

# WORD & DEED

VOL. XIX NO. 1



NOVEMBER 2016

A JOURNAL OF SALVATION ARMY  
THEOLOGY & MINISTRY

**Holiness and Mission: A Salvationist Perspective**

**The New Wonder**

**Memoirs from The Salvation Army's  
'Outpost War' in Norway**

**Benedictus: Paul's  
Parting Words on Ministry**

**Founders and Foundations:  
The Legacy of the Booths**



Salvation Army National Headquarters  
Alexandria, VA, USA

**Word & Deed Mission Statement:**

The purpose of the journal is to encourage and disseminate the thinking of Salvationists and other Christian colleagues on matters broadly related to the theology and ministry of The Salvation Army. The journal provides a means to understand topics central to the mission of The Salvation Army, integrating the Army’s theology and ministry in response to Christ’s command to love God and our neighbor.

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The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church. Its message is based on the Bible. Its ministry is motivated by the love of God. Its mission is to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ and to meet human needs in His name without discrimination.

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# A Call to Attentiveness

*Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green*

A Salvationist saint once prayed, “O God, forgive us when your grace goes unrecognized and unacknowledged.” His prayer lamented our inattentiveness to God’s presence and amazing grace, acknowledging that all Christians struggle to keep focused on God. This issue is a call to attentiveness, with five articles on this theme.

The first two articles are papers from the 2016 Growing Saints Conference, a joint initiative of Asbury University and The Salvation Army. The first is by General (Dr.) Paul Rader (ret.), who keynoted the conference and calls our attention to holiness and mission. The second is by Asbury University professor of literature (Dr.) Daniel Strait, who shares reflections on the importance of attentiveness in the Christian life. The issue’s third article was written by Commissioner Gudrun Lydholm and deals with a long-forgotten part of Army history, offering the lessons derived from remembrance. In the fourth article, Lt. Col. (Dr.) Lyell Rader explores the apostolic reflections in Paul’s parting words to his young parter, Timothy. The fifth article, by Professor (Dr.) Roger Green, focuses on the Founders’ (William and Catherine Booth’s) rich, multi-faceted legacy and the foundations they left behind. This article was written not as a scholarly article but as some reflections in response to a speaking engagement. The Salvation Army Historical and Philatelic Association in London invited the author to present these thoughts in London at a theater on the site of the O2 Arena on the eve of the International Congress in 2015.

Together, our contributing authors encourage attentiveness to God’s amazing grace throughout Salvationist life: our Wesleyan theology of full salvation and holiness, a standard every Salvationist is called to pursue; God’s presence and grace, how they call us to recognize and respond to Him as well as others in

need of His grace; rediscovery of long-forgotten Army history, with reflections on its important lessons; Paul's mentoring message to Timothy, exploring the "core" of ministry that transcends generations; and the remarkably rich legacy of our gifted Founders, how the foundations they laid exclaim the glory of God.

Our prayer is that this issue will serve as a catalyst to attentiveness in Christian life and help Salvationists recover the art of attentiveness. We pray that as our Army brings glory to God, we cultivate a greater capacity of attentive imagination, knowing that God's works powerfully through those attentive to his Grace. By recognizing His presence, may we be continually filled to the measure of the fullness of God. Thanks be to God!

*JSR*

*RJG*







# Holiness and Mission: A Salvationist Perspective

*Paul A. Rader*

The Highway of Holiness is not for the comfortably and casually Christian. The saints we want—and that God wills to grow—are seriously, intentionally, and ‘consequentially Christian,’ as Kendra Creasy Dean terms it in her book, *Almost Christian*. “The fruit of a consequential Christian faith,” she writes, “is holiness, not niceness, which is not a course for the faint of heart.”

The Salvation Army is a real army in a real war that cannot afford to engage the enemy of our souls with anything less than the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of peace. To the Army, the Wesleyan understanding of full salvation is not an arcane sectarian dogma, but a strategic necessity and condition for victory in the Great Salvation War. The doctrine of Sanctification is a vital element in the wider conviction affirming a positive, open-ended, victory-oriented theology of possibility and power.

## **The Wesleyan Imperative**

Wesley’s delineation of Prevenient Grace (‘enough light to see the hand of God and enough strength to grasp it!’) offered a salvation available to all, opening wide the door to the Wesleyan *ordo salutis*: conviction, repentance, saving faith, regeneration, consecration, sanctification, and glorification. The

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*This article was the keynote address given by General Paul A. Rader to the 2016 Asbury University-Salvation Army Growing Saints conference held at Asbury University in January 2016.*

goal of redemption is transformation into likeness to Christ resulting in lives that glorify God. In a word, holiness—becoming like and living like who we are in Christ, who is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption (1 Corinthians 1:30). The Holiness God desires is expressed in disciplined and godly lives of Christ-like virtue: purity, humility, and integrity, compassionate action, and commitment to mission. Sanctification is that heart-cleansing, empowering, and engracing work of the Spirit, through the merits of the shed blood of the Savior and the power of His risen life, that makes such a transformation possible.

Salvationists believe that Scripture teaches that all can be saved ‘completely,’ through and through and for all time (Hebrews 7:25 ESV). We believe it is possible to live above the power of sin as we are transformed into Christ-likeness from ‘one degree of glory to another’ (2 Corinthians 3:18). Our founders, William and Catherine Booth, required a salvation from sin and from sinning—a Gospel for the sin-enslaved, addicted, and depraved, among whom they had been called to pursue their mission. With a mandate to ‘Go for souls and go for the worst!’ they required a message of hope. Their Gospel was one of ‘Apostolic Optimism,’ proffering a life of victory and faithfulness. It included a call to arms for every redeemed person, enlisting them in the conflict that they believed would end in final victory and the reign of Christ.

### **Verdict Theology**

There were a number of influences that contributed to the positive nature of the Gospel they embraced. William and Catherine Booth came out of a Wesleyan heritage, finally settling into ministry within the Methodist New Connexion until their call to launch out on their own. William Booth was a convinced Wesleyan, as was his more theologically astute companion in arms, the redoubtable Catherine Booth. Their commitment to Wesleyanism was forged in the fires of the mid-century awakening in which they established themselves as effective evangelists. They preached for results. The adoption of the Mercy Seat was an expression of the conviction that God can and would meet saving faith with soul-transforming power and do it now. Under the influence of the American Revivalist and erstwhile trial lawyer, Charles G. Finney, they adopted a ‘verdict theology’ that drove their hearers toward decision. Finney

may not have been the first or only evangelist to introduce the ‘Anxious Seat,’ the Penitent Form, or Mercy Seat, but it was entirely consistent with his style of evangelism. Finney’s *Lectures on Revivals of Religion* were ‘gospel’ for William and Catherine, and commended by them to the early Army. The Mercy Seat eventually became a central focus for all Salvation Army worship. Major Nigel Bovey has traced the evolution of its usage in the contemporary Army toward a more diverse range of applications.<sup>1</sup> Still, it remains the focus for the call to saving and sanctifying surrender and faith that anticipates an instantaneous work of grace, opening the way for continuing growth in grace and godliness. Indeed, the founders were adamant that preaching should move to that end. In Salvation Army worship, ‘all roads lead to the Mercy Seat.’ Some see it as a ‘place of prayer.’ Certainly, the Mercy Seat has become a place of intercession, communion, renewal, rededication, and more. But essential to maintaining the uniqueness of the Army’s mission is the centrality of the Mercy Seat, not only as furniture, metaphor, or program item, but as a focal point of saving and sanctifying grace.

### **Holiness Then or Now**

The Booths proclaimed a ‘transactional Gospel.’ Seekers were helped to ‘pray through’ at the Mercy Seat, to the assurance that the work was done as faith laid hold on the promises of God and the Holy Spirit did his saving and sanctifying work. As the Army has come more and more to terms with its ecclesial identity, a pastoral drift is identifiable toward a gradualism that sometimes supersedes the call to a transactional and experiential emphasis to which a positive witness can be borne. The Army’s ‘Apostle of Holiness,’ Commissioner Samuel Logan Brengle, and his presentation of the Holiness message have often been contrasted with the extensive Holiness teaching of General Frederick Cou tts.<sup>2</sup> Brengle has been identified with a theology of crisis more consistent—it must be acknowledged—with the preaching of the early Salvationists and reflecting the influence of the American Holiness Movement. General Cou tts has been identified with a view of sanctification that emphasized a more gradual growth toward Christ-likeness. Setting the one against the other in absolute terms is clearly a mistake. Brengle taught the need for a gradual maturity toward Christ-likeness with the crisis of sanctification as the door to such growth in holiness,

and Coutts accepted the need for decisive surrender of the self in the pursuit of godliness. Major Geoff Webb observes: “The ‘neo-Couttsian’ tendency was something that was probably not part of Coutts’ agenda at all—the effective collapsing of crisis into process at the point of conversion.”<sup>3</sup> General John Larsson summarizes the relationship between these differing perspectives in this way:

“Whether the interpretation of the crisis as simply the gateway to the mountain trail of holiness [as Coutts seems to maintain] fully accounts for the kind of experience that Samuel Brengle knew on 9 January 1885 needs consideration. Moving the state of being perfect before God into the future as an ideal always beckoning us on, is a positive step. But on the other hand we must also guard against the error of minimizing the epochal nature and transforming power of a crisis experience such as Brengle experienced.”<sup>4</sup>

Would it be fair to suggest that Brengle was more the evangelist than the pastor, inclined by vocation and gifting to expect immediate results? And that Coutts was more the pastor than the evangelist, inclined by experience and reflection to deal with the struggles of the faithful in quest of a holy heart and life? In fact, Brengle had only a few short years in corps work. The bulk of his ministry was as a traveling evangelist or Spiritual Special. Doubtless, General Coutts was faithful to his covenant to seek the salvation of the lost with evangelistic purpose. And Commissioner Brengle would not have been cheered by a charge of being indifferent to the pastoral realities with which seekers after holiness might struggle. Indeed his books, beginning with *Helps to Holiness*, are concerned with the practical implications of holy living in the aftermath of a crisis of sanctification. Still, one suspects that insofar as the teaching of the one can be set against the other, the particular gifts and ministries of these two advocates of the holy life may account in some measure for the emphases for which they have become known. The Army has learned and benefited immeasurably from the approaches of both Brengle and Coutts.

For the Booths and the early Salvationists, the biblical call to holiness (1 Peter 1:15-16) lay at the heart of the Gospel. “If holiness be not the central ideal of Christianity, I do not understand it!” Declared Catherine Booth (See, Ch. 3,

‘The Pursuit of Godliness’). Their aggressiveness in mission derived from a conviction regarding the provision of the Cross and the power of the Spirit to ‘break the power of canceled sin and set the captive free.’ They were convinced the invitation to freedom in Christ made possible living godly in Christ Jesus in this present age (Titus 2:12 ). Nothing less would do. Catherine declares:

“[The Deceiver] has got the Church, nearly as a whole, to receive what I call an ‘Oh, wretched man that I am’ religion! He has got them to lower the standard which Jesus Christ himself established in this Book—a standard, not only to be aimed at, but to be attained unto—a standard of victory over sin, the world, the flesh, and the Devil, real, living, reigning, triumphing Christianity!”<sup>5</sup>

She called for a salvation full and ‘freeing,’ realized in the experience of saving and sanctifying power available to every earnest believer. The notion of living above sin was as counter-intuitive then as it is now, but William Booth was not inclined to accept the backsliding experience of others as a standard for his people:

“Now I affirm on the authority of the Bible that Jesus Christ your Saviour is able and willing to keep you from doing wrong. His name was called Jesus, that is, Saviour, because He should ‘save his people from their sins.’ You may make mistakes; you may have temptations; you may have perplexity in your mind and anguish in your heart . . . and yet, in spite of all this and all else of the same kind, you can be kept from sin. In the name of my dear Lord, I assert that it is possible for you to have and to keep a pure heart.”<sup>6</sup>

The Wesleyan message fit the founders’ commitment to a salvation that saves from sin and sinning, aggressive evangelism, and a concern for the plight of the poor and exploited masses. Further, it extended to their broader concerns for human welfare. In their view, God was not accepting the sufferings of the poor and oppressed and neither would they. There was a ‘sanctified pragmatism’

at work here. In the openness and breadth of their vision, physical as well as spiritual redemption were embraced in an integrated Gospel of wholeness and *shalom*. It was a Gospel calculated to gain the results that were wanted in the battle for souls. It offered hope of a steadfast and durable faith. It was a message of hope to those hopelessly enslaved by their own heart's bondage and the soul-destroying circumstances of poverty, powerlessness, and exploitation in which they were ensnared.

Holiness is not only a possibility for all in Salvationist understanding, it is the purpose of God, the provision of Christ and the standard of Scripture for every believer. "We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24). Earlier iterations of the 10th Doctrine were more explicit regarding the nature and extent of the sanctifying work of the Spirit in regard to heart cleansing and a decisive dealing with the nature of inbred sin. Whatever one's understanding of the nature and extent of the heart-cleansing work of the Spirit in the crisis of sanctification, its manner or mode of experience, the Army remains firmly committed to the possibility and priority of lived and experienced holiness as essential to our mission.

### **The Way into the Blessing**

Holiness was not intended to create a spiritual elite or special class of Christian whose standards remained 'counsels of perfection' for ordinary believers, ever beyond the reach of all but super saints. In speaking of sanctification as a 'privilege,' it was never intended to suggest that the pursuit of godliness was optional for Christ followers in general or Salvation soldiers in particular. Nor can it be presumed that progress toward a crisis of sanctifying grace and the growth in Christ-likeness that sanctification makes possible is pain-free or inevitable. True, Catherine Booth herself claimed the blessing of a clean heart at her husband's urging on the basis of what came to be known as the 'altar theology' propounded by Phoebe Palmer. That is, the faith that the altar sanctifies the gift and that if all is on the altar then the heart is made clean. Still, it was not without a long period of struggle that she made bold to claim the blessing by 'clean faith.' Yet, there was for Catherine a definite moment of

entering into the assurance of sanctification. It was not what some have called “the Longer Way” of sanctification experienced only after a long journey of dying to self. Her experience is perhaps best characterized as the ‘Middle Way’ of earnest seeking until one receives the gift of faith to claim the blessing.<sup>7</sup> It may indeed be an arduous way of anguish over the blackness of one’s heart in the light of Christ’s purity, renouncing one’s idols and dying to self. It is the way of the Cross which affords no ‘Calvary by-pass.’ There may be a seeking, knocking, and asking until the door is opened. The Booths called for a patient and persistent waiting on God until the work is done. Significantly, William and Catherine appeared to move toward advocating the ‘Shorter Way’ in their later preaching in the quest for definite results, emphasizing the instantaneous experience of heart cleansing. True, they acknowledged that for most, the path to a heart-cleansing crisis of sanctifying grace was steeper and more beset by obstacles than this would suggest. But the ideal was there: the possibility and the privilege for all who meet the conditions. Ultimately, entering in is a matter of faith’s hand reaching out to claim the promised Gift.

In all of this, the Spirit of Holiness is seen as the active agent: convicting, illuminating, strengthening faith, cleansing, empowering, freeing, and flooding the heart with boundless love poured out (Romans 5:5) in loving service. That love is the motive force sustaining the plethora of Salvation Army ministries of compassion engaging the toughest crises of our broken and suffering world: reaching out to refugees flooding into Europe, helping to contain the plague of HIV/AIDS and the spread of Ebola, engaging the tragedy of human trafficking, and so much more.

### **‘Fighting Holiness’—A Strategy of Grace**

Oswald Chambers writes of ‘Missionary Munitions’ as a necessity to survive and thrive in the line of fire as we pursue our mission in a world that is no friend to grace. We live out our particular calling as Salvationists in a world still in the grip of the Evil One—it is a world in which we are silently and subversively drawn toward a comfortable spiritual mediocrity that neutralizes the believer as a fighting unit. Satan is an active agent set against all those who presume to live godly in Christ Jesus. Yet Scripture assures us that “His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through the knowledge of him who

calls us by his own glory and goodness.” Through the promises given us we may “participate in the divine nature and escape the corruption in the world caused by evil desires” (2 Peter 1:3-4). The Army ethos calls for just such a life beyond though never apart from conversion, regeneration, and the assurance of salvation. It demands Cross-bearing, sin-denying, and devil-driving—total dedication to the fight of faith and the tough and costly business of opposing evil while snatching brands from the burning and advancing the cause of our Blood and Fire banner. The early-day Holiness teacher and regular preacher at Thursday night Holiness Meetings in the London of the Founder’s day, Commissioner T.H. Howard, called for a “Fighting Holiness.” Not a “hot-house emotionalism or glass-case sanctity, but a vigorous, daring, aggressive religion on the lines of the Saviour’s words, ‘The Kingdom of Heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.’”<sup>8</sup>

True Salvationism calls for a purity of desire, disciplined devotion, and continuing growth that result in a resilient and durable faith under fire. Nothing less will do. This is the standard toward which all Salvationists are called to aspire as ‘soldier saints.’ The successes of the Army throughout its history may be traced to the soldiers and officers who epitomized these qualities of holiness, lived out amid the cut and thrust of our engagement in mission. It is Holiness in action. As such, it is a strategic necessity.

Holiness produces a unique capacity for self-sacrifice and sustainability in soldierly obedience. Only a costly, molten love poured through the channels of a holy heart suffices. “The fierce heat of pure love, created and maintained by the Holy Spirit, makes Salvationists watch and pray, toil and talk and suffer, careless of what it costs them in doing so, if they can only gain the blessed object on which their hearts are set . . . . If you are resolved to spend your life in blessing and saving men and women and fighting for your Lord, you must have a pure heart.”<sup>9</sup> Such suffering, self-sacrificing love is not incidental to missional effectiveness. It is the essential dynamic for mission.

The autocratic system of governance that took hold of the early Army under the dominant leadership of the Founder was not incidental. Perhaps it was inevitable, given the personality of the man himself and the urgent demands of the rapidly advancing movement under his direction. His legal counsel suggested that he wanted to be made a pope. Booth did not deny it. He was convinced that centering authority in himself, under God, was the most strategically efficient



structure for an active Army. The exigencies of the war demanded it. The first generation of warriors acceded to it gladly. But it wasn't long after the General 'laid down his sword' in 1912 that there began to be pushback—beginning even earlier with the promotion to Glory of Catherine who seemed to be the glue that held the family together by the very strength of her personality. Indeed, she had a presentiment that her own children might not stay the course under the autocratic control of their father and their elder brother, Bramwell. She was right. There were early and distressing cracks in the dike of unquestioning devotion.

At this point, Commissioner Railton, a central figure in the leadership team at the beginning, opined that without a sanctifying experience, in time, Salvationists would not accept the discipline. The very system of governance demanded holy hearts not only on the part of the governed, but also in the life and leadership of the movement. It required a holiness content to place the demands of one's calling and commitment to the mission ahead of one's own desires. Obedience, the Founder insisted, is a 'soldier's grace.' Without it, Railton maintained, the Army system simply would not work.<sup>10</sup> We now understand more than ever that this standard of holy love and Christ-like humility must be reflected in the structures and policies of the institution and extend both to the leaders and the led.

We are, after all, a covenanted people. The decision to rename the *Articles of War*, signed by every new soldier at their swearing in under the flag, to *The Soldier's Covenant* was wholly appropriate. The relationship of every soldier to the movement is covenantal in nature, neither contractual nor conditional. It assumes a *calling* to be a Salvationist and an unconditional acceptance of the ethical demands which are set out explicitly, as well as a self-sacrificing commitment to the mission. By their very nature, covenants imply an enduring commitment. Admittedly, this may be a 'hard sell' in a day of 'open options,' but it is consistent with our calling as soldiers of Christ.

### **The Optimism of Holiness**

The Spirit of the Army is a spirit of 'Holy Optimism.' Our God is a God of unfailing love who wills all to be saved and 'to come to the knowledge of the truth' (1 Timothy 2:4). In keeping with our Wesleyan heritage, we proclaim that all can be saved through the merit of the shed blood of the Savior. And all who come to God through Him can be saved to the uttermost (Hebrews 7:25

AV; TNIV ‘completely’: ‘through and through’ 1 Thessalonians 5:23 ANT). As has been seen, our founders insisted that salvation is a salvation from sin and sinning, otherwise it is no salvation at all. Indeed, our 9<sup>th</sup> doctrine affirms that “continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.” As Catherine Booth declared, “I don’t believe in any religion apart from doing the will of God.”

This confidence in the full possibilities of grace for holy living in this present world is wholly consistent with our founders’ commitment to a positive gospel of possibility and power. The result is a fighting force prepared and empowered to engage the evil and suffering of our world. Given such confidence, William Booth could not help but believe that the forces of righteousness must prevail. The battle is the Lord’s and his Army, he believed, would march steadily on towards final victory. Our Army flag is not just a symbol. It is a banner trumpeting the inner dynamic of a fighting and prevailing Army made holy by Blood and Fire. It leads the way toward final victory when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father.

## Afterword

General Shaw Clifton entitled his collection of autobiographical essays, “*Something better...*” referencing a line from the Founder’s Song: “I feel something better most surely must be, if once thy pure waters would roll over me.” The book includes his moving testimony to his own experience of sanctification. Let us not satisfy ourselves with anything less than the ‘something better’ that awaits our surrendered and seeking hearts. Your heart desires it. The war requires it. The world awaits it. And God himself wills it. For, “This is the will of God, even your sanctification!”

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Nigel Bovey, *The Mercy Seat* (London: UK Territory 1996). *The Mercy Seat revisited*, 2010.
- <sup>2</sup> See articles by David Rightmire and Wayne Pritchett in the initial issue of *Word and Deed*, Fall 1998.
- <sup>3</sup> Geoff Webb with Kalie Webb, *Authentic ‘fair dinkum’ Holiness for Ordinary Christians* (The Salvation Army Australian Southern Territory, 2007) p. 210.

- <sup>4</sup> John Larsson, *Spiritual Breakthrough: The Holy Spirit and Ourselves* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1983) p. 58.
- <sup>5</sup> Catherine Booth, *Aggressive Christianity* (London: International Headquarters, 1891) p. 6.
- <sup>6</sup> Cyril Barnes (ed.), *The Founder Speaks* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, Ltd., 1960) pp. 27-28.
- <sup>7</sup> Chris Bounds has helpfully explained these classic approaches to experiencing sanctifying grace in his paper presented to a Doctrinal Symposium sponsored by the Wesleyan Church in 2005 entitled “Spiritual Transformation: What is the range of current teaching on Sanctification and what ought a Wesleyan to believe on this doctrine?”
- <sup>8</sup> T.H. Howard, *Standards of Life and Service* (London: The Salvation Army Book Department, 1909) p. 123.
- <sup>9</sup> Barnes, *The Founder Speaks Again*, pp. 23-24.
- <sup>10</sup> G.S. Railton, *The Authoritative Life of General William Booth* (New York: The Reliance Trading Company, 1912) pp. 70-71

## Further Reading

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- James Strachan, *The Marechale* (Minneapolis: Bethany Fellowship, Inc., 1966).
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# The New Wonder

*Daniel H. Strait*

In his essay “Immanuel’s Ground,” published posthumously in the *American Scholar* in 1999, Lionel Basney describes the religious experience of camp meetings, personal to him, and common among holiness Christians in rural New York State, and in other American places, more than forty years ago. “How and when faith changes in the life of the believer, and in what circumstances,” writes Basney, is a “call to presence and attention.”<sup>1</sup> Yet the call of God exceeds our best attempts to prepare for its arrival. Basney adds, “We must know when and how to acknowledge, in the company of others, that our explanations, our myths, and our practical uses for things thin out quite close to us, and that then we must simply wait for meanings that come to us from outside.”<sup>2</sup> In his essay, Basney recounts the joys, and the terrors, of the experience of waiting: “The question is, have you met whatever you take to be non-negotiable—God, the divine, death, the ultimate ground of being?”<sup>3</sup> I begin with Basney’s essay because it offers a penetrating, and profoundly evocative, exploration of Christian religious experience, not least through its practice of, and its emphasis on, the language of such experience: looking for, seeing, listening, observing, watching, and waiting. Within the context of Basney’s essay, these words signal attentiveness to the call of God.

This call also extends to us, in our circumstances, not only at the altar, in the urgency of religious encounter, as Basney describes it, but also in the study and in the classroom, where, in the unfolding of daily events, a routine discussion can lead to a radical opening before God. I have been a college English professor for more than two decades and, for much of that time, the real-time interaction

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between student and teacher has made me aware that, even on my “best days,” as I perceive them, when every word seems in order, when most students seem attentive, when time seems to fly by because we have attended to the material, to each other, and not to the clock, so much more remains of the “breadth and length and height and depth” of Christ, as St. Paul writes (Ephesians 3:18, NRSV). The problem starts when we take these dimensions as our own co-ordinates—as *our own* careful measures of God. The paradox of Paul’s passage is that God goes beyond what we think we can measure. We marvel at God and his “wondrous deeds” (Psalm 40:5, NRSV), but the Psalmist makes clear that we can’t count them. God is the “new wonder,” if we would only look again. My essay insists on the need to look again.

We tend to run through our routines without noticing much. Things exist, and run their practical course, and, as they do, such things—people, places, events, situations, words, and deeds—organize and structure what we come to regard as life as we “know” it, and presume to see it. The phenomenologist Edmund Husserl calls this the “natural attitude,” a thesis, a kind of default position, about the way the world works.<sup>4</sup> We see things around us according to how we expect to see them. Yet Husserl insists that we need to learn how to “take a look” in the process of “seeing.”<sup>5</sup>

As I am writing this essay this morning, for instance, different things in my office divert my attention: my books, the desk, the coffee carafe to my right, the shafts of sunshine coming through the window, the motion lights above me that just flicked off because I am not moving my body enough, my colleague who just opened his door, tomorrow’s deadline for submitting this text to *Word & Deed*. The range of things I can see, touch, taste, hear, and smell reminds me that I am at work, present in my office, and that my office is filled with things (too many things, to be honest). As I often sense during class, in this moment in my office, I wonder how much more is waiting to disclose itself, if I could “bracket,” as Husserl says, my ready-made explanations for things all around me, if I could really “take a look.” While such phenomenological concepts go well beyond the scope of this essay, and amount to more than a discussion of attention, of course, they do reinforce the idea that even “attention” needs attention, since “attention” fades out as an empty form of seeing when what we seek to bring into focus is an object we already claim to “know.” With this

caution in mind, part of my task will be to describe the work of attention, and to insist, or rather re-assert, its importance in the Christian life.

My main claim will be that we need to recover attentiveness, and cultivate the further capacity of an attentive imagination. The first part of my essay, then, deals with a few challenges, and opportunities, of recovering attentiveness amidst distraction; the second half of the essay explores the attentive imagination as vital to growing in the Christian faith. It also offers an example of the interrelationship of the attentive imagination and Christian faith within the context of teaching literature at a Christian university. The essay closes with an emphasis on attentive seeing, more specifically, on a renewed seeing amidst “new wonder.”

The challenge to attentiveness is so obvious that we fail to see it from one day to the next, from one moment to another. Even in a Christian university setting, it’s difficult to slow time’s rush. The pace of the academic day, the heavy teaching load, the frenzied and furious push through material, the grading, the slogging across campus for yet another late afternoon meeting, the welter of distractions—the phone call, the text, the unanswered email—all these necessary activities threaten sustained attentiveness. Students, busy as ever, though doing what I am not always sure, fail to see the difference between attending class and “attending to” class. But time makes heavy demands on all of us, and exacts its toll. I would be remiss if I didn’t confess from the start that, at times, I am as guilty as my students in succumbing to the problem of inattention. I fix my eyes on *my* concerns, *my* little realm of preoccupations, and don’t look up. “See better Lear,” says Kent in Shakespeare’s *King Lear* (1.1.159)<sup>6</sup>. The imperative calls out to us too. Christian community shares with the broader culture the temptation to see attentiveness as inefficient, and, finally, as unproductive of the work of practical life, unless it serves a political, technical, or economic interest. But the loss, or the slackening, of attentiveness, and attentive seeing, diminishes our capacity to see beyond ourselves, to love God and neighbor.

We are called to “behold,” “look,” “witness,” and “see” God’s presence in our midst. Isaiah 43:19 calls us to live in the expectation of God now, at this moment, in the place where we stand: “I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert” (NRSV). Often we don’t perceive it, and, just as often perhaps, we don’t expect anything new, not even at the start of a new year, or at the beginning of a new semester. In the Gospel of John, we read that

Jesus is “the way, and the truth, and the life” (John 14:6, NRSV), the way in the wilderness, and the river in the desert. Yet Jesus spent much of his time with the disciples just getting them to pay attention—to stay awake. *Watch ye therefore* (Mark 13:33-37) (KJV). Watchfulness is attentiveness full of moral and spiritual vigilance.

The first part of my thesis, then, is that as Christians, especially for those of us who teach, whether as part of a university faculty, a teaching staff, a ministry, or as part of some other vocational calling, we need to recover attentiveness, in variety ordinary (temporal) encounters. In the November-December (2013) issue of *Harvard Magazine*, the art historian Jennifer Roberts writes about the importance of shaping the “temporal” experiences of the students through course design. She spends time designing syllabi, selecting readings, and choosing topics for discussion that promote attentiveness. She pays attention to how students inhabit time: “When will students work quickly? When slowly? When will they be expected to offer spontaneous responses, and when will they be expected to spend time in deeper contemplation?”<sup>7</sup> Roberts requires students to spend extended periods of time really observing works of art, because, as she says, “just because you have *looked* at something doesn’t mean that you have *seen* it”<sup>8</sup>. She adds, “It is commonly assumed that vision is immediate. It seems direct, uncomplicated, and instantaneous—which is why it has arguably become the master sense for the delivery of information in the contemporary technological world”<sup>9</sup>. We need to acknowledge that attentiveness makes not only aesthetic and social demands, but also moral ones. If we hope to recover a deeper attentiveness, it will require a willingness to look—really look—at what “lies before us in daily life,” which, as Adam says in Book 8 of Milton’s *Paradise Lost*, is “the prime wisdom” (*PL* 8.193-4).<sup>10</sup>

What lies before us, however, grows increasingly familiar and hence fades into the indiscriminate background, where others and their concerns, along with our uses for things, and their purposes, slip out of sight. Roberts’ subtle but important critique of technology, for instance, suggests that paying close attention to works of art helps us to unmask the pretensions of the technological marketplace and structures of power. To be attentive has the potential to liberate us from surface illusions about others and the world. Without a developed attentiveness, we put at risk the possibility of a deeper encounter with experience, not just with our own, but also with the experiences of others.



Yet in our ordinary routine, we can only take in so much, which is why we turn to art in the first place. Visual art gives us eyes to see from perspectives other than our own. We also read great literature to see with others' eyes. Literature involves us profoundly in the activity of looking and seeing. The literary critic James Wood contends, "Great writers extend our capacity for 'serious noticing.'"11 "Serious noticing," he says, helps us to see beyond ourselves, to "see better."<sup>12</sup> On the threshold of a new academic year, I like to remember a few lines from Wordsworth's *The Prelude*. They capture a sense of how the seasons of our work come and go, which, as the poet writes, "but for this most watchful power of love, / Had been neglected; left a register / Of permanent relations, else unknown" (*The Prelude*, 2.291-93).<sup>13</sup>

Ways of attentive seeing, particularly in the liberal arts and sciences, relate to larger questions about the imagination, and, for Christians, about the "Christian imagination." Yet I want to avoid using this phrase if only to suggest, in a mostly submerged way, that it is not only possible, but also quite common, in fact, to use it in a dangerously self-explanatory way to avoid the intellectual and theological work, the more integrative work, that it entails. Such phrases can have a certain incantatory power of their own. One does not have to accept all of Wittgenstein's assumptions about language to register this caution: "Don't think, but look" (30e, §66).<sup>14</sup> We need to "see" language better. We need to insist, more often than we do, that Christian language show its face—that is, how and when we use it, when, and for what purpose.

"Dialectical" or "confessional interrogation," as Alasdair MacIntyre uses the terms, might help us to examine the way we use language as part of inhabiting the framework of Christian belief and practice.<sup>15</sup> This type of interrogation might also help us to achieve, or recover, a moral and theological coherence crucial to the inquiry of Christian faith-learning integration. In an essay about Shakespeare's Christian dimension, Lionel Basney posits the need for Christian scepticism, not empty "but rather full of moral commitment and Christian belief."<sup>16</sup> Basney is not asking us to give up on trust—in others, in the world, in language, or in God, of course. He wants to locate its actual ground. A Christian "scepticism" would keep constantly in view "the capacity of the human heart, desperately wicked, to justify its own motive."<sup>17</sup> Under such pressure, we might find that the phrase "Christian imagination," trotted out quickly, expressed too formulaically, or pressed into the service of a Christian apologetics or "Christian

world view,” often stultifies efforts to achieve a more compelling approach to the role imagination plays in the life of the Christian believer eager to see with a renewed vision.

Without a renewed vision, including a commitment to seeing and re-seeing, we often force attempts at Christian faith-learning integration, which often results in the distortions of both Christian faith and learning. Such forced attempts at integration fail to account for the paradox that profound moments of faith-learning experience often happen in the classroom without the explicit use of “religious” or devotional language. This is hardly a new idea. The parables of Jesus work this way. They cut across, often undermine, our expectations of what we think we are going to see and hear. Biblical parables exert a tremendous pressure on our ability to discern the interrelationship between the hidden and the open, the heard and the unheard, between public and private values. “Under that veil there may be hidden things to be esteemed,” writes Sir Philip Sidney, who describes parables as “most divinely true, but the discourse itself feigned.”<sup>18</sup> His *Defence of Poetry* and his remarkable heroic-pastoral romance work the *Old and New Arcadia*, an immense work, which I read, slowly, during the quieter hours last summer, reveal that Christian truth is much larger than we think when we see it with a renewed vision, “an erected wit,” as Sidney says, in altered circumstances.

The other part of my central claim is that, as Christians seeking ever-deeper levels of Christian faith-learning integration, we need to develop the further capacity of an attentive imagination as a crucial aspect of vital Christian faith. An attentive imagination seeks out the fusions, interpenetrations, and intersections of ideas that form the deepest truths and unities of human life. An attentive imagination holds the potential to access a deeper dialogue between history and myth, philosophy and science, and literature and theology. Such attentiveness also opens a narrative space to consider the human story as irreducible to mere politics and power. This human story embodies the hope of self-transcendence and the life of possibility.

The playwright and political dissident Vaclav Havel, not a Christian, but whose views certainly draw inspiration from Christian belief and practice, argues for the crucial role of self-transcendence in effecting any social change. If politicians and social reformers hope to make a productive difference in the global community, on any number of issues from human rights to climate

change, they will need to recognize that such imperatives “derive from the respect of the miracle of Being, the miracle of the universe, the miracle of nature, the miracle of our own existence,” as he says, or such efforts will mean nothing at all.<sup>19</sup> This view of life depends on seeing better, beyond the self. Yet, ironically, the idea of self-transcendence seems utterly absurd to some Christian students, even to those who can quote Matthew 10:39 from memory: “Those who find their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it” (NRSV). This paradox informs and shapes the remainder of my discussion.

An attentive imagination needs to be anchored in the reality of a God-ordained world, in Christ. It has the potential to free us from the confines of the egoistic self and its darker imaginings, its constant manipulations, and its confusions of personal preferences and self-declared entitlements with moral goods and just deserts. For C. S. Lewis, as Alasdair McGrath has written, “the Christian faith offers us a means of seeing things properly—as they really are, despite their outward appearances. Christianity provides an intellectually capacious and imaginatively satisfying way of seeing things, and grasping their interconnectedness.”<sup>20</sup> Yet we often grow satisfied at our own peril. “Things” become objects we quickly handle for our own purposes. For the remainder of this essay, I want to explore imaginative seeing, “profound and careful observation,” as Lewis emphasizes, and relate it to questions about growing in Christian faith. I take two of Lewis’s texts as my initial point of departure: *An Experiment in Criticism* and *The Discarded Image*.

The kind of attentive imagination we need to recover leads to an “enlargement of our being,” as Lewis says in *An Experiment in Criticism*. He adds, “We want to be more than ourselves.”<sup>21</sup> Lewis is talking about reading, of course. But as always, his literary criticism says so much about human nature and the orders of the world—social, intellectual, aesthetic, moral, and religious. Lewis’s critical work, which I discovered and read long before ever having read a word from the Narnia tales or the Space Trilogy (strange, I know), keeps alive many of the most enduring questions about humankind’s search for ultimate meaning. It also provides a lively context for exploring the role of the attentive imagination.

In the opening pages of *An Experiment in Criticism*, Lewis recalls a time when he “attended” to pictures, to illustrations from Beatrix Potter and from Arthur Rackham (Norse mythology), in particular, and from other childhood

stories, “very inadequately.”<sup>22</sup> Lewis says, “It hardly mattered intensely what the picture was ‘of’; hardly at all what the picture was.”<sup>23</sup> The argument in *An Experiment in Criticism* rests on the assumption that, in order to really “see,” a reader needs get beyond himself or herself. “We want to see with other eyes,” Lewis says, “to imagine with other imaginations, to feel with other hearts, as well as with our own.”<sup>24</sup> When I first read these lines, as a recently converted Christian, I felt the thrill of the world opening up all around me. I started to see everything in a new light. Yet even where Lewis wasn’t talking explicitly about Christian faith, I felt the moral (and spiritual) refreshment of seeing beyond the possessive self. Lewis, and later Chesterton, awakened my drowsing imagination to an encounter with a fuller sense of time and place, unity and mystery, fact and fiction, faith and learning. The final passage of *An Experiment in Criticism* has served as a rich example of the integration of Christian faith and learning:

“But in reading great literature I became a thousand men yet remained myself. Like the night sky in a Greek poem, I see with myriad eyes yet it is still I who sees. Here as in worship, in love, in moral action, and in knowing, I transcend myself and I am never more myself than when I do.”<sup>25</sup>

Three years after the publication of *An Experiment in Criticism*, in 1964, Lewis published *The Discarded Image: An Introduction to Medieval and Renaissance Literature*. No book of literary criticism has influenced me more. Not only do I count it among the seminal texts in Medieval and Renaissance studies, but I also consider it as offering its own profound “experiment in criticism.” As an undergraduate, I took the bait. I agreed to the experiment. As I read the book, I turned my attention to Lewis’s discussion of how Medieval and Renaissance writers used sources and authorities—classical writers, mainly Greek and Roman—as a repository of ideas. The more I read the more fascinated I became with the Medieval structure of the universe, the “Model,” as Lewis calls it. As I turned the pages, I realized that I was acquiring a working vocabulary of huge regions of Medieval and Renaissance thought—dreams, spiritual assents, natural phenomena (astrology, zoology, physiology), heaven, body, and soul. Not only that, but in the process of reading, I felt the strange but delightful encounter with mythology as a search for meaning (figurative

and metaphorical). Yet I also recall registering, as a new Christian in search of deeper understandings of God's truth, the unsettling fusion in this Model of the world of pagan and Christian elements.

The Medieval "Model" of the world was not thoroughly Christian. As Lewis points out, this particular fact explains why reference to the "Model" does not occur as regularly or as fully in the spiritual writings of the period. This fact alone opened a whole new set of questions about the difference between literary and spiritual writing. But the question hardly stopped me from the new openness I felt to consider the interrelationship between and among philosophy, history, and story, especially between history and "fiction" in the variety of genres Lewis explores in the text: genealogy, etiological tales, chronological history, saints' lives, animal fables, fabliaux, archival records, devotional books (practical guides to spirituality), allegory, frame tales, legends, romance (among others). Little did I know then, but Lewis's *The Discarded Image* awakened me to the fullness of antiquity, more importantly, to the need for a deep historical consciousness. He does this in the book partly by asking the reader to identify with the assimilative energies of the medieval mind.

To identify with the "Model," then, at least in the way Lewis insists, requires an imaginative attentiveness willing to let go of egoism. While he hardly assumes we can see the Medieval and Renaissance world with perfect historical clarity, no matter how much we open ourselves up to its influences through the "Model," he nonetheless holds out the possibility that we might get a glimpse of it if, for a time, we save its appearances and allow them to be part of an imaginative discovery of a time and place quite different from our own. Lewis's experiments in criticism, not just in the two books I have mentioned here, but in others—*The Allegory of Love*, *English Literature in the Sixteenth Century, Excluding Drama*, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*—invigorate imaginative attentiveness. This imaginative capacity plays a vital role in re-discovering wonder.

My final point about *The Discarded Image*, which sets up my conclusion, has to do with the relationship between imaginative attentiveness and wonder. This is the point in the essay where I might risk being misunderstood. So I want to be careful here. About midway along in Lewis's book, after he explores classical influences on the "Model," he follows with a chapter entitled "The Longaevi," or "long-livers," as he says.<sup>26</sup> He takes several pages to describe these "marginal, fugitive creatures" as softening "the classic severity of the huge design."<sup>27</sup> They

“intrude,” Lewis remarks, with a welcome hint of “wildness and uncertainty in a universe that is in danger of being a little too self-explanatory.”<sup>28</sup> Yet Lewis admits that, for this very reason, they have imaginative value. Such creatures include fairies, fiends, spirits, witches, elves, dwarves, and the like. While such figures are products of a creative imagination, even of a darkened imagination (some of these creature were terrors to the mind), they nonetheless reinforce something important about our task: that our best explanations don’t entirely capture God’s world. Regardless of how tidy and orderly our Christian view of the world may seem, this part of the old “Model” reminds us of the need for a certain intellectual humility, and a little fun. The “Longaevi” aren’t real, of course. But they do suggest, however metaphorically, that our attempts to understand a God-ordained universe might reach their limits. At these limits, we might then encounter mystery and diversity, even surprise and wonder.

I want to conclude with a story about wonder. Several years ago, in the fall semester, I had a student in my Literature and Culture course who came to class everyday wearing a long black trench coat, black boots, a black t-shirt, and black jeans. He also had dyed his hair black and wore black finger nail polish. He never, as I recall, brought a book, or anything, to class—not any of the required texts, not a notebook, not a pen, not even one with black ink. For sixteen weeks, he glared at me with what I perceived then as a kind of defiance. His non-verbal signs and gestures, not unkind, seemed to convey a message nonetheless: “I dare you to teach me anything. I dare you to get me to care about anything.” I lived with a certain assuredness (the kind that comes with having taught for a while) that I knew what his clothes “meant.” This led, of course, to the false supposition that I knew something about his character, about his orientation to life, to school, to others—his story and history. The terror of Columbine lingered, significantly enough, in my daily memory to make his appearance more than a little unnerving. To this day, I am not a fan of long trench coats, at least worn as part of classroom attire.

Over the course of the semester, in an effort to draw him into the conversation, I tried calling on him, catching him after class, emailing him. He had few words for me, in or out of class. I don’t remember how well he did on the course assignments or on the exams; he might have passed the course; he might have earned an “A.” I don’t recall anything about the quality of his work. But I know he didn’t return to Asbury, something I realized (perhaps to my shame) about

three years later, when I received a one-page, single-spaced letter from him telling me he had left Asbury for reasons he left undisclosed. He said nothing much about his personal life, not a word about school, work, finances, or family. He wrote simply to tell me how much he appreciated my course.

In the letter, he confessed that he didn't remember much of anything we discussed (a sober thought, as I reflect on it) except a short passage from a writer whose name, by his own admission, he had long forgotten. The phrase comes from a passage in G. K. Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man*, and the phrase is this one: "the dumb significance of seasons and special places."<sup>29</sup> Plenty of people quote Chesterton. He has a memorable way of saying things. This phrase (and the passage from which it derives), however, is not necessarily among the most commonly quoted Chesterton passages. Yet it persisted (more so than the actual substance of the course, apparently) in his thinking to prompt him to reflect, three years later, on his experience in a required literature course at Asbury. Here is the whole passage in which phrase it occurs:

Men of the people, like the shepherds, men of the popular tradition, had everywhere been the makers of mythologies. It was they who felt most directly, with least check or chill from philosophy or the corrupt cults of civilization (sic), the need we have already considered; the images that were adventures of the imagination; the mythology that was a sort of search; the tempting and tantalizing hints of something half-human in nature; the dumb significance of seasons and special places. They had best understood that the soul of a landscape is a story and the soul of a story is a personality. But rationalism had already begun to rot away these irrational though imaginative treasures of the peasant; even as systematic slavery had eaten the peasant out of house and home. Upon all such peasantries everywhere there was descending a dusk and a twilight of disappointment, in the hour when these few men discovered what they sought. Everywhere else Arcadia was fading from the forest. Pan was dead and the shepherds were scattered like sheep. And though no man knew it, the hour was near which was to end and to fulfill all things; and though no man

heard it, there was one far-off cry in an unknown tongue upon the heaving wilderness of the mountains. The shepherds had found their Shepherd.<sup>30</sup>

The immediate context of this passage has to do with what Chesterton identified as the darker consequences of rationalism.<sup>31</sup> In Chesterton's view, rationalism threatened to eat away at the core of human history—that is, of sacred history, the story of God seeking man. From time to time, I reproduce this passage on a handout, along with the text of Virgil's Fourth Eclogue, when I am introducing Virgil's *The Aeneid*, partly to get students thinking about the relationship between the classical past and the advent of Christianity, mostly, though, to get them to reflect on time. I am quick to remind them that prominent Christian thinkers—St. Augustine, Dante—thought Virgil a kind of prophetic writer, whose great epic poem, though largely a political myth about Roman history as world history, embodied a “vaster theme implicit in it,” as C. S. Lewis writes.<sup>32</sup> Virgil's poem has a way of making the reader feel as though the destiny of the whole world unfolds in Roman myth and history.

In *The Everlasting Man*, Chesterton turns his attention to the hinge-point in human history, that period of historical and mythic time between what he describes as the decay of the pagan mythologies and the advent of Christ. Chesterton's *The Everlasting Man* explores human history in relation to the Incarnation, to “the strangest story in the world,” as he calls it. He describes God's redemptive movement in time as a “new wonder.” This passage, like the first one, deserves some added attention, so I quote it here at some length:

For in the second cavern the whole of that great and glorious humanity which we call antiquity was gathered up and covered over; and in that place it was buried. It was the end of a very great thing called human history; the history that was merely human. The mythologies and the philosophies were buried there, the gods and the heroes and the sages. In the great Roman phrase, they had lived. But as they could only live, so they could only die; and they were dead.

On the third day the friends of Christ coming at day break to the place found the grave empty and the stone rolled away.



In varying ways they realised (sic) the new wonder; but even they hardly realised (sic) that the world had died in the night. What they were looking at was the first day of a new creation, with a new heaven and a new earth; and in a semblance of the gardener God walked again in the garden, in the cool not of the evening but the dawn.<sup>33</sup>

In the second paragraph, starting with the all-too-familiar phrase “On the third day,” the passage deals profoundly with revelation, and, equally as much, with looking and seeing, not just seeing as mere noticing, but seeing as realizing—that is, something coming into awareness through attention: “In varying ways they realised (sic).” Christ’s friends, as Chesterton describes the biblical scene in John’s gospel, “realized” but also “hardly realized” what they were looking at. Little did they fully know that they were looking at “the first day of creation, with a new heaven and a new earth”—at the glory of God in the resurrection of Christ. Beyond all expectation, all understanding, the risen Christ appeared to Mary Magdalene, who wept and searched for him in the garden, looking all about, even after the others—Peter and the “other disciple,” presumably John—had left after “seeing” the empty tomb (John 20:1-18) (NRSV). The whole scene, as Chesterton describes it, accounts for, or tries to, an ordeal of seeing, a moment when the unforeseeable unfolding of God exceeds our gaze.<sup>34</sup>

The passage has another effect. While it draws us into the biblical scene, as narrative, it also signals something for the writer, and ultimately, for the reader. If we read the passage as an event of perception, not just as a text, Chesterton’s “look” at the risen Christ, the “new wonder,” seems to unfold along multiple horizons of perceptual seeing. The weight of this phenomenal moment asks us to “look again.” As vivid as Chesterton’s passage makes the scene, it shuttles us to a new hermeneutic site, where the coming of the new day, the glad mystery of the rolled away stone, the astonishment of the empty grave, and the scattering of the night of death mark a new openness to the magnitude of the reality of Christ’s resurrection. “Dawn,” then, seems an appropriate last word, a beginning—a first appearance—at the end of the passage. The word carries the added meaning of something “new,” as one registers something in his or her consciousness. In this “dawning,” in the effort of “realizing presence,” the “new wonder”—Christ—makes even our wonder new.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Lionel Basney, "Immanuel's Ground." *American Scholar* (Summer 1999), p. 114.
- <sup>2</sup> Basney, "Immanuel's Ground," p. 119.
- <sup>3</sup> Basney, "Immanuel's Ground," p. 118.
- <sup>4</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*. Trans. William Alston and George Nakhnikian. The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1973. In "Lecture I," Husserl writes, "The natural attitude of mind is as yet unconcerned with the critique of cognition. Whether in the act of intuiting or in the act of thinking, in the natural mode of reflection we are turned to *the objects* as they are given to us each time and as a matter of course though they are given in different ways and in different modes of being, according to the source and level of our cognition. In perception, for instance, a thing stands before our eyes as a matter of course. It is there, among other things, living or lifeless, animate or inanimate. It is, in short, within a world of which part is perceived, as are the individual things themselves, and of which part is contextually supplied by memory from when it spreads out into the indeterminate and the unknown," p. 15.
- <sup>5</sup> Edmund Husserl, *The Idea of Phenomenology*. In the Introduction, Nakhnikian offers a useful observation. He asserts, "The phenomenologist must be in a position to "take a look" at what is going on when he is actually seeing something," p. xvii. This emphasis on "looking" amidst "seeing" deeply informs my discussion.
- <sup>6</sup> William Shakespeare, *King Lear, The Complete Works of Shakespeare*, Updated 4th ed., ed., David Bevington. Longman, 1997.
- <sup>7</sup> Jennifer Roberts, "The Power of Patience," *Harvard Magazine*, (November/December 2013). <http://harvardmagazine.com/2013/11/the-power-of-patience> Web. 15 June 2015.
- <sup>8</sup> See Roberts, "The Power of Patience."
- <sup>9</sup> Roberts, "The Power of Patience."
- <sup>10</sup> John Milton, *Paradise Lost*, 2nd ed., ed., Alastair Fowler, New York: Longman, 1997.
- <sup>11</sup> James Wood, "Serious Noticing," *Michigan Quarterly Review*, 49.4 (Fall 2010). [quod.lib.umich.edu](http://lib.umich.edu) Web. 15 July 2015.
- <sup>12</sup> See Wood, "Serious Noticing."
- <sup>13</sup> William Wordsworth, *The Prelude*, in *English Romantic Poetry and Prose*, ed., Russell Noyes. New York: Oxford, 1956.
- <sup>14</sup> Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Philosophical Investigations*, 3rd ed., trans. G. E.M. Anscombe. New York: Macmillan, 1968.

- <sup>15</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Inquiry*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, p. 202.
- <sup>16</sup> Lionel Basney, "Is a Christian Perspective on Shakespeare Productive and/or Necessary?" *Shakespeare and the Christian Tradition*, Ed. Beatrice Batson. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 1994. p. 21.
- <sup>17</sup> See Basney, "Is a Christian Perspective on Shakespeare Productive and/or Necessary?" p. 29.
- <sup>18</sup> Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, New York: Penguin, 1987, p. 230. See also Sir Philip Sidney, *The Defence of Poesy*, in *The Major Works*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2002, p. 228.
- <sup>19</sup> Vaclav Havel, "The Need for Transcendence in the Postmodern World." [www.worldtrans.org/whole/havelspeech.html](http://www.worldtrans.org/whole/havelspeech.html) Web. 15 July 2015.
- <sup>20</sup> Alister McGrath, "Try seeing in this way: Imagination and Reason in the Apologetics of C. S. Lewis." *ABC Religion and Ethics* (15 May 2013). <http://www.abc.net.au/religion/articles/2013/05/15/3760192.htm> Web. 15 July 2015.
- <sup>21</sup> C. S. Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 137.
- <sup>22</sup> Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*, p. 15.
- <sup>23</sup> Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*, p. 15.
- <sup>24</sup> Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*, p. 137.
- <sup>25</sup> Lewis, *An Experiment in Criticism*, p. 137.
- <sup>26</sup> C. S. Lewis, *The Discarded Image*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 122.
- <sup>27</sup> Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, p. 122.
- <sup>28</sup> Lewis, *The Discarded Image*, p. 122.
- <sup>29</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, p. 174.
- <sup>30</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, p. 174.
- <sup>31</sup> For an interesting discussion about the relationship between religious belief and rationalism, see Reinhold Niebuhr: *Theologian of Public Life*. Ed. Larry Rasmussen. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress, 1991 p. 83.
- <sup>32</sup> C. S. Lewis, *A Preface to Paradise Lost*. New York: Oxford University Press, p. 34.
- <sup>33</sup> G. K. Chesterton, *The Everlasting Man*, p. 213.
- <sup>34</sup> For a remarkable discussion of this concept, see Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Toward a Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans. Jeffrey L. Kosky. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002, pp. 238-245.



# Memoirs from The Salvation Army's 'Outpost War' in Norway

*Gudrun Lydholm*

## **Introduction**

The Salvation Army has been in Norway since January 1888 and now has a presence all over the country. Corps were planted at an amazing speed, some took root and remained, while others lasted for only a short time. Looking into statistics from 1910 to 1970<sup>1</sup> (every tenth year), growth continued. The figures from 1910 included eighty-five corps, and in 1920 there were 114, topping off in 1950 with 138. Numbers then began dwindling, going down to 128 in 1970. Connected to the corps work were figures from outposts, often called the “outpost war” where growth was much larger than the growth in numbers of corps. In 1910, there were 183 outposts. These had grown to 680 only ten years later, then up to 806 in 1950, and on to a high in 1960/70 with 882.

These figures from the outpost work caught my interest. I came to Norway in 2005 to be in leadership of the Salvation Army's work in the country together with my husband. I had experience in The Salvation Army's work in several countries, including my native country, Denmark. This outpost concept seemed different from what I had seen before. I wondered if it resembled some of the work my mother had told me about from her life as a corps officer in Denmark<sup>2</sup> and what was behind these statistics. I decided to do some

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research to answer two simple questions: What was an outpost? What did the “outpost war”<sup>3</sup> consist of?

I found that an outpost was a place being visited by officers/soldiers or musical groups on a regular basis and making local contacts from door to door, often selling the *War Cry* (*Krigsropet*) and inviting people to public meetings for children and adults. Devotions would often be held in private homes of families the officers stayed with and sometimes neighbors attended as well. Meetings were also held in farms, schoolhouses, prayer houses, community halls, and local institutions or canteens. These were situated in the district of the corps, which encompassed villages, islands, isolated farms, small fishing communities, even workplaces like timber factories on the river Glomma or aboard the Salvation Army rescue schooner, *Catherine Booth*.<sup>4</sup>

During my research, another question came up: “What value did this work have for the people at the outposts and for the officers doing the work?” These questions, the first two and this added one, directed my research.

The interest I had in this work was not so much as a Salvation Army leader—the work had dwindled out long before I came to Norway. My interest in this history came from the stories my mother told me about her first years as an officer. I experienced a bit of this work as a young teenager, but not at the scale it had taken on in Denmark earlier on, not to mention in Norway. I think “the lenses in my glasses” have a nostalgic color and a touch of fascination when it comes to the Army’s outpost work. I am aware of that as I read and analyze the letters.

### **The search for material**

Apart from the statistics that caught my interest in the first place, I looked into the small booklets giving a yearly overview of The Salvation Army’s work called “Our Crusade”<sup>5</sup> from the years, 1927–1935. I could see that the statistics of the outposts were changeable or unclear. In 1927, there were 1376 outposts and the following eight years the number outposts is just recorded as “countless,” “many” or “quite a lot.” Turning to *Krigsropet*<sup>6</sup> and *Den unge Soldat*<sup>7</sup> the information widened a bit, but not substantially. *Krigsropet* contained mostly very small reports that this or that outpost had been visited, that it had been a blessed meeting, a good congregation, or that a corps band or string band had been visiting the outpost. An exception to these sparse reports came in an arti-

cle from 1985 from Commissioner Haakon Dahlstrøm,<sup>8</sup> who, in his retirement, highlighted different aspects of Salvation Army mission. It is called: "Outpost Norway: The chapter of faith in Hebrews 11 on Norwegian soil." It is a nostalgic reminiscence on the faithfulness of officers, the blessings they brought to people, and the hardship of long journeys in all sorts of weather and by all modes of transport. It does not give a lot of facts about the actual work itself. In *Den unge Soldat*, the reports were as sparse, but included photos in between. I could see rather large Sunday schools with 30 to 40 children from an outpost. Some of the adults in the photo would be in Salvation Army uniforms. In one photo, two of the adults were listed as outpost soldiers. I took that to mean (and it was confirmed) that soldiers living in that community apparently operated Sunday schools and other children's activities. It seemed as if the name "outpost" covered a broad variety of activities from regular meetings and children's work to occasional visits by officers and groups from the corps.

Because the information from written sources was so sparse, the next step I took was to send out a questionnaire<sup>9</sup> to 350 officers, active and retired.<sup>10</sup> I received 212 answers, 143 from officers over sixty and sixty-nine from those under sixty.<sup>11</sup> Most of the material I have used for statistical purposes. It could be used further to investigate, for instance, the affect of different kinds of work on recruitment, but for the purpose of my research there were few with substantial enough answers. Twenty questionnaires contained longer answers and small narratives. I have chosen seven of these to help explore the answers to my questions. Four of them actually signed the letters with their names.

### **The method for the research**

These stories are the officers' own recollections of their lives or part of their lives. They resemble autobiographies or memoirs, but are of course only covering a specific part of each person's life. Some parts of their answers are more like reminiscences than memoirs. This material gives insight into how the officers experienced their work with more details about the work itself and is different from what I got from the short answers. The stories do not offer an in-depth answer my third question about what value the work had for those involved in it since I could not follow-up on what they had written.

However, the stories give some hints about the work's value, depending on what the officers chose to write about. The stories fill out the sparse reports from *Krigsroport* and *Den unge Soldat* with more solid facts, first-hand accounts and personal reflections.

On the subject of people recounting their own life stories, Birgit Hertzberg Johnsen<sup>12</sup> said:

“When talking about their lives, people lie sometimes, forget a lot, exaggerate, become confused, and get things wrong. Yet they are revealing truths. These truths don't reveal the past ‘as it actually was’, aspiring to a standard of objectivity. They give us instead the truths of our experiences.”<sup>13</sup>

I would not express myself in the same way, but I find some truth in this quotation, because the stories have been through a writing process, a period of reflection and a series of narrative choices that color what has been written. Over the years these incidents might have been at the forefront of the writers' minds, while others have been buried until the exercise of answering the questionnaire uncovered them. Whatever the case, all these stories will be colored by the “now” more than the “then.”

Paul Thompson is one of the pioneers of oral history<sup>14</sup> and he<sup>15</sup> reports the results of different experiments of the reliability of memory. I think the documentation of the reliability of memory coming from the different sources he is presenting is valid and relevant for this research even though they are memoirs and not Oral History. His conclusion from these findings is:

It is clear that on all counts the loss of memory during the first nine months is as great as that during the forty seven years. Only beyond this do the tests suggest any sharp decline in average memory; and even this may be more due to declining speed in tests timed over seconds, and also to the affect on average performance of ‘degenerative changes’ among some of those in their seventies. Of equal importance is the finding that for those class-mates who were considered friends, no decline in accuracy of recall can be traced, even over an interval of more



than fifty years. The more significant a name or face, the more likely it is to be remembered...Accurate memory is thus much more likely when it meets a social interest and need.<sup>16</sup>

The descriptions of the visits to the outpost and the people there have a character of being significant for the writer, so I think it can be justified to connect their stories to this long lasting accuracy of memory. Most of the respondents chosen for this essay were between seventy and eighty years of age,<sup>17</sup> and most were being asked to recall the first years of their officership. Some of these recollections might go fifty or more years back. The values each writer holds today will come through in what they consider to be the most important part of their past work.

Thompson<sup>18</sup> continues on the theme of the reliability of memory:

The final stage in the development of memory commonly follows retirement,... This is the phenomenon recognized by psychologists as 'life review': a sudden emergence of memories and of desire to remember, and a special candor which goes with a feeling that active life is over, achievement is completed. Thus in this final stage there is a major compensation for the longer interval and the selectivity of the memory process, in an increased willingness to remember, and commonly, too, a diminished concern with fitting the story to social norms of the audience. Thus bias from both repression and distortion becomes a less inhibiting difficulty, for both teller and historian.

Even though most of the respondents were well past the retirement experience, Thompson's assessment rings true regarding the officers who volunteered their thoughts on the outpost work. After I sent the letters out to the officers, I found myself being stopped after meetings or even on the street by retired officers who wanted to tell me their memories of the outposts. This often happened in situations where I could not take any notes. For a number of the officers, the outpost work was extremely important in their own sense of personal calling and their identity as officers. They felt what they did was valued by people at the outposts, because they were met with respect and excitement when they came.

As a Salvation Army officer's life and work are (or at least used to be) fundamentally intertwined, it was difficult to separate one from the other. The information of this specific work was a sharing of their life in a wider sense than just telling about a workplace. Many felt they were sharing their identity and evaluating their service as officers.

### **The experience of those growing up at an outpost**

Question nine of the questionnaire has two parts, a) and b). Part a) asks about the respondent's contact with The Salvation Army growing up at an outpost and part b) deals with their personal experience working at the outposts. I have separated the seven chosen answers along these lines. Four of the respondents grew up at an outpost as well as working as officers later in life, while the other three did not have a background with the outposts before working at them.

There are differences in the way the two groups describe their own work. Those who grew up at an outpost spoke of how refreshing it was to travel to the outposts. One wrote that coming to the outpost would take away any feelings of work-weariness, another said that when she was feeling exhausted she would go to the outposts for inspiration. So the outposts became a sort of cure for tiredness, a theme that didn't repeat among those who hadn't grown up around the outposts. I think it must be due to a feeling of "home coming." To those who grew up around them, any outpost, even those in a totally different part of the country, felt like home. Outpost work was rather demanding and not a natural option for rest, but still, the feeling of being at home gave the demanding work a refreshing quality. I doubt that this sentiment was always the case, but this was their lasting memory and perhaps says more about how close the work was to their hearts than anything.

The only man out of the four who grew up around outposts recalled how nice it was to get to know the people hosting his family. He said he enjoyed helping out with the daily tasks at their farm. Another, because she was a farm girl herself, helped out at the farms hosting her and reflected that her hosts respected her for it—"people saw that we were ordinary workers," she said.

The man mentioned above experienced the Army's visits to the prayer house and stated that the officer was sometimes hosted in his home. He mentioned that the officers came regularly to have Sunday school there. He did not reflect

upon the impact of these visits, but he wrote that the class in his last year at school was asked to write an essay about their wishes for a future profession. "I wanted to write Salvation Army officer, but I lacked the courage." This was his comment, and it says a lot about how strong an impact the officers' visits had made on him. He mentioned his own life as a corps officer and the focus he had on the outpost war.

The youngest<sup>19</sup> of the respondents in this group gave a short statement as well. First, on how she perceived these visits growing up on a farm, then on how she felt doing the work herself:

Meetings in sitting rooms in my home (and other homes in the village) made a lasting warm and good impression of care and Christian influence. The officers were met with great trust and were considered ministers, spiritual advisors, evangelists and 'happy' musicians.

On the back of the questionnaire, she attached a copy of part of an essay she wrote as a student at the grammar school those many years ago that gives the atmosphere of such a visit.<sup>20</sup> She described how this was a real celebration. She recalled cleaning everything she could in advance, because it all had to be clean when the Salvation Army came. She says she will never forget sitting on a hard bench with the rather lively dog resting calmly on the floor at her feet, both of them listening to songs and music on accordion, guitar and violin. Everybody from the village came. The place smelled of coffee, waffles and homemade cakes which would be served after the meeting. Karen, the maid, had her white apron on and smiled like the sun, even Ola, the old handyman, had washed the beard free of snuff, the brown tooth he normally hid now visible in his broad and warm smile.

What comes through these accounts is the expectation of something special, a gathering with singing and music, always worth attending and arranging. Although this essay is closer in time to the actual experiences it describes, according to the experiments of Paul Thompson quoted above ("the loss of memory in the first nine months is as great as that during the forty seven years") it may not be any more reliable than the other writings dealing with the more distant past. The essay certainly has the character of reminiscences, a charm-

ing and romantic picture of these meetings. Still it gives the message that the Army's visit was something special.

She also comments on her own service:

Meetings (sermons/testimonies/songs/music) with great emphasis on an evangelical message. Meetings and Christmas parties were for all age groups. Conversation and pastoral care when needed. The outposts were a fine financial support. The outpost work gave me much in my service.

I interpret the statement about outpost work giving her "much" in her service as an expression of her sense of fulfillment and of the true value of her calling.

The oldest of the four, a woman between eighty and ninety years of age, told of her first meeting with the Salvation Army. At the age of eight, she came down to the village from her farm and met two ladies who gave her a paper, *Den Unge Soldat (The Young Soldier)*, and invited her to the children's meeting at night in the prayer house. When she returned home, her mother told her that they must be the "Army ladies," but because of the darkness she was not allowed to go down from the farm. She recalled that years later, when she had moved to the nearby town for further schooling, she heard music and singing from a hall and went there with her friends. She recognized the uniforms from her childhood and was drawn "like a magnet."<sup>21</sup> She then told about her own work as an officer at the outposts:

They were so happy that we came, we got the impression that they thought we could do all sorts of things. If we were out selling *The War Cry*, the wife would call: 'Now you have to come with the guitar and get it in tune. We have a visit of the Salvation Army.' If somebody was ill or dying, we had to go in and read and pray for them. Often we felt inadequate, but God never failed us, he gave us what we needed to carry out what he had sent in our way. There were so many rich experiences. If we got tired we forgot it as fast.

Her letter reflects a strong belief that she was out on a special mission, God's mission. He was the one who had sent these situations her way, and therefore she had to respond to them in spite of her feelings of inadequacy. This belief is present in a number of the other responses as well. It seemed to be the driving force for the respondents in facing situations that demanded more from them than they felt they could provide.

The longest letter I received was five pages long (computer written) from an officer between seventy and eighty years of age who had grown up on a mountain farm in the north of Norway. She recalled the officers' visits and how she perceived them as evangelists. She also explained her own conversion at the mountain hut and reflected on her life as an officer. She stressed that it was certainly not a nine-to-four job—there were hardly any days off—but this was what God had called her to do.

In another part of her letter, she added a new dimension to the outpost war. She described the timber work along the river Glomma that involved so many in that community. She recalled that the two female officers went out with the workers' bus every Friday during summer and autumn at 5:30 in the morning. They led devotions for the workers before they started their work at seven o'clock. During the day, the officers walked on the small tracks made by timber on the river and talked with the workers. They had four devotions at different barracks during lunch break, and often they would be asked to sing and play just standing at the shore of the river during work hours, using the accordion and the guitar with them. When the day was over, they would stand at the bus selling *Krigsropet* and wishing the men a good weekend. They would then go home on the bus at 6:30 at night. "This was different outpost work with a focus on evangelism," she said.

The story about the timber industry was from her very first appointment. The first appointment usually seemed to stand out in the respondents' memories. Memories of such transitional events are fairly accurate according to Thompson's experiments. In her letter, she wanted to stress the value of taking all the trouble of long days out at the timber industry. Perhaps she took this issue up because of things being different with today's shorter working days. It seems that she considers the value of not counting hours important for her own identity as an officer, as she mentioned it both in the story from Glomma and in the overall view of her officership.

With her letter, she enclosed a copy of a Christmas and New Year's program from 1966/67 that shows the extent of the outpost visits at that time of the year. On Christmas day and Boxing day, there would be worship and Christmas parties at the corps. From the 27<sup>th</sup> of December and on to the 14<sup>th</sup> of January, there would be visits to two different outposts most days. Sundays were centered at the corps with worship, apart from one Sunday where the evening meeting was held at an outpost. This program confirms the stories about the many Christmas parties at the outposts.

When I looked through the letters and sorted them, I noticed that there was a difference between women's and men's accounts of the engagement in "the outpost war." The men focused on the actual program, not so much personal reflections or evaluation of what it meant to them or their officership. The women gave an account of the program as well, but added reflections on their role, their reception by the people they served, and the fulfillment they experienced. The pastoral care aspect came primarily from the women's accounts. There might not have been a difference between the men's and the women's involvement at the time, but the women stressed it more in their letters, suggesting that this part of the work was of special value to them.

### **The experience of those without outpost background**

The youngest of the respondents, a man between forty and fifty years of age, mentioned three corps with outposts where he was in charge. At two of them, he had two outpost Sundays schools every week, meetings,<sup>22</sup> and Christmas parties that took place in schoolhouses, prayer houses, and private homes. At the third one, he had an outpost Home League with meetings there as well. He mentioned fundraising for The Salvation Army's work in all three places as part of the visits. He was normally hosted for the night at the homes of soldiers living at the outposts. He, like a number of other respondents, mentioned the Christmas parties, the number and how many people attended. In one corps, he had twenty to thirty different arrangements at the outposts and estimated that ten percent of the population in this vast district came to these events. His only personal comments were that the outposts gave a closeness to people "which we would never have had in the corps hall." He added that it was an opportunity for

training soldiers in witnessing, singing, and leading meetings when they were visiting outposts together with the officer.

Another mentioned his own and his wife's first corps with forty outposts. He highlighted the few areas of entertainment offered in these small places:

Apart from the dancing arrangements for the youth, the district cinema and The Salvation Army 'competed' for the market. People from the district cinema would phone to ask about our plans, because if we were there at the same time as a film showing, both would 'suffer.'

He also commented that the fundraising was important, but reflected on the fact that the mission was the driving force since there were easier ways to raise funds than traveling to the outposts. Still, he underlined that it was a welcomed "byproduct." He pointed to the fact that the Army's visits were popular because all the believers could gather together with the village's "worldly" people who normally would not attend a service.

His fairly long letter is reflective, a typical "life review," as Thompson calls it, where he focused on what had value for him today. He stressed the mission as the overall purpose and downplayed the fundraising aspect. It was not as easy to raise funds in other ways as he suggested, which had also been shown in other sources. I think he is right in remembering this mixture of "church" people and "worldly" people. That is a general experience for Salvation Army activities even today. The last part of his letter concerned his thoughts on how to do mission work today—using different methods than the outposts had, but reaching a similarly wide swath of people. His focus today is mission. It might have been the same focus he had forty years ago, but that cannot be concluded from his letter.

He also suggested why this work dwindled out in a part of his letter called "Paradigm shift:"

It happened the second year we were at that corps. In a normally well-attended schoolhouse meeting, we found only ten to twelve people present. One of them said: "Tonight, as many people as are here now will be sitting round each of the three

televisions that have come to the village.” We noticed that fewer people were attending the meetings, especially the outpost meetings. Televisions, together with the growing number of private cars that until then had been reserved for those who needed it for work purposes, had changed things. Before then, people had been more bound to the neighborhood and what was happening there. The district cinema and The Salvation Army had once been breaths of fresh air for the community at large and met that need to come together, and the Army most likely met a spiritual need as well.

Even though the numbers were falling, the outpost meetings still continued in the following years.

One of the female respondents mentioned this aspect, though from another angle. She simply stated that it became too costly with traveling expenses, rent of halls, and heating when donations and collections began to wane.

As far as I can gather, the financial support from the community as a whole diminished. Some of the officers mentioned that they were given free passage on the boats, buses, and milk vans.<sup>23</sup> It seems as if the halls earlier on were freely given gathering spaces: prayer halls,<sup>24</sup> school halls, community halls, and of course the private homes and farms.

The last letter to be dealt with is from an officer between seventy and eighty years of age. She recalled her first corps after being commissioned, especially focusing on one incident she wanted to share. Usually the officers visited private homes at the outposts. One day, they came to an elderly couple and were invited in, but then the couple disappeared and the officers wondered what was happening. After a while the couple came back dressed in their Sunday clothes and the man said: “It is a feast when we have a visit from the witnesses of the Lord, therefore we must dress ourselves in our festive clothes when we are going to worship.” The letter continued: “I will never forget that prayer time. The man of the house mentioned everybody in the district by name in his prayer. The couple did that every day, they told us afterwards.”

I see the recollection of this incident as something significant. As with the story about the timber industry workers, this was the respondent’s first appoint-



ment—it stood out in her memory. It was an unusual experience, a precious one, and very special because it confirmed the essence of her calling and officership<sup>25</sup>.

## A Summary of the Work

The answered questionnaires I received satisfied my curiosity about the “outpost war” in different ways. I can gather that the designation “outpost” has been used for various forms of mission work from more consistent meetings with weekly activities to sporadic visits to different villages. Even the timber industry work at Glomma is considered outpost work. Local geography must have played a role in the frequency of visits—how far outposts were from the corps and how difficult it was to get to them: Odda with outposts all over Hardanger, Larvik where the outposts seemed to be closer and therefore more regular work, Ringebu with outposts all over Guldbrandsdalen, Hennesberget with outposts at the islands, Sogn and the fjords with soldiers living at different outposts, Gol with over fifty outposts in Hallingdal, Ørlandet at the Trondheim fjord with seventy outposts, Finsness in north of Norway etc. It is evident from the answers that some corps were considered outpost corps meaning that the actual corps was not very big and the essence of the work at these corps was “the outpost war.” It seems as if young officers were sent to these outpost corps intentionally, because many of the respondents stories came from their first years as officers, though some worked at outposts for most of their lives as active officers. The bigger corps in the country such as Bergen I<sup>26</sup> had outposts as well, but these were not so central to the corps officers’ work, as was the case in the smaller corps or outpost corps.

There are two aspects of the program that were repeated more or less in all of the responses: Visiting people from door to door with *Krigsropet* and perhaps *Den unge Soldat*<sup>27</sup> and evangelical meetings at night.<sup>28</sup> Some mentioned children’s meetings in the afternoon and some said that the meeting at night had items for children as well. Visiting door to door with *Krigsropet* led to contact with most of the people in the village or area. It also meant coming to people who were ill, grieving, or dying. It seems as if the neighbors would tell the officer about such situations and expect them to visit these houses. Many mentioned the families that hosted them and the small meetings and gatherings in their homes as well as devotions with the family at the breakfast table. Some mentioned the contact they kept with these families over the years, even long after the officer had left the corps and moved somewhere else.

I will repeat my third question: *What value did this work have for the people at the outpost and for the officers doing the work?* For the local people it seemed to be a cultural event with music and songs, a social gathering with coffee, cakes, and fellowship, as well as a religious meeting with testimonies and sermons. It was mentioned that these meetings brought together both religious and secular people, so these meetings served as a mixture of cultural program and religious service. One respondent mentioned that it was seen as a breath of fresh air from the wider world in these smaller communities.

What strikes me in these responses is the focus that the women especially had on the contact with people. They remembered vividly the times when they seemed to make a difference for people in difficult situations by giving pastoral care, and experienced trust, expectation, and gratitude from people. The main focus among many of the respondents seemed to be contact and fellowship with people, even above the cultural/religious impact of the meetings themselves.

On the face of it, people from the villages came for the meetings, but the personal connections and invitations to the meetings were perhaps the greatest service. The difference between the officers' missional intentions and the public's seeking experience, may ultimately meet in the same place: the personal relationships that made people want to come together under one roof.

## Conclusion

Looking at this long period of Salvation Army history and having new insight to the value and extent of it, I am even more amazed by the silence about this work in official documents. I have examined territorial leaders' reports to IHQ<sup>29</sup> and only found statistical information on the number of outposts—apart from a piece of a report in September 1966 from Commissioner Kaare Westergaard. The comments come at the end of a little paragraph on economy for the whole territory:

However, as the economy no longer is dependent upon meetings as was the case previously, the tendency to cancel meetings, cease visiting outposts, discontinue *War Cry* sales etc. is becoming very apparent with the expected consequences for our evangelical work.

For those doing the work, the outpost ministry became too expensive. For those looking at the big picture, the lack of economic necessity was the cause, but here, at least, we find a hint of recognition of the evangelical work that being done.

From the officers' letters, it is clear that the main aims were evangelism and pastoral care. This work was so important to many respondents that it inspired them to work through fatigue while keeping long work hours. The fundraising was often seen as a "welcome byproduct," a trivial necessity, or sometimes as a burden to the real work. The letters naturally only mention the positive experiences, but it must have been hard work—traveling long distances, visiting every house (which surely were not all as welcoming as the old couple who put on their best clothes), arranging meetings that required spending a cold morning getting a school or prayer house heated up,<sup>30</sup> not knowing where they would stay the night,<sup>31</sup> or getting stuck with a load of unsold *War Crys*. In spite of the challenges of the "outpost war," this work stands out as something of high value in the officers' lives as expressed by their own words.

There seems to be quite a gap between the corps officers' own appreciation of "the outpost war" and the one that was present in the leadership.

My own conclusion, based on the officers' need to talk about this special work and the hints people gave that it had not been fully recognized, is that the "outpost war," in spite of its imposing name, was an expression of Salvation Army core values: "to preach the gospel and meet human needs without discrimination." It was not given the credit it deserved as an undertaking of great significance in the Salvation Army's work, at least publicly. The special "outpost corps" were small corps with few soldiers and they were, from what I have gathered, mostly used as training corps for young officers. Many officers were sent there straight from Training College as a first appointment. The traditional way of showing appreciation for an officer's work has been to move them to a bigger corps, or greater responsibilities very often administrative positions.

This structure of hierarchy within the organization might have blinded it from recognizing the vast importance<sup>32</sup> of the "outpost war." Perhaps this disconnect explains the "silence" in official documents,<sup>33</sup> but as our only knowledge is based on these few accounts, there may be other reasons to which I too am blind.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> The figures from these years, 1910, 1920, 1930 etc, were chosen to see the development long term apart from the pioneering period. I got all the information from Lt. Colonel John Bjartveit who in his retirement is in charge of the Salvation Army archives.
- <sup>2</sup> The work she told about concerned tours to the district on her bike visiting small villages, selling *War Cry*, collecting money for the Army's work, having public meetings at night, staying in people's homes, and sharing devotions and pastoral care with the members of the household. These tours would often be from Monday to Friday, with time at home to lead meetings and services at the corps during the weekend. This work was especially prominent before World War II and just after. She had fond memories of the many contacts she made with people during these years.
- <sup>3</sup> This expression has been and is still used for this particular work especially by officers.
- <sup>4</sup> The rescue schooner, Catherine Booth, operated from 1900–1930 along the coastline of northern Norway following the fishing fleet at the fishing seasons at Lofoten and Vest Finmark in order to help rescue fishing boats and fishermen in hard weather. The crew were officers and soldiers who attended meetings and devotions held at different places along the coastline.
- <sup>5</sup> The booklet contained rather substantial financial statements and a small report of the work during the year.
- <sup>6</sup> Weekly paper published since 1888 from the Salvation Army. I chose to look into the papers every tenth year, from 1890 to 2000.
- <sup>7</sup> Children's Paper, *The Young Soldier* published during a number of years weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly from the Salvation Army. I chose to look through papers for the years 1930, 1940 and 1950
- <sup>8</sup> Territorial Commander in Norway 1972–75
- <sup>9</sup> The questionnaire was called "A questionnaire concerning officer service". There were nine questions all together. The first seven were yes/no questions or just to underline the possibilities:
  - 1) Man/woman
  - 2) How long have you been an officer?
  - 3) Age
  - 4) How did you meet the SA? (followed by a number of suggestions closing with "something else")
  - 5) Are you first generation Salvationist?

- 6) Are you a child of officers/soldiers?
- 7) How many generations have your family been in the Salvation Army?
- 8) How did you experience the calling to officership?
- 9) What sort of experiences have you had with outpost work?
  - A) Was it part of your childhood?
  - B) Have you as an officer had responsibility for outpost work?

People were asked under A) to tell about their experiences of meetings, devotions, of the officers who came, which impression they made on the person and his/her family. What sort of role did the officer have for the people at the outpost? Did they consider the officer as spiritual adviser, evangelist, fundraiser, "minister," musician/entertainer? Was the officer somebody people trusted or looked forward to get a visit from? Did it matter if it was a man or woman in the role they had and the expectations that was there? Did you or your family consider yourselves as belonging to the Salvation Army? Under B) People were asked to tell about experiences at the outposts. What sort of program? Meetings for children/youth/adults? Conversations and pastoral care? Fundraising for the Salvation Army's work? The homes that showed hospitality during visits and the contacts with the members of the family or household. Were soldiers enrolled? What sort of value did you consider the outposts gave to your own ministry? (The translation into English is mine)

<sup>10</sup> The questionnaire was sent out in January 2009 with a deadline at the end of February. Together with the questionnaire I had written a letter explaining my interest in the outpost work.

<sup>11</sup> At the time the questionnaires were sent out I was in the territorial leadership and number of the officers might have felt compelled to answer. All questionnaires were anonymous and I had enclosed a stamped addressed envelope with my name on. Nobody else saw the answers and I did not have a clue who were behind the answers apart from the few signing the letter with their name.

<sup>12</sup> *Konfirmasjon og erindring*, Universitetet i Oslo 1993

<sup>13</sup> *Interpreting Women's Lives*, Personal Narrative Group 1989: 261

<sup>14</sup> In Oral History the researches use interviews and dialogues, collecting people's memoirs or have focus on stories that have been passed over from one generation to another, a recollection of tradition. Mostly this material is documented by being taped during the interview.

<sup>15</sup> Paul Thompson 1982: *The Voice of the Past*, Oral History. Oxford University Press p. 100-103

<sup>16</sup> Thompson p. 102 -103

<sup>17</sup> 1 is 80-90 years old, 4 are 70-80 years old, 1 is 60-70 years old, 1 is 40-50 years old

<sup>18</sup> Thompson p. 113

<sup>19</sup> Between 60 and 70

- <sup>20</sup> I cannot give credit to her wonderful New Norwegian language, so it is a summary and not a direct translation.
- <sup>21</sup> From different questionnaires I can see that young people from the outposts sought out the Salvation Army when they moved to town for further education or for visits.
- <sup>22</sup> Meetings are the Salvation Army expression for worship. There is a tradition in the Salvation Army in Norway for a special weekly meeting, called “fester.” It is a religious meeting with songs, sermon, witnessing, but people are sitting at coffee tables and there will be a raffle to raise funds. There is no good English word for that concept. There is a distinction in the reports between meetings and “fester.”
- <sup>23</sup> This might have stopped at the same time as the private car became general commodity, even for officers
- <sup>24</sup> The local support from the prayer house might have lessened so they needed money for running costs
- <sup>25</sup> The essence of the officer’s covenant and commissioning is to preach the gospel and to meet human need, “to feed the hungry, to clothe the naked and to love the unlovable”.
- <sup>26</sup> There are presently three corps in Bergen, historically Bergen 1 used to be the bigger corps there.
- <sup>27</sup> *Den unge Soldat* was not published as regularly as *Krigsropet* and therefore not as regular a feature.
- <sup>28</sup> It might include what I explained as “fester,” these with coffee and raffles, but I doubt that this was on regular base as they are mentioned separate from the meetings.
- <sup>29</sup> International Headquarter in London, which has the central administration of the global Salvation Army. The territorial leaders have to write a rather substantial annual report concerning the work in the territory. I have looked through the reports from 1950 to 1968.
- <sup>30</sup> I have heard stories from the officers about ice cold building that had to be heated
- <sup>31</sup> One of the letters have a longer story about this, of course with a happy ending, another stated short answers with points like a diary simply stating “Slept in the hall on a bench.”
- <sup>32</sup> This is my interpretation based on the letters with small remarks of the joy of meeting people 30 - 40 years later telling them how much a special meetings or visitation in their home had meant for them and their families.
- <sup>33</sup> There have efforts to gather material on the importance of the outposts by Commissioner Einar Madsen, Territorial Commander from 1985 – 88. According to his son he made statistics on many subjects, among these a detailed statistic on recruitment of officers with a focus on where they originated from. This statistical material, I am told, showed that a very high percentage came from the outposts. Unfortunately, these statistics have disappeared.







# Benedictus: Paul’s Parting Words on Ministry

*Lyell Rader*

When Brigadier Clifton Siple lay dying, two years ago now, he whispered to an officer at his bedside, “Lord, do it again!” There were, whelming in his frail heart, I think, memories of halcyon years, simpler times of lined Mercy Seats and burgeoning rolls, a church-centric culture, time and space for patient, pervasive pastoral care—and withal, grace, mercy, and peace. It was a benediction from a generation passing away to us who serve under conditions and in landscapes he could not imagine. But the blessing, we take.

So it was for Paul in his second epistle to Timothy. These are the last words we have from his pen and they are swaddled in benediction (1:2; 4:22). They are revelatory of two generations, two saints. They would surely have been puzzled by the veneration the Church has given them as St. Paul and St. Timothy for they knew themselves ordinary men—differently gifted, differently flawed, differently holy.

We look to these scriptures to help us in this respite hour to re-vision and renew the work that we do.

First, we consider the core of these two men, the core of our ministry. There is a provocative line in the poet George MacDonald:

We make, but thou art the creating core./ Whatever thing I  
dream, invent, or feel,/ Thou art the heart of it, the atmo-  
sphere./ Thou art inside all love man ever bore....<sup>1</sup>

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

The core is the same across generations. What God did in Paul, He will do in us. That relationship is the core of ministry. But note, it is a creating core, fitted to serve uniquely “the present age.” C.S. Lewis once said that the one prayer God never answers is “Encore!”

Observe then (as though for the first time) the veteran and the novice.

## THE VETERAN PAUL

### Going Long

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life that is in Christ Jesus.... For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher... (2 Timothy 1:1, 11. All scripture is from the NRSV unless otherwise indicated).

*Paulos apostolos.* Paul was not the name his mother gave him. It was his missionary name. Twinned with the name is the calling. He was authorized and sent by the will of God. In the great Caravaggio painting, the young rabbi is upended from his horse, thrown backward, stunned, to the ground, his arms outstretched, his eyes closed as if dazzled by the light of Christ. The poet writes:

Who that one moment has the least descried Him,/ Dimly  
and faintly, hidden and afar,/ Doth not despise all excellence  
beside Him,/ Pleasures and powers that are not and that are--/  
Ay, amid all men bare himself thereafter/ Smit with a solemn  
and a sweet surprise,/ Dumb to their scorn and turning on their  
laughter/ Only the dominance of earnest eyes?<sup>2</sup>

It was a story Paul could not contain (Acts 9:1-19a; 22:1-16; 26:9-19). His conversion was a commission—by the will of God, for the sake of the promise of life, in an age Tacitus called “one delirium of hate and terror.”<sup>3</sup> Thus he became an apostle, a herald and a teacher.

As he writes, Paul has been in custody for some ten years. Nero is on the throne. The preliminary hearing has gone badly. The end is imminent. Paul is in his sixties, ancient for that time. He is wasted and weak. His eyes are bad. And we may assume, he is in chronic pain. For these epistles, he is leaning heavily on Luke as the language and style suggest. He will die shortly, beheaded at the third milepost on the Ostian Way and buried in a pagan burial ground at a swamp outside the city. A church will be raised there called St. Paul Outside the Walls.

“The essential thing in heaven and earth,” wrote Friedrich Nietzsche, “is... that there should be long obedience in the same direction.”<sup>4</sup> Paul knew.

### **Gracing pain**

For this gospel I was appointed a herald and an apostle and a teacher, and for this reason I suffer as I do. But I am not ashamed.... I suffer hardship even to the point of being chained like a criminal. But the word of God is not chained (2 Timothy 1:11; 2:9).

The apostle was not above complaint. To Corinth, he cataloged hardships like medals: the physical battering, the nameless privations (1 Corinthians 11:24-29), the tormenting illnesses (2 Corinthians 12:7b-10), the relentless anxiety (2 Corinthians 11:28). And shame—a condition of humiliating disgrace or disrepute.

Such is the lot of a prisoner. Wrote Dietrich Bonhoeffer:

Who am I? They often tell me,/ I step out from my cell,/ composed, contented and sure,/ like a lord from his manor....

Am I really what others tell me?/ Or am I only what I myself know of me?/ Troubled, homesick, ill, like a bird in a cage,/ gasping for breath, as though one strangled me,/ hungering for colors, for flowers, for songs of birds,/ thirsting for kind words, for human company,/. Quivering with anger at despotism and petty insults,/ anxiously waiting for great events,/ helplessly worried about friends far away,/ empty and tired

and praying, of thinking, of working,/ exhausted and ready to bid farewell to it all.

Who am I? This or the other?/ Am I then, this today and the other tomorrow?/ Am I both at the same time? ... Lonely questions mock me./ Who I really am, you know me, I am thine, O God!<sup>5</sup>

Somehow in weakness, Paul magnified grace (2 Corinthians 12:9).

### **Braving Adversity**

You are aware that all who are in Asia have turned away from me, including Phygelus and Hermogenes. May the Lord grant mercy to the household of Onesiphorus, because he often refreshed me and was not ashamed of my chains; when he arrived in Rome he eagerly searched for me and found me—may the Lord grant that he will find mercy from the Lord on that day! (2 Timothy 1:15-16).

At my first defense no one came to my support, but all deserted me. May it not be counted against them! But the Lord stood by me and gave me strength... (2 Timothy 4:16-17).

Let us remember that Paul had little to show for his efforts. His congregations were small, scattered, and embattled. No gain was irreversible. Among his detractors, his motives were questioned, his efforts undermined, his talents scorned. But he learned to frame his adversaries and deserters in mercy.

We know nothing else of Phygelus and Hermogenes. At the mention of Onesiphorus, there is a break in the Greek which suggests a catch of emotion in Paul's throat as he dictated. It appears that Onesiphorus sacrificed his life for his friendship with Paul.

Bramwell Booth wrote of his father:

He was singularly reticent about his own inner life. He was totally innocent of "gush." Yet who that knew him could doubt

the reality of his spiritual experience? It sustained him amid persecutions, slanders, and conflicts, and under the burdens of a world of cares such as few men have been called to endure. It did more than sustain him in the stoic sense; it kept his spirit sweet.

When I have gone to him, perhaps with some infamous newspaper attack, and in my indignation have said, "This is really more than we can stand," he has replied, "Bramwell, fifty years hence it will matter very little indeed how these people treated us; it will matter a great deal how we dealt with the work of God."

He would not accuse those who accused him. He would not impugn the motives or imply evil. He could speak out when duty demanded. But he did not wish to speak. He would never take unfair advantage in argument or treat personalities as reasons. He rather strove to account for the mistakes of his opponents, and to hope all things. It was his rule not to retaliate, scarcely to explain, and it was perfectly delightful to see how many cursings and railings turned out in the end to be blessings.<sup>6</sup>

There is an unusual stress on mercy in these final letters. "Storms," wrote George Herbert, "are the triumph of His art."<sup>7</sup>

### **Finishing Well**

I am already being poured out as a libation, and the time of my departure has come. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. From now on there is reserved for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, will give me on that day... (2 Timothy 4:6-8).

Paul is focused on the end. The great ones among us teach us how to live and how to die. His death would be a libation, like the cup of wine poured out to the gods at the end of every Roman meal. It would be the loosening of moorings and a setting out into the deeps of God. It would be a victory in the arena, a race won, a faith held intact.

Erik Leidzen, the beloved Salvationist musician, came to Territorial Headquarters on a wintry day in the early 1960s. He set a parcel on the desk of then Major Richard Holz, the Music Secretary. “There it is,” he said, “I have finished everything the Lord gave me to do.” Within days he went to Glory. A complete man. Faith intact.

### ...AND THE NOVICE TIMOTHY

To Timothy, my beloved child: Grace, mercy, and peace from  
God the Father and Christ Jesus our Lord (2 Timothy 1:2).

Beloved. “I have no one like him...” Paul wrote to the Philippian congregation. “Timothy’s worth you know, how like a son with a father he has served with me in the work of the gospel” (Philippians 2:20-22). Timothy was bi-cultural, a Jewish mother and grandmother, a pagan father. In ministry, he was a switch-hitter, comfortable and fluent in two worlds. The bond was close. As far as we know, Paul had no family connections.

Yes, without cheer of sister or of daughter,/ Yes, without stay  
of father or of son,/ Lone on the land and homeless on the  
water/ Pass I in patience till the work be done.

Yet not in solitude if Christ anear me/ Waketh Him workers  
for the great employ,/ Oh not in solitude, if souls that hear me/  
Catch from my joyaunce the surprise of joy.<sup>8</sup>

Paul begins with a blessing. There is grace, a word which means beauty and favor, kindness and help.

Frederick Buechner writes:

The grace of God means something like: Here is your life. You might never have been, but you are because the party wouldn’t have been complete without you. Here is the world. Beautiful and terrible things will happen. Don’t be afraid. I am with you.<sup>9</sup>

And there is mercy, the leal-love that lasts forever (Psalm 136). And there is peace, comprehensive well-being.

### **Affirming the Past**

I am grateful to God—whom I worship with a clear conscience, as my ancestors did—when I remember you constantly in my prayers night and day. Recalling your tears, I long to see you so that I may be filled with joy. I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that lived first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, lives in you (2 Timothy 1:3-5).

Timothy must embrace his past. “When you truly possess all you have been and done,” wrote Florida Scott Maxwell, “you are fierce with reality.”<sup>10</sup> Paul validates ancestry, Timothy’s and his own (Acts 24:14-15; 26:6,22). He remembers backwater Lystra (Acts 14:8-20), a superstitious, inhospitable place, and Timothy’s uneasy home.

“You’ve been a good apprentice to me,” Paul writes, “a part of my teaching, my manner of life, direction, faith, steadiness, love, patience, troubles, sufferings—suffering along with me in all the grief I had to put up with in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra. And you also well know that God rescued me!” (2 Timothy 3:10-11, Message).

He has on his prayer list Lois and Eunice, Timothy’s Jewish grandmother and mother. Nor does he forget the father, who is yet to come to faith. It was at the father’s behest, probably, that Timothy was not circumcised, lest he be the object of ridicule in the gymnasium and bring dishonor on the family. But the women saw to it that Timothy was trained in the scriptures.

In this grab-bag of circumstance, the Lord had set a living faith.

### **Quelling the Fear**

God did not give us a spirit of cowardice . . . . 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. . . (2 Timothy 1:7-8).

The language is harsh. It would seem that Timothy struggled with fear (KJV), timidity (NIV), shyness (Message). The Greek means something close to cowardice (NRSV), a fear that renders one unfit to fight. Ben Witherington writes:

We get the sense that Timothy himself has become a problem. He needs jump-starting, and there is a warning about cowardice and shame.... One gets the clear sense that Timothy is in over his head. This letter shatters the illusion of the inexorable progress of the Pauline mission and makes clear that there were many difficulties, even at the end of Paul's life, when one would have hoped that the congregations established earlier would have been mostly stable.<sup>11</sup>

There are earlier clues to Timothy's temperament. When he sent Timothy to Corinth, a quarrelsome, high octane church, Paul wrote to ease the way: "If Timothy shows up, take good care of him. Make him feel completely at home among you. He works so hard for the Master.... Don't let anyone disparage him. After a while send him on to me with your blessing (1 Corinthians 16:10-11, Message; see also 1 Timothy 4:12).

Paul knew Timothy would have to come to terms with himself. "It is no trouble to preach," wrote Bishop Quayle, "but a vast trouble to construct a preacher."<sup>12</sup>

### **Grasping the Grace**

God did not give us a spirit of cowardice but rather a spirit of power and of love and of self-discipline.... You then, my child, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.... Share in suffering like a good soldier of Christ Jesus, (2 Timothy 1:7; 2:1,3).

There is power to cope, power enough to do the needful—not the power of dominance, but the power of accompaniment.

There is love. "Nothing less will keep me tender/ Nothing less will keep me true;" wrote General Albert Orsborn, "Nothing less will keep the fragrance/ And the bloom on all I do!"<sup>13</sup>

And there is self-control, moderation, saintly sanity.



These are within reach. Timothy would never have the imperious persona of Paul. The record we have of Timothy is almost entirely as a helper. Erik Leidzen would often say, "Wanted! Hearts for second parts." For Timothy it became an art form. Eventually, he came with quiet grace to a bishopric in Ephesus and died there for Jesus' sake.

He represents the hidden stalwarts of the Army like one Brigadier I know well. One day the young Divisional Youth Secretary came to his corps for an inspection. It was the DYS's first appointment on headquarters. He was impeccably uniformed and, perhaps, a bit self-important. When he arrived at the given hour, he was informed that the Brigadier was not available. "Where is he?" He asked. "In the shower" came the response and then, improbably, "You can go see him if you want." And so he did and found the Brigadier at work scrubbing down a one-legged transient with the severe mercy of a practiced hand. Timothy

### Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> George MacDonald, *Diary of an Old Soul*, 1994:31.
- <sup>2</sup> F.W.H. Myers, *Saint Paul*
- <sup>3</sup> In William Barclay, *Daily Study Bible: Timothy, Titus, Philemon*, 1956:23.
- <sup>4</sup> In Eugene Peterson, *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction: Discipleship in an Instant Society*, 1980:9.
- <sup>5</sup> Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Voices in the Night*, 1999:45-46.
- <sup>6</sup> Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories*, 1925:20.
- <sup>7</sup> George Herbert, *The Country Parson, The Temple*, 1981:276.
- <sup>8</sup> F.W.H. Myers, *Saint Paul*.
- <sup>9</sup> *Wishful Thinking: A Seeker's ABC*, 1973:39.
- <sup>10</sup> In Parker Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak: Listening for the Voice of Vocation*, 2000:70.
- <sup>11</sup> Ben Witherington III, *Letters and Homilies for Hellenized Christians*, vol. 1, 2006:302.
- <sup>12</sup> In James S. Stewart, *Heralds of God*, 1946:190.
- <sup>13</sup> *The Salvation Army Song Book*, 1987:591.



# Founders and Foundations: The Legacy of the Booths

*Roger J. Green*

William and Catherine Booth were remarkable people. We are witnesses to the legacy that they left. And in our appreciation for William and Catherine, we see them now for who they really were. We are not skeptical about them—for all their faults they were not schemers or plotters; they did not deceive in order to make themselves look good. On the other hand, they were not stained-glass-window saints. They were real people with faults—just like you and me, redeemed sinners whom God used in a mighty way because they gave themselves up to God (with all their imperfections) for Him to use.

This rich legacy shines like a diamond with many facets, but three are prominent. First, the Booths developed an intentional community—intentional in its doctrines, its mission, and even in its appearance. Their Army was founded not on the personal authority of the Booths, but on the authority of the Scriptures that bore witness to the glorious message that “The Word became flesh” (John 1:14) in the person of Jesus Christ. N. T. Wright has reminded us in his article entitled “How Can the Bible Be Authoritative?” (*Vox Evangelica* 21, 1991, p. 24) that “Scripture is the book that assures us that we are the people of God when, again and again, we are tempted to doubt. Scripture is the covenant book. . . through which the Spirit assures us that we are his people and through which he sends us out into the world to tell the Jesus story. . . .” I think that the Booths would resonate with that kind of language. They did not get sidetracked with all kinds of doctrines *about* the Bible, but recognized that the authority of Scripture came from God because those Scripture were inspired by God Himself and no other.

The doctrines that flowed from this belief came to life in the Army's preaching and ministry, often to the least among them. And part of the reason for the vitality of the movement was the preaching of women as well as men. The Booths were committed not only to the fact but to the reality of the Pentecost experience of the New Testament Church and lived out the promise that "Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy," a teaching that was reiterated in the witness of the New Testament—see for example Galatians 3:28: "In Christ there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female."

It was at least possible that this was one of the factors that prevented the merger with the Church of England in 1882-1883, and I have tried to make this case in an article to be published in the November issue of the journal entitled *Faith and History* and entitled "The Salvation Army and the Anglican Church, 1882-1883." [Editors' Note: the article was published with that title in *Fides et Historia*, Volume 47, No. 2 (Summer/Fall, 2015), pp. 19-32]. But of course other factors also played an important role in that final decision, including the place of William Booth should the merger take place, our view of the sacraments, and our still rather unformed (and sometimes raucous) worship experiences.

But the Booths had an intuitive Protestant sense of doctrines—that doctrines are not written in stone but are expressions of the needs of every generation and of God's authority as the inspiration for the Scriptures speak the doctrinal word clearly and unimpeded. That is why, as good Protestants, they moved rather easily from seven doctrines to ten doctrines to eleven doctrines, as there was need.

Central to the theological life of the Army is the doctrine of holiness of heart and life. This biblical and Wesleyan emphasis on the holiness of the individual as well as the community of the faithful was a legacy from the Booths that witnessed not only to their theological loyalties, but to their vision for the central doctrine of the Scriptures culminating in Jesus' command in the Sermon on the Mount to "Be perfect as God is perfect" (Matthew 5:48). Have the same view, the same direction, and the same goal as God does. Love what God loves and hate what God hates. There is no evidence that this vision for holiness came late to the Booths. Both had been reared in the Wesleyan holiness tradition, and Booth studied with William Cooke, one of the most respected Methodist teachers of his time. A reading of the theology of Cooke, which he developed from his lectures, demonstrates this clearly.

And the power of that redemptive life was lived out in simplicity, demonstrated most evidently in the wearing of the Army uniform as a sign that all of life was sacramental, a visible sign of God's invisible grace

This legacy of intentionality is vital today. Denying the intentionality of the community brings certain death in a pluralistic society. In our world, the only groups that will survive are those that are absolutely sure and committed to their doctrines, mission, and identity. Chris Smith (whom I am proud to claim as a graduate of Gordon College, and who now teaches at Notre Dame and is one of the leading scholars in the world in the discipline of sociology) makes this point carefully and poignantly in his book entitled *American Evangelicalism: Embattled and Thriving*. Don't be misled by that title. The book is an analysis of the place of religion in the broader culture today. And Smith states that "We might hypothesize that religious groups that are more capable of constructing distinct identity boundaries vis-à-vis outgroups will produce more satisfying morally orienting collective identities and will, as a consequence, grow in size and strength. By contrast, religious groups that have difficulty constructing identity distinction in a pluralistic environment will grow relatively weaker." (p. 97). The Booths knew this intuitively, although the pluralism in which we now minister would have been foreign to them. As would our cultural moment in which the imperial autonomous self, or the globalization of indifference, or the world of moralistic therapeutic Deism in which we live identify the broader culture, especially Western culture. Taking our community life seriously, and taking the agenda of our community life seriously is being faithful to the biblical legacy left to us by William and Catherine.

Second, there was an intellectual component to the Army. Of course the Booths were not trained at Oxford, but here I mean an appreciation for and intuitive sense of the life of the mind (especially witnessed in the life and ministry of Catherine), and a remarkable productivity of writing—witness *The War Cry*, *All the World*, *The Conqueror*, *The Young Soldier*, *The Deliverer*, *The Field Officer*—the list is long, and even longer when we consider the books published by the Founders and those around them.

We remind ourselves that the leaders of the Army in those early days usually did not come from Whitechapel Road. The Army made its appeal to the likes of George Scott Railton, who, until joining The Christian Mission, was on his way to a ministry among the Wesleyans; or Samuel Logan Brengle, who was

academically trained in both college and seminary before joining the Army; or Frank Smith, later to become a Member of Parliament; or the Swift sisters, both Vassar graduates. Susie Swift herself bears ample testimony to the intellectual appeal that the Army made to her, and was ever appreciative. On the fourth page of some brief autobiographical notes written by Susie Swift she recorded the following:

In Scotland, in 1884, I met The Salvation Army. I have told so often from pulpit and platform what that meeting then meant to me, that I do not think I need repeat it here. To those who find it hard to understand how an Episcopalian of “High” tastes could work with the Army, I answer that the Army taught in those days that it was “not a church but a mission” and placed no obstacle in the way of my receiving the “sacraments” of my own or any other denomination. To those who do not see how an educated person can work with the Salvationists, I simply say that they do not know the Army’s leaders, or the freedom of thought and mental activity permitted to those officers who show that they can make a wise use of liberty. Into the London headquarters, to which my sister and I were attached, are drawn the most intelligent organizers whom the “General” can select from all lands. I used to say at first that education must destroy originality, so marvelous were the intellects around me and so manifestly untrained in pedagogic ways. Many highly educated men and women surround the leaders—men and women for the most part like my old self—all untaught in history and metaphysics, but clever linguists, fair scientists, brilliant popular writers, arguing backward from the rapid results of Salvationism to causes that are far enough afield, wonderfully skilled in “pulling the cords of Adam” to advantage. For twelve years I worked with them. No woman living knows the Salvation Army better than I do. If I shudder today in remembering much that I saw and knew and aided in, it is not because the Army is worse than other Protestant organizations. I believe it is better. But it is less

bound by traditions handed down from Catholic days and in the main wholesome; and it is an absolutely consistent form of Protestantism.

Third, there was clarity of purpose for their Army. All that was said and done was a sign of service to the glorious Kingdom of God established by Christ whose first sermon gave the clarion call that “The Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel” (Mark 1:15). There were two aspects to that purpose. First, they had a vision of where history was going. The Booths were postmillennialists, sharing that vision with many Protestants of the nineteenth century. In their day, it was not unusual for Christians to believe that they would win the world for Jesus and thus usher in the glorious Kingdom of God in all its fullness. The Booths shared that vision. That vision is largely responsible for the growth of the Army, and you are aware of that growth so it does not need to be repeated here, simply to say that it was notable.

However, that view of history was unsustainable in the twentieth century, a century that began with the unimaginable First World War. That war was clear demonstration that the world was a brutal world, and that evil surrounded the Church. The twentieth century continued to bear witness to sin, godlessness and inhumanity. And the Booths were wise in not putting some kind of millennial doctrines into our stated doctrines.

Nevertheless, both the hope and the blessed assurance of the ultimate triumph of the Kingdom of God have never left the Army. The Army moves forward in difficult times and circumstances not on its own strength, but with the declaration that God raised up the Army, God has sustained the Army, and the future of its message, mission, and ministry are all secure as long as the Army remains faithful to the Christ whom it serves. The Army moves into the future, following God into His future, with great hope in the authority of God for its work. And the Army still believes, as did the Booths, that we are on the march toward the new heaven and the new earth that will be inaugurated with the Second Advent of Christ. This holy optimism bears witness to the legacy of William and Catherine Booth.

The other aspect to that clarity of purpose was this—the preaching of the gospel as well as the giving of a cup of cold water bore witness to that Kingdom, and the Army in its 150<sup>th</sup> year still proclaims that gospel in word and in deed.

While initially The Christian Mission Preaching Stations served the people who lived near the Stations as there was need, The Salvation Army began to live out loving God and neighbor (Matthew 22:34-40) in several places around the world. William Booth finally organized this growing expression of the Kingdom, first in an article to his followers entitled “Salvation for Both Worlds,” and second in his now famous book entitled *In Darkest England and the Way Out*.

Since that time, the Army has been committed to serving the Kingdom by loving our neighbors, especially the poor among us. When Salvation Army officers (ministers) are ordained and commissioned to preach and live out the gospel, they promise “to care for the poor, feed the hungry, clothe the naked, love the unlovable, and befriend those who have no friends.” Faithfulness to taking the gospel to the world, and especially to the poor of this world, continues the legacy of the Booths.

The Salvation Army today is grateful indeed for its Founders, but is cautious that they be seen for the human beings that they were. Nevertheless, at the same time, we recognize that both William and Catherine Booth gave themselves to God for the holy purpose of proclaiming His redeeming message to the whole world for the sake of the Kingdom of God. And so, perhaps the greatest legacy of the Booths, after all is said and done, is their lives of perfect loyalty to the God who redeemed them and called them to bring an Army of salvation into a world in need of redemption.







# Book Notes

*Reviewed by Roger J. Green*

Brooks, David. ***The Road to Character***. New York, NY: Random House, 2015.

The author of this book is best known for being an op-ed columnist for *The New York Times* as well as being a best-selling author. He is concerned in this book with the formation of character and, as one writer has noted “he focuses on the deeper values that should inform our lives.” Chapters such as “Self-Mastery,” “Dignity,” and “Love” give the reader a hint of what is to come, and Brooks’ thoughts combined with his masterly writing keep the reader engaged throughout. In a sense, this book is a treatment of common grace, God’s favor to humanity, as well as a call to humanity to live a life for the good of others rather than for the pleasure of the self.

Tyson, John R. ***The Way of the Wesleys: A Short Introduction***. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014.

Readers may be aware of the scholarship of John Tyson, and especially of his work on John and Charles Wesley. This book is a remarkable introduction to the thinking of the Wesleys, and to the theological groundwork of the Wesleyan tradition, and thereby of The Salvation Army. This is not a work of systematic theology, but of a theology of grace that provides a clear organic and comprehensive vision of the theology of the Wesleys. With his extensive knowledge of Charles Wesley, Tyson organizes each chapter after the first line of one of Wesley’s hymns, connecting theology to the hymnody of Methodism

and demonstrating the wholeness of this theology. For Salvationists interested in their own theological heritage, this resource is invaluable.

Farthing, Peter. *1865: The Year That Made The Salvation Army*. Sydney South, AU: Carpenter Media, 2015.

This is a timely book, published in the year of the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of The Salvation Army. The author looks back on the exciting year of 1865, and skillfully tells the story of the events of that year that providentially brought about the birth of The Christian Mission, which evolved into The Salvation Army in 1878. The author has accomplished the desire he stated in the “Note from the Author” at the beginning of the book: “I need to say that I have tried to tell a story—a true story. I want readers to easily get absorbed in the drama.” Readers do indeed get absorbed in the drama and will be captivated by the events so vividly depicted in this book. *1865: The Year That Made The Salvation Army* brings history to life and gives William and Catherine Booth their rightful place in the history of the Church.

Galli, Mark and Ted Olsen, eds. *131 Christians Everyone Should Know*. Nashville, TN: B & H Publishing Group, 2000.

Here is a text that should be in every person’s library as well as the libraries of Salvation Army training colleges around the world. As is stated in the title, 131 Christians are mentioned in this book, generally with about two pages describing each person. The editors divide up these Christians into thirteen categories, beginning with theologians and ending with martyrs. This is an easily readable guide for these 131 Christians. Knowledge of these men and women is invaluable for study, for research, and for preaching and teaching. As with any book of this kind, every reader could think of people who have been omitted who should have been included, but Salvationists will be pleased that both William and Catherine Booth can be found in this book.

Witherington III, Ben. *The Problem with Evangelical Theology: Testing the Exegetical Foundations of Calvinism*,

***Dispensationalism, Wesleyanism, and Pentecostalism***, Revised and Expanded Edition. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2016.

Here is a critical text reminding Evangelicals of their commitment to the authority of the Scriptures on the one hand, but on the other hand challenging Evangelicals to make sure that their doctrines and beliefs are biblically grounded and not merely popular traditions. This text is a clear reminder of the necessity for theology to find its source in the Bible if that theology intends to reflect the Protestant commitment to *sola scriptura*. *The Problem With Evangelical Theology* is written by one of the most distinguished biblical scholars in the world today. Ben Witherington III brings his scholarship to the service of Evangelicalism with this book, asking some tough questions and pressing Evangelicals of many traditions to measure their theology by the Scriptures.

Dunning, H. Ray. ***Biblical Heights: Mountain-Top Revelations of Christian Holiness for Today's Valleys***. Spring Valley, CA: Aldersgate Press, 2015.

The author of this book does a superb job of bringing the doctrine of Christian holiness into the everyday lives of the people of God. While recognizing the valleys in which Christians find themselves, the author challenges the readers to remember the mountain-tops to which the believer is called. The reminder provides inspiration as the believer participates in God's intended redemptive purpose, but also gives the believer strength for the everyday challenges. Each chapter deals with a mountain in the biblical text, beginning with Mount Ararat and ending with the Mount of Final Vision. The chapters are readable and end with discussion questions. Here is a resource for personal study, for Bible study, or for preaching. In addition, readers should be aware that Aldersgate Press is the publication arm of the Wesleyan Holiness Connection, where many excellent resources can be found. Their website can be found at *HolinessandUnity.org*.



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