

# Word & deed

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A JOURNAL OF SALVATION ARMY  
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

“To Turn the World Upside Down”:  
Practical Holiness in the Anthropocene

Benedictus: Paul’s Parting Words on Ministry  
— Part Two: The Gift

Reformation 500: Here We Stand

Brief Encounter:  
A Meeting at the Edge of Our Beings



Salvation Army National Headquarters  
Alexandria, VA, USA

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# 500

*Roger J. Green and Jonathan S. Raymond*

It is appropriate that the editorial for this issue of *Word & Deed* begin with a number—500. October 31st marked the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Protestant Reformation. There had been pre-Reform movements in Europe that led to Martin Luther posting his ninety-five theses to the door of the Wittenberg Church on that day in 1517. And while the act itself was simply that of a university professor letting the community know that there would be public disputation regarding the use of indulgences in the Roman Catholic Church, what followed with further writing and speaking brought about the birth of Protestantism.

It is remarkable that in the history of the Church we can see that occasionally the right person comes along at just the right time with the right ideas. That is what happened with the Protestant Reformation. Martin Luther lit the bonfire that had been only embers until he accepted God's vocation for his life and challenged the Church to be the Body of Christ as God had intended. And so our lead article for this issue by Richard Munn helps us to remember both the Protestant Reformation and the heritage of that Reformation found in the ministry of The Salvation Army.

Anthropocene is an interesting word that denotes the influence that human beings make on the natural world. The Reformation message is that Christians should be particularly concerned about this for two compelling reasons. First, because we view the natural world as God's creation and we see that creation as a means of God's revelation to us. Second, we are granted the privileged honor of being good stewards and caretakers of that world. Matt Seamans has carefully studied the implications of what it means to be caretakers, and develops this in the second article. He is careful to view his topic in relation to the message of holiness, so central to the Wesleyan heritage. For readers interested in pursuing

this topic further, his research for a graduate degree resulted in the writing of an interesting dissertation entitled *Yellow, Red, Blue and Green: Exploring Ecological Aspects of The Salvation Army*.

What was also critical to the Reformation was a biblical understanding of ministry, and Lyell Rader's second article in a series shares that with us. This article comes to all readers as a challenge of the many aspects of whatever ministry God lays upon the believer. And as the writings of Paul were so indispensable to the Reformers in shaping the Church after the demands of the New Testament, so in this article we once again turn predominately to those writings to understand the nature of ministry in our day and age.

The final article brings our attention to the reality of God in Christ in the person of Jesus. A familiar incident from the fourth chapter of the Gospel of John is used to bring the reader again to what the ministry of the Gospel is all about and to Kingdom life. Because, although we began this issue with the big story of the Reformation, this article reminds us that ultimately the great Christian story is about Jesus—God with us.

We offer two book reviews to complete this issue and to suggest further reading on a central theme of the Bible and of the Reformers, and a reflection of how the Army lived out the Reformation through the ministry of the Booth family.

We pray that our readers will be led to reflect on the great work of God through people such as Martin Luther who were faithful to the call of God in their lives. One of Martin Luther's hymns includes these words, appropriate for concluding this editorial and encouraging our readers to enjoy this issue of *Word & Deed*:

Lord Jesus Christ, Thy powers make known,  
For Thou art Lord of lords alone;  
Defend Thy Christendom, that we  
May evermore sing praise to Thee.

RJG  
JSR







# “To Turn the World Upside Down”: Practical Holiness in the Anthropocene

*Matthew Seaman*

*An earlier version of this paper was presented at the “Salvation Army Scholars and Friends” additional meeting of the American Academy of Religion 2014 conference in San Diego.*

## **Background and Introduction**

In 2013, I completed a practical theology Masters research degree that explored the relationship between spiritual, social, and ecological matters within The Salvation Army.<sup>1</sup> This research process incorporated semi-structured interviews with 27 people involved with The Salvation Army primarily within South Queensland Division of the Australia Eastern Territory. The findings from this research corroborated a number of research findings in sociological and environmental literature and uncovered some particularly Salvationist-related themes. For example, there was widespread acknowledgment among interviewees that humanity has adversely impacted the Earth. Responsible stewardship was seen as the proper response to God’s provision, whereas sin and greed were linked with irresponsibility, pollution and social and environmental injustices.

Towards the end of the research, two areas presented as being noteworthy for further research. The first was the area of the early ‘radical’ action of The

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Salvation Army compared to the current levels of ‘radical’ Salvationist action. The second area centred on the notion of holiness. The Salvation Army is considered part of the holiness movement, yet at the end of my research interview process, I noticed that there was an almost complete absence of conversation around the topic of holiness, or holy living. Only one interviewee, an interviewee who grew up within the Lutheran tradition, mentioned during the interview process that she thought that “*we have the capability to be holy*” I mused that this message of holiness, of wholeness and holistic living in light of the kingdom, was potentially an important area for the rediscovery of care and compassion for all of God’s creation.

Questions I asked at the end of the study were: Can or should Salvationist radicalism resurface or be reignited toward holistic spiritual, social and ecological health and well-being for all of God’s troubled creation? What might this look like in practice? What are the barriers? What might be some critical pathways for Salvationists and The Salvation Army to encourage and cultivate holy, sacramental and holistic life within the entire household of God?

Following on these two themes in this paper, we will first briefly explore the notion of the Anthropocene as a potential frame for perceiving humanity’s place within God’s creation today. Second, the importance of Salvationist views of holiness being inclusive of practical, loving and Christ-like action that is mindful of all of God’s creation will be considered in light of the realities and projections of the Anthropocene.

## **The Anthropocene**

In all societies, past and present, humanity has impacted the planet in which we live, breathe and have our being. These impacts have been through gathering, hunting, farming, or producing food; providing places of safety and shelter; or the transportation of goods and people. Some impacts have been minimal. However, throughout the past couple of centuries, particularly in the West and more recently in Asia, widespread industrialization has distinctly changed humanity’s relationship with nature. With the increased rates of industrialization, productivity, innovation and human populations there is an ever-expanding range of products available to consume. The amount of energy and materials required to produce this merchandise is therefore also increasing the amount

of waste left from the creative process. Many have commented on the material and human waste stemming from the new industrialization. Indeed, General William Booth did within the publication of *In Darkest England and The Way Out*, published almost 125 years ago.<sup>2</sup>

Humankind has become such an agent of change upon ecosystems around the world that biologist Eugene Stoermer has put forward the idea that a new era is taking shape. This new period has been titled the “Anthropocene” based on the fact that humanity has become such a significant force within nature.<sup>3</sup>

To list some known changes to the earth, to God’s creation, due to anthropogenic causes is sobering. There have been huge losses in biodiversity caused by human activities. A 2014 report estimates that over the past few decades vertebrate species populations worldwide have seen decreases of up to 50%.<sup>4</sup> Overfishing, habitat destruction, deforestation, overgrazing, desertification, and increases in non-native invasive species have all been contributors. Decreases in air, water, and soil quality have been observed; ozone depletion has occurred; oceans are becoming more acidic.<sup>5</sup> There have been vast increases in light and noise pollution and chemical and nuclear contamination in both times of war and peace.<sup>6</sup> Other alarming human-caused environmental issues include the existence of ‘garbage patches’ or ‘trash vortices’ within all major oceans<sup>7</sup> and that newborn babies can already test positive for a multiplicity of harmful and toxic chemicals and carcinogens.<sup>8</sup>

In addition to these monumental changes brought upon earth ecosystems by human activities, there now loom the potentialities of greater climate variability.<sup>9</sup> Before continuing, I acknowledge that not all people are in agreement regarding human contributions to climate variability and change. Yet, with the significant risks and impacts if projections are even partly correct, it is wise to consider how these potentialities may affect fellow Salvationists, our movement, our local communities, and our global neighbours. However, even if the projections do not eventuate, as Wesleyan scholar Howard Snyder contends, caring for God’s creation can be perceived as the first commission or call from God towards wholeness and holiness.<sup>10</sup>

If we then consider what the future may hold for the earth based on the current range of projections, there is the possibility that sea level rises may cause significant impacts to animal and plant populations in lower-lying areas.<sup>11</sup> Decreases in the extent of glaciers, snow and ice, will particularly affect eco-

systems that rely on melt water.<sup>12</sup> The range and location of plants and animals are shifting, with many more species anticipated to become endangered and extinct.<sup>13</sup> Coral reefs are expected to experience increased bleaching events and eventual demise due to rising sea temperatures.<sup>14</sup> Extreme weather events such as heat waves, flooding, and fires are likely to increase in number and severity.<sup>15</sup>

However, the current and potential future impacts of human practices on environmental systems are not just limited to flora and fauna. There are and will likely continue to be correlated physical and social impacts on humanity itself. Contaminated and polluted water, air, and soils all affect human health and well-being.<sup>16</sup> Potential decreases in food production and water availability may cause complex social disputes within and between countries.<sup>17</sup> Future and current examples of water-related issues include areas that rely on melt water for irrigation, such as vast swathes of India, China, and other countries that feed from the Himalayan mountain ranges are projected to receive much lower melt water levels.<sup>18</sup> Consider the current declared state of emergency in California due to the drought conditions and water requirements of the people and corporations of California.<sup>19</sup> Similarly, the Australian states of Queensland and New South Wales are also experiencing a widespread drought, which The Salvation Army is responding to in various ways.<sup>20</sup>

The changed and changing climates will most likely impose new constraints on adaptive measures and challenges for social cohesion.<sup>21</sup> Disparate sectors of societies such as defense forces and insurance companies are increasingly taking seriously the risks and latent impacts of climate variability in future planning, forecasting and estimates.<sup>22</sup> Furthermore, with current climate projections it seems plausible that financial and personnel pressures on Salvation Army emergency service provision will increase. These future adaptations and associated social issues are currently unknown and open-ended dynamics that The Salvation Army, among many other organizations and groups will be likely required to factor in to their operations as time progresses.

It is also important to note that it is likely that negative effects and concerns will be felt most acutely by the poorest and most vulnerable in society.<sup>23</sup> The interrelated nature of social and ecological issues is asserted by many, including the social theorist Ulrich Beck who argues that:

Social inequalities and climate change are two sides of the same coin. One cannot conceptualize inequalities and power any longer without taking the consequences of climate change into account, and [vice versa].<sup>24</sup>

Beck continues and points to the paradox of climate change and inequality claiming “climate change is both hierarchical and democratic.”<sup>25</sup> There continues to be a hierarchy of the rich over the poor and it is most likely that the gap between the two extremes will grow. However, increased climate variability and change will in some ways level out this hierarchy. It is likely that both the rich and the poor will be significantly affected.

Notwithstanding issues of climate variability, there is certainly extensive untapped potential for religious communities, including The Salvation Army, to raise awareness of the interrelatedness of social justice and environmental justice issues and to engage in policy debates, disaster reduction, and preparedness, guiding towards resilient and adaptive communities.<sup>26</sup>

These new socio-ecological situations require theologies that are awakened from their “dogmatic slumber”, to use a phrase from Gordon Kaufman.<sup>27</sup> Furthermore, as Anne Lemmel argues, “careful ethical or dogmatic consideration of traditional topics such as creation is not sufficient for a responsible answer to such challenges.”<sup>28</sup> Consideration must be followed by action. Lemmel, Kaufman, and Beck’s comments on the relationship between social inequality, climate change, and action resonate strongly with major elements of Salvation Army mission. The impact of environmental degradation and the potentialities of climate change on all people, and particularly the poor and vulnerable, can be argued to sit squarely within the spheres of the work and mission of The Salvation Army. The Salvation Army’s mission flows from its emphasis on practical holiness, so let us now consider ideas around holiness in light of the idea and potential realities of the Anthropocene.

## **Holiness**

As much has already been written on the theme of holiness there is no need for an in-depth retracing of the background to the idea of holiness within this short paper. Rather, we will briefly consider writings on holiness that specifically

intersect with practical action with a focus on what could be termed practical holiness—the quest to work through what the call for followers of Christ to be ‘holy’ as Christ is holy and what this looks like in one’s local context. The Salvation Army’s International Spiritual Life Commission (ISLC) acknowledges that this quest is far from complete:

We confess that at times we have failed to realise the practical consequences of the call to holiness within our relationships, within our communities and within our Movement.<sup>29</sup>

The ISLC continues in its emphasis and support of the commitment to holiness:

We call Salvationists worldwide to restate and live out the doctrine of holiness in all its dimensions – personal, relational, social and political – in the context of our cultures and in the idioms of our day while allowing for, and indeed prizing, such diversity of experience and expression as is in accord with the Scriptures.<sup>30</sup>

However, to these stated dimensions I argue that the *ecological* must also be added. Should we not also ask how we might have failed to realise the practical *ecological* consequences of the call to holiness? I contend that the range of ecological issues we have briefly covered above are closely interrelated to personal, relational, social and political dimensions of holiness.

It must also be noted that considering the ecological aspects of holiness, there is definite need to reflect contextually. What might be more ecologically appropriate in a particular territorial, divisional, or even local corps setting could and will likely be different from another. This relies on us being aware of both our own local ecosystems and larger global contexts. It must also be mentioned that this is not necessarily a call to focus entirely or primarily on ecological issues – The Salvation Army is not placed to fix all the issues stated above. Rather, by being aware of these concerns and aiming for holistic holiness in the everyday for individual Salvationists and the Army collectively, there is increased potential for defending and supporting the flourishing of all God’s creation.

## Love and Relationality

At this early stage of data collection in my current research project it appears that when holiness is considered in a purely spiritual way, it can have the potential to be a *mysterium tremendum* for some Salvationists—to misuse Rudolf Otto’s well-known term! However, I resonate with the statement by Church of the Nazarene scholar Ron Benefiel that “when we understand the core of holiness as love, the differing ways of talking about holiness begin to line up and make sense.”<sup>31</sup> Of course, many holiness writers agree. Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle has stated: “Do you want to know what holiness is? It is pure love,” similarly Thomas Oord and Michael Lodahl insist that “being Christlike actually means living a life of love ... Christlikeness is love in action.”<sup>32</sup>

I maintain that we must be continually deepening and grounding our ideas and the practical outworking of holiness which includes considering earthy, sustainable, loving, practical holiness and its impacts on our neighbours, future generations and God’s creation. In this regard, Oord and Lodahl helpfully insist:

“We are holy when we respond to [God’s particular] call and work cooperatively with God to promote the well-being of others and of all creation, including ourselves. For God calls everyone to the work of love.”<sup>33</sup>

We can see the effects of holy love toward all of God’s creation in the experiences and writings of fellow Salvationists. For instance, reconsidering a well-known passage from Samuel Logan Brengle through a practical, ecologically-mindful lens:

... as I got out of bed and was reading some of the words of Jesus, he gave me such a blessing as I never had dreamed a man could have this side of Heaven. It was a heaven of love that came into my heart. I walked out over Boston Common before breakfast, weeping for joy and praising God. Oh, how I loved! In that hour I knew Jesus, and I loved Him till it seemed my heart would break with love. I was filled with love for all His creatures. I heard the little sparrows chattering; I loved

them. I saw a little worm wriggling across my path; I stepped over it; I didn't want to hurt any living thing. I loved the dogs, I loved the horses, I loved the little urchins on the street, I loved the strangers who hurried past me, I loved the heathen, I loved the whole world.<sup>34</sup>

Brengle's experience echoes strongly with a section within The Salvation Army's *Orders and Regulations for Soldiers*:

A soldier within the Salvation Army should be kind-hearted, and should manifest love and gentleness especially in their connection with the animal world. To inflict or to witness cruelty should be impossible. Not only should they avoid causing unnecessary hardship on animals, but should be willing to aid or relieve any suffering creature.<sup>35</sup>

Contextual practical holiness that resonates with both the *Orders and Regulations* and Brengle's testimony where he "didn't want to hurt any living thing" can be so precious and life-affirming in today's often uncaring and callous world. It is a radical and all-encompassing love that calls for and partners towards the flourishing of all people and "all His creatures" from the "little worm" to the largest of flora and fauna. All of which are valued, important and interconnected within the ecosystems that God has lovingly brought forth with the promise to redeem, renew and reconcile all things through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.<sup>36</sup>

As Commissioner William Francis has stated: "The life of Jesus makes holiness intelligible, understandable and desirable. In Christ we see a beauty that is good, perfect and most desirable."<sup>37</sup> How then might the life of Jesus be translated into today's societies, to cultures that are absorbed on accumulation, consumerism, materialism—within societies that continue along a trajectory of pollution and degradation? Another constructive viewpoint in this regard is offered by Lt Colonel Dean Pallant, who helpfully contends that:

"healthy persons" is an appropriate *telos* for all Salvationists, employees, volunteers, and others who seeking to be to be



“faithfully present,” participating in God’s work of redeeming the world.<sup>38</sup>

Pallant’s focus on health in this text is primarily regarding provision of healthcare and services. However, as noted above, there are definite links between human and ecological health, I argue it is wise and promotes an even deeper level of being “faithfully present” to broaden the aim towards healthy people within health landscapes and ecosystems.

Furthermore, Commissioner Francis speaks of the journey of “holiness should be the natural result of a believer’s growth in Christ.”<sup>39</sup> This spiritual growth, a progression of increasingly being attuned to wider possibilities of love, brings to mind the explication of three elements of mission by Australian theologian Norman Habel.<sup>40</sup> Habel’s first element involves mission focused primarily on the saving of souls. The second element broadens the idea of mission and includes bodily and community-focused evangelism and social justice. The third and broadest sense of mission takes the whole of creation as the focus of salvation, redemption and healing. The Salvation Army has a strong history in the first two elements. I argue that all three elements are relevant to Salvationists individually and collectively. Might it be time to enlarge the scope of mission, or at least our individual and collective visions of holiness?

South African theologian Ernst Conradie suggests that, in the light of the ecological crises faced, “what is required is a fundamental change of orientation, a *metanoia*”.<sup>41</sup> Changing orientation to recognize that the journey towards holiness encompasses the whole of God’s earth would very likely lead to ‘radical’ action—actions that would be considered radical within the cultural context. Defying social and cultural norms in the journey toward holiness, supports Johnathan Cornford’s assertion that, one of the “most political acts we can undertake today [is] to seek holiness”.<sup>42</sup> This then leads us to consider radical action as a likely extension of holy lifestyles in each of our own personal contexts in the Anthropocene.

### **Whole and Holy Radical Action**

Reflecting on radical action in The Salvation Army more often than not takes one back to the earlier years of The Army. For instance, a quote from

George Railton on radical Salvationism which made its way, in part, into this paper's title:

“With cries of ‘Death unto sin’ and ‘Life unto righteousness,’ we go on, determined *to turn the world upside down*. We are not philosophers or the theorists of revolution; but its agents. Merely to recommend revolution is contemptible. We must make it.”<sup>43</sup> [emphasis added]

There are Salvationists who continue encouraging this energetic view on social action oriented by a focus on holy and righteous living, yet the extent of personal Salvationist involvement in contemporary radical social action appears to be much lower than within the earlier years of the Army. It could be argued that there has been a general shift from a radical spiritual orientation and the social regeneration espoused by Railton toward more moderate social and spiritual work within The Salvation Army. This, of course, is again not a situation entirely unique to The Salvation Army, and there are a large range of potential reasons why this is the case. Furthermore, there appear to be additional barriers to enlarging culturally radical Salvationist mission and views of holiness to include concerns for God's creation.

Salvationists have indeed been influenced by a diverse range of voices. Langmead, Simmons, Bounds, Wilkinson, and others have engaged in reflecting specifically on evangelical theology and mission and its relationship to God's creation.<sup>44</sup> From a Salvationist perspective, Major Dr Dean Smith has reasoned that there is a “destructive binary logic” present in some Western theology which can reinforce “God over against the world, the material over against the spiritual ... [and the] soul over against the body.”<sup>45</sup> In response, Smith puts forward that “reorient[ing] the discussion on holiness around a more generalised sacramentality” that “take[s] the material world seriously” may be a helpful conceptual and practical way forward for Salvationists.

Likewise, there are a variety of reasons that some followers of Christ have avoided and continue to distance themselves from caring for creation due to associations made, accurately or misguidedly, with the work of ‘green’ groups.<sup>46</sup> There are many organizations, groups, movements, and individuals outside of the church that are concerned and very active in a wide range of areas including

caring for ecosystems, replanting vegetation, and calling for pollution reduction. Religion and nature scholar Bron Taylor has suggested that elements within these groups could be considered as having a form of "dark green religion."<sup>47</sup> This resonates to some extent with barriers Christians have shared relating to 'New Age' and pantheistic concerns within the 'green movement.' Yet, I have wondered whether the growth in environmental concern is a spiritual stirring of prevenient grace to become more responsible, full of grace and love, and to care more deeply for all of God's creation. Could this 'dark green' movement have emerged because of a lack of care for God's earth within the Church?<sup>48</sup>

Of course, there are many Christian individuals and groups that are concerned and work towards the healing and flourishing of creation.<sup>49</sup> The question for us as Salvationists is then should Salvationist radicalism resurface or be reignited toward holistic spiritual, social, and ecological health and well-being for all of God's troubled creation? Are there more relevant ways for Salvationists and The Salvation Army to encourage and cultivate holy, sacramental, sustainable, and holistic life within the entire household of God?

I do believe there are. However, there are other aspects and barriers to moving further in this direction, that of personal choices, balancing options, determination, and self-discipline. I'll share a little from my own story of grappling with these multifaceted matters. Through my studies, I am encouraged to present papers relevant to my work, so an earlier version of this paper was presented at a conference in San Diego, California. I live on the Sunshine Coast of Queensland, Australia. My journey was over 7000 miles one way across the Pacific Ocean by train, plane, car and foot to present on the relationships between holiness, action and caring for all of God's creation. That journey did not occur without significant personal tension and questioning the extent of double standards in my life! I personally love the freedom that is available to those who can afford it through air travel. It really is amazing. I am among those who are blessed to have had these opportunities. Yet, just because I can—does that mean I should? Even on an individual level, weighing up the benefits and harms I might be having on others and God's creation can be a complex task. Was it enough to pay a few extra dollars for planting trees as a "carbon offset" for my flights? How might I actually live more lightly on God's earth in my own context? Would a video recording sent via the internet have sufficed?

Of course, Salvationists have explored similar questions in different transportation, cultural and environmental contexts. For instance, George Scott Railton influenced by factors such as his “primitive Christian’s obsession with poverty,”<sup>50</sup> was known to “always [travel] third class, simply because there was no fourth class.”<sup>51</sup> Simplicity was one of the hallmarks that drew some to liken Railton as the St Francis of The Salvation Army.<sup>52</sup> Brengle, as R. David Rightmire writes, was another notable Salvationist who perceived that “holiness also leads to humility and self-denial.”<sup>53</sup> Rightmire continues, mentioning that Brengle “found a model of simplicity, heart purity, and self-sacrificial service—worthy of emulation by all who wish to live a holy life—in St Francis of Assisi.” It is noteworthy that the holiness journeys of both Brengle and Railton have links to Francis.

There are indeed correlations between the Brengle, Railton and Francis in that there appears to have been a good amount of care taken in their perceptions and use of worldly goods—attention towards simplicity and self-denial. There are common threads in their focus on love as an outward expression of the journey of the sanctified life, with strong links to caring and loving not just humanity, but the world which God has created and all that is within.

In view of the interrelatedness of social and ecological issues, keeping particularly in mind the probable consequences for the poorest and most vulnerable, we could pose Beck’s question to Salvationists and The Salvation Army:

Why have ... climate change and ecological crisis—not been met with the same enthusiasm, energy, optimism, ideals, and forward-looking democratic spirit as the past tragedies of poverty, tyranny and war?<sup>54</sup>

Indeed a complex question to contemplate. It is interesting to note at this point a recent quote from General Andre Cox:

“I hope that we will never be a people who primarily seek to protect the reputation of The Salvation Army, rather I pray that we will be a people who do the right thing consistently. The reputation of the Army will then take care of itself”<sup>55</sup>

Resonating with Railton’s previously quoted hope to bring holy change to the household of God, General Cox’s call to “be a people who do the right thing consistently” and bearing in mind the state of the planet on which we live, Stephen Bouma-Prediger has called for “radical faith in a troubled world.”<sup>56</sup> What does “turning the world upside down” mean when much of the world is hooked on consumerism, materialism, and greed, and where the pursuit of financial success is prioritized over the flourishing of life—life in all its fullness? What might Salvationism, considered particularly in terms of radical action and holiness, bring to a world that is increasingly feeling the negative effects of humanity’s destructive and harmful habits? What might “radical” Salvationist actions, grounded in love, practical holiness look like?

### **Potential Ways Forward**

I certainly don’t have all the answers. One would expect that local corps and centers have or work towards having a much greater awareness of what practical holiness might look like in their own ecosystems and social contexts and to find a balance of caring for people and place. Though, I will offer a few suggestions that may be helpful on the journey toward practical holiness that is mindful of all of God’s loved creation. First, Ross Langmead has adapted four points from William Dyrness regarding potential ways forward in these important areas:

1. *Recognise* the biblically announced mandate to care for creation and develop policies, structures and aims that characterise a culture of earth-care.
2. *Model* personal lifestyles of simplicity and earthkeeping, living as Christ would among us today.
3. *Provide* environmentally sound development programmes among the poor with ecological awareness, procedures and actions.
4. *Train* ministers, missionaries, and church members in the principles and practice of Christian ecology, as well as encouraging them to reproduce the message.<sup>57</sup>

Second, a few practical possibilities for territories, divisions and local corps and centres to consider as part of the journey towards holistic, loving and practical holiness:

- Urban and community gardens for fresh food production and education. Gardens are already well established in many corps and centres around the Salvation Army world. Gardens are wonderful ways for people of all ages to:
  - Grow and enrich their local community by connecting with each other through connecting with God’s earth.
  - They can be used for learning new life skills and learning more about plant and animal lifecycles and our relationship with God’s creation. In terms of food systems and enacting change, Mark Bittman argues that the idea of cooking one’s own food is one of the most radical actions we can take,<sup>58</sup> and Stanley Hauerwas has suggested that “how we eat, with whom we eat, when we eat, what we eat, are among the most important questions of ethics.”<sup>59</sup>
  
- Urban Salvationist eco-mission could emerge through supporting or partnering in “civic ecology”<sup>60</sup> projects such as:
  - Supporting and partnering in creating urban forests for a cleaner urban atmosphere.
  - Water, energy, and heating efficiency retrofitting and ‘green’ buildings (assessments and certifications vary by country e.g. LEED, NABERS, EER, WELL, etc.). Others points to consider in this space are the financial benefits of lower energy and water use.
  - Green roofs and brownfield rehabilitation. Along with gardens, these also assist towards wildlife biodiversity, and provide more positive and green spaces for people.
  - Education and health and wellbeing programs (In the USA, KROC centers are already leading the way in providing such programs).
  
- For those in more “developed” nations, moving towards radical simplicity. As Tom Ehrich has argued: “Now is the time ... [to] echo Jesus, who commended radical generosity, radical sharing, radical self-denial.”<sup>61</sup> This could mean actions such as eschewing comforts, ease and conveniences in order to minimise our personal and collective impact on others and God’s creation. This would be a very radical move in capitalist societies today.

- Supporting renewable energy projects in lower income areas, as has already occurred in the India South Eastern Territory.
- Another related move has brought people to encourage companies, universities and churches to divest from companies that are not interested in focusing on cleaner energy sources, or who continue to condone socially questionable work practices. Could this be a potential avenue for reawakening Salvation Army corporate action, taking a lead from other historical Salvationist campaigns?
- Taking peaceful action in support of people, of communities that are being negatively impacted by corporations that are more interested in profit than caring for people and the places they live within. Within the United Kingdom, the “For the Love Of” campaign has been supported by Salvationists.<sup>62</sup> It resonates strongly with holiness as love by asking what we each love and how it might be impacted by climate variability.

## Conclusion

We have briefly considered some of the global and local ecological issues that are currently and will more than likely continue to cause various levels of distress and suffering for life on this planet due to human choices and actions. I have argued that practical holiness should be extended to include the love and care for all of God’s creation. How practical ecologically-mindful holiness might be enacted requires contextual consideration in local communities and ecosystems, with the global landscape in mind. It is my hope and prayer that this paper has provided some fertile ground for further discussion and considerations of practically oriented Salvationist holiness culture that supports and encourages the flourishing of all life in God’s loved creation. As a closing thought, I share a section from Commissioner Phil Needham’s wonderful text *Community in Mission*:

The sacramental life is lived in the power of the Spirit. Those who ‘walk by the Spirit’ look for the sacredness of every moment, the presence of God in every encounter, the divine possibility in every human soul, the sacrament in every expe-

rience. They shun compromise and accommodation of sacred here and secular there: they look for God *everywhere*.”<sup>63</sup>

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# Benedictus: Paul's Parting Words on Ministry

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*PART TWO: THE GIFT*

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*Lyell Rader*

The burden of the letter is this:

... I remind you to rekindle the gift of God that is within you through the laying on of my hands; for God did not give us a spirit of cowardice, but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline (1:6-7).

Paul recalls the scene of Timothy's ordination, the laying on of hands, the emblematic bestowal of the charisma for ministry. Now that gift needed rekindling.

William Pennick was a passionate young missionary officer in India and China. We know him from his song, "We are witnesses for Jesus/ In the haunts of sin and shame,/ In the underworld of sorrow/ Where men seldom hear his name."<sup>1</sup> An appointment to leadership in Belgium at the age of 44 brought to a head his longing for a deeper cleansing. Meditating on Psalm 24, he wrote: "There is a holy hill of God,/ Its heights by faith I see;/ Now to ascend my soul aspires.../ Lord, cleanse my hands, and cleanse my heart,/ All selfish aims I flee./ My faith reward, thy love impart,/ And let me dwell with thee."<sup>2</sup> He received a kindling there that distinguished his ministry thereafter. From Belgium he returned to India where he served to the end of his days.

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*Lyell Rader retired from Salvation Army officership as a lt. colonel and now resides in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania.*

Albert Orsborn was 48, serving as Chief Secretary in New Zealand, overcome by “heavy and bitter sorrows” when he wrote:

When shall I come unto the healing waters?/ Lifting my heart,  
I cry to thee my prayer.../ Wash from my hands the dust of  
earthly striving/ Take from my mind the stress of secret fear;/  
Cleanse thou the wounds from all but thee far hidden./ And  
when the waters flow let my healing appear<sup>3</sup>

The metaphor is different but this too was a mid-journey crisis of renewal. He would shortly go to territorial commands and in 1946 become the beloved poet-general.

Paul discerns Timothy’s need and appeals to him in five ways.

### **A Call to Heed**

Do not be ashamed, then, of the testimony about our Lord or of me his prisoner, but join with me in suffering for the gospel, relying on the power of God, who saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works but according to his own purpose and grace. This grace was given to us in Christ Jesus before the ages began, but it has now been revealed through the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel... (1:8-14).

There was good reason for embarrassment. After all, Timothy worshiped an executed felon. And now his mentor too was a convict in chains. Moreover, there was little to show for Paul’s efforts. The Message renders the verse, “So don’t be embarrassed to speak up for our Master or for me....” The word comes from the Latin for noose!

While still a student, the immensely gifted Samuel Logan Brengle was offered the pastorate of the new Studebaker Methodist Church, a large and wealthy congregation in Indiana. He turned down the position to follow his heart into evangelistic ministry and soon The Salvation Army. He was appointed in



1889 to Boston. In those days, the Army was young and much scorned. Brengle dreaded facing friends and professors from student days who would consider him a failure. One night, while marching to the open air with three non-descript comrades, to the singing of "We're a band that shall conquer the foe," he passed an imposing Methodist Church. The irony was not lost: the song, the church, the poorly band. A mocking voice seemed to say, "You fool. You might have been the pastor of a great church like that but here you are. . . ." <sup>4</sup> It was in Boston that he was struck with a ruffian's brick and laid up for 18 months.

He later wrote:

I confess there were times when I wrestled in an agony of prayer to make sure that I had not missed God's guidance and misread His call. Many of the Army people themselves looked upon me with some suspicion and it was years before the doors swung open to world-wide service and immeasurable opportunity. <sup>5</sup>

Suffering and shame Paul understood. What is there for it? The call to holiness, not according to our works but according to His purpose and grace.

Word has recently come to hand of the promotion to Glory of Joseph Capanna. He was dumped onto the streets at fourteen. He made do and did not do well. But God was on his case. He reached out to the ARC in Cleveland. He made an appointment and on a February morning set out to walk the 18 miles to the center. Midway, with no money for fare and running late, he found a valid bus pass on the ground. At the center he was welcomed and enfolded into a community where he came to faith. Ministry as a soldier at the Cleveland Miles Park Corps followed. He found his mission in recovery evangelism, eventually becoming an officer, serving at Youngstown, OH and Cleveland New Hope and Hough. He struggled with illness in later years but the surprise of God's purpose and grace did not dim. He had come to a life firing on all cylinders, fulfilling the call to holiness.

## A Work to Do

You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.... Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus. No one serving in the army gets entangled in everyday affairs; the soldier's aim is to please the enlisting officer. And in the case of an athlete, no one is crowned without competing according to the rules. It is the farmer who does the work who ought to have the first share of the crops. Think over what I say, for the Lord will give you understanding all things. Remember Jesus Christ... (2:1-13).

There are three pictures.

First, the soldier. Paul warns against entanglement. The term is used of sheep whose wool is caught in thorns. God has chosen to call us to ministry in a time of unprecedented, epidemic proliferation of entanglements. There is nothing for it but to draw margins as Richard Swenson, M.D., points out in *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives* and his later *The Overload Syndrome: Learning to Live within Your Limits*.<sup>6</sup> An Army leader said of *Margin*, "That book saved my life." The price of encumbrance is known to us. Swenson, when addressing members of congress, was asked by one about the symptoms accompanying stress and overload. He listed psychological symptoms such as anxiety, depression, confusion, negative thinking; physical symptoms such as headaches, unexplained fatigue, indigestion, increased infections; behavioral symptoms such as irritability, withdrawal, driving too fast. As he finished, another asked: "What does it mean if you have all of those symptoms?!"<sup>7</sup>

Swenson expresses concern about the stressful changes in the pastorate over recent decades. According to one report, only one in three pastors "finishes well." H.B. London of Focus on the Family has called the pastor/officer "an endangered species." At least 22 organizations exist for the sole purpose of pre- or post-burnout counseling for pastors.<sup>8</sup> Dr. David Rambo, former president of the Christian and Missionary Alliance, reported that 90 percent of pastors say they are inadequately trained to cope with ministry demands, 80 percent say

their ministries have had a negative effect on their families, and 70 percent have a lower self-image now than when they started in the ministry.<sup>9</sup>

Secondly, Paul speaks of the athlete who competes by the rules. In ancient Greece, the day before the Olympic Games began, the athletes were required to take a solemn oath declaring that they had given at least 10 months to training and that they would not resort to trickery to win. Paul is pointing to Christian practices.

The father of the famous cellist Yo-Yo Ma spent World War II in Paris. He lived alone in a garret during the German occupation. The cellist remembers hearing his father night by night playing on his violin in the dark the music of Bach for the sake of continuity and reassurance and sanity. To this day, the son plays Bach by memory every night before bed. Paul wants for Timothy a regularity of practice, of spiritual athleticism.

Finally, Paul speaks of the farmer, who toils, yes, and waits. A conference is being planned in the Fall for returned missionaries with the title "A Seed Planted." Officers here and abroad often do not see the harvest of our toil. But we believe the promise that our labor is not in vain in the Lord (1 Corinthians 15:58).

## **A Place to Stand**

... Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved by him, a worker who has no need to be ashamed, rightly explaining the word of truth. Avoid profane chatter, for it will lead people into more and more impiety, and their talk will spread like gangrene.... In a large house there are utensils not only of gold and silver but also of wood and clay, some for special use, some for ordinary. All who cleanse themselves of the things I have mentioned will become special utensils, dedicated and useful to the owner of the house, ready for every good work. Shun youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart... (2:14-26).

There are two foci. The first is the word of truth (see 2:8-13). “God’s firm foundation stands,” says Paul. Here is the witness of the great missionary to India, E. Stanley Jones:

This passage sums it all up: “If you dwell within the revelation I have brought, you are indeed my disciples; you shall know the truth, and the truth will set you free” (John 8:31-32, NEB).

Here, then, was and is my position: I would “dwell within the revelation” he has “brought.” ... I would not occasionally refer to this revelation as a side reference to corroborate my views, while I dwell within this, that, or the other modern or ancient philosophy. I would dwell within this revelation. It would be my home, my departure point, and my returning point. I have a foothold – more, a standing place in my universe. I have a viewpoint, a point from which I view God, life, destiny. I have a decision point, a point from which I must decide my life, my actions, and my reactions; or else I’ll be “off the track,” bumping along the ties, destroying myself and my surroundings. I have an enjoying point, a point where I enjoy the sense of having the universe at my back, the sense of cosmic approval. I have a message point: I have something to give, something I know works, for it is working in me to the degree that I work it.<sup>10</sup>

The second is the life of holiness which Paul explains as uprightness, reliability, good will and mature completeness. The Greek word for “pursue” has a sense of constancy. “I press on,” said Paul, “to try to grasp that for which I have been grasped by Jesus Christ” (Philippians 3:14, Barclay).

Paul pictures the implements of a common household. As the Message puts it:

In a well-furnished kitchen there are not only crystal goblets and silver platters but waste cans and compost buckets – some containers used to serve fine meals, others to take out the gar-

bage. Become the kind of container God can use to present any and every kind of gift to his guests for their blessing (2:20-21).

### A Space to Serve

You must understand this, that in the last days distressing times will come. For the people will be lovers of themselves, lovers of money, boasters, arrogant, abusive, disobedient to their parents, ungrateful, unholy, inhuman, implacable, slanderers, profligates, brutes, haters of good, treacherous, reckless, swollen with conceit, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding to the outward form of godliness but denying its power. Avoid them! (3:1-9).

This will be no picnic. Paul skewers here the practices of evil. Our fundamental malady, he says, is that we are curved in upon ourselves. In his classic novel, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Oscar Wilde portrays a character of this kind. He is infatuated by his flawless face and his charm and his debauchery. He arranges by a stroke of magic for his face to remain innocent and youthful and every mark of age or illness or excess to be passed over to a portrait. The years go by in recklessness and betrayal and murder. The portrait becomes loathsome but Dorian's face is untouched. In the end he seeks redemption and finds none. In a passion of remorse and despair, he thrusts a knife into the portrait and the map of all his sins falls upon his face.

Paul's mood here is as dark as his prison cell. He does—elsewhere—have cheerier things to say about the Father's world. We see a more positive Paul in Timothy's Lystra (Ac 14:16-17), where he seems to appreciate and understand their past and culture. There is a more debonair Paul in Athens where he builds positively upon the truths the Athenians possessed (Acts 17:22-31). There is a more culture-affirming Paul who writes to the Philippians: "... Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is admirable—if anything is excellent or praiseworthy—think about such things" (Philippians 4:8).

Timothy is warned not to be beguiled into the ranks of the ungodly. But he dare not "mistake the dawn for the setting sun."<sup>11</sup> He must minister in an

ambiguous world for “[God] desires everyone to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (1 Timothy 2:4).

### **A Faith to Hold**

Now you have observed my teaching, my conduct, my aim in life, my faith, my patience, my love, my steadfastness, my persecutions, and my suffering.... Wicked people and imposters will go from bad to worse, deceiving others and being deceived. But as for you, continue in what you have learned and firmly believed, knowing from whom you have learned it, and how from childhood you have known the sacred writings that are able to instruct you for salvation through faith in Christ... (3:10-17)

Paul says to abide in what you have learned and believed, not to doubt in the dark what you have seen in the light. John Claypool, a minister, for months sought therapy or relief or healing for his 10-year-old daughter who suffered from leukemia. At the end all he could do was sit by her bed and hold her hand as life slipped away. He wrote:

Now I am sure that to those looking for the spectacular this may sound insignificant indeed. Who wants to be slowed to a walk, to creep along inch by inch, just barely above the threshold of consciousness and not fainting? That may not sound like much of a religious experience, but believe me, in the kind of darkness where I have been, it is the only form of the promise that fits the situation. When there is no occasion to soar and no place to run, and all you can do is trudge along step by step, to hear of a Help that will enable you “to walk and not faint” is good news indeed.<sup>12</sup>

Timothy too would have his seasons. Only a gift ablaze would see him through.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> *The Salvation Army Song Book*, 1987:832.
- <sup>2</sup> *The Salvation Army Song Book*, 1987:461.
- <sup>3</sup> *The Salvation Army Song Book*, 1987:647.
- <sup>4</sup> William G. Harris, *Stuff that Makes an Army*, 1962:100.
- <sup>5</sup> David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle*, 2003:22.
- <sup>6</sup> Richard A. Swenson, *Margin: Restoring Emotional, Physical, Financial and Time Reserves to Overloaded Lives*, 1992; *The Overload Syndrome: Learning to Live Within Your Limits*, 1998.
- <sup>7</sup> *Overload Syndrome*, 46.
- <sup>8</sup> *Overload Syndrome*, 181.
- <sup>9</sup> David L. Rambo, "Come Apart Before You Fall Apart," *Briefing by the President on Matters of Interest to Colleagues in Ministry* (March, 1993:1) cited Richard A. Swenson, *Overload Syndrome*, 181.
- <sup>10</sup> E. Stanley Jones, *A Song of Ascents*, 1968:106.
- <sup>11</sup> Leonard Sweet, *Carpe Manana: Is Your Church Ready to Seize Tomorrow?* 2001:23.
- <sup>12</sup> Philip Yancey, *Reaching for the Invisible God*, 2000:200





# Reformation 500: Here We Stand

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*MILLER LECTURE  
ASBURY UNIVERSITY  
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*Richard Munn*

## **Introduction**

On October 31, 1517, Martin Luther, an intensely devout monk and a university lecturer in biblical studies at the recently founded University of Wittenberg, in Germany, nailed a copy of his Ninety-Five Theses to the door of the Wittenberg Castle church in Germany. This was common practice of professors at the University and was not a revolutionary act. However, as Luther made these theses more public, and as he continued writing and speaking against corrupt practices in the Roman Catholic Church, his initial theses proved to be catalytic. Luther eventually unleashed seminal events in world history, and the ensuing birth of Protestantism exerted revolutionary change on the cultural, political and religious landscape of Europe that remains today.

## **Protestantism**

Evolving over subsequent years the basic tenets of Protestantism emphasize the capacity for individual people to receive grace directly from Christ, salvation by grace through faith alone and the supremacy of the scriptures.

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This is captured in the 5 *Solae*:

- Solus Christus (Christ Alone)
- Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)
- Sola Fide (Faith Alone)
- Sola Scriptura (Scriptures Alone)
- Soli Deo Gloria (Glory to God Alone)

## Here We Stand

When on trial for his convictions Martin Luther famously stated, “Here I stand. I can do no other.” The image of a solitary individual facing organized power as a matter of conviction continues to resonate and gives the Reformation an element of drama and inspiration.

Closer to home, it provides context for the birth and expression of The Salvation Army which stands on the foundational principles and convictions of Martin Luther even today.

## Wesley and Booth – Early Antecedents

It can be suggested that the legacy and witness of Martin Luther is present in the very DNA of Salvationist thinking.

For instance, the May 24, 1738 “heart-warming” experience of John Wesley happens while he hears the public reading of Martin Luther’s preface to the book of Romans. Wesley is never the same again.

“In the evening I went very unwillingly to a society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther’s Preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for salvation, and an assurance was given me that he had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death.”<sup>1</sup>

Over a century later, William Booth states unequivocally in the formative stages of the army’s evolution that “ours is just the same salvation taught in the Bible, proclaimed by prophets and apostles, preached by Luther and Wesley and Whitfield.”<sup>2</sup>

Allen Saterlee paints Booth as somewhat of a reformer himself as he notes:

William Booth proved that he was as undaunted by controversy as he was unconvinced by arguments from tradition. It was not enough that women preach; they must be placed in positions of authority. Not satisfied to simply lead; he abolished the democratic process. Unrestrained by ecclesiastical structure, he marshaled his troops into an army.

And with regard to the sacraments,

Nineteen centuries of Church tradition were not enough to deter him from questioning one of its most honored rituals.<sup>3</sup>

This paper will broadly survey the areas of irreplaceable Reformation influence extant in The Salvation Army and then focus more detailed attention upon another great reformer, Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), and his specific impact on Salvation Army sacramental thinking.

## **Outcomes**

Evolving reformation outcomes over the decades that are essentially synonymous with Salvationist values are worthy of note.

## **Personal relationship with Christ**

Medieval Catholicism mediated salvation through the church, and specifically through the Mass administered by the ordained priesthood. In contrast, Luther proclaimed that salvation is mediated by faith through Christ alone.

A key text for Luther is Romans 1:17—“In the gospel a righteousness from God is revealed, a righteousness that is by faith from first to last, just as it is written: “The righteous will live by faith.” This is in some way his key insight, the one that liberates him from the onerous burden of institutionalized church dogma.

To some extent this differing emphasis still exists today. Note the fascinating insight from a Catholic scholar during the Vatican Conversation with The Salvation Army International Doctrine Council:

Recently at a gathering a Catholic youth officer commented that when young Catholics enter a Protestant assembly in Northern Ireland and are asked: 'have you been saved?' the question 'freaks them out, it's unfamiliar language to them!' This probably says a lot about the topic of salvation in the Catholic consciousness.<sup>4</sup>

Now note the assertion of The Salvation Army International Spiritual Life Commission which outlines confidently:

Among aspects Salvationists confirmed as integral to the Army's life were its ministry to the unchurched, the priesthood of all believers (total mobilization), personal salvation, holiness of life, the use of the mercy seat, and social ministry (unreservedly given).<sup>5</sup>

### **Owned confession of faith**

A painful legacy of the Reformation is the persecution of the Anabaptists by both Catholicism and the Reformers. At the heart of the persecution is the Anabaptist conviction that an adult confession of faith accompany baptism. As Christians begin to be baptized again as adults this is perceived as outright sedition, an act of political rebellion.

Historical evidence survives that implicates both Luther and Zwingli as complicit in the persecution. In some measure this communicates the tumult of the time, the inter-locking complexity of Reformation religion and politics and the enigma of the central personalities.

On this matter, Salvationists anticipate an up-to-date testimony during the enrollment of a Senior Soldier. The matter is formalized and explicit in the Articles of War.<sup>6</sup>

### **Priesthood of all Believers**

A key Reformation principle is the availability of grace by faith, directly from Christ to the believer, with no priestly mediation in between. This strikes at the

heart of medieval Catholicism; it disempowers organized religious authority and empowers individual people. Each believer is his or her own priest.

Summarized through the centuries as the “priesthood of all believers” it is this thinking that opens the door for multiple, multiple interpretations of ecclesiology, scriptures and Kingdom principles.

Herculean Luther opens a mighty door, locked and closed for fifteen centuries, and a flood quickly follows. He stands up to organized religious authority on principle, erudite and sophisticated as he is, but it is a short time before somebody else stands up to him with equal conviction, passion and principle. And so on, and so on, and so on *ad infinitum*, it seems.

There is some misunderstanding and misinterpretation on this matter of the priesthood of all believers.

Note the description from General Shaw Clifton:

Some have come to misuse the phrase, making it a slogan for diminishing the role of a separate order of clergy or of officers, thinking mistakenly that the phrase is a battle cry which means: ‘Anyone can do anything within the church.’ Luther would have been puzzled by this distortion of his concept.<sup>7</sup>

## Primacy of Preaching

The central act in the mystical drama of Medieval Catholic worship is the Mass. While never equivocating on the Mass, Luther urges that the reading and preaching of scripture should be more dominant.

Without question the period of the Reformation brought the Christian pulpit into the modern age. There had indeed been significant developments in the centuries immediately before, and the contributions which Wycliffe, Tauler, and others made to preaching were by no means abandoned, but it was the preaching of Martin Luther, Ulrich Zwingli, John Calvin, and the other great men of their age by which preaching finally stepped out of the medieval shadows.<sup>8</sup>

Robust, scholarly, impassioned Reformed preaching through subsequent centuries is one of the hallmarks of Protestantism, and in conjunction with the call to the Mercy Seat is the central act of Salvationist worship.

Note the exhortation from the International Spiritual Life Commission, *Call To God's Word*:

We call Salvationists worldwide to a renewed and relevant proclamation of and close attention to the word of God, and to a quick and steady obedience to the radical demands of the word upon Salvationists personally, and upon our Movement corporately. We affirm that when the gospel is preached God speaks. The Bible is the written word of God. Preaching is that same word opened, read, proclaimed and explained.<sup>9</sup>

### **Married Clergy**

Luther marries a nun, Katherine Von Bora in June 1525, and thus begins one of the great partnerships in the reformation story. As titanic as Luther could be, Katherine is his equal. And, Martin loves her force of personality.<sup>10</sup>

As the reformation spreads its chaotic influence, married clergy becomes a feature as evidenced in every derivation—Lutheran, Anglican, Anabaptist etc etc.

The Salvation Army has the highest percentage of dual clergy couples in the church with 85% of its congregations headed by married officers. From its inception the dual clergy couple has been an intrinsic facet of her ministry and organizational framework, decidedly not just the more traditional pastor and pastor's wife.

General John Gowans described the empowerment of women in leadership as “clearly God's intention for us to follow.”<sup>11</sup> Periodic high profile appointments along such lines serve very well as symbolic reminders; however, it is the broad based, year in-year out implementation of true egalitarian leadership across the army world that is likely bringing about the deepest impact in this regard.<sup>12</sup>

### **Scripture, Worship and Music in the Language and Idiom of the Culture**

Luther translates the scriptures into German and composes and writes the music and lyrics for ‘A Mighty Fortress’—the anthem of the Reformation—

recognizable as German folk song style. Indeed, with the simultaneous invention and impact of the printing press, Luther is perceived as a master of propaganda, utilizing the idiom of the day to progress his reforms.

Of course this all stands in contrast to the strictures of Latin Mass.

The long term global result is the plethora of denominational expressions, exhibiting the versatility of Christianity and the durability of the gospel message. Nigerian Pentecostalism, Pennsylvania Dutch Amish and Australian Hillsong are all very different from each other – they are all Protestant. Respected ecumenical organizations estimate over 40,000 distinct denominations in the world today.<sup>13</sup>

Into that mix, we would add The Salvation Army.

Salvation Army ceremonies—baby dedication, marriage, funeral and enrollment—have central and recognizable elements; however, they are deliberately and notably brief, and are preceded with the guideline: “The setting of fixed forms or words or acts in connection with the ceremonies is not part of the salvationist tradition. Further, there are many local customs in certain countries which necessitate some variation in the wording set out in this manual.”<sup>14</sup>

This is pure Reformation.

Of course, a much beloved expression of Salvationism is the quite remarkable global musical heritage, beginning with jaunty choruses, simple gospel lyrics set to the music hall songs of the day.

## Summary

From the married corps officers who greet people in the corps lobby, to the soldier who preaches while they are on vacation, to the reading of Eugene Peterson’s *The Message* in the meeting, to the contemporary guitar band playing preliminary music, to the invitation for anybody to share a word in the testimony meeting, to the simple meeting outline, to the centrally placed sermon, to the invitation to come to the mercy seat and accept Jesus as “your personal Lord and Savior” The Salvation Army is saturated with Reformation values.

## Transition

Let us now focus our attention on the Mass, a ritual we will not find in our army meeting. Is its absence another Reformation value? Well, yes – and, no.

## Zwingli

We begin with another great Reformer, Huldrych Zwingli (1484-1531), Swiss peer and contemporary of Luther.

Commencing with Zwingli's interpretation of the Eucharist, a new and distinct intellectual movement arises that follows through the Anabaptists, Mennonites and Quakers, leading eventually to The Salvation Army.

It is Zwingli who gives the *symbolic* interpretation its clearest and most articulate expression—so much so that this interpretation is often called the “Zwinglian theory.”<sup>15</sup> Zwingli is a Humanist and becomes influenced by the writings of Erasmus, Dutch founder of humanism.

He differs from other aristocratic intellectuals in his patriotism and in his identification with the uneducated Swiss. Starting with his early parish work, he develops a “profound interest in the common people.”<sup>16</sup> This is a decisive characteristic and enables him to enact church reforms with the support of political leaders and the masses. The military and political elite respect his unabashed patriotism, while the common people support him because of his pastoral concern. It is an effective combination.

### The Contribution of Zwingli to the Reformation

Zwingli leads the Reformation in Switzerland. Although Zwingli often denies his dependence on Luther, there can be no doubt that they share much in common.

‘They were one in rejecting the authority of the Roman Church and papacy, the hierarchical principles of Catholicism, the doctrines of the mass and of purgatory, five of the seven sacraments, including the whole penitential system ... and the great mass of ecclesiastical rites and ceremonies, feasts, fasts and pilgrimages and the like. They introduced radical changes in traditional forms of worship, Zwingli going much further at this point than Luther, and they gave the civil government a larger measure of control in ecclesiastical affairs than it had hitherto enjoyed. There was thus a considerable area of agreement between the two reformers, and their common thought was inherited by all the Protestant churches.’<sup>17</sup>

By 1527, a number of cantons adopt Zwingli's principles and form a Synod of Swiss Evangelical Churches. In response, the older Catholic cantons, loyal



to the Pope, declare war. While serving as a military chaplain, Zwingli is killed in the struggle for Geneva.

His ideas remain influential and several Protestant movements subsequently follow Zwingli rather than Luther.<sup>18</sup>

### **Zwingli's Sacramental Theology**

The most significant difference between Luther and Zwingli is their interpretation of the sacraments, especially the Eucharist. Luther interprets the Lord's Supper mystically, Zwingli through a more intellectual lens.

Zwingli maintains that the sacraments are mere signs or seals of divine grace *already given*. For him, the elements do not mediate grace. Just as baptism does not in itself regenerate the individual, the Lord's Supper does not provide grace through the real presence of Christ. Zwingli emphasizes fellowship and the spiritual union of the communicants confessing faith together. He sees the Lord's Supper as a "memorial" of Christ's sacrificial death on the cross and a corporate confession of faith.<sup>19</sup>

Zwingli sees the atonement as a grace received only *by faith*; for him, living faith always brings with it the presence of Christ. Hence the real presence of Christ *is* in the ceremony of the Eucharist, but only in the faith of the communicant, and not in the bread and wine.

The distinctive idea here—and the one that specifically pertains to Salvation Army doctrine—is that the presence of Christ in the sacrament in no way depends upon the ceremony itself.

Does the sacramental theology of The Salvation Army find its roots in Zwingli? There does seem to be a strong historical and theological connection between Zwingli's belief that physical objects cannot mediate spiritual occurrences<sup>20</sup> and the Salvationist's "experience of mediation of divine grace without symbol or sacrament."<sup>21</sup>

### **The Marburg Colloquy**

The conflict between Luther and Zwingli reaches its climax in their 1529 debate at Marburg. There is some hope that the two could reconcile to form a

united front against Catholicism, but this proves impossible. In the end, Luther flatly concludes, “They have not the same spirit with us.”<sup>22</sup>

The debate centers on the statement recorded in scripture, “This is my body” (*Hoc est corpus meum*). Zwingli understands the passage to mean, ‘this *signifies* my body.’ Luther interprets it as saying that the blood and body of Christ are literally *in* the elements. Zwingli’s concern is that the common people will look upon Luther’s position as a return to Catholicism.<sup>23</sup>

By this point, the breach between the two men is irreparable.

Of some significance is the observation of David Rightmire:

The most significant Spiritualist reformer in relation to the development of non-sacramental theology was Caspar Schwenckfeld (1489-1561). A convert to Lutheranism in 1518, Schwenckfeld differed with Luther over the interpretation of the Lord’s Supper.

Schwenckfeld’s ‘middle way’ theology rejected both Luther’s and Zwingli’s interpretations of the Lord’s Supper, teaching instead a true presence of Christ apart from the elements. The immediacy of Christ superseded the need for external elements. Christ, as the only means of grace, ‘is mediated internally by the Holy Spirit.’<sup>24</sup>

The phrase “immediacy of Christ” is still frequently referenced in Salvation Army parlance and dialogue with regard to the sacraments.

### **The Anabaptists**

Among the most radical interpreters of Zwingli are the Anabaptists, a multifarious group that originate amidst the political and social unrest of the sixteenth century.

Whereas Zwingli is an ardent patriot and affirms the strong link between church and state, Anabaptists believe that the church should consist of freely committed individual believers who join not because they are born into the church, but as a result of a personal profession of faith and commitment to a holy life.

This difference leads to a conflict over baptism. Adult baptism becomes tantamount to rebellion. “Let the man be drowned who baptizes a second time,”

said Zwingli—a threat realized with the drowning execution of Felix Manz in 1527.<sup>25</sup> For his part, Zwingli remains staunchly anti-Anabaptist.

### **Sacramental Theology**

In terms of sacraments the link between Zwingli and the Anabaptists—especially with regard to the Eucharist—remains intact. For the Anabaptists, as for Zwingli, the Lord’s Supper is merely a remembrance; it is a fellowship meal, signifying union with Christ and the community of faith.

The central idea is grace imparted in accordance with the faith of the communicant. Now, however, the Eucharist will be integrated with the common meal. This practice is akin to that of The Salvation Army, which regards every meal eaten in remembrance of Christ as sacramental.

Though debated how directly influential, this is a point of similarity between the Quakers and The Salvation Army. Indeed, Quaker ideas, influence Catherine Booth and George Scott Railton and play a role in convincing William Booth to dispense with the public observance of the sacraments, a decision he announces to an assembly of officers in January 1883.<sup>26</sup>

Booth, finds “no place for these sacraments according to the New Testament.”<sup>27</sup> This is a crucial conclusion: an appeal to “the source”—that is, the New Testament—ultimately providing the basis for such thinking.

### **Conclusion**

Salvationists reject the claim that Christ institutes a ceremony at the Last Supper rather emphasizing the necessity of inner commitment. In this respect, The Salvation Army seems to extend a line of sacramental thinking that originates with the Reformer Zwingli and the Anabaptists.

While consistently questioned within the movement, this denominational distinctive remains essentially strong.

It may be that the foundational tenets of the Reformation are cause for the greatest current scrutiny and evaluation, namely, authentic ecclesiological freedom in Christ. This is certainly the central *cause célèbre* following the dialogue of the *International Spiritual Life Commission*:

The Salvation Army has a God-given freedom in Christ which, if used to the full, could enrich the Army's spiritual life and total ministry in ways far beyond those already enjoyed.<sup>28</sup>

And with regard to the sacraments:

It was when giving consideration to practices of other churches that the value of the Army's freedom in Christ was particularly evident. The Army is not tied to the setting of fixed forms of words.<sup>29</sup>

Finally, a warning:

The more the Commission looked at this, the more it felt that the privileges of exploration and freedom were not always being used to best effect in the Army of today. Many Salvationists had 'settled down', become predictable, even reluctant sometimes to see what new things God could do for them within the freedom which he had given.<sup>30</sup>

In 2017, the 500-year anniversary of the Reformation, it may be that some useful Salvationist dialogue and questioning can be exercised to review what might be helpfully "re-formed" to alleviate onerous and unnecessary burdens, enabling us to stand, truly confident, flexible and free.

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- <sup>2</sup> William Booth, *The Founder Speaks Again: A Selection of the Writings of William Booth* ed. Cyril J. Barnes, Salvationist Publishing, 1960, 45 – 6.
- <sup>3</sup> Allen Satterlee, *Turning Points*, Crest, Alexandria VA, 2004, 45
- <sup>4</sup> Brendan Leahy, *Aspects of the Catholic Church's Teaching on Salvation*, 2010. The paragraph continues: 'On the one hand, we affirm 'the paschal mystery of Christ's cross and Resurrection stands at the center of the Good News' that is, that 'God's saving plan was accomplished 'once for all' by the redemptive death of his Son Jesus Christ'. Yet Catholics adhere to that central doctrine using a wide variety of terms and live it out not so much as an explicit declaration or recognition of being saved but rather in terms of being a member of the Catholic Church, going to Mass and hoping, after living a good life and repenting of sin, for heaven, the ultimate salvation.'
- <sup>5</sup> *Called To Be God's People*, The Salvation Army, International Headquarters, 1999, 1
- <sup>6</sup> I now call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.
- <sup>7</sup> Shaw Clifton, Selected Writings, Vol. 1, *Martin Luther and the Priesthood of all Believers*, Crest, Alexandria, VA, 1
- <sup>8</sup> Carl Fickenscher, *The Lutheran Witness*, vol. 117, no. 7, 1998
- <sup>9</sup> *Ibid*, *Called To Be God's People*, 17

- <sup>10</sup> See Roland Bainton, *Here I Stand*, Abingdon-Cokesbury, 1950, 286ff for an excellent account of their married life
- <sup>11</sup> 2001 letter from General John Gowans to international Salvation Army leaders
- <sup>12</sup> Richard Munn, *The Husband Of The Officer Leader – An Update*, The Officer, 2014
- <sup>13</sup> See Jennifer Powell McNutt, *Division Is Not Necessarily Scandal*, Christianity Today, January 2017, 42
- <sup>14</sup> *Salvation Army Ceremonies*, IHQ, 1989, 1
- <sup>15</sup> Norman Fox, *Christ in the Daily Meal*, James Clark and Co., London, 1898, 28
- <sup>16</sup> A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought before Kant*, Charles Scribner's Sons, New York, 1917, 62
- <sup>17</sup> *Ibid* 64
- <sup>18</sup> *Ibid* 70
- <sup>19</sup> David Rightmire asserts that Zwingli's position on the sacraments as 'mere memorials' is a popular misunderstanding of his position, and that for Zwingli the real presence of Christ in the Mass is never compromised. See *The Road To Marburg: An Examination of Real Presence In The Thought of Luther and Zwingli, 1519-1529*, Marquette University, 1982
- <sup>20</sup> James White, *Introduction to Christian Worship*, Abingdon, Nashville, 1983, 229
- <sup>21</sup> *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: A Response from the Salvation Army*, IHQ, 1984, London, 15
- <sup>22</sup> Quoted in *A History of Christian Thought*, Paul Tillich, Simon and Schuster, New York, 1967, 261
- <sup>23</sup> Harold Grimm, *The Reformation Era*, MacMillan, New York, 1954, 196
- <sup>24</sup> David Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*, Crest, Alexandria VA, 2016, 83
- <sup>25</sup> William Stevenson, *The Story of the Reformation*, John Knox Press, Richmond, VA, 1959, 54-55
- <sup>26</sup> *The Sacraments – The Salvationist's Viewpoint*, The Salvation Army, London, 1960, 7
- <sup>27</sup> *The Salvationist and the Sacraments*, William Metcalf, The Salvation Army, London, 1965, 44
- <sup>28</sup> *Ibid*, *Called To be God's People*, 1
- <sup>29</sup> *Op Cit*, 2
- <sup>30</sup> *Op Cit*, 36

# Brief Encounter: A Meeting at the Edge of Our Beings

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*SOME PERSONAL REFLECTIONS AND COMMENTS ON JOHN 4*

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*Peter Dawson*

## **Introduction**

As a raggedy-trousered kid, I grew up on the wrong side of the street, nay, the wrong street, of a heavily industrialized town in the North East of England.<sup>1</sup> At that time, I was conscious of the steam trains of the LNER carrying passengers to places that I had never seen, or even thought that I would see. For me in my small world, they had rather evocative names such as Carlisle, Edinburgh, or London. I often wondered about those passengers—who they were, where they came from, what sort of lives they lived. This then, was a part of the matrix that formed my early life. A richness of the Gospel Stories, indeed of the Bible as a whole, is that they engender a phenomenological response about the characters within the stories; an extension of my life matrix.

Contemplating the reoccurrence of human behaviour and some interesting interplay between philosophical and social psychological explanations of behavioural interactions, and using selected commentaries, I take a brief look at what I see as a significant encounter in the Gospel of John; the story of Jesus' meeting with the Samaritan women at the well at Sychem, as it is called in Old Syriac.<sup>2</sup> When I read this story, my mind brings to my attention two interesting views. The first is that of Martin Buber, the Jewish philosopher, one of whose major works is "I and Thou" in which he sees ethics and theology in a dialogical encounter. God is the eternal Thou, never an "it", never transformed into

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an “it”; a Thou that we encounter as the living God when we speak to Him (not of Him).<sup>3</sup> In his “I and Thou”, Buber says that all real living is meeting.<sup>4</sup> The second is Paul Tillich, who said “The boundary is the best place for acquiring knowledge.”<sup>5</sup>

Essentially, we live our lives surrounded by a whole variety of boundaries. Some are rather obvious, such as the physical boundaries of land and sea; some are perhaps less so, but very clear, as with many of the social class boundaries that are present even in countries or societies that claim to have few such boundaries. Social boundaries that can be present within churches too. Others are related to such things as languages and can become evident when translators, who are not professionals, believe that they are translating very well for you personally, but on the receiving end, one can be quite aware that the translation is not always that good.

## **Living Water**

There are a number of references to “living water” throughout the scriptures, for example Isaiah 44:3; 58:11; Jeremiah 2:13; Zechariah 13:1; John 4:14; 7:38; Revelation 21:6; 22:1; 22:17.

In John 4:10, Jesus refers to himself as “Living Water” and in Jeremiah 2:13 it says that Yahweh tells His people

My people have committed two sins :they have forsaken me,  
the spring of living water, and have dug their own cisterns,  
broken cisterns that cannot hold water.

Reference to water in an everyday sense is either to

1. Water from a running source such as a spring, or a stream, or a river,

Or

2. Water that has been collected and put into a tank or cistern, from whence it is drawn for use. Potable but not fresh.



Yahweh in Jeremiah 2:13, and Jesus the Christ in John's Gospel 4:10 both refer to "Living Water," the spring of life, and this coming from God, and Jesus in himself being that living water.

As Jeremiah 2:13 makes very clear, it was an evil for Yahweh's people to forsake the fountain of living water then; it is an evil for his people to forsake the fountain of living water now. Jeremiah spells out clearly that people had built their own cisterns instead of turning to God for what they needed.

When someone dug a water cistern they lined the cistern with Lime clay plaster. However, when the water level drops and it dries out, the structure cracks. As the water leaks out, depending upon the amount of cracking, the loss of water can be heavy or slow but still a valuable water loss. If one thinks for a moment about the seepage of water in our lives we can fool ourselves that we are going along alright and that we can "catch up" with the Lord in a while.... then suddenly a crisis comes upon us and when we look there is nothing to support us.

One commentator<sup>6</sup> quotes a description written in 1886<sup>7</sup>:

The best cisterns, even those in solid rock, are strangely liable to crack...., and if by constant care they are made to hold, yet the water collected from clay roofs or from marly soil has the colour of weak soapsuds, the taste of the earth or stable, is full of worms, and in the hour of greatest need it utterly fails.

So naturally the preference would be to have a water supply that is clean, moving briskly (part of the oxygenation process that supports life), and from a good source. The analogy of the "Living water" from Jesus as being related to wisdom, the description above seems appropriate also, to the "Marly" quality of our lives, then and now, if Jesus is not present.

When Jesus met with the Samaritan woman at the well John 4 tells us that the Pharisees heard that Jesus was gaining and baptizing more disciples than John, although in fact it was not Jesus who baptized, but his disciples. When the Lord learned of this, he left Judea and went back once more to Galilee. Now he had to go through Samaria. So he came to a town in Samaria called Sychar, near the plot of ground Jacob had given to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was there, and Jesus, tired as he was from the journey, sat down by the well.

Jesus had two options for his journey to Galilee: the first option is a river valley coming out of the hills, but unfortunately the longest way. The second option is through a rift valley that runs almost north and south. However, although this is the shortest way, it also took Jesus and his disciples through Samaria—and to say that the Jews and the Samaritans do not get on with each other would be a gross understatement. It has been said<sup>8</sup> that the antagonism between Samaritans and Jews was bitter and often dangerous. For Jews, the Samaritans were not only “below the salt”; they were not even at the table. A Jewish person who ate bread from a Samaritan was considered to have eaten the flesh of a swine. Those Jews who considered the resurrection of the dead denied this for Samaritans.<sup>9</sup> The Samaritans were regarded by the Jews as being the descendants of Mesopotamian expatriates who had settled in Samaria at the time the northern kingdom collapsed, intermingling with others. However, the Samaritans themselves saw their origins as being the descendants of Israel who had remained loyal to Jehovah at the time the Ark of the Covenant was deposited at Shiloh instead of on Mount Gerizim.<sup>10</sup> For the Jews, it has been said that the most important symbolic feature was the Temple at Jerusalem and it became the centre of national religious life

These water wells are, of course, places where people congregate—in fact in many parts of the world they are the essential centre of their community. It is a place where information is given and received. This communication, commonly gossip, is almost the lingua franca of many small communities, so often several women would make their way to the well; they see one woman going to the well and they also decide to go. Depending upon the demands of the household, the servant, daughter, or woman of the house might go to the well a number of times in a day. Of course, the better off the household is financially, the least likely it is that the water carrier would be the woman of the house.

## **The Woman**

This woman comes alone to the well. We know so little about her, not even her name, and one can wonder why that is. It cannot be because she is a woman, after all we know about others such as Lydia and Mary Magdalene. Nor can it be because of her past, as we know about Rahab the prostitute. Jesus and his disciples spend some two and a half days with that community but we do not

know any names. We can ponder what she thinks, about the others in her community, particularly the other women, and their treatment of her. Where, if at all, does she fit in? This then is one of the important social needs of Maslow's hierarchy of human needs.<sup>11</sup>

There are a lot of people who go through life just wanting to fit in and feel that they are accepted. This woman at the well would be well aware of the Pentateuchal law against adultery and she was living with a man who was not her husband. We do not know why this is; perhaps the woman is a five times widow, perhaps she had been divorced five times? We know that there were no bars to the number of marriages a woman could contract, although the Rabbis did not approve of more than three.<sup>12</sup> In her pensive moments, she may well have reflected, as many of us have done, that her life was not as she had hoped it would be. Perhaps, she thought, some of the other women were simply lucky that they were not in her position. This is a woman that we can infer, bears not a few of the scars of life. We, of course, have no idea of what dreams this woman may have had. Sometimes people even now, find it difficult, even impossible, to walk away from their situations. A woman of that time is possibly least likely to be able to disengage from what life has dealt her.

Disengagements can take various forms one being suicide. When we think of suicide we think of a person who takes their own life because of what they see as an intolerable situation. However, I would suggest that there are at least two other forms. One would be the person who cannot walk away from a professional role; perhaps because of family demands, financial demands, or similar. This man or woman begins to break professional rules until eventually the profession throws them out—professional suicide. Similarly with the person who finds themselves no longer able to cope with their social milieu, they behave in a way that is not acceptable. Whilst this behaviour is not criminal, it is socially unacceptable and people walk away from them—social suicide. This woman at the well, whom we know very little about, had the courage to keep going whilst apparently despised by her community.

When the woman arrives at the well, there is a Jewish man sitting there, one might almost see her thinking “umph! He needn't get smart with me”. However, this Jewish man neither ignores her, a Samaritan, a woman, and on her own; nor is he unkind or sarcastic; rather he asks her for a drink of water. A simple request one might think, but in that time and that place it was unthinkable. Although

one can say that of necessity this water carrier is a woman, after all, men did not carry out such tasks, apart from shepherds watering flocks; she does respond and gives him a drink of water. One can imagine all the social and cultural taboos falling one after another. Dialogue takes place. The responses of the woman can be looked at in a number of stages, sarcastic at the beginning, then, being intrigued, questioning, then some petulance or surliness (one can almost see her thinking “it’s not enough I have to put up with my communities response, this Jew has to start talking husbands”); then an awakening. This dialogue is not simply a piece of commerce, or custom. It is a meeting.

Jesus rests by the well and he sends his disciples off to buy food in the city, it is about noon and as Jesus sits there a woman of Samaria comes to draw water. Jesus asks the Samaritan woman who comes alone to the well for a drink of water. If we unpack this a little we can make a number of points.

- The woman comes alone; this is unusual and is perhaps related to her past and the number of men in her life, and the fact that at the time of the meeting she is not married to the man with whom she is living.
- Jesus breaches social custom by asking the woman for water and a cultural custom because she is a Samaritan woman.
- This Samaritan woman gives Jesus a drink, and thus fulfills the Christian Law.
- Jesus refers to the “Living Water” which the woman does not recognize, but is drawn into dialogue.
- Jesus tells the woman that both Mt Gerizim (the Samaritans number one symbol) and the Temple mount of Jerusalem (the Jewish number one symbol) are obsolete. The woman has yet to know that this is because of who Jesus, the man she is talking to, is and why he came.
- Jesus tells her, a Samaritan, a woman, directly who he is... and yet a Jew should burn the Law rather than teach it publicly to a Jewish woman.
- When Jesus tells the woman about herself she runs off to the community and brings people back to Jesus.
- The woman leaves her water jar (John sees this as symbolically leaving the past behind).
- The matrix of this woman’s life includes the iterations of her relationships that we would consider her to have had some decision making

about. However, it also has an iteration that she has no part in determining, that of being born a Samaritan. Jesus the Christ indicates that he overcomes both sets of iterations in his decision to reach out to her.

- Is this woman the first female evangelist?

This lady is a Samaritan, therefore an outcast in terms of the Jews; she may have a past that makes her something of a social outcast within her Samaritan community. This is how we read her aloneness at the well and that she lives with a man rather than married to him. She may not understand initially, Jesus' reference to "Living Water," but she knows the soap sudsy, marly quality of her life, that makes her go to the well at a time of day that would tend avoid others who would demean her, as much as others would avoid her. As Lockyer,<sup>13</sup> says, some versions of this passage refer to "*the*" woman of Samaria. This does not mean however, that she has given up hope. Temple,<sup>14</sup> reminds us that the Greek idiom permits the omission of the pronoun "he" and a literal translation of verse 26 is "I that am talking to thee, I AM." As Kew,<sup>15</sup> says, when Jesus uses the phrase "ego eimi" it has special and unmistakable reference to God and his own divinity. For the Samaritans there were no prophets after Moses so when the woman says that Jesus is a prophet he has perforce to be *the* prophet for whom they have all been waiting.<sup>16</sup> In the interaction with Jesus this woman moves incredibly quickly, from a person who avoids community to become a person who seeks community. In verse twenty-nine, she went back into the community to tell people about Jesus, but note that she does not go back and announce Jesus as the messiah. This is a woman who is used to being avoided, even shunned, who goes along with that to the extent of going to the well at the most difficult time of the day, a woman who does not expect to be listened to. Rather she goes back and asks "He cannot be the Messiah, can he?" However, the woman speaks with such force, or authority that these same people that would normally shun or avoid her do what she asks and come to meet Jesus.<sup>17</sup> That spark of hope that this woman has, is given a sharp focus by "the man who told her everything she had ever done." As Buber would have said, the woman has really lived in this encounter.

In her encounter at the well, this woman, whose name we never know, is suddenly moved, in Tillich's terms, to the boundary of her being. As a result of that, Jesus stays a further two days with the Sychar community and many more

come to believe in him. As Carson,<sup>18</sup> says “That the Samaritans should urge a Jewish rabbi to stay with them attests not only the degree of confidence he had earned, but their conviction that he was none the less the promised Taheb, the Messiah.”

If we were able at this moment in time to “gently” interrogate this woman who had met Jesus at the well, and we were able to ask her if she had ever imagined that she might possibly meet with the Messiah; I think that we would clearly expect her to say “No, never.” However, I suggest that it is most likely that none of us would expect to say yes. It was, I might say, an amazing and totally unexpected experience for me too.

It is something that many of us would love to know—did the meeting at the well change her social standing in the community? It would seem obvious that she was aware of the “Marly” quality of her life and clearly, meeting Jesus changed her, and because of that change she brought Jesus into the lives of others; but in the social matrix of her community we have a fairly clear “before”.... but no “after.”

If we want to examine Jesus’ impact upon others, who are educated (?) we have a picture of him as a child as described in Luke 2:41 – 52 when as a twelve year old he is amazing people at the Temple. Interaction with a socially accepted, influential and educated male, we have John 3:1 - 21 with Nicodemus of the Sanhedrim.<sup>19</sup> However, the woman at the well is not well off, is not educated and perhaps most importantly, is not socially accepted in a politically correct way. Through no fault of her own, the matrix of this woman’s life does not include the knowledge to ask the questions that Jesus refers to. Nevertheless, Jesus chose her, came to her, and changed her life in a significant way. I sometimes consider, from an experiential basis, that many ministers of the Christian church, and not a few senior lay leaders, are so far removed from the real lives of people that they come across as very “self – satisfied” and “superior” when, in reality they are rather ignorant of the lives of the women (and men) at the wells of life.

The woman’s encounter with Jesus then, as for many of us now, meant that regardless of her origin, regardless of her past behaviour, regardless of our society’s responses to us, gives us a face to face meeting with God, the eternal Thou, that results in our having the “courage to be”<sup>20</sup> and in that “being” God uses us for his purposes in the building of his kingdom.

## End Notes

- <sup>1</sup> You may consider this mere hyperbole. However, in this day and age, when towns and cities are classified in numerous ways, it is true that the town I was born in is always in the top few of the list of the “worst places to live.” It is often in the top spot and in 2016 it was in the top spot and was marked as “the worst place for a girl.” Of course when I reflect on this I am aware that I was born exactly where the Lord wanted me to be, and equally, given the subject of this paper, the woman at the well was born exactly where the Lord wanted her to be too.
- <sup>2</sup> Ellis, David J. “*The Gospel According to John*”. Chapter in Howley, G. C. D., Bruce, F. F., Ellison, H. L. “*A New Testament Commentary: Based on the Revised Standard Version*” (London: Pickering & English Ltd. 1969) p 262
- <sup>3</sup> Goodman, Lenn E. “*Martin Buber*” in Honderich, Ted (Edited) “*The Oxford Companion to Philosophy*” (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1995) p 106
- <sup>4</sup> Panko, Stephen M. *Makers of the Modern Theological Mind “Martin Buber”* (Texas: Word Books 1976) p 28
- <sup>5</sup> Tillich, Paul “*On the Boundary: An Autobiographical Sketch*” (London: Collins 1967) p 13. Tillich had been asked to give an account of his own life development in terms of the way in which his ideas had developed. The concept of the boundary he thought was fitting for the whole of his personal and intellectual development. The book cover says that he saw his life as a permanent frontier situation. However, he also says (ibid p 42), “Life cannot only stand on its own boundaries; it must also live at its centre, out of its own abundance”.
- <sup>6</sup> Kidner, Derek *The Bible Speaks Today “The Message of Jeremiah: Against wind and tide”* (Leicester: Inter – Varsity Press 1987) p 32
- <sup>7</sup> Thomson, W. H. “*The Land and the Book*” (Harper 1986) In Kidner (op cit) p 32
- <sup>8</sup> Lee, Bernard J. “*The Galilean Jewishness of Jesus: Retrieving the Jewish Origins of Christianity*” (New York: Paulist Press 1988) p 60
- <sup>9</sup> Lockyer, Herbert “*All The Women of the Bible*” (Michigan: Zondervan 1967) p 236
- <sup>10</sup> Harrison, R. K. “*Old Testament Times*” (London: Inter-Varsity Press 1970) p 303
- <sup>11</sup> Maslow, A. H. “*A Theory of Human Motivation*” *Psychology Review* 1943 Vol 50, p 370
- <sup>12</sup> Barrett, C. K. “*The Gospel According to St. John: An Introduction with Commentary and Notes on the Greek Text*” (London: SPCK 1965) p 197
- <sup>13</sup> Lockyer op cit p 237
- <sup>14</sup> Temple, William “*Readings in St John’s Gospel*” First and Second Series St Martins Library (London: Macmillan & Co Ltd 1963) p 64. Temple makes the comment that what

John writes is a “stupendous affirmation” for the reader and refers to the way in which eternal life is actually offered in Jesus the Christ.

- <sup>15</sup> Kew, Clifford *“To Tell The Truth: Keys to Unlocking John’s Gospel”* (London: The Salvation Army 1966) p 2 - 3
- <sup>16</sup> Carson, D. A. *The Pillar New Testament Commentary “The Gospel According to John”* (Leicester: Apollos 1991) p 221
- <sup>17</sup> Tillich, Paul *“The Courage To Be”* (London: Nisbet & Co., Ltd 1952) Although I have absolutely no objective data to base my judgment on, I believe that this woman was not a financially “well off” person, or an educated person. However, despite being apparently labeled and shunned by her community, when she makes this decision as to whom Jesus is, she is very courageous and immediately wants to involve the very community who rejected her. This is really another avenue for exploration in this story. However, Tillich in this work explores a number of avenues that can be useful in understanding what happens.
- <sup>18</sup> Carson, (op cit) p 231 of the nine commentaries on John’s Gospel on my own shelves, I find Carson’s to be the one that I return to time and time again. I would encourage anyone with an interest in John to have their own copy for reference.
- <sup>19</sup> *“The Holy Bible”*, New International Version (Michigan: Zondervan 1984)
- <sup>20</sup> Tillich (op cit) p 152



# Book Notes

*Reviewed by Roger J. Green*

Green, Joel B. ***Why Salvation? Reframing New Testament Theology***. Nashville: Abingdon, 2013.

Reviewed by Donald E. Burke, Booth University College

The very name of the *Salvation* Army suggests that Salvationists would have a clear understanding of what we mean when we talk about “salvation.” However, our collective grasp of salvation frequently is murky and confused. On the one hand, in our eleven doctrines the focus of salvation appears to be the preparation of individual persons for an afterlife with God in heaven. Consistent with our revivalist and Wesleyan history, a strong emphasis on conversion as well as holiness of heart and life is foundational. But on the other hand, especially since William Booth’s articulation of his mission and the mission of the Army as “salvation for both worlds” in 1890, our ministry has expanded to include not only the deliverance of individual souls to heaven, but also the transformation of the conditions in which they live in this world. Thus, while our doctrines focus on the deliverance of individual persons to a heavenly reward, our mission evidences an expanded understanding of salvation which moves beyond the individual to society, often under the rubric of bringing or establishing the Kingdom of God. The underlying tension between salvation as focused on the deliverance of individuals to the heavenly realms and salvation as the transformation of the world to resemble the Kingdom of God remains largely unresolved. Is there a way forward to an understanding of salvation that would support the scope of the Army’s mission?

A recent book by Joel Green lays some biblical groundwork for a broadened understanding of salvation. In his book, *Why Salvation?*, Professor Green situates the New Testament's teaching regarding salvation within the broader context of the canon of the Christian Scriptures. Given the constraints of space (approximately 150 pages), much must be presented briefly, must be inferred or even omitted from the book. As a result, the author has produced a tantalizing book which leaves the reader thirsting for more.

In broad outline the book begins with a discussion of the problems that salvation must address (chapter 1). It moves on to consider two broad ways in which God saves, first as healer (chapter 2) and then as liberator (chapter 3). The fourth chapter focuses on how we can be saved and the final chapter discusses the goal or end of salvation.

The opening chapter, "Adam, What Have You Done?", develops a perspective on humanity and the nature of our human situation based upon Genesis 1-3. Drawing upon the work of the philosopher Charles Taylor, Green suggests that our western understanding of what it means to be human focuses on self-sufficiency, self-determination and autonomy. This strong emphasis upon individualism stands in striking contrast to the biblical description of humankind in Genesis 1-3 which emphasizes human relatedness to God, to the non-human creation and to one another. In the Genesis creation narrative sin is alienation from God, from the non-human world and from one another whereas in western tradition sin frequently is focused on the internal life of the individual. On the basis of this reading of Genesis 1-3, Green concludes that sin has personal, social and cosmological consequences; later, he will build on this assertion to argue that salvation also has personal, social and cosmological impact.

In the second chapter, "Yahweh, the Healer," Green argues that healing is a primary biblical metaphor for salvation. However, healing in the biblical world is viewed as much more than physical. For example, the healing narratives in the gospels frequently address not only the physical ailment presented to Jesus, but also the social and even cosmological disorders that infect both the individual and the community. True gospel healing is wholistic.

This chapter develops a valuable counterbalance to the strident individualism which Green observes in western society. While the healing work of God in individual lives is acknowledged, the emphasis is placed upon a much more comprehensive understanding of salvation that embraces all people, in com-

munity with one another, in the world. This discussion of the scope of healing could be very important for a Salvationist understanding of salvation which is sufficiently expansive to embrace the breadth and width of the mission of the Army.

The third chapter, "Yahweh, the Liberator," draws upon the exodus as a paradigm of Israel's salvation. Certainly in the Old Testament, various writers return to the exodus narrative in order to find both a pattern and inspiration for hope that God would intervene again to free Israel from its oppressors. Green argues that New Testament writers draw upon the image of God as Liberator to articulate the social implications of salvation. He maintains that the ministry of Jesus is presented not as apolitical but rather as a nonviolent revolution whose challenges to the powers of his day were more subtle and ultimately more penetrating than a violent revolution. Thus Green writes, "The true enemy of God's people could not be identified with the people of Rome, but rather with the forces and powers that found expression in Roman rule. An important consequence is a shift of battleground, from flesh-and-blood hostility to a confrontation over what values, what allegiances, what interpretations of the world would govern the commitments and behaviors of God's people" (p. 82f). It is from these forces that God liberates most profoundly.

Chapter Four, "How Can We Be Saved?", argues that salvation always comes through a divine initiative which addresses some form of human distress. But while the initiative rests with God, a human response is required. In the ministry of Jesus, as the Kingdom of God takes center stage, Jesus enlists his followers in the service of the Kingdom. The message of the Kingdom presents people with a decision. "To serve or not to serve? That is, Jesus' message of the kingdom is realized in the call to change one's heart and life and thus to align oneself with God's rule, to engage in the practices of the kingdom, and to serve as recruits who through word and deed participate in the mission of making evident what is otherwise unclear or hidden from view, namely, God's royal rule, and in this way unmasking those powers that compete with God's rule. Through conversion, a change of heart and life, people find that they are no longer working at cross-purposes with God's ancient purpose but are living in sync with God's own aims and are actively serving God's redemptive project" (p. 104). According to Green the New Testament's teaching about "conversion" is more encompassing than the way in which we commonly think and talk about

conversion as a spiritual act in a single moment of time: “Conversion, then, really is a change of heart *and* life. Put simply, the call to salvation is the call to live according to another world order, faith is entrusting ourselves to God’s view of things (even when the evidence before us seems contrary), and this faith is irrepressibly on display in faithfulness” (p. 114).

In the final chapter, “The End of Salvation,” Green outlines the main features of what the New Testament writers taught about the goal of the saving work of God. Green argues that the New Testament understands that the Kingdom of God is both present and coming. It is also inclusive, especially of the poor and marginalized. The New Testament writers want to encourage faithful Christian living. Finally, they want to remind their readers that salvation is a journey rather than a state of being or existence.

But what is the actual destination or goal of salvation? First of all, it is an embodied existence. Green argues that New Testament authors focus on the significance of resurrection. Thus the future life is an embodied existence, rather than a kind of spiritual existence in an eternal soul. Yet resurrection is not simply the resuscitation of our current physical bodies but rather involves their transformation. According to Green, this emphasis upon an embodied existence counters the temptation to view salvation and eternal life merely as “spiritual.” Salvation is not an escape from life in the world, but rather its transformation.

Green goes on to argue that for the New Testament writers salvation is not an escape into a kind of union with God in which individuality is lost. Rather the Bible speaks of personal existence. Yet, in contrast to our western emphasis upon individualism, salvation also is focused on the formation of a faithful community of salvation, the church.

Finally, salvation is worldly in the sense that the New Testament speaks of a new heaven and a new earth. This emphasis on the transformation of the heavens and earth mitigates against an unbalanced spiritualization of salvation.

One of the strengths of *Why Salvation?* is the brief exegetical comments Green makes, especially when addressing what the New Testament writers teach. It is obvious that behind the brevity of the individual comments there is a much deeper knowledge and insight into the biblical text. Green is a master exegete whose interpretations are worthy of serious consideration.

A second strength of Green’s book is its emphasis upon the continuity between the Old Testament and the New Testament in the presentation of

humanity, sin and salvation. Green successfully shows how Israel's exodus from Egypt provided a pattern for the New Testament's interpretation of the saving actions of God in Jesus Christ. He also sees continuity in both the understanding of sin and of salvation across the Christian canon. In other words, Green does not impose a great divide between the testaments.

A third strength of the book is the way in which Green focuses on salvation as concerned with all of creation and its interrelationships rather than simply the salvation of individual human beings. This emphasis is easy to see in the Old Testament, but Green has demonstrated that this same emphasis can be found in the New Testament.

Finally, although Green does not explicitly present his book as a work of Wesleyan theology, his own background in the Wesleyan/Methodist tradition is evident throughout the book. As a result, Salvationists will find resonances with our own theology.

*Why Salvation?* does, at times, lose sight of the direction of its argument, especially in the early chapters. On occasion, too much tangential information is provided; this can lead the reader to lose track of the overall argument of the book. But patience is rewarded as the book progresses.

This is a book worth reading carefully. It is possible to be distracted by some of Green's digressions, but the exegetical comments on New Testament texts more than compensate for that. For Salvationists Green opens up several aspects of biblical teaching about salvation that could be helpful as we continue to discern and work out the soteriological foundations of our mission.

Larsson, John. *Those Incredible Booths*. London, United Kingdom: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2015  
Reviewed by Roger J. Green

If ever there was a book waiting to be written about the Booths, this is it. There have been volumes written about William and Catherine, and even biographies of some of the Booth children. But never has there been a complete picture of the life of William and Catherine and their children. This is an invaluable resource for any reader interested in both the family life and the relationships of the Booth children with each other, sometimes complex, especially in their adult lives.

John Larsson is particularly qualified to write this book for three reasons. First, he has done extensive research on some aspects of the family life of the Booths previous to this, as witnessed for example in his *1929 A Crisis that Shaped The Salvation Army's Future*, which dealt with the removal of Bramwell Booth from the office of the General and changed the method by which the Generals of The Salvation Army are placed in that position. Second, he is a lucid writer, and readers of any previous works of John Larsson will be aware of that. This book is no exception, and the clarity of the narrative and the careful use of resources bear witness to that. Finally, and perhaps more elusive but also important—John Larsson knows what it is to fill the office of the General, himself being the General of The Salvation Army from 2002 until 2006. As such, he understands both the joys and the difficulties of that office and has insights that another writer without that inside knowledge would not have. Both Bramwell Booth and Evangeline Booth became Generals of The Salvation Army, and, as the book clearly indicates, other Booths might have been considered for that office had events moved in a different direction.

The author devotes a chapter to each of the eight Booth children, and makes mention also of George Booth, the adopted son of William and Catherine Booth. But before those eight chapters he sets the stage for those brief biographies by using his first four chapters to deal with the parents, William and Catherine. In those chapters he writes about early years, wilderness years, family life, and the mission team. The triumphs and tragedies of those years, leading finally to the establishment of The Christian Mission in 1865 and The Salvation Army in 1878, help the reader to understand the world into which the Booth children were born. In the Booth home the expectations of the children were high, as were some of the demands by their parents.

Each of the eight chapters about the Booth children are illuminating as the reader learns about their relationship with their parents, with each other, and with the mission to which the entire family was called (each of the children became Salvation Army officers or took on a title as Bramwell Booth did with the title of Chief of the Staff although he held no officer rank). The other Booth children had ranks within The Salvation Army and several of them also had titles. Some of their ranks came early in their lives. Evangeline Booth was given the rank of staff-captain at the age of 21, and was promoted to commissioner one year later. Catherine was called the *Maréchale*, Emma was the Consul,

Ballington, a colonel at the age of 23, was titled the Marshal, and Herbert, a commissioner at the age of 26, was called the Commandant. Such titles surely set the Booth children apart from the rank-and-file officers.

What is especially appealing about this book is that General Larsson treats the Booth family with the respect that they deserve, but also recognizes their flaws. While there are some who still treat the Booths as though they were somehow superhuman, such admiration does no service to the Booths, to the biblical truth of fallen humanity redeemed by God's grace, or to the reality of lives lived in a complex world. The Booths shared a common humanity, and seeing them fully means seeing that humanity. The relationships of the Booth children were supportive and graceful in their early years in the Booth home under the watchful eye of William and Catherine. However in later life, after the death of Catherine, those relationships became more strained as some of the Booths challenged the supervision of Bramwell and the autocracy of both William and Bramwell. In those years the Booth children sometimes treated each other in selfish and petty ways and that is part of the story. The author does not ignore those incidences. However, by the grace of God those incredible Booth were used to fulfill the purposes of God for His world both through the ministry of The Salvation Army and also through various ministries of the three children and their spouses who left the Army.

There are many things about the Booth children that this book emphasizes, and three are noted here. First, any reader will be impressed by their ability to preach the Gospel. Most of them and their spouses began preaching in their teens, preached to howling mobs opposing them or to thousands of Christians who rejoiced in their message. But preach they did, and the conversions of the thousands who responded to that preaching were a witness to the compelling truth of the message of Christ that they preached. Second the Booth children had administrative talents, and opening the work of the Army or organizing a fledgling work in such culturally diverse places as France, India, Australia, the United States, or Canada was no small task. The ability of the Booth children and their spouses to bring their skills to the service of the Gospel in this way is remarkable.

Third--and especially the Salvationist readers will appreciate this--the Booths were musicians. They wrote songs and composed tunes that are still sung by Salvationists today around the world. The songs capture bedrock Christian

doctrines such as the atonement and provide great hope for the ministry and the mission of the Army to win the world for God. There was a holy imaginative strain in many of the Booth children, and that was infectious with the multitude of Salvationists around the world who were led by the Booths.

The Booths were indeed incredible, and by the time the last of the Booth children died they had taken part in a Christian ministry of worldwide proportions, and provided a living model of what church growth is all about. Bramwell's ministry as General is but one example here. The author writes that in 1926 "In Britain, the work had grown to unprecedented size and influence. With 5,000 active officers and 150,000 senior soldiers at work in 1,500 corps and 200 social centers, the Army in the land of its birth had never been bigger. The annual intake of cadets was growing each year and by 1928 would reach 700" (p. 94).

All readers will be inspired by this book. Those Salvationists who know a great deal about William and Catherine can now envision the Booth family life perhaps in a new way. People outside the Army may find this as an exciting introduction to the lives of the Booth family. This may lead them to want to explore further the lives of the Booths and the history of The Salvation Army, which can also be labeled incredible.







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