

# **JOURNAL OF AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY**

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

**Transposing the Gospel** *page 5*  
Major Robert Evans

**Samuel Brengle and Phoebe Palmer** *page 6*  
Major Young Sung Kim

**Discovering the Origin of the Holiness Table** *page 9*  
Steve Bussey

**The Fish** *page 21*  
Captain Gordon Taylor

**An Inside Perspective on Magdalene** *page 27*  
Major Andrew Bale

**A Timeless Celebration** *page 28*  
Commissioner Harry Read

**On "Changing the Army"** *page 29*  
Captain Andy Miller III

**A Biblical Model for the DCs** *page 32*  
Dana Townsend

**7 Characteristics of Soul Goals** *page 36*  
Steve Simms

**Blow My Mind and Heal My Heart** *page 37*  
Major Danielle Strickland

**Enthusiasm** *page 38*  
Commissioner Wesley Harris

## **Editorial Introduction**

by Major Stephen Court, Editor

Welcome to JAC96. This is the 96th issue of Journal of Aggressive Christianity, established 1999. And we keep pumping this stuff out, God helping, every two months, six times a year.

Along with familiar names, we have some new contributors this issue – Taylor and Townsend. And we've got a cluster of poetry for you, too!

Major Robert Evans, corps officer in Australia, discusses the value of Transposing The Gospel as we seek to effectively extend the great commission.

Major Young Sung Kim, ambassador for holiness in the United States, gives us some insight into the holiness teaching and influence of Phoebe Palmer and Samuel Logan Brengle in Brengle And Palmer.

Steve Bussey, co-founder of Salvation Factory in New York, shares some research on Discovering The Origin Of The Holiness Table.

Our poetry cluster starts with Captain Gord Taylor, area commander in British Columbia, with an extended consideration called The Fish.

Major Andrew Bale, a corps officer in the United Kingdom, follows with an inside perspective on Magdalene.

And, finally, Commissioner Harry Read shares a song composed for a Regent Hall anniversary called A Timeless Celebration.

Captain Andy Miller III, a corps officer in the United States, offers a covenantal paradigm for discussions On 'Changing The Army'.

Dana Townsend, a soldier in Australia, suggests that the efforts of Paul and Barnabas might provide for us A Biblical Model For DCs?

Steve Simms, Sergeant in USA, has created for us 7 Characteristics of Souls Goals.

Major Danielle Strickland riffs of the love of God in Blow My Mind And Heal My Heart. This is an outtake of her recovery series over at [daniellestrickland.com](http://daniellestrickland.com).

And rounding things up again is Commissioner Wesley Harris, who, these days, is pondering Enthusiasm.

Thanks for taking the time to check in. We invite you to read, apply, and share each of these articles and those from the previous 95 issues. May they be used by God to accelerate the advance of the salvation war on every front around the globe.

## Transposing the Gospel

by Major Robert Evans

In an attempt to effectively communicate the gospel message in the modern age, I have often heard people suggest that we need to make the gospel more relevant. While the intention is to make the gospel more accessible, this suggestion can infer that the gospel is no longer adequate or compromise the integrity of the message.

I hold a strong conviction that the gospel is always relevant and entirely adequate with its message transcending time and culture for all generations! The only inadequacy it faces is our ability or inability to communicate it effectively. This is the space where the relevance of the method often gets confused with the truth of the message.

We can attempt to translate the message, which runs the risk of changing its form and altering its original meaning and intention.

We can attempt to transfigure the message, which runs the risk of embellishing parts to appear more attractive or palatable to our audience.

or...

We can attempt to transpose the message, which transfers it to a different place or context without changing its original state.



The word transpose is most often used in the context of music to describe the process of changing the key or the sound of the music while remaining true to the structure of the original score. A thoughtful transposition of a piece of music preserves the integrity of the original composition, compliments the gifts of the musicians performing the arrangement, and makes a meaningful connection with the target audience.

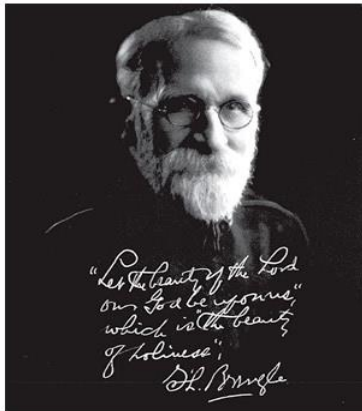
When it comes to effectively communicating the gospel today, the idea of transposing the message, like with a piece of music, seems to fit well and resolves the conflict between the message and the method; preserving the integrity of the former while promoting the innovation of the latter.

See more at:

<http://ephesiansfour12.blogspot.com.au/2015/03/transposing-gospel.html#sthash.Hdhx5Hgq.dpuf>

## Samuel Brengle and Phoebe Palmer

by Major Young Sung Kim  
*Territorial Ambassador for Holiness*  
*The Salvation Army USA Eastern Territory*



Samuel Logan Brengle (1860-1936), known as 'the teacher of holiness,' wrote nine books on holiness in his life time as gifts for the people's spiritual life. Reading Brengle's books should be an experience of blessing not only for nurturing one's soul for holy living, but also for learning about many spiritual giants as Brengle saw them. The list of the names mentioned in Brengle's books are as follows: Augustine, Martin Luther, John Knox, Baxter, George Fox, St. Francis, John Bunyan, William and Catherine Booth, Bramwell Booth, John and Charles Wesley, George Whitefield, John Fletcher, Jonathan Edwards, David Brainerd, Livingston, Charles Finney, Asa Mahan, Hannah Whittal Smith, Daniel Steele, Dwight L. Moody and more.

In addition to those names, there is one great female feature that we don't want to miss in our reading of Brengle's books. She is Phoebe Palmer (1807-1874)! She is the one who has been called "the mother of the holiness movement." Palmer is one of the most influential thinkers and writers in building Brengle's own Wesleyan understanding of holiness in the context of the 19th century holiness movement.



Those who enjoy reading Brengle's books may wonder where we can actually find her name in Brengle's books considering her significant place in Brengle's theological and spiritual journey. Ironically, we will not see her exact name in Brengle's books as much as we are expecting to see it. However, it is important to acknowledge that Brengle emphasizes Christ as the altar for receiving sanctifying grace through consecrating ourselves to God by professing the simple faith which is the condition of salvation and sanctification. I believe that Brengle's theological emphasis of Christ as the divine altar in his writings is clearly related to the lineage of Palmer's distinctive teaching on holiness, known as Palmer's "Altar theology." In my reading, the influence of Palmer's "Altar theology" echoes in many places in Brengle's books.

It is not surprising to find some books that Palmer wrote in Brengle's personal library. Especially, we can see Palmer's two books, *Entire Sanctification to God* and *Faith and Its Effects or Fragments From My Portfolio* on his book shelf. These books are considered as two of the major writings for understanding Palmer's distinctive teaching of "Altar theology." It is also thrilling to find Brengle's own signature on both books and

his notes on the margins in many pages. In fact, The Salvation Army reprinted Palmer's *Entire Sanctification to God* and used it as "a primer for the teaching of entire sanctification within the movement."<sup>1</sup>

Having said that, let us briefly discuss Palmer's "Altar theology" in light of its influence upon the development of Brengle's theology of holiness. As a metaphor and theological method, the "Altar theology" is a cornerstone of Palmer's holiness theology. First, it shows the pragmatic implication of Palmer's holiness theology by synthesizing the ethos of 19th century American revivalism which emphasizes the instantaneousness and immediacy of the work of the Holy Spirit during the experience of sanctification. Second, it shows Palmer's Christocentric attention in her principle of interpretation of the Bible. Arguably, as a key concept of Palmer's "Altar theology," the "shorter way"<sup>2</sup> demonstrates the originality and creativity of Palmer's holiness theology in modifying and popularizing John Wesley's teaching of entire sanctification.

In her book *Entire Devotion to God*, we see Palmer's definition of holiness in relation to her idea of "Altar theology." She explains that: "Holiness is a state of soul in which all the powers of the body and mind are consciously given up to God; and the witness of holiness is that testimony which the Holy Spirit bears with our spirit that the offering is accepted through Christ. The work is accomplished the moment we lay our all upon the Altar."<sup>3</sup> For her, Christ is "the Christian altar" that "sanctified the gift."<sup>4</sup> Because of that reason, "the only way to retain the grace of entire sanctification is by *keeping* all upon the altar."<sup>5</sup> Now we see how Palmer's "Altar theology" is implicated into her core understanding of holiness by introducing the concept of the "shorter way." In teaching of the "shorter way," Palmer formulated a three stage process - entire consecration, faith, and testimony - as the way of attaining the way of holiness. She explains it as follows:

There are distinctive steps in the attainment of the great salvation! In that of ENTIRE CONSECRATION, I had so carefully pondered the path of my feet, that the way back again to self, or the world in any degree, was returnless. The next step, FAITH, in regard to Divine acceptance of all, had also been distinctly taken. And now, as I plainly saw the third step clearly defined in the Word, I took the advance ground – CONFESSION.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity* (Alexandria, Virginia: Crest Books, 2003), p. 202.

<sup>2</sup> Under the tenet of her "Altar theology," in the first four part of her book *The Way of Holiness*, Palmer teaches her doctrine of "the shorter way," by asking the question, "Is There Not a Shorter Way?." In that book, she answers that "There is a shorter way." Phoebe Palmer, *The Way of Holiness with Notes by the Way: Being a narrative of Religious Experience, Resulting from a Determination to Be a Bible Christian*. 50<sup>th</sup> ed. 1867. (Reprinted edition: Salem, Ohio: Schmull Publishing Co., Inc., 1988).

<sup>3</sup> Phoebe Palmer, *Entire Devotion to God*. 14th ed. Originally published as *Present to My Christian Friend on Entire Devotion to God* (New York: n. p., 1853. Reprinted edition: Salem, Ohio: Schmull Publishers, n. d.), p. 21.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 76.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>6</sup> Richard Wheatly, *The Life and Letters of Mrs. Phoebe Palmer* (New York: W. C. Palmer, Publisher, 1881; New York and London, Garland Publishing, Inc, 1984), p. 43.

The main idea of Palmer's teaching of the "shorter way" can be characterized as follows: "A Christian must be conscious of utterly complete consecration, of being 'on the altar,' before he may exercise such trust. Moreover, the faith was placed not in his own experience but in 'Christ the altar' and the word of God."<sup>7</sup> Palmer's concept of the "shorter way" is represented as the most optimistic implication of the Wesleyan teaching of holiness. She affirmed the urgent possibility of experiencing entire sanctification now, in the present moment, based on the believers' total consecration to Christ in faith, by believing that Christ is the divine altar for those who surrender their lives to God who purifies and empowers them.

Truly, we thank God for Samuel Brengle; his personal example of a sanctified life as well as his holiness teaching as a treasure for the mission of The Salvation Army. At the same time, we also thank God for Phoebe Palmer, her distinctive influence in the history of the holiness movement and beyond. There are many good reasons to continually study their teachings on holiness and to imitate their sanctified lives as models for ourselves to become true followers of Christ.

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<sup>7</sup> Timothy L. Smith, *Revivalism and Social Reform: American Protestantism on the Eve of the Civil War* (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1989), p. 127.



## Discovering the Origin of the Holiness Table

by Steve Bussey

### SEARCHING FOR THE ORIGIN OF THE HOLINESS TABLE



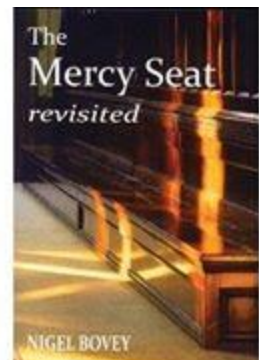
I am part of a group called the SAHPA (Salvation Army Historic and Philatelic Association). One of the participants, Erik Johannson, was asking about the origins of the Holiness Table. Apparently in Scandinavian Corps, they have never had these - utilizing the Mercy Seat for both salvation and holiness.

To date, I have not been able to find a satisfactory response to the source of *where* this came from and *why* it was introduced. For many, it seems to only be a piece of furniture on which we place flowers and offering plates with a red cloth which says, "Holiness Unto the Lord."

When I was young, I would witness people who would go and kneel at the Holiness Table - which symbolized that they were seeking holiness of heart. To be honest, it looked more like they wanted to pray independently...

Probably the best treatment to date has been Nigel Bovey's chapter on "The Holiness Table" in his brilliant, must-read book, The Mercy Seat Revisited (2010). In it, he states,

"It is a well-documented fact that the Army mercy seat started out as the revivalist's anxious seat, on which the seeker sat, rather than at which the seeker knelt. What is far less clear is the *origin of the table as the dispensary for holiness.*" (p.85)



Robert Sandall's The History of The Salvation Army Vol.2 (1950) states that the Holiness Table as a distinct place to encounter holiness was part of the ministry of The Salvation Army,

"Another point sometimes lost sight of is that there was from the first a vital distinction between a 'penitent-form' and a 'holiness table.' The configuration of modern buildings is often such that it is difficult to place a table at the front as *it was done in holiness meetings of earlier days*, and the penitent-form has to do duty for both. *But for those seeking the higher life it is figuratively an 'altar' or 'mercy seat' and not a 'penitent form'* (p.135).

General John Larsson's Spiritual Breakthrough (1983) (p.54) references a report from the Christian Mission Magazine (August, 1878) when the Christian Mission truly became

The Salvation Army and they had "undoubtedly the most wonderful meeting ever held in the history of the Mission"

"Round the table in the great central square Satan was fought and conquered, as it were, visibly by scores of persons whose names and numbers no one attempted to take. Evangelists came there burdened with the consciousness of past failings and unfaithfulness, and were so filled with the power of God that they literally danced for joy. Brethren and sisters who had hesitated as to yielding themselves to go forth anywhere to preach Jesus, came and were set free from every doubt and fear,, and numbers whose peculiar besetments and difficulties God alone can read, came and washed and made them white in the Blood of the Lamb."

That scene of wrestling prayer and triumphant faith, no one who saw it can ever forget. We saw one collier labouring with his fists upon the floor and in the air, just as he was accustomed to struggle with the rocks in his daily toil, until at length he gained the diamond he was seeking - perfect deliverance from the carnal mind - and rose up shouting and lay there for some time as if dead, overwhelmed with the Power from on high. When the gladness of all God's mighty deliverance burst upon some, they laughed as well as cried for joy, and some of the younger evangelists might have been seen, like lads at play, locked in one another's arms and rolling each other over on the floor.

Quite a wild description! So from the inception of The Salvation Army, the *Holiness Table* has played a central role in our identity. The two sides of full salvation are blood (justification) and fire (sanctification). While the experiences can happen in the same setting, they are two sides of the spiritual blessing.

I have been a very strong advocate of Salvationists rediscovering the heritage of *New Measures Revivalism* - which has its roots in Wesleyan Methodism, but emerges as a more distinct category of *transatlantic revivalism* in the 19th century. While the use of the 'Anxious Seat' emerged out of frontier revivalism and was codified by Charles Finney, which is well documented in Salvation Army history, the origin of the Holiness Table is more obscure, as Bovey has noted.

I was reflecting on Bovey's reference (pp.86 & 277) to the 1925 O&R for Officers used the term "Holiness Altar" rather than "Holiness Table":

"The penitent-form or mercy seat (*and in Holiness Meetings the holiness altar*) occupies an important place in Salvation Army warfare...

2. 'Seekers' include all who come to the penitent-form or *holiness altar*.

(a.) Salvation seekers are those seeking Salvation; they are also known as penitents. Backsliders needing restoration are dealt with as Salvation seekers.

(b.) *Holiness seekers are those seeking Holiness.*

In the past, I have searched for historical references to a Holiness *Table*, but Bovey caused me to realize that just as the Salvationist 'Mercy Seat' was originally called an 'Anxious Seat', so too is it possible that the origin source of the 'Holiness *Table*,' might in fact be the 'Holiness *Altar*'!

A new search all of a sudden revealed the answer! *The origin of the Holiness Table is rooted in New Measures Revivalism!* In particular, the source of this inspiration is *Phoebe Palmer* - the great holiness theologian, revivalist, urban mission pioneer - and the woman who truly inspired Catherine Booth to defend the rights of women to preach the gospel!

Young Sung Kim highlights the unquestionable connection between Phoebe Palmer and The Salvation Army in his article, Brengle and Palmer:

"I believe that Brengle's theological emphasis of Christ as the divine altar in his writings is clearly related to the lineage of Palmer's distinctive teaching on holiness, known as Palmer's "Altar theology." In my reading, the influence of Palmer's "Altar theology" echoes in many places in Brengle's books.

It is not surprising to find some books that Palmer wrote in Brengle's personal library. Especially, we can see Palmer's two books, *Entire Sanctification to God* and *Faith and Its Effects or Fragments From My Portfolio* on his book shelf. These books are considered as two of the major writings for understanding Palmer's distinctive teaching of "Altar theology." It is also thrilling to find Brengle's own signature on both books and his notes on the margins in many pages. In fact, The Salvation Army reprinted Palmer's *Entire Sanctification to God* and used it as 'a primer for the teaching of entire sanctification within the movement.'

David Rightmire even credits the Booth's Holiness experience to the influence of the Palmers in his book, Sanctified Sanity (2003):

"William and Catherine's sanctification experiences date back to 1861, two years after their first known contact with Phoebe Palmer. Their correspondence to one another from this period reflects a direct dependence on Palmer's holiness thought, especially her 'altar theology.'" (p.151)

### **PHOEBE PALMER'S HOLINESS ALTAR THEOLOGY**

Randall Balmer's "Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism" (2001) references how Palmer "issued 'holiness altar invitations' during her revival campaigns and her famed Tuesday Morning Holiness Meetings. Here's the full reference:



"Phoebe Palmer's works and writings were more important in both the shaping and the propagation of holiness doctrines in the nineteenth century. She set forth what she called an 'altar theology,' derived from the Old Testament practices of sacrifice. Palmer urged people who wanted to be sanctified, which she regarded as 'full salvation,' to lay their desire for holiness on the 'altar' and trust God to deliver entire sanctification. *She issued 'holiness altar invitations'* and invited people who had received the experience of entire sanctification to testify to it immediately. *Palmer's theology was adopted by such holiness groups as the Salvation Army, the Free Methodists, and the Church of the Nazarene.*" (p.436)

Charles Edwin Jones article in the Wesleyan Theological Journal (31:2, Fall, 1996) on The Inverted Shadow of Phoebe Palmer identifies how Palmer is a *forgotten influence* on the Holiness Movement, but how her teaching and practices most certainly shaped the modern holiness movement.

*The altar sanctifies the gift, the consecration formula based on it, was to be the centerpiece of the Holiness quest for entire sanctification. Its utilization in practically every altar service over many decades caused the core of Mrs. Palmer's teachings to become the cornerstone of widely-held belief. Unlike the defeat of spiritual assurance implied by the Half-Way Covenant of New England Puritanism, the collage of proof texts, spiritual songs, and physical accouterments which made up this symbol of personal consecration pointed the seeker after entire sanctification to the Altar of Sacrifice, the anteroom to assurance in the higher Christian life.*

Nowhere in the Holiness mind is Mrs. Palmer's impact more apparent than in its visualization of salvation. *The centrality of the altar as physical object and as spiritual symbol could hardly have been lost on the vast majority of American Methodist hearers. Stress on the altar of the heart sprang quite naturally from the material culture of the revivalistic spirituality in which they, like she, had been nurtured.* The practice of kneeling for prayer and for communion, an inheritance from Anglicanism, was an integral part of Methodist worship. Relation of religious experiences was expected in every class meeting and every prayer meeting, and *use of biblical metaphors, such as the Altar of Sacrifice and the Mercy Seat, were the stock in trade of common religious discourse. Phoebe Palmer required no illustrator.*

Presentation of Mrs. Palmer's theology of self-sacrifice in such a context was destined to make the altar - represented by the altar rail rather than the communion table - the focal point of Holiness worship, causing proponents of her Altar Covenant to regard as essential this accouterment of the nineteenth-century Methodist chapel both as consecrated object and as sacred symbol. *The altar rail was to be for the church at prayer the place where the physical and spiritual merged. Placed directly in front of the pulpit, the altar was the most revered article of furniture in tabernacle, chapel, and mission hall.* Over many decades it was to stand both as a physical and symbolic representation of the Wesleyan

way of salvation. The scores of thousands who struggled during these years to surrender all and to die to self and sin while kneeling before it gave unconscious witness to the immensity of the shadow cast by this remarkable woman."

Charles Edward Wright, in his book, The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist and Humanitarian (1986) explains the source of Phoebe Palmer's *Altar Theology*:

"Mrs. Palmer developed her three-step plan for achieving entire sanctification in conjunction with her 'altar theology.' As we have already seen, she was seeking for some scriptural basis for applying 2 Corinthians 6:17, 'I will receive you,' to herself. She found this assurance by arguing from a catena of passages containing sacrificial imagery. In Romans 12:1-2 she read that Christians are commanded to offer themselves to God, in Matthew 23:19 that the altar sanctifies the gift, in Exodus 29:37 that whatever touches the altar is holy, and in Hebrews 13:10 that Christians have an altar which is more sacred than the one in the tabernacle. Following Adam Clarke, she believes that this greater altar is Christ himself. From these passages Mrs. Palmer deduced that Christians who entirely consecrate themselves to Christ are presenting their bodies as living sacrifices. Christ himself is the altar on which the offering is made so long as believers rest themselves entirely on him, their all is on the altar. Because whatever touches the altar is holy, the believers themselves are holy. Thus entire consecration guarantees entire sanctification."

Phoebe Palmer's view on sanctification was considered the 'shorter way' to holiness, with three simple steps:

1. Entire consecration
2. Faith
3. Testimony

The Salvationist Holiness scholar, Young Sung Kim, in his article Brengle and Palmer writes that, "As a metaphor and theological method, the "Altar theology" is a cornerstone of Palmer's holiness theology. First, it shows the pragmatic implication of Palmer's holiness theology by synthesizing the ethos of 19th century American revivalism which emphasizes the instantaneousness and immediacy of the work of the Holy Spirit during the experience of sanctification. Second, it shows Palmer's Christocentric attention in her principle of interpretation of the Bible. Arguably, as a key concept of Palmer's "Altar theology," the "shorter way" demonstrates the originality and creativity of Palmer's holiness theology in modifying and popularizing John Wesley's teaching of entire sanctification."

Some Methodists did not agree with Palmer's theology. In fact some severely criticized her in 1851 before she set sail for England. In particular was a Methodist named Hiram Mattison. He found her views too extreme. It is important to note that the Palmers were



banned from the same Methodist gatherings that the Booths were being banned from in the 1850s. This was largely for their support of the 'new measures' of revivalism.

White explains how Palmer's shorter view of Holiness drew from sources other than John Wesley (but who were Wesleyan), which modified her view. All of these sources shaped the Booths:

1. From **John Fletcher**, she identified *entire sanctification* with the *baptism of the Holy Spirit* (a key early Salvationist distinctive)
2. From **Adam Clarke**, she linked *holiness* with *power* (again, also referenced by Salvationists)
3. From **Adam Clarke**, she emphasized *instantaneous elements of sanctification*, to the exclusion of the gradual
4. From **Adam Clarke**, she taught that sanctification is not *the goal*, but rather *the beginning* of the Christian life
5. Through her **Biblical** 'altar theology' she reduced the attainment of sanctification to *three stages*.
6. The **Bible** alone gives *assurance* of entire sanctification (White, pp.125f.)

This 'altar' was the altar of holiness. The song, "Is Your All on the Altar of Sacrifice Laid" written by Elisha Hoffman in 1873 summarizes Palmer's teaching:

1. You have longed for sweet peace,  
And for faith to increase,  
And have earnestly, fervently prayed;  
But you cannot have rest,  
Or be perfectly blest,  
Until all on the altar is laid.

*Refrain:*

*Is your all on the altar of sacrifice laid?  
Your heart does the Spirit control?  
You can only be blest,  
And have peace and sweet rest,  
As you yield Him your body and soul.*

2. Would you walk with the Lord,  
In the light of His word,  
And have peace and contentment alway?  
You must do His sweet will,  
To be free from all ill,  
On the altar your all you must lay.

3. Oh, we never can know  
What the Lord will bestow  
Of the blessings for which we have prayed,  
Till our body and soul  
He doth fully control,  
And our all on the altar is laid.

4. Who can tell all the love  
He will send from above,  
And how happy our hearts will be made;  
Of the fellowship sweet  
We shall share at His feet,  
When our all on the altar is laid.

### **PHOEBE PALMER'S HOLINESS ALTAR METHODOLOGY**

Out of this *Holiness Altar Theology* came a very clear *Holiness Altar Methodology* that she developed. It seems pretty clear that the Booths adapted some, if not all, of the Palmer's Holiness Altar Methodology. This methodology was incorporated by the Church of the Nazarene and the Free Methodists, so it would not be surprising to hear that the Palmers were the source of this new innovation.

Charles Edward White explains the methodology of the Palmer's Revival Meetings:

"Sometimes Mrs. Palmer spoke for twenty minutes and sometimes for an hour. On the first night of a series of meetings her messages would usually be that Pentecost is a model revival and that it may be duplicated whenever believers seek the full baptism of the Holy Ghost. She would then go on to say that *if believers were baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire, the world would then be convicted*. Most Christians are not so baptized only because they have not sought the blessing through entire consecration, faith, and testimony. Next Phoebe Palmer *would challenge all who resolved to seek the baptism to rise*, indicating their determination to the Lord. Finally, she invariably concluded this section of the meeting by inviting people forward to the altar, where they could pray for the promised blessing.

The purpose of the altar service was 'gathering the fruit' that had ripened during the preaching. *It was a time for people to solidify their commitments they had made by openly presenting themselves in front of the congregation*. This altar service was so important that the Palmers more than once changed the interior architecture of a church to provide space for it. Both the Palmers, along with other leaders in the church, took an active part in praying with seekers, giving counsel, and listening to testimony. At times Mrs. Palmer went into the congregation seated in the nave or even up in the galleries to persuade people to come to the altar.

While the focus of the altar service was on the individual seeker, at times the whole group would be asked to give its attention to one person who was having a particularly

hard time 'praying through.' All would then join in beseeching the Lord, aiding the sister or brother to obtain the sought-for blessing. At other times those at the altar would be called to hear the testimony of one whose petition had been granted. Then those who had already received sanctification could rejoice with the newly blessed believer, and those who had not yet obtained holiness could be encouraged on their quest. Phoebe Palmer often reported that *the power of the Holy Spirit was evident at such times*, and once recorded that people were slain in the Spirit: 'We saw it possible to be baptized with a baptism beyond what we were able to physically bear.' She did not, however, encourage emotionalism. Usually her meetings were free from extravagancies, and disorderly and fanatical demonstrations...

As most of the seekers began to find what they sought, the focus of the meeting would *shift from prayer to testimony. The Palmers would question the people at the altar rail, asking them to explain what the Lord had done for them.* This practice provided the opportunity for the seekers to *give the testimony that was so important to being sanctified.* Then, as the people were leaving the altar, they would give their names to the *recording secretaries.*" (p.173f.)

The 'architecture changes' which were made to churches were, without question, the same churches in England that William and Catherine Booth were preaching in during the late 1850s and early 1860s! Sometimes the Booths were literally the next itinerant evangelists to follow the Palmers, therefore it is no wonder that their theology, methodology *and* architecture would influence one another!

Charles Edwin Jones goes into further detail - linking the methodology of an "Altar Covenant":

"This construct — the so-called *Altar Covenant* — *linked Scripture, sacred song, and physical setting into a representation of the way to full redemption.* Worked out in Phoebe and Walter Palmer's own ministry, this unarticulated metaphor, used by both separatist Holiness folk and Methodist loyalists with whom they shared joyful fraternity, proved amenable to all situations face by those striving to assist seekers after entire sanctification. *Product of the New York Tuesday Meeting*, the Altar Covenant was the source of the most advice given by the saints *in the after meeting of every Holiness service* in which there were seekers at the rail.

The altar sanctifies the gift, the consecration formula based on it, was to be the centerpiece of the Holiness quest for entire sanctification. Its utilization in practically every altar service over many decades caused the core of Mrs. Palmer's teachings to become in fact a cornerstone of widely-held belief. Unlike the defeat of spiritual assurance implied by the Half-Way Covenant of New England Puritanism, the collage of *proof texts, spiritual songs, and physical accouterments* which made up this symbol of personal consecration pointed the seeker after entire sanctification to the altar of sacrifice, the anteroom to assurance in the higher Christian life.



Nowhere in the Holiness mind is Mrs. Palmer's impact more apparent than in its visualization of salvation. *The centrality of the altar as physical object and as spiritual symbol* could hardly have been lost on the vast majority of American Methodist hearers. Stress on the altar of the heart sprang quite naturally from the material culture of the revivalistic spirituality in which they, like she, had been nurtured. The practice of kneeling for prayer and for communion, an inheritance from Anglicanism, was an integral part of Methodist worship. Relation of religious experiences was expected in every class meeting and every prayer meeting, and use of biblical metaphors, such as the Altar of Sacrifice and the Mercy Seat, were the stock in trade of common religious discourse. Phoebe Palmer required no illustrator.

Presentation of the new theology of self-sacrifice in such a context was *destined to make the altar — represented by the altar rail rather than the communion table — the focal point of Holiness worship*, causing proponents of her Altar Covenant to regard as essential this accouterment of the 19th century Methodist chapel both as consecrated object and as a sacred symbol. It was to be for the church at prayer the place where the physical and spiritual merged. *Placed directly in front of the pulpit, the altar was the most revered article of furniture in tabernacle, chapel, and mission hall.* Over the many decades it was to stand both as a physical and symbolic representation of the Wesleyan way of salvation. The scores of thousands who, during these years, struggled to surrender all and to die to self and sin while kneeling before it, gave unconscious witness to the immensity of the shadow cast by this remarkable woman.

The genius of Mrs. Palmer's message and methodology was that it spoke to the dilemma faced by many in the second and third generations who believed themselves incapable of realizing in the same manner as their parents the witness of the Holy Spirit to having been made in perfect love." (Jones, 1997, p.205f.)

### **PALMER'S HOLINESS ALTAR & THE SALVATIONIST HOLINESS TABLE - REFLECTIONS ON REDISCOVERING ITS' THEOLOGY & METHODOLOGY**

So what does knowledge of the origin of the Holiness Table mean for us today? A rediscovery of the roots of the Holiness Table *really does challenge us today*. What is the value we place on holiness? Do we believe it possible to lay our all on the altar?

SASB 511 was written in 1869 by Mary Dogworthy James, a friend of Phoebe Palmer. These words still ring true today:

My body, soul and spirit,  
 Jesus, I give to thee,  
 A consecrated offering,  
 Thine evermore to be.

*My all is on the altar,  
I'm waiting for the fire,  
Waiting, waiting, waiting,  
I'm waiting for the fire.*

O Jesus, mighty Savior,  
I trust in thy great name;  
I look for thy salvation,  
Thy promise now I claim.

O let the fire, descending  
Just now upon my soul,  
Consume my humble offering,  
And cleanse and make me whole!

I'm thine, O blessed Jesus,  
Washed by thy precious blood,  
Now seal me by thy Spirit  
A sacrifice to God.

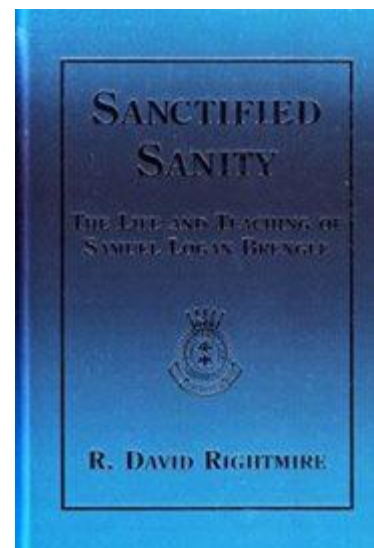
Herbert Booth would gain inspiration from James, penning the Salvationist lyric, "My mind upon thee, Lord, is stayed, My all upon thy altar laid, O hear my prayer! And since, in singleness of aim, I part with all, thy power to gain, O God, draw near!" (SASB 513) Again, Herbert Booth writes, "Upon the altar here I lay my treasure down; I only want to have thee near, King of my heart to crown. The fire doth surely burn My every selfish claim; And while from them to thee I turn, I trust in thy great name." (SASB 415)

Therefore, I believe there is ample evidence that the Holiness Table was birthed from the Palmer vision of the Holiness Altar.

### **BREngle AND THE MOVE AWAY FROM ALTAR THEOLOGY & THE GROWING OBSCURITY OF THE IDENTITY, ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE HOLINESS TABLE**

Ironically, it was the writings of Samuel Logan Brengle that steered the Army away from Phoebe Palmer's influence. David Rightmire reflects on this in his book, Sanctified Sanity (2003):

"The dynamic balance between the immediacy of expectation and the waiting upon God for the assurance of sanctification, as found in Brengle's holiness theology, is not dealt with in early Salvation Army holiness teaching. Although not systematic, the holiness theology of the Army was dominated by members of the Booth family and George S Railton in the first three decades of the movement's existence. The immediacy of the experience of entire



sanctification, appropriated by simple faith, was the predominant teaching. Although Brengle would concur with the receiving of the second blessing by faith alone, he believed that the witness of the Spirit was essential for one to know that the blessing had been given. His writings, especially *Helps to Holiness* and *Heart-Talks on Holiness*, both written prior to the turn of the century, were more 'Wesleyan' in that they emphasize the need to wait on the Lord for His witness and assurance.

*Thus, it was Brengle's influence that directed The Salvation Army away from the emphases of Phoebe Palmer, and the misuse of her altar theology in popular piety, to a more orthodox Wesleyan expression." (p.155)*

Rightmire also notes that Brengle did influence the 1925 O&R for Officers, but the Holiness Table took on more of a Wesleyan significance - meaning that the Palmerian Holiness Table in the *architecture* of a Corps took on new meaning and a new (and possibly lower) value...

During the early 20th century, there was an explosion of growth of Pentecostalism in Scandinavia and The Salvation Army was influenced by this. Wesleyan-Holiness scholar, Donald Dayton argues that Pentecostalism grew out of the Wesleyan-Holiness movement and adopted many of its' theological and methodological principles. One key component was re-appropriating Palmer and New Measures Revivalist's Altar Theology and the 'Baptism of Fire.' These influences seemed to have shaped Scandinavian (and specifically Swedish) Salvationists.

Apparently (I still need to verify this), Brengle went to Scandinavia to help them sort through these influences and sought to bring the Scandinavian Salvation Army more in line with Wesleyan (and less Palmerian) beliefs and practices. The strong influence of Brengle during these critical years might have had a dramatic effect on the Scandinavian architecture of the Corps. And, while this is conjecture on my part, I wonder whether the reason why Corps in Scandinavia do not have Holiness Tables beckons back to this early 20th century influence?

In America, one would think that Brengle's influence would mean less of an influence from Palmer, but, as Young Sung Kim has pointed out, Brengle did read Palmer, and the broader American Wesleyan-Holiness culture was more attuned to Palmerian Holiness. This might explain the difference between these expressions.

## **CONCLUSION**

General Paul Rader is quoted by Nigel Bovey in *The Mercy Seat Revisited* (2010) as saying, "The presence of the Holiness Table is a constant reminder of the central importance of holiness of heart in the life of our Movement - a reminder that we are and must be a holiness movement. Ours is a gospel of blood and fire!" (p.90)

I believe that it is worth us revisiting the origins, purpose, function and architecture of the Holiness Table. Like the Mercy Seat - that can metamorphosized from a drum into a

sacred space, Bovey illustrates how in the past even a Billiards Table has been converted into a Holiness Table in Army history. It is less about how the actual object looks that the meaning, centrality and value we place on the theology, experience, methodology and architecture.

I pray that we as a movement would return once again to building Altars of Holiness in our Corps. May the words of Francis Bottome ring true:

So with banners unfurled to the breeze,  
Our motto shall holiness be,  
Till the crown from his hand we shall seize  
And the King in his glory we shall see. (SASB 808)

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## The Fish

by Captain Gordon Taylor

Swimming, feeding  
This way, that  
Down to the depths  
Cold  
Back up to the light  
The warmth  
Basking in the warmth  
The splendid warmth  
Food is plentiful  
Life is good  
All is well  
Thanks and praise rise  
To the creator  
The glorious one

Life continues  
Good days  
Difficult days  
Swimming from danger  
Swimming for pleasure  
Dancing with joy  
Showing my thanks  
Shouting my praise  
To the creator  
The glorious one  
For His provision  
And the beauty all around

Seeing the beauty  
Accepting His gifts  
Questioning  
Asking - What?  
What can I give?  
What can I do?  
For Him who made all  
For Him who has all  
How can I serve Him?  
What can I do?  
To prove my love?

Listening  
Waiting  
Hoping for an answer  
Down to the depths  
Back up to the light  
Then to the quiet  
The still waters  
Alone with Him  
The answer comes  
I go

Swimming, swimming  
How far I cannot tell  
Everything is new  
Different  
I am afraid  
But not alone  
He is with me  
He takes my fear  
He tells me to wait  
I obey  
I feel I will burst  
With anticipation  
But I am still

Darkness comes  
But it is not yet night  
A storm  
A great storm  
I am ready  
He has called me here  
To this place  
At this time  
The storm rages  
Worsens  
Suddenly  
Just above  
A splash

Something is in the water  
What is it?  
Not food  
Not anything I've ever seen  
Big  
Smaller than me  
But big  
Lord – what?  
WHAT?  
I don't understand  
But His voice is clear  
I swim

Approaching  
The object  
It moves  
But not like me  
It is not swimming  
It is – struggling  
I act  
I obey God's call  
I swim towards it  
I open my mouth  
I take it in

Inside me  
It moves  
Lord  
What now?  
Wait  
But what is it?  
Wait  
I wait  
I wonder  
I don't understand  
But I wait  
Night comes  
I sleep

A new day dawns  
Still I am far from home  
Still this thing is inside me  
Lord what is going on?  
I have obeyed you  
For what purpose?  
I am here  
It is here  
What now?  
Wait  
Wait?  
Wait  
I wait  
Night comes again  
I sleep

Another day  
Nothing has changed  
Far from home  
This thing inside  
It hurts  
I miss home  
And family  
Not what I thought  
When I asked to serve  
Scared  
I cry out  
Lord – what now?

He speaks  
I am with you  
I love you  
I have not changed  
I have a plan for you  
You can trust me



I choose  
Trust  
I choose  
God  
I wait  
I am still far from Home  
I am still in pain  
But He is here  
All will be well  
Night comes again  
I sleep

I awake in shallow water  
Never before  
Water so shallow  
Inside the thing stirs  
What now Lord?  
Even shallower?  
I obey  
I go as far as I dare  
I open my mouth  
Out comes the thing  
Right out  
And up  
Up on to the hardness  
It moves  
It still lives

I move  
Quickly  
Freed of my burden  
I swim free  
Heading home  
I am filled  
With happiness  
I have served Him  
He is pleased  
This  
This is the best  
I keep swimming  
I burst with joy and energy

Home again  
I ponder  
What was it?  
Where is it now?  
What was the purpose in this?  
The answer comes  
In a way  
He simply says  
Trust me

And so I do  
I may never know  
The answer  
To the mystery  
Of the thing in the sea  
But I do know  
It was part of God's plan  
I was part of God's plan  
That is all  
I need to know  
For that  
I am truly thankful  
And full of joy

So  
I swim  
And feed  
This way, that  
Down to the depths  
Cold  
Back up to the light  
The warmth  
Basking in the warmth  
The glorious warmth  
Food is plentiful  
Life is good  
All is well  
Thanks and praise go up  
To the creator  
The glorious one

## **An Inside Perspective on Magdalene**

by Major Andrew Bale

'Magdalene' "'Tear damp feet' Worship-wrapped in hair. Puddled celibate tears Wept by a wanting woman disallowed. Locked up passion burning in her veins. Heart-aching cries, Sweet sighs. Stomach churning, Longed for yearning Sharp heart-burning tears, Stinging future seeing Raw rubbed scarlet eyes. She wants to hold, To stroke, To kiss, To cosy-cuddle in the darkness - just the two. Instead she sees the very same She held like precious stones, Gravel scraped, red-bleeding, Stumble-led like dog dragged bones. Tears drop and lick the hounds she fights. Flesh tearing, blood smelt, waste-not wolves, Unfed, misruled, misled By faceless huntsmen blowing horns like moral laws. The crowd poked mourner finds a place, And sees the feet she worship-wiped and wept now stabbed, Pinned like weather telling seaweed, Empty, lifeless, cold and dessert-dusted dry. As empty as her soul, Wrung like a sponge by pious-mimic hands. She never was his lover nor his wife. And no one hugs a nearly widow in her grief. Her mortal mourning mind thinks back And with nostalgic might-have-beens keeps happy company. The morning wets the grass With sky wept tears shed sad with empathy. She lost her lord, the evening lost his life And left the dew proof of his loss. Then living, kicking, bathing, splashing in the dawn dripped tears, She sees two feet, two healthy feet. And the panting, passing joy she never had, Fades like the long-dead morning mist. And perfect love, Just like its shallow shadow left Begins with tears."

© Andrew Bale

## **A Timeless Celebration** by Commissioner Harry Read

Through the streets of town and city  
Marched the soldiers of the Lord,  
In their hearts the Saviour's pity,  
In their hands the Spirit's sword.  
Freed themselves, they offered freedom  
From sin's ever-strengthening hold,  
In his name they bade all welcome  
To the Warrior-Shepherd's fold.

Though they stirred up opposition –  
Bruised in body; bruised in soul –  
They maintained their Master's vision  
Of a world by grace made whole.  
Eager converts reinforced them,  
For this warfare learned to pray,  
By their fruitful faith endorsed them:  
God's new host was here to stay.

At this time of celebration,  
As our lips sing out your praise  
O Lord, make our generation  
Messengers with hearts ablaze.  
Make us worthy of our history,  
Help us seek and find the lost,  
Fill us with the love of Calvary  
And the fire of Pentecost.

*(Tune: Blaenwern 430)*

## On “Changing the Army”

by Captain Andy Miller III

A loyal soldier approached me, it was clear he had something important to say. It was Sunday and the holiness meeting had just finished. His index finger was pointed right at me and with an agitated tone he said, “Your goal must be to kill the Army. You are trying to change everything!” Kill? I think not. Advocate for change to advance the fight? Absolutely.

In contrast, a few years ago I received a phone call from a well-known Salvationist writer asking me to contribute a chapter to a volume on Salvation Army doctrine that would feature “liberal” and “conservative” opinions on a variety of theological issues. He said, “We are looking for a solid conservative voice like yours.” That volume never came out, and I was too busy changing diapers, so I declined.

So what gives? Am I conservative or progressive? Do I want to change everything, or remain parked with the status quo? It depends on whom you ask. My experiences have led me to ask, “In what way can, or should, we change the Army?”

In full disclosure, I am a person who loves intra-Army discussions and am invigorated by change. I enjoy expressing my passions about the Army so much that I have found it to be a temptation for me. However, my efforts to “change the Army” shouldn’t keep me from “being the Army” while living out my covenant.

While at training, a staff officer said to a group of Cadets, “If you think you became an officer to change the Army, you are in the wrong place [officership, training college, etc.]” There are several ways to think about what is involved in “changing the Army.”

One way to enter these discussions is to list “non–negotiables,” as did [General Clifton](#) and [General Rader](#). They have been helpful for my understanding of Salvation Army theology and practice. So when considering change you can ask yourself, “Are any of these values compromised in the process?” Other methods use mission statements, branding promises, or core values to achieve a similar response to proposed changes. For the Salvationist, and particularly the Officer, I suggest Covenant-centered change. If a simple test had to be administered it should be this, go look at your Soldier’s Covenant (Articles of War) and ask, “Is this change in conflict with what I covenanted with God?”

What is it that has formed the essence of the church’s beliefs throughout its history; we could describe this as the canon or orthodoxy. The Army’s canon is most fully summarized in the covenant we share. It is expounded and clarified through Handbooks of Doctrine, Song Books, Year Books, and other publications.

Do some of these articles (doctrines) need nuancing? Probably, but that does not mean they need to change? We need to explain what we mean by “...the divine rule...” We

need to shade “total depravity” with prevenient grace. We need to carefully discuss and elaborate on what being “wholly sanctified” is and is not. We need to clarify that we are not platonic philosophers as we present a Christian version of “immortality of the soul.” It could be an American stylistic bias, but I wouldn’t mind gender neutrality in the human pronouns. These pieces are all consistent with how the Army does theology and I don’t think they need, or should, change.

There are areas where I desire to see the Army change. I would love to see a renewed understanding of how we approach training and the connection therein to officer recruitment. A more nuanced conversation on sacraments would be helpful and welcomed. We probably need to do better in understanding the complexities of the marriage relationship in officership and how the dynamics of shared and separate appointments can work. The uniform and its use should be updated or changed as we seek to be a visible people. I have at times found myself helpfully and humbly corrected by experienced officers who have helped shape and refine my “ideas.”

The biggest change I would like to see is this – more soldiers, more corps, and more officers, bringing more people to Christ’s saving grace. This is a necessary change.

Changes that call us to redefine marriage, cut certain articles of our faith, reject original sin, deny the substitutionary nature of the cross, get rid of our name, become a formal high church that is a liturgically drenched denomination or embracing universalism all are changes that move us away from a centered identity, these changes are outside of the scope of Covenant-centered change. These changes are instead, Covenant-rejecting changes.

So what of those changes? First, questions lead to answers and we need to ask good questions to get to good answers. When I was learning to swim in the discipline of theological studies, I had to work through each article of faith. When I came up for air I discovered a richness in Army theology that humbled me.

Second, if you come up for air in your search for truth and are resolutely opposed to the Army’s theology and you can no longer affirm the covenant, and if you are trying to make changes that move away from the canon of Salvation Army teaching or Covenant-centered change, I wonder if you should find another institution in which to serve. I say that not in cruelty or anger, but in love. These things will not change in the Army. I am no psychologist, but I think your life would be much more fulfilled in another movement if this is the sort of change you seek.

A wise senior officer, who taught many years at the training college, described his approach in teaching the doctrines in our covenant. “Andy, I am not telling Cadets what they should believe, I am expanding on what they have covenanted their lives to believing and teaching.”

If the changes I desire remain unchanged, then I trust God. Continued growth and relevance is contingent on our ability to adapt to our changing world. However, that change must be centered in the covenant which unites every Salvationist.

Forward to the Fight!,

Andy Miller III

Check out my book,  
Holistic Hospitality: A Bridge to a Future Army,  
via this the link [here](#).

## **A Biblical Model for DCs?**

by Dana Townsend

*“21 And when they [Paul & Barnabus] had preached the gospel to that city [Derbe] and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, 22 strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “We must through many tribulations enter the kingdom of God.” 23 So when they had appointed elders in every church, and prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord in whom they had believed. 24 And after they had passed through Pisidia, they came to Pamphylia. 25 Now when they had preached the word in Perga, they went down to Attalia. 26 From there they sailed to Antioch, where they had been commended to the grace of God for the work which they had completed.*

*27 Now when they had come and gathered the church together, they reported all that God had done with them, and that He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. 28 So they stayed there a long time with the disciples.”*

[Acts 14:21-28 NIV]

Antioch, Iconium, Lystra, Derbe. Paul and Barnabus had covered a lot of ground in their recent endeavours of spreading the life-changing Gospel of Jesus.

As I reflected on their strategies and successes I began to imagine how this would look in The Salvation Army... what if we adopted Paul and Barnabus' strategies for our DCs? What if we read Acts 11-16 in an early Army War Cry? It might sound something like this:

### **A New Division begins...**

It began with a stoning. Persecution arose after a zealous soldier full of faith and the Holy Spirit- Local Officer Stephen- was martyred, scattering salvationists all over the country... even as far as Antioch! But the persecution could not hold back the explosive force of the Gospel. These faithful soldiers continued the great salvation war, preaching the Lord Jesus. “And the hand of the Lord was with them, and a great number believed and turned to the Lord.” [Acts 11:21 NKJV] Word got back to Jerusalem (IHQ), and they sent through Capt. Barnabus to continue the work at Antioch. Great things were happening with believers maturing and disciples multiplying... so much so, that Capt. Barnabus called up Lt. Saul of Tarsus and together they led this new corps for a whole year.

During a season of fasting, with the prophets and teachers of their corps, the Holy Spirit called Capt. Barnabus and Lt. Saul (who soon became Capt. Paul) to extend the Kingdom of God in other towns. In obedience, they went. And what fruit for their labours they could see! A corps at Iconium, a corps at Lystra, and an outpost at Derbe! But the enemy was always seeking to kill and destroy the work, with stonings and



persecutions following closely wherever they went. It was reported in Lystra that “Jews from Antioch and Iconium came there; and having persuaded the multitudes, they stoned [Capt.] Paul and dragged him out of the city, supposing him dead. However, when the disciples gathered around him, he rose up and went into the city. And the next day he departed with [Capt.] Barnabus to Derbe.” [Acts 14:19-20 NKJV]

Now, with several corps or outposts, these bold Officers were functioning as DCs of a new division. Their pastoral hearts shone as they returned to each community invest in the people... to strengthen their souls, exhort them to continue in the faith, set up leadership, pray and fast, and commend them to the Lord. Finally, they arrived back at their home corps (Antioch) and stayed for a season (Acts 14:21-28).

### **Doctrines, Disagreements and Decisions...**

COs from another division came to visit, but they were holding some traditions which Christ had set them free of... This was causing some doctrinal issues and led to a trip for Capt. Paul and Capt. Barnabus to IHQ for a doctrinal council (Acts 15:1-29). Following this, they returned to their home corps- Antioch.

The enemy again was attacking the advance of the Lord’s Kingdom by causing division between Capt. Paul & Capt. Barnabus (a disagreement about personnel to accompany them on their travels). To counter attack, Headquarters approved an appointment change for Capt. Barnabus who requested to go with Lt. John Mark to Cyrus, but Capt. Paul and Lt. Silas went back to Syria and Cilicia to see how their corps were going and to strengthen them (Acts 15:36-41).

During Capt. Paul’s travels, he picked up a new recruit for officership- Timothy- and he journeyed with them... “As they traveled from town to town, they delivered the decisions reached by the apostles and elders [at IHQ] for the people to obey. 5 So the [corps] were strengthened in the faith and grew daily in numbers.” [Acts 16:4-5 NIV]

This direct communication from IHQ prompted such strengthening of the soldiers’ faith and a continual increase in recruits covenanting up.

### **The Mission Continues...**

In recent times, Capt. Paul has been scouting out new areas to invade, but was forbidden by the Holy Spirit to go to Asia... so they obediently stayed out of Asia. He then received a vision of his new mission field- Macedonia (Acts 16:6-10). We are anticipating the beginning of another successful missionary journey of invading new lands for our Lord. Comrades; bolster the fight by praying with us for the work in Macedonia.

...

What exciting times for the early church! What rapid expansion of the Kingdom of God they witnessed and were catalysts of! I believe we have much to learn from their methods and strategies. Perhaps in some locations we have already adopted similar processes, but for those of us who have not, here are some lessons:

- *How did they pioneer corps?* Following the lead of the Holy Spirit, in pairs, bold preaching of the Gospel, with signs and wonders following. (Acts 14:1-3)
- *How did they set up leadership?* Those who had set up the corps returned to appoint leaders, spend time in prayer and fasting, and commend them to the Lord. (Acts 14:23)
- *Did the DCs have a corps?* Probably- they definitely had a home corps (Antioch) and seeing as they began the corps, spent a long time there in between missionary journeys, and were held in high regard... they were most likely at least 'associate officers' of their home corps. (Acts 14:26-28, 30, 35)
- *Where do COs come in during the planting process?* Perhaps they join the DC in starting the corps? or maybe they come in when they are setting up leadership? Eg. First option- new plant- DCs with COs. COs stay, DCs move on. DCs come back and strengthen, exhort, help set-up leadership (elders- pastoral/corps council). (Acts 14)
- *What do DCs do after a season of pioneering corps?* They come back to visit (as they are led by Holy Spirit) to strengthen and communicate from HQ, and when in another territory, they write to the corps to continue the communication. (Acts 16:4, Paul's letters to the churches)
- *How are Officers trained?* New Officer recruit, Timothy, is trained on the go, mentored and disciplined by a zealous, blood and fire DC! (Acts 16:1-5)
- *Where to invade next?* First they were called out during a prayer meeting with the prophets and teachers (who were all soldiers!) of the corps. (We need prophets and teachers in our corps!) [Acts 13:1-3] Second, Paul learnt to not just go where he thought they should go (Asia), but follow the lead of the Holy Spirit (this time via a vision of Macedonia). (Acts 16:6-10)
- *And what about for those already established divisions?* What then for the role of DC? Maybe they could do as Paul did after planting all those corps... That is, to visit Corps for a considerable time (not just 'special' for a day) to strengthen, exhort, communicate (Acts 14:22, 16:4-5)... And to lead/assist at their 'home corps' (Acts 14:26-28, 30, 35), and plant corps when led by Holy Spirit (Acts 14:1-21).

### **In summary?**

A DC like Paul would work with one or more Officers to start a corps with bold preaching of the Gospel and signs and wonders following. He/she would stay for a while until much persecution arises or the Lord sends him/her on. This DC would then move to

another location and repeat the process until led by the Holy Spirit to return to these plants and set up leadership. He/she would be constantly communicating from HQ to the Corps via communication in person (where possible) and letters (when not in the local area). This DC would regularly join in with prophets, teachers and apostles within each corps to fast and pray, and then obey what the Holy Spirit has revealed.

May the Lord add understanding, revelation and wisdom!

## **7 Characteristics of Soul Goals** *(That Turn SMART Goal Setting Upside Down)* by Steve Simms

Spiritual goals go by different rules than traditional goal setting. The 7 characteristics of soul goals turn goal setting upside down!

There is a popular acrostic that teaches that goals need to be SMART: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic, & Time based. However soul goals are based more on God's wisdom than on our smarts.

What's your soul goal? –Let your soul flow with love, joy, and peace and you'll be filled with pleasure. –Let your soul roll with anger, sadness, and anxiety and you'll be rocked with pain.

A soul goal is . . .

- 1) Qualitative not quantitative. It's not about how much, but about how pure, how real, how sincere, how inspired.
- 2) Free of time limits. The only deadline for soul goals is the flat line that shows no heartbeat.
- 3) Not measurable. "We do not dare to classify or compare ourselves with some who commend themselves. When they measure themselves by themselves and compare themselves with themselves, they are not wise." –Paul of Tarsus
- 4) Flexible. The closer we get to God, the more we allow Him to change our soul goals into His goals.
- 5) Not achievable. Soul goals are spiritual gifts to the humble, not the achievements of the proud.
- 6) Himpossible. When life takes a toll and you're out of control, Christ can make your soul whole!
- 7) Approached by surrender not by striving. The more we lay down our will and surrender to God's will the more our soul will flow with His presence and gifts.

(A popular name for soul goals is spiritual formation.)

## **Blow My Mind and Heal My Heart**

by Major Danielle Strickland

My friend Jo Saxton recently used this line in a Facebook update about a preach she's doing on God's love in Christ. Turns out the prayer really hit home. I'm preaching on God's love and doing step two in the recovery series... 'we came to believe that a power greater than ourselves could restore us to sanity.' This step is related to step one a lot... because most of us spend our lives trying to fix ourselves. We even use religion to this end. We use God as a stepping stone to good behaviour. We use the Bible as a guide to good works and we try to keep busy doing all the right things to restore ourselves to sanity.

But God doesn't work like that and neither do we. There is a famous story in the Bible where God comes to Joshua the night before a key battle. Joshua responds to Him coming as a sign that He is on their side. God responds, 'I haven't come to take sides – I've come to take over.' It reminds the readers of one of the original patriarchs of the Jewish faith and classically gifted sinners the 'grasper' himself – Jacob. When Jacob finally has his encounter with the living God he wrestles Him for a blessing. Still 'taking' God to get His life sorted. God ends up wounding Jacob... most likely to ensure that Jacob will never forget that God can't be used but will freely give. That should blow your mind, heal your heart and GIVE YOU A LIMP. :-)

God will not be used but He freely gives. This is because His very definition is LOVE. Step 2 is to guide us even further over the cliff of self-recovery. It pulls the boots out of our grip right as we try to pull ourselves up by our proverbial bootstraps. Losing the grip we fall back which is our nightmare and we find a loving God catching us in the trust fall of our lives. The good news of Jesus is that there is not only a power greater than ourselves (a collective big sigh is appropriate here) but that that power is personal and loving... and is personified in Jesus. Romans 5:8 says it like this 'even while we were still sinners Christ loved us'. This is the truth that will blow your mind and heal your heart. I promise. It's doing that to mine.

Most of us can't let go. That's the deep struggle – the wrestle – that's the fear – that's the necessary place we need to get to... to actually let go of managing our own weaknesses... of hiding from our own deepest fears. Can we trust God? I've come to reluctantly agree that I'd rather walk with a limp and have a true encounter of God... than walk with no 'visible' weakness and with no authentic embrace. I think these are our options:

A do it yourself recovery program disguised as Christianity – or allow God to take over and admit our own absolute and utter need of His intervention and help. Our limp will be more obvious but our encounter more real. I'm opting for the limp – going in for the wrestle – trust falling on Grace. You are most welcome to join me. And that my friends, will blow your mind and heal your heart.

Read Danielle's blog here - <http://www.daniellestrickland.com/>

## Enthusiasm

by Commissioner Wesley Harris

I LIKE ENTHUSIASTS! Dull eyed people who never get excited about anything are a bit hard to take and make me want to shake them like a bottle of medicine to see if that would make them a bit more stimulating. But enthusiasts! They are a real tonic. Of course the objects of people's enthusiasms are many and varied ranging from stick insects to stamp collecting and from cold baths to hot jazz. Not all these grab me as the saying goes but I find the enthusiasm they inspire is infectious.

The understanding of enthusiasm has varied. In an ancient English churchyard someone had chiselled an epitaph of an old parson's grave. It read: 'He was vicar of this parish for forty years without showing the least sign of enthusiasm'. In fairness to the deceased and the writer of the epitaph it should be known that a meaning of the word 'enthusiasm' was not as it might be now 'energy which boils over and runs down the side of the pot'. It could mean 'religious frenzy and fanaticism from which apparently, the late cleric and his congregation were mercifully delivered.

I have sometimes delivered lectures to students in a training college and have loved the zest with which many of them have prepared for their chosen vocation. I have hoped that the warm gulf stream of youthful enthusiasm may reach into the chillier regions of middle and old age and that they will be as keen on their work after many years for, as Henry Thoreau said, "None are so old as those who have outgrown enthusiasm." The changing nature of our society will mean that some people have various jobs over the years but for any of them to be meaningful; it will be necessary to generate the inner drive of enthusiasm/ A quitter never wins and a winner never quits. Enthusiasm must be generated and balanced by perseverance.

I read about a prospector who was looking for a vein of gold in a remote location. Day after day he swung his pick but finally, frustrated and angry he drove the tool into the ground, grabbed the rest of his gear and went away. Many years later the pick, now rusted with the handle rotted was found a few metres from a rich deposit of gold which might have been claimed if enthusiasm had not run out.

We live at a time when many people have become blasé, with little enthusiasm for the rich values which underpin any great society. For some the shrug of a shoulder has become a characteristic gesture. J. Seeley wrote, "No soul is pure that is not passionate." It is a point to ponder. So is the entry on enthusiasm in the Oxford Dictionary from which we learn that the word is derived from "ēn theos" meaning possessed by God". "As I look at the world of nature with its infinite variety I find it easy to think of God as the Divine Enthusiast Who would in turn inspire us.