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In This Issue
JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY
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Editorial Introduction *page 3*
Major Stephen Court

Four Anchors from the Stern *page 5*
Harold Hill

Hebrews 8:13, The Old Covenant, The New Covenant
Milkshakes, and Coming of Age *page 16*
Captain Michael Ramsay

A Greater... is Here *page 21*
Major David Laeger

Church and church *page 23*
Commissioner Wesley Harris

Ocean of Life *page 24*
Karyn Wishart

Who Cares? *page 26*
Cadet Sean Attard

Life Outside the Amusement Park *page 28*
Cory Harrison

The Great Divide *page 31*
Captain Genevieve Peterson

Triune Aspects of Man in Scripture *page 36*
Major David Laeger

A Holiness Movement? *page 39*
Commissioner Wesley Harris

Holy Leadership *page 40*
Colonel Raymond Finger

Something About Mary *page 50*
Captain Danielle Strickland

Start Stomping! *page 52*
Major Stephen Court

Editorial Introduction

by Major Stephen Court

Welcome to JAC64.

We praise God for the expanding influence of Journal of Aggressive Christianity. You will know that there are 63 issues archived for free download on this site. You can search to your heart's content some great content on issues of Salvationism and warfare. Enjoy.

Major Harold Hill leads off JAC64 with *Four Anchors From The Stern*, an important article on Salvation Army identity and mission. This article will be studied for years to come in training colleges around the world and will impact our understanding of who we are and what we are about.

Captain Michael Ramsay is back with another article on, you guessed it, covenant. His name is now synonymous with covenant (not that we want to limit him to that subject) and we are guessing that there has to be a book on the way. Be sure that you will hear about it right here at JAC. His take on Hebrews 8 is called *Old Covenant, New Covenant, Milkshakes, and Coming of Age*.

Major David Laeger contributes *A Greater Is Here*, a timely reminder and confidence booster in our faith and fighting.

Commissioner Wesley Harris clarifies for us Church and church in his typical clever manner.

Lieutenant Karyn Wishart considers the Ocean of Life that William Booth saw in his vision *Who Cares*. And Cadet Sean Attard considers that vision's *Mighty Rock*.

Cory Harrison is convinced that real Life (is) *Outside the Amusement Park*, and conveys this hard-hitting message with silk gloves. Get ready for some surprise conviction.

Captain Genevieve Peterson, in *The Great Divide*, tries to separate Siamese twins and, in the process, discovers some subtle, but important, distinctions in theology and praxis that complicate our salvation warfare.

Major David Laeger provides us with an outline on *Triune Aspects of Man in Scripture*.

Commissioner Wesley Harris asks if *The Salvation Army* is a holiness movement. Since he's been at it for more than 80 years, you might guess that he has a considered opinion on the subject.

Colonel Raymond Finger, in a book excerpt, provides a piece called *Holy Leadership*. He originally delivered this lecture at the 2009 National Brengle Institute in Geelong,

Australia to officer delegates from three territories (AUS, AUE, NZF). Read it with the original audience in mind. And you can easily transfer the lessons even if you are not an officer. The book is BOSTON COMMON, which also features Lieut-Colonel Ian Barr, Major Alan Harley, and Captain Grant Sandercock-Brown (with other single-chapter contributors) to be launched Sanctification Day 2010 (January 9).

Captain Danielle Strickland adds a little something about Mary - a short study for the Christmas season. Women and the economy look especially good in this take. Check it out.

And we wrap it up with a short piece on Stomping on demons. Last issue I contributed Demonised Salvos. Don't read into it too much of a theme or a future book. But it is all part of our salvation warfighting and this generation's silence on it in the Army has resulted in unhelpful extremes – at one end those who see demons under every music stand, and at the other those who don't believe that demons exist. Biblical and Salvationist teaching on the subject should spare us from both extremes and enable us to confront and defeat the enemy.

That's JAC64. It is dedicated to the glory of God and the salvation of the world.

Four Anchors from the Stern

by Harold Hill

This article first appeared in the Practical Theologian, 2007

The Salvation Army as “a Church”: a Dissuasive

You will recall that when the ship in which Paul was sailing had come through a great storm, the sailors sounded a rising sea floor. To save the ship from drifting onto rocks in the darkness, they threw out four anchors from the stern and waited for the morning.¹

I think the Salvation Army’s drift to “denominationalism” also runs onto a shoaling shore in a fog of confusing definitions and I would like to throw out four anchors from the stern. While the organisation’s mission statement has until recently described it as “an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church”, there is now a tendency for it to be described as “a world wide evangelical Christian church”. Certainly, we are *part* of the Church, members of the body of Christ. That is altogether different from being a church.

My four anchors are the Salvation Army’s own history, the doctrine and history of the Church, the sociology of the Church and, finally, Scripture.

My first anchor: the Salvation Army’s own history.

We are familiar with the way in which the Army began as what today would be called a para-church agency, assisted by people from diverse church communities. In the manner of such bodies it eventually became an independent entity.

The change probably came about as early as 1867; Sandall calls that year “the turning point”.² In that year the East London Christian Mission was named, acquired a headquarters, hired a theatre for Sunday meetings and increased its number of “preaching stations” to six, began to hire workers (nine by the end of the year), established a system for processing converts, printed its first documents (combined articles of faith and bond of agreement), began giving social relief to the poor and issued its first financial statement. It was also the year in which many of the former supporters left and went back to their churches, replaced by new converts and other enthusiasts like James Dowdle, and the year in which members of the mission are first reported as taking the sacrament together. It was becoming an independent community of faith. We might call that “a Church”.

But they did *not* call it “a church”. They called it a “Mission”, and later on an “Army”. They also liked to call it a “Movement”; that seems a little free-flowing for anything so tightly organised though there was at first an element of spontaneity about it. In Maud Booth’s words,

¹ Acts 27:29. I borrow the title from Alan Richardson who used it for his riposte to Alec Vidler’s *Soundings* and John A.T. Robinson’s *Honest to God* in 1963.

² Robert Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army* (London: Nelson, 1947) Vol. 1, p. 72.

“There are sects and denominations enough. This is an Army, a band of aggressive men and women, whose work of saving and reclaiming the world must be done on entirely new lines...”³

And for a century, they stoutly resisted any notion that they might be “a church” although they were happy to be counted a *part* of the church. At the same time the Army increasingly resembled a conventional church denomination, and eventually, as we entered the 21st century, it finally, unambiguously, described itself as “a church”.⁴ Colonel Earl Robinson plotted the course of this process in his paper for the Johannesburg Theological Symposium in 2006 through a series of quotes.⁵ Major David Noakes has helpfully summarised these as follows in his paper for the 2007 Australia and New Zealand Tri-Territorial Theological Forum:

- William and Catherine Booth: Not a church, an army.
- Bramwell Booth: Part of the Church.
- Albert Orsborn: Not a church but a permanent mission to the unconverted.
- Frederick Coutts: Not a church, but implies it.
- Clarence Wiseman: Pointed to the need for an ecclesiology, doctrine of the Church.
- 1969 *Handbook of Doctrine*: Makes direct reference to the term “ecclesia”.
- Philip Needham: The Salvation Army is a true denomination and integral part of the church.
- *Salvation Story* (1998): Chapter 10: “People of God – the Doctrine of the Church”.
- John Larsson (2001): A watershed had been reached in transition from a movement to a church.
- Shaw Clifton: Emphatically states the Army is a church rather than merely a part of the universal Christian Church.

All of this illustrates that we have not stood aloof from that organising principle which can be demonstrated from every part of the church and in every age: that *doctrine follows praxis*. We like to assume otherwise; that we do what we do because it is principled, or theologically sound, or God’s will. Alas, whatever we do, we eventually come to sanctify it with the belief and claim that this is what God intended, even though we might originally have adopted it for quite pragmatic, or even questionable, purposes. It is called “tradition”, or “the guiding hand of the Lord”. It becomes inscribed on tablets of stone. It sets like concrete.

Of course, when other people do that, and claim for example that Jesus ordained the three-fold orders of bishops, priests and deacons, or that the Pope is infallible, well of

³ Maud B. Booth, *Beneath Two Flags* (New York: Funk and Wagnalls, 1889) p. 271.

⁴ *Salvation Story* (London: 1998) p. 100.

⁵ *Word and Deed*, Vol. 9 No. 1, November 2006 pp. 13-17, 28-31.

course, that is different. From their vantage point, when we do it with the sacraments for example, well that is different too.

Now who am I to try to turn back the clock? Organisations come fitted with a ratchet clause; they don't back up. Some people are mildly scathing about those who want the Army to revert to being a Christian Mission. Well I am not urging that, but through the ages, every movement for reform and innovation has sought validation from the original Founding Vision, so here goes.

The reasons those founders resisted being a church – are they valid today? Has the wheel turned and their time come again? Here were some of their arguments:

- William Booth said, "We are not and will not be made a Church. There are plenty for anyone who wishes to join them, to vote and to rest."⁶ Thus he dismissed churches as characterised by democracy and a passive laity, neither of which he intended would have a place in his Army.
- Booth also spoke of not wanting strife with the churches or to be in competition with them. When interviewed by Sir Henry Lunn in 1895 on the Salvation Army position on the sacraments, Booth claimed, perhaps a little disingenuously, that "we came into this position originally by determining not to be a church. We did not wish to undertake the administration of the sacraments and thereby bring ourselves into collision with existing churches."⁷
- In *Heathen England*, George Scott Railton inveighed against sectarianism as ingrown and insufficiently evangelistic:

Shall we ever sink into a sectarian spirit of selfish care about our own, and cease to spend all our strength for the good of others?" Answering the hypothetical objection, "But this is making a new denomination – a new sect," he responded, "Well, and supposing that it is. Is there any harm in doing so? Is there not a need for just such a 'sect' in many cities?... But we deny that we are in any proper sense a sect... We are a corps of volunteers for Christ, organised as perfectly as we have been able to accomplish, seeking no Church status, avoiding as we would the plague every denominational rut, in order perpetually to reach more and more of those who lie outside every Church boundary."⁸

- Catherine Booth also argued that the clericalised attitudes prevalent in churches meant that the unsaved were left unsaved:

"Yes, thank God, we are teaching the Churches that others besides clergymen, ministers, deacons and elders can be used for the salvation of men. The multitudes have too long been left to these. As a clergyman said to me the other day, 'There are 35,000 souls in my parish, what can one do?' What indeed! Set

6 *Orders and Regulations for The Salvation Army* (London: SA, 1878) p. 4.

7 Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth, Founder of The Salvation Army* (London: Macmillan, 1920) I, pp. 468-9.

8 George Scott Railton, *Heathen England* (London: S.W. Partridge, 2nd edn, 1878) pp. 143-4.

the carpenters and the washerwomen on to them, saved and filled with the Spirit!"⁹

The essential, underlying argument was that of "adaptation of measures" (Charles Finney and Catherine Booth), or "being all things to all men, if by any means we might win some" (Paul). The Army's target group, those Railton said "lie outside every Church boundary", the socially disenfranchised British underclass, did not relate to and never had related to the Church or churches, so the founders deliberately chose not to identify themselves in that way.

Now we can say, that was *then* and now is *now* – we have moved on. These early arguments against being a church tended to pillory inadequate kinds of church – and would be refuted and held to be no longer applicable by many evangelical churches today. (Just as some of our still-repeated arguments against the practice of the sacraments as "formalism" or dependence on external means might be denied by those practising sacramental worship today...) Despite the concern Booth expressed to Henry Lunn, we not been deterred by the thought that some churches might see us as competitors in the religious market either.

The fact is, however, that many Salvation Army corps have come to resemble the kind of churches the founders did not want their Army to be like, and many of us as Salvationists to resemble those church-members. This has come about as part of that same transition which has led us to think of ourselves as "a church."

My argument from our history then is not just that our founders did not conceive of the Army as a church because it did not appeal to the people we sought to serve and evangelise. It is firstly, that our community today in our part of the Western world, the word "church" suffers from the same disadvantage today. And secondly, that our becoming more church-like has not necessarily meant becoming more effective in our mission; sometimes, the reverse. As the Archbishop of Sydney once said to a Divisional Commander, "Mr Salvation Army, you've got it *all* going for you, you lot. Why isn't it happening?" If it isn't happening, might the founders' arguments against "churchliness" still carry some weight with us?¹⁰

My second anchor: the doctrine and history of the Church.

Sometimes the claim is advanced that the Salvation Army exhibits "the marks of the church" – whether these are the traditional yardsticks of "one, holy, catholic and apostolic", or more involved criteria such as the no fewer than twenty adduced by Earl Robinson in the paper to which I have already made reference – and that therefore we

⁹ Catherine Booth, *The Salvation Army in Relation to Church & State* (London: SA, 1889) p. 75.

¹⁰ Quoted by Lt. Colonel John Major, former Divisional Commander in Sydney. Have I shot my own argument in the foot with this quote? Nothing could be more churchly than the Archdiocese of Sydney and nothing more successful! However, *our* constituency is those who will not have a bar of the church. Those who *do* want church can be left safely in the hands of the Archdiocese of Sydney. What about the others? I rest my case.

are a church. Certainly we should exhibit the marks of the church, if we really are a part of it. Praise God we do! But these are marks of *the* church, not of a church. We can't go from "these are the marks of *the* church" to "we exhibit these marks" to "therefore we are a church". The syllogism is flawed. We need to define what we mean by "the Church", "a church" and "a part of the Church".

Salvation Story defines "*the* Church" as "the fellowship of all who are justified and sanctified by grace through faith in Christ." It goes on to define "a church" as "an evangelistic body of believers who worship, fellowship, minister and are in mission together". It affirms that "Salvationists are members of the one body of Christ. We share common ground with the universal Church while manifesting our own characteristics... [we are] one particular expression of the Church."¹¹

Salvation Story's definitions of *the* church and a church are good as far as they go, but they do not address the question of the relationship between the two except by implication. They leave unexamined the fact that there is in practice another level of entity between the two – that of separate (even rival, competing, disagreeing) associations or families, of churches. We are on safe Biblical, theological and ecclesiological ground when we speak of a church as a local congregation and of *the* church as the whole church, but it is more difficult to justify the denominational entities except as the product of history. They are a concession to *realpolitik*, rather as Jesus spoke of Moses permitting divorce "because of your hardness of heart."

Sometimes the view is expressed that the "real" church is spiritual, and quite independent of human, sociological structures, so it is unimportant how it is structured. The Army has never subscribed to that theory; the body of Christ is clearly incarnate and has structure and organisation. Further, the Army accepts that the Church's unity is manifest in diversity ("with other Christian denominations and congregations", as *Salvation Story* puts it) rather than in uniformity, and the Booths very early forbade criticism of any other body.¹² The difficulty lies in making this paradox work. Lack of uniformity would not be such a worry, but unhappily too often the diversity is displayed in disunity. We do not maintain the Lord's Table, so unlike the Roman Catholics we cannot refuse any one access to it – but I do know senior officers stripped of their soldiership and rank *after their honourable retirement* for accepting ordination in "another denomination". To adapt G.B. Shaw's Bill Walker in *Major Barbara*, "Wot prawce unity nah?" Sometimes our actions speak louder than our words.¹³

Since fairly early times there have been rival factions of Christians: witness the great schisms which took place over discipline and doctrine, setting rival Donatist and

11 *Salvation Story*, pp. 100-1.

12 *Orders and Regulations for Field Officers* (London: The Salvation Army, 1886) Part XVI, Chap. I.

13 Though here's an interesting story about Peter Cullinane, RC Bishop of Palmerston North, speaking recently to a group of priests and laity about who might receive communion from the hands of a priest. Said the Bishop, I will give communion to any Catholic in good standing and, if a Salvation Army member in uniform was to come to receive communion, I would not hesitate to offer the host." (The context was that those who were not Catholics should not receive the host.)

Catholic, Arian and Catholic, Nestorian and Catholic, Celtic and Roman Catholic and eventually Orthodox and Roman churches squaring off against each other over the centuries. They could be compared with “denominations” in our modern sense in that they were rival associations of local churches, in some cases occupying overlapping territory and each claiming to be more correct than the other – the *true* church.

Most of what we now call denominations are a comparatively recent phenomenon; the heirs of the reformation. Although the Pope still claims that all save the Roman Catholic Church are “defective” in some respect,¹⁴ these churches seldom anathematise one another today, being usually content with a slightly smug assumption of superiority. It is difficult to generalise about the origins of these groups – personal disagreements, social and national interests, theological controversies have all played a part.

In the now-ebbed high tide of ecumenism in the mid-twentieth century, it was held by many that the history of denominationalism in the church demonstrated the “scandal of disunity”, a betrayal of Jesus’ prayer “that they may all be one”. To my mind that is still is a dissuasive against it. Claiming to be a denomination consciously buys into that disunity. It attempts to sanctify that status quo. Our doctrine meekly follows our praxis.

We make no apology for not practising the sacraments. We happily swim against the tide of general church doctrine and practice in positing our own spiritualised interpretations of baptism and the Lord’s Supper, on the ground that they represent a valuable witness to the rest of the church. So why are we unable to hold the line on this, no more peculiar but equally important distinctive mark, that we are not a “denomination”? Probably because it is the line of least resistance. We resist conforming to something arguably derived from the Scripture but collude with something evolved in the era of the Enlightenment. In this we pass up the opportunity to maintain a witness to another great principle – the unity of *the* Church, a refusal to accept the divisions of the Church as final.

Obviously I am not claiming that our choice of vocabulary will heal the divisions amongst God’s people; only that this take on the doctrine of the church gives us an opportunity to bear witness to something important. Have we ever claimed more than that for our stand on the sacraments?

My third anchor: the sociology of the Church.

My third anchor is the pattern of decline and renewal, repeated at intervals throughout the history of the Church. Evangelicals might explain these in terms of the waxing and waning of evangelical faith and fervour. Sociologists examine more objectively the patterns of human behaviour, and can also help us to make some sense of the church’s past.

14 Pope Benedict XVI, “Responses to Some Questions Regarding Certain Aspects of the Doctrine on the Church,” document issued July 10, 2007.

The life-cycles of organisations, including religious ones, follow a sigmoid curve from movement to institution as they grow. They tend to plateau and enter a period of decline, from which they may or may not recover. Commonly, with the onset of decline, some schismatic or renewal movement strikes out upon a new trajectory of growth before eventually repeating the pattern.

In the Catholic Church, various orders and groups from monasticism in the second century to Opus Dei in the twentieth, as well as heretical fringe movements, have been the loci of such renewal. In Protestantism, itself such a movement in origin, sectarian groups have flourished. Such reactions against the institutionalising of the original movements seek to recover their founder's vision and validate their new departure by the past. The original theorist of sectarianism, Max Weber, referred to their adherents as "spiritual virtuosi", the athletes of spirituality. They make the rest of us feel somewhat uncomfortable. Usually the sectarian offshoots themselves institutionalise in due course – in Protestantism such groups are usually known as denominations. Sometimes, usually in response to the new offshoot, a large segment of the church experiences a measure of rejuvenation, as in the sixteenth century Counter-Reformation or with the "third wave" of the charismatic movement of the twentieth century.

Bryan Wilson summarised the characteristics of the sect as:

A voluntary association; membership is by proof to sect authorities of some claim to personal merit – such as knowledge of doctrine, affirmation of a conversion experience, or recommendation of members in good standing; exclusiveness is emphasized, and expulsion exercised against those who contravene doctrinal, moral or organisational precepts; its self-conception is of an elect, a gathered remnant, possessing special enlightenment; personal reflection is the expected standard of aspiration...; it accepts, at least as an ideal, the priesthood of all believers; there is a high level of lay participation; there is opportunity for the member spontaneously to express his commitment; the sect is hostile or indifferent to the secular society and to the state.¹⁵

The Salvation Army would admit to many, though not all, of these descriptors and it can be readily seen that the movement fits this pattern in origin and development. Some sociologists have described it as a "conversionist sect"¹⁶ on account of its over-riding sense of mission, or an "established sect"¹⁷ because it seemed to retain many sectarian characteristics long after it might have been expected to discard them. (Real life is seldom as tidy as the sociologists prescribe.)

I find this sociological analysis helpful in trying to get a handle on what has happened and is happening to the Salvation Army. The Army, like most renewal movements, has gradually institutionalised and its leadership has become clericalised. At the same time it has retained some of its sectarian character and some of its soldiers have to some degree retained, or attempted to recover, its earlier revivalist ethos. The institution has

¹⁵ Bryan Wilson, "An Analysis of Sect Development", *American Sociological Review* 24 (February 1959) pp. 3-15.

¹⁶ Bryan Wilson, *ibid.*, p. 5

¹⁷ B. R. Scharf, *The Sociological Study of Religion* (London: Hutchinson, 1970).

of course moved inexorably in the direction of accommodation to the world and assimilation into the generic church, both in representing its officers as “clergy” and more recently by describing itself as a “church”. So now that the wheel has turned full circle, and we have our own renewal movements, our *virtuosi*, the neo-primitive Salvationists, the 614 movement, seeking to recover the original vision.

General John Larsson, addressing a 2001 International Theology and Ethics Symposium in Winnipeg, Canada, stated that “A key question for us is how we make the transition from a movement to a church in such a way that we do not lose the original dynamic that brought the Army into being. Or if we have lost something of that dynamic, how do we regain it?”¹⁸ Unfortunately “loss of original dynamic” may describe an essential difference between “movement” and “church”. Werner Stark quotes Bramwell Booth writing to Railton, “I am convinced that we must stick to our concern, and that we must also keep up its so-called extravagances. They, and they only will save it from drooping down into a sectarian nothing.”¹⁹ Stark comments, “What Booth wanted was precisely what Trotsky wanted: a permanent revolution.”²⁰ Finke and Stark comment, “When successful sects are transformed into churches, that is, when their tension with the surrounding culture is greatly reduced, they soon cease to grow and eventually decline.”²¹

In this “watershed in its self-understanding”, as General Larsson has called it,²² the Salvation Army’s leaders have a choice as to what traits in its DNA they will promote as dominant and what aspects will be relegated to the status of recessive genes. The “neo-primitive” ideals call for an emphatic rejection of clerical status and a turning away from the trap of denominational identity. Those directions offer a chimerical security, whereas the Army’s true vocation is as an egalitarian, counter-cultural movement. This sociological analysis of the Army’s role in *the* church therefore argues against its being content to be called a church.

My fourth anchor is Scripture.

Are we to say that denominational diversity is quite acceptable? By what criteria is this situation to be judged? Some would argue that there is no reason to suggest that the disunity manifest in these separate denominational groups, cooperating at best and competing at worst, is contrary to God’s intention. This applies to ecclesiology the dictum of Wallenstein, “Anything not forbidden is permitted,” rather than the reverse, laid down by Calvin (and George Orwell). If our first doctrine, that Scripture is the “Divine

18 Quoted in background papers to the 2006 International Theology and Ethics Symposium, Johannesburg.

19 To clarify the terms, by “sectarian” here Bramwell Booth meant what we would describe as “denominational”.

20 W. Bramwell Booth, Letter of 6 October 1874, quoted from Th.F.G. Coates, *Prophet of the Poor*, p. 98, in Werner Stark, *The Sociology of Religion* Vol. 2, *Sectarian Religion*, (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1967) pp. 284-5.

21 Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The Churching of America 1776-1990* (New Brunswick NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992) p. 148.

22 John Larson, Opening Address to the International Theology and Ethics Symposium, May 2001.

rule of Christian faith and practice”, is to be maintained, then denominational diversity might be judged by Scripture.

Does Scripture have anything at all to say about denominational diversity? In the New Testament, the word “Church” is used in more than one sense. It meant the local community of faith, and also the whole company of those who name Jesus as Lord, wherever they might be. Early on, there were varieties of local church; Hebrew-speaking Christian synagogues and Greek-speaking ecclesia. There were churches that met in the houses of their leaders, and were named for them. Then Paul wrote to churches in various geographically scattered places. They even had local variations in pattern of government until gradually the three-fold orders of bishop, priest and deacon became general in the second century.

However, unlike so many of today’s churches, these churches recognised each others’ ministries and shared the one table. They were all *the* church. That is the New Testament, Apostolic, sub-Apostolic picture, and it persisted long after the canonical ink had dried. The only way in which the expression “a church” could be used of New Testament times is with reference to a local congregation of “the church”. The concept of some local congregations being associated in a bond that excluded some other local congregations simply would not compute. When eventually that unity fell apart in schism, they viewed that as a scandal to be resolved rather than an achievement to be celebrated.

In Scripture the solitary example of a literally denominational situation is that which Paul cites in 1st Corinthians 1:10-17. There he condemns the division into sects claiming over against their rivals to be followers of Paul or of Apollos, of Cephas or of Christ! Paul specifically *accused* them of being, literally, “denominations”. That sounds more like a forbidding than a permitting – a binding rather than a loosing. Tested against Scripture, denominations are a confession of our sinfulness, borne with shame, to be repented of rather than aspired to. Is that what we’re so anxious to claim to be?

To offer one further Biblical reference, an analogy rather than an injunction, it seems to me that our aspiration to church identity and clerical status is like the elders of Israel begging Samuel to give them a king so that they could “be like the nations round about”.²³ According to at least one strand of Biblical history, that didn’t turn out too well.

Do all these arguments fly in the face of reality? All right...I admit it. There is no doubt that legally (in most countries) and sociologically we *are* “a church” in that we exhibit all the marks of a denomination. It looks like a duck, walks like a duck, quacks like a duck... so why do I still resist calling it a duck? Because I believe that names still have some power. They represent meaning. We tend to be shaped by the discourse we adopt. It’s the collective application of Proverbs 23:7: “As a man thinks in his heart, so he is.”

23 1 Samuel 8:5.

Since I'm attempting to propose an alternative reality, what might we call that reality? General John Gowans recalls the Methodist historian Gordon Rupp saying to Salvationists in the 1960s, "You are our Franciscans. We Methodists began as a mission. We have become a Church. May the Army always remain a mission."²⁴ "Mission" may not be a term to conjure with but the evidence tabled from sociology suggests that we could make a claim to be a Protestant "order", which would be one way of defining that missional, not-a-denomination, state.

This argument has been rejected on the grounds that "order" pre-supposes a subordinate relationship with some other ecclesial body – like that to which the Salvation Army might have been reduced had the Anglican-Salvation Army talks of 1882 succeeded.²⁵ That of course is the status of most existing orders, though Taizé seems to have established itself with general acceptance in the ecclesial no-man's land between the great confessions. So how about the suggestion that the Salvation Army is an order of the *whole* Church, the catholic church, rather than of any particular denominational branch of the body? That would involve no concession of independence. That is in fact what our traditional claim to be a "part of the church" has amounted to; we've just never used that particular word to describe it. Why have we given it away? We fit the criteria exactly. Now I am not arguing that we should use the word "order" ourselves. We already have a perfectly good word, a proven "brand", to borrow the ubiquitous advertising jargon: we are an *Army*.

This is not a conservative response, a reluctance to let go of what we're used to, but a radical response, in the true sense of going back to our roots – which means back to the future. It can be dismissed as "make-believe" – except that believing does indeed make it so!

In sum then, we are an example of a revival movement which has institutionalised and settled down, finally coming to claim status as a "church", a denomination. This is seen as appropriate, an achievement, a reason to congratulate ourselves, and necessary in order to maintain and consolidate our status. I suggest otherwise. If status is what concerns us (and if so, that's a worry in itself), our claim to be an Army, a permanent mission to the unconverted, has not involved any fatal disability or disenfranchisement in the eyes of the "churches" or the community over the past hundred or more years. Safeguarding some degree of ambiguity on the question has not threatened our integrity.

So: I argue that the Army's own history, the history and doctrine of the church, the pattern of sociology, the Word of Scripture, all testify against any great need to be "a church". Our own history provides us with a clear precedent for retaining our identity without resorting to denominationalism; the history and doctrine of the church provide an ecclesiological and theological base, the sociology of religious movements provides a rationale, and Scripture provides a mandate.

²⁴ Quoted by Denis Hunter, *While the Light Lingers* (privately published 2005) p. 36.

²⁵ For example, by General Clifton in *The Officer*, January-February 2007, p. 3.

In the morning the sailors cut the ropes and drove for the beach. Well, we've already done that: my dissuasive is too late. But I'm still perched in the stern, trying to yell above the wind that beached vessels do not always set sail again.

Questions:

1. Is this just nitpicking about words without any practical application? In what ways does this analysis not make sense? Please refute my arguments.
2. If it *were* a helpful thing to "back up" in this matter, how might the Salvation Army do that?
3. If the Salvation Army cannot, how else might it be renewed as a denomination?

Hebrews 8:13: The Old Covenant, New Covenant, Milkshakes, and Coming of Age

by Captain Michael Ramsay

“By calling this covenant ‘new,’ he has made the first one obsolete; and what is obsolete and aging will soon disappear.”

What is this old covenant that is now obsolete?

This old covenant was very important to the Hebrew people. Their whole society was founded upon it. It was more important than but not entirely dissimilar to the Canadian *Constitutional Act of 1982* and 1867, the American *Declaration of Independence* or even the *Magna Carta* and its very important *Habeus Corpus* clause. There were a number of activities, ceremonies and cultural traditions related to this old covenant that were cherished by the Hebrews such as circumcision (this actually relates to Abraham’s covenant but often is seen in light of the Mosaic covenant; **John 7:22**, see Genesis 17:11); ceremonial hand-washing; worshipping at the Temple; priests and Levites who had various jobs relating to the covenant; Sabbath (this has its roots even before Moses, in creation itself; see Genesis 2:2, Exodus 20:11, Hebrews 4); the Ten Commandments; the Law and the prophets (see **Exodus 20, 34; Deuteronomy 5, 10**); frequent sacrifices and much more.

Between all of these things relating to Moses, the election of the Hebrews for the task of proclaiming salvation to the world (see Genesis 12:3), the Temple and the Torah (even though the Israelites did not live up to the terms of this old covenant): these ceremonies were very significant to the people. They loved them. It was like a number of things are to some of us who have been involved with The Salvation Army for a while: the band, timbrels, Songsters, Soldiers, Officers, uniforms, League of Mercy (Community Care Ministries), thrift stores, emergency disaster work, community and family social work, evangelism, social justice, etc. Even more than that: Moses, election, the Temple, Torah, all their ceremonies and holidays were as important to them as is to us: our national anthem at sporting events, birthday parties, Sunday church services, New Years celebrations, Christmas, Christmas Eve, and Easter. It would be as difficult for the Hebrews to imagine life without the ceremonies of the old covenant as it would be for us to imagine winter without Christmas.

The application of the old covenant covered every aspect of the Hebrews’ lives. The rituals of the old covenant were as important to people then as a child’s birthday party and all that it entails are to us here today. Hebrews 8:8-13 is saying that God has taken this whole important system that developed out of this covenant with the Israelites (like Christmas trees, Easter eggs, nativity scenes, and birthday presents to us), crumpled it up like a piece of paper and thrown it into the garbage. This would be even more devastating for the Hebrews than if God took all of our Christmas traditions, crumpled them up and tossed them in that same garbage can. God says that their very important covenant is old. Jeremiah says that they need a new one. The author (or homilician) of

Hebrews says that it is obsolete and should be thrown away and even replaced. Can you imagine how difficult that would be for the Hebrews of that day and age to accept?

What happened to this ‘old covenant’? Why is it obsolete?

So what happened then? Why was all that the people knew and loved in the old covenant simply crumpled up and tossed away? Hebrews 8:13 records that this old covenant is now obsolete and even at the time this sermon to the Hebrews was originally preached it was already aging and fading away. Why was it fading away already? How is it obsolete? What happened to this covenant? The terms of the covenant were broken. The Israelites broke them. The covenant was a conditional contract and Israel broke the conditions of it. Like we see in the children’s story, **Jeremiah** (www.sheepspeak.com/jeremiah.pdf),²⁶ ancient Israel turned their backs on God. Israel turned their backs on their fellow YHWH worshipers. They betrayed the Lord and they betrayed each other. It would take much too long to run through all or even many of the times that Israel (the Hebrews) defied God or how they broke their covenant. One of the key ways, however, would be their neglect of the disenfranchised:²⁷ the poor, the widow, the immigrant (see for example, Exodus 23:6,11, Leviticus 19:10,15, 23:22, 27:8, Deuteronomy 15:7, 15:11, 24:12-15, 1 Samuel 2:8, Psalms 22:26, 34:6, 35:10, 82:3, Isaiah 61:1, Ezekiel 16:49, 18:12, 22:29, Amos 2:7, 4:1, 5:11-12, 8:4-6, Zechariah 7:10, Matthew 6:19-21, 19:13-26, 25:31-46).²⁸ One comment pertaining to this that I would point us towards is in the New Testament Gospels themselves. Remember when Jesus was asked about the old covenant and the Law? What did He say summed up the whole Law and the prophets? Love God and love your neighbour (Matthew 22:36-40; see also Luke 10:25-28, **Exodus 20, 34**, Leviticus 19:18, **Deuteronomy 5, 10**). How does one love one’s neighbour? By looking after the most vulnerable in society, by turning the other cheek, and by bringing others to the Lord (see Matthew 6:19-21, 19:13-26, 25:31-46). Micah 6:8 says that we are to ‘love justice, love mercy, and to walk humbly with our God’. The Hebrews didn’t do this. They did not live up to the terms of the agreement.

An important point to remember here is that this old, ‘obsolete’ covenant wasn’t exactly cancelled rather it was completed (fulfilled) by the advent of Christ (John 19:30; see also Leviticus 26:42-44; Deuteronomy 7:9; Judges 2:1; Matthew 5:17-20, 24:35; Luke 16:17, 27:33; Romans 3:3-4, 31, 7:1-6). Remember that by definition covenants, when made with the Lord remain in place until they are fully completed (See Leviticus 26:42-44; Deuteronomy 7:9; Judges 2:1; Matthew 5:17-20, 24:35; Luke 16:17, 27:33; Romans 3:3-4, 31, 7:1-6; Hebrews 10:23; see also JAC issues 40, 52, 56, 59, 62). This old covenant wasn’t forsaken. It was completed or even renewed like a library book or a rented movie. When the allotted time for borrowing a book or a movie is completed, it

²⁶ Captain Michael Ramsay, Sarah-Grace Ramsay and Rebecca Ramsay, ‘Jeremiah, Jeremiah, What Do You See?’ Available on-line at www.sheepspeak.com/jeremiah.pdf

²⁷ Cf. Captain Michael Ramsay, ‘Good News to the Poor: Comparing a Christian Worldview as expressed in Luke’s Gospel to Marx’. Presented to William and Catherine Booth College March 2009. Available on-line at www.sheepspeak.com

²⁸ God has always had a concern for the vulnerable even as is recorded in the OT: Deut 15:4 says, “However, there should be no poor among you, for in the land the LORD your God is giving you to possess as your inheritance, he will richly bless you,” See also Exod. 23:6,11, Lev. 19:10,15, 23:22, 27:8, Deut. 15:7, 15:11, 24:12-15, 1 Sam 2:8, Pss. 22:26, 34:6, 35:10, 82:3, Isa. 61:1, Eze. 16:49, 18:12, 22:29, Amos 2:7, 4:1, 5:11-12, 8:4-6, Zec. 7:10.

can be renewed. We must not forget though that, as there is a penalty to pay if we fail to live up to the rental terms – if we are late or damage the book/video there are fees to pay - so too there was a penalty that Christ paid on our behalf before He renewed our covenant²⁹ (see Jeremiah 31:31ff, Ezekiel 36:16ff, Joel 2:28ff, and also Deuteronomy 10:16; 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; 6:10; 9:25; Ezekiel 44:7). Let me explain by exploring a couple of more questions.

Was there anything wrong with the old agreement itself?

Was there anything wrong with the old covenant, the old agreement that is now obsolete? Yes and no.³⁰ No, in that the old covenant was certainly fair: God promised that He would look out for His chosen covenant partners and He did. He let them enter His rest so long as they loved Him and their brothers and sisters. It is like any of us who are parents saying, “all right children, we can all go for a milkshake at the *Land of Milk and Honey Ice-Cream Parlour* after dinner so long as you kids don’t fight and don’t give me a bad time.” This seems fair.³¹ The problem is that the children of Israel just wouldn’t stop fighting and they weren’t very nice to their Father either. They were always fighting. They were always hurting each other. And they didn’t even bother to obey their curfew. They were likely to not even come home at all. Instead they would stay out all night in the hill country with the Baals when they should have been spending the night safely in the protection of their Father’s house. And when they did come home the children of Israel would fight amongst themselves about all of this and more too. They didn’t show their love for their Father or for their brothers or their sisters.

A big part of the problem with Israel’s disobedience was that God promised them the metaphorical milkshakes from the *Land of Milk and Honey Ice-Cream Parlour* IF they would just be good. And even though they didn’t deserve it, God really still wanted to give them their *Land of Milk and Honey* milkshakes (see for examples Isaiah 3:1-6; 8:16-22; 9:1-7; Jeremiah 31, Amos 9, Micah 2:1-11-13; 5:1-4). Not only that: He wanted to drink the milkshakes with them in the *Land of Milk and Honey Ice-Cream Parlour*, Himself. He wanted to spend this quality time with His children. He wanted to have fun with them. He wanted to give them all of this and much more but they just wouldn’t stop fighting and they just wouldn’t listen to Him so He just wouldn’t give them their reward.

This was the purpose of the milkshake incentive. The purpose of the Law, the old covenant, was to bring people closer to God so that they could experience His Salvation. God’s Law, His old covenant – that He set up so that His children could come for the eternal milkshake with Him – this Law, that was created for good, actually wound up preventing His children from getting the milkshake that God wanted to share with

²⁹ Cf. Tom Wright, ‘The Great Acquittal: Justification by Faith and Current Christian Thought’, Ed. Gavin Reid, London: Collins, 1980, p.13ff.

³⁰ David W. Chapman, ‘Notes on Hebrews 8:7’, (ESV Study Bible: Crossway Bibles: Wheaton, Illinois 2008) p. 2373: ‘The old covenant was not wrong; rather it was weak and ineffective (7:18-19)...’

³¹ Leon Morris, The Expositor’s Bible Commentary, Pradis CD-ROM:Hebrews/Exposition of Hebrews/VII. A New and Better Covenant (8:1-10:39)/A. Christ’s “More Excellent” Ministry (8:1-7), Book Version: 4.0.2: The author brings out the superiority of the new covenant by referring to the supersession of the old one. If there had been “nothing wrong” with the old covenant, there would have been no place for the new. That the new covenant has now been established is itself evidence that the old one was not adequate. (For the line of argument, cf. 7:11 ff.) The old covenant was lacking not so much in what its terms spelled out as in the fact that it was weak and unable to bring men to God (cf. 7:18 f.; Rom 7:10 f.).

them. Because they were bad and they didn't deserve this milkshake, God was very sad. God kept His part of the covenant. God wanted to enjoy that milkshake with them in the *Land of Milk and Honey Ice-Cream Parlour* but they just wouldn't co-operate (See Romans 3:3,4). This old covenant failed to bring people into a Salvific relationship with God (Hebrews 8:7-9; see Hebrews 4, Numbers 14 and Deuteronomy 1; see also Galatians 3-4). God's chosen people, the children of Israel failed Him; the Law therefore did not provide for their (our) salvation (see Galatians 3 and Romans 2:1-14).

What is this new covenant?

Since this old covenant did not give us the Heavenly milkshake, what about the new covenant? What is it? Can God use the new covenant as a way to share the milkshake of eternal life with us? What is this new covenant that is God's seemingly new idea? First we should note that it is not really a new idea at all.³² God knew all along that He would eventually implement this new covenant. He knew this even before He put the old one in place that this new one was to be enacted through Jesus' incarnation, death, and resurrection (see Genesis 15:7-21; Jeremiah 34:18-20; Romans 7:1-7).³³ Jesus' death fulfils the old covenant: it is finished (John 19:30). The old one – as bad as we were at living up to it - was not thrown out before it was finished; it was only discarded after it was completed on the cross.

It is like with our children. Our daughters are still pre-teens but we know that someday there will be curfews and guidelines for using the car but there is no need for those to come into place just yet. We know this new structure will eventually be coming to our home; it is not here yet but it is inevitable. Likewise,³⁴ God knew that this new covenant was inevitable even before He made the old one.³⁴

As far as my children are concerned, even further down the road relating to these curfews and guidelines for driving the car that we will eventually have for our girls: there will come a time when even these rules will no longer be needed. Our children will grow up and be ready to have a relationship with us, and the world, as responsible adults. If we do our job as parents, then our children will grow up to love God, read their Bibles, love their neighbour and clean up after themselves – all on their own, without our rules to make them do it. They will do their chores and assignments as adults living and working in the world without us needing us to enforce our old house rules. This is what the Law and the old covenant is like; it was only good until the enactment of the new covenant at the advent of Christ (Galatians 3:24-25). The advent of Christ is like humanity's coming of age – it is our growing up, our leaving the Law's home for the final time (Galatians 4:4).³⁵

³² Cf. Fred B. Craddock, *The Letter to the Hebrews* (NIB 12: Nashville, Tenn.: Abingdon, 1998), pp. 100-101.

³³ See Captain Michael Ramsay, 'Covenant: When God is Bound... a look at Genesis 15:7-21' in the *Journal of Aggressive Christianity*, Issue 52 (December 2007 – January 2008). See also 'Sarna, Genesis, PP. 114-115, Terence E. Fretheim, *The Book of Genesis*, p. 446. Cf. also Anet, p.532 and John H. Sailhamer, *Abraham and the Covenant* (15:1-21).

³⁴ Cf. William L. Lane, *Hebrews 1-8* (WBC 47A: Word Books: Dallas Texas, 1991), p. 209 and R.A. Harrisville, *The Concept of Newness in the New Testament* (Minneapolis, Min.: Augsburg, 1960), pp. 48-53.

³⁵ Pastor Brian Craig, then of Emmanuel Baptist Church in Victoria, BC, Canada, in a conversation with me in 1987 made a very good argument explaining the Law and the old covenant in terms of a child coming of age.

Paul tells us in Galatians 3:23-25 that the old covenant and the Law were needed but that the people were being imprisoned and guarded by the Law. He says that the Law – depending upon your translation -was our guard, our disciplinarian, our custodian, or some translations even say our schoolteacher. In Galatians 4, the Apostle Paul goes on to explain the Law as if it were this guardian servant who is the tutor of a small child. The guardian servant only has any authority until the child is grown, then the child has authority over her servant. And now we are here today; we are like the twenty-something year-old son or daughter who is making her way in the world today without our tutor, without our teacher, without our parents' house rules but still with our Heavenly Father's very real love. This is what the new covenant is. We no longer have the house rules to follow but because God raised us well, we can read our family history (the Bible) and because we are His children we can live the way He would have us live and this is good (1 Thessalonians 5:12-24). And the really good thing is that – just like a an adult child of a Christian parent – if for some reason we do become confused in life, we can always come to God. God is even closer than a phone call away; God is as close as a prayer.

A Greater... is Here

by Major David Laeger

GREATER THAN “THE SABBATH ...”

(Matthew 12:8)

Rest, O my soul,
enter Shabbat,
the Kiddush of the soul has come again –
the lesser labor days have reached an end;
flesh-impulses on this sacred day rescind;
the creature seeks what They intend:
He who is greater is here -
the weary soul will mend.

“... the Son of Man is Lord, even of the Sabbath.”

“... GREATER THAN THE TEMPLE ...”

(Matthew 12:6)

Praise, O my soul,
Hekhal of Israel,
forms the tri-fold house of man –
the essence of the temple span,
where conscience light reveals what life must ban;
where nourishment of mind and heart began;
where worship’s fragrance must ascend.

“... your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit ...”

“... GREATER THAN JONAH ...”

(Matthew 12:41)

Rise, O my soul,
hear the Haftarah of Yom Kippur –
remember God’s command to preach
from prophet-shadows of the Savior’s reach;
of Jesus Christ whose Passion healed the breach
between the Lord and us, yes, to us each.

“... so shall the Son of Man be ...”

“... GREATER THAN SOLOMON ...”

(Matthew 12:42)

Learn, O my soul,
learn the Covenants of Torah,
to find the knowledge of the holy -

the Bereshith of life and messianic hope;
the Fount of Wisdom's purest scope;
the Homily of Life beneath the Sun;
the Song of Love from Yahweh's Chosen One.

".. He opened the Scriptures to us ..."

"... GREATER THAN HE THAT IS IN THE WORLD." (I John 4:4)

Stay, O my soul,
Shekinah Glory
shines afresh through trust and gives new life -
when evening dusk turns to midnight fright;
when darkening vales malform what's right;
when fleshly impulse causes loss of fight;
when speech betrays one's deeper sight.

"... He that is in you is greater...."

DEFINITIONS:

Shabbat - the Sabbath, the 7th day of the week, a reminder of the Creator's rest

*Kiddush – morning and evening blessing over meals, and at festivals; it means
"sanctification"*

*Hekhal – the Holy Place of the Temple; the temple is the building/body housing this
room and the Holy of Holies/(place of God's residence; the realm of the spirit, innermost
room of the soul, brought to life when God comes in through redemption).*

*Haftarah – the Prophet portion of Scripture, read coinciding with a portion from the
Torah.*

Yom Kippur – the Day of Atonement

Torah – the Law, but may also refer to all of the Hebrew Scriptures

Bereshith - Genesis

Shekinah – the glorious manifested Presence of God

Church and church by Commissioner Wesley Harris

OUR founding fathers may not have been keen on the Army being known as a church but they certainly held that they were part of *the* Church or the people of God and the Body of Christ.

Like them I am not comfortable about calling my corps a church although I know comrades who relish the use of ecclesiastical terms – like a young sergeant major of my acquaintance who wished to be known as the senior elder, presumably with the unlikely thought that it would make his position clearer to people in the highly secular situation in which he lived. As if!

In some countries there is the problem that many people think of us only as a social agency that they are happy to support with their dollars without realizing that we are a worshipping community to which they could actually belong.

It is a sad fact that in some parts of the world the word ‘church’ does not resonate positively with many in a secular society and borrowing tired ecclesiastical terms does little to help although it may make some among us feel a bit more respectable!

We should be glad about the degree of acceptance we receive on account of our social service but strive to extend that acceptance to include the Lord in whose name we serve. That is in our DNA as Salvationists and should not be lost.

By all means let us define what we are and placard our corps buildings not only as bases for community service but also as places of worship. Still, in our terminology, we should remain ‘originals’ and not merely carbon copies of others in the Christian community. Like love *the* Church is a many splendoured thing and we should dare to be different for the glory of God.

Ocean of Life

by Karyn Wishart

I want to start today by asking you a question, Is the ocean of life, today, as dark and stormy as it seemed to William Booth in his day? As you think about your response, I'd like to read to you a portion of William Booth's reflection upon what he thought the world looked like in his day.

"On one of my recent journeys as I gazed from the coach window, I was led into a train of thought concerning the conditions of the multitudes around me. They were living carelessly in the most open and shameless rebellion against God, without a thought for their eternal welfare. As I looked out the window, I seemed to see them all....

Millions of people all around me given up to their drink and their pleasure, their dancing and their music, their business and their anxieties, their politics and their troubles. Ignorant – wilfully ignorant in many cases – and in other instances knowing all about the truth and not caring at all. But all of them, the whole mass of them, sweeping on and up in their blasphemies and devilries to the throne of God. While my mind was thus engaged, I had a vision."

I'm wondering if this seems to be a picture that we still view daily.

Do we see a world that is filled with utter darkness that creates absolute heaviness?

Where people are drowning in the storm of life, due to the oppression of society or through life choices or because of their addiction to the darkness.

Unfortunately I believe that vision is still the vision we face today.

People who are oppressed, broken, demoralised and exploited surround us and these people are people of all classes.

Whilst I was on placement at the Marion Salvation Army in Adelaide, I met these people and situations daily. People who suffered social isolation due to their mental illness, homelessness due to no housing opportunities being available, loneliness due to not knowing where to turn to meet people, fear because she's not sure whether she'll get beaten by her partner when she arrives home, worry because he's not sure where he's going to get food for another meal for his family, anger because there just doesn't seem to be anyway of making this life get any better.

Some of these people fight the darkness and finally find the light, but there are so many that fight the darkness and never get to see the marvellous light.

Are these oppressed, broken, demoralised and exploited people just out there, or are they sitting here in this room as well?

I guess the question we need to ask ourselves is 'Who Cares'. There are faithful people who choose to reach into the darkness and pull people into the light. But there are so many of us that stand in the safety of the light and plan and discuss, how to pull the people out of the darkness. But very few of us seem to make it our business to go and get the people out.

The amazing fact is, is that we have all lived amongst the darkness at some point but have luckily been able to claim the light.

We live right in front of the darkness, we talk about it, we hear lectures about it, we discuss it, we preach sermons about it and yet we seem to ignore it. What holds us back?

God speaks to us about it, calls us to do something about it, we hear his calls and yet we seem to ignore it? What holds us back?

We pray, we sing, we ask for more spiritual infilling, we ask for his strength and yet we seem to ignore it.

Sometimes we look into the darkness and snarl, we think we are better than the darkness and so we stay away, or do we just get scared of what could happen to us if we went into the darkness or do we fear that the light may shrink if we get too close to the darkness.

We have come to college to help pull people out, but have we placed ourselves at our heavenly Father's feet, to be at his absolute disposal. Ready to step out into the darkness to where Christ is already, to help pull more people into His light.

Psalm 36:9 says 'For you are the fountain of life, the light by which we see'. May that be our prayer today that we would drink again from the Lord's fountain of life, so that we can see all opportunities that He places before us, to pull more depraved people from the dark stormy sea.

So I finish by asking, do you think the ocean of life, today, is as dark and stormy as it seemed to William Booth in his day?

Who Cares?

by Cadet Sean Attard

Is the mighty rock seen in today's religiously pluralistic society as being as secure as it might have been in William Booth's day?

pluralism |ˈplʊərəˈlɪzəm| noun

1 a condition or system in which two or more states, groups, principles, sources of authority, etc., coexist.

• a form of society in which the members of minority groups maintain their independent cultural traditions.

In Booth's day, I say it is highly likely that they saw that Rock which represents Calvary as being more secure than we do today. Not only in Booth's day, more precisely also in his place and his culture, which was English culture.

In Booth's day, good, white, English Christians with names like Sawyer and Thompson and Fitzgerald had a sort of monopoly on religion. They were the only serious contenders out there. You only had two choices really – you were a respectable, upstanding British Christian citizen or you were a baby-killing, moonshine swilling, unwashed demoniac that was part of Charles Darwin's lot.

In his essay, *The Decline of Religion*, C.S. Lewis says "... we must remember that a widespread and lively interest in a subject is precisely what we call a Fashion. And it is the nature of Fashions not to last."

And what really was the Christian Fashion, began to die out when:

In more recent years, those honest folk have had to contend with all kinds of coloured people just barging their way in on those hallowed British shores – people with names like Sachin Tendulkar or Ravi Shankar or Sharif Abdur Rahim or Kareem Abdul Jabbar or Wasim Akram or Cherukh Khan or Yoko Ono or Cat Stephens and they didn't talk about Jesus. They brought with them these other strange folk and strange ideas like Buddha and I-Ching and Guru Nanak and Guru Gobind-Sing and Krishna and Mohammed.

And then, to make matters worse some devilish Pied Piper invented dancing and rock 'n' roll and things that were more entertaining than Christian perfection – and suddenly all of the churches are empty – and Christians have these electric guitar playing false idols to contend with!

So, yeah, a lot of people are pretty concerned (either happily or unhappily) because the church appears to be losing ground.

To quote Lewis again, he says that this isn't "...a new religious situation, but only revealed the situation which had long existed."

Whatever security or “ground” the church might have had in those days, Booth still saw that there was a drowning multitude. That hasn’t changed. It is just more obvious to us and appears to us in a greater variety of ways.

As for the real, actual security of the cross – that is also the same.

Rom.8: 38,39 “For I am convinced that neither angels nor demons, neither the present nor the future, nor any powers, neither height nor depth, nor Nanak or Krishna or Michael Jackson nor anything else in all creation will be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

But Booth’s vision wasn’t concerning the security of Calvary, and he had disdain for the practice of many of those Christians he saw on that rock – storing up riches (they might have called them blessings), talking about whether or not they were secure... WHO CARES about whether or not we are secure – we are surrounded with people suffering, living in deplorable conditions... and WHO CARES about them?

... Booth said “you’ve enjoyed yourself in Christianity long enough!”

and “Go to God and tell Him you are prepared as much as necessary to turn your back upon it all, and that you are willing to spend the rest of your days struggling in the midst of these perishing multitudes, whatever it may cost you!”

So hang the security! Let me tell you that Jesus can look after Himself, whether it seems the Church is losing ground or not! But there are people who cannot look after themselves. They need someone – someone like you, people like us who have been SAVED TO SAVE - to introduce them to Christ. They are the ones who need a chance to enjoy the security of Calvary!

We can give them that chance! God has put His Spirit in us, guaranteeing what is to come – may we be compelled to turn our back on the pleasant feelings of security, and dive into the midst of the suffering multitude – getting people saved and keeping them saved. That is our specialty – that is our destiny.

Life Outside the Amusement Park

by Cory Harrison

One Englishman once said of us Americans, “The problem with you Americans is that you have to be so confoundedly happy all the time. You have dedicated yourself to the pursuit of happiness. You brag about it as if it is the supreme and ultimate goal of all existence. Surely there are more important things in life than just being happy.

I think the guy is kind of right, it is an American thing. Right along side of life and freedom, we put in our Declaration of Independence, the words and “the pursuit of happiness.”

“Americans are endowed with certain unalienable rights among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.”

And some people I know have been living up this pursuit of happiness at the highest level. Their life is devoted to the pursuit of happiness. And isn't it funny how people go about happiness?

One Salvationist buys a few homes to be happy while another moves into the slums to live with the poor for the same feeling.

One woman becomes a nun and another woman becomes a whore.

One young man tries to find happiness by body building while another young man tries to find happiness by turning to drugs and destroys his body.

One couple is convinced that happiness is in children and they have 8 of them while another couple is convinced that children will get in the way of happiness and they go childless.

In a book entitled: “Conversion of Spiritual Journey” Malcolm Muggeridge says this about happiness:

“Of all the different purposes set before mankind, the most disastrous is surely the pursuit of happiness. Slipped into the American Declaration of Independence along with life and liberty as if it is some unalienable right, almost slipped in at the last moment perhaps by accident. Happiness is like a young deer, fleet and beautiful. Hunt him and he becomes a poor frantic animal. And after the kill, just a poor piece of stinking flesh.”

C.S. Lewis in his book Screwtape Letters has the arch devil, Screwtape, advising his apprentices on how they should go about deceiving the humans. He tells them that the way you do it is this:

“Through an ever increasing craving for an ever diminishing pleasure.” “That” he said, “is the formula of destruction.”

I read recently a short parable that defines the differences between the 2 ideas of happiness that are known to us all today. The parable was written by a girl named Gloria and she wrote it of herself.

Many times I have felt as if I am on a huge roller coaster that goes up and down and round and round. Sometimes I manage to escape and get off the mad ride, but I'm still in the amusement park.

Outside the park, the world looks exciting but it is too risky. I'm not sure I could survive so the amusement park remains the biggest attraction.

For everyone is being persuaded to stay inside and get back on the coaster. Yet I still think to the past of the people who went outside of the amusement park. They are the ones that seem to be truly seeking after God with all their mind, heart, soul, and body and are prepared to give it all up. They are the ones who live uncompromising lives. The committed.

They don't feel the grip of money, the pressure of groups, the punctured self discipline, the crushing fear of the future, the horror of death, the need of security, and the rule of self. They don't struggle with faith, hope, and love; faith, hope, and love pour out of them. And through them, it seems from my view point inside the amusement park, that those who live on the outside are those who are really happy.

And I would like to live out there but I am not strong enough to stand up for what I believe, partly because I am not sure what I believe.

My discipline is worthless inconstancy, myself wants to satisfy myself, I am not happy. I wish I could live an uncompromising life outside the amusement park. I wish it but yet I fear it at the same time.

Life outside the amusement park.

With this parable in mind, I am amazed at the example of Jesus and his pursuit of happiness and his life outside the amusement park.

He was a hugely happy man. We can read the record of his life and we see:

He had good relationships and friends. He was entertained by some wealthy people, not often but sometimes. He had the opportunity to do what he loved to do. He could teach, he could heal, he could have some good meals with friends and disciples. All of these doors were open to him for his happiness.

But think about this, through the last months of his life, all the doors of outward pleasure were slammed in his face. His ministry has taken a huge hit. His disciples are all but ready to desert him. The next day he will hang on a cross and die. And even in the midst of all this, he says this he says in John 15:11:

"I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete."

That intrigues me, all the support systems gone. All the doors to outward happiness shut. And He still says, “so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete.”

Can you imagine in your minds that here is a man about the face the most terrible death and he is talking about his joy and his happiness?

There are only 2 explanations for that: Either he is crazy mad or he knows something the rest of the world does not know.

At the core of his life was the happiness by being who God creating him to be.

For us, true happiness is in being who God created us to be. Or maybe I could say it like this: “True happiness is life outside the amusement park.”

The Great Divide

by Captain Genevieve Peterson

Occasionally, a quirky TV show or top notch Matt Damon movie will have a story line involving Siamese twins. Inevitably, it leads to the question of how one pursues a romantic relationship with the one twin, while the other twin is left 'tagging along'. The intimacy with the one is clearly hampered by the presence of the other. I can't help but draw the same analogy when we consider the union of our two-fold mission of The Salvation Army, that of evangelism and social action. Booth once stated "if you want my social work you have got to have my religion; they are joined together like the Siamese twins, to divide them is to slay them."

Now most Salvationists would not want to divide the two to the point where we removed one completely. While it is not uncommon for Christian charities to lose their evangelical ties, The Salvation Army has been firm in remaining as strongly an evangelical movement as much as it has remained a forceful welfare movement. However as Salvationists, too often the temptation is to encourage the one, and while acknowledging the other, ignore and neglect the lesser valued. The result is a skewed mission that 'almost' looks right, but in reality becomes terribly inadequate. So how did Booth do it? How did he use the two wings of the bird with such ease? And why do we seem to have so much trouble?

Let's start at the beginning where we so often get things muddled. Booth's statement was required at a time where society was in dire need of a sophisticated welfare system. There was poverty and depravity throughout London and he felt not just an inclination, but a mandate and spiritual imperative to act. Booth once stated, "What the poor and the fallen and the prodigal and the backslider and the hopeless crowds around us need is help, practical help, without delay. We must not only remember them and pray for them and talk about them, we must go to them in their miseries and deliver them." If we look at the world or sections of our own communities today, we might say that the condition of the poor is not too dissimilar from that of the late 19th century. However there are some significant differences. When we review the work he and others in the Army commenced, we must always keep in perspective the context of poverty. We are talking about an era that lacked social infrastructure and lacked a deep knowledge of social sciences. Mental illness, addiction, poverty, economic, child abuse, neglect, and political structures and their implication to the construction and consequently the stability of society, were all relatively unexplored academic fields. This meant that they were not working with an ideology that was mapped out with years of careful study, research and thought. They were not working from a social paradigm. Consequently, it means that their social practice was almost purely intuitive, and based entirely on their theology.

For the Booths, all social services were an outpouring of the Spirit working through them. Booth states that "All the social activity of the Army is the outcome of the spiritual life of its members. All social service must be based on the spiritual, or it will amount to little in the end." The relevance for us? We tend to base our social services on social

science practices, and then work our theology in. I am not suggesting we ignore the academic field of social science now and work purely from a theological standpoint. We could not even if we tried. However, you can see how our evangelism and social practice have disconnected, for they are often founded on different paradigms. It's like taking two people and sewing them together and calling them Siamese twins. Push as hard as you like, they will not become one being! What is the answer? We need a social theology developed for the Army based on sociological and theological principles, and then this needs to be taught to our people so that we can stop the unnecessary tug of war. We need an acknowledgement that social work is part of the gospel, but not the complete gospel. We need an acknowledgment that proclamation of the good news involves words, but very much includes practical temporal life-transforming actions. Without this, we will continue to compartmentalise our social and our evangelical actions to the point where they can actually be performed in two separate locations and by two separate sets of people.

When we are contemplating the development of a social theology and practice, we must also acknowledge that when we look at our past, we are looking at a nineteenth century State that connected poverty with morality and ethics, and where charity was both highly residual, value-laden, and based in reciprocity. Booth, and others like him, developed social practice that began to serve humanity with the knowledge that in part, their troubles were not completely their doing; that assistance did not need to be inextricably linked to punishment for the individual was often a victim of a flawed society. However, to suggest that poverty was taken completely out of the realm of morality would be to elevate Booth to the realm of fiction. While Booth may have recognised structural poverty, he did not apply a social, political or economic causal theory. Catherine, William and many others like them believed that social evils were both evils of society and of the individual, and to separate the spiritual condition from the social condition was unfathomable. The following quote of Catherine Booth should give you the general idea of their foundational thinking:

“We, Christians, see around us everywhere men and women under the influence of false ideas, given up to selfish indulgences and evil practices, which enslave their faculties and render real happiness impossible to them, either in this life or in that which is to come. Now, religious aggressive effort implies measures taken for their deliverance from these evil habits, and from the bondage of Satan, and the actual bringing of these souls into the liberty, power, and blessedness of the family of God. It is, in short, a holy warfare, prosecuted under the direction and power of the Holy Spirit, to bring men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan unto God.”

Or how about this one on the state of alcohol:

“Doubtless one secret of the church's failure in nearly all aggressive measures has been her ignoring the power of this great adversary. Why, even heathen chiefs, the heads of savage tribes, have sent us word that "it is of no use to send them the Bible, if at the same time we send them strong drink." Alas! that Christians have been so slow to learn the power of this mitrailleuse of hell, but, thank God, some of them are beginning to appreciate it at last, and these are crying, What is to be done? How shall we deal with

the drink? We answer, in the name of Christ and humanity, deal with it as you do with all other Satan-invented, Christ-dishonouring, soul-ruining abominations. Wash your hands of it at once, and for ever! And give a united and straightforward testimony to the world that you consider it an enemy of all righteousness and the legitimate offspring of Satan!”

The Booths, while showing a greater empathy for the individual, and placing greater responsibility on the State, did not see the social condition outside of the spiritual condition. I am not certain that modern day Salvationists still see this in the same way, which is why we can allow social and spiritual to remain separate entities but believe the same transformation will occur. For the Booths, social action and evangelism are one in the same in a literal and not metaphoric sense. Transformation and salvation occurred holistically and simultaneously. Sanctification was the freedom from sins that had manifested in negative social condition, and therefore sanctification is what they worked for in whatever way necessary. They didn't do social work to make themselves feel better as Christians, they didn't do it to get people into corps. They didn't even do it because it was a prosperous harvest of easily malleable vulnerable people! They did social action because the social and spiritual cannot be removed from one another for they are one in the same, both in cause and in solution.

However, this is where I find a lot of people get 'hazy' on the application, and as a result, we water down our entire understanding of salvation. Booth understood his mission from a theological standpoint, and his practice was deeply rooted in the knowledge that Jesus was Saviour. He states; “Our social operations are the natural outcome of Salvationism, or, I might say, our Christianity as instituted, exemplified in the life, teaching and sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Social work, in the spirit and practice which it has assumed with us, has harmonized with my own personal idea of religion”. So, when I say that for Booth, social and spiritual are one in the same, it is to say that they are an action that is unified and morphed, but still identifiable as separate entities with separate functions. A classic illustration would be the quote often attributed to St Francis, to “Preach the gospel at all times, and to use words if necessary”. This is NOT something I think Booth would have encouraged. While his actions were one in the same, they involved both social action, and the words of the gospel. Therefore we cannot say that to give a food hamper is to do evangelism. Rather it is to ask, why would we give a food hamper and not the message of the gospel? The food hamper is not Jesus, just a way of understanding the love of Jesus.

How is this concept remotely relevant, interesting or applicable for us today? Well, let's look at an example. For the Booths, alcoholism was not understood as an illness, but as a sin, either personal or as a result of generational sin. Therefore, the response to alcoholism was repentance, faith and an intense discipleship that superseded any form of case management we see today. One could argue that intuitive therapeutic measures were also included to assist the person as well, however there was very little understanding of addiction as a medical concern. Today, many of us in the social science field would see addiction as an illness and as a result, we would treat that illness with medication, counselling and personal support. We may incorporate

chaplains into our service, but we would place our socio-medical response as our primary means of support.

Fundamentally, we must recognise that we as a society have progressed considerably, and these changes must be implemented into our practice. However, we must also recognise that social science does not supersede theology, and therefore we must reconsider some of our welfare practices and programmes. This must be done with a careful development of a theology of social work, and not a meshing of old practices with new ideology. We must recognise that the Siamese twins cannot be separated, and that Siamese twins cannot be manufactured. If we can do this, we may perhaps at last realise that social and evangelical are not two functions performed by two sets of people, and rather one action offered by the same person.

Having said all of that, we know that there were campaigns and schemes carried out by the Army that attempted to transform society on a much larger scale, and these were more acts of social reformation than a focus on spiritual transformation. The Maiden tribute, much of the Darkest England scheme, the Match Factory and many other endeavours like them are all examples of social action that was not always closely connected to evangelical aims. These works would have provided significant 'distraction' from the mission of individual evangelism and discipleship, and provided tension in the development of the mission of the Army. Catherine was clear in her warnings of such distractions. However, I would argue that they were based in a clear theological paradigm with aims of social justice based firmly in Biblical principles. The difference between then and now is not in our larger social justice campaign work, and rather in our everyday social programme work. I see great value in social justice-related activities that push our largely selfish and corrupt society into acting with the justice principles God has designed for us. However I see great danger in leaving much of our everyday social work void of Christian influence within programmes and institutions, and allowing our discipleship to remain confined to the four walls of our shiny corps buildings. Our job as soldiers is surely to be on the frontline, where the darkness of abuse reigns. Our job as soldiers is surely to provide transformation for both now and into eternity. Our job is surely to have an understanding of the complexity and evil that lives in oppression to enable us to impact the social and spiritual realms. Our job is surely to educate ourselves in the social sciences, to work within our social programmes, to personally involve ourselves in the lives of the least, last and lost. Our job is to engage within the whole of our mission, and not just do the parts we like. And to do this, we will need to understand why and how we do things.

Only then perhaps will our Salvationists stop hiding in our corps performing occasional welfare tasks and instead stand along-side the poor with the same level of intensity, faith and love as our original Salvationists. Only then will we understand how spiritually oppressed the poor and addicted are, and how much they need the light of Jesus from within you. Only then will we realise why a good social welfare structure will not reap the kind of transformation God desires. Perhaps the divide between the social and evangelical is far more convenient for us middle-class Salvationists than we would care to acknowledge, and that it is not actually a divide between our theology and theory that

causes so much confusion, but a divide between our beliefs and subsequent lack of action.

Triune Aspects of Man in Scripture

by Major David Laeger

I THESSALONIANS 5:23 PARAPHRASED

The apostle Paul, due to persecution, was able to stay in Thessalonica (Acts 17:1-9) for a short time, perhaps only three Sabbaths, but he wrote letters of comfort and correction to them about their endurance and accurate understanding of the Parousia of Christ. This verse sums up the manner of living in Christ until He comes.

Now may	<i>I desire this for you, that</i>
the God of peace Himself make holy	<i>all of you together, though that requires each of you individually to be made holy</i>
wholly	<i>that is, in every part of our humanity, in every congregant and in all the congregation together, that you be holy</i>
and that the whole part	<i>of every fraction of every part</i>
of you all	<i>meaning, in all the faculties of each aspect of our humanity, I wish</i>
the spirit	<i>that innermost room of our being through which we communicate with God</i>
and soul	<i>that which identifies us as a human creature</i>
and body	<i>the earthly house of the soul through which expression of the soul is made (I pray that these things that comprise your humanity to be as if it had already been finished in you)</i>
be kept watch over	<i>having been saved and sanctified wholly, that He will diligently keep you</i>
blameless	<i>without defilement, having no spot of the world</i>
in the Parousia	<i>appearance of the King, when He comes for His own in rapturous glory</i>
of the Lord of us Jesus Christ.	

MATTHEW 22:34-40 PARAPHRASED

Our Lord in His last week met with many confrontations from the “religious” leaders – Pharisees, Sadducees, Herodians, scribes, elders of the people, Roman soldiers, Pilate, and Herod the tetrarch, the high priest and chief priests. On one of those days a lawyer from among them asked Jesus about the greatest commandment of God.

And a lawyer from among them asked, *a scholar of the law*

tempting Him, *because no one else had trapped Him in their interrogations, this one must have thought himself more clever*

and saying, *in the process of asking, perhaps a few times*

“Teacher, *An address of courtesy, though in context the lawyer was probably sarcastic in His question, testing the intelligence of Jesus the answer should be a very fundamental thing, known even by children; however, Mark 12:28 says the man was a scribe, and that account seems to present the questioner as one more genuinely interested than this paraphrase suggests of Matthew*

which is the greatest commandment *the law (Torah) has 613 commandments,*
in the law?” *which one of them is greatest would be a great task to conclude, unless you are Jesus*

And Jesus said to him, *no doubt with love and unshakeable calm, for He gives a summation of all the law in terms of love*

“You shall love the LORD your God *this is agape love, the love that exceeds description and complete definition by man, but may be experienced by and expressed through a man*

with your whole heart *the heart produces the thoughts; love God with all of your thoughts, let His love in you respond to Him likewise, passing every thought through the fire of His love*

and with your whole soul

*the soul is what we are humanly; love Him
with all of the characteristics of your
personhood*

and with your whole mind.”

*the Shema says “strength” and Mark’s
account adds the Shema word, “strength.”
In both the word for mind implies the place
where thoughts are cross-examined
Love God with all your intellect*

A Holiness Movement?

by Commssioner Wesley Harris

IT IS often claimed that the Army is a 'holiness movement' and no doubt an emphasis on the preaching and teaching of the Wesleyan doctrine of holiness was characteristic of our early days. The word 'holiness' was often on our lips. We spoke of holiness meetings, holiness songs and the holiness table, for example. Now at the grass roots the word seems to have dropped out of the Army vocabulary.

Of course in words as in clothes there are fashions which tend to change. So is it just the *word* 'holiness' which has lost its appeal? Do we have 'holiness teaching' under a different name? Has the greater open-ness to the ways of the wider Church (through Church Growth teaching, for example) caused us to leave our characteristic emphasis behind? I only ask.

Many corps now only have one meeting on a Sunday so that the message may have become more diffused rather than dealing with the specifics of salvation or holiness. We have our Brengle Institutes often with first class teaching but how much percolates down to corps? Who can tell? Army leaders and others encourage holiness teaching through our literature, so what more can be done? That is a challenge for us all.

The Army began as a somewhat outlandish expression of Christianity and adopted strange methods and means of reaching people for Christ. But our methods of witnessing were under girded by the credibility of our comrades. People might not have fancied our way of doing things but they could not deny the radical change in the lifestyle of our converts. 'Holiness unto the Lord' was not only written in the Bible it was like a watermark in the lives of the people called Salvationists. The kind of life proclaimed in the open-air and holiness meeting on Sunday was demonstrated in the factory or mill on Monday. Please God that will always be the case!

Holy Leadership

by Colonel Raymond Finger

I do not think the intention of the Brengle Institute is to turn any of us into spiritual giants, but rather, through the weakness of our humanity, to help us simply live and experience the life of God more meaningfully.

I think, essentially, we all want to capture whatever it is that God might have for us. The reality is that, in your life and mine, we become so distracted by the daily demands and grind of ministry, we do to God, what we do to our family and ourselves. We do not give Him the attention sufficient to gain from Him the life He wants us to experience and live.

It ought to come as no surprise then, as a result, many Officers live without life. Many work so hard at trying to please people, the program and the Army, that we burn ourselves out and become lost in the maze, or is it haze, of Officership.

Ancient Roman legend tells of Quo Vadis, the great Roman hero who, upon entering Rome, hailed a hero after a mighty battle, rode in his chariot along the boulevard lined with thousands of cheering Romans.

Quo Vadis had instructed the servant who rode standing behind him, to hold the laurel above his head and to keep repeating, 'Remember thou art only a man'.

Colleague Officers, allow me to say this in the generic sense:
Remember, thou art only a man.

Would the apostle Paul have considered himself a spiritual giant? I don't think so because, when I read Romans, despite the interpretation of the scholars, I see a man, like you and I, who struggled with daily temptation and the spiritual tensions that come because we are redeemed, but fallen creatures.

In speaking to the subject of 'Holy Leadership', it is not my intention to suggest that any one of us needs to become a spiritual giant, but rather, my hope is that the Brengle Institute might help you live again, if you are not already doing so.

In saying that, let me now say to you today, plainly and simply, that Spirit-filled leaders become the target for spiritual hits. You know that to be true, and so do I, because every one of us in this room has been an Officer for many years, and each of us is a victim of that kind of attack.

I have been influenced in my thinking today by Henri J.M. Nouwen's reflections on Christian Leadership.

I'm thinking that, perhaps the only difference between us and some of those who are no longer part of the fraternity that is Officership is we have managed to miraculously survive those horrible times of deep trial and temptation throughout our ministry.

We all have a story to tell and throughout the precious time spent in this sacred retreat, some of you will tell your story and, despite the pain, sadness and loss that might be

expressed, let me remind you that you are still serving the Lord. You are still an Officer, you are still in ministry. I hear you say, 'but I am only holding on by my fingernails.' It is amazing how long we can hold on by our fingernails when the floor boards have dropped away beneath our feet – it's called the sustaining grace of God. My story is this: when I have, at times, reached the very limits of who I am and what I've got to give, when the floor has dropped out and I have felt like I was in free-fall, God always showed up. God will always show up; it is the nature of His commitment to you and me, it is the covenant of His love. It is the nature of God to always, always show up. Jesus promised:

'I will be with you always, to the very end of the age.' Matthew 28:20

Can I tell you, that you are, by far, more resilient than you give yourself credit for. Make no mistake; we do not work in a world of concrete and steel, income and expenditure, even if that is what our hands are found to do in the daily occupation of our time.

We are servants of the Most High and Holy God. At heart, you are engaged in spiritual ministry because it is your spiritual calling to do so, and your faith has saved you. God has made it clear.

'For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.'

Ephesians 6:12

But I need you to hear more of the narrative from Ephesians 6, this time from the Message Bible.

Be prepared. You're up against far more than you can handle on your own. Take all the help you can get, every weapon God has issued, so that when it's all over but the shouting you'll still be on your feet.

Truth, righteousness, peace, faith and salvation are more than words.

Learn how to apply them throughout your life. God's word is an indispensable weapon. In the same way, prayer is essential in this ongoing warfare. vv.13-17

I want to say to you that Holy Leadership becomes grounded, resolved and is forged by the confrontation of trial and tribulation.

When we are confronted with the reality of our sinfulness, limitations, weaknesses, prejudices, basic humanness and when we come to the very end of ourselves, we begin to see God much more clearly.

It is difficult to see God when your eyes have become veiled by flattery, self-importance or vanity. Neither is it easy to see God in the maze and haze of the daily grind.

Let's look together at Luke 4:1-13 and see how holy leadership is challenged and therefore get a sense as to what holy leadership might look like.

v.1 'Jesus was full of the Holy Spirit' - and so are you!

Remember, Jesus had just walked out of the waters of baptism after the Holy Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove when God declared:

'This is my Son, whom I love.'

Jesus was then immediately led away by the Spirit into the wilderness.

Now, whilst the Scripture is silent on the subject, I am not convinced that Jesus chose the wilderness, despite His being led by the Spirit.

You see the ministry journey will often lead us to places where we might not necessarily choose to go or, worse still, to places where we do not want to go, or to places that are away from the familiar and comfortable that we have come to love and do not want to leave.

And isn't it true to say that none of us would voluntarily choose the wilderness, but, it has been the place where we have been led by a variety of reasons or experiences at different times throughout our Officership.

You don't need me to tell you that the wilderness can be a place of loneliness, abandonment, isolation and disappointment. It can be a desolate, merciless and, at times, hostile place.

It can be an unforgiving and empty place and we don't even have to get into our car and drive to it because, more often than not, it comes to us!

It can be tiredness that takes us there, disappointment, hurt, a deal that's gone wrong, a relationship that's getting to us, a congregation that seems recalcitrant and unresponsive to the Spirit of God or, perhaps, the seemingly unrealistic expectations of others. The pressures, demands, endless drain on our energy and struggle to balance life. Any number of things can take us there. I don't know - but what I do know is this.

IT IS A PLACE OF VULNERABILITY

As I follow the journey of Jesus into the wilderness, I see His vulnerability, I see His Spirit-filled life provoked, challenged, threatened and tested by the enemy of Christian faith, and the sheer reality of His circumstances.

And I tell you this today, because it is where the church is being disassembled, brick by holy brick, and where its integrity is being trashed, particularly throughout the western world.

It is, therefore, where the holiness of God's Leaders is being hindered by the four most beguiling, insidious and destructive temptations common to each of us. We know them well.

THE FLESH - THE WORLD - THE DEVIL - OURSELVES

THE FLESH Luke 4:2-3

“For forty days, He was tempted by the devil. (be under no misapprehension as to where temptation comes from, it is not from God, The Salvation Army, some person, but it is from the devil. The devil is always the architect of temptation) He ate nothing during those days, and at the end of them He was hungry. 3 The devil said to Him, ‘tell this stone to become bread.’

So, here is the first of the temptations and challenge to the Holy Leader.

INDULGE YOURSELF

The word ‘flesh’ is often used to describe the obsessive desires of the body. Within every one of us there is a motor that drives us, wants, desires, cravings, demands, all of which are fueled by a compulsive passion to indulge ourselves.

Jesus might have thought, ‘well, it’s only bread: one small bun, one pathetic slice, what does it matter, where is the harm and, what’s more, I’ve earned it. I’ve been out here for forty days, I’ve been obedient, and I’ve done all that has been asked of me, I think it’s my turn so, why not?’

In the maze and haze of Officership, it is so easy to lose sight of God and what is right, righteous and holy, when you are in that place.

Those who have either served in the Personnel department, or been a member of the Officer Review Board, have heard this sad story too many times as a justification for behavior that was not right, righteous or holy.

It was only bread, it was only ever going to be a few dollars, it was a difficult time and I work hard, long hours and we get precious little to show for it.

You and I both know the Church is littered with people who have chosen to indulge themselves; the ministry has been scandalized by clergy who have chosen to indulge themselves. From time to time there is a need to speak with Officers and staff over inappropriate internet use. Good people who lose sight of God and what is right, righteous and holy and who get caught in the web of pornography; bread that feeds the insatiable appetite of sexual indulgence.

Jesus’ story moves to another place as does ours.

THE WORLD

I want to read Luke 4:5-6 and here is an opportunity for power, authority and splendor.

5 The devil led him up to a high place and showed him in an instant all the kingdoms of the world. 6 And he said to Him, I will give you all their authority and splendor, for it has been given to me, and I can give it to anyone I want to. 7 So if you worship me, it will all be yours.

This surely is the place for personal opportunism, of unnatural and accelerated gain and greed, the place to:

GRATIFY YOURSELF

This is one of those moments when you want to just step right into the story, take Jesus by the shoulders and say.

It's not his to give; it's not his to give!

Sadly, for some, there are times when, lost in the maze and haze, they find themselves taken to a place where the humility of ministry becomes obscured by an obsession for lofty, elevated places. And some of us know colleagues who live bitter lives, resentful because of appointments they were never given that they believed should have rightfully been theirs.

Appointments are not his to give: position, power, authority and splendor are not his to give. And, because they are not his to give, the truth is, you will never get what he promises, unless it comes through devious means. But that will not stop him from using the notion of them to destabilize us, which is always his plan – distraction and destabilization.

What you might get, through whatever scheme used, is something that may look like what you want but, if obtained by ill-gotten means, you will never get what God gives to the worthy. What you will get is a poor imitation of the blessing and you will go on living in discontent.

Interestingly enough, there are people in business doing crooked deals every day, and it's not theirs to deal. The company directors of HIH have, to this day, still not showed any remorse for deals done which were not theirs to do. Not surprisingly, the e-news *Lawyers Weekly* makes this observation regarding corporate fraud, for example.

'Gambling has emerged as the most common motive for fraud. Almost half, (44%) of the total value of fraud was attributed to gambling, a two-fold increase over the 2006 survey.'

The article went on to say these acts are, 'typically motivated by greed.'

Greed, is simply wanting what might not be ours to take. Kingdoms of the world, and it can all be yours because it is mine to give - It is a lie!

Just because the Army is not a corporation, doesn't mean we are immune from fraud because it takes places on varying scales.

What I am saying is simply this, the temptation that came to Jesus, in that moment when He was transported by the devil to a high place, was to gratify Himself. Flattered by the very idea of personal grandeur, authority and splendor, it sounds wonderful and alluring, but it is a lie, because it is not his to give and therefore it is not ours to take.

It is the same temptation that seeks to rob leaders of what is right, righteous and holy. Subtle, suggestive but offered at a time of vulnerability when, all that Jesus had were the clothes upon his back and living in the poverty of an isolated, barren and obscure location in the back-blocks of nowhere in particular.

Into His wilderness world came the temptations from the devil.

Firstly, there was the temptation of the FLESH with an invitation for Him to INDULGE HIMSELF. It was only bread so, what of it, who cares, so what? Next, came the temptation of the WORLD with an invitation for Him to GRATIFY HIMSELF. Where He was taken to a high place so as to get a glimpse of what it could be like, what it would feel like, to have authority and splendor.

But isn't it true that we are our own worst enemy? Each of the temptations focuses the attention on us, me, myself, mine. Now the truth is, the devil did not take Jesus to a high place, or the city of Jerusalem, He was transported in his own mind.

He was in the wilderness and what I am saying is that, when you are in a vulnerable place, you are subject to temptation and bizarre thinking that is not normal for you. The wilderness is not always a location, but more a state of mind or a space we can be in at any time.

In the third temptation, Jesus pictured Himself in Jerusalem and taken to the highest point of the temple, when the devil said 'jump'. Fascinating, you know some may be inclined to read this in an entirely different way when speaking about personal vulnerability.

Isn't it true that there are people who go to high places believing that they can fly, that they are a bird, they can fly and no harm will come to them? Some might say, this is what happens when a person is at their worst or suffers deprivation, no food, exposure to the elements, lost or alone in a 'wilderness'?

OUSELVES Luke 4:9-11

Luke 4:9-11

The devil led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the highest point of the temple. 'If you are the Son of God,' he said, 'throw yourself down from here. 10 For it is written, 'He will command his angel's concerning you to guard you carefully; 11 they will lift you up in their hands, so that you will not strike your foot against a stone'.'

Here is the temptation to;

BE SPECTACULAR

Do you know what I am talking about here, is it possible that what drives us at times might have little to do with, 'may Your Kingdom come and Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.' And more to do with another kingdom?

It is entirely possible to become so enamoured by the likes of Brian Houston, Robert Schuller, Ric Warren, Bill Hybells and Tim Costello.

With their 5000 or 10,000 seat auditoriums and influential ministries that place them on the top 10 speakers most in demand around the Christian world.

Friends, here is the question, am I living close to Jesus, am I in a close relationship with God, do I spend time with the Word of God and in prayer? If the answer is, 'not really,' then you might actually be in a wilderness even though you show up for work every day while your heart, mind and spirit might be in another space?

The temptation to be spectacular can seem so innocuous because, we can be convinced that, all I am doing is for the Master, when that may very well mask a deeper agenda.

Finally, the most shocking of all the temptations - the last - was that of the DEVIL himself, with an invitation for Jesus to SELL HIS SOUL.

THE DEVIL

Look at Luke 4:7

v.7 'so if you worship me, it will all be yours.'

Now, there's the catch, there always is. To get what you want means you have to compromise something else, to give something, trade something or even sell something.

Does this imply that we would knowingly, intentionally compromise what is right, righteous and holy in order to get what we want? That is exactly what is invited; to knowingly do what is wrong, corrupt and unholy.

It is obvious that the devil was not deterred by the reality that Jesus was not only the Son of God, but the Incarnate God. Still, his bold assault was to invite apostasy.

And you can be very sure that, if he tried it on the Son of God, there is nothing that stands in his way of trying it on you.

In our weakness, vulnerability and isolation he comes and, what sits behind the scheming of what you want, is the cost of your soul.

The alluring offers of the world, whatever they might be, will come at the cost of your soul.

The Bible says:

'What good will it be for a man if he gains the whole world, yet forfeits his soul.' Matthew 16:26

The temptation is to sell yourself to get what you want.

This incident in the wilderness was not the first time the devil had made this kind of assault. The mirror story is told in Genesis chapter 2 when it was told to Adam and Eve that, if they ate from the tree of knowledge, their 'eyes would be open and they would be like God.'
Genesis 3:5

The notion sounded attractive. The devil asked, 'did God really say that you should not eat from the that particular tree?' He went on to say that it would be alright for them to touch the forbidden fruit. He told them they would not die as God had suggested. He told them that their eyes would be open and, finally, here is the big one - he told them that they would be like God.

As a consequence, our doctrine says:

We believe our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

In the sad litany of temptations, there is still one more - sting in the tail - and it almost goes unnoticed. Twice the devil provoked him.

v 3&9 'If you are the Son of God.'

The provocation is this, if you are who you claim to be, then you can do whatever you want! If you are the Son of God, then act; use your power, use your authority and act. By doing so you become your own god and the world serves you. Do what you please, take what you please; behave as you please because, if you are who you claim to be, then it is all yours anyway.

Now think about it for a moment: the proposition is nothing less than an inversion of God's expressed way for the world. It inverts holiness, rightness and righteousness and it is the complete opposite of servant-hood and, of itself, becomes self-serving.

Henri Nouwen observes:

One of the greatest ironies of the history of Christianity is that its leaders constantly gave in to the temptation of power - political power, military power, economic power, or moral and spiritual power - even though they continued to speak in the name of Jesus, who did not cling to power, but emptied himself and became as we are.

Nouwen goes on to say: 'It seems easier to be God than to love God, easier to control people than to love people, easier to own life than love life.'

I want you to note the double inflection created by the challenge to identity.

On one hand it implied Jesus had power and authority, therefore He could do as He pleased, whilst on the other hand, it can be accusative and condemning.

If you are who you claim to be, then perhaps you can't do the things that you have power and authority to do?

How many of us are destroying, or have destroyed, our precious, and often fragile, inward confidence by critical self-doubt and condemnation over the things that we tell ourselves we should be doing.

Worse still perhaps, by others who tell us, because we are an Officer, what we should be and what we should be doing.

I want you to think about this because, at times, the battle is much more subtle than we might know.

The truth is, you might never succumb to the kinds of temptations to indulge yourself, gratify yourself or sell yourself, but what about this?

TO DOUBT YOURSELF

Is self-doubt not one of the most debilitating and crippling thoughts that haunt our thinking and minds?

Isn't it true that we look with admiration at colleagues and peers believing they have it all together? It all seems to come to them so easily, they are so good at everything they do and by comparison, we feel like a failure.

And what sits behind this self-punishment is the voice. The sarcastic, condemning, patronizing voice that says, 'if you are, who and what you claim to be, then act, do what you are supposed to have power and authority to do!'

The truth is that Officers are required to be all things to all people, but that will often mean we have to work outside of our gift-set, our skill-set, and, at times, even outside of our level of competence.

What it does not mean is that it will come easy, sit easy, feel easy or is easy. Sometimes it means we will work with what we do have and we will do our best, if that is what's required.

My own personal experience tells me that these are the times when the great grace of God does for us, what we are unable to do for ourselves.

My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness. Therefore I will boast all the more gladly about my weakness, so that Christ's power may rest on me. 10 For when I am weak, then I am strong. 2 Corinthians 12:9-10

You can have confidence in God, even if you have diminished confidence in yourself and as life and times goes on, so you will know the truth of what is means by the words – 'my power is made perfect in your weakness'.

Which is another way of saying, do your best and leave the results to God. It is after all, His business not yours.

The things of which I speak today are hindrances to Holiness that will rob the leader of Holy Leadership and Godliness of life.

I am saying that the journey of Holiness requires that we live in an experience of God that will easily reflect and reveal the falseness of temptation and evil invitation.

Thus, we might live victorious, God-honoring lives that lead others to Christ.

Notes

1 Henri J.M.Nouwen, In The Name Of Jesus, Darton, Longman & Todd Publishing 1998

2 Lawyers Weekly:

http://www.lawyersweekly.com.au/blogs/risk_management/archive/2009/03/11/face-of-corporate-fraud-unmasked.aspx

3 Ibid.

4 Psalm 91:11-12

5 Salvationist Doctrines, Schedule 1 of the Salvation Army Act 1980, Article 5

6 Henri J.M. Nouwen, In The Name Of Jesus, p. 58

7 Ibid. p. 59

Something About Mary by Captain Danielle Strickland

At an afterschool club in an inner city neighbourhood we spoke recently about Mary. A friend of mine refers to Mary as the Catholic boogieman... she comes out at Christmas and scares all the protestants!

The fear around worshiping Mary often crowds out a proper response at the amazing reality of Mary's life story and witness. And I'd like to consider a couple of important things about her. Use them to reflect, emulate and well, just for plain inspiration.

Scripture: Luke 1

Gender.

It is worth some consideration that the Jewish people have been waiting in silence for 400 years since the last prophetic announcement of a coming Messiah. That's a long time to wait - exacerbated, I'm sure, by the occupation they now find themselves in, the fever for a Messiah had not been hotter. Apart from the miraculous intervention of oil in the Temple during the Maccabean revolt (which is symbolized in Hannakah), there was stunning silence from the Heavens. Until, Elizabeth prayed and Mary obeyed.

Then, all of heaven was loosed on earth, and the world would never be the same. In a middle-eastern culture of degradation and oppression, in a religious system that pushed down women to the level of a dog – God shows up at their request, at their response and through their loving obedience to Him. This would be the time to write 'wow' in the margin of your Bible. It's epic.

William Booth (founder of The Salvation Army) once famously said, '(some of) my best men are women' and most people think that he meant it as a grudging practical response to the enormous need – that he 'had' to use women to get the job done. They'd be mistaken. William came to a conclusion, with many thanks to his heroic wife, Catherine that women were God's chosen vessel for Good News. Mary is the case in point, but it's incarnation Good News – the event crowning the history of all events – the start of the good news through the birth of Jesus is announced by and established through a woman. The victory of Good News through the resurrection would also be the honour of women. A coincidence?

Both events are historical shifts – cosmic sized moments of God communicating beyond words of His intention to redeem all of humanity – both of them done through women. To be sure men are also central to the story. Joseph deserves more than a father's day nudge for his own obedience and accompaniment of Mary's journey, Zechariah's silence was helpful, and the offspring of both women were men of Great News and the twelve disciples etc... but the essential role that women have played in the ushering in of God's kingdom come can't be overstated.

Yet, it's often overlooked.

Economics.

Back to my neighbourhood; an urban welfare housing estate full of first generation Australian immigrants whose parents are on the bottom rung of the economic ladder. As a result, the kids are not exactly the cream of the crop of civilized and educated young Australians. None of them are likely to win Australian youth of the year any time soon. As a matter of fact, the only extra curricular activities going on in this neighbourhood are free, volunteer driven, inconsistent, and a bit lacking in quality. No offense to the volunteers of church groups that continue to fill the gap- but the reality of their lives lined up with the wealthier suburban kids in western worlds... well, it doesn't compare. These kids are starting at a deficit. I spoke with a camp leader years ago who was convinced that one of the best ways to change the nation was to target wealthy kids at his camps. He recognized that charity demanded care for the marginalized kids of the world – but in the real world... we ought to target those who would rise to be the future leaders, decision makers in the fabric of society. It's an interesting angle. Mary was from the urban welfare masses. She lacked education, economic security and basic human rights. She was, well, poor. She was on the bottom economic rung of societies coveted money and status ladder.

You know how you can tell? Read her song. Do it. Read her song like you are with her in the proclamation of God's kingdom come. The song reads like gangster rap lyrics from Compton but with Heavenly overtones. "Filled the hungry, but sent the rich away... lifted up the humble, and brought down the proud." We may like to think of Mary as a postcard image of humility and meakness – but her lyrics may just give us a hint of her known oppressed state overturned by God's intervention. Mary is a fighter – she fought the powers and won. She used obedience to God as a weapon against her enemies and from the bottom rung she began her climb. And in God's kingdom come – she ends up in a great cosmic reversal on the top end of the ladder – shouting to all who will listen... good news, good news indeed! Jesus said it himself when he began his public ministry thirty some years later, although he borrowed an old pop favourite from Isaiah, "the spirit of the Lord is upon me because he has brought Good News to the POOR."

Conclusion:

There is a lot more about Mary that's worth considering. Most things we've admired over the years; her obedience, her humility, her survival and dependence on the Lord, her favour with God, her faithful witness raising Jesus, her grief at his short life and tragic death.

But this season – let's take a few minutes to reflect on the revolutionary figure of Mary. Mary the freedom fighter, Mary the oppressed – set free. Mary, the poor girl from the bad side of town rising against the odds to defy the world's system of power, defy the critics and become central in the great unfolding drama of God's kingdom come. Now with that kind of news, there is something about Mary indeed.

Start Stomping by Major Stephen Court

http://www1.salvationarmy.org.uk/uki/www_uki.nsf/vw-issue/0F73D227F83BC9D38025766900332492?opendocument&id=5C46762EE4B97FA880257669002F15DE

Major Stephen Court, Australia Southern, suggests we should...

...Start stomping!

DUSK fell on the remote hills and sparse treeline, playing tricks with your vision. Was that a wild animal skirting across the valley or, more innocuously, a shadow? As night settled into its quiet somnolence, the highly decorated Commander parachuted into enemy territory. The Reclamation Operation began. And that, folks, is the beginning of the end of human history. Jesus undertook to reclaim enemy land and re-establish the Kingdom of God on Earth.

The Salvation Army has a healthy view of spiritual warfare, recognising that, in this gigantic reclamation operation, spiritual warfare is the means to the end of the return of Jesus Christ as global King. To many people, spiritual warfare, as engaging a subject as it is, can become the end. That it is a reclamation operation connotes that the Earth is now not under the control of God. People tend to get all tied up in knots at this statement, as if it is somehow a poor reflection on the sovereignty of God. This is poor thinking. Understand this: God created everything. He set the rules in this closed system called humanity. These include such things as free will and consequence. God, having set the rules, plays by them. When people, choosing with their free will, sinned, the consequence was that Satan, who had bamboozled them, lawfully took the dominion over the Earth that had been delegated to them by God. Do you follow? And so the Bible correctly states that Satan is the god of this age and the power of darkness in this world. He owns it. That is why Jesus initiated the massive reclamation operation.

Recently, my wife Danielle described the whole scenario by comparing it to D-Day and VE-Day in the Second World War. Although the decisive victory was won at D-Day, much fighting remained. Some battles were lost. Casualties mounted. There was much carnage, before VE-Day arrived. This is important to emphasise because many Christians believe, incorrectly, that Jesus crushed Satan at the Battle of Golgotha and that all we have to do is mop up. No, no, no! Such thinking has some serious consequences affecting our battle readiness, our battle performance, our battle willingness and the wellbeing of others.

You see, Jesus did not crush Satan at the Battle of Golgotha. Yes, he defeated him. Yes, he humbled him. Yes, he won in such a way that we can compare it with D-Day. But the Bible calls it a bruising, not a crushing. This bruised enemy is dangerous. History records that the wounded foe is a dangerous enemy.

Back in Genesis 3:15, when God is explaining the consequences of sin to Eve and to the serpent, he asserts that her seed will bruise the serpent's head, and the serpent will

bruise his heel. Jesus will bruise Satan. And he did that at the Battle of Golgotha. But look at Romans 16:20: 'The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet' (New International Version). Two things are pertinent here: a) God will soon crush Satan. That means Satan isn't crushed yet; b) He will soon crush Satan under our feet. There is a boatload of good stuff right here. First, it shows us Jesus' modus operandi, the way he does things. We know that Joshua's life foreshadows some of the things that Jesus does centuries later. They share the same name. They both lead their people out of the wilderness into the Promised Land. And so on.

You may remember that after Joshua took Jericho the surrounding nation states were terrified. A southern coalition was formed by five kings to rid Canaan of the Israelite intrusion. The Battle of Gilgal was an historic victory. The five kings attacked the Gibeonites at Gilgal, knowing that Joshua would get sucked into the fighting to honour the brand new covenant he had entered into with them. It was a supernatural battle. The Bible reports that the sun stood still, waiting for Joshua to finish off the five armies of the Amorites. Not only that, but God directly pitched in by hurling great hailstones at the enemy and killing more of them than the Israelites did.

When the battle was obviously lost, the southern coalition kings hid in a cave at Makkedah. At the end of the day, Joshua and his army rolled the stone away and yanked out the frightened kings. Now, Joshua could have easily killed them on the spot. Instead, he had his captains place their feet on their necks. When you place your foot on the neck of the foe you are exercising your complete domination over your foe; Joshua was sharing the domination with his soldiers and allowing them to share in the victory. Then he chopped off their heads.

The God of peace will soon crush Satan under your feet. You probably remember Ephesians 1:22 and 23 on our position in Christ. We are the Body. Jesus is the head. All things are under our feet. All we have to do is start stomping.