she would be able to rest whenever she desired, and go to meetings occasionally.”<sup>3</sup> Some might characterise that attitude as typical welfare-dependency, or perhaps a public service mentality. I don’t think that’s entirely fair, but I gather that senior officers today may be as frustrated as Mrs Booth at a like reluctance of some officers to be accountable to anyone but themselves for their time or for the discharge of their responsibilities.

You will gather that the particular angle of “sacrifice” I am addressing is that which concerns “the Work”, as “service”. Here we find these two opposite poles, workaholism and laziness – or at least such a clarity about the need for self-care that, as one church-member said of his pastor, “Unfortunately the church doesn’t seem to figure in his ‘core business’.” Organisationally, have we swung from one to the other? Why do some people always need a rev up and others need to slow down? What causes these

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<sup>1</sup> *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers*, (London: Salvation Army, 1886) p. 9.

<sup>2</sup> Catherine Bramwell Booth, *Bramwell Booth* (London: Rich & Cowan, 1932) p. 199.

<sup>3</sup> Florence Booth, *Powers of Salvation Army Officers*, (London: Salvation Army, [1928] ) p. 18.

extremes? How can we maintain a realistic balance between having no boundaries at all and erecting a Maginot Line around the Quarters?

### Sacrifices then and now

Once upon a time the sacrifices involved in serving God through the Salvation Army were fairly obvious – poverty, suffering, hardship, persecution were par for the course. You sometimes depended on charity to eat, if you collected enough for the corps expenses but not enough for your allowance as well. Riots and terms of imprisonment were left behind with the nineteenth century, but you were not too highly regarded in the community until the movement had earned a grudging respect through its social work or war service, and you might still endure some name-calling from the rowdy element and a measure of contempt from their betters. There was also the expectation of obedience to superiors, and sometimes a degree of harshness, of arbitrary unfairness, about the administration of the Movement. Of course, that would never happen now, but frustration with the organisation is nothing new. Even the loyal and saintly Brengle confided to his wife in 1912 that

I think probably most of our difficulty at present in this country arises from this multiplicity of details and the infinite red tape with which we are tied up which sap the strength and frustrate the piety of our people... To my mind it is one of the paradoxes of history how the General, with his free, large spirit which refuses to be bound by the mild rules of a Methodist conference, could have developed a system which binds men hand and foot with red tape, which is to Methodist rules what... calculus is to the multiplication table.<sup>4</sup>

Officer-recruitment in the good old days was like Churchill's famous offer to the British people in 1940; "nothing but blood, toil, tears and sweat". However, the Salvation Army officer's boat has risen with all the others on the rising tide; it's nearly forty years since officers in New Zealand were not virtually guaranteed their allowance. We have come to expect a moderately comfortable middle-class life-style. If we still maintain some of the rhetoric, the reality is a little different. And most, if not all men, think well of us.

So what are the sacrifices asked of officers today? Is there anything which might occasion *suffering*?

I suspect that most discomfort arises *internally*, from within the movement itself, both from above and from below. The officer is caught between the upper and the nether millstones, like Hopalong Cassidy in the first moving picture I ever saw. Unfortunately it was just part two of a three-part movie and I never saw the final instalment, so for me Hopalong Cassidy is forever crouching beneath the slowly descending grindstone of a bad injun's grinding mill...

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<sup>4</sup> S.L. Brengle, in letter to his wife 22 July 1912, in William Clark (ed.), *Dearest Lily: a selection of the Brengle correspondence* (London: SA, 1985) p. 112

The “lower” millstone? I suppose there have always been some Salvationist families whose staple Sunday lunchtime fare was roast officer; that won't have changed. Keeping the peace amongst our comrades in the war remains an onerous responsibility, and the energy expended dodging friendly fire is no longer available for prosecution of the war itself. Perhaps more significant is that in any people-helping role, you cannot have a more than ordinary exposure to a toxic environment of sadness and badness without risking some personal damage.

The “upper” millstone is the expectations of the organisation itself, augmented by the ever-growing burden of compliance fashioned by those who rightly seek to save us from ourselves. This is not a Salvation Army distinctive. Ask any professional person or anyone in the “people-helping” industry. Of the making of forms, all for the best of possible reasons, from Occupational Health and Safety to Statistical Returns, there is no end. Computers have not yet delivered the paperless office, and the officers no longer visit the comrades at home because they are bent over their keyboards far into the night... Mat Badger describes it as “death by paperwork”.<sup>5</sup> The end result is that we continue to kick against the pricks with renewed energy as far as accountability to the organisation is concerned.

### **Biblical perspective**

The Biblical text which most commonly springs to mind as linking the concepts of “sacrifice” and “service” is of course Romans 12:1: “Offer yourselves as a living sacrifice... which is your reasonable service”.

Here we have firstly the notion of sacrifice, *thusia*. Sacrifice implies costliness; we remember David saying that “I would not offer to the Lord my God that which costs me nothing.”<sup>6</sup> What is being offered as sacrifice to God is the Christian's whole self; in T.S. Eliot's words, “costing not less than everything.”<sup>7</sup> Once offered, ownership of what is sacrificed passes into the hands of God. If, as in the feast that followed a temple sacrifice, we get to share the meal, we receive it as God's gift to us, not as something we own ourselves.

Then we have Paul's play on the word “service” – *latreian* – meaning both cultic worship and the tasks of ordinary servitude. It embraces both the “religious” duties we may discharge, the tasks which maintain the corporate life of the church, and the necessity of doing everything else, our “secular callings”, the “trivial round, the common task”,<sup>8</sup> all in the name of the Lord Jesus.<sup>9</sup> They are all means to worship and glorify God. “Service” reminds us that our faith includes both vertical and horizontal dimensions; both heart to God and hand to man. It is a word rich in prophetic associations,

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5 Mat Badger, “The Changing Nature of Salvation Army Officership: An Examination of the Impact of Institutionalization on the Mission of the Salvation Army”, *eJournal of Aggressive Christianity* 40 (December 2005/January 2006), on [www.armybarmy.com](http://www.armybarmy.com).

6 2 Samuel 24:24.

7 TS Eliot, from “Little Gidding”, in *Four Quartets*.

8 John Keble in SASB 668.

9 Colossians 3:17

reminding us of Isaiah's warning that offerings are useless if justice is neglected, of Hosea's declaration that God requires "mercy and not sacrifice", of Jesus' own "inasmuch" parable and his warning that it is not those who merely say "Lord, Lord" who will enter the Kingdom.<sup>10</sup> This is all about "walking the talk".

Then there is the qualifier, *logikon*, "reasonable". (We'll set on one side the NIV's "spiritual service" because although the translators have their reasons, frankly, I think they're wrong. "Spiritual" conveys far too restricted an application.) So, "reasonable". What is "reasonable" in this context? Does he mean something like "moderation in all things... Sure, make *some* sacrifice... just don't go overboard about it..." I think not. "Intelligent worship" says Philips. "The most *sensible* way to serve God," according to the CEV. "Understanding worship" in Cranfield's phrase. Paul is not referring to "reasonableness" or "rationality" in our modern, colloquial sense, but as Cranfield puts it, to what would be "consistent with a proper understanding of the truth of God revealed in Jesus Christ." Logically, given *that* (the mercy, the grace of God), then *this!* (our whole-hearted response).

Cranfield sums up: "The intelligent understanding of worship, that is, worship which is consonant with the truth of the gospel, is indeed nothing less than the offering of one's whole self in the course of one's concrete living, in one's inward thoughts, feelings and aspirations, but also in one's words and deeds."<sup>11</sup>

Then of course that opening is followed up by Paul's injunction not to "let the world squeeze you into its mould", in J.B. Philips' memorable paraphrase, but to let God re-mould, transform us from within. And all of this as introduction to, and in the context of, our involvement in the Body of Christ. So although I'm taking that particular text as a springboard, I'm not intending to use it as a "proof text" on which all depends, without context, but as one directing us towards the whole grace-filled Christian life-style implied by the qualifier, "reasonable".

So what does that mean in practice; what does it involve? And how does it relate to the two poles of workaholicism and hyper-self-care illustrated by my opening stories? Living for others and living for myself are both needful, but either, if not balanced by the other, is deeply dangerous. But a whiff of paradox is not uncommonly a sign that a truth lurks nearby, so let us tease it out.

"Living for others" is obviously Biblical. Paul urges that "those who live should no longer live for themselves but only for him who died and was raised to life for their sake."<sup>12</sup> He also says that "We should not please ourselves. Instead we should all please our brothers for their own good, in order to build them up in the faith."<sup>13</sup> He says that we should "look out for one another's interests, not just your own."<sup>14</sup> (Note: not "instead of

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10 *Isaiah* 1:11-17, *Hosea* 6:6, *Matthew* 25:40, 45; *Luke* 6:46.

11 C.E.B. Cranfield, *A Critical and Exegetical Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*, II, p. 605 (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1979).

12 *2 Corinthians* 5:15.

13 *1 Corinthians* 15:1-2.

14 *Philippians* 2:4.

your own”). To live by these principles, by the power of the Holy Spirit, is a needful and powerful witness to a self-centred and hedonistic society. (Though we remember that countless non-Christians also live or die for causes greater than their own pleasure or self-interest, from the care-giver for a disabled person to the suicide bomber making the ultimate sacrifice.) That side of things is pretty well covered anyway.

At the same time, what about “self-care”? Is that just “another gospel”, derived from pop psychology? No string of supporting texts springs readily to mind here. Perhaps it’s more a matter of inferring what kind of life-style was being enjoined by one who promised not only suffering but an “easy yoke”. Who not only warned of homelessness but emphasised the need not to get stressed out about the things the Gentiles were all uptight over because “your Father knows you need that stuff”. Who was sufficiently sensitive to our lack of self-love that as an update on the second-greatest commandment, “Love your neighbour as yourself”, he proposed “Love one another as *I have loved you*”. On a merely utilitarian level there’s a case for calling self-care the wise stewardship of God’s resources, but the recognition that we are *loved* takes it to another level altogether. More than anything else the thread that ran through all Jesus’ teaching and example, the central truth of the Gospel, as Paul’s great insight had it, was “grace”. That is, the undeserved favour of God, independent of merit or earning capacity – the antithesis of Law, and of the slavery to shoulds and oughts to which we are prone. This “grace” is fundamental to, inseparable from, the “truth of the Gospel” to which Cranfield alludes. Self-care is actually integral to that perspective.

### **Addictive behaviours**

Sometimes we get a different message from that, partly because, fairly or not, Paul comes across in his letters as a classic, driven, workaholic. But chiefly because Law is the default position of humanity; and because workaholicism is one of the devil’s classic imitations designed to deceive even the elect. No use having a temptation if it doesn’t look a bit like the real thing; a Bangkok market Rolex looks like a Rolex until the gilt wears off. Or it stops. So: love is distorted to lust, gambling demonstrates a parody of faith, low self-esteem masquerades as humility, rescuing presents as care, co-dependence is mistaken for mutuality, hope has been displaced by expectation – workaholicism is rewarded as diligence and laziness can hide behind self-care.

So there is a connection between the rhetoric of sacrifice and the phenomenon of resistance to sacrifice in the name of self-care. Both are good things made bad by over-use. Both are addictive behaviours, at opposite ends of a continuum. Both arise from unmet needs for attention and approval, which we attempt to meet in our own ways – whether over-working or under-working – instead trusting in God to meet our needs. Like all addictions, workaholicism and laziness are characterised by selfishness and self-centredness, by the using of other people for personal ends. And both consume the one afflicted by them as well as creating a zone of toxicity, hazardous to others. They give rise to one or other of two opposite and equally adverse reactions. One is the “headless chook” syndrome, the revving out of control. The other is the reactive, “tell someone

who cares” complex, which brings the wheels to a grinding halt. Both extremes are “unreasonable”, in that both are incompatible with the gospel of grace.

Without a sacrificial commitment to God and the people, the inconsistency between what the Salvation Army claims and what I actually do as a Salvationist soon becomes destructive of my own integrity as well as a disincentive to those who might look to “imitate me as I imitate Christ”<sup>15</sup>. If I’m known as a lazy slob, hardly motivated to countersign the salary cheque if it can possibly be avoided, the word will get around quite soon. The same is true of course if what we model is unhealthily driven and obsessive behaviour. If we have within ourselves a deep and addictive need to be needed, we will run ourselves (and others) ragged, and eventually burn out. And as far as serving either the Lord or others is concerned, that soon becomes counter-productive. People are not silly; nor is God.

This is not beat-ourselves-up time. Of course we are always people of mixed motivation, and our needing to impress our peers, or to please our boss, or to placate our own sense of inferiority, may have to be acknowledged. Any blame and shame we might have taken on from family of origin or absorbed by osmosis from a shame-based society, and the perfectionism of a holiness theology gone sour, are burdens to be laid aside so that they do not get in the way as we address ourselves to the race that lies before us.<sup>16</sup>

### **The application of “reasonableness”**

Which brings me back to Paul’s key word, □□□□□□, “reasonable”; that is, “consistent with the gospel of grace”, in Cranfield’s exegesis. If you like, that is the fly-wheel on the engine of sacrifice, the weight of which not only helps keep the engine turning but also prevents it from revving out of control.

So, what would be “consistent with the gospel”, and by what means might that be secured as our “default setting”, instead of being the unattainable ideal of over-responsibility on the one hand, or a complete discarding of responsibility on the other? A proper application of “reasonable” is the answer. That is, bringing our needs to the only one who can meet them, a transforming experience of grace; a conversion from self-salvation, to trust in the love of God. Grace sets us *free from* the need to earn brownie points and *free to* get stuck into the job. And that attitudinal change can be followed up by (1) on-going, practical measures taken to ensure accountability, with appropriate supports (which are all part of being part of the Body in the world), and (2) an on-going, deepening, personal relationship with Jesus (which goes on transforming from within).

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15 1 Corinthians 11:1.

16 Hebrews 12:1.

## On Liberalism

by Captain Grant Sandercock-Brown

I am not a fan of liberal theology. It's nothing personal. I know some very nice people who are liberals. It's just that for me, an evangelical, underneath our surface similarities there is a radical divergence in our world view.

It's why my liberal friends and I so often talk past each other. I say, 'Of course I believe X, that's what the bible says', and my liberal friend replies 'I know the bible says X but I can't accept it. (This conversation is usually repeated in varying paraphrases). We then walk away, baffled by the other's refusal to accept the obvious truth. However, the bafflement springs, not from insufficient communication skills, but rather mutually exclusive worldviews that will always talk past each other.

I'm not saying that liberal theology is all bad. The liberal social gospel has been a reminder to evangelicals that the gospel is also a call to help others; to make the kingdom a reality in the present. Evangelicalism is too often self-centred. At its worst it becomes, 'I thank God because He is there when I need him'. Sadly, in practice, that seems to be not very often at all.

Nevertheless, Christianity is still about a personal relationship with God. Remember, *Amazing Grace* is written in the first person. We shouldn't just dismiss a theology that embraces what we think, feel and experience. It's hard for me to see how all meaningful theology is not, at some level, personal and experiential. So yes, it's true that modern spirituality is often centred on personal experience. But in a piece of delightful irony, so is classic liberal theology.

For my hypothetical liberal friend, 'I can't accept it' actually means, 'I can't understand miracles or believe in the resurrection or accept that God was involved in inspiring the bible or understand how Peter wrote such good Greek'. What underpins all of that is the word 'I'. Here also is a 'me' centred worldview. Liberal theology is not born out of the failure of the bible under scientific scrutiny or a disproved God. It too is an experiential world view, where my reason trumps the mystery of God. Therefore I must cut God down to size. I may worship God the Father, but he is the father only in the sense that Ingmar Bergman is the father of modern cinema. That is to say, he retired a long time ago and has been rather ineffectual for years, admired but no longer potent. In fact he died a little while ago didn't he?

Isaiah, in chapter 46, mocks the Babylonians for this very thing. 'How can you worship a God of your own invention? You pour out gold, hire a goldsmith and make it into a god, you set it in place and there it stands'. "Though one cries out to it, it does not answer". Of course. Ultimately, the problem with liberalism is that you can't worship a question mark.

British playwright David Hare, a self-confessed agnostic, was asked to address the Lambeth Bishop's conference some years ago. Hare said that while he appreciated the

compassion of liberals in the church, as an observer he was rather surprised by their reluctance to mention their founder. “If Jesus Christ really did rise from the dead, then call me a fanatic but I think you have to tell people about it”. He’s correct. The centre of an evangelical faith is grounded in the truth of a real and risen Lord.

And because of that truth, by the grace of God, I am a believer. I believe that in Jesus I can know the living God; believe that I may not have all the answers but I serve the One who is the answer. Surely ‘me’ at the centre of faith is never enough. There are truths beyond my ken.

C.S. Lewis once wrote “Christianity, if false, is of no importance, and if true, of infinite importance. The only thing it cannot be is moderately important”. God is God or he is not. For me? I believe.

## **“Subverting the Salvo Empire”**

by Nathanael Homewood

They sat their attentive, engaged, and intrigued. The teacher spent hours unwrapping themes and nuances from a book only four chapters in length. Many lingered close to the storyteller afterward, insatiable in their appetite to digest the Word. The speaker – Brian Walsh – skilfully painted a complete picture of the radical call from Paul to the church at Colosse. This treasonous call to subvert the Roman Empire and its marked implications for today inspired, challenged and provoked. What is the empire, though? The question hung in the air with a certain tension and silence. Nobody wanted to immediately out themselves as an imperial conspiracist. Then slowly and tepidly answers were offered: the media, America, culture or Wall Street. Later a young person, with all the sensitivity in the world, gently asked “Is the Salvation Army an empire?”

According to Walsh’s characterization of empire a strong case can be made to categorize the Salvation Army as such. He simplifies empire into being defined by four characteristics; systematic centralization of power, socioeconomic and military control, powerful myths, and imperial images that capture the people’s imaginations. With varying degrees of efficacy one could ascribe each of these aspects to the Salvation Army. This creates a space for a fascinating discourse on the Salvo Empire.

The systematic centralization of power in the Salvation Army is stark. It has been since its conception an organization dominated by a distinct hierarchy. The position of General carries with it enormous potential to dictate the agenda for the denomination universal. The amount that this holds true of course varies according to the respective managerial excess of each General. Membership itself has always been hierarchical. Centralization of power certainly exists in the Salvation Army.

Walsh’s second characteristic is where the parallel falters. Walsh claims an empire needs socioeconomic and military control. One can attempt to draw out the abstract military parallel by referring to the obvious affinity of all things military in certain pronounced constituencies in the Salvation Army. It might even be possible to discuss how economic control – on both a local level (DHQs, THQs) and international level (IHQ, donor territories vs. receiving territories) – perpetuates the Salvation Army’s imperial structures. Nonetheless, it would be an irresponsible representation to indicate that the Salvation Army acts imperially through intentional socioeconomic or military control.

Everyone loves a good story and stories perpetuate empire. In an empire myths shape the rhythm of life. And Salvationist history is filled with these tales. One need not read Hattersly’s *Blood and Fire* to know that some of our favourite stories contain in them some inspired stretching of reality. But we find myths most poignantly in our self-understanding of our organization, in the definitions we create of whom and what we are. The “largest provider of non-governmental services” line reverberates through our collective consciousness. At its very best the claim lacks Christ’s humility. At its worst it

is a gargantuan myth that masks our deficiencies and creates a false sense of accomplishment and comfortability. And we sometimes take this line even further. I will never forget the hyperbolic or arrogant (I pray it was the former!) words of a territorial leader echoing in my young head stating “We are the Salvation Army; we are the only church that is doing something.” Yet, I looked to my heroes of the faith – Dorothy Day, Oscar Romero, and Dietrich Bonhoeffer – and they weren’t Salvationists but were deeply engrossed in the mission of the church universal. This “largest provider of social services/only church doing something” myth shapes the rhythm of life in the Salvation Army and perpetuates the empire itself.

The final characteristic of empire is imperial images; ubiquitous imagery of the empire permeating culture. These images mask the reality of empire that lies behind the images themselves. In the Salvation Army we have undoubtedly perpetuated the empire through imperial images. The obvious imperial images include the shield, the flag, the uniform, the crest, and William Booth. These images dominate and, sometimes, consume the Salvation Army. Everyday I sport a red imperial logo on the chest of a collared shirt – something normally worn by UPS delivery persons and those pumping gas. Pictures of the founder – and there have been more aesthetically pleasing denominational founders! – are hung in places of honour. We sing songs about the flag. We must be the only denomination that heartily enjoys singing about itself in the third person. All these images mask the reality behind them, the reality of a looming and dangerous Salvo empire.

There is a great sermon illustration that can be used to illuminate fears about the Salvation Army and empire. An assembly of pastors are sitting around a table discussing overall direction of their denomination. The leader of the group interjects, “Why all this conversation about the Kingdom? It sounds like you would be willing to sell out the Salvation Army for the sake of the Kingdom.” Growing more forceful he pounds the table and states, “That is disloyalty.”

“No sir,” this response contains no timidity, “what you are describing is idolatry.”

For God’s sake sometimes we need to subvert the empire. We need to run from the idolatry of empire. We need to reimagine the radical call of Paul to the church at Colosse as a call for the Salvation Army. A call that is not about abandoning our prophetic place in the church universal, it is not about encouraging disloyalty, and it is not about the pending doom of a denomination. And for crying out loud it is not asking for Revolution (can we add to the Soldier’s covenant that we will cease using this word now rendered meaningless by mis- and over-use?). What we need to do is to secede from our worst imperial practices and vices. Where we have established empire we need to put it to death. We need to remove all that has been deformed by our empire with a call to the resurrection life. If the story of empire no longer dominates us, then the narrative of Jesus – crucified, buried, risen, ascended and returning – will shape the character of our denominational community. This will be the alternative to empire. The problem with empire is idolatry. The alternative is renewal of the image of God. The alternative is a community where Christ is all and in all. And against most of the

evidence the church is the flesh and blood embodiment of Christ. So let us refuse empire, secede from empire, and cease perpetuating and building our own empire. Let us subvert the Salvo Empire wherever necessary for the sake of the Kingdom. Then we will be just a little closer to image of the invisible God. Fondly do we hope, fervently do we pray.

For further reading on Empire and Colossians see: *Colossians Remixed: Subverting the Empire* by Brian J. Walsh and Sylvia C. Keesmaat.

## Does Holiness have a brand name?

by Major Priya Morgan

In the November 1998 edition of The Salvation Army theological journal, 'Word & Deed' (vol.1,no.1) two articles appear. Both address the holiness tradition of The Salvation Army. In the first article, 'Samuel Brengle and the Development of Salvation Army Pneumatology', David Rightmire writes from the perspective of Colonel Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936) whom he describes as, "*the major exponent of holiness theology in The Salvation Army*". (Rightmire 1998:29) Rightmire states it is his intention to "*uncover the influence of Brengle on Salvation Army pneumatological development, through an examination of his holiness theology.*" (Rightmire 1998:29)

In the second article, 'General Frederick Coutts and the Doctrine of Holiness', Wayne Pritchett writes from the perspective of General Frederick Coutts (1899 –1986) whom he describes as, "*a key holiness teacher in The Salvation Army*". (Pritchett 1998:50) Pritchett's article focuses upon Coutts, "*because his teaching and preaching of Christian holiness...gave holiness teaching a different flavor than had been prominent prior to his increasing labours to present holiness in a way that was practical, Christocentric, and in keeping with modern Biblical scholarship.*" (Pritchett 1998:50)

Anyone familiar with the 'Army' names of Brengle and Coutts, would say their teaching offers differing perspectives on the Army's doctrine of holiness. These articles certainly highlight this point. It has been interesting for me to note, however, that these two men also had much in common regarding their perspectives on the doctrine of holiness as their personal theology came from the tradition of orthodox Wesleyan theology.

Brengle was active in ministry during the 'early days' of The Salvation Army, becoming a cadet in 1887. He, therefore, had first hand knowledge of the holiness doctrine being taught and practiced at the time, under the direct influence of the Army founders, William and Catherine Booth. Coutts' ministry covered a later period; he entered the Army's training college for officers in 1919. A period of 30 years had passed, between the time Brengle became active in Army ministry and that of Coutts. Whereas Brengle inherited the holiness doctrine perspective of the Booths, Coutts inherited the holiness doctrine perspective of Brengle.

Both Rightmire and Pritchett know it is important for the reader to know something of the spiritual experiences which helped form the personal theology of the men they are writing about. Rightmire talks of Brengle coming to a "*realization that the 'second blessing' was a result of simple faith in the promises of God. The assurance of the impartation of God's grace and the experience of heart cleansing followed the act of surrender and simple faith.*" (Rightmire 1998:30) Rightmire explains that the assurance Brengle spoke of came some days later when he experienced "*a new dimension of the work of the Holy Spirit in his life.*" (Rightmire 1998:30) Brengle identifies that "*This critical 'glory experience' was just the beginning of a life-long process of sanctification.*" (Rightmire 1998:30)

Pritchett does not identify Coutts as ever experiencing an actual 'entire sanctification moment'. He does suggest, however, that Coutts experienced a growing awareness

and a gradual work of the Holy Spirit within his life. Pritchett mentions a few examples. Coutts recalled a time as a young boy: “suddenly my fidgeting...ceased” and the Old Testament lesson came alive.” (Pritchett 1998:49) As a young man of 19, Coutts recalled, “during [a] ... painful transition ... experience that the stirrings of a call to officership emerged.” (Pritchett 1998:50) This was a time when “I was given no vision. I heard no voice ... No bright light from heaven.... It came home to me ... that the proclamation of the salvation of God in Christ Jesus should be my vocation. ... Any conviction was at first no larger than a grain of mustard seed but this has since grown to such a size as to dominate my life.” (Pritchett 1998:50) These personal recollections confirm the opinion that some had of Coutts, who described him as a shy, private person, never wishing to draw attention to himself. (Pritchett 1998:49)

Once Pritchett had helped me understand something of Coutt’s nature, I had a greater appreciation of why he relied upon a quotation by Catherine Booth, in his desire to offer a more reflective experience of entire sanctification. Catherine Booth wrote, “by the simple reception of Christ as an all-sufficient Saviour, dwelling in my heart and thus cleansing it from all sin... I have dared to reckon myself dead indeed to all sin, and alive unto God through Jesus Christ, My Lord.” (Pritchett 1998:53)

Both writers also speak of the spiritual climate within Britain during the late nineteenth century and how the influence of Wesleyan theology was a major factor in the development of the holiness movement at the time. This holiness theology also had a major influence upon the lives of Salvation Army founders, William and Catherine Booth. Rightmire and Pritchett both conclude that the doctrinal factors, which influenced the Booths, were major reasons for The Salvation Army being birthed as a holiness movement.

As an indication of the value the Army placed on holiness, Pritchett quotes Booth, when he spoke of a “willingness and ability of the Holy Ghost to make men entirely holy in thought, feeling, and action in this life. ... . God [is] willing and able to sanctify any and every man – body, soul, and spirit – who trust[s] Him to do so.” (Pritchett 1998:51) Rightmire quotes Brengle, “One of the Army’s central doctrines and most valued and precious experiences is that of heart holiness. ...the Savior... [offers] forgiveness of sins... and the purifying of the heart....” (Rightmire 1998:31f)

Both articles make it clear, however, that the Booths, and therefore the early Army, also came under the influence of some within the American holiness revival movement.

Rightmire says, “early Army literature [was] heavily dependent on the holiness theology of Phoebe Palmer”, an American perfectionist evangelist. (Rightmire 1998:42) Pritchett states, “The Army holiness teaching that Coutts encountered was typical post-Wesleyan, American Holiness movement-influenced theology.” (Pritchett 1998:52)

American holiness theology and female evangelist, Phoebe Palmer, in particular, had a significant influence upon the Booths. Palmer advocated a theology that stressed a “shorter way”. (Rightmire 1998:40) She taught that the evidence of the ‘second blessing’ having occurred within the life of a sanctified person was his or her own personal witness. Rightmire states that this doctrine of “immediacy of the experience of entire sanctification, ....was the [Army’s] predominant teaching” (Rightmire 1998:42)

Rightmire states that Brengle held the view that the crisis event of the 'second blessing' was a necessary element in a Christian's experience of entire sanctification, however, he reacted against Palmer's 'short-cut' approach. Brengle offered a more balanced view; one which placed the crisis event within the growth process of holiness. This 'more balanced view' is sometimes overlooked by those who support Brengle's view of holiness. Rightmire helpfully explains how Brengle believed the evidence of entire sanctification was spiritual assurance, subsequent to the crisis 'second blessing' event. This assurance evidenced itself through the witness of God's Spirit within the life of the sanctified person. Rightmire goes on to explain that Brengle believed the 'second blessing' event was not an end in itself, but an ongoing spiritual process, reliant upon the believer's continued communion with Christ through the Holy Spirit. Rightmire states, "*The ministry and message of Samuel Logan Brengle helped centre Salvation Army holiness theology in the tradition of Wesley and brought about a balancing between active faith and patient waiting in the experience of entire sanctification.*" (Rightmire 1998:43) I found Rightmire's explanation, concerning Brengle's perspective on the doctrine of holiness, and in particular, the 'second blessing' event, to be most helpful.

Pritchett acknowledges that during Coutts' ministry *there "was a stridently strong holiness emphasis. ...'entire sanctification' was possible in this world – NOW!"* (Pritchett 1998:52) He says that, "*There was a very heavy emphasis on the crisis of entire sanctification. ....Our morning meetings were 'evangelistically' designed... to result in crisis sanctification experiences through the Spirit.*" (Pritchett 1998:52) I found these statements surprising. My reading of Rightmire's article highlighted Brengle's desire to offer a more balanced approach to the doctrine of entire sanctification. The passing of time, did not appear to have changed very much at all, concerning The Salvation Army emphasis on the crisis event of the 'second blessing'. I can only assume that, although Brengle sought to correct the doctrinal imbalance, there were those within the Army who had, either misinterpreted or chosen to ignore his teaching and had continued to emphasise "*emotional and dramatic manifestations*" of the Spirit. (Pritchett 1998:52)

Pritchett speaks of Coutts' desire to offer a different perspective by "*abandon[ing] the terminology of those who went before him*", (Pritchett 1998:53) whilst at the same time he "*sought to communicate the same zeal for God.*" (Pritchett 1998:53) but with a different emphasis. Pritchett explains how Coutts found the writings of C.H. Dodd helpful in his communication of holiness. Dodds stated, "*...it is never safe to emphasize the call to holiness as part of Christian teaching, unless the idea of the Holy is understood by constant reference to the Jesus of the gospels.*" (Pritchett 1998:55f) Coutts found this wisdom inspiring, and sought always to teach the doctrine of holiness in a way that reflected the necessity of a believer's relationship with Christ. Coutts communicated, "*The gifts of the Spirit [as] the virtues of Jesus and the virtues of Jesus [as] the gifts of the Spirit. No 'baptism of the Spirit' can 'improve' on Jesus. Our highest spiritual goal...is to be increasingly conformed to His image.*" (Pritchett 1998:56) Coutts strongly believed that "*Christlikeness is the best description we have of holiness*". (Pritchett 1998:60)

I found it interesting to note that Pritchett acknowledges Rightmire's assessment of Brengle's teaching of holiness when he says, "*It served as the basis for Salvation Army*

*pneumatological self-understanding through-out most of the twentieth century.*" (Pritchett 1998:57) Rightmire says that Coutts' doctrine of holiness, which stressed "*the process of holiness following the 'second blessing'*" provided a balance to "*Brengle's emphasis on the critical nature of entire sanctification.*" (Pritchett 1998:57) Pritchett also acknowledges Rightmire in his comment that both Coutts and Brengle used the definition of "Christ in you" to define holiness. Both Brengle and Coutts agreed that "*The experience of holiness is the possession of the 'same Holy Spirit who was in Jesus.'*" (Pritchett 1998:58)

It has been helpful for me to consider the Army's understanding of holiness from the doctrinal perspective of both Brengle and Coutts. I believe both men held to the orthodox Wesleyan doctrine concerning entire sanctification, even though they applied their own personal emphasis. Brengle emphasised the importance of the 'crisis event' known as the 'second blessing'. Coutts emphasised the importance of an ongoing sanctification process involving a personal relationship with Christ. Having read these two articles however I can also accept that each of these two men would have been in agreeance with the other, even though their own personal experiences and emphases were different. Now that I have a more rounded view of the Army's doctrine of holiness, understanding something of the influences which helped to form William and Catherine Booth's perspective, and also having a greater understanding of both Brengle and Coutts' perspective, I now hold a position where I can say I am comfortable with both perspectives and choose to hold them in a balanced tension. These articles have helped confirm within me that there is room, within the Army, for individual expressions and experiences of holiness. This individuality, however, needs to be considered within the orthodoxy of Wesleyan theology, from whence the Army gains its theological heritage.

In conclusion, I refer to a quote from The Salvation Army's 1969 edition of the Handbook of Doctrine, and concur with Pritchett when it states, "*the call to holiness is a call to believers to live in continual fellowship with the risen Savior.*" (Pritchett 1998:59) My heart also resonates with the words of Coutts, "*Holiness is the unfolding of Christ's own character in the life of the individual believer*" (Pritchett 1998:60) May it be so in me.

#### Reference List

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## **Be Bold for the Gospel: a look at Philippians chapter 1**

by Captain Michael Ramsay

The world changes very quickly, doesn't it? I remember when I was child. I lived in a semi-rural area. All behind my house were cornfields, beside us were Farmer Wild's potato fields and we had a very small orchard of our own in our back yard. The Vantreights, they had Daffodil fields everywhere; so, between Farmer Wild and the Vantreights there was no end to seasonal employment for the kids. In the Spring some of us could even be seen cutting school in order to go earn a couple bucks cutting daffodils.

These days my parents' home has been completely swallowed up by my hometown which is now a city of 300 000 people or so. It is the country's 13th largest city.[2] Things change.

In those days, however, life was different. The area was semi-rural and dogs could even roam free without being on a leash or without even their owners. They would often stroll along by themselves or together in pairs or packs and then they would meet up with another pack of dogs and start to investigate each other. Of course, every once and a while there would be an aggressive dog or two and I certainly saw more than one dog fight growing up. (Some of these could be quite scary actually).

We had a dog. His name was Tuffy. Tuffy was a little border collie/sheltie cross and he was a smart dog but every once in a while, of course, he would get into one of these scraps himself. I remember more than once, Tuffy would see some dog on our block that doesn't belong there. He would charge them. It wouldn't matter how big is the dog. It doesn't matter how fierce is the dog; Tuffy runs at them. He's not afraid of them. He growls at them. He, completely without any fear, engages the intruder.

Now sometimes, like I said, the dogs are a lot bigger than Tuffy. Still Tuffy charges, teeth bared- no fear – he charges the giant intruder with full confidence and then when the large dog strikes back...He runs away.

The other dog inevitably chases him and Tuffy runs right toward home. Tuffy runs faster and faster. As the dog gets closer, Tuffy – never afraid – runs to our next door neighbour's house. He bounds up the stairs to his deck. The dog comes flying after Tuffy and arrives on the deck where he is seemingly trapped and ... there is Goldie.[3] Goldie is by far the biggest dog you have ever seen and Goldie and Tuffy are quite a pair. They really are the best of friends.

So now the pursuing dog, the dog chasing Tuffy – which until this moment seemed quite large - is all of a sudden dwarfed by the giant Goldie, surrounded, and trapped on our neighbour's deck. Then, after a couple of very noisy minutes, the intruding dog finds a way out and runs away as fast as it can never to come back again, and there is little Tuffy standing at the top of the stairs –(if dogs could smile)- this little collie-sheltie cross is telling the much bigger dog, I'm sure, to never to come back! When Tuffy saw the

intruder, he wasn't worried, he engaged him; he did not avoid a conflict. He was prepared; he was not afraid. He didn't worry about what could happen to him. His goal was to encourage his opposition toward Goldie and have Goldie take care of the rest. This is actually the same sort of thing that is happening in Paul's life as he writes this letter to the Christians in Philippi. Paul has been openly engaging the non- and pre-Christian world. He has met with some strong resistance and it is just as if he is Tuffy up against a bigger dog. Paul is even in jail right now as he writes this letter. Paul is in a jail and jails then, like now, really are not the best places in the world to be and not only that, Paul is facing a capital charge[4]. Paul, if convicted, is facing execution. Paul is seemingly cornered by a larger and an aggressive part of the pre- and non-Christian world of his day but he is not afraid of this dog nor is he even apparently concerned for himself.

Imagine with me that you are in that prison with him. I don't know how many of you have ever seen the inside of a prison here. I've seen a couple. I can tell you that they themselves can be more than a little intimidating – even when you aren't confined there.

Now imagine that you aren't just in any prison. Imagine that you are in an off shores American prison – the Super Power of our day – imagine that you are in Guantanamo or something and they've actually charged you OR even imagine that you are in Afghanistan or Pakistan and in the hands of the Taliban or another such group and imagine that you are facing a capital charge. Imagine that you are facing execution if you are convicted...

What would you write in your letters home? If you could make a video tape or leave a phone message, what would it say? I imagine that we would be more than a little afraid. I imagine that we would ask for everyone to pray for us. We would try to activate a prayer chain on our behalf and we would get everyone that we could to pray for our safe return, right? We would send up the prayer alert and ask everyone to pray for our deliverance...

Now this is interesting because this isn't what Paul does here at all. Paul mentions that he is in prison but it is not with his own state that he is concerned (1:18b-26).[5] He is bold and he is concerned with how well the Philippians are doing at standing firm in preparing to meet Christ (cf. 1:11) on the balcony as it were, on the 'Day of the Lord'.

He is encouraging them to not be afraid and to be prepared for this 'Day of the Lord' by living in a manner worthy of the Gospel (1:27) by being united in purpose (1:18; 2:1-8; 3:15-16), staying the course, fighting the foe, and he is even now rejoicing (cf. 1:3, 6) in the Lord's accomplishments through them;[6] he is encouraging them to be bold in making preparations for the day of the Lord's return. Are they ready for Christ's return?

Look at Chapter One. Instead of 'Please pray for me', Paul writes in verse 3, 'I thank my God every time I remember you'. Paul is not concerned about himself. He is thinking about others and about their participation in the Gospel and Kingdom of the Messiah. Paul goes on; verse 6: he tells them how confident he is that God will complete the

good work in them that God has already started. Verses 9 and 10: he speaks of his desire that their love may overflow with wisdom and knowledge to help them determine what is best so that they and, by extension, we are prepared when day of the Lord does arrive – and He's coming soon – when everyone meets Goldie on the balcony, Paul wants the Philippians to be prepared; we should be prepared.

Paul is not worried about his own self and neither should we be. Paul is concerned about others' ability to stand firm and be prepared for the Kingdom of God. This is a man in chains writing here. This is a man facing a death sentence. This is a man who has put his life on the line for the Gospel and right now is in jail awaiting appeal. He is in jail and we don't read in his letter any 'Oh why is this happening to me, Lord', do we? We don't read any of the, 'What have I done to deserve this?' or 'How could this be happening to me?', talk; do we? NO, we don't! Rather Paul is bold because he is prepared; he says to live or die, both are good. Death is gain (because of the resurrection) and life, life, is Christ.

We don't hear him whining and complaining (cf. Romans 8:19). We don't hear accusations about his captors. We don't hear him calling down curses upon Caesar. We don't read of complaints about even the food or his fellow inmates. What do we hear? We hear that his captors are hearing the Gospel and we hear Paul encouraging others to be bold and be prepared to share the Gospel in Philippi.

Paul is in jail and he is concerned about the Philippians and their courage to fully participate in the Messianic Kingdom of Jesus when Jesus returns. We should likewise be bold for the Gospel and concerned that others can be the same rather than concentrate on what we may or may not like about our own lives.

Philippi was once a predominately Greek city but by Paul's time it is a small Roman Colony with special status and many Romans citizens.[7] It is a city of privilege[8]. Paul has visited it before, and now he, imprisoned by the Romans, is writing to encourage them who are free and in this privileged city to be bold. He is writing encouraging them how to live – being united in purpose, with their love overflowing – so that they will be prepared for the coming 'Day of The Lord'.[9]

Interesting. The one imprisoned is writing to encourage those who are free. Paul is imprisoned for his defence of Christ. In our world today, people are still imprisoned for defence of the Gospel. Missionaries are still martyred but lest we think ourselves better off than we are in the so-called 'west', let us not forget that there are Canadians and others who struggle against our own governments for the Kingdom of God.

Now in Saskatchewan, where I currently reside, we do have it good. I spoke about Christ in the public Remembrance Day ceremonies here. The schools put on Christian plays at Christmas and there was even reference to Christ in my six year-old's homework - and she goes to public school. There is still a certain amount of freedom of religion here but let's not be mistaken about what is happening in this country and if it is happening here it is happening in other first world countries as well. Today people are

suffering for the Gospel and we do need to be bold and prepared to stand firm for Christ because the 'Day of the Lord' is coming.

In BC, in previous sermons and articles[10] I have mentioned the religious persecution that has already begun in the public school system. In the 1980s or early 90s, we were told not even to refer to 'Christmas' in the schools. We were told rather to call it a 'Winter Festival.' I heard of Christian student teachers taking a stand at this time and I heard of some of these Christians not successfully completing their degree or suffering even worse consequences. Not too long ago as well, a Surrey school board decided not to have a book in their libraries entitled, "One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads Blue Dads." [11] It promoted a different world view than the one held by the those who elected the school board. The people of Surrey did not want that book to be read to their children.[12] The Supreme Court and the federal politicians[13] continue to fail in standing up for these concerned citizens and the school board members they elected. They have ruled that the book must stay in the schools.

Even more recently, it was decided in BC's lower mainland that Christian parents are not allowed to protect their children from courses –vetted by outsiders who are not even their regular school teachers - that they feel encourage counter-Biblical teachings[14]. So not only are Christians not allowed to try to protect others from what some consider very dangerous things, but they are forced to subject their own children to this other worldview/religion (unless they are able to pay the not inexpensive costs of a private school education). It is no wonder that since this Atheistic religious indoctrination has begun in the schools that Atheism has become the fastest growing religion in BC and with its growth, this persecution of others.[15] Persecution for serving Christ is not confined to the Roman Empire of the 1st Century or the third world of today; so, are we prepared to be bold in defence of the Gospel?

In Nova Scotia, after the Swissair crash, the Christian clergy was told not to mention the name of Jesus and after 9/11, and even though the federal government apologized for the Swiss Air incident, the only world view represented in the Canadian ceremonies was that of the Secular-Atheists: God was not invited; He was to be excluded from the ceremonies.

Even though we still have some religious freedom in Saskatchewan where I heard a local politician encouraging others to write letters to the editor defending our freedom to proclaim Christ in the public arena; in Ontario, the Secular-Atheists are calling for the police to step-in when politicians dare to pray in even small meetings.[16] Persecution for serving Christ is real and it is not confined to the Roman Empire of the 1st Century or the third world of today. It is happening more and more here in Canada and other first-world countries of the 21st Century. As it comes here, are we prepared to be bold in defence of the Gospel? I hope so. This letter addressed to the Philippians is indeed for us as well.

We here in Canada and Saskatchewan have it pretty good, just like the citizens of Philippi did. Canada is one of the richest countries of the world and a close ally of the Super Power of our day. Philippi had a privileged status within the Empire of its day;

people had it pretty good by comparison but even in Philippi persecution had begun and even now in Canada persecution has begun.

But let's not just lament the acts of our aggressors. Paul didn't. Let us not run away and hide. The Philippians were not to. Let us not cry out, 'whoa is me'. Let us not let our predecessors' preaching be in vain. Let us not let those who are hauled before the courts in this country for our faith today do so in vain. Let us rather stand firm in proclaiming the Gospel. Let us be bold in our preparations for the 'Day of the Lord.'

Paul is encouraging us, thousands of years later; Paul is encouraging us, since we have the same struggles that he had (cf. 1:30), to be bold in our proclamation and our preparation for the Day of the Lord so that our love may overflow and so that indeed the harvest of holiness, the harvest of righteousness may be produced in our own lives as the Kingdom of Christ will certainly be established through Jesus and to the glory and praise of God (1:11; cf. 1:27,28).[17] Let us not be mistaken, in our world today, as we walk along we, like Tuffy, will run into dogs, who attack us for the truth of the Gospel of Christ. We will run into big, aggressive beasts. We must stand firm in proclaiming and living a life worthy of the gospel (1:27,28). Like Tuffy did not back down from his adversaries but rather let them to the balcony to meet Goldie, we should be prepared to be bold and not back down, and in the process lead even our aggressors to Jesus Christ - because it is only through Him that our Salvation comes. ----

[1] Octavius, as he was called at this time, was allied with Antonius (Mark Antony) and Lepedus against the republicans, led by Cassius and Brutus. Octavius later defeated Mark Antony as well which led to the famous story of Cleopatra's suicide by Asp. Octavius / Augustus, after securing power, and thanks to Julius Caesar's wresting power from the Senate and placing it instead in the leader's hands, would turn out to be arguably the most powerful Roman Emperor ever.

[2] 2006 Census. Canadian's largest urban area: [www.stascan.ca](http://www.stascan.ca)

[3] I can't remember her real name.

[4] Paul may or may not actually be in a jail as we think of it today. He is still awaiting trial so he could be in a cave, a secured room, a house, or a barracks. (Fred B. Craddock, Philippians, Interpretation Series, 1985, p. 19). Regardless, he is in the hands of the Super Power of his day, the Roman authority (Paul, of course, is himself a Roman citizen) and we should not assume that his imprisonment is necessarily easy. In some of our contemporary Canadian minimum security facilities, which are undoubtedly more comfortable than Paul's arrangements, outsiders have greatly underestimated the effects of confinement upon people. Imprisonment is not a pleasant experience. Let's not forget as well that he is awaiting trial for a crime that is punishable by death. This fact itself does not tend to gain oneself favour from one's captors. See also DW Palmer, "To Die is Gain." *Novum Testamentum* 17. 1975. pp. 203-208, re: release from imprisonment via death (and later resurrection, of course).

[5] This segment (1:18b-26) serves to clarify to readers that even if Paul does die, it doesn't matter and they (we) should still be encouraged. After all if he does die, the next thing he knows will be the resurrection, when the Kingdom to come has indeed been established and gained and if he does live, he can continue to rally the troops to be prepared for the coming 'Day of the Lord.'

[6] Paul's reference to "Joy" is repeated numerous times throughout the letter.

[7] This is particularly interesting in the context of this letter because it doesn't appear that there was much of a Jewish population in the tiny city of 10 000 people at all. This is interesting because Paul usually first evangelised the Jewish communities in the towns. Here there is no such evidence of such a segment even existing.

[8] There was however persecution of the Christians in this city. Cf. Philippians 1:28-29.

[9] It is interesting that there is some debate as to the theme of the letter itself. One thing, however, that is evident regardless of the primary theme (if there need be one at all) is that Paul is indeed encouraging the readers how to act in accordance in relationship to our theological understanding. Cf. Morna D. Hooker, *The Letter to the Philippians*, NIB XI, 476. Cf., also, R.C.H. Lenski, *St. Paul's Epistles to the Galatians, Ephesians, and Philippians*, p. 695.

[10] Full citations for the references in this list are in other sermons and papers of mine, most of which are available on-line at <http://www.sheepspeak.com> .

[11] cf:  
[http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1040356828066\\_95](http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1040356828066_95)[http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1040356828066\\_95///?hub=TopStories](http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/1040356828066_95///?hub=TopStories)

. Cf. also Christianity Today: Parents Flee Public Schools: "Christians in British Columbia, Canada, are worried that courts are undermining their religious rights in the classroom." <http://www.christianitytoday.com/ct/2003/march/12.23.html> and also the Atheist website, nodeity.com: [http://nodeity.com/chamberlain\\_v\\_SD36.html](http://nodeity.com/chamberlain_v_SD36.html) re 'One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dads, Blue Dads'. You can read the Supreme Court Decision: <http://scc.lexum.umontreal.ca/en/index.html> - The following phrase is interesting - 'The School Act's insistence on secularism;' this begs the question why must our be subjected to the secularist Worldview; neither BC nor Canada were settled or founded upon that mythology. There were other problems with the books as well. CBC.ca: "This story has problems with punctuation and grammar throughout. The spelling of 'favourite' is inconsistent, switching from the Canadian to the American," said board chair Mary Polak about Asha's Mums. The board also criticized the book's depiction of men. ([http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2003/06/13/samesex\\_books030613.html](http://www.cbc.ca/canada/story/2003/06/13/samesex_books030613.html) ). It is serious that even though the book is unsatisfactory for education young people, that it was deemed necessary for our children to be exposed to it. The courts it appears are more interested in promoting a secular-atheist worldview than they are about providing a quality education for our children.

[12] There was, I believe, even an election in the interim between when the offer of the book was declined by the school board and when it was forced upon them by the courts and parliament.

[13] The federal government has the jurisdiction to make laws to protect its citizens. The Supreme Court is only allowed to interpret the laws in theory.

[14] Cf. The National Post: 'Gay couple gets input into school curriculum', <http://www.nationalpost.com/news/story.html?id=80dd8007-ef56-40a7-809d-37936b9d4179&k=51593&p=1> .Cf. also 'Secular-Atheist's religion secures making the promotion of Homosexuality mandatory in the BC school system.' Lifesite.net: <http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2006/jun/06060101.html> Cf. also 'Documents Reveal Government Signed Over Control of Education to Homosexual Activists': <http://www.lifesite.net/ldn/2006/jun/06061907.html> . Cf. also: Peter Corren (né Cook) and Murray Corren (né Warren) — 'Corren is a combination of their former names — are LGBT-rights activists from Vancouver, British Columbia whose complaint before the BC Human Rights Tribunal led to an agreement by which the provincial Ministry of Education will consult them on how gays are presented in the school curriculum': [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter\\_and\\_Murray\\_Corren](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Peter_and_Murray_Corren)

[15] No religion / Atheism is now the largest religion / World View in BC: StatsCan: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/companion/rel/bc.cfm>

[16] cf. a letter from a former mayor: <http://www.secularontario.ca/peterbexam06dec13.html> , CBC.ca: <http://www.cbc.ca/canada/ottawa/story/2007/01/26/prayer.html> , Canadian Christianity.com: <http://www.canadianchristianity.com/cgi-bin/na.cgi?nationalupdates/070201prayer>

[17] Paul is encouraging us not to fight amongst ourselves (cf. 1:18: How it is that we proclaim the gospel doesn't matter; what matters is that it is proclaimed). He is encouraging us to proper actions, ethics, and to have love overflowing.

## Foolish Worship

by Cadet Peter Hobbs

April Fools day... I don't know about you but I love it, playing practical jokes on each other is something I look forward to. Seeing someone fooled in fun is priceless, one of my favourite jokes is leaving a note telling someone that Mr Lyon rang then giving them the number for the local zoo... the response is priceless, try it to see what happens. Fooling people in this way in jest and in a spirit of fun for one morning of the year is a blast. However most of us go on to get fooled and deceived throughout the rest of the year, especially spiritually, and so often we don't realise it's happened, and that's certainly not funny.

Satan is constantly roaming around like a lion looking for someone to devour, deceive, and ultimately destroy and obviously his prime target is his enemy, "Christ Followers". I have been thinking a lot about this lately in relation to the issue of Worship. A very touchy subject, which has been the heart of corps splits, relationship breakdowns and ultimately souls lost for the Kingdom of God.

Unfortunately the issue of worship has been watered down in many cases simply to music styles, and the Army is very good at music, we even have music departments, but like the rest of the church satan has got us to believe that through the use of music we can reach God. By making worship about music we've come to believe that it's a feeling that takes us into God's presence... Vaughan Roberts in his book True Worship says "many people believe the buzz we get from the music is an encounter with God which is True Worship..." (*Roberts 2002:88*).

Millions of Generation X's and Y's, including myself, have grown up in this environment and to me it's no wonder we go to Christian meetings looking for an experience... If the spine tingles and the hairs on the back of your neck prickle then they go home satisfied we've had a good time of worship and 'met with God', but have we?

I'm an old music scholar, been a bandmaster, solo cornet player and now a drummer in a contemporary group and I have a great appreciation of good music. I have played Army brass music where I have been overwhelmed with emotion, similarly playing Army cornet solos I have been overcome with emotion, and also drumming in contemporary groups the same kind of emotional experience. However there have been many kinds of "secular" music which have deeply moved me emotionally, from the theme tune of Schindler's List, Handel's Largo in G, and even Australian artist Vanessa Amorissi's song Heroes Live Forever.. But do I call this an encounter with God?

I find it interesting when the older generation of Salvationist criticizes the younger one by saying the new type of worship music is "playing on kids emotions". When the same could be said for Army songs such as I'll not turn back or Share my Yolk.. some might say these songs play also on our emotions? You see we have turned worship into music.. Some might say that's Idolatry.

I love this quote from Vaughan as it really got me thinking “The Bible never teaches us that a feeling can take us into the presence of God. If that had been possible God would have sent us a musician rather than a saviour” (Roberts 2002: 88).

Now some of you may be thinking that I am a heretic and being a bit extreme in my views, but all I am simply trying to do is make the point that worship is not primarily about music. By making worship about music we water down the Gospel, we put culture first and God last. Church culture usually becomes stale and traditional and society’s culture is more about man than God, without knowing God’s culture/his heart then all we do is foolishness.

This is not an article about post modern worship versus modern worship. I’m not concerned with the pros and cons of praise choruses versus Salvation Army songs... These issues are not my focus but what is the focus is that it’s obvious The Salvation Army like most western churches have been fooled, deceived by the master of lies. He has got us to water down worship so much that it has been limited to 20 minutes before the message... a lifestyle of worship seems somewhat foreign to most.

We spend more time arguing about styles of music than how many prostitutes did we rescue this week. We spend more time rehearsing our songs than we do in Bible study. You can see the two subjects are poles apart, yet we spend so much time on music and because of that our worship has become far too “Safe”. “Wilderness? Exodus? Exile? Incarnation? Crucifixion? Taking up your cross? These elements of a biblical narrative suggest that God does not prize comfort.”(Labberton 2007: 57) God is not calling us to be comfortable in worship he’s calling us to respond to him and do whatever that leads to, he does not want us to be entertained in church he wants us to meet with him 24/7 and then go out and share what you’ve discovered.

We’ve turned worship into consumption rather than an offering, and it’s become an expression of human taste – not a longing to reflect God’s glory. Mark Labberton says in his book *The Dangerous Act of worship* “Our worship practices are separated from our call to justice, and worst foster the self-indulgent tendencies of our culture rather than nurturing the self sacrificing life of the Kingdom of God. We are asleep” (Labberton 2007:23).

When our worship and don’t connect with God, and we’re not being driven by God to love our neighbour and serve suffering humanity then our worship is false, and it leads to a frustrated and often failed mission. The Army, along with the majority of western churches can bear testament to this fact and because of it are dying.

I always thought that the main point of worship was to encounter God and respond with our lives, no matter when and wherever we are. If we are truly worshipping God, journeying towards God, connecting with God then the world is meant to know something about God through our lives and actions. It’s not rocket science. As we live our lives of faith and demonstrate in character and action the life of the one we worship, then they see God.

“Everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another” (John 13:35).

The Salvation Army like all other Christian churches will only expand its territory and influence on the world when its members literally encounter God through worship. When we engage in a Christ centered, refocused life and live it out in the passions and purposes of God then we'll be worshippers. If we don't become Christ centered worshippers and see sharing our faith, doing justice, and loving kindness as the very essence of our lives then we are obviously not encountering God in worship and living a meaningless “safe” existence here on earth, and obviously that's very foolish.

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## Development of Character

by By Lieut.-Colonel Catherine Bramwell-Booth  
From book '*Training Staff Council Lectures 1925*'

Forgive me if this lecture seems to be something of a repetition of what has already been said. You have heard so much; and as all these subjects dovetail one into another, a certain amount of overlapping cannot well be avoided. And again, this subject is one of the fundamentals of which one can hardly hear too much.

I

The Training Officer must be convinced that character is a matter for development, and that alteration in a man for the better is the work of the Holy Spirit. We believe in miracles! We should be no good as Training Officers if we did not; and we must see that Officers under our direction are also confirmed in this faith – that it is possible to develop character. I had thought of beginning by asking, 'What is character?' I do not know how one can define it satisfactorily. Character is not soul. It is not mind. Some of the cleverest men have no character, or but poor character. It is not will. Some strong-willed people have thoroughly bad characters. What is it? I do not know. It is rather interesting to analyse what goes to make man; and it seems to me that character is something we cannot quite explain. I am afraid I cannot attempt to say anything enlightening about the origin of character, because I am in the dark about it myself except that it is something God has given man, an important quality for his being. As a Training Officer, I have sometimes felt I would rather have a Cadet who is inferior in gifts yet possessing real character, than one who is capable, but weak in character. If your people have character, you are likely, it seems to me from my experience, to accomplish more with them in the end than with the brilliant people who lack in this something we are talking about.

What we can do for the development of character is likely to be in proportion to our realization of the importance of character as a part of the man. At any rate, be quite sure we shall not be able to help our people as we want to unless we believe that, whatever a man's character, God can improve on it, develop it, and turn it into something better than it would be if left to go its own way apart from the influence of the Holy Spirit.

An Officer I know very well – one of our leading Officers – told me he was once on a long railway journey, with one other gentleman in the carriage. He soon began to talk of The Army and its work, and this man said, 'I'm sorry, but I do not believe as you do. When one comes to enter the fields of science one is obliged to abandon much that one believed in before. I do not say there is no God, but I cannot believe there is any Power that is interfering with the development of the human race to-day. I think we are left to get on as best we can. There may be a Power somewhere, but, if so, I do not know where: everything is under fixed laws, you cannot change a man, or a dog!' My comrade (he was a Colonel) turned to him and said, 'If you knew The Salvation Army

you could not think that. We must believe because we see bad men changed. How would you account for that?' The man replied, 'As a matter of fact, my dear sir, it does not happen; you think they are bad, but they are not really bad; or you think they are good, and they are not really good. Nothing is really changed! It is all according to the shape of the brain. Take yourself, for example, I can see what you are when I look into your face. I am a phrenologist.' Then the Colonel said, 'Be honest, I have been honest with you. Feel my bumps and see just what I am. What do you really think I should be?' The phrenologist felt his head. He was absolutely nonplussed and said, 'I must admit if I judged merely from this I should not expect to find you in any way connected with religion. You lack veneration; I must say you are a most interesting case,' and he began to question him about how long he had been in The Salvation Army. I suppose he was trying to find out whether the Colonel was one of the good ones, or one who only seemed to be good!

This incident impressed me at the time (I was on Training Work) because it confirmed much that I liked to think; for instance, that our natural limitations have very little to do with what God can make of us if we really give ourselves up to Him. To remember that, and to teach the Cadets that, is especially helpful in these days when the very people we are trying to help are often tainted with psychological bosh. There is a lot of talk today about a man's natural tendencies. We are told a child's bent must not be changed, he must be allowed to do everything he wants to do, even to falling in the fire! I do not know quite how far they go. Some of the Cadets have picked up a bit of it: they say, 'Well, of course, that is not my bent,' or 'This is my make up,' or 'Yes, I know it's a failing but my father was like it, it's in our family,' and settle down to be content with what they are. We have to come to them with the great fact, new to them, that God can change them.

I was inexperienced when suddenly planted down, a Cadet among a crowd of others. I had not been to school, nor mixed with many people. There had been enough of us at home to make ideal companionships within our own circle; and when I was suddenly plunged into the midst of a crowd, I was depressed at my own limitations, and I thought, I shall never rise up to be what I ought to be and want to be, and what the Work requires. Dear Commissioner Rees helped me. I do not think he ever lectured on any subject without bringing in at the beginning, or at the end, or before he left the platform, 'Well, remember! what you are not by nature you can be by grace.' Do you believe it? He simply drilled this into us. We were always hearing it; and could not get away from it. He used to say it to us again and again, and it has remained with me, 'What you are not by nature you can be by grace.' That was of inestimable value to us as Cadets. You see we felt, 'that man believes that, whatever our limitations, we can rise above them. He believes it, whether we can believe it or not!' That is how the Training Officers ought to make the Cadets feel. We believe God can change men, and this being so we should strive with all our might to create in the minds of the Cadets a living faith in the possibility of their own development; keep on saying to them as the Lord said when one came to Him in perplexity, 'If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth.' (Mark ix. 23.)

Further, if we are convinced that character is a matter for development, and are striving to create in the minds of the Cadets a living faith for their own development, we shall guard every evidence of growth. Sometimes evidences of growth of character are expressed very clumsily. A Cadet may strike out and do a new thing, but do it altogether badly. Training Officers must be wise enough and quick enough to see behind that lack of skill, for frequently they will find a motive, an impulse which is really a most encouraging sign of development in that character. Guard carefully against any desire to correct an error, if your correction might at the same time injure a blessed impulse of growth.

In training plants, the first years count for much. For instance, if trees are going to live and develop, it is amazing how much depends on guarding them during the first years. If the main shoot is broken when the tree is only a few inches high, the tree will be deformed. For hundreds of years, may be, it will live and try to correct that deformity, but it will never be perfect, never be the same again. You can go through any wood and see trees which have been injured in their youth. It is sometimes like that with character: some stultifying influence is brought to bear on it, and that which should have developed into beauty is injured, hurt, shrinks away, and that soul is maimed.

It is very strange how men persist in the colossal error that it is much easier to deal with a man's spiritual nature than with his physical nature! The most delicate and rare skill is required from those who seek to help in the development of character. I think this is especially so for Officers engaged in Training. Of course, skill is needed in all our dealings with souls, but especially in Training, where we have them in our care day after day. The younger Officers coming up in Training Work need to ponder this, to be helped by you to face it, so that they may approach their work with care and preparation, and be guarded from making mistakes. It has been disappointing to find how blunderingly and haphazardly many are prepared to rush in and deal with a soul!

We must maintain our faith for those for whom we are working. It is not enough to begin with faith. A physician says, 'While there is life there is hope.' And I think the Training Officer should feel, 'While they are Cadets there is hope!' At any rate, I think it is important that the Cadet should feel it is so. I have seen an almost blighting effect produced on souls because they have felt an Officer had no faith in them. And you must remember there is always the danger that we may have misjudged. It has a blighting effect when a Cadet comes to feel, 'the Ensign (or Major) has lost faith in me!' That exhausts the last scrap of faith he might have had for himself. Up to the last moment, the Cadet should feel, whatever his own discouragements, down-heartedness, and failures may be, 'At any rate, my Training Officers have faith for me!'

Have not some of us been helped by the faith of others? And have not you heard scores of people say of their trials, darkness, failures, and defeats, 'This man encouraged me in such and such a way'? They tell you that the only thing that kept them going and made them able to right the wrong, was that some one believed in them. With some of the Cadets is it just the same: 'The Colonel believed in me,' 'The Captain believed in me,' 'Somebody had faith for me, and kept on making me feel it!'

## II

The Training Officer must believe the development of character may be assisted by human instrumentality. We must not only believe, and make the Cadet believe, that God can change him, but we must believe God will use us to help bring about that change. The steadfast faith of one heart for another may exercise an immeasurable influence. I do not think we have learned to understand that fully yet. It is one of the mysteries of the spiritual world to me, one of the things I wish I saw more clearly. When I have stopped to think and pray about it, as I have done, I have been frightened. It has made by inner soul tremble, especially when I have come up to interviews, and have been faced with the thought that perhaps what I say in this next hour may really make a difference to that soul, to its development, to its future. It is tremendous! We cannot get away from it; it is happening all the time; we must accept it as we have accepted so much in God's plan which we do not understand. Speaking for myself, at any rate, I do not understand it. I can only say it is so, and I must accept it. We cannot doubt it, because we have evidence that this is His way of working amongst us, and we have evidence of it in our own experience. I certainly have in mine. I look back to people, this one, and that one, and thank God that they ever touched my spirit: they gave me something, did something for me, and made me different from what I should have been if I had not come in touch with them. I am bound to say I cannot doubt that human beings help to mould each other because my own life and heart would contradict such a doubt.

There are many ways of assisting in the development of the character of those entrusted to our care. We should do all we can to inspire them. Hold up an ideal before them until it becomes a thing they desire, something for which their own hearts reach out with longing.

Desire! Oh, if we could only get it really burning in their hearts! Then we could almost fold our hands and let the Holy Spirit and the soul go their way, for that soul's development would be assured. We have a part in the kindling, the stirring up, the creating of desire. If desire for spiritual light, life and love be strong enough, that desire is to be fulfilled. This is the Lord's promise: 'What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them.'

We may assist in the development of character by inculcating the laws that belong to growth. Do not be afraid of repetition. When I was in the Training Garrison I was greatly impressed by going through the Gospels and noticing for myself all the occasions on which it is clearly stated, or implied, that the Lord said the same thing over again, or did the same thing over again. 'And, as He was wont, He taught them again.' (Mark x. 1.) And then how often the parables came back to the same lesson! This encouraged my own heart and made me feel 'no matter how often I have to go over essentials, I will go over them until I feel they are really in the Cadets' minds.' This repetition is necessary to the inculcating of the laws of character. We cannot too often insist upon such foundation laws of progress as:

1. Sincerity. A man's character cannot be developed for good if he is not sincere, no matter what you do for him, or he does for himself, or how splendid may be all the machinery for helping him. For the development of character in the right direction, sincerity is absolutely essential; and natural gifts have nothing to do with this. Help the Cadets to get away from themselves, and make them understand sincerity. Some, alas, do not understand what it is to have a true heart! It is a difficult matter to deal with; but sincerity is essential to any soul aspiring to progress in the way of God. Deal with it from every aspect, so that, whether they accept the law for themselves or not, no Cadets can be in doubt as to the meaning and importance of sincerity.
2. Perseverance. We must make plain, by continual repetition if necessary, the part which perseverance plays in progress. It is wonderful how often the natural laws are a tangible representation of the spiritual. Personally I believe this is part of God's plan to enlighten us, that we may know Him, His nature and His will for us, to a marvellous extent by studying His work. I think this is written large over God's creation – if we want to attain, it is decreed that we must do it by perseverance in work.

Here again Commissioner Reed helped me. There were two things he emphasized. One, 'What you are not by nature you can be by grace'; the other (and I think he used to bring it in somehow every day), 'You must work!' In his illustrations, talks, and lectures, he would say, 'You are no good if you cannot work. My dear boy, if you cannot work, you had better clear out!' He emphasized it so much that he almost made us feel it didn't matter what work we did so long as we worked! He used to tell us about his weaknesses and shortcomings, and then add, 'But I worked! I got up early in the morning and I went to work. I had to work when I was a Cadet; I had to work when I was a Lieutenant; and now I am a Commissioner I work! If you do not want to work you will not get anywhere.' He rubbed it in with all his might. Perhaps some of us worked too hard; but I think it was erring on the right side.

3. The Mastery of Self. I am but mentioning a few foundation laws necessary to the development of character. No high development of man in any direction, spiritual, mental, or physical, is possible without a governing of himself and his faculties. The man who sets out to be an acrobat has to govern his body, and master those physical powers which are his, that he may excel. He has to exercise his muscles until they are under such perfect control that each is brought into submission. In like manner, a man who wants to excel in the field of mental activity has to subdue his thoughts that he may properly use his mind. Equally, a man of character must be master of his impulses.

We must help the Cadets in the development of character by giving them room to exercise the qualities we are seeking to develop. In this connexion you must not ignore nor despise small things. Ordinary hum-drum experiences may be used for the development of the highest and rarest gifts. The spirit of unselfishness can be truly

exhibited in an ordinary rough-and-tumble day as in the moment when a man lays down his life for another. We must make the Cadets realize this, and help them to exercise the qualities of which we speak to them, and towards which they are reaching out. Let us use their relationships with each other to help them. A Cadet who is selfish and disagreeable amongst her comrades will act selfishly in her duties to souls. A selfish person will not willingly carry the burden in the work of God; he may come in for the glory where he can, but he will be likely to shirk the burden and shirk the work.

The Officers dealing with Cadets should make them feel that the qualities they need as leaders may be exercised at the Cadets' meal table, and in the dormitory, and on the march, and in the Corps, just as much as anywhere else. We should also use the Cadet's attitude toward his Officers. If you want a man to develop in right spirit, and in the character which is going to make him the man we want in the future, let him show those qualities as a Cadet towards his superiors. People who resent being told things, what a nuisance they are! They must be approached so carefully, and the moment they are corrected they are all bristly and upset! That sort of spirit ought to be dealt with in the Cadets; they must have opportunity for exercising the right kind of spirit towards their Sergeants and Officers.

Then Cadets should have opportunity to exercise themselves in voluntary works and discipline. I perhaps feel more strongly on this than many feel. I hope I did not make a mistake, but I set a high value on what the Cadet did of his own accord, and I think we should make more opportunity for voluntary work. There is a tendency in that direction here at Clapton. We do not decide so much as formerly what Cadets shall do in their Field work and in the Meetings. We do not say so often as formerly, 'This Cadet will speak or pray, or this one lead and fish.' We say, 'Here is the Meeting; every one do what you can.' We leave the door open so that we may know those whose own hearts push them to action. When, without being actually called upon, they are drawn out in testimony, we find the people who have it in them – it is the voluntary testimony that is valuable.

I feel also that we ought to give the Cadets ample opportunity for voluntary works of self-discipline. I found it helped me considerably, and I know it has helped scores of other I have come into contact with, to impose some yoke on themselves. Apart altogether from the value of what they do, this self-discipline does something for their own character. I have said sometimes to Cadets, 'Will you for the next month, whatever happens, whatever you feel, get up one half-hour earlier to read and pray and study?' I have proved that, apart from the benefit derived from the study (I do not say the reading and study does not do good, I am sure it does), that grip on themselves, that making themselves do it, adds something to character which is of infinite value. The Bible says, 'It is good for a man that he bear the yoke in his youth.' Well, I think by putting a yoke on himself in his youth he has certainly gone a long way towards being a man fit to impose a yoke on others.

There should be opportunity for the Cadet to do more than is expected of him. God save us and protect us from Officers who cannot do more than they are supposed to do!

Why, The Army would never be what it is, we should never be sitting here, if our leaders and comrades and the saints who have gone before us has not done more than anyone expected them to do! In the past they did not wait to know whether this particular department was supposed to do this or that. The need imposed the responsibility to meet it if possible.

One of our failures in the development of our present-day young people and Officers is that, in spite of all we do, we turn out too many who are merely prepared to go through the daily task; so many hours visiting, and so much time for this and that; Officers who say, 'What things I am supposed to do I have done, I am a faithful servant,' and go to bed in peace! This is not enough! When you think of the countries where our Officers are working, do you think it is enough? It is not enough! The Salvation Army needs people who, when they have done all that is required of them, will still say, 'I am an unworthy servant. What more can I do?'

Let us give the Cadets room to exercise this spirit while in Training. If every moment of the day is taken up, and every duty told off, and it takes the whole of the Cadet's strength to do what they are supposed to do (and you must have mercy on the limitations of human strength), then with the best will in the world they cannot do more than they are expected to do. Let us, whilst still telling them to go so far, see that they shall always have strength – if they have the heart – to go farther. In this matter, and indeed in all that has to do with the development of character, the small Training Garrisons have an immense advantage over the larger. I know that in the smaller Garrisons you have fewer Officers; but the smaller your company, the finer your opportunity to make men and women of character.

Officers and Sergeants should be one with you. And let me say in passing, teach our young Officers to let the Cadets help themselves. It is an old-fashioned difficulty. It is far easier to do things for people than to leave them to do things for themselves, and one of the snares of Training Work is that very often the love, zeal, faith, and desire in the hearts of the Officers push them on to do for the Cadets what the Cadets ought to be left to do for themselves; and we must teach the younger Officers that part of the skill they must acquire in dealing with souls is not only to know when to help, but also when not to help; the one needs quite as able a mind and heart as the other.

We may assist in their development by helping the Cadets to find out for themselves about themselves. After all, it is only what a man does for himself than can develop him, and that is why it is so important to encourage voluntary effort on the part of the Cadet even in the simplest things, in their public work, and in the use of their time. It is what they do for themselves that will help them. Cadets must be helped to know themselves and find out what is in them, and then helped to deal with their weaknesses, if their character is to develop as we desire.

The Cadets must be armed against dangers in themselves. Are there any other dangers? I do not know whether you agree with me, but I am tempted to say that there are no dangers really worth calling dangers to a man's soul and spirit apart from the

danger which exists in himself! My experience in dealing with Cadets individually led me to feel this, and the longer I was at it the more firmly I became convinced of the falsity of the argument that environment makes the man. The exceptions were too many! I have met some who are strong in the belief that environment has a great deal to do with character. I must say I think that if Training Garrison Officers would take trouble to look behind the scenes they would come to the conclusion that environment has very little to do with deciding a man's character. I have studied the Cadets from this standpoint; and, in the majority of cases, I have been compelled to the conclusions that environment has had quite a different effect from what I should have expected.

Failures, in my opinion, are caused by the inherent weaknesses in a person's character rather than by his circumstances, and these weaknesses are what we should teach the Cadets to discover in themselves. All have some weaknesses. The strongest character has its weakness. No one is without a weak spot in character, and we must show the Cadets that their very strength often involves weakness. Take, for example, the will, one of the finest assets in character building. We say that the strong-willed people are the people to make leaders; and it is true that a strong will is an asset towards making a fine character. But we have all had experience, also, of how a strong will can cause havoc and disaster! When strong will remains self-will, the strong-willed person becomes one of the most heart-breaking of all. When we have to deal with him we look at what we saw in him of good, the capacity and the promise, and we see how because of self-will his whole life has gone to smash. His strength was also his weakness!

I do not think it hurts the Cadets to tell them we think God has given them this or that quality and to mention their good qualities. The Cadet is sometimes tremendously astonished, had never thought there was anything good about that tendency, and when you sit down and tell him that you feel he is gifted it helps him to a certain self-respect which is good for human nature. Then you can go on to show him how to turn these gifts to good account and to warn him how they may become a danger.

Show the Cadets also that they must deal with failure in themselves, and that weakness and failure left uncorrected will ruin the finest character. If you are going to show the Cadets how to build a good character, you cannot allow them to tolerate weaknesses and little failures side by side with strength. Failures and weaknesses must be mastered, corrected, turned out if necessary and, if possible, lost. Many weaknesses cannot altogether be banished; they remain and have to be mastered.

Teach them, further, that all gifts and talents should be servants. Help the Cadet to deal with himself by showing him that his gifts and talents ought to be his servants, and that servants must not rule the master. If you can make him understand this it will help him. Show him how the gifts God has given can be rightly used. As an illustration, take the gift of quick judgment. I do not know whether you have much trouble with your young people, but in our country we sometimes have difficulty because of their quickness to judge and criticize; at any rate, I found this a difficulty, and because of it many Cadets close the door to blessing.

It is not exactly cynicism, but a certain fashion of picking holes, finding fault, turning up their noses at this and that and the other. Sometimes it does an immense amount of harm, especially when people influence each other. I have found it a help to some of them when I have said, 'I notice you are rather critical.' Generally these people are proud of their critical minds, and they have replied, 'Perhaps I am,' expecting me to condemn them. But, instead of that, I have often said, 'Have you thanked God for this gift?' 'No, not exactly!' 'Well, it is a gift – a great gift. If you are thinking of being a leader of men, that discernment and clear mind which enables you to judge quickly ranks, perhaps, as one of the highest qualities you will need in order to be a good leader.' Then I have talked about the abuse of the critical faculty: how some who have this faculty have let it run away with them so that they cannot go to a Meeting without being led away from the subject of the Meeting to criticize this and that. I have tried to show that this is the master in bondage to the servant, and that the spirit of criticism which has, perhaps, often led them into condemnation, can be so governed, mastered, and trained as to be one of the greatest help to them.

Then I think you should help the Cadets to believe that all weakness can be made a means of grace. I hope that is not putting it too strongly. I think God's dealings and records in the Bible give us a right to say that, when it is not the Lord's will to take away a weakness, He will make it a means of grace. I have known people absolutely under bondage through fear of other people, and have seen that weakness taken right away; but sometimes a soul will pray not only three times, as Paul prayed, but far more often, and yet a particular weakness is not removed, because it is God's purpose to let it remain; but, with a recognition of His will, there comes a promise: 'My grace is sufficient for thee: for My strength is made perfect in weakness.' We want to make the Cadets understand that if they have a weakness which it seems part of God's will shall remain, they can bless God because that weakness in them is going to be, throughout their future, a means of grace: something that will make them better because it will keep them in close touch with God, or keep them – more humble, or more tender.

### III

Every Cadet should be convinced that development is essential to spiritual health. Root and ground them in this belief: Salvation and Sanctification are the preparation for development, just as the preparing of the ground and the putting in of the seed are the first steps towards a bringing forth of fruit.

Spiritual growth is a token of Holiness. Holiness has been called spiritual health. 'Where there is growth, there is life'; this is very clearly one of God's messages to us in the natural world, where I think we can say growth and life are almost synonymous terms. I have often asked myself: Is not the fact that we keep on growing one of the inward, silent tokens of immortality? I am growing older, but the older I am, the more I see how many things I have to learn, and how much there is I wish I knew. My desire to know is getting stronger and stronger. May I not conclude that this is one of God's silent whispers to me, telling that He has much to do for me yet, and that this little life is

a mere nothing, so far as its capacity to satisfy my spirit is concerned. But this is in passing. Let the Cadets understand they must go on developing.

It is a heart-breaking truth that Officers backslide! Some I have had to deal with in bitter anguish of spirit. The awfulness of seeing people who have walked with God, tasted the joys of the Spirit, engaged in the service for souls and won other souls, turned back into sin – even into gross sin! I have said to myself: ‘Why is it? How can this thing be? How can it be?’ Doesn’t it sometimes come to you as a blow? It has to me. Perhaps I have not seen the comrades concerned in the interval, and have suddenly heard of some awful thing happening, some black cloud having descended, and they have gone out of sight! I have felt if only I could speak to them and say, ‘I cannot believe it. It cannot be you! You could not have done that, not the you I knew – how could you?’ Alas, for the dull answer of fact!

Sometimes I have looked at the Cadets when they have some near to the commissioning, during the crowded days before they must go marching out; looked at them and felt that they were Cadets for the last time! I have said to myself, ‘I shall never have the right in the same way to take them aside and say, heart to heart and face to face, what I want to say, and what God gives me to say.’ Looking at them in a body for the last time, I have asked myself, ‘Who among them shall be lost? Who?’ As I have looked into their faces I have felt it cannot be that one, or this one; and, looking at them one after another, I have been unable to think it of any. And yet I always knew (and you always know) that within so many years there will be empty places. I do not mean the blanks caused by sickness, or death, or circumstances which may turn people away but which they cannot control. I mean those blanks which come because of souls stepping back into sin and wrong-doing.

Why is it? Why is it? God’s will is higher than our will. If we would keep them in the way of purity, Holiness, and right-doing, how much more would their Heavenly Father keep them in His way. Why do they step out of the way? I think one of the reasons is that they have not really grasped this truth of God’s law, which cannot and will not change, that if they do not grow, if their spiritual life does not develop, if their character is not getting better, they are in that place of danger where at any moment the Tempter may step in and destroy them. They are like the tree that, ceasing to grow, begins to rot; when the wind blows, down it comes. But the rotting, the period of cessation of growth, had begun weeks or months, if not years, before the storm, before the crash.

Let us warn the young Officers we send out of the perils of the way. Let us get them to carry this lesson with them: I must advance. If I stop growing I shall come to grief. So God will build up characters that will be like Him. ‘It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him.’ May it be so with these souls He has given us!

## **Why are we so afraid of hell?**

by Matt Kean

We're afraid to talk about it, preach about it, read about it, write about it, and we sure as hell are afraid to believe it. It seems that the non-existence of a horrible dwelling place for the wicked has become quite trendy amongst today's post-modern, more enlightened, Salvation Army. The popular churches, along with their popular preachers, with their popular fresh look at the Bible, are all too eager to present the niceties of the gospel, but are equally quick to cower away from the harsh truth of the wages of sin.

When the Salvation Army was built by William Booth, it was raised on fearless faith. The doctrines were formed by the founders' pain-staking searches of the scriptures. They were used to shape the officers, the soldiers, and every sermon intended to plead with the hearts of the unsaved. These eleven statements of faith created a unity within this great organization that all could settle and lean upon. They were the written logic for our ruthless attack on Satan and his minions, yet in many circles today they are hardly even held as true Biblical principle and dismissed as just more personal opinion.

How can this be? How is it that men and women who sign the articles of war, wear the uniform, and even become ordained as ministers within the Army's ranks can absolutely deny and even deem foolish the eleventh doctrine? Not only does this suggest that the Salvation Army is founded on an erred interpretation of scripture, but it also suggests that the fathers of Evangelical Christianity were mistaken in their theologies. St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, John Bunyan, John Calvin, John Wesley, Oswald Chambers, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Charles Spurgeon, D. L. Moody, and countless others lived out their faith and presented the saving love of Jesus Christ with urgency to the lost because of the inevitable fate of the lost. They were called, obligated, to warn the world of the necessity of surrendering to the redeeming power of Christ in order to avoid the damning power of sin. Have we become so arrogant as to suggest these great men of God were wrong?

Throughout the New Testament Jesus specifically spoke of an eternal punishment on several occasions (see all four gospels). He warned us of the terrible consequences of sin and the inevitable future of those who cling to it. His words were never without unconditional love, limitless forgiveness, and absolute truth, yet he insisted that iniquity and evil-doing must be repented and renounced. His message of eternal life was hope and freedom for all who heard it, but that same message included the fact that he was the embodiment of the Old Testament God who despised sin's corrosive ability, and had created a place for it (Jude 6).

For some reason, it seems that these two qualities of our Lord - the loving Saviour and the vindicating God – cannot be reconciled by some members of the present Salvation Army. It's easy to preach for five minutes about how there is a divine plan for one's life, how much God loves us, and how very special we are in the sight of the Lord, but to really pull the ears of men and confront them with the harsh truth of the reality of Satan's spirit-suffocating grip requires conviction and much introspection. Could this be

the reason that hell is hardly spoken of, because honest, personal repentance is compulsory in order to face it?

“There simply is no hell!” Some will certainly scream this aloud, while others whisper it silently behind closed doors, but whatever the case, such statements are commanding attention within our classrooms, I dare say, even in our pulpits. “God’s love is far greater a subject than the place where the devil lives.” Of course it is! But the glorious truth of His wonderful love cannot be separated from the eternity of which it frees us. The awesome power of Almighty God is not seen more perfectly than in the gruesome death of His own flesh which offered us liberty instead of an endless misery. How can we so brazenly present as truth such shaky theories as annihilationism and universalism when the bedrock of Christianity (i.e. the Bible) so clearly contradicts them? We are offered a choice in Jesus Christ. We can choose eternal life or eternal punishment. Our sin is a serious offence. It put the perfect Saviour on a cross and watched him die, so why should the consequence of it be any less serious?

The Greek word *aionion* is translated as eternal in the English New Testament. It is used most often in regards to the place of the righteous and the wicked after they die. For instance, in Matthew 25 Jesus tells of people being like sheep and goats. The sheep represent the righteous, the goats the wicked. At the end of the chapter (verse 46), Jesus uses the same word, *aionion*, to describe both fates. However, only the eternity of the wicked is ever disputed. Nobody ever argues that Heaven is eternal! Why not? How can we logically remove the adjective from one word that Jesus applied to both? Why are we afraid to embrace the truth and be the watchmen God expects us to be? If Jesus made a point of so sternly warning the unsaved of rejecting his redemptive power, shouldn’t we also be so diligent in presenting the gospel under the same terms?

The book of 2 Peter is so descriptive of the end of the unrighteous that it makes the hair on my neck stand straight. It speaks clearly of the dangers of preaching and teaching anything different than the Word of God, yet for some reason this entire epistle has been ignored, forgotten, or simply dismissed by far too many. It seems absurd to me that soldiers and officers who make up an Army of Salvation can believe in a gospel that subtracts the dire consequences of being outside the family of God. Millions of precious souls look to us for answers and freedom, but instead of introducing them to the untamed power of the Holy Spirit to set them free, we present them with a series of pleasant philosophies and a half-true, one-sided gospel. We claim to know the Author of faith and forgiveness, yet we deny his words. We claim to be free, yet we are bound to our theological comfort zones. We claim to be representatives of the truth, yet we refuse to believe it.

As soldiers in this great holy Army we should hold onto, and hold forth, every word of Christ and present the entire gospel with courage and pride. We are called to warn the lost in love and tenderness, but not without pleading and compulsion. We are those who stand on the front-lines of this terrible war, and ours are too often the only hands that will grab those poor souls about to be swept away by the forces of darkness.

Doubting the existence of the enemy's hell is like doubting the existence of the enemy, and an enemy unseen is most dangerous.

The refusal to believe in a hell might very well be Hell's greatest victory.

## **No retreating, hell defeating**

by Captain Andrew Bale

When Edward Saunders and John Gore began the work of The Salvation Army from the back of a grocer's cart under a gum tree in Adelaide, Australia on 5 September 1880, they sang the following words:

“We're travelling home to heaven above, will you go?”

When George Scott Railton unfurled the first official Salvation Army flag in America, the customs officials at the New York Battery, where he and his seven intrepid lasses landed, asked for an open air meeting. In response Railton fell to his knees in prayer, then rose to sing a song and boldly asked the question “Are you bound for hell or heaven”?

One of the most popular songs used by the early Christian Mission in its open air meetings in the East end of London during the 1870's and beyond contained the refrain “Oh you must be a lover of the Lord, or you won't go to heaven when you die!”

In ‘Heathen England’, Railton's eye-witness account of the birth of primitive Salvationism, the purpose of an Army meeting is described as follows;

“The officer or other person who leads the meeting is there to see that the truth as it is in Jesus, and that only, is set forth, and set forth in such a way as to inform the darkest mind present of the two great facts which alone we profess to propound: that every man is a guilty, hell deserving sinner, and that there is a way of escape for him if he be willing to avail himself of it.”

Orders and Regulations for Field Officers published in 1908, Book 1, Chapter 2, Section 3, paragraph ‘g’ states:

“Every F.O. ought to read the 33rd chapter of Ezekiel on his knees at off-returning intervals. The F.O. is the watchman. He sees – or ought to see – the sword coming. He knows that hell must be the doom of every man who dies with his sins upon him. He has to blow the trumpet and warn the people; if they die in their sins, their blood will be found on his skirts. The F.O. should consider well what that means. Let him remember that he will have to see these people again, that he will have to meet those who are lost, whom he had the opportunity of warning, at the judgement seat of Christ, where enquiry will certainly be made, as to whether he has dealt faithfully with them. Let him anticipate that solemn hour, and fix himself before that Throne and see these very people, whom he meets almost every day, come up to receive their sentence. This will give him feeling, and with his soul filled with compassion he will go out with burning zeal to save them.”

Just to underline the consequences, should an Officer fail to accept his primary directive, Chapter 5, Section 8' of the same book issues the following frank warning:

“If he does not personally save souls, he will hinder others from doing so. If he is a daring Blood and Fire Officer, rushing to the very mouth of Hell to rescue sinners, his soldiers will imitate him. And Alas! Alas! They will also too probably copy him, if he is a cowardly, indolent, hang-back creature, which can neither bark nor bite at the roaring lion of Hell as he carries off his prey.”

In the January edition of *The Officer* magazine (1894) that great Army pioneer and exemplary soul winner Commissioner Booth Tucker writes of a dream in which he witnesses his own funeral. As he wonders at the scenes below he shares three regrets, the third of which is quoted below:

“The nearness of Heaven brought with a sweep over my soul the terrors of hell... Oh, how I wished I had better compelled men to seek God: That my compassions had been fuller, deeper; that rivers of tears had run down my eyes; that I had believed for the most hopeless; that I had made a chance for the worst; that I had hung on to the backsliders; that with Calvary passion I had poured out my very soul over sinners and had been less easily turned aside from seeking their Salvation.”

Catherine Booth who, along with her husband and Railton co-founded The Salvation Army, says in her collection of lectures entitled ‘Aggressive Christianity’:

“What is our work? To go and subjugate the world to Jesus; everybody we can reach; everybody we can influence, and bring them to the feet of Jesus.”

In answer to his own question “Are all to be Officers?” William Booth responds:

“My business is to get the world saved. If this involves the standing still of the looms and the shutting up of the factories and the staying of the sailing ships, let them all stand still. When we have got everybody converted, they can go on again.”

Finally, one last quote, said by Catherine Booth at the public meeting where Railton and his seven lasses were given their commission to save America:

“The decree has gone forth that the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and that He shall reign whose right it is, from the rivers to the ends of the earth. I believe that this Movement is to inaugurate the great final conquest of the Lord Jesus Christ.”

The information given above is meant to clearly set out our heritage and our purpose. The Salvation Army exists to rescue those who are on their way to hell and set them on the road to heaven. The Salvation Army was raised up specifically to do this work and to remind the rest of the church of its urgent responsibilities in this area. The sole purpose of a Salvation Army Officer is to practice dare-devil soul saving and to train and encourage his soldiers to do the same. Our very name perfectly describes our reason

d'être, we are an 'Army' engaged in spiritual warfare and the plunder we seek is the 'Salvation' of the lost.

It is no wonder that in the western world at least, The Salvation Army is suffering from a terrible identity crisis. Our once fearless movement sits in the corner of some ethereal denominational psychiatric ward a gibbering and confused wretch, apparently no longer possessing sufficient confidence to be itself.

The problem stems from our attitude towards eternity and the blessings or punishment awaiting us there; we don't believe in hell or we simply don't care – I'm hard pressed to believe it's the latter and conversations I have had with colleague officers convince me it's the former.

Our understanding has got out of balance; we are so enthralled and entranced by the undeserved and generous love of God that the idea of his wrath has become an anathema to us. We can't comprehend how the God who has done so much to save mankind could bring himself to punish it.

To make matters worse the debate is further clouded by two notions, both of which if not carefully handled, can lead us into universalism.

The first is the belief that everyone is judged (if they are judged at all) according to the light they have received. This myth which holds so many people in error is based largely on Paul's teaching in Romans (especially chapters 1 and 2) and the statement in John 3:19-21

"This is the verdict: Light has come into the world, but men loved darkness instead of light because their deeds were evil. Everyone who does evil hates the light, and will not come into the light for fear that his deeds will be exposed. But whoever lives by the truth comes into the light, so that it may be seen plainly that what he has done, has been done through God."

Although this phrase is waved about by contemporary Christians like a talisman, it has no real scriptural authority. We are not judged according to the light we have received but by the way we respond to that light which God has shines upon all.

We use this get out clause at our peril. To assume that a sinner's failure to respond to the gospel is down to the quality of delivery is dangerous indeed – of course method and style is important, but to suggest that poor evangelism is the reason behind every rejection of the gospel is taking the argument too far.

At Pentecost God the Holy Spirit descended upon Peter and made the incomprehensible comprehensible – although many 'were cut to the heart' and responded many did not – the thousands who rejected Peter's message did so because they chose to – not because the quality of the evangelism was poor.

The second notion is based on the biblical truth that in heaven the social order is not as might be expected. The laws governing judgement are largely a mystery to man – which is why we are not permitted to make judgements about each others eternal destiny:

"Do not judge, or you too will be judged. For in the same way you judge others, you will be judged, and with the measure you use, it will be measured to you. "Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and pay no attention to the plank in your own eye? (Matthew 7:1-3)

Citizenship in heaven doesn't depend upon our definition of righteousness but upon God's.

"Jesus said to them, "I tell you the truth, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him." (Matthew 21:22)

What we call bad, God might call good, whilst our apparently anointed ministry he simply dismisses out of hand:

"Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only he who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'" (Matthew 7:21-22)

Neither of these arguments does away with the problem of hell, judgement and eternal punishment. We cling to such arguments like a drowning man clinging to the wreckage of his broken boat – but our desperation doesn't remove the peril of our situation.

If we are to experience revival in the western territories of The Salvation Army, then we must have a workable and biblically based concept of eternity, and the positive and negative consequences that might await us there. A Salvation Army Officer operating in a theatre of war where there is no enemy, no hell and no 'endless punishment of the wicked' is a bit like a surgeon operating in a theatre where no one is ill. In such a hospital there would be no need for medical knowledge, no need for infection control or medicine – the surgeon and his staff would be redundant. Correspondingly, a Salvation Army Officer operating in a theatre of war where there is no heaven, no hope of victory, no crown of life – no 'promotion to glory' would be like a Doctor compelled to spend his days in a hospice – no chance to cure just the daily toll of administering palliative care.

To rediscover our identity we need to rediscover the context in which we are called to operate.

There is a heaven, there is a hell, there is a devil committed to seeing as many damned as he can; there is a God determined to save as many as he can and there is a final

judgement where everything is sorted out. These facts are so intricately woven into scripture that they cannot be removed without destroying the whole garment. Tug at just one of these threads and you will soon unravel the whole jumper.

So, in an increasingly ambivalent world, what should our approach be?

First of all we should look to Christ – if there are no consequences for me to face once I cross the Jordan, then why did he endure such a painful death? If nothing else convinces me of the reality of hell then the sacrifice of Christ ought to. I'm no great fan of Cecil Frances Alexander's theology but he was spot on when he wrote the following words:

"We may not know, we cannot tell  
What pains he had to bear;  
But we believe it was for us  
He hung and suffered there.  
He died that we might be forgiven,  
He died to make us good,  
That we might go at last to Heaven,  
Saved by his precious blood"

Secondly, bitter pill though it is to swallow, we must recognise that in spite of Christ's efforts to save us his sacrificial act alone is not enough to provide eternal security for everyone regardless of their behaviour. The only people that go to heaven are those deemed by God to be righteous – wicked people will not get in.

"Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Corinthians 6:9-10)

However, in our pursuit of sinners we must not forget that social justice, social welfare (feeding the hungry, clothing the naked etc) are clearly outlined in the bible as fruit 'worthy of repentance. Citizens of heaven are installed by God not by themselves.

On this basis we should assume that everyone we meet is potentially destined for hell and we should love them accordingly – not in a self righteous judgemental way but in the same way we might wish to help an old lady cross a busy street. Motivated at all times by divine compassion and controlled and empowered by discernment, wisdom, knowledge and other spiritual gifts. I must also remember that my own eternal destiny rests not just on my faith and righteousness but on my active and effective involvement in 'getting others to climb with me'.

Finally, we must avoid getting bogged down in the theological difficulties associated with a God who judges and punishes with the same impartiality with which he loves and forgives (as Paul reminds us "God does not show favouritism." Romans 2:6-11) Instead

we should emphasise in our preaching that God judges with a painful reluctance, our God is a “compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness” (Exodus 34:6) Yet at the same time always conscious of the fact that reluctant or not he will ultimately judge as surely as he loves “The LORD is slow to anger, abounding in love and forgiving sin and rebellion. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children for the sin of the fathers to the third and fourth generation.” (Numbers 14:18)

I'm writing this article just one week before Good Friday when we will celebrate God's final heroic effort to save us all from the consequences of our sins, and it would be a tragedy indeed if we refused to promote his offer of heaven, simply because we were uncomfortable with the idea of hell. It would be a double tragedy if The Salvation Army stopped preaching Salvation on the same grounds. Whatever the world says, whatever our doubts say, whatever the church says, however the unsaved laugh at us - let us be ourselves – a Salvation Army ‘mobilised by God’ and ‘moved with compassion’ and like our first General possessing but one ambition – the souls of men!

As with most things in life, death and heaven Pearson has written a song about it:

With salvation for every nation,  
To the ends of the earth we will go,  
With a free and full salvation,  
All the power of the cross we'll show.  
We'll tear Hell's throne to pieces,  
And win the world for Jesus,  
We'll be conquerors forever,  
For we never will give in.

## **Acceptance of Authority** by Commissioner Wesley Harris

THE ACCEPTANCE of properly constituted authority within the Army is important. Not that leaders are infallible. (Like others, commissioners can make mistakes and I have inside information on at least one for whom that has been true!) Likewise, boards and councils can arrive at wrong conclusions. Though their decisions may be made in good faith and on the basis of wide experience they are still fallible, as of course are those who may not agree with them!

But from the beginning the Church has found it necessary to invest certain people with authority- not to 'lord it' over others but to glorify God and facilitate the worship and work of his people. A church without properly constituted authority – or a 'do-as-you-like army' – could not be effective. The words 'disciple' and 'discipline' are related and one of the secrets of the success of our founders was in the combination of love and discipline in the Army. Without that combination there might have been a religious rabble; with it there emerged a cohesive force in the world.

We live in an age when consultation is valued and that's fine and is a mark of respect. But just as even in a football team, for example, the context must be one of accepted discipline, so in that part of the Church called The Salvation Army.

Does that mean that Salvationists are required to be 'yes men or women'? The answer is both 'yes' and 'no'. We promise to accept the legitimate authority of our leaders but, in my experience, that does not put us in a straight-jacket or restrict our service. On the contrary, in fact. Sharing in the solidarity of salvationism increases our potential for service. As part of an army we can do so much more than we could as 'lone rangers'.

As a Salvation Army officer I have enjoyed great freedom. Within a wide framework of doctrine and discipline there has been plenty of room for personal expression and joyous service with opportunities for service beyond my wildest dreams. I'm so glad I joined!