

JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY

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In This Issue

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Editorial Introduction *page 4*
Captain Stephen Court

Social Evils the Army has Challenged *page 6*
Captain Danielle Strickland

Five Life Shaping Books (reprint) *page 12*
Major Stephen Court

The War College – Rules of Engagement *page 21*
Jonathan Evans

When You Grow Up *page 26*
Aaron White

Deep Redemption, Wide Adoption *page 29*
Cadet Xander Coleman

A Soldier's Covenant *page 33*
Jessica Bryant

Knowing Grace *page 36*
Megan Smith

Grace vs. Licence *page 38*
Jamie Reifer

Life is Death (or Death is Life) *page 41*
Nicole Brindle

Questions for Today - an addition to The Holy Club
and the Test for Self-Examination *page 45*
Nicole Brindle

The Potter's Field *page 48*
Caitlyn Spence

Community *page 49*
Cadet Leo Killion

Leighanne's Interview *page 51*
Courtney McLeod

A 'new' Identity Crisis? page 53

Cadet Joel Boyd

The Humility of Christ page 54

Cadet Ashley Aspeitia

Entire Sanctification page 57

Neisy Castillo

The War College isn't just a place you 'go' page 59

Heather Dolby

Editorial Introduction

by Guest Editor, Nicole Brindle

Greetings in Jesus' name!
Welcome to JAC63!

Inspired from the sixty-first issue of JAC; issue #63 brings you a globally written Journal with a common War College theme, either Alumni or Faculty – and sometimes both.

As always, writers receive no compensation for their work- all glory to God.

The mission statement of The War College is: To Train Warriors to Win the World for Jesus.

The War College was established in 2003 by Captains Stephen Court and Danielle Strickland and Pioneers Ruth and Ian Gillingham, and has since seen 3 campus' (Vancouver CA, Charlotte NC, and Chicago IL) with nearly 100 students in 7 sessions and has attracted students from over 8 countries.

We are incarnationally based, living simply and in community while taking classes in Extreme Holiness, Justice, Evangelism, Prayer and Biblical Interpretation. You can find our course calendar on our website listed below.

The War College Sessions:

2003: Death and Glory

2004: Martyr

2005: Holy _____

2006: rEVOLution

2007: Incendiary

2008: Conqueror

2009: War Cry

In this issue you will read articles submitted by...

Captain Danielle Strickland; Co-Founder of The War College gives us a sneak peak of her soon to be re-published Salvation Army classic: Social Evils The Army Has Challenged.

Major Stephen Court; Co-Founder of The War College, provides us with a reprint of an article he submitted back in September 2003 the same month The War College first started.

Canada's first Ministry Director, Jonathan Evans; a War College Alumni graduating from the very first session and the current Training Principal for The War College Vancouver Campus, forwards us bits and pieces of The War College's Rules of Engagement. It may read odd, as it's written to accepted students, but it can easily be translated into

your context. It's challenging yet rewarding stuff - and just might in fact apply to you as well!

Sergeant Aaron White, a gifted teacher (and much more) at The War College Vancouver Campus, writes on calling and challenges us– definitely an interesting read.

Cadet Xander Coleman, who studies at The William Booth College in London, England - and is a War College graduate of the Martyrs session, brings us a great piece on the Spirit of Adoption.

Canadian Salvationist, Jessica Bryant of the Incendiary Session writes on Solidership.

Canadian Salvationist and Incendiary graduate, Megan Smith writes a great article on her friend Grace while American Salvationist Jaime Reifer from the Martyrs Session wrestles through the other type of Grace with us.

I bring you a couple articles: my first answers the age old question: What is the meaning of life? And my second provides you with an extended list of questions to couple with John Wesley's Holy Club questions and the ones you can find in your O&R.

Skilled writer and Incendiary graduate, Caitlyn Spence, shares some of her poetry.

Cadet Leo Killion of the USS Territory and a graduate of the Revolution Session in Charlotte NC, brings us his views on community.

Canadian Salvationist Courtney McLeod who just graduated from the Conquerors session of The War College interviews one her neighbours who has an amazing story, it's a must read!

Holy Session graduate, Cadet Joel Boyd of the USA Western Territory brings us a short piece contemplating the current position of The Salvation Army while Incendiary graduate Cadet Ashley Aspeitia of the same territory writes on The Humility of Christ.

And to end our issue we've got Neisy Castillo, a recent graduate of Chicago campus' first session, sharing with us her response to Holiness.

Many thanks to Stephen Court who let me tackle a War College edition of JAC and also to the USA Southern Territory for the idea!

God Bless The Salvation Army,

Nicole Brindle
Recruitment Secretary of The War College
Please check us out online at
www.thewarcollege.com and www.thewarcollegechicago.com.

Social Evils The Army Has Challenged

by Captain Danielle Strickland

A special JAC preview of soon to be re-published Salvation Army classic: "Social Evils The Army Has Challenged." By S. CARVOSSO GAUNTLETT (with up to date discussion guides on the issues of today's fight for justice by Danielle Strickland)

This is dedicated to the fight against human trafficking in the DTES of Vancouver, Canada, which is hot enough to be garnering national media attention these days. Go warriors.

CHAPTER IV IN JAPAN'S 'LICENSED QUARTERS'[1] THE challenge next to be recorded resulted in one of the most remarkable social victories in Salvation Army history. Its story takes us to Japan, and is all the more notable because The Army-a 'foreign' organization, of course-had been established in the country only five years. In 1900 the total number of Salvationists in Japan was not more than a few hundred.

For nearly three centuries a system of licensed prostitution had prevailed in Japan. Throughout two hundred and fifty years girls could be openly sold to such a life for a fixed period; then, in 1872, an Imperial Ordinance forbade the selling and buying of girls[2] and, indeed, ordered the release of all licensed prostitutes.

Unfortunately, few at that time understood the meaning of the new law, and the change was formal rather than actual. Girls were not bought; but loans were made to them-or, generally, to their parents or friends-the girls agreeing to practise the calling of a licensed prostitute in the house of the keeper until his loan be repaid. The unscrupulous brothel-keepers saw to it that in the accounts the cost of maintenance appeared always larger than the income, so that the debt only increased!

Brothels were situated together in what were called licensed quarters, generally just outside a town. Often these were surrounded by a high fence and had only one entrance. Tokyo had five such quarters; the largest and best known was the Yoshawara, with no fewer than 5,000 prostitutes.

It may be difficult for us to understand that no disgrace was attached to the professional vice of many of these girls. At times of famine, epidemic, earthquake and other disasters, girls bartered themselves away in order to help their starving family, a self-sacrifice which, in a land where filial devotion is very strong, was regarded as meritorious and deserving of respect.

Most of these girls had no idea to what they were condemn-ing themselves. They soon became disgusted with their 'calling,' the conditions of which were terrible. Often, moreover, they were underfed and brutally maltreated. A large number contracted disease and had to undergo hospital treatment.

Yet, however much they might loathe their life or wish to regain their freedom, they were bound until the accumulated debt was paid. A police regulation prevented any girl from leaving a licensed house without the signatures of the brothel-keeper and the manager of the licensed quarter; if she tried to escape, the police, who kept a register of the girls, would arrest and punish her, and then return her to the licensed house.

The turn of the century was to witness the doom of this slavery. In the city of Nagoya an American Methodist missionary, the Rev. U. G. Murphy, had become interested in the terrible problem and had set himself carefully to study the law of the land. In February, 1900, Murphy won his first case-his three contentions being:

1. The plaintiff (the girl), having attained adult age (full twenty years), could not be bound by any contract entered into by her father while she was yet a minor.
2. Even though the contract be considered as binding on the plaintiff, yet a person could not be deprived of liberty on account of debt, for that would constitute slavery - and Japanese law prohibited the purchase and sale of human beings.
3. The rule which until now had bound prostitutes to their business must be considered null and void, as it was founded on an immoral purpose, and the law regarded as null and void any juridical act which was contrary to the public welfare and good morals.

The Nagoya police, however, refused to carry out the court's order that the brothel-keeper must sign and seal the girl's 'notice of cessation.' They declared that the police regulation did not allow them to force a keeper to release a girl, irrespective of her indebtedness.

It was well-known that the brothel-keepers and their depraved and reckless men would stop at nothing to safeguard their business interests. But Murphy defied the police 'regulation' and the brothel-keepers; he courageously took into his home two girls who had escaped from the Nagoya licensed quarter.

Commissioner Henry Bullard, who had recently taken charge of Salvation Army work in Japan, had repeatedly been asked by his Officers whether The Salvation Army could not attack this evil. Knowing, however, that Japan would be entering the comity of nations before long - when all foreigners would come under Japanese law - he insisted on postponing action until that change had taken place.

At last the time came and, after conferring with Murphy and others, Bullard decided that The Army should move.

The first consideration was the provision of a refuge and of after-care for girls who might be freed from their horrible serfdom. Without delay-in July, 1900-a Rescue Home was opened in Tokyo. Its first Matron was Mrs. Captain Yamamuro,[3] who later had seventy women under her care and in this difficult work displayed notable understanding and fearlessness.

Then the victims of licensed prostitution must be informed that The Salvation Army would help them if they so desired.

A special Rescue Number of Toki-no-Koe (The War Cry) was issued. On the front page it had, in bold characters, the operative clause of the 1872 Imperial Ordinance-rendered by Gunpei Yamamuro into colloquial Japanese, which was different from the official, classical language, and far better understood by the common people. This special issue also dealt with the evils of prostitution and declared God's power to deliver from sin, as well as the Salvationists' willingness to protect and aid all who wished to leave their degrading calling. Commissioner Bullard then summoned all Officers-some fifty in all, Japanese and foreigners'-to Tokyo, where he met them in the Hall of the Kanda Corps. The veteran Lieut.-Colonel Matilda Hatcher recalls vividly how the group knelt in the little Hall around the pile of War Cry, while their leader explained the situation and pointed out that fierce opposition would follow the enterprise they were planning. The whole of that night was spent by those men and women in passionate prayer for courage and wisdom, and Divine aid.

In the morning the dedicated band of Salvationists marched behind the Army Flag from Kanda into the notorious Yoshiwara quarter, beating a drum and singing all the way. At the various street corners they stopped to explain their purpose and to distribute the Rescue Number of Toki-no-Koe to the girls who came out to see what was up.'

This invasion naturally caused great excitement. As soon as the Salvationists' aim was understood, trouble began. They were violently assaulted by men in the brothel-keepers' pay. Their Flag was torn to shreds, the drum smashed. The valiant invaders were badly injured, and escaped only with much difficulty.

A party of Salvationists setting out from other Tokyo Corps fared similarly on their expedition to another licensed quarter.

When, a few days later, in response to a piteous appeal from a sick girl, Bullard and a group of Salvationists again went to the Yoshiwara, they were escorted by more than fifty policemen. As soon as they entered the licensed quarter, they were surrounded by hundreds of rough men, armed with sticks and worse. While the Commissioner demanded the girl's release from the chief brothel-keeper, a menacing mob of several thousand men gathered outside the office. The police, though reinforced, could not deal with the situation and barely managed to get the Salvationists out by an otherwise unused exit.

Other Officers-including Charles Duce, Matilda Hatcher, Gunpei Yamamuro and Kataro Yabuki-went far afield, even to places a considerable distance from a railway line, and at great risk to themselves secured the liberation of girls.

Bullard himself went to Kobe, whence a pathetic appeal had reached him from a girl who was being cruelly maltreated. On arrival he discovered that she had been removed

to Kyoto; there he was able, though with considerable difficulty and danger, to free her. The girl was taken to the Tokyo Rescue Home, later was converted and afterward married and settled happily.

The very violence used against the Salvationists secured valuable publicity for their crusade. The most important newspapers gave full details of The Army's attack and of the Rescue Home newly established, and quoted at length from the Rescue Number of The War Cry.

Practically the whole of the Japanese press supported the Salvationists' action and joined in their demand that any girl who wished to leave the licensed quarters and return to normal life should be free, to do so.[4]

For the first time in their history, Japanese newspapers issued special editions—two, and even three, a day.

Their agitation made the expression 'Free Cessation' a national slogan. Both in the capital and in the provinces the challenge became a chief subject of conversation and discussion. The Japanese nation, it was said, had rarely, if ever, been so stirred on a social question.

The movements and addresses of Commissioner Bullard and other Officers, touring the country to explain to great crowds The Army's social campaign, were fully reported in the press. Girls who read the papers appealed to the editors, or directly to The Army, to help them.

Early in September the whole staff of one newspaper went to the Yoshiwara to liberate a girl. Several of them were badly beaten, but though the police still refused to release a girl unless her notice of cessation was signed by the keeper they succeeded in their mission. On the same day, Duce and Yamamuro, on their return from an attempt to free a girl in the provinces, were severely beaten and had to be escorted back by forty policemen!

A few days later a regulation was issued to the effect that if a keeper refused his signature, without adequate reason, the police might liberate a girl without such a signature. Even so, the determination of an 'adequate reason' was left to the police, and many girls were not allowed to leave. However, a large number gained their liberty.

That, of course, only served still further to enrage the brothel-keepers and others whose earnings depended on this vile traffic. A gang from one of the licensed quarters wrecked the offices and machinery of two large Tokyo newspapers which had specially supported The Army, and seriously injured members of the staff. The licensed quarters were picketed to keep out Salvationists and pressmen, and anyone who looked like either of these was not safe! For nearly a year the homes of leading Salvation Army Officers were guarded by special police.

What was described as the 'reign of terror' in the licensed quarters, and-despite all attempts to prevent it-the de-parture of very many girls, kept away numerous well-to-do 'customers.'^[5] During the month of September, 1900, the number of visitors to prostitute quarters in Tokyo alone decreased by 2,000 per night!

The Japanese Government was not slow in responding to the nation-wide agitation. They took a course possible only in a supreme emergency: on October 2, 1900, an Ordinance - prepared by the Ministers of State and signed by the Emperor - was issued with the full authority of law.

The Ordinance declared that any prostitute who wanted to be freed need only go to the nearest police station and state her wish. Her name must then at once be removed from the register and, irrespective of any indebtedness to her keepers, she would be free. Indeed, it was made a punishable offence for a keeper or anyone employed by him to hinder any girl who wished to leave.

The new regulation, moreover, made it more difficult for a girl to become a licensed prostitute; no girl under sixteen years of age was allowed to register as such. Of course, keepers also became much more wary of advancing' loans'.

The Rescue Number of the Japanese War Cry had been issued on August 1st, and within two months a victory sur-passing their utmost hopes rewarded the tiny band of Sal-vationists who had so boldly challenged an entrenched evil. Japan had responded very nobly to the challenge, but no wonder that the name of Henry Bullard, together with that of Charles Duce, is among those of half a dozen Europeans in-scribed in a permanent national record of benefactors of Japan.

During the first year alone, after this revolutionary event, twelve thousand young women^[6] abandoned their lives of immorality. From one of the licensed quarters of Tokyo, by the end of December, 1,100 out of 6,835 girls had forsaken their evil calling. Thousands of homes throughout the land rejoiced over the return of daughters who had been enslaved seemingly beyond hope of deliverance.

The agitation had in some measure created a 'conscience' on the whole question. Immorality was not by any means abolished, but many men ceased to patronize the licensed quarters. A number of houses had to be closed.

A group of influential Japanese gentlemen issued in the columns of a national newspaper an appeal for funds in aid of The Army's Rescue Work. There was evidence, moreover, that the unexpected homecoming- of so many liberated girls opened many doors for the Gospel, and not least for its proclamation by Salvationists. No doubt the remarkable standing rapidly gained by The Army in Japan may be attributed in no small measure to this agitation.

The amazing triumph in 1900 was only the beginning of a gradually extending work of rescue for women. Strange though it may appear, the days of danger were by no means

over because the Ordinance had been issued, and this chapter of Salvation Army history should include at least a reference to a very valiant Japanese Officer who passed to his reward in 1923.

Fujio Itoh, in his youth, had been very pleasure-loving, but his conscience was awakened when a friend, whom he had introduced to vice, committed suicide with a prostitute. Itoh, a skilled workman prominent in the Japanese labour movement, was converted, became a Local Officer and, later, an Officer in Kyu-Sei-Gun, as The Salvation Army is called in Japan.

From 1912 to 1923 he served as Rescue Officer at Tokyo Headquarters and dealt individually with nearly 1,200 cases, mostly licensed prostitutes. He helped nearly 1,000 of these to give up their 'calling.' Scores of times he risked his life. Near the police station, to which he took so many girls for the final seal of their liberation, men often waited to try to carry off the girls, or to injure the rescuer. They would call at Headquarters or at Itoh's home; twice, at least, Itoh was thrashed within an inch of his life and had to spend weeks in hospital. The brothel-keepers even tried to bribe him, sending coins or bank notes in boxes of sweets or cakes.

But neither to threats nor blandishments - nor to the influence of association with girls accustomed to a different type of man - did Itoh ever succumb. Hero and saint he remained to the end, a Salvationist Samurai.

'The name of Adjutant Itoh,' Isowo Ake, the Japanese Christian scholar and labour leader, has declared, 'will be permanently recorded in the history of the abolition of licensed prostitution.'

[1] For the facts of this great story I am indebted mainly to Commissioner Henry Bullard (promoted to Glory in 1/9/45) and to Bufo and Tamiko Yamamuro, gifted son and daughter of The Army's distinguished Japanese Commissioner.

[2] The immediate cause of this Ordinance was peculiarly interesting. A boat in Yokohama harbour was found to have on board over two hundred Chinese who had discovered that they were to be sold as slaves to work in mines in Peru. One of them escaped to a British warship. The Japanese authorities succeeded in setting the men free or sending them back to China. Peru evidently raised objections, but the Russian Tsar, who re-tried the case, supported Japan's action. Then, however, Japan was accused of having, in her system of prostitution, an institution worse than slavery. That challenge sufficed to bring about the 'Woman's Emancipation Law.'

[3] Wife of Gunpei Yamamuro, who years afterward became leader of The Salvation Army in Japan. Mrs. General Carpenter's *Women of the Flail* contains an excellent sketch of Kiye Yamamuro

[4] Many individual Japanese expressed their admiration for The Army's courage, faith and tactics, as did most Westerners; e.g. the Anglican Bishop of North Japan-who, incidentally, had confirmed Matilda Hatcher when she was fourteen-and the editor and proprietor of the Japan Mail, who had lived many years in the country and was amazed at Bullard's daring.

[5] A number of ordinary visitors, suspected of being pressmen, were badly beaten by the pickets and refused admission

[6] In 1898 there had been in Japan 50,553 licensed and some 80,000 un-licensed prostitutes, and 30,386 registered geishas

-- Danielle Strickland (Captain) SOCIAL JUSTICE DIRECTOR

Five Life Shaping Books

by Captain Stephen Court

This is a reprint from the JAC issue when THE WAR COLLEGE started, September 2003, so some ranks are obsolete.

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

Major Janet Munn

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

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

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

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

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

Colonel Dennis Phillips

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

I Samuel

Job

John

II Timothy

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

1. QUIET TALKS ON PRAYER (S. D. Gordon) This book was already old and dog-eared when it was handed to me during the year I was preparing to enter training (1959). S. D. Gordon introduced this young officer-to-be to the wonder of prayer, and his writings prompted me to take the first steps in a life-long pilgrimage (which I am still on) in pursuit of a holy prayer-relationship with God. Remember, I was getting ready for cadetship, that necessary step to becoming an officer, and it was one of those times in my life when I was particularly sensitive to spiritual things. So, my 20-year-old mind took it quite seriously and literally when I read, "For if a man is to pray right, he must first be right in his motives and life." During that time, I drew up my first "Ten Most Wanted" list of souls to be saved, most of them my own family, and although it took 33 years for one of my brothers to come to Christ, every one of those ten people came to the Lord, and I attribute my quantum leap of faith in prayer to the detailed instruction given in this text.

2. CELEBRATION OF DISCIPLINE (Richard Foster) In 1980, while serving as territorial youth secretary, I was invited to lead the Asbury College Salvation Army Student Fellowship Retreat and was advised by the Student Fellowship President, Kenneth Luyk (now training principal in the USA Southern Territory) that the theme of the retreat would be based on this book. Reading it changed my life. Through all the years of my youth and early officership, I heard senior officers speak of the impact Brengle's books had had on them, and I longed for such a spiritual literary experience. It came with the reading of *Celebration of Discipline*. The first time, it took me a year to read its 200 pages because I was driven to process each chapter (sometimes one paragraph at a time) into my life. As with a great novel, my full attention was piqued upon reading the first page: "We must not be led to believe that the Disciplines are only for spiritual giants and hence beyond our reach, or only for contemplatives who devote all their time to prayer and medication. Far from it. God intends the Disciplines of the spiritual life to be for ordinary human beings: people who have jobs, who care for children, who wash dishes and mow lawns. In fact, the Disciplines are best exercised in the midst of our relationships with our husband or wife, our brothers and sisters, our friends and neighbors." "Wow", I said to myself. "This book is for me". And although each chapter is overwhelmingly rich and worthy of mention, I take time (space) here to draw attention only to Chapter 11, "The Discipline of Worship". Dr. Foster's recommendations for one to prepare for worship have made Sunday mornings rich and precious for this itinerant who has worshipped everywhere from Pasadena Tabernacle to the distant mountains of Haiti. Meaningful worship has little to do with how good the preacher is or how large the congregation may be. It's all about one's preparation to meet with God and be changed by the very essence of His presence.

3. LEAP OVER A WALL (Eugene H. Peterson) If the most creative novelists of the 20th/21st Centuries were brought together, they could not come close to conceiving a plot as wild, imaginative, daring, adventuresome, sexy, emotional and dramatic as the

story of David, and Eugene Peterson masterfully draws out all of the above in *Leap Over a Wall*. I have referred often to Chapter Two in which Mr. Peterson vividly re-tells the story of David's selection to be king. He was the least of the 8 brothers. (Maybe I identified too strongly here in that I, too, was "the least of 8 children" - 6 of whom were brothers, but I relished the picture of David having been virtually forgotten and overlooked by everyone except God.) The House of David, yes the one Jesus was prophesied to rule over, is to be honored and held in holy regard; yet, we find in King David many of the same life-situations we also face, though centuries apart. Though chosen by God and set apart for Kingly responsibilities, David demonstrated an ordinariness that emboldens us "ordinarians" to realize a stumble does not have to mean a fall, and even a fall does not have to mean one is down forever. We learn from David that it isn't what we do for God, but what God does for us. God's providence prevails.

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

5. PRAYER, FINDING THE HEART'S TRUE HOME (Richard Foster) This book came to me just before we moved to the Caribbean Territory in 1998. Again, God's timing was perfect, for one discovers a whole new relationship with God while serving on the mission field. While serving in the USA, prayer was certainly good, helpful and inspirational, but on the mission field, prayer becomes one's lifeline, an absolute necessity to cope and survive. At one point, Dr. Foster explains the "Selah" so often seen in the Psalms. It is meant as a signal for a meditative interlude. Well, reading this book required many "Selah's", for one must not just read through it. One must pause and ponder every point and each paragraph. I promise, this book will take you to places

of prayer you have never imagined. In fact, just writing about it here, I am encouraged to pick it up yet once again and return home to the heart of God.

Commissioner Wesley Harris

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

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

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

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

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

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

that any change in the Army would be for the best. This book has some sign posts we would do well to consult.

Captain Danielle Strickland

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

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

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

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

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

Life Together, by Bonhoeffer. The classic on community. This book (along with others by Tom Sine who I would say is the contemporary classic on community) has shaped my life in major ways. Bonhoeffer challenged my core belief that my 'devotions' had to

be done in isolation from anyone else... now I understand that my time with God can be both individual and communal. I now spend my morning devotions reading and praying with my family as a unit of one together before God. Both Bonhoeffer and Tom Sine have challenged me to live the Gospel out in rough, and poor neighbourhoods, to live the opposite of the world, to challenge the statusquo.

Bonhoeffer did it by his words but also his life (going back into the fire of Nazism) and Tom Sine by his practical examples in his books (*The Mustard Seed Conspiracy*, and *Mustard Seed versus McWorld*). Both have brought me to a place today where I live in an inner city, in order to live out the Gospel and see His Kingdom come.

Commissioner Shaw Clifton

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

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

The second is *Extracts From General Booth's Journal 1921-22*, published by Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd., London, in 1925. Reading these daily journal entries by Bramwell Booth has brought me into contact with a holy mind, a *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, Issue 26, August - September 2003 10 thoughtful, intelligent, visionary Army leader, and a deeply principled, passionate man of God. The book came into my possession when Lt. Colonel Ethne Flintoff, then the Social Secretary in Pakistan but now leading the work in Bangladesh, gave it to me as a Christmas gift in Lahore in 1998. It is one of my most treasured books. It is revisited often.

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

Book four may seem to some a surprising choice. It is the *Army's Handbook of Doctrine* published in 1940 by International Headquarters, London. Though written five years before my birth, it resonates with me still. It was when reading Chapter X on "Entire Sanctification" that I was led into the blessing of a clean heart. This happened some

years ago on an early morning commuter train going from Romford, Essex into London's Liverpool Street Station. I felt as though cocooned from my fellow passengers, and when they alighted I could hardly get to my feet in the empty train, such was the Lord's silent, invisible but unmistakable embrace. At the time I was serving at IHQ as the Legal and Parliamentary Adviser. This 1940 edition of the Handbook represents Army literature at it best, written when we still knew how to write for a verdict in the heart, even in our teaching and instructional material.

Finally, the fifth volume is Jim Garrison's *From Hiroshima to Harrisburg – The Unholy Alliance* (SCM Press Ltd., London, 1980). It opened my eyes as never before to the folly and waste of war. All that human energy, creativity, genius and funding poured into weapons of mass destruction in America, and eventually elsewhere, with millions still without food, shelter, clothing, education or housing. Something is wrong deep in the human soul. Garrison's account of the coming of these weapons engendered in me a deep hatred of war, not such as to make me a pacifist outright but sufficient to take me to the very brink of that courageous outlook.

"We lay all carnal weapons down to take the shining sword." How heartily, but thoughtlessly, we sometimes sing Catherine Baird's anti-war anthem (SA Song Book 1986, Song 705).

Captain Stephen Court

One of the joys of being the editor is that I can make up neat features like this one. Another of the joys is being able to succumb to the temptation to jump into the fray with my own two cents' worth! After reading the submissions, I couldn't resist. I've read a bunch of the books included by these greathearts commended above. But I am happy to say that I've got a fresh list!

While I've benefited by 20th century writers (such as Ravi Zacharias, Commissioner Ed Read, Peter Wagner, Jack Deere, Major Chick Yuill, and Charles Colson), I've chosen books by my heroes.

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

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

It wasn't two years after Finney was promoted to Glory that Catherine and William Booth made a name change that has changed the world. While John Wesley was the grandfather of The Salvation Army and Finney was dubbed 'the Presbyterian Salvationist' by the Booths themselves, my next choice, PAPERS ON AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY, was by the Army Mother herself (I'm hesitant to use that term, as she was the General and the Founder, too, but she is the only one who was the Mother). I could have chosen any of a few books by Booth. They are merely collections of her preaching. They are merely fire on paper! Flames flick from her words off the page to practically lick your clothes. Each sermon oozes spiritual authority. Almost every paragraph shouts out to you with the urgency of the war.

This hero makes no concessions, no compromises, and no political 'correctitudes'. She put (and continues to put) a holy fear in me of the kind that doesn't cause cowering and retreat but impels total exertion to spread the dread. This helped shape my life- I named a cyber journal after it (JAC) and an annual conference (ACC- Aggressive Christianity Councils).

Catherine Booth was promoted to Glory in 1890. Not coincidentally, Commissioner George Scott Railton was excommunicated from the halls of primitive salvationist Journal of Aggressive Christianity, Issue 26, August - September 2003 12 power in the same year (was it coincidental that this was the year of the death of primitive salvationism?). While not famous as an author, GSR battled as effectively with the pen as he did with the Bible. Backing up every page of HEATHEN ENGLAND was a life of unleashed resolve that GSR modeled for the world. My buddy called me this winter from training college to get suggestions for references. I recommended HEATHEN ENGLAND and TWENTY-ONE YEARS' SALVATION ARMY. He emailed a week later noting that my name was the last one written in the CFOT borrowing cards (And I've been an officer for ten years!). And that is tragic, because the book is literally revolutionary, recounting, as it does, contemporary history of the primitive salvationist war. The stuff he was writing was happening outside his window. The heroics that lace these pages are enough to gouge a hole in your casual, comfortable Christianity and leave in its place a wrenching hunger for the guts to live and fight for death and glory as our 19th century comrades did, and for the God of Railton to show up again today.

Railton outlived William Booth by a year. Booth has yet to get his due as an author. He wrote some unknown classics such as SERGEANT-MAJOR DO-YOUR-BEST, SEVEN SPIRITS: Or, What I Tell My Officers, HOW TO PREACH, PURITY OF HEART, all less

famous than IN DARKEST ENGLAND AND THE WAY OUT. But my last choice is VISIONS. It is a collection of visions Booth had, the most renowned being 'Who Cares?' Not only is VISIONS eloquent, it persuasively depicts the divine.

Booth doesn't settle with capturing your imagination- he grips it with a stranglehold. The undercurrent is that Booth is all about the prophetic. He hears from God and conveys the message to us. Most of us have neglected this reality in our salvationism (Catherine prophesied that this movement shall inaugurate the great final conquest of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ). We can more easily marginalize modern classics by Rick Joyner like FINAL QUEST and THE CALL. But Joyner lines up right behind Booth's VISIONS for prophetic impact. And while I love the visions and the writing, I embrace the Army's experience and calling with the prophetic.

The War College – Rules of Engagement

by Sergeant Jonathan Evans

Orders and Regulations for The War College

The War College is an intense year, and as such we have intense guidelines, all to provide students with the best possible year they can get. Below is a portion sample our O&R for War College students.

So take a read through these and perhaps challenge yourself to try living like a War College student for a week. Can you hack it?

Rules of Engagement

Aka: Orders and Regulations for War College Students

Mission

We exist to train warriors to win the world for Jesus. Anything that accelerates, accentuates, or amplifies this mission is welcome. Conversely, anything that thwarts this mission and grieves God's heart needs to be quickly weeded out so that we can continue blessing Jesus and establishing His kingdom both here in the Downtown Eastside and in each of our lives. In everything we do, we aim to train you in being a part of God's Army of Salvation!

Attitude

Humility - Our attitude should be the same that Christ Jesus had. Though He was God, He **did not demand** and cling to His **rights** as God. He made himself **nothing**, He took the **humble** position of a **slave** and appeared in human form, and in human form **He obediently humbled himself** even further by dying a criminal's death on a cross [Phil 2:5 – 9]. Don't be selfish; don't live to make a good impression on others. Be humble, thinking of others as better than yourself. Don't think only about your own affairs, but be interested in others, too, and what they are doing [Phil 2:3-4].

Expectancy - Come before God with anticipation and eagerness. Expect to have a good time of fellowship with Him and receive a blessing from your time together. That was what David expected: "O God, You are my God, earnestly I seek You." (Psalm 63:1)

Teachability - This attitude is crucial: you don't come to God to choose what you will do or not do, but to do anything and everything that God asks of you. Jesus said, "If anyone chooses to do God's will he will find out whether My teaching comes from God or whether I speak on My own" (John 7:17). So come to meet the Lord having already chosen to do His will, no matter what. Honour that your leaders, teachers and other community members have years of discipling experience and have wisdom, knowledge

and discernment for you to incorporate into your life.

Community

Living in community is a tricky process that we are still figuring out. Community is difficult for a variety of reasons, but a few standing out: 1. Our Western culture is anti-community in philosophy and practice. In the West the individual is valued before others. This fact is exemplified in “The American Dream,” and in new levels of apathy, with crimes of omission escalating. The American Dream states that we will be happy if we live for ourselves and gain resources, homes, fame, etc. for ourselves and our immediate community. This is unbiblical, as in scripture we see believers sharing everything they had and selling not only surplus but necessary items in order to support each other. Crimes of omission exist, such as allowing someone to be raped because ‘That’s not my business!’ This prevailing philosophy allows for the breakdown of social care and results in extreme lawlessness, as exhibited in our neighbourhood. We are in this together. All people are our neighbours, and we take responsibility for them! Every War College student is part of one body, and we will ensure that we support, cover and train each other into the image of Christ. Paul expresses this principle in Philippians 1.27-30, “But whatever happens to me, you must live in a manner worthy of the Good News about Christ, as citizens of heaven. Then, whether I come and see you again or only hear about you, I will know that you are standing side by side, fighting together for the Good News. Don’t be intimidated by your enemies. This will be a sign to them that they are going to be destroyed, but that you are going to be saved, even by God himself. For you have been given not only the privilege of trusting in Christ but also the privilege of suffering for him. We are in this fight together. You have seen me suffer for him in the past, and you know that I am still in the midst of this great struggle.”

Living Above Reproach

This verse leads us to the knowledge that our actions, within the seen and unseen realms, have consequences in our warfare. We must be on guard for anything that would compromise our collective witness and discredit the testimony of Jesus. *The Message* paraphrase of Phil 1:27 – 30 brings this to light. “**Meanwhile, live in such a way that you are a credit to the Message of Christ. Let nothing in your conduct hang on whether I come or not. Your conduct must be the same whether I show up to see things for myself or hear of it from a distance. Stand united, singular in vision, contending for people’s trust in the Message, the good news, not flinching or dodging in the slightest before the opposition. Your courage and unity will show them what they’re up against: defeat for them, victory for you—and both because of God. There’s far more to this life than trusting in Christ. There’s also suffering for him. And the suffering is as much a gift as the trusting. You’re involved in the same kind of struggle you saw me go through, on which you are now getting an updated report in this letter.**”

Our neighbourhood is rampant with compromise, with the devil’s pointing finger aiming to discredit the message and discourage converts. This is not a new trick of the devil. We are not unaware of his schemes! We will ensure that Christ’s message will not be

questioned and that his reputation will not be dragged through the mud. There are three very common ways the devil can trick us to compromise our witness:

Sexual innuendo – ***we will not give even a hint of sexual immorality by occupying private spaces with those of the opposite sex.*** [Also, we will be careful when with people of sexual orientation of which we are an object]. This means no being in washrooms, bedrooms or any closed door. Billy Graham went so far as to avoid entering an elevator alone with a woman.

Finances – We will not accept money from or pay those to whom we minister. If someone would like to bless us, and the Lord, we will ask him or her to fire a cartridge [give an offering to The Salvation Army]. We will be witnesses when handling any money that is not our own. We will be honest about our own stewardship and pay any debts that we have incurred.

Our tongues – We will speak words of encouragement regarding other believers, the church, and ourselves. We will not utter offensive, slanderous, or foolish words. We will be joyful and use our words to heal and love.

Relationships

Exclusive relationships rob you of the blessing of making relationships with more people and investing yourself in mission. Any relationship that is shown to be exclusive, such as dating or romance will not be tolerated. Dating relationships demand extra attention and can cause stress. While recognising the value of God's plan for intimacy with a spouse, you are not permitted to enter any romantic relationship [engagement, courting, dating, casual physical contact] until your year at The War College is completed. *Be aware, also, that the Lord is faithful, and recognises your commitment to fasting relationships for a year. Please don't assume that He would tempt you by bringing true love to you during this time, but be faithful, keeping your eyes on Jesus, as he remains faithful to you. "Promise me, O women of Jerusalem, by the swift gazelles and the deer of the wild, not to awaken love until the time is right."* [SOS 2:7]. In a word, this year is dedicated to focussing on Jesus rather than the distraction of finding love.

Training & Learning

You have heard it said time and time again, "You get what you put in." This is true at The War College. Your year has been planned for you to go through a gauntlet of experiences ensuring that you grow in spirit, wisdom and grace. However, the tempter would like to augment our attitudes so that Jesus does not fulfil His wonderful plan for your year at The War College. Therefore, be on guard; make the most out of every opportunity and **persevere** through every challenge. Each student is responsible to their squad to ensure they are meeting all the requirements of The War College. Students who are not fulfilling requirements will be corrected in squad and further by leadership if required. It is our delight to share with you in a growing and changing process. You will thrive this year with scheduled sessions and the lifestyle of warring for Jesus!

Time

In order to show the utmost respect to our neighbours, punctuality is valued at The War College. This means arriving at least 5 minutes early to scheduled events. We recognise that our time is not our own: we have been bought at a price, and will offer our bodies as living sacrifices, at all times of the day and night, to God. We will gift each other with our presence and exhibit the sacrament of The Body of Christ by being together.

Fast Food Fridays

It is our corporate witness and discipline to fast on Fridays from 7:00 AM through 3:00PM for three reasons:

1. We want to discipline our flesh in order to subject it to our spirit.
2. We want to discipline ourselves in fasting so that when the Lord asks this of us, we are ready.
3. We want to intercede for our session's holiness, our session's warfare, and for those who are sexually trafficked.

Wordly Items

We live not for what is seen, but for what is unseen, for what is unseen is eternal! Also, we recognise God's blessing in our lives. Every good thing we have he has given to us, and we'll try to share it and take care of it to the best of our ability. **We will not be distracted with TV's, worldly magazines, video game consoles, Internet sites, movies etc. During the week we will fast from such media.**

Retreats

Retreating into solitude is a necessity when engaged in serious warfare. We will prayerfully retreat at the required time.

Bonus Blessings

Bonus Blessings are a lot like the push-ups my basketball coach used to give us as a punishment/reward. Nobody really wanted to do the work at first but we were impressed with the results. Our punishment made us into superior basketball players by discouraging selfishness and irresponsibility. **You are responsible in your squad to acquire and do bonus blessings. A bonus blessing is a bonus spiritual exercise consisting of at least an hour for such things as lateness, not doing assignments, attitude adjustments etc.** The group does the bonus blessing together, teaching us that we are responsible not only for our own behaviour, but also for the behaviour of those entrusted to our care. However, in some circumstances a bonus blessing is not a group's responsibility, and therefore individual blessings can be obtained from squad leaders.

Diet

Food items that are hydrating, nourishing and high in fibre ought to be selected when eating at Harbour Light. Meanwhile, we respect that God created food to be sensory, satisfying and shared. Thus, we will use food as a means of celebrating our common life in Jesus and do not discourage modest portions of such things as deserts.

Junk Food [any food item that is perceived to be unhealthy or to have poor nutritional value] is highly discouraged. We recognize the convenience and low cost of fast food, but insist that it simply doesn't help the mission. Examples of junk food may include, but are not limited to: hamburgers, pizza, candy, soda, slurpees, and salty foods like potato chips and french fries. Since junk food is high in fats and sugars, it is a leading cause of obesity, dental cavities, increasing cases of Type 2 diabetes, heart diseases, etc. They are very low on proteins, vitamins, and fibre. This leaves our bodies ineffective, lethargic, and recuperating, rather than poised to engage the enemy. Junk food, in addition to being unhealthy, tends to be anti-social and costly. For these reasons we discipline ourselves to abstain from the pleasure such food gives and use it on special occasions to celebrate. [If you don't believe me, check out *Supersize Me!*] Moreover, tobacco is highly discouraged while alcohol and non-prescribed drugs are prohibited.

Drill

Drill is our way of disciplining our bodies to an active lifestyle. We choose to present our bodies as living sacrifices, holy and blameless before God. That is to say, we will do our best to make our body healthy and able to serve God for the long term. We will evaluate our fitness levels individually and see that personal fitness improves throughout the year. Drill times are mandatory unless another ministry time is scheduled for an individual at that time. If a conflict presents itself, the student is responsible for exercising for an equivalent amount of time in the same week.

Spiritual Warfare

Sometimes we find ourselves in the midst of manifestations of the spiritual world [i.e. demons and/or The Holy Spirit]. It is important that proper discernment and leadership are present to guide students through such experiences. Here are our basic guidelines:

1. "Our terms of engagement are that we confront the enemy whenever possible on our terms, not its." - Stephen Court. In other words, we set the times for serving eviction notices. If the enemy is manifesting it is to distract attention from Jesus, this should be bound and dealt with at a proper time.
2. As a sign of love and respect for each other, class time takes precedence over personal prayer issues. This does not mean that we can't pray for one another during class, but a general consensus must be reached, and we must have the blessing of the teacher. This should not result in breakout groups.
3. To give you some spiritual covering and direction, we would like you to enter these situations with someone who is a part of leadership, such as a teacher, squad leader or discipler.

When You Grow Up by Sergeant Aaron White

“What do you want to be when you grow up?”

This is the question asked of children in households around the world. It used to be a fairly straightforward question, almost a ridiculous one:

“What do I want to be when I grow up? What do you mean? My Dad’s a farmer / baker / lawyer / King. That’s what I’m going to be as well, as if I have a choice. *Duh.*”

Or,

“What do I want to be when I grow up? Well, I guess the choices are wife or nun. Like my Mom.”

But now the options are wide open, or at least it seems that way. You don’t have to follow in the footsteps of your parents if you don’t want to (though of course we want to reserve the right to come and live on their couch and eat their food if our exciting careers in underwater basket weaving don’t work out.)

Of course, this glut of options does not necessarily make things easier. It actually forces us to ask some fairly difficult questions. What do I want to do? How will I make a living doing it? And perhaps most difficult of all: Does God have a job in mind for me?

This last question sometimes sounds like this: Does God have a *calling* for me? A calling used to mean that someone was going to be a priest or minister or missionary of some kind, suggesting that only these special people were uniquely called by God into ministry jobs. But again, things have opened up a bit in this regard. It is now widely recognised that God might call someone to serve Him as an actor, a musician, a carpenter, a teacher, or a clown every bit as much as He might call someone to be a monk. Full-time ministry no longer automatically means putting on a white collar, attaching red epaulets to your shoulders, or submitting to a vow of celibacy for life.

So, *if* God does have a calling for everybody, how do you find out what yours is? I guess you could always wait for a divine bolt of lightning to tell you that God has a life of plumbing in store for you. It has happened before (not so much the plumbing bit, but the bolt of lightning bit). The story of Saul / Paul in the Bible is one where Saul is blinded, spoken to directly by Jesus, given a name change, and later set apart specifically by the Holy Spirit to go out as a missionary. It seems kind of unfair that Paul was given so much direction in his calling. Then again, the life set out for him was not an easy one, so we probably shouldn’t complain.

Still, the cases of people deciding their future based on God making them blind are decidedly rare, so we should perhaps look for some other guiding principles.

I like to look at some of the disciples for inspiration. Here they are, happily fishing away, doing their jobs, and then along comes Jesus. “Come, follow me,” he says. And they stop what they are doing and follow him, as if this was the kind of thing that happened every day.

It turns out their decision was not taken just on a whim. Many Jewish boys at that time would be marked out specially to receive religious instruction from Rabbis in small groupings. The fact that the disciples were out fishing means that they had probably been rejected by the Rabbis as “not suitable for instruction.” So, instead of delving into the mysteries of God, they got to spend their time delving into the smelly insides of fish.

It is interesting, then, that Jesus comes along and takes the only people who are available to him, the rejects, the unsuitables. And they come, hungry for the Kingdom of God. Later on they confess that they left absolutely everything for Jesus.

But the Bible also tells us that they kept on fishing as well. Sure, Jesus was making them into fishers of men, but they could also keep on fishing for fish. They were good at it, they could make a living doing it, so why not? Of course, if Jesus came along and asked them to follow him to Jerusalem, or if he had some specific mission stuff for them to do, they would drop everything and do it. And Jesus used their fishing time to teach them lessons about himself and his Kingdom. Their jobs as fishermen definitely came second to Jesus, but it didn’t mean they had to stop fishing.

Paul was actually the same way. His main job was to follow Jesus and to bring the gospel to the Gentiles. But he also made tents wherever he went and sold them. Presumably he was pretty good at making tents, and maybe he even enjoyed it. (I can’t imagine enjoying making tents, but then I suppose that is not part of my calling.)

The point is, God has given us all natural abilities, and it is good and proper to use them. We can be athletes or scientists or writers or fishermen, and those jobs may well be part of God’s calling for us. But God’s primary calling for us is to follow him, no matter where we are or what we are doing. That way, everything we do, whether we eat, or drink, or work as a cashier at the Safeway, we can do it all for the glory of God.

This kind of thinking puts our “vocations” in the proper perspective. It means we have to hold on to them lightly, ready to drop them at a moment’s notice to follow hard after Jesus. Our jobs and careers – really our whole lives – are entirely secondary to the Kingdom of God, and to put them in first place is essentially idolatry. But it also means that our jobs and careers are incredibly important. It means that whatever we find ourselves doing right now, we should do it with care and excellence, because we are doing it for the glory of God. And as we plan out our future vocations, this must be done with diligence and effort, as we want everything we do to best reflect the goodness of God.

Compared to Jesus, our vocations are utterly insignificant. But because of Jesus, our vocations take on the eternal significance of worshipping God.

So what do I want to be when I grow up? An astronaut. Or a cowboy. Maybe an astronaut cowboy. An astronaut cowboy fireman who follows Jesus.

Deep Redemption, Wide Adoption

by Cadet Xander Coleman

Cosmic Anticipation

Romans 8:15-19 (NIV)

For you did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear, but you received the Spirit of sonship. And by him we cry, 'Abba, Father.' The Spirit himself testifies with our spirit that we are God's children. Now if we are children, then heirs – heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, if indeed we share in his sufferings in order that we may also share in his glory. I consider that our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us. The creation waits in eager expectation for the sons of God to be revealed.

There's something about adoption that tugs at our heartstrings, isn't there? Our hearts leap for joy when we hear stories about Oliver Twist finding Mr Brownlow, or when Daddy Warbucks falls in love with little Annie. It's something that's close to our hearts.

And God Himself seems concerned about orphans; they're mentioned countless times in the Bible, from Exodus 22:22, “*Do not take advantage of a widow or orphan,*” through to James 1:27, “*Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress...*”

Perhaps the reason that orphanhood and adoption is so precious to the human psyche is that each of us have an understanding of the orphaned state. I don't know anyone who has not known some form of loneliness, of rejection, and of insecurity.

Although we have all experienced periods of loneliness and rejection unless we are actually an orphan we have no real idea of what it must feel like to be without 'blood' parents. Yet when it comes to spiritual parentage we all begin life as orphans.

However, this passage from Romans assures us that God Himself will give us (if we believe) the Spirit of sonship! Some translations actually refer to a Spirit of adoption! Through the Holy Spirit, we no longer have to be enslaved to that fear and pain which is common to all spiritual orphans, we don't have to be afraid of not having it all together or of being rejected.

We can know what it means to be a son or a daughter of the Most High. I think that's amazing. Absolutely incredible!

Paul draws an interesting contrast between slavery and adoption. The slave has no rights. He or she is property, owned by another human being, and bound to do whatever they command. Slavery is the antithesis of sonship or daughtership. It's the exact opposite! But we 'did not receive a spirit of slavery again to fear', this scripture tells us; we're not in bondage anymore, we're not bound to behave in a certain way.

Fear is no longer our master! We're free! Hallelujah! Free to be sons and daughters, free to take up our positions as children of the Most High.

And it's important to recognize that for the Romans at this time, adopted sons had the same rights as born sons, including inheritance rights! We have an inheritance in Christ as a co-heir with Him. Hallelujah!

Yes, once we were slaves to Fear and as such were obligated to obey Fear because of that bondage. But now, through the Spirit of adoption, we are set free, adopted into the family of God. Our sonship and daughtership doesn't come without responsibilities, but we don't obey God our Father as we obeyed Fear, as slaves. Now we obey our Father because we love Him. We are still compelled to obey but not out of slavery but by our love for God. This is not slavery, it's freedom!

We have been adopted into the family of God, and we have all the rights and privileges that come with adoption. Hallelujah!

Verse 15 tells us that it's by this Spirit of adoption that we cry out, "Abba, Father". Now that word, Abba, is more than just a band from the 70s, it's the Aramaic word for Father. And it doesn't just mean 'Father' in a cold, legal sense. The word connotes closeness, a special relationship. It implies intimacy, much like the English word, "Dad," or even "Daddy. In the same way, the Holy Spirit testifies with our spirit that we are His children, and not just in a cold legal sense, but in a living, breathing, intimate and relational way. His Spirit rises up in us and we cry out, "Daddy, I love You; Daddy, I want to be close to You". We are prompted by His Spirit to relate to God with intimacy! This is HUGE! That you and I, sinful by nature, can know intimacy with the Living God! It is a massive condescension on God's part, and only possible by His grace. But it's at His instigation. He desires us to be intimate with Him. Wow! O, that we would respond to His call to experience that Father-son or Father-daughter relationship! This idea was revolutionary at the time. Jesus related to God as an intimate Father, and the religious leaders hated it – it was tantamount to blasphemy to be so familiar with God! The relationship Jesus has with His Father (as disclosed in John 14, 15) would have been seen as scandalous to the religious elite of His day. And this is the very kind of relationship God wants with us – that we would abide in Christ, even as He abides in the Father!

Verse 16 says, "The Spirit himself testifies that we are children of God. And if children, heirs also; heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, *if indeed we suffer with him, so that we may also be glorified with him.*" (emphasis added).

There's something noble about suffering, isn't there, in the Christian faith. I don't understand it, I don't even know why God allows suffering to happen, but there it is. It seems to me that the most holy people I know; those with the greatest spiritual power, are those people who've known what it means to suffer. People like the prophets Elijah and Jeremiah, like King David, like John the Baptist, like Jesus himself, like Paul, Peter; or more recently people like Mother Theresa. They all experienced suffering, and gained a crown because of it. Why is there such a blessing in sharing with Christ's

sufferings? maybe it's the 'overcoming' talked about in Revelation. 'To him who overcomes, I will give the right to sit with me on my throne, just as I overcame and sat down with my Father on his throne.' (Revelation 3:21). To be so committed to being like Jesus so as to take part in His sufferings? That's the kind of Christlikeness this world needs! I cannot even begin to understand what life must be like for the thousands of Christians around the world who haven't got enough to eat today, or for those who, worse still, are being marginalised, persecuted, tortured, killed for their faith.

It puts our 'light and momentary afflictions' into context, doesn't it?

The writer, Paul, is himself no stranger to hardship, and persecution and suffering, as we read in 2 Corinthians 11:24-27.

Five times I received from the Jews the forty lashes minus one. Three times I was beaten with rods, once I was stoned, three times I was shipwrecked, I spent a night and a day in the open sea, I have been constantly on the move. I have been in danger from rivers, in danger from bandits, in danger from my own countrymen, in danger from Gentiles; in danger in the city, in danger in the country, in danger at sea; and in danger from false brothers. I have labored and toiled and have often gone without sleep; I have known hunger and thirst and have often gone without food; I have been cold and naked.

Yet he writes in Romans 8:18 “...our present sufferings are not worth comparing with the glory that will be revealed in us”. Paul knows that as an adopted son of God, he has an inheritance that will far exceed any earthly suffering. What an amazing plan for redemption that God has for us! We're not just saved by the skin of our teeth then whisked away to heaven when we die. No! Redemption is so much bigger than that! Even in our sufferings with Christ, we can be glorified with Christ. We are joint-heirs in an inheritance with Christ! We can know freedom, forgiveness, fullness, in Christ! *We can be glorified with Christ!*

And our collective redemption inaugurates the redemption of the whole world. There is a cosmic anticipation of this that is expressed beautifully in verse 19: “*For the anxious longing of creation waits eagerly for the revealing of the children of God.*” There is an expectation, an anticipation which is building, and creation itself is groaning, crying out, willing the people of God to rise up and take their positions as sons and daughters! To walk in fullness, to walk in His plan for our lives, and to walk in the knowledge that we are forgiven and set free. Creation understands that Christians living as they should be living, the people of God rising up in the authority they've been given – is critical to the redemption of the whole universe!.

And so it's our great pleasure, it's our great joy to know what it is to be a son or daughter of the Living God. And yet, our adoption isn't just for our sake, but so that the whole world can be redeemed. Hallelujah! That's our goal! That's our mission! How often do we sing those words in the Founder's song: “The whole world redeeming...”?

John Wesley said, “there's no holiness but social holiness.” He's talking about this truth, that the collective redemption of the people of God will make an impact on the world. It

must, necessarily, make the world a better place. You and I have a responsibility to ourselves and to God, but also to a dying world, to pursue lives of holiness, of fullness, of whole redemption. Deep and wide! We must go deep into God so that His Kingdom is spread wide throughout the earth. Deep redemption, wide adoption.

Lieutenant Colonel Janet Munn describes the Kingdom of God as an ever-expanding circle of inclusion, and that is what it is! Those of us who have know the joy of adoption have a debt of love to pay. This must affect the way we live. We must spread our Father's love abroad, far and wide. The children of the Queen of England have certain duties they must discharge because of their position. As sons and daughters of the Most High, then, how much greater are the responsibilities we have been given to discharge – to care for the broken and invisible people of this world, to war against the injustice which oppresses them? Or, as Isaiah put it, to 'to preach good news to the poor... to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim freedom for the captives' (Isaiah 61:1)Let's pursue lives of holiness. Let's be intimate with God. Let's take up our position as adopted sons and daughters of God. Let's allow His Kingdom to invade every part of our lives. Let's join Christ in His sufferings so we can join Him in glory as He redeems the whole world to Himself. All of creation is waiting in eager anticipation for us...

A Soldier's Covenant

By Jessica Bryant

In the few years that I've been involved in the Salvation Army, I've seen a lot of people come in and out. Many of these people were just testing the waters; or so to speak. While, many of these same people came simply for free lunch after the Sunday morning service.

My main concern is seeing Soldiers drift in and out of their uniforms. It's okay to struggle and work through things with your faith and with your covenant (if we didn't, then how would we learn or grow stronger)? As far as I'm concerned, it is healthy to figure things out. What's unhealthy is turning your back on the church, or worse on your Covenant. I have seen too many Soldiers think that their commitment means nothing, and they simply abandon the church that loved them, encouraged them and taught them.

A Solidership covenant with the Salvation Army is just that, a covenant. As such we should treat it like one. A covenant is an unbreakable agreement between you and God. As a Christian, your commitment is to God. As a Soldier, you sign a covenant choosing to follow that commitment through the Salvation Army.

If you've ever read Genesis 15, then you might have thought to yourself "Why does God tell Abram (soon to be Abraham) to cut all those animals into pieces and walk through them?" (Ok, so maybe you've didn't think about that, or even read Genesis 15 for that matter, but you should just check it out to get a handle on what I'm laying down). Well, God wasn't just doing it to be gross (FYI, I'm a vegetarian). It was symbolism. It was as if God was saying "if I break this covenant, I deserve to be like one of these animals." So in the end, the punishment for breaking the covenant is death.

I don't think soldiers, or pre-soldiers; really understand the full weight of that commitment. When you sign something, like the articles of war, you sign it as a covenant. And that means any waver, any fault, or any omission has the same weight as the entire covenant breaking.

"Let he who is without sin..." claim to follow through with the above statement.

But, there is good news. Christians don't need to bring animal sacrifices to God (like the ancient Israelites did) for one simple reason: Jesus. He is the ultimate sacrifice. He dies on the cross, replacing the animals, and replacing us. He takes our sins away, and the punishment we deserve. This covers us before and after we sign our covenants, and covers any faults we may make on our end of them.

However, that is not an excuse to take our covenants any less seriously. Romans 6:1-3 says,

What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

The commitment of Solidership requires us to not just try to follow a hard set of rules. It's much more than not swearing, drinking or even looking at pornography. It's a lifestyle. It's a witness. It's a choice, every day. It's not just a special outfit you slip into on a Sunday so that people at your church can recognize you. It is much more than that.

It's the decision to live your life completely for God. It's the decision to seek and grow his kingdom with every opportunity.

So how do we do that? In our day to day lives, how can we make our Solidership important?

In everything we have a choice, a choice between life or death. This may seem cliché or exaggerated, but it's true. Our choices will either be towards pleasing God, growing his kingdom and bringing us closer to Him; or will be something that does the opposite (See Proverbs 14:12).

Anything that is done based off of pride, selfishness or greed; is in essence, an act of choosing death. Anything done out of love, mercy, and kindness is an act of life.

When I was in the War College and living in Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, the contrast between these choices was so obvious it was almost as if I was holding onto a coin with these choices on their respective side.

Walking down the street you would see people literally rotting away right before your eyes. Yet, living in the midst of that, and choosing life for myself; was a testament to God's love and grace. Sharing this love in abundance came naturally as a response to this choice of life.

That is why the decision for Solidership also came easily. It allowed a new opportunity to stand out from the crowd. Gave me more opportunities to proclaim God and His Kingdom through what I said and did, on a daily basis, and on a whole new level.

With the responsibilities of the Soldier's covenant we have a new level of expectations and sacrifices to meet. The only hope we really have in this fight is God's unshakable mercy and unstoppable grace. Our commitment to serve God and suffering humanity means nothing without the power of God, and modeling His love for those suffering people.

Let us understand that God makes up for where we fail in our covenant and strive to live up to his model of integrity on our end.

William Booth exemplified how we can live up to this same level of integrity when he said: "While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while children go hungry, as they do now I'll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I'll fight;

while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, while there remains one dark soul without the light of God, I'll fight, I'll fight to the very end!"

Knowing Grace

by Megan Smith

She stood there, shivering in the night air amongst a pile of hooded figures bent over one another's goods. Walking briskly back from the corps building I hardly saw her there. Noticing me walking over, she looked like a child caught in the act, but, to me, she was the most beautiful sight in the world then. She had been missing from our community for days.

As I took Grace in my arms she collapsed into me and cried. She is a small and delicate woman who usually wore a bright and beautiful smile, but all of that seemed lost in the darkness of the hour. Through her sobs she was able to explain to me that she was afraid of going home (to where she shared a house with other women in our community); this was not the first time she had run away back to her addiction. It was obvious she felt ashamed. Her sentiments struck a chord within me as I saw in her a picture of myself standing in a place I had been so many times before. I pleaded with her to come home but, still stuck in her feelings of shame and addiction, she refused the offer.

I was able to be waiting for Grace the next night when she did return home. It wasn't until the earliest hours of the morning that we heard the door open. My roommate and I - petrified as we were - crept down the hall and dared to look outside. At first glance we saw nothing but shadows, but there, crouched in the darkness with her head hung low, was Grace.

The joy that overtook that house that night was unlike anything I had ever known. Immediately the preparations began for a celebration – everyone awoke to welcome her home, a hot bath was drawn, a feast prepared, and a soft bed lay waiting in her well-lit bedroom. I felt as though there was a general consensus in the room that nothing but the finest would do. At that hour of the day it was nothing more than incredible to see what was taking place inside the body of Christ – each woman working to her own abilities to celebrate the return of a sister. In the back of our minds we knew that tomorrow there would be consequences for her actions, as laid out in a previous agreement, but the sweetness of the moment washed any thought of that away for now. Inside of me I knew this night was for joy, for celebration, for love, and, above all, for knowing grace.

I had never thought much about Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son before (it had always been the Sunday school story taught so many times that its meaning dried up before I could even understand it; Luke 15:11-31). I suppose you could say it never 'clicked' with me that the parable was about God's grace for sinners, but I began to understand as I watched it in front of me in 3D action. The similarities that night between Grace's story and the Prodigal's were strong: both had broken the rules, both had done things they shouldn't have, both had felt the weight of their actions, both had wandered home with broken spirits, but both were received by the open and loving arms of a Father ready to forgive. Glory to God!

Of all that I learned that night about God's grace, what caught my attention the most was the element of surprise. As revealed by our discussion the night before, my sister Grace had certainly not expected a party thrown in her honour and a warm welcome home. Neither did the Prodigal Son, who was so full of shame he was prepared to offer himself as his father's servant (Luke 15: 18-19). However, in thinking about grace we must also remember that it is not a lack of consequence, nor a lack of accountability. Rather, it is an act of love in its truest form. Beginning with the Father's embrace, it is a celebration of the lost being found and the dead being raised. It is the surprise party for the sinner, and the imperative of the gospels (Matthew 6:14,15; Matt. 18:35; Mark 11:25).

Just as our God is a God of grace, let us be a church of grace, also. As we examine our hearts and forgive one another, let us be so soaked in the grace of God that it overwhelms our hearts and pours into our communities. Grace is surprising and it is transforming. That night in Vancouver is one I am sure never to forget. Since then God's grace has been more real to me than any other truth I know, and my prayer for you is simple: may you always know grace.

Grace vs. Licence

by Jamie Reifer

Last night I participated in a small group Bible study in which the focus was the idea of grace versus license. To begin, we had to identify what these two different ideas meant. License was easy, we decided that it is the notion that one has the ability and privilege to do whatever they wish. Grace, however, was a much more complicated matter to settle. After a discussion that went on for about thirty minutes—one that involved the use of the book of Romans, a concordance, and my Zondervan All-In-One concordance, dictionary, topical bible we came to the consensus that we still had a very slippery hold of what this ‘thing’ called “grace” is.

A few different ideas we came up with included getting things you do not deserve, being blessed beyond what you should be, salvation, and one girl pointed out that in her opinion grace is not just an idea or a nice fluffy thought but an action—so we decided grace is a verb.

Our discussion guide then led us to ponder and discuss the difference between grace and license. At first many group members failed to see the connection (that is until the idea that grace brings freedom was presented and explained to them). From there I learned two things:

1. People do not have much of an idea what grace is and
2. There is no difference.

Having talked about defining grace for a good half hour or so I was shocked that we were still unsure of what grace is. The articulation of what God has done for us is so far from the norms for some of us that it was almost impossible for people to be able to come up with a time in their lives where they were shown God’s grace. What I saw to be even worse than that was the fact that when we really began to look at and examine these two ideas of grace and license (or what our book also referred to as “lawlessness”) I began to see less and less of a difference.

That is when the real question hit me. Is the only true difference between the grace that came through Christ Jesus’ death on a cross that brings with it freedom from the chains of sin and death as well as freedom to “kill and eat” and what is seen as license to do and behave as we wish word choice?

As I began to scrutinize that possibility it became more evident to me that: yes, that is the world I currently live in one where God’s grace is equal to the perception that “you don’t know me! I do what I want!”

The good news, however, is that this could possibly be an isolated incident. Perhaps it is just the group I run with and the crowds I happen to see that behave and believe this way. One can always hope.

So what do we do now? Are we content with this idea that grace maybe is not only the same is, but perhaps is what gives us license to do what we want? Was that really God's true and perfect plan? Was His sons life in exchange for ours everlasting supposed to be our justification?

In Romans 14:20, and again in 1 Corinthians 10:32 to not allow our freedom in Christ to cause another to stumble. In both cases Paul was talking specifically about food—something so simple as what we eat and drink can cause others to fall into temptation and sin. Perhaps this new license you have is causing you to fall into sin.

The idea of using grace as license is a very slippery slope. If we depend wholly on God's grace to be our only redemption and we refuse to take any sort of responsibility for our actions are we really living a life worthy of His call? If we are commanded to be Holy—as our Lord, God is holy how do we attain that? If grace is our excuse, if it is our way out, then how can it be the one thing that holds us up and presents us blameless before our Father and Judge?

In this scenario of “grace is license” what then, is sin? If always we are simply forgiven for any wrongdoings then what does it matter what we do? I remember becoming quite indignant at a young age because of some friends I had who maintained this flippant idea of what grace is. They seemed to honestly believe that they could do what they please and part of their excuse was that they were teenagers and their justification was that God would forgive them. I will not argue that He will not, but I will firmly stand by my opinion that that is not God's intentions for how we should live.

We are not asked to make excuses for why we cannot be perfect. We are not expected to be perfect on our own, either. We, however, told to be holy. We are expected to live up to what we have already attained, and what we have attained is really just something we were given freely: grace. Grace to not have to live in a tangled-up web of sin. Grace to be able to walk about and find others who are lost and invite them to take part in this incredible journey. Grace to have the knowledge and understanding that this world, this place that drives you absolutely crazy, is not the culmination of what life is about, that it is not even close for the glories which God has in store for you and me.

So why do we sit idly by while others cheapen that grace? Why do we allow our brothers and sisters to sit in the mud rather than walk as if they are going someplace?

I love words. I love to go into my concordance and look things up and then go and see what the same word could also mean, and then I go to my all-in-one-dictionary-concordance-topical-bible and I find my word and see what the good people at Zondervan have to say about it. (My friends who come to my cell do not seem to share my opinion in this matter; they find the dictionary a bit dry.) Tonight, this is what I learned: “Grace, therefore, is that unmerited favor of God toward fallen humanity whereby, for the sake of Christ—the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth—he has provided for people's redemption.” From there it is mentioned that the relationship between law and grace are thoroughly explained in Paul's writings. It does

not stop there. In the book of Acts (11:23, 20:32) and 2 Corinthians 9:14 “grace is also regarded as the sustaining influence enabling the believer to persevere in the Christian life.” Grace is not our excuse, it is not our crutch. Grace is not what gives us license that leads to the idea that “everything is permissible but not beneficial.” Grace is what gives us the strength to carry on through the day-to-day. Grace is our protection. Grace is God’s outpouring of love on each of us. Grace is our capability to accept that which God is giving us.

“Thus, grace is not merely the initiatory act of God that secures the believer’s eternal salvation, but also that which maintains it throughout all of the Christian’s life.”

We are not called to be holy so we can fail, but I also do not think we are given the option to remain stagnant. God’s plan is to reconcile everyone to Himself again, through the grace brought by Christ’s death and resurrection. Therefore we cannot allow ourselves to view God’s grace as something to be thrown about however we wish. We do not like to think of God as a fire-and-brimstone type of God much these days, but I am reminded of the sermon “Sinners in the Hands of An Angry God” by Jonathan Edwards. His picture he painted was that we are all in this giant set of hands being held over the gaping mouth of Hell and it is only by the grace of these hands we are not slipping through His fingers. Maybe it would behoove some of us to think on that a bit.

It is for freedom that we have been set free, so be free. Do not let the snares of sin trap you or trip you up. Do not allow the enemy to gain a foothold, especially not because of freedom. Instead, be free. Do not think you have license to do as you please, instead, pray that what you please to do is that which God’s wants you to do. Abide. That is the key. That, I feel like, is always the answer. Abide in Christ and you will know His grace—he true, redemptive, beautiful, cleansing grace.

Amen.

Life is Death (or Death is Life)

by Nicole Brindle

I'm no scholar, or philosopher that's for sure but I do think I have found the answer to the age old question "What is the meaning of life?" Before you continue reading, make sure you are ready to grasp this, because it really is a mind blowing reality. The meaning of life is, drum role please, *to live!* Are you completely flabbergasted? Are you tearing up the pages of your Philosophy 101 text wondering why you wasted four years of university when all you had to do was read the opening sentence to this article?

The dictionary defines life as "The interval of time between birth and death" Yes it is that simple. We are conceived and then we die, everything else in between is life. The interval of time between our conception and our death is when we are living and thus the meaning of life is to live.

Jesus says "*I came that they may have [life] and enjoy life and have it in abundance (to the full, till it overflows)*". John 10:10b Amp.

Jesus also says that He is the life. Not just life, but THE life (John 14:6). The only way we can know life is by knowing Jesus. Actually, with that said, before I go on I need to ask a question. Do you know Jesus? Have you repented of sin and do you believe Jesus is Lord? If you have, keep reading. If not, keep reading too...but repent and believe, because Jesus is coming soon.

We've established it, Jesus came to give us life, yet the first part of this verse tells us that there is an assignment of death upon us. *The thief came to steal and kill and destroy. John 10:10a*

Jesus is talking about His sheep (us) in this verse. The thief didn't come to steal and kill and destroy from just me, or just Jesus, or just the drug addict, he came to steal and kill and destroy from the sheep. You are not immune.

I don't want to talk too much about death here, because this is an article on life. I do however want you to know the seriousness of death, that there is a real and serious plot for your life. That if we do not hold on tightly to our Salvation we will die.

Death is the end of life – that is as simple and literal as it gets. But life is the end of death! Hallelujah. That is good news. Remember and know that life always conquers death. It is the very character and nature of Christ.

The book of Romans zero's in on this life is death policy. I have the first four verses of Romans 6 below, but I strongly encourage you to read the whole book of Romans as part of this article, there's some really great stuff in there.

Well then, should we keep on, sinning so that God can show us more and more of his wonderful grace? Of course not! Since we have died to sin, how can we continue to live in it? Or have you forgotten that when we were joined with Christ Jesus in baptism, we joined him in his death? For we died and were buried with Christ by baptism. And

just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glorious power of the Father, now we also may have new lives.

So life is death. We actually cannot fully live until we have fully died. We need to die to ourselves to that we can live in Him. It is by dying to sin we are saying no to death. When we say no to death we are saying yes to life. This is pretty bizarre, I am writing an article on life, yet I am telling you to die. Go figure. But that's the beauty of mystery of it all, that life is death and death is life.

Right, how do we die to ourselves? If you frequent ArmyBarmy or JAC, or simply follow various Salvo teaching, you have likely heard the Allister-Smith two canary illustration. To refresh your memory, the illustration is as follows: we are like a bird cage with two canaries in it, a good canary and a bad canary. The process of dying to ourselves is merely an exercise in starving the one and feeding the other, or perhaps you have heard it said, wring its neck and throw it out of the cage!" That means this full life, this Zoë life Jesus tells us about is not attainable until we surrender our sinful nature, until we wring the bad canary's neck and throw him out of the cage.

It's actually a lot simpler then we want it to be. It isn't hard at all. As humans we like to complicate things. I don't know why – it is so simple. Just stop dying. Stop dying and live.

The concept of dying to self has taken me years to unravel, and probably years more to understand. But what it comes down to is surrender. Whether it be the sin that easily entangles or the hurt that has made our heart hard. Whatever it is it needs to be given to the Lord. It isn't ours anymore anyways – it has already been accounted for. Jesus already took up our sin, our shame, our hurt and our pain on the cross. We don't need to carry this junk around with us, so why do we? Why is it so hard to let go of it? It's not even like its good or worth hanging on to. I mean if it was a dollar bill or an ice cream cone you may have an argument, but it's not, it is cancer and it is ugly...you don't want it, so why have it?

After you finish this article, I want you spend some time with the LORD. Look at His face, into His eyes. Look at Him upon the cross. What is stealing life from you? For me it was addiction and depression. I received a lot of freedom they day I looked at Jesus on the cross. I saw Him with my scars and with my sin. I saw Jesus on the cross with a cigarette in his mouth, with his arms bleeding from the knife I used on my own. I saw Him crying and I saw Him dying and it sickened me. I saw Jesus in pain and in death and realised it was me who brought Him to that point. But in His love he took all that to the cross and to the grave with Him, simply so we could have a full life. If you cannot grasp that, please don't continue to read until you do. And the only way you will be able to grasp that is to spend time, intimate time with the Lord.

"...our old self was crucified with Him...Now if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him...So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus" Romans 6:6a, 8, 11.

What kind of article on life would this be if I didn't talk about Jesus rising from the dead! This is the single most victorious life moment ever recorded in history. You see, life always conquers death. From the beginning of Jesus' physical life here on earth, death tried to get Him. King Herod sent out a memo to kill baby boys throughout the land intending to get Jesus and when that didn't work, satan tempted Jesus in the desert enticing Him to throw himself off the cliff and when Jesus stood strong to that He was crucified on the cross. But then three days later Jesus rose from the dead! He defeated death! Hallelujah! He is risen!

One Resurrection Day our corps marched around our neighbourhood. Picture a bunch of people, most in uniform, some in pyjamas and others in unwashed street clothes walking along a poverty stricken and oppressed neighbourhood shouting and singing praises to the Lord celebrating his triumphant victory over death. As we began we were stopped by a cop right off the bat and he asked us what we were doing.

"Marching." "What is your cause?" "The declaration that Jesus is alive and is Lord" Then just as the police officer was about to tell us to stop, seven year old Joshua White, ran up to the police car and yelled into the window "JESUS IS REALLY REALLY RISEN FROM THE DEAD!!!" The cop let us proceed.

Do you believe, like REALLY believe, as Joshua does, with that same excitement, that Jesus is REALLY risen from the dead. If you do not believe that, then really you will not ever live.

Jesus' Resurrection from the dead is as essential to the Christian faith as His death upon the cross. There is absolutely no legitimate scholar today that can deny Jesus is a historical figure who walked this earth over 2000 years ago, that He did miracles, that He was a good man and that He died a horrifying death on the cross. That is true. The debate does not lie in His existence or His death, it lies in His Resurrection. Is it a matter that it is impossible? Well our God is one who does the impossible, so that argument can be crossed off. It is not false, and we must really believe in the Resurrection of Jesus if we are going to live.

Am I making it clear enough? We must really believe that Jesus is REALLY risen from the grave. If you don't REALLY believe that, then this whole Christianity thing is bogus.

I hope I've explained just how important it is to choose life, not only for the sake of our own Salvation, but for the sake of those around us. If we do not choose life, how can we share that with others? You cannot give something away you do not have. Not choosing life, so remaining stuck in sin, is by far the most selfish thing you can do.

It's one thing to know that we need to die to our sinful nature so that we can live in Christ, but now the question is how to do it. It's just as simple...intimacy.

The Lord longs to be with us. He just really wants to be with us, to know us, as He does, and for us to know Him. He wants to be with us so much, he will wait until we come. Intimacy is the turning point for change.

Let me say that again - INTIMACY IS THE TURNING POINT FOR CHANGE.

I don't want to change so *I can be with him*. I want to change because *I am with him*.

Spouses do things like this all the time.. In the movie "Shall We Dance" this big foot-ball guy is asked why he is taking ballroom dance lessons, as an elegant dancer didn't really fit his demeanour. He responded by saying he was doing this for his fiancé. He loves his wife-to-be and his love for her is the spark for change. Movies aren't the only place I have heard this. I work in a Salvation Army Transitional Home where most our residents are in recovery. Nine times out of ten, the reason for sobering up is for people they love, often family. If we love someone deep enough it is easy to make the changes we need to. This is no different with Christ.

All we have to do is love Him, and that love will make us change. How can we love the Lord more? The same way we love people more - by spending quality time with them. It's the same with Yahweh. The more time I spend with the Lord the more I will love him. The more I love him, the more I will want change.

This could look like lengthening the time of our morning rations (devotions), lengthening our prayer times and to pray without ceasing. It should look like when the Psalmist says "I cannot stop thinking about your mighty works" (Psalm 77:12). Intimacy looks like always having your lover on your mind. This is what intimacy with the Lord should look like. May the Lord be our first thought when we arise. May He be on our minds when we walk through the empty forest and through the crowded streets. May He be on our minds when we am lying awake at night and may we think of Him also as we sleep, in our dreams.

The more we transform the way we think the closer we get to the Lord. And the closer we get to the Lord the more intimate we get. And intimacy is the turning point for change.

Questions for Today – An Addition to The Holy Club and the Test for Self-Examination

by Nicole Brindle

Do you know about John Wesley's Holy Club, or perhaps the test for self examination found in the Orders and Regulations for Soldiers? If you frequent ArmyBarmy you may have read a blog about them early last month. Below I have copied those questions down for a refresher. They are a useful resource for accountability and discipline and something I have found personally helpful.

Because I am an ArmyBarmy frequenter I did come across said blog and I got inspired to make a little addition. The Holy Club questions were written over 200 years ago and the test for self examination I have included, (though some amendments have been made since), were published over 50 years ago, and there are just some things in today's society that weren't issues then.

Read through the first two sets of questions- then go on to the third. You might even want to print this page off and use it in your rations and/or accountability groups.

These questions are from John Wesley's Holy Club which originated out of a spiritual accountability group he started when a student at Oxford.

1. Am I consciously or unconsciously creating the impression that I am better really am? In other words, am I a hypocrite?
2. Am I honest in all my acts and words, or do I exaggerate?
3. Do I confidentially pass on to another what was told me in confidence?
4. Can I be trusted?
5. Am I a slave to dress, friends, work, or habits?
6. Am I self-conscious, self-pitying, or self-justifying?
7. Did the Bible live in me today?
8. Do I give it time to speak to me every day?
9. Am I enjoying prayer?
10. When did I last speak to someone else about my faith?
11. Do I pray about the money I spend?
12. Do I get to bed on time and get up on time?
13. Do I disobey God in anything?
14. Do I insist upon doing something about which my conscience is uneasy?
15. Am I defeated in any part of my life?
16. Am I jealous, impure, critical, irritable, touchy, or distrustful?
17. How do I spend my spare time?
18. Am I proud?
19. Do I thank God that I am not as other people, especially as the Pharisee who despised the publican?
20. Is there anyone whom I fear, dislike, disown, criticize, hold a resentment toward or disregard? If so, what am I doing about it?
21. Do I grumble or complain constantly?

22. Is Christ real to me?

And the following questions can be found in the Orders and Regulations for Soldiers 1950....

1. Am I habitually guilty of any known sin? Do I practice or allow myself in any thought, word or deed which I know to be wrong?
2. Am I the master of my bodily appetites so as to have no condemnation? Do I allow myself in any indulgence that hurts my holiness, growth, obedience, or usefulness?
3. Are my thoughts and feelings such that I wouldn't be ashamed to hear them published before God?
4. Does the influence of the world cause me to act, or feel or say things that do not show the love of God?
5. Am I doing all in my power for the salvation of sinners?
6. Am I fulfilling the vows and promises I have made before God in the past?
7. Does what I do as a Christian match what I say about being a Christian?
8. Am I conscious of any pride in my life?
9. Do I conform to the fashions and customs of this world or do I show that I despise them?
10. Am I in danger of being carried away with worldly desires to be rich or admired?

I don't have a cool name like Holy Club or Test for Self-Examination for this set of questions, but have a read through them. These are not necessarily meant to be read everyday – just something to think about.

1. How is my integrity on the computer? Am I spending more time online than I am in fellowship with the Lord and with others? Do I clear history so others don't see what sites I have visited?
2. Are my tattoo's or piercing's pleasing to the LORD? What are my motives for getting them?
3. Am I sponsoring a child?
4. Are my networking applications (iphone, twitter, facebook, blogs, myspace) causing myself or others to sin in word, action, thought or deed?
5. Would I let Jesus listen to all the songs on my iPod?
6. Are my tweets evangelistic or prophetic or do they cause for gossip, self pity or for pride.
7. Am I tithing more than 10%?
8. Do I watch inappropriate youtube videos?
9. Do I skip past sex scenes or other inappropriate scenes in movies, or do I allow the ways of the world to influence me?
10. Do I put effort in buying Fair-Trade products or do I go for convenience too often?
11. Do my clothing labels read "Made in _____"? (<- insert poor nation here)
12. Do I love who I see in the mirror? (or for some, do I love who I see in the mirror too much?)

13. Do I drive when I should walk, bike or take transit?
14. Is there anyone whom I hold a grudge towards or bitterness against?
15. Am I sleeping too much or too little?
16. Am I eating too much or too little?
17. Has modern technology taken over how much time I spend in the Word?
18. Do I pray for my enemies?
19. Do I spend more time watching TV than I do in the Word?
20. Do the purchases I make on my Credit Card honor the Lord?
21. Do I use email communication to replace human contact when applicable?
22. If Jesus had a mobile and all the text messages you sent also got sent to Him, would you still text as you do?

The Potter's Field

by Caitlyn Spence

In this city, there are no stars; no
points of light or reason, no
song to hang above our heads, no
brightness pierces through this silent shroud of night, no
reminder of the hopelessly inevitable.
We see only the dark blood of yesterday's dead dawn
bleeding black as midnight, blocking out the sun.

In this city, the winter is violent and long; no
grass remains alongside the sidewalk to redeem this weather, no
women or child can hide herself from the merciless rain, no
break in the clouds, no
warm, rebellious ray of stray sunlight finds the
cold, angry homeless people, hiding from a grey sky under blue tarps,
while small children watch the glass jars on their verandas
collect the constant tears of Demeter for Persephone.

In our city, though the darkness blinds us,
we remember we never needed eyesight, anyway
but our faith is in the fact that the stars exist and
we live as though the night lay divided before us,
like the red sea or the crowds on the way to Golgotha.

We believe, you
are our home, and the stars that guide us there; you
are the crisis of springtime, that erupts in the midst of a sky-darkened season; you are
the only reason we know the sun will rise again;
you watch the rain run through the cracks in the sidewalk, watering future daisies;
you pull our mud-soaked hearts from the city and
you set them above the dull, reaching expanse of city skyline.
And we watch, with wonder, the beauty of the inevitable sunrise.

Community by Cadet Leo Killion

Community
Cadet Leo Killion

I once lived in the most unwelcoming place I have ever been, but with some of the most on fire people I have ever meet. While I was there, I lived with, hung out with and even fought with them, but at the end of the day God was glorified. That was once upon a time ago and now we have all moved in different directions.

Some of us have left because of God's leading and others because something had happened. What is community like when one person goes and what happens to that person? What did that one person do for that community? As I write about my experience with living in community I'll be wrestling through some of the questions I have, and hopefully causing you to question similar things.

Community is something you are born into, it's a God given thing. The Trinity Himself teaches us true community. Now, was it fully active before moving into a community? For me, it wasn't. I had no full understanding of what community was until I experienced it. I experienced the joys and pains of community, but I tell you this, the joy was worth the pain. The thing is, you can't hide in community, or at least you can't hide well. Yes, it was painful when past hurt got dragged up and embarrassing when sin was exposed, but the end result of freedom and deliverance trumps any fear or pain that was there in the first place. Once you get rid of all that junk God then has more room to pour himself into you.

This is only the start! For once God has poured into us, we can go out and pour into the people all around us from children to adults and from the lost to the saved. So we can say community is when God pours into us and we pour into others, (and others pour into others and so on).

As a Salvation Soldier, I know that we often don't stay in the same community our whole lives, this is part of what makes The Salvation Army unique. But what happens to those who do leave?

We must not think once we leave a particular community that we loose community. No, that would be foolish; the beauty is you are always part of that community. Community extends beyond a specific location. Sure you can go back and maybe see that place and you don't recognise the people or see what you started, but you must understand the things we can see with our eyes can lie. What you have done is far deeper then what you could see.

The world doesn't need more cowboy's, it needs community! Cowboy's go in and change things and ride off; but community is where you go in and show, teach, fight

along side others from different places on how to stop that injustice, or have the same understanding of Jesus.

Here is something about community we should never forget, but often do -that you can always call upon your community, you can always have them pour into you, and you into them no matter what happens or where we go. Just as I said earlier that community extends beyond a specific location, love also knows no bounds.

What about that hole that we have left? Well don't worry about that, God will bring more people and if what you did was so important God will bring some one,

That is what I have learned since I have left my community.

Leighanne's Interview

by Courtney McLeod

Leighanne is a lively 38-year-old woman who is trapped in addiction on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, Canada. She has adopted us War College students into our lives and calls us her kids – and she will let the world know that! She is suffering from full blown AIDS, two kinds of Cancer, Huntington's disease, Depression, Addiction and currently has an infection that is spreading into her bones but she is such a beautiful woman who loves the Lord with all she's got. The doctors gave her until June 2009 to live, five months later she is still holding strong and credits it to the love of Christ she's received and to the hope she sees through our love for her. I did an interview with her, and her life on the downtown eastside. She was really excited to know that her story would be published. Here it is!

Courtney: How Long have you lived on the Downtown Eastside?

Leighanne: For 30 years, since I was 8.

Courtney: What brought you to the Downtown Eastside?

Leighanne: My mom. She came because of her own addiction. My mom and I never got along.

Courtney: When did you leave your mom?

Leighanne: When I was 12. I left home and was on the street.

Courtney: Why did you stay on the Downtown Eastside after you left?

Leighanne: I was already addicted to drugs. They never get away from me, never in my whole life.

Courtney: When did you first start doing drugs?

Leighanne: When I was 8, with my mom. She made me do them. She tied a tourniquet around me arm, fixed me with dope, beat me, everything. She just didn't know right from wrong.

Courtney: What drugs have kept you here?

Leighanne: Heroin, Cocaine, Crack, everything.

Courtney: What's your favorite part of the Downtown Eastside?

Leighanne: You! My kids, and God. You, my kids, teach me how to love God. And, I have nobody else. I love my kids!

Courtney: What's your least favorite part of the Downtown Eastside?

Leighanne: The drugs. I hate the drugs. I see them all the time and I can't get away from them.

Courtney: Have you ever tried to go to detox?

Leighanne: Yeah, I don't know why it doesn't work.

Courtney: Do you ever get mistreated when you're not in the "Downtown Eastside"?

Leighanne: Yes, always.

Courtney: Why do you think that is?

Leighanne: Because of the way I look. I don't think I look bad. I don't care about how I look; I get up, and get dressed. I don't need to impress anyone.

Courtney: How do you feel in situations when you're mistreated?

Leighanne: Like hitting people. But I try to be nice. But it's hard, very hard.

Courtney: Do you think your drugs make you react worse than you should?

Leighanne: Only when I'm detoxing.

Courtney: Do you want to get clean?

Leighanne: Of course I want to get clean! I try to get clean all the time!

Courtney: Is there anything you want to say to anyone who reads this?

Leighanne: Behave! Or I'll kick you in the pants!

To those who have read this, please pray for Leighanne. Pray for healing from sickness and disease and deliverance from her abusive past and her drug addiction. Leighanne is one of our greatest teachers in the Kingdom of God and we have grown to love her, and the Christ in her as one of our own.

A 'New' Identity Crisis

by Cadet Joel Boyd

War College Alumnus 2006 Holy _____ Session, Currently USA West Territory.

I've been reading *Marching to Glory*, a book about the history of the Salvation Army in America, for my pre-training homework. While the stories about the early Salvation Army were interesting and inspiring, what really stuck out to me was the last chapter, 1980-1992. One part quoted General Rader (before he was General) writing about the Army having an identity crisis. Wasn't that on the cover of *War Cry* not too long ago? Another section talked about people's growing passion for more urban, inner city work.

Really? Have we really been throwing this kind of stuff around for over twenty years? Since I was a toddler? Since before I was born? If there is really such a big problem, why haven't we fixed it yet? How come in over twenty years, we still haven't found ourselves?

I'm not trying to pass judgement on my elders, on a previous generation. I know people have been trying to solve these kinds of problems and have come up with new ideas. But I look around and see that America still doesn't know we are a Christian evangelical movement. We are still failing to make a major impact on our nation and on our communities!

So I'll suggest what I think the problem is. I don't think this will be super profound or new, but here it is anyway. I feel like we've gotten so caught up in our methods and programs and models that we've lost our spirit of salvationism. It's the very core of The Salvation Army, the center of what makes us who we are. It's the passion to reach out to the lost, the lonely and marginalized, the victims of injustice, the worst of sinners. Salvationism is the creative evangelistic fervor that will stop at nothing to find a new way to bring the gospel of Jesus, the hope, peace, joy, love, and wholeness of knowing the redeeming God. It seems we've sacrificed this spirit, our zeal, for a world of business, of liability, of being a respectable organization, America's favorite charity. There is nothing wrong with these things, but they HAVE to be a means, never the end. If ever we sacrifice evangelism for the fear of being liable, or if we sacrifice zealotry for respectability, or reaching out to the least for good business practices, we lose sight of the spirit that birthed this Army and has kept it alive and effective for so many years.

I'm not recommending throwing caution to the wind. There is a practical side of things, but we have to find a better way to reconcile the two. The days of marching the streets and being thrown in prison may be over, but sharing the love of Jesus with drug addicts and prostitutes isn't! We need to go to the Lord, have Him fill us up and re-commission us to the work of the Army for the 21st century. It will be different than ever before. In some ways it will probably be more dangerous and more radical. The world is a crazy place these days, in desperate need of the Salvation Army. It's time we finally found ourselves.

The Humility of Christ

by Cadet Ashley Aspeitia

I sat there, nervous and trembling.

I was about to tell a few teens what it was to be a part of the disenfranchised. Why God would use the poor and humble... It really hadn't been intended but I turned out to be a perfect example. I had been struggling with depression and severe anxiety for years (to say the least). The depression was kicked, but there was no way I should have been the one speaking to teens.

But there was. I learned something that I will never forget – God uses the broken.

I heard a phrase in War College. There was this girl who would refer to all of us as “wounded healers.” A bit like the phrase I had heard of in speaking of Christ – THE wounded Healer. I thought about it, and it only scratches the surface of what I want to convey to you.

So, let's just give it a go... Here's what drove home the RADICAL POWER of Christ's humility: the Church and the State: of my soul.

I have lived in the USA, Canada, and New Zealand. Each has taught me something about nation-states and the people that occupy them. One thing is that practically everyone has good intentions and when it comes to politics practically everyone thinks the other person has tripped a switch in the brain to think contrary to their own thoughts. Then, when I was attending the War College, God introduced me to another way – not purely right or left, just living for His Kingdom, whatever that took.

Here is what gets me, the eerie silence in the midst of the noisy cities and countries I've lived in: poverty. It's the crisis I see now and that catalyzes everything else I am and do. Oh, we could probably still feign ignorance of our sorry state, if it were not for this! It flies in our face. Just a smidge under 50% of our fellow human beings live on less than \$2.50 a day.¹ Something is terribly, terribly wrong. And that something only begins to speak to the state of our churches, governments and souls.

And I sit here fearful and trembling. “It's not just!” I cry when I see my sisters and brothers on hard streets. Whether addicted or abandoned, adults or still children. Babies' bellies are empty and photographers are photographing and reporters reporting and we're eating ourselves to death. My country is at war, the kids think it's funny. Mommies' bellies are stripped, and left bare. And I think “Dear God, when will You make things right?” When will all the violence stop? And my justice screams turn into whimpers.²

¹ Shah, Anup. “Poverty Facts and Stats.” *Global Issues*. 22 March 2009
<http://www.globalissues.org/article/26/poverty-facts-and-stats>

² TRULY, you HAVE to read Scot McKnight's *A Community Called Atonement*. It is especially perfect for those like me, brought up in the North where sin can often become confined to the realm of legal limitations and personal guilt!

As usual, our Bible has answers to our society – past and present. So, let's look.

If you go to Mark and read it as a whole, you'll notice it packs a bit of a unique punch. It's shorter than all the other gospels. Most historians agree that it was the first of its genre in retelling of the story of Christ. It begins abruptly with the statement that Jesus is Lord and it ends abruptly with the telling of His disciples' failure to understand. They were left in IMMENSE fear! Everything in between is everyone else just not getting it. Mark hones in on the sufferings of Christ, on His persecution, on His misunderstood nature. Mark points out who the Kingdom of God is for – those who get Christ... and who gets Christ? No one. The poor are his friends, but they don't get Him much more than the next person. No one "get's Him" until He is naked, beaten to flesh, and hanging on a tree and breathes His last in such a way that the Centurion over Him looks up and says "surely this man was the Son of God."³

What is interesting to me in each of these instances is God's revelation of Himself in the broken and finally of the POWER of His revelation in His own brokenness. His revelation isn't just something that is like "wow, that's pretty neat." It is something that leaves even His very closest awestruck and dumbfounded! Think dreadful awe! That is the humility of Christ.

As a matter of fact, it is the answer to church and state. A soul. A lone soul on a lonely tree. Me. Me looking up at the lone soul on the lonely tree and getting it, "Surely, this man was the Son of God."

That is why I have to go back onto the street even when I don't feel like it. Even when I know I'm the biggest joke and failure there is on this earth. Why I don't drink certain things, or eat certain things. Not because I can do anything, but because I'm weak.

Don't doubt it. God is changing the world. The rich will be called to account, as will the poor. And look, it has begun!

The humility of Christ's final sigh has got me in dreadful awe. That means that I will follow no other King because none of them have got it down, but when I look up at the way He took His final breath and as my society and friends and family heave out their last existence, I know I can only follow Him.

The cross makes forgiveness of sin possible, but what does that mean?! Nothing less than COMPLETELY restoring the world to God, through Christ. Righting what went wrong in our rebellion and rebellions! And as I watch another day heave a sigh and in faith I wait through the night, the morning explodes again. There is power in the blood; in the broken body of God.

There is power in humility that is struck on the other cheek but THEN WINS!

³ Lane, William. The Gospel of Mark: New International Commentary on the New Testament. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1974.

The humility of Christ is not His weak point, it is His strength.

This is the power of Christ to make all things new. To give hope to my generation, my nation, the nations, all creation. It is marvelous in our eyes!

All that to say: let us think about the humility of Christ. The fire in His eyes at His accusers words, the final sigh of the firstborn over all creation. It's a whisper. This is the underground uprising. Could we be like Him? Is this really the power of Christ? To draw your sword and die?

Is this how the world begins? Not with a bang but a whimper?⁴

⁴ I took this from T.S. Elliot's poem: "The Hollow Men." Worth a read if you're the depressed type.

Entire Sanctification

by Neisy Castillo

Doctrine 9:

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continual obedient faith in Christ.

Doctrine 10:

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

I believed God has called us to be holy, I was raised in this belief and it has always been in the back of my mind. But also in the back of my mind was some disbelief and lack of faith. I think faith mainly in the fact that I never really thought I could be holy. I don't think that I would ever think God could not make me holy, because I know and believe in a God that is holy and is able to do anything He wants.

Since the beginning, His plan for us as His creation was to be holy and to have a relationship with Him. But since we've always had free will, we've been trying to run away from that, from the blessings that God has for us. It is that shame that Adam felt after sinning that follows us, and we are ashamed and we feel as if we have no right of asking anything, especially to be righteous.

"God's will for man is Christian holiness — a perfection not of the intellect, personality, or service, but of a character, motive, and love of God and man" (Entire Sanctification, Pg. 21). God wants and calls us to be holy, which for some people it would translate to be perfect. Our entire lives have to give that example of holiness that our lives would show the love we have for God and man.

I think Biblical holiness is just this, it is the calling God has made for us, since the beginning He has tried to make us holy. This is the only way we can have a perfect relationship with our Creator. First of all He did make us holy, since He made us in His own image. Then we decided to sin against Him, and the sin was not the act of eating the forbidden fruit, it was the disobedience against God.

Biblical holiness is God showing us throughout time how much He wants us to be holy. After trying to tell people how He wanted us to act and to live, He decided to give us laws. And after us still not following his laws, He sent His last resource, His son. To die for us, to pay for what we could never pay for, and the Bible is the one thing that has kept us close enough to knowing what God wants from us. It is the proof that God wants to make us holy, and wants the best for us. It is the testimony of God's love for us yesterday, today and tomorrow. And how He shows us he will never change.

I think that if we are living a holy life then it would influence not only our lives but the lives around us, and it would make a revival in our families, churches, communities,

cities and if we are aiming to that goal, to be holy then we will get the world, which is the ultimate goal God has had in mind since the beginning.

I believe faith has a lot to do with our relationship with God, we have to have faith that God is faithful and just and He does what He promises us. He wants us to be holy He wants His people to be happy; He doesn't want any injustices in the world. And we are part of His plan, if we have the faith in Him, that He can make us holy then He can use us to reach others and do something for the injustices that are happening in the world. To make a change, make a difference. If we are living holy lives, or trying to reach an extreme holiness, then we will have the urge, the desire to do something.

The War College isn't a Place You Can 'Go'

by Heather Dolby

"I've come to realize that The War College isn't just a place its a people - and I'm taking The War College to everyone I meet!" S. Tarter

I love this quote, because in 2003 when I arrived in Vancouver, I discovered that The War College really *wasn't* a place - in fact, it's never had a food court, lecture halls, stadiums or student societies - the campus was the street and that's where I 'got schooled'. The faculty were brothers and sisters in Christ who modeled maturity, devotion and love. I call them family because we plowed the fields of the Downtown Eastside shoulder to shoulder every day and every night. No retreating, hell defeating! It was in those hours that we learned Scriptural truths and what they mean in everyday life. **"The fellowship is in the fight!"** we'd always say - and we meant it. We loved one another deep-spiritedly. Holy Spirit bound us together and we are still bound today. Holy Hallelujah indeed.

We lived radically - as material minimalists, cash-poor, in the sketchy side of town. Our doors were always open to the stranger, the alien and the outcast, and we did not love our lives so much as to shrink from death.

The War College isn't a place you can 'go' - It's a people group you become. It's an Army. It's a family. It's a host of enlisted women and men, bound to the Cross of Christ, finely tuned to the timbre of Holy Spirit, committed to taking the Narrow Way and soberly counting the cost of following the One who saved our lives.

The War College is about Kingdom seeds being sown into the fertile soil of the believer and producing a crop yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown - over months and especially years afterwards.

Even when my time at The War College was over - I never really left, because all that has been planted in me is now mine, and I'm taking it everywhere I go and letting that fruit spill over into the lives of those I meet.

Emerging from this internal reservoir are these pearls of practical wisdom that I gleaned from my time in The War College:

People Are Rarely What They Seem

Labels are for the lazy. "That prostitute" is really my friend Mary, "that drug dealer" is Juan, "that transvestite" is Laurel and "that crazy guy that pees himself" is my friend Michael. There are folks in your neighborhood that could be your friends too. It's always easier to glance over a person's appearance/behavior/circumstance and categorize them rather than spending time learning names, drinking coffee together and striking up conversation about your journey and their journey and finding points of connection and commonality. It's the harder thing (awkward, time-consuming, sacrificial) but hey, it's

what Jesus did, so there you go. Besides - when was the last time *you* were labelled rather than get a chance to share who you really are inside and what you're about? It stinks, right? Look beyond the exterior. Give someone a chance to reveal to you who they really are - the beauty and the brokenness.

Remembering A Name Bestows Dignity (and makes friends)

I love meeting people. I also love remembering people. Early on, as I met more people than I could reasonably remember their names/locations/situations, I quickly began to ask God for help as well as enlisting the 'post-it system'. Here's how it played out. After arriving home from a day of being out and about in the neighborhood and meeting people, I'd write their name on a post-it note (Traci) along with where I had met them (at the Stanley hotel) what came up in conversation (used to live in Toronto) and a distinguishing feature to help her stand out in my memory (has a pet rat living in her hoodie). Pretty soon the wall of my room was covered in yellow sticky paper, as I walked through my community I could greet folks by name. I still use this tool to get to know people. To me, remembering a name bestows dignity. It says "You are worth remembering, and I value you." Friendship soon follows if you keep at it. I can testify that on my most recent visit to Vancouver, (6 years after graduating from The War College) the first day I set foot in the neighborhood I recognized and greeted "Roger. Corner of Main & Hastings. War Veteran. Has one-arm and carries a fishing pole."

Comparisons Are Lethal (you'll shoot your eye out)

One of the foxiest schemes the devil uses in my life is comparisons - My giftings to yours. My opportunities to yours. My stuff to your stuff. My recognition and reputation to yours. At the end of the day I start wishing I was more like you! Falling into this slimy pit breeds inferiority, self-doubt and eventually, I become paralyzed. I'm serious - I can't accomplish anything because I'm so afraid to fail. So I stop trying. At all. At that point, I'm no good to anyone and I spend my time creeping on facebook all day constantly refreshing my page to see what other people are doing and saying. If I can nip that thinking in the bud and take those wicked thoughts captive to Christ Jesus then I can appreciate the good stuff in you and celebrate the good stuff in me and not only live out the calling I have received but live up to what I have already attained. Trust me - comparisons are lethal - we waste time, energy and brainspace getting caught up in measuring ourselves against one another (coming up short every time). You'll poke your eye out. Please, don't learn the hard way. Comparisons are lethal.

Reality Is Rewarding But Escapism Is Easier

You know what? Ministry is hard work. Even when I'm anointed and walking in my calling - really getting to know people, and allowing others to get to know me, it can be heartbreaking, exhausting, frustrating and discouraging. Building the Kingdom brings beauty along with brokenness. There is a strong temptation to "check out" at the end of a day, to come home and watch tv, hang out online, read meaningless novels, and take facebook quizzes like "what 80's rock band are you?" All of these activities numb my

brain and lock the activities, conversations and drama of the day on the outside of my conscious mind. I escape. What's wrong with that? Welllll...when I engage in escapism I fail to acknowledge how all of the brokenness and stress, etc. are weighing on my mind and heart and spirit. Instead, it builds up like ice on my windshield in Winnipeg in winter. Have you ever tried to chip that off? Lord Jesus have mercy. If I just let that stuff pile up, I'll start feeling heavy all the time, depressed and next thing you know, I'm having breakdowns and maybe even on medication or leaving ministry altogether. No...turn off laptop Heather, I need to get with my Father and download where I'm at on my insides. I consider it 'daily maintenance', and it's a process and a discipline. Pray it out. Weep. Ask questions. Intercede and unload. God loves that stuff. It doesn't mean that I never go see movies or surf online - but when I do, I'm not avoiding stuff that needs to be dealt with.

Busy, busy, busy till He Comes Back! (yikes)

It's easy to unwittingly adopt an life of 'busyness' if I'm not careful. A schedule that is heavy on meetings, programs, and planning with family time, housework and facebook (!) plugged into all the spare moments leaves me running around like a chicken with its head cut off. What gets choked out in a life like that? I'll tell you - it's quality solitude time with The Word, the Trinity, myself. My strategy? I need to be ruthless with my time, and jealously guard what I have intentionally set aside for the Lord. In those moments, I'm listening to what *He* has to say (both the rhema and the logos Word) and what His expectations are. Then I'll know what I ought to be doing the rest of the time-the activities that I was created to do, that fulfill my calling and bring about Kingdom Advance. I also know what I can say a firm "No" to - because maybe it's someone else's calling, not the 'God timing' for it, or doesn't amount to a hill of beans in the Heavens. So the bottom line? I believe in hard work, puttin' my hand to the plow and not turning back, but I also want to be about my Father's business. Don't you?

At The End Of The Day, Jesus Will Always Know (and so will I)

I esteem to set the bar high and just be holy. Not because I'm trying to win a holiness contest, but because it Just. Feels. Good. When I'm with Jesus and the Father and the whole host of Heaven on the Day of Judgement and we're going over the details of my life and how I handled myself and treated others, how I spent my time and my talents and how I brought the Good News into the world around me, I want there to be as few instances as possible where I missed the mark. I'm talking about the times when my thoughts about people or decisions are just plain miserable. The words that I've spread about others that were gossipy, petty or just plain untrue. When I've made others feel small or betrayed. Then there are my actions in the Name of Jesus Christ - am I powered by love, gratitude and a passion for souls? Or am I running on guilt, obligation, what others will think of me and building my own reputation? Sometimes, I just have to stop myself and say "girl, don't you dare let Love leak out".

In the end, "everything is uncovered and laid bare before the eyes of him to whom we must give account." (Hebrews 4:13) At the end of the day, Jesus will always know the

truth and He will judge the thoughts and intentions of my heart. I want to be filled to the brim with Love.

"The Army is so thoroughly organized and disciplined, so wrought into the life of nations, so fortified with valuable properties, and on such a sound financial basis, that it is not likely to perish as an organization, but it will become a spiritually dead thing if love leaks out. Love is the life of the Army." Samuel Logan Brengle