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Editorial Introduction

By Major Stephen Court, editor

Greetings in Jesus' name. Welcome to JAC156 - the 156h issue of the oldest SA online journal, the Journal of Aggressive Christianity. As usual, you can look forward to orthodox, edifying, provocative content, this time from writers in six territories. And this issue includes a few book excerpts from SA authors. Don't settle with the excerpt - read the whole books!

We lead off with Steve Bussey (USE) on The Internationalism Of The Salvation Army.

Major Sunghyo Hong (Korea) gives us a study on Spiritual Leadership: Samuel L Brengle.

Major Sandra Pawar (USS) shows us how to Lament in an excerpt from her new book, MORE THAN JUST A REFUGEE (which you can read, here: [<link>](#))

Major Pete Brookshaw (AUS) is Getting Off The Couch with an excerpt from his new book, WHO AM I TO CHANGE THE WORLD? (which you can read, here: [<link>](#))

Commissioner Joe Noland has an excerpt, Go With The Flow, from his new book OCTOGENARIAN MUSINGS (which you can read - subscribe to read the whole book, here: [<link>](#)).

And your JAC editor (C+B) is still Catching Up To William Booth.

As always, if you finish before the next issue is due out, feel free to browse through the previous 155 issues, all free in the JAC archives.

May God help us all use this content to love Him more dearly and accelerate the advance of the salvation war. Courage and Godspeed.

The Internationalism of The Salvation Army

Steve Bussey

I have been thinking about the "internationalism" of The Salvation Army lately - and how we are called to be "a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light" (1 Peter 2:9).

Paul reminds us that "our citizenship is in heaven. And we eagerly await a Savior from there, the Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 3:20). The word for "citizenship" in Greek is "politeuma" - meaning being part of a "commonwealth," meaning that one should "conduct" themselves in a way that is consistent with the by laws of the nation from which they come.

On Biblehub, this descriptor is given:

"In the Greco-Roman world, citizenship was a highly valued status, conferring rights, privileges, and responsibilities within a city-state or the Roman Empire. Citizens were expected to participate in civic duties and uphold the laws and values of their community. For early Christians, the concept of heavenly citizenship provided a powerful metaphor for their identity and allegiance to God's kingdom, often in contrast to the surrounding pagan society."

I think this is such an important issue for all Christians - but especially for those of us who are part of The Salvation Army who celebrate a connection that transcends political or national boundaries - but also the limitations of a space-and-time bound philosophy and ethic. There is something "more than meets the eye" when it comes to what shapes our beliefs and values, our perception and understanding of reality, and the motivational forces that drive us to action... Those who live as part of a "holy nation" must be different from and maybe even at odds with the general trend of the broader populace.

Paul speaks to the Ephesians and reminds them:

"You are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God's people and also members of His household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In Him, the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in Him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit" (Ephesians 2:19-22).

Here the word for "fellow citizen" is "sumpolités" - a word that emphasizes a socially dynamic "withness" between those who share this common identity of heavenly, holy citizenship. One might use the term "social holiness" - a banding together of a group of individuals that transcends the borders of any geographic or generational marker.

John Wesley stated:

"Solitary religion is not to be found there. "Holy Solitaries" is a phrase no more consistent with the gospel than Holy Adulterers. The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection."

Bible Hub's description states that the Greek word "sumpolités" indicates "a sense of belonging and community within a political or social entity. In the New Testament, it is used metaphorically to describe the spiritual unity and shared identity of believers in Christ."

So what is that "political or social entity" that is referred to that describes a "spiritual unity" and "shared identity"?

Is this our local church? Yes.

Is it the visible church? Yes.

Is it the universal invisible church? Yes, yes, yes!

This goes beyond even denominational boundaries to something so much bigger. It is our "witness" with God and our "witness" with the universal bride of Christ. It is our "witness" with the "great cloud of witnesses" referred to in Hebrews 12:1. This "cloud" ('nephos') refers to a "multitude" with whom we associate "with" - like a series of particles that form a cloud that stretches across the sky!

Biblehub again elaborates on this word:

"In ancient Greek culture, clouds were often seen as divine or mysterious, representing the heavens and the dwelling place of the gods. In the biblical context, clouds frequently symbolize the presence and glory of God, as seen in the Old Testament with the cloud that led the Israelites in the wilderness (Exodus 13:21). The metaphorical use of "nephos" in the New Testament draws on this imagery to convey a sense of divine witness and spiritual reality."

We are part of something so much bigger than our local setting - even our denominational setting. We are part of a great work that God is doing in this world and throughout history! We are a particle of that much bigger 'nephos.'

Such a citizenship within a heavenly and holy nation might sound like we have our 'head in the clouds.' Is this simply the promotion of some form of spiritual escapism from this world - a justification of "being so heavenly-minded that you are no earthly good?" Is this some rationale for an Army of spiritual beatniks oblivious to the pain and brokenness evident all around us in our local communities? Is that what Scripture is suggesting as being the mission of the church? No, no no. It is so much more than that...

Enter Dutch-Canadian theologian, Hans Boersma, whose book, "Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry" I have been reading this week. His view on "sacramental ontology" speaks to me as a Salvationist who deeply values the interconnectivity with a broader historic and global community shaped by a common view of reality. Here is what Boersma shares about heavenly citizenship:

"Saint Paul's theology is an otherworldly theology. He is much more concerned with heavenly participation than about earthly enjoyment... For Saint Paul, heaven is our home. After all, he insists our citizenship papers carry the stamp of heaven. [O]ur

citizenship is in heaven,' he plainly remarks [Phil 3:20; Eph. 2:12]. This citizenship of Christians is incompatible with attempts to turn earthly ends into ultimate concerns.

Speaking of enemies of the cross, the apostle observes, 'Their destiny is destruction, their god is their stomach, and their glory is in their shame. Their mind is on earthly things' [Phil. 3:19]. The heavenly identity of believers is, according to Paul, already a present reality. The rather realized eschatology of the letters to the Ephesians and Colossians is emphatic about this present reality.

For Paul, it is not as though believers here on earth somehow identify with a faraway place called 'heaven.' Rather, they have a real or participatory connectedness with heaven...

To be sure, St. Paul's otherworldliness does not stand in absolute opposition to every this-worldly orientation. Rather, heavenly participation means that life on earth takes on a heavenly dimension. The church, through her participation in heaven, is called upon to make known the wisdom of God 'to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms' [Eph. 3:10].

Heavenly participation implies a battle 'against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms' [Eph. 6:12].

Precisely because heaven is already present on earth, the moral lives of Christians on earth are to reflect their heavenly participation. 'Since then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is seated at the right hand of God. Set your minds on things above, not on earthly things [Col. 3:1-2]. The apostle then comments on the vices that are connected to the 'earthly nature' [Col. 3:5] and encourages believers to follow the virtues of Christ [Col. 3:5-17].

PARTICIPATION IN HEAVEN CHANGES LIFE ON EARTH: PARADOXICALLY, ONLY OTHERWORLDLINESS GUARANTEES PROPER ENGAGEMENT IN THIS WORLD."

- Hans Boersma, "Heavenly Participation: The Weaving of a Sacramental Tapestry" (2011, 4-5).

There is so much more that could be quoted here - but as a Salvationist, this perspective resonates so deeply on so many levels that I fear it to be near impossible to unpack.

Do you see the connection to holiness as a sacramental interweaving of the supernatural work of grace into the natural, situated circumstances of everyday life?

Do you see how there is an immanent-transcendence that occurs when the eternal reality of the presence of the Holy Spirit abides in us?

Do you see that when the presence of God "synagogues" within us, we become the dwelling place, the 'household' (oikos) or temple of the living God - that we will be like "aliens" and "strangers" residing in a foreign land?

In such a world, we find our sense of identity and purpose 'with' a community that transcends any local setting. We find ourselves not only woven together 'with' the living God - but we find a 'witness' that connects us with the people of God for whom "salvation" has become their "-ism" - their worldview. This 'ism' is much bigger than mere 'this-world-isms.'

When CHRIST becomes our cornerstone, we find our unified identity 'within' the glorification of HIS personhood and purpose 'within' HIS mission to spread HIS holiness manifested in full salvation to the ends of the earth!

So, what does this all mean? To bring this back to the concrete reality of 'this' world that is being shaped by the paradigm of 'that' world in the here and now - it means that our GLOBAL interconnectivity is a vital testimony to our heavenly citizenship!

In a world of fragmented opinions driven by partisan perspectives on pretty much everything one could imagine, our heavenly citizenship calls us to an uncanny unity that stands in the grandest contrast to a world divided.

May the image of God be stamped on the passports of our hearts and declare a spirit of nonconformity to the patterns of this world! Let us renew our heads, hands, and hearts to be true to the timeless principles of biblical Salvationism!

Spiritual Leadership: Samuel L. Brengle

Major Sunghyo Hong

A soul winner must have spiritual leadership. Spiritual leadership is given by the Holy Spirit, not by birth, position, title, education, or circumstances. This is why the power of humility is demonstrated in Salvation Army Officers who are called from the lowest social classes.

Joseph was a young prisoner in an Egyptian dungeon. But he walked with God, and because God was with him, he prospered in all things. Finally, Joseph became the prime minister of Egypt, second only to the Pharaoh.

Paul was on a ship to Rome, guarded by Roman soldiers, as a prisoner being hurried to the court of the Roman emperor. One day the wind of God stirred the sea, and the wind and waves threatened to swallow up the ship. Everyone on board the ship trembled in fear. Then Paul became the leader of all on board, possessed of spiritual kingship.

I knew a new lieutenant in the Salvation Army who was a quiet, thoughtful, prayerful, faithful, humble, godly young man, and a moderate man. Although he did not know the new lieutenant, the lieutenant colonel of the Corps he was assigned to was impressed by him.

The captain colonel approached him humbly to discuss spiritual matters. They treasured the example of the so-called pious and wise words and his spirit. Although the lieutenant has long since been promoted to lieutenant and gone to a new assignment, the clean footprints he has left tell me of his saintliness and his Christ-wearing. The officers walk with God, and because God is with them and in them, they lead spiritually in the Corps.

Spiritual leadership cannot be earned or achieved by promotion, but is achieved through much prayer and tears. Also, it is accomplished through confession of sin, humble attitude before God, self-examination, self-abandonment, and boldly removing all idols. This spiritual leadership is obtained through bold courage that does not fear death, courageously loving the cross without compromise or complaint, and faith that looks upon Jesus crucified forever and firmly. In order to obtain spiritual leadership, we should not pursue great things for ourselves, but, like Paul, count the things that are beneficial to us as loss for Christ. Paul said, "I count all things as loss compared to the surpassing worth of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord, for whose sake I have suffered the loss of all things and count them as rubbish, that I may gain Christ"(Phil. 3:8).

It is a very high price to pay to count what is good for us as harm. But it is a price that must be resolutely paid by those who wish to be true spiritual leaders, not merely nominal leaders. Those who wish to be leaders whose abilities are recognized in heaven, on earth, and even in hell must pay this price without hesitation. Moses was able to obtain this kind of spiritual leadership in the palace of Pharaoh and in the valley of Mount Sinai. "By faith Moses, when he was grown up, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin,

esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt"(Heb. 11:24-26).

Spiritual leaders are not made by men or by teamwork. Nor can conferences, board meetings, or councils make spiritual leaders. Only God can do that. Spiritual power is the outpouring of spiritual life. All life, from the life of the moss on the rock to the life of the archangel before the throne, comes from God. Therefore, those who desire this kind of leadership must pay a sufficient price and seek spiritual leadership from God.

Who made Elijah and John the Baptist, who were hairy and unpolished men of the wilderness and desert, prophets, and who made kings fear and nations shake? He is God. Who brought Moses out of the university of Egypt and the palace of Pharaoh, and trained him among the sheep of the desert for forty years, and made him a meek man, and made him an indomitable leader who could lead two million people, and also an ever-shining lawgiver and source of laws? He is God. Who chose young Samuel, put the prophetic words about the aged priest Eli in his mouth, and made him the spiritual leader of Israel? He is God.

Who chose the boy David and trained him to shepherd the innocent flock, and gave him a strong heart and courage in his arms to fight lions, bears, and giants? Who gave David the skill to lead the armies of Israel so that the women sang, "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his tens of thousands" (1 Sam. 18:7)? Who made the elders come to David after Saul's death and say, "In former times, when Saul was king over us, you were the one who led Israel out and back; and the LORD said to you, 'You shall shepherd my people Israel, and you shall be ruler over Israel'" (2 Sam. 5:2)? It is God.

Why did God choose and set apart these men and give them the power to rule over others? It was because they recognized God as the supreme truth. They believed in Him, sought Him, feared Him, trusted Him, and obeyed Him. Read the Psalms and see how God filled David's thoughts, desires, and affections. You will never cease to marvel at his leadership. David's leadership was based on spirituality, the power of the Holy Spirit, and fellowship with God.

Once you have acquired spiritual leadership, you must guard it. Moses, Elijah, Paul, Fox, Wesley, Whitney(Charles Grandison Finney, 1792-1875), William Booth, and countless other leaders who served in secret are witnesses to this. They were "still bearing fruit in old age," and had "vigorous and vigorous" ministries. I once visited a saint who was eighty years old and gray-haired. When I had finished praying for him, he suddenly began to pray. "O Father, I thank You that You have allowed me to prove to You and to angels and to these young brethren that old age is not a time of returning to the state of childhood, but of acting as eternal youth."

I have heard complaints and fears expressed by the younger generation. I have seen many who fear and worry that as they grow older, they will be pushed aside and displaced by younger or more mature youth who have not yet attained even a tenth of their experience. They forget that it is not long service or experience that makes a true spiritual leader, but a living, spiritual life. If they fall behind, it is because they have not walked with God, have forsaken the Holy Spirit within them, and have

neglected the holy life. Even if they have served as Salvation Army officers for a long time and have various experiences, if they have lost the spirit of prayer, faith, burning affection, simple and faithful life, and self-sacrifice that they had in their youth and are only pursuing the experiences of past victories, revelations, and graces, how can they enable people to receive the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit? Even if their eyesight is poor due to age, their backs are bent, and their voices are murky, if they always experience the fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit in the present, not the worn-out grace of the past from God, they will be welcomed by people.

Among the ministers, some opposed the doctrine of holiness and refused the baptism of the Holy Spirit during the period when they were active in their ministry. Or there are those who, after being baptized, ignored baptism or lost their ability and received a large salary from the Corps with many attendees. However, their influence gradually declined, and in their later years, they became filled with complaints, disappointments, sorrows, and jealousies, and their lives, which were like the sun, disappeared behind the clouds as they set. The reason is that they have ignored God.

I know a man who, although old, was "filled with the Spirit of God." He was persecuted for Jesus' sake in his youth, but he did not lose his saltiness, and he lived a life full of joy in the Lord. Even now his bow is drawn with great strength, and his sun is shining. People are longing to hear the message of God that he proclaims to the whole world. You must realize that longevity and experience will not save you from danger. But if God is with you, you need not worry. The only one who will save you is God in you. God is always ahead of the times. What people want is God.

When God was going to establish Moses, Samuel, David, Daniel, and Paul as leaders, did He ever put them to work or give them a demonstration of leadership experience? Not at all. They were simply walking with God. In other words, they were following God's will, being meek, trusting, obedient, courageous, and uncomplaining.

They were men full of God's grace. Even if you are driven to the outskirts when you can no longer bear your ministry, you must know that a man filled with the Holy Spirit of God will never be abandoned. If a man filled with the Holy Spirit of God is sent into the wilderness, as was the case with Jesus and John the Baptist, people from Jerusalem and all the provinces will flock to the wilderness where he is. And if a man filled with the Holy Spirit of God is driven to the outskirts, then the people of the world will stop what they are doing and turn their ears toward the outskirts to hear his last message from God. People put Paul in prison. But Paul wrote and delivered powerful words burning with the inextinguishable fire of the Holy Spirit. He inspires modern people with more affection and faith than ever before, and guides their thoughts correctly. When the Jews and Romans beheaded Paul, they thought that his influence was gone forever. However, even today, two thousand years later, Paul's influence continues to expand day by day.

In this way, people thought that they had shut their mouths by imprisoning Madame Guyon(1648-1717), who had greatly helped the spiritual development of the saints, in the Bastille prison, and John Bunyan(1628-1688), a true man of God who had led many souls to nature, in Bedford prison. But who can silence the thunderous voice of

God? Who can block the "still small voice" that God speaks through one person? Those silent prisons had become telegraph offices connected to heaven.

One day, an old man passed away in a city. He was a pastor who was already over 70 years old. At the age of 47, his body became extremely weak due to overwork, and for 5 years he could not read the Bible or any other book. However, he maintained his faith and fervent love for God and people in any situation. When he finally finished his life, the people of God who had been saved, sanctified, inspired, and equipped with spiritual gifts through his words and actions and the institution he had established for the salvation and sanctification of God's people, mourned heartily. In fact, his great ministry was accomplished after he was sixty years old.

Such spiritual power and leadership can be maintained, but on the other hand, it can be lost forever as something subtle.

Saul could have been king when he considered himself weak. But when he became proud and disobedient, his kingdom was transferred to another. This is something we must always guard against in light of the following words: "Hold fast what you have, that no one may take your crown"(Rev. 3:11). The apostleship of Judas Iscariot was also given to another. Jesus said to take the talent from the "wicked and lazy" servant and give it to the one who had ten talents(Matthew 25:26).

I have seen wise, enthusiastic, gentle, spiritual, and ambitious young men follow a Corps Officer for advice and instruction. The officer invited the young men to his quarters one evening. The young men were waiting for spiritual food when they visited the quarters, and coffee and cookies were brought out. The young men expected prayer and counseling, but the Corps Officer brought out a chess board. Thus the young men lost their opportunity to be blessed that night forever. And the strong bond that had been forged in God was loosened and gradually weakened. He was still recognized as a nominal officer, but sadly his spiritual leadership as a Corps Officer was gone. I always fear such cases.

"But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, waiting for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. Now to him who can keep you from stumbling and to present you blameless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, be glory, majesty, power and authority, before all ages, now and forever. Amen"(Jude 1:20-25).

Lament

Major Sandra Pawar

“It is the cry of those who see the truth of the world’s deep wounds and the cost of seeking peace. It is the prayer of those who are deeply disturbed by the way things are.”

Emmanuel Katongole

One way we can respond to the plight of unaccompanied minors is to lament alongside and with those who have been damaged and who have lost hope. Emmanuel Katongole, author of *Reconciling All Things: A Christian Vision for Justice, Peace and Healing*, writes of lament as “a cry directed to God. It is the cry of those who see the truth of the world’s deep wounds and the cost of seeking peace. It is the prayer of those who are deeply disturbed by the way things are”.

When I spent time in Athens for my field work, there was a continuous engagement with pain as I heard devastating stories from refugees and asylum seekers. I listened to the story of a mother from Afghanistan whose six children were smuggled to Athens by human traffickers after her husband was killed by the Taliban. I sat in Omonia and Victoria Squares and watched young boys selling themselves for sex in order to survive; I listened as they said “no” but went with their exploiter anyway. I listened to case workers share how they had children as young as nine years old sleeping on the steps outside their building because they had no beds for them inside. I heard the story of a child, a baby as young as three, being left without family when her parents died at sea. These are true stories; these are real-life situations that should tear us up inside, stories that should cause us to weep.

The only thing I could do with the stories I heard and the things I saw was to give them back to God and to cry and weep in lament for these children of God who had faced and were facing things I could not even imagine. Hoang reminds us that “there are countless stories of people all over our world—people created by God for a life of wholeness and flourishing but who instead undergo a living nightmare of injustice”.

Such were the people I met in Athens: deeply broken and hurting people, scarred from the injustices of this world. Katongole shares that “when we draw near to those who are most sinned against, our call is not first to ‘make a difference’ but to allow the pain of that encounter to disturb us”. Sometimes what we need to do first is to allow ourselves to be disturbed and broken by the despair we see around us. To sit in it, to acknowledge it and to feel it.

We must first learn the language of lament before rushing to try to find solutions for the problems we see. Lament opens the way for us to name the brokenness, to honestly sit and mourn with those who mourn and weep with those who weep. It is an ongoing action that helps us stay close to the heart of God even as we move into the work of justice. Katongole suggests that lament “helps us to become aware of ways that we might be contributing to the problems we see, and it prepares the ground for the long-lasting but slow-going work of transformation”. It’s easy to run away from people who are suffering and much harder to stand in the struggles with them; but before we attempt to do anything else, stand we must. We must stand

alongside those who are suffering, we must hear and embrace their cries, and we must spend time in lament.

Making It Personal

Questions to Consider

- 1) Why do you think it is important that we spend time lament over what is happening in the world in regard to refugees and unaccompanied minors?
- 2) Find some scripture verses that talk about lament, write them down and meditate on them.
- 3) Ask God to reveal to you his heart over the stories and people who have read about thus far in this book. Ask him to show you what breaks his heart.

Dear Lord

Meet us in our lament over the suffering of your children in this world. Give us a heart that grieves over the things that grieve and break your heart. Take away our cold hearts and instead give us compassionate and empathetic hearts. Send your Holy Spirit to comfort those who need only the comfort you can give. Give peace to those who are anxious and afraid. Give us hope even when things seem hopeless. Help us to be faithful in the spaces and places where you have placed us. Amen

Getting Off The Couch

Major Pete Brookshaw

An excerpt from Major Peter Brookshaw's book, "Who am I to change the world?"



If you want to change the world, you have to get off the couch.

There, I've said it. I've laid it out right from the outset. You cannot change the world sitting on the couch. You may well read this book on the couch, but you cannot implement its ideas by staying on the couch. This book is about growth. It's about looking at core principles that will help identify ways to grow and develop into the person you are meant to be.

In essence, this book is about getting off the metaphorical couch of mediocrity and taking life by the horns and changing the world. I believe that God has placed within everyone the capability to do something significant and life on earth is so short, so let's start on it now. The days are too limited to be coasting through the years without identifying how we can take the opportunities before us so we can grow far beyond where we are now in our spirit, mind and body capacities to make a positive difference in our world.

But before I go any further, what has all this got to do with the couch? The couch is a metaphor. A picture that helps us identify that we are not necessarily reaching our full potential in life. Imagine with me for a moment that you have finally arrived at work, but you were 10 minutes late because of bad traffic. You excuse

yourself from this because you know for the last six days you've been working around the clock trying to finish off paperwork for the boss. You happen to run into an employee on the way to your desk who snaps at you, "Where have you been? We can't all have a nice sleep-in around here!" Your heart sinks, and you feel the anger rising. You escape to your desk and slump into the chair. You spend the next 45 minutes producing absolutely nothing of value for the company.

What's happened? Well, you've escaped or collapsed on the couch, and it captures you. You settle in because the couch is comforting and doesn't expect anything back from you.

For me, couch sitting or couch escapism, has been a common occurrence during my life. I have a gruelling day at work. I sit on the couch. I buy the latest technology and digress to the couch. I hear of a new show on television and diverge to the couch. I have an argument at work, and I slump on the couch. I get discouraged from seeing a lack of success and I find myself stuck on the couch.

The challenges of life draw us to the couch. You know what I mean? When life gets difficult we prefer to slump on the couch rather than proactively make necessary changes. We may not be on a literal couch, but we may be wandering around the office with our mind all over the place, or we may be driving and find our mind performing mental gymnastics. We may be thinking about those addictions we've been trying to conquer. We may be organising a holiday to get away and escape to the beach for the next two weeks. At some point it all becomes too much, and we look for some respite – an escape – the couch!

When circumstances lead us to the couch, **a danger is that we become more than casual couch-sitters being refreshed, instead we become stuck.** We fall into a state of mediocrity. The full potential we have wastes away, encased by self-pity and typically helped along by a technologically induced coma. While playing with our phones or flicking through different streaming services and television stations, we orchestrate in our mind a rational defence for our lack of commitment and reasons that justify our insecurities, anxieties, fears and resistance.

We try to convince ourselves that it is more than warranted to be sitting on the couch. Phrases run through our heads like:

"But you should have heard what they said?!"

"They called me fat... Well, maybe I am. I guess I'll never be a decent weight again."

"I couldn't possibly try that."

"Who am I to do this?"

"I'll never find a real job."

While we're couch-sitting, seemingly rationally considering whether we could do anything significant in life, we are missing out. While our response to derogatory

comments about us may cause us to sit on the couch, it is our lack of physical, emotional and intellectual effort that causes us to stay in a vicious state of never having enough energy.

While we're full of unforgiveness, bitterness, brokenness and anxiety, we prefer to wallow on the couch rather than engage with the world. When we fail to recognise the spiritual realities surrounding our existence and the presence of the Creator with us, we remain on the couch, and totally miss seeing and understanding God's greater life purpose for us.

So, here's the premise of the book – ***If you want to change the world, you have to get off the couch.***

I hope you want to change the world. I hope you realise that you can be a world-changer. I know my book premise sounds like a lightweight cutesy catchphrase. But, for me, it's not. I firmly believe that we are not meant to waste away our life by couch sitting. I also believe that we are called to do more in life than eat, drink and be merry. Bringing lasting joy, fulfillment, peace and care to the world doesn't come through staying on the couch or by simply climbing the corporate ladder, making large sums of cash, paying off our mortgage and having great holidays.

When we look at the global environment in which we live we can see that the world needs changing. I'm excited to think that this book might at least play some small part in empowering someone to grab hold of their potential and the opportunities to run like crazy to an amazing people impacting finish line. **Do you want to change the world – your immediate world, or even the wider world? If so, will you let me help you to get off the couch?**

Remember, this couch is not a physical couch with nice soft cushioning and a bright red throw rug. It is the couch-sitting going on in our mind when we make rational excuses for not following through on something. It can be in our heart. We can be despairing and convincing ourselves that it's justified. In the heat of our emotions we believe it's okay to permanently reside in a place of comfort and security. Our couch can even be related to physical fitness. We have a day when we choose to eat pizza and absolutely destroy our fitness routine, which leads to us deciding on the next day that it is much easier to just give up.

If we are going to have a positive life influence it is vital that we stay off the metaphorical couch of mediocrity. I suggest that getting off the couch is to make a choice to 'have a go' and 'make a difference' and if we do this, then we are probably already starting to make life changes happen.

So, what's stopping us? Well, it's much easier to abdicate responsibility for something than to see it through to the end. It's easier to sleep-in than wake up early for a morning fitness regime. It's easier not to start a new initiative than it is to start one. Couch-sitting is easier!

This book is about finding ways to embrace life with focus, passion and wisdom and to find an integrated way to live it to the full. We are not created to be couch-sitters, but rather to be world-changers. Success doesn't involve vegetating in any kind of

couch. Even the person who invented the comfort bringing couch surely didn't build it by sitting on it.

The world needs world-changers. We crave leadership in an age bereft of courageous, visionary people who motivate and inspire, and we also want the strong, capable, quiet achievers who complementarily lead from the second chair.

I am so sad when I see people choosing to slip into the background, not fully using their gifts and abilities, and waiting for someone else to do the job. I believe that every one of us is called to have a part in changing the world! Conversely, you may already be a highly educated, experienced, proactive go-getter who actively seeks to make a difference in the world. That is awesome. But there is something you need to know – the challenges of life will often drag you back to the couch.

Even after success we can end up on the couch. Even after a great day at work, we can come crashing down at home. The danger of prolonged couch-sitting is not just for the lazy. The danger exists for each of us because it is so easy to simply choose to no longer move forward. Here's the thing about achieving our goals – sometimes we work so hard to reach them and when we do, we're not sure what to do next, or we are worn out, so we resort to the couch. I mean, who wants to deal with more pressure and obstacles in the future? It is much easier to become emotionally detached and switch off our brain.

This book is about getting off the couch and staying off it. And I say this as someone who has had a fair share of time on the couch of life. One instance relates to my journey at university. I finished public high school with top marks in my year level. I headed off to the prestigious University of Melbourne and began a science degree. I fumbled my way through the crowds and regularly sat in historical libraries reading about electrons and protons and electromagnetic thing-a-ma-jigs (it's been a while!). I lacked the hair of Albert Einstein, but had a passion for science, nonetheless.

During the first year I had found a girl and a new-found faith in God. I had a few friends around me who were praying that God would bless my studies. I remember those prayers vividly. Then, in my second year, I began to lose interest in science. Someone had turned off my Bunsen burner. In fact, following the four exams I completed, the results came in and, out of 100, I scored exam results that you wouldn't tell your mother about. My world came crashing down. I remember the agonising slow motion glance at my results: 37, 42, 38, 41.

What had happened to me?! I used to be the smartest kid in town. I used to be the academic hotshot who never failed a test. Failing for me was getting a B-plus. Now I was at Melbourne University at the bottom of the food chain. Even the janitor was getting better marks than me!

I had a choice to make right then. Was I going to resort to the couch? I tell you, that would have been the easiest road. Turn on the TV, charge up my gaming console, eat lots of chocolate and kiss success goodbye. I could easily have switched off my mind, disengaged my heart, hardened my soul and put on loads of weight.

My parents suggested I study business. In fact, they had suggested that in the first place. Stay tuned for my next book, *Why You Should Listen to Your Parents When They Give You Advice for What You Should Do with Your Life*. I made the change. I left Melbourne University, waved the future doctors and lawyers goodbye and headed off to Victoria University.

I went on to complete a Bachelor of Business. It took me longer than usual, as it was a difficult transition. I did end up with science credits for a business degree. That will come in handy if I start selling tennis racquets. I can let them know about the velocity of the ball and gravitational potential energy of the racquet.

Here is the thing. Better to have finished late than not to have finished at all. Better to have resisted the urge to sit on the couch than say, "Woe is me". I am called to change the world. I can't do it sitting on the couch.

Even high achievers and self-starters can be knocked down and it is how we respond, and who we have on our side, that determines what happens next.

My greatest Speech

I have had opportunity for some important speeches over the years, but this one trumped them all. I remember it as if it was yesterday. We were inside a formal-looking dining area surrounded by gum trees visible from the floor-to-ceiling windows that surrounded the beautiful, serene conference centre. The water in the small swimming pool behind us glimmered in the night and the rock'n'roll band had just finished its second bracket of songs. I stood by my lovely, amazingly beautiful bride, with my tuxedo on and began to speak from the heart. Naturally, I spoke about my love for my wife and thanked those who had worked tirelessly to put on a great wedding night. Although, with sweaty palms and dry lips, I told family and friends something some were not expecting.

I stood in front of the crowd that night and spoke with emotion, with a little quiver in my voice. I told those gathered that we needed to love God with all our heart and soul, and all our mind and strength. We couldn't do anything less, because Jesus had commanded us to. I got a little teary as I shared that when I chose to follow God in my late teen years those words from Jesus resonated in my life. God would have all there is of Pete Brookshaw. Nothing less. I eagerly said to the crowd – who I was convinced were already thinking about dessert and its impending arrival – that those words would characterise the rest of my life.

Sum It Up For Us, Jesus

So, it's time to delve a little deeper into this couch analogy and look at an encounter with Jesus.

In a well-known story found in the Gospels, we read of religious leaders asking Jesus what is the greatest commandment in the Law. Only recently Jesus had put the religious leaders back in their place when he was answering a question about marital relationships after death. Now he was confronted with another tough question. How would he answer the religious elite on this one? I mean, what was the

greatest commandment? Maybe he would simply say, “Well, all the laws are important, and we should follow them all. End of story. Thanks for the question.” However, he didn’t say that, in fact, Jesus had a radical answer for them.

The Jewish Law consists of the content of the following books of the Bible: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers and Deuteronomy. These books, called the Torah, pronounce with great authority the stories of creation, Noah and the flood, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, Joseph, and the Exodus of the people of Israel under the leadership of Moses. Along with those stories of the great Patriarchs of the Old Testament, the books are full of rules and regulations, codes of conduct, advice on maintaining healthy relationships, and keeping a right relationship with God. The question was asked: Were any of the laws found within these texts any more important than another?

I am going to side-track just for a minute. If you were nice enough to a local police officer, you might be able to get him to print off a list of fineable offences related to, say, traffic rules. On that list you might find the following:

- *Failure to stop at a red light*
- *Drinking while under the influence of alcohol*
- *Driving five kilometres an hour over the speed limit*
- *Overtaking when unsafe to do so*
- *Overstaying five minutes in a parking bay*
- *Failure to use an indicator when turning a corner*

It is very clear that breaking the laws described above will have you needing to explain yourself. The laws exist for a reason – they exist for our safety and to provide us with direction and clarity. It is imperative that these laws are followed, as they are trusted, and proven laws handed down from generation to generation.

Are all the laws important? Yes. Are all the laws equally important? Well, that’s an interesting question.

When considering the above list of road safety infringements and comparing a five-minute parking infringement with drink driving, it is easy to see that not all laws are equal. These laws are important, sure, but they do not hold the same weight. We only have to watch the news for a few nights and we’re bound to hear a story of a fatality on the roads due to drink driving. It is ludicrous to suggest, however, that being a few minutes late back to the parked car is as dangerous as drink driving. So, from our example of the local police officer, we see that all laws are important, but not all are equally important.

Let’s turn back then to the religious leaders attempting to trap Jesus with their question. “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” It is overly simplistic and logically incomprehensible for Jesus to reply with, “They’re all great!” The religious group knows full well that there are definitely laws that hold more weight than others. While all the laws are important – they are not all equally important.

So, what was the greatest commandment? With the question on the table, Jesus chooses to say the following: “Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment.” And

the second is like it: "Love your neighbour as yourself." All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.

This is complete gold! Look what Jesus has done here. He has taken the long list of laws that are vital to the Jewish faith, and he sums them up in two sentences. In fact, he condenses the first five books of the Old Testament by using two biblical passages. He then goes a step further and says that these two texts not only sum up the Law but sum up the words of the prophets as well.

Consider the significance of this for a moment. Can you think of the latest book you have read, and are you able to pluck out 9 two sentences, from the myriad of words, that sum up the entire book? Generally, this is a hugely difficult. A good book will have much to say and narrowing the focus to simply two sentences is quite often near impossible.

I found this out at university when the class was asked to do a 500-word book review on an in-depth business book. I remember chuckling to myself as I reflected on the small word count required. I mean, in comparison to 3000-word essays, surely a 500-word count would be a breeze! After reading the book, the task came to summarise the main points of the text. There was so much to say, so much to include and so much to acknowledge. Very quickly, I sensed that summarising a large business text in 500 words would not be easy. And if you asked me to summarise the book into two sentences, that would take me many hours!

Irrespective of our thoughts about Jesus, here we see a man who could sum up the essence of subjects with one sentence. What about these pearls:

- *"I am the light of the world."*
- *"I am the bread of life."*
- *"Come, follow me."*
- *"Peter, do you love me?"*
- *"Seek first the Kingdom of God."*

Jesus had this uncanny ability to sum up his teaching into short bites that became memorable. He knew how to create simplicity. He would've been great on X if it had been around in his day. What Jesus was gifted at doing was creating simplicity from complexity. He takes complex theological writings, laws and prophecies, historical literature, and narrows them all down to simple axioms of truth for his listeners.

It is important to note at this point that the message is not simplistic but simplified. We surely would not claim that statements like, "I am the light of the world" are simplistic. We would say they are said in words that are understandable by a large percentage of people. They convey in a few easy-to-understand words what many of us would take paragraphs to explain. Jesus encapsulates depth and meaning within one statement that people will meditate on or analyse for years.

I want you to grasp therefore the gravity of what we are reading in the Gospels about the Great Commandment. Jesus is simplifying the Old Testament Scriptures to two commandments – loving God and loving others. With intellectual aptitude and theological wisdom, Jesus simplifies the message. He does not water it down. He does not compromise or contradict the Old Testament writings. He simplifies and

clarifies the essence of what is important. He takes the Old Testament writings, shakes them up, and sifts out the nuggets of truth to the astonishment of the listeners around him.

You may wonder what this has to do with getting off the couch and changing the world. We're about to find out that what Jesus said to the religious leaders of his day is what most secular personal development coaches have been communicating ever since.

Simplicity In Complexity

By the time Jesus was on the scene, the Jewish law had expanded to include hundreds and hundreds of laws. If you were to be a faithful Israelite, you had many expectations. We could recite Scriptures such as, "Each of you must respect his mother and father, and you must observe my Sabbaths. I am the Lord your God" (Leviticus 19:3). There were many specific requests too, including, "Three times a year you are to celebrate a festival to me" (Exodus 23:14).

Some of us are convinced that this just reinforces the idea that outdated religious structures provide little relevance in today's secular, postmodern society. Some of these commandments may well seem legalistic to us, like "Don't touch that!" "Put that down!" "Stop doing that!", but in fact these Scriptures were a helpful handbook for living for the people of that day.

By the time Jesus arrived, legalism had crept in. The laws had expanded. The expectations were greater. Something had happened to the words traditionally passed down from the Lord to Moses. One may say that the religious leaders over generations had added to these words and the interpretations of them (no doubt for the intended good of the people) and the rules and regulations were mounting.

Our organisational structures evoke the same issue today. When you read of the beginnings of The Salvation Army, in Harold Hills', Leadership in The Salvation Army, for instance, you read of an active people who were living, preaching and moving among the broken and marginalised people of East London. There was a call to action and a call to revivalist-type ministry in the East End. The missional imperative was there, although the following inevitable things happened:

- *They acquired a headquarters.*
- *They started hiring workers.*
- *Printing started on the first 'Soldier's Covenant' document (that Salvationists use an adaptation of today).*
- *Ministry to the poor and hungry expanded.*
- *The organisation of funds began with the first financial statement.*

The point is this – movements can begin with very simple ideals and visions (such as ministry to the poor), although when growth comes, complexity arises. Who will pay the bills? Will we apply for marriage licences through government channels? Who will organise a wage for our employees? Do we need contracts? Who will manage these? Like any other movement, The Salvation Army has become challenged by the institutional demands of its operations (religious or otherwise).

In a broader sense, organisational structures that are created to help 'organise' the growth that is occurring can become stumbling blocks to effective mission. When the institutional expectations within an organisation become stifling to innovative, creative, life-giving mission, then change is needed. Organisational bureaucracy is meant to be a skeleton – it holds the organisation together, but if it begins to dominate, we have a problem.

To help us flesh this out, let's consider John Wesley and the beginnings of the Wesleyan movement compared with the current Methodist Church. Wesley conducted his ministry on horseback throughout the English countryside, calling people not just to follow Christ but to become committed disciples of Christ. **Can you see the challenge?** Fifty people in a local community choose to realign their lives to that of God's will and suddenly you have logistical challenges. Who will disciple? What will be the foundation of teaching used to disciple? What will we do with the financial support we are receiving? Who will administer these finances? Who will ensure the consistency of teaching across the board? The list goes on, and the complexity sets in.

The concern for any movement or community of faith is to not over-regulate itself. Communities of people inevitably become organised and thus become organisations, but we must be challenged to find ways to remain relational and engaged in ministry without getting caught up in unnecessary red tape. There is so much more that could be said on simplifying the church structures of our day, but I'm now going back to the way of Jesus.

The way Jesus summarised the Scriptures into two verses was astounding. No doubt, this was a bit controversial when he was physically on earth.

And it is certainly worth exploring, so let's have a closer look at Jesus bringing simplicity within complexity. When he answers the religious leaders' question he offers them two verses:

“Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength” (Deuteronomy 6:5).

“Do not seek revenge or bear a grudge against one of your people but love your neighbour as yourself. I am the Lord” (Leviticus 19:18).

Around the time of Moses, the Israelites embraced a creed called the Shema, which encapsulated the words found in Deuteronomy 6:4-5: “Hear, O Israel: The Lord is our God, the Lord is one. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength.”

These were words that the Israelite people consistently taught their children. The Scriptures say they had the words on their hearts. They impressed the words upon their children. They were encouraged to talk about them when they sat at home or when they walked along the road. The Israelites even tied the words as symbols onto their hands and bound them on their foreheads. They inscribed the words on their gates and the doorframes of their houses. Such was the commitment of the

Israelite people to this creed that they seemed tirelessly concerned to keep such words at the forefront of their hearts and minds.

Jesus made it very clear on what it meant to get off the couch so we have opportunity to change the world.

Living Life To The Fullest

Staying at my parents' house for a holiday some time ago in the surfer town of Torquay, on Australia's south-east coast, provided an ideal time to gather my thoughts for the year ahead. And one day while when I was walking down to the beach, I had a lightbulb moment. I had been reading USA author Stephen Covey's The 8th Habit, the sequel volume to his immensely popular The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.

I was intrigued by Covey's look at human intelligences and his perception on how to be effective as a human being. The angle he took was that we should develop our intelligence in all areas of life. This meant that growing as a person included growing our intellectual intelligence (Intelligence Quotient – IQ), our emotional intelligence (Emotional Quotient – EQ), our physical body and health (Physical Quotient – PQ) and our spiritual consciousness (Spirit Quotient – SQ).

With the sea breeze moving through my hair (I embellish a little here), I had a revelation. **The whole rigorous, intellectual discourse about human intelligences seems to derive from the words of Jesus!** Now, please stick with me as I explain where I am coming from. Humanity's desire to grow and mature as people has focused on improving our intellect, increasing our emotional intelligence, wrestling with existential questions about existence, ensuring we are fit and healthy, and developing our ability to connect well with others. The human intelligences, such as IQ and EQ and the like, have been our way of articulating what humanity needs to do to grow.

- *Love God with all your heart – **Grow in emotional intelligence.***
- *Love God with all your soul – **Grow your spiritual understanding.***
- *Love God with all your mind – **Increase your intellect.***
- *Love God with all your strength – **Get fit and healthy.***
- *Love your neighbour as yourself – **Grow in social intelligence.***

There is clearly an overlap here. The words of Jesus – to love God with your heart, soul, mind and strength – have become a challenge in secular circles of personal development, namely, to grow in emotional, mental, physical and spiritual intelligence. I am excited to realise that mainstream leadership authors are developing books that have been pressed and formed from principles that Jesus communicated many years previously!

Covey's book is not religious, but it helped me make the connection between what Jesus said and today's personal development material.

Can you see what's happening? We are now setting the foundation for getting off the couch and changing the world. We have taken a number of laws and narrowed them down to two commandments – to love God and to love others. As we delved a little further, we saw that to love God with all our heart is synonymous with emotional intelligence. We also learnt that loving God with all our soul is articulated in general society in terms of spiritual intelligence and awareness. Loving God with all our mind is connected with mental intelligence. Loving God with all our strength relates to our focus on physical fitness and health. Loving others can be encapsulated under the theme of social intelligence.

This is how it is. If we want to develop our whole life, we need to grow in emotional intelligence, spiritual intelligence, mental intelligence, physical intelligence and social intelligence.

Take a deep breath. I need to stop here for a moment. If you are like me, you just read a whole bunch of thoughts and ideas about personal growth that need thinking through.

It takes effort and courage to consider changing ourselves, let alone changing the world. It would be easy to choose not to wrestle with growing and to quit before it costs anything – to get off the bandwagon before we get too invested.

However, what you're about to discover now is a rich, doable, holistic strategy for personal development. What you're about to see is that personal growth can be broken into five areas and that positive change is inevitable when we intentionally choose to spend quality time in developing ourselves in these areas.

*An excerpt from Major Peter Brookshaw's book, "Who am I to change the world?"
Pick up your eBook copy online: [<link>](#)*

Go With The Flow

Commissioner Joe Noland

Excerpt from the book OCTOGENERIAN MUSINGS.



Note: For those who missed the “Introduction,” these musings are taken from contemporaneous notes written during our time as territorial leaders in The Salvation Army. They were inspired by a sign that adorned my office wall. It read: “**Use Me O’ Lord, In Thy Work, - Especially In An Executive Capacity**” Continuing...

My next two posts will contain the keynote presentation delivered at each of those thirteen command vision consultations mentioned in the last post. Its’ title was...

“Go With The Flow”

The serpent told the Woman, ‘You won’t die. God knows that the moment you eat from that tree, you’ll see what’s really going on. You’ll be just like God, knowing everything, ranging all the way from good to evil.’

When the Woman saw that the tree looked like good eating and realized what she would get out of it—she’d know everything!—she took and ate the fruit and then gave some to her husband, and he ate. -Genesis 3:4-6

This Garden of Eden faux pas is The Salvation Army’s raison d’être. Except for that original gargantuan error in judgment, there would be no need for salvation and its accompanying charitable initiatives. This defining historical moment set off a series of “change precipitators” that have shaped our destiny.

I have framed them alliteratively for your viewing pleasure, and thereby making them easily memorable:

1. Seethe
2. See
3. Seek

They are merged into what I call, “the dynamic flow”.- *Passion* (what you seethe) flowing into *vision* (what you see) flowing into consequential *change* (what you seek).

It is this dynamic flow that inspires invention. It is this dynamic flow that stimulates innovation. It is this dynamic flow that moves proverbial mountains. It is this dynamic flow that fuels The Salvation Army, one of the most innovative and transformative movements to ever emerge on this planet.

Passion

To feel passion is to seethe. The dictionary defines “seethe” as “To be filled with intense anger.” Allow me to spiritualize this by adding one word: “To be filled with intense, ‘righteous’ anger.”

It was a seething of the spirit that led Martin Luther to announce, “Here I stand. I cannot do otherwise!” It was a seething of the spirit that stirred Catherine Booth to stand in that gallery and shout “Never!” It was a seething of the spirit that provoked William Booth’s battle cry: “I’ll Fight! I’ll fight to the very end!”

John Stott, the Anglican cleric, and theologian, wrote, “Vision begins with a holy discontent with the way things are.” I love that. The words, “holy discontent,” are a sanctified version of the word, “seething.” Or put another way, a “holy discontent” is “seething” wrapped in compassion.

Think about it this way. Passion is the precursor to compassion. Its role is to channel that seething (holy discontent) empathetically toward the suffering of another. I love the way it is expressed by Spencer Hope Davis:

“Passion can be seen as desire, emotion, and intensity. Compassion can be expressed as care, empathy, and charity. The differences between passion and compassion can first be conceptualized as internal and external. Passion can be seen as beginning with an internal feeling that manifests itself externally as an expression of emotion. Compassion on the other hand can be seen as something that you extend and give as an act to another person.”

Passion compels us; compassion centers us. It is an unbeatable combination designed to keep everything in perfect balance. Allow me to personalize this combination, illustratively, by sharing with you the gist of a story I recently read in the New York Times:

“At age 10 her mother was killed in an argument over drugs. She went to New Jersey to live with her father; a man she would later say sexually abused her. Intervening years were spent in a rough passage through New York City’s foster care system. At 14, she was dead, battered, sexually abused, and left in the gutter of a New York suburb. Her body was not identified until late October, more than 8 months after she was found.

“‘Her greatest fear,’ her friends said, ‘was that she would be unloved, and nobody would notice if she were gone. Her fear turned out to be prophetic. One of her many foster parents said, ‘If someone had been there for this one, she might still be alive.’”

My spirit seethes angrily toward the parents and foster care system that failed her. It compels me to do something. Sans the compassion balancing part, I might act

hatefully and destructively toward the system, rather than with compassionate zeal toward a solution.

The lyrics of that old Albert Orsborn song come immediately to mind; three lines 'Especially' highlighted:

But how shall they hear if the preacher forbear
Or lack in compassionate zeal?
Or how shall hearts move with the Master's own love,
Without his anointing and seal?

It is not with might to establish the right,
Nor yet with the wise to give rest;
The mind cannot show what the heart longs to know
Nor comfort a people distressed.

Except I am moved with compassion,
How dwelleth thy Spirit in me?
In word and in deed
Burning love is my need;
I know I can find this in thee.

GO WITH THE DYNAMIC FLOW (It begins with passion)

USE ME O' LORD, ESPECIALLY...

Next, I will teach you to see the invisible and do the impossible. So, stay tuned.

Thanks for reading Joe's Newsletter! Subscribe for free to receive new posts and support my work.

Excerpt from the book OCTOGENERIAN MUSINGS; subscribe to read the whole book, here: [<link>](#)

Catching Up To William Booth

Major Stephen Court

We're inculcated with the priority of the moment (selfies prove we were there!), the ascendancy of the current (epitomised by recency bias), and the obsolescence of the ancient. All of this underlines a generational arrogance that presumes it is better than what preceded.

Here's a little secret...

It's always been the case (though, admittedly, ebbing and flowing through history and at different rates in different places).

Hold that thought.

Now, William Booth, largely celebrated for his innovative creativity and apostolic leadership, is widely undervalued for his convictions. Here are ten Booth had, along with the impact of generational impact on the embrace of those convictions.

1. William Booth saw no New Testament priesthood.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today the Church is catching up with William.

So is The Salvation Army. We're seeing that sticking a title like 'pastor' behind certain people's names is inaccurate, misreading Scripture, and hampering mission. We're seeing that it is inaccurate because lots with that label are not 'pastor' / shepherd but apostle or prophet or evangelist (alluding to Ephesians 4); it is misreading because 'pastor' is translated that way only once in the Bible – every other time it comes out 'shepherd' (and why is it that no one sticks THAT on their business card? [and the four-fold of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and shepherd & teacher]); and it is hampering mission because it identifies with a role and an institution rejected out of hand by the large majority of people in the world – the actual people we're trying to reach!

AND, it elevates the people of God who are sent (apostolic), who prophesy (prophetic), evangelise (evangelistic), and disciple (shepherd & teach).

2. William Booth saw no female subordination in NT Scripture.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today some of the Church is buying in.

And some of The Army is, too... Some of our best apostles, best prophets, best evangelists, best disciplers are female, as you'd expect. And we're increasingly recognizing them, applauding them, supporting them, following them. Much, much more to come...

3. William Booth saw an aggressive evangelistic mandate in the New Testament.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today most of the Church is catching up.

The Army is rediscovering this, too. We're seeing that all of the credibility we've built up, the incredible global infrastructure, the corporate genius in dealing with marginalization, the collective sacrifice and commitment, all of it can be leveraged to optimize supernatural results for the Gospel. Hallelujah.

4. William Booth saw no institution of sacraments.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today some of the Church is changing its focus.

Some of The Army is blinking awake to the truth, again, too. There was a dalliance for a generation with imitating 'church' and all of its liturgical accoutrements. But we're recognizing the robustness of primitive salvationism's convictions and the missional shot-in-the-arm that accompanies such perspective.

5. William Booth saw that the great commission was a command.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today some of the Church is coming around.

The Army is figuring this out, too. Whether it is the local expressions that are sorting that without intentional, rigorous discipling practices we're limiting ourselves in impact or all the way out to a global recognition that 'all nations' is a still a big gap in our obedience that requires focus and commitment, we're sensing the indomitable draw of the great commission.

6. William Booth saw that the world could actually be won.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today more and more are believing that we shall win if we fight in the strength of the King.

And our Army is getting around to this point of view again, too. Well, we believe it. And you might, too. That's two of us. And climbing!

7. William Booth saw no biblical favouritism based on wealth.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today most of the Church worldwide has lined up with his understanding of truth.

SA keeps getting it (that is, we keep resisting the temptation to butter up those with wealth at the expense of those without it). And, of course, most of the 'church worldwide' is without wealth these days so the perspective has changed.

8. William Booth saw no reason to criticise or benefit in criticising other parts of the Body of Christ.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today much of the Church has learned this lesson.

Salvos are getting this, too. We oppose the temptation to throw dirt and dig ourselves in bigger holes. And we celebrate victories across the Body of Christ as they are ours (even if it means magnifying tiny connections, like Gilbert Bilezikian getting saved at an open air meeting and then being influential in the start of an influential church or Yongii Cho apparently offering for Officership or Brian Houston being an Officers' kid or... [and let's not criticise the later doings, following the main #8 point]).

9. William Booth saw justice as crucial to the Gospel.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today, increasing portions of the Church has come onside.

The Army gets this. And so as Richard Munn lays it out, we engage in social service, social action, and justice – three tiers of manifesting the effects of the Gospel.

10. William Booth saw no limits to the power of Jesus' love.

The Church of the day disagreed.

Today, a lot of the Church has experienced his same revelation.

And The Army experiences it, too. And so we relentlessly press in for more and more of Jesus' love in our own lives and through our lives to those still lacking it. God help us.

So, thinking differently might come from a humility that recognises that the past (and Booth, specifically in this take) has something from which we can learn. God make us humble and help us learn.