cultural form.

Finally, Taylor believes that if we are truly open, the Church has a great deal to learn from the primal vision. "[T]here are many who feel that the spiritual sickness of the West, which reveals itself in the divorce of the sacred from the secular, of the cerebral from the instinctive, and in the loneliness and homelessness of individualism, may be healed through a recovery of the wisdom which Africa has not yet thrown away."[72] He hopes that through God's grace, the world Church will discover a new synthesis between a saving gospel and a total, unbroken unity of society and at last discover how to be in Christ without ceasing to be involved in mankind.

Conclusion

Lesslie Newbigin observes that "it is never enough for the Church simply to be there and to say "Come." There has to be a movement of *kenosis*; one has to be willing to go, to become simply the unrecognized servant of men where they are, in order that *there*, perhaps in quite new forms, the authentic substance of the new life in Christ may take shape and become visible."[73] The Christian's desire and longing, then, must be to enter—sensitively and appreciatively—into the other's world, not first in order to *talk* more effectively about our Lord but in order to *see* what the Lord of that world is like.[74] Like Christ, we go as humble, empathic servants. As human beings, we go recognizing our ignorance and asking for understanding. And, as Walter Freytag reminds us, understanding is a reciprocal experience, "for you do not 'understand' until you have been touched (affected) yourself, until you get a new insight into who you are yourself ... until you have been compelled to interpret your own gospel in entirely new terms."[75]

Rather than an "either/or" philosophy which ruthlessly requires one culture to cede to the other, effective cross-cultural ministry can instead be seen as a meeting of three, in which Christ has drawn together the witness who proclaims Him and the other who does not know His name, so that in their slow discovery of one another, each may discover Him more.[76]

Notes

1. See Donald W. Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters: The Fundamentals of Intercultural Communication*, 4th edition (Englewood, CO: Morton Publishing Co., 1998), pp. 3–17.

2. Pico Iyer, "The Global Village Finally Arrives," *Time* 142,21 (Fall 1993): 86.

3. The Immigration Act of 1965 (which abolished discrimination based on national origin) produced a shift in immigrant origins. Whereas prior to 1965 Europeans constituted the principal source of immigrants, afterwards immigration accelerated from Asia, South America, and the Caribbean Islands, countries whose peoples were excluded under previous laws. In 1960 Europeans represented about 80% of the total number of immigrants to the United States; by 1992, however, the number of European immigrants had dropped to 15%, Asians had increased to 37%, and Latin Americans and people from the Caribbean to 44%. Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, pp. 7–8. Cf. "The Numbers Game," *Time* 142,12 (Fall 1993): 14.

4. Donna M. Gollnick & Phillip C. Chinn, *Multicultural Education in a Pluralistic Society*, 3rd edition (New York: Merrill, 1990), pp. 172–73. Cited in Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, p. 55.

5. See Klopf, pp. 34–35. For example, a broad definition might characterize culture as consisting of the nonbiological parts of human life, such as *artifacts* (the things humans make to enhance their lives), *sociofacts* (practices that humans follow to regulate their lives), and *mentifacts* (the cognitive and affective elements that influence human thinking). A definition of this vein states that "culture is a set of human-made objective and subjective elements that in the past have increased the probability of survival, resulted in satisfaction for people in an ecological place, and thus become shared among persons who communicate with each other through a common language and lived at the same time."

A more narrow definition confines culture to the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate behavior. A definition along these lines considers culture to be a set of rules for constructing, interpreting, and adapting to the world. It does not consist of things we can see and touch, but rather provides a set of rules for getting along in life.

6. Laura Montgomery, "A Manual for Volunteers in the Partners in Mission Program" (unpublished paper), p. 6.

7. See Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, pp. 35–39.

8. Klopf points out that in intercultural encounters—when we are most concerned about the appropriateness of our behavior—we tend to concentrate on the explicit behaviors and ignore the implicit ones. Nevertheless, if we err, the miscues will most likely occur with the implicitly learned behaviors.

9. Moreover, highly ethnocentric groups are more homogeneous, cohesive, and prone to conformity. They learn proper behaviors of the "in-group" (the ones with which they identify) more quickly and address problems with greater vigor and persistence. They typically experience less social disorganization and are more likely to survive threats from external forces. Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, pp. 131–32.

10. As an alternative to ethnocentrism and parochialism, *cultural relativism* advocates the ability to understand other cultures in their own terms, not by our standards. Likewise, the *cultural contingency approach* recognizes that one can reach a final goal or live one's life in many culturally distinct ways, all of which may be equally valid. Ibid., pp. 131, 133.

11. In *Developing Intercultural Awareness*, L. Robert Kohls lists ten cultural truisms or universals, features which all cultures have in common. They are: (1) Human beings create culture; (2) Thousands of years ago, in isolation, groups of people developed their own culture; (3) Each group found a way to solve these ten basic problems—food, shelter, social structure, protection, religion, clothing, family structure, government, arts/crafts, knowledge/science; (4) Different groups developed different solutions to the ten problems; (5) No absolutely "right" ways were found, just ways right for each group; (6) Each group created a culture of its own, not "better" or "worse" than those of the other groups—just different; (7) Each group comes to believe its ways are best—they become ethnocentric; (8) When children are born, they are enculturated, or taught the group's ways; (9) As long as each group remains isolated, no intercultural communication problems arise; (10) Problems occur when persons from one group try to communicate with persons of another group. Cited in Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, p. 49.

12. See Klopf, pp. 40–42. For example, Western culture is considered individualistic: our dominant self pervades our relationships and is part of all our activities. People in the US, for example, typically are interested in their self-image, self-esteem, self-reliance, self-awareness, self-actualization, and self-determination. We can be persuaded to do something if our self-interests are at

stake. In collectivisitic cultures like that of India, on the other hand, the group, not the individual member's self, is the vital entity. An individual's personal goals overlap with those of the group and if they do not coincide, the group's goals take precedence over personal goals. The group's image, esteem, and achievement are primary.

13. Montgomery, "Manual," p. 2.

14. See Morris A. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1982), pp. 11–16.

15. What follows is a summary of "The High Road," Chapter Two in Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, pp. 17–24. For a more detailed discussion, see also Donald McGavran, *The Clash Between Christianity and Cultures* (Washington D.C.: Canon Press, 1974), pp. 51–81.

16. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 20.

17. Moreover, a low view is also ultimately self-defeating, for it leads to idolatry of a particular culture, a sure road to cultural decay: "It is a humanistic superstition to believe that the man to whom [his own] culture is everything is the true bearer of culture. The opposite is true. Culture necessarily degenerates where it is made God." Emil Brunner, *Christianity and Civilization*, vol. 1 (London: Nisbet, 1948), p. 158. Quoted in Inch, p. 22.

18. Some of these factors are geography, climate, population density, and the state of technological progress.

19. For example, McGavran points out that in Nagaland, India, at least 95% of the Naga culture came into the Christian faith automatically; out of the thousands of cultural components only about 5% were of any consequence for or affected by the introduction of Christianity. At the time of McGavran's writing (in 1974), more than half of the Nagas had become Christians; by the early 80s, the figure exceeded 80%. This amazing growth is what one hopes for when the local culture is respected and left intact, that is, when there is a high view of culture. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 21.

20. See Inch, pp. 27–28.

21. All biblical citations are from the New International Version.

22. Marvin K. Mayers. *Christianity Confronts Culture: A Strategy for Cross-Cultural Evangelism* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1974), p. 243.

23. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 28.

24. Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other*, trans. Richard Howard (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p. 168.

25. What follows briefly summarizes Inch's key points in Chapter Four, "Paul's Admonition to the Church at Corinth," *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, pp. 35–41.

26. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Ethics* (New York: Macmillan, 1955) p. 129. Quoted in Inch, p. 38.

27. Inch, p. 39.

28. In other words, when we view Scripture we must decide whether the intent of the author is to prescribe practice for all time and all peoples in an absolute, literal way, or whether he establishes a principle that may be fulfilled at one particular time and place and among a particular people, but not necessarily applicable at other times and places and among other peoples.

29. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 41.

30. For a more detailed discussion of these principles, see Montgomery, "Manual," pp. 2–5.

31. John V. Taylor, *The Primal Vision: Christian Presence amid African Religion* (London: SCM Press, 1977), p. 7.

32. Montgomery notes that many missionaries have arrived at their destinations with their sermons and programs already written rather than waiting and listening to the needs, the concerns, and the questions of those they came to serve. As a result, Christianity is often perceived as a "white man's religion," with little relevance to the lives of those outside western culture.

33. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (London: SCM, 1953), p. 179. Quoted in Montgomery, "Manual," p. 4.

34. Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, pp. 105–106.

35. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 73.

36. What follows summarizes Inch's Chapter Eight, "Followers of Isa," *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, pp. 73–80, which is based upon Phil Parshall's *New Paths in Muslim Evangelism: Evangelical Approaches to Contextualization* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1980).

37. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 74.

38. Parshall, quoted in Inch, p. 74.

39. Although Parshall's experience provides an excellent example for cross-cultural ministry, it is important to recognize certain contextual issues that have helped to make his approach more successful. Parshall was working with a particular thread of Islam which is more open, less funda-

mentalist than other branches. Therefore, some have pointed out that while his model is very effective (and we can learn much from it), it cannot be used as a blueprint for all branches of the Muslim faith.

40. See Parshall, *New Paths*, pp. 25–26.

41. Inch, *Doing Theology Across Cultures*, p. 75.

42. John A. Hardon, *Religions of the World*, vol. 2 (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1968), p. 100. Quoted in Inch, p. 76.

43. Inch, p. 76.

44. Parshall, "Evangelizing Muslims: Are There Ways?" *Christianity Today* 23 (5 January 1979): 31. Quoted in Inch, p. 80.

45. Inch, p. 79.

46. Ibid., p. 79. For Inch, this response is not completely satisfactory, although he admits that alternatives do not readily come to mind: "Perhaps this is simply another instance of the tension we must live with in affirming high views of both the Bible and culture. If so, while the traditional Christian must take care to maintain a high view of culture, the innovative Christian (as understood by Parshall) must take care not to lose his high view of Scripture."

47. Ibid., p. 77.

48. Taylor realizes that some may question his speaking of African religion in the singular, and concedes that there is not one homogeneous system of belief throughout the entire continent. Nevertheless, he affirms that anyone who has studied extensively the ethnology of various parts of Africa will be struck not only by the remarkable number of features which are common throughout, but by the "emergence of a basic world–view which fundamentally is everywhere the same." See Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, pp. 18–21, for a more detailed discussion of his defense of this position.

Additionally, Taylor uses the word "primal" when speaking of this African traditional religion or vision, "in recognition of the fact that so many features of African religion occur elsewhere in the globe and in the history of human belief that we may reasonably claim that we are dealing with the universal, basic elements of man's understanding of God and the world." (He rejects the term "primitive" because in most contexts it connotes a sense of backwardness.) Ibid., p. 18.

49. Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, pp. 11–12.

50. Ibid., p. 12.

51. Ibid., p. 12,14. Taylor notes that for forty years the advance of the Christian Church in tropical Africa has depended primarily on her virtual monopoly of Western education. Thus, in many tribes the word used to mean *Christian worship* means simply "to read," and believers are the same as literates. Today, however, with secular governments taking that monopoly away, what appeared to be Christianity's greatest strength in Africa ironically threatens to prove its heaviest liability.

52. Ibid., p. 13.

53. Ibid., pp. 13–14. A telling example of the latter emerged during the preliminary planning of the first All Africa Churches' Conference, held at Ibadan in 1958: "British and American 'experts' had agreed that this was to be Africa's conference run in Africa's way. But when it appeared that the African leaders intended to have no agenda but to allow the findings to emerge from free, informal discussion, the experts felt constrained to take a hand, and once again Western methods prevailed!"

54. Ibid., p. 14.

55. Ibid., p. 15.

56. Ibid., pp. 20–21. Recall that one's worldview specifies the relationship of humankind to the universe, and that the effects of a culture's worldview usually are subtle, spreading throughout the culture and permeating every aspect of it. One's worldview affects attitudes, values, beliefs, and it is deeply buried in each person's subconscious mind, so that most people take their worldview (including their religious beliefs) for granted. Klopf, *Intercultural Encounters*, p. 119. Thus, Dr. Michael Gelfand says of the African of Mashonaland, "He can believe in his own religion without necessarily practicing it, and at the same time be a practicing Christian." Michael Gelfand, *Shona Ritual* (Cape Town: Juta, 1959), p. 12. Quoted in Taylor, p. 20.

57. Taylor, p. 16.

58. See Taylor, pp. 64–74. "[F]undamentally all things share the same nature and the same interaction one upon another—rocks and forest trees, beasts and serpents, the power of wind and waves upon a ship, the power of a drum over a dancer's body ... No distinction can be made between sacred and secular, between natural and supernatural, for Nature, Man and the Unseen are inseparably involved in one another in a total community." Ibid., p. 64.

59. Ibid., p. 37. The "different "relatedness" of the self, which in the West we speak of as faculties or compartments of the mind, are pictured in Africa as separate entities rather loosely held

together, each having a different source and a different function. For a more detailed discussion of this concept, see Taylor, pp. 35–58.

60. Additionally, the African self is not limited to "souls": a man's *shadow* is an extension of his self (its intensity or faintness may disclose the condition of his power–force); his *name* is also a most sensitive and powerful extension, like a limb of the self; and *possessions* may also be regarded as imbued with the selfhood of their owner (thus an adolescent boy has been known to weep with shame when someone older and stronger gave his empty garments a beating).

61. For Taylor, perhaps a hint of what death of this African self must mean can be found in the words of Dietrich Bonhoeffer: "Encounter with Jesus Christ. Experience that here we have a reversal of all human being, in the fact that Jesus exists only for other people...not in the Greek divine human form of 'man in himself', but 'the man for others!'" Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Letters and Papers from Prison* (London: SCM Press, 1953), p. 179. Quoted in Taylor, p. 58.

Taylor believes that Western Christianity has much to learn from the African:

Perhaps there are few things more important for the Western Christian in Africa, or for that matter, for the African Christian as well, than to enter into this vision of selfhood and to appreciate its validity. For the Gospel is for men as they are and as they think they are, and this is the self that is potentially the New Man in Christ. What has the Christian, present in such a world, to share or to learn about the self? He believes, to quote Dr. J.H. Oldham, that "the isolated individual self is an abstraction. We become persons only in and through our relations with other persons. The individual self has no independent existence which gives it the power to enter into relationships with other selves. Only through living intercourse with other selves can it become a self at all." Ibid., p. 57.

62. See Taylor, pp. 85–108. In his discussion of this view, Taylor reminds us what a very new phenomenon—"what a monstrosity of human history"—one might say is our isolated man with his intensely private world. To make his point, he quotes John Colin Carothers: "Modern Western culture, with its insistence on an individual self-sufficiency which implies the constant need for personal choice and personal decision — the application of general principles to particular situations — is quite a recent thing and dates only form the Protestant and the later Industrial Revolutions. It is far more strange in human history than are the African cultural modes, and carries many risks." John Colin Carothers, *The African Mind in Health and Disease: A Study in Ethnopsychiatry* (Geneva: World Health Organization, 1953), pp. 151–52. Quoted in Taylor, p. 85.

63. Taylor, p. 106.

64. Quoted in Taylor, pp. 106–107.

65. Ibid., pp. 109–110. In fact, Taylor notes that the Christian understanding of Man has far more in common with the solidarities of Africa than with the individualism of the Western World. Taking the Bible as a whole we find no conception of man as an individual existing in and for himself, nor is its attention focused upon the individual's relation to God. The opposite may well be true. Scripture recognizes the ultimate dread and dereliction of isolation (as with Cain), for human destiny, according to the Bible, is the destiny of a "people."

66. Ibid., p. 119. Taylor continues: "By opposing the Church and the world, Western theology has drawn a picture of two separate co-existent realms to which the New Testament lends little support. In its pages darkness and light are contrasted, the far are made nigh, the alienated are reconciled. But the simple opposition of two Kingdoms is never stated, and the word *methistemi*, in the sense of transference out of one realm into another, is used only once (Col. 1:13). The typical New Testament word is *metanoia*, which means turning about. The emphasis is entirely on a change of direction, not on a change of position."

67. The changes were concerned mainly with banishing sorcery and blood feuds and the introduction of communal work and communal discipline.

68. Walter Freytag, *Spiritual Revolution in the East* (London: Lutterworth, 1940), pp. 23–30. Cited in Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, pp. 120–21.

69. Taylor, p. 121.

70. Ibid., pp. 121–22.

71. Ibid., p. 122.

72. Ibid., p. 108.

73. Lesslie Newbigin, *Honest Religion for Secular Man* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 121.

74. Taylor, *The Primal Vision*, p. 27.

75. Quoted in Taylor, p. 28.

76. Ibid., pp. 26–27.

The International Spiritual Life Commission: A Case Study in Discernment

Lyell M. Rader, Jr.

In the severe graphic of Fritz Eichenberg, "The Lord's Supper," 12 homeless men sit down to a bare dinner of soup, bread and coffee. Jesus is host. It could in fact be a Salvation Army center anywhere. The odors of life on the street are almost palpable. The circular table forms a halo against the menacing dark at the door. Motley, disheveled, beloved, the guests abide, to the Quaker artist's mind, in a eucharistic communion.

The 18 members of the International Spiritual Life Commission convened in London, 1996–1997, in an analogous community, diverse in ethnicity, vocation and circumstances, beholden to the hospitality of the Lord and mindful of their disparate constituencies, especially, in Tagore's words, "the companionless among the poorest, the lowliest and the lost."[1] They were called to discern how best to "cultivate and sustain the spiritual life of our people and the inner life of our Movement."[2]

General Paul A. Rader noted the timeliness of the undertaking. There is, he said, a growing consciousness among Salvationists of their "churchly identity" and their participation in the community of Christian confessions and fellowships. Further, the challenges of powerful spiritual forces, false ideologies, complex moral and

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ethical issues require groundedness in faith as never before. "We have a responsibility," he said, "to ensure that we are not denying our people necessary means of grace and that their participation in the life of the Army through their corps affords them every available advantage in living the Christian life, nurturing their children in the faith and passing to them their spiritual values and experience, and in pursuing their own individual calling in Christ."[3]

Discernment requires humility, courage and poise.[4] It is an act of humility to acknowledge that our own judgment is at best fragmentary and fallible. Discernment cannot be the exclusive preserve of a corporate or clerical elite. It is a function of the whole people of God. If "Christianity means community through Jesus Christ and in Jesus Christ," as Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote from his clandestine seminary in wartime Germany, it follows that discernment should be multilateral.

> God has willed that we should seek and find His living Word in the witness of a brother, in the mouth of man. Therefore, the Christian needs another Christian who speaks God's Word to him. He needs him again and again when he becomes uncertain and discouraged, for by himself he cannot help himself without belying the truth. He needs his brother man as a bearer and proclaimer of the divine word of salvation. He needs his brother solely because of Jesus Christ. The Christ in his own heart is weaker than the Christ in the word of his brother; his own heart is uncertain, his brother's sure.
>
> And that also clarifies the goal of all Christian community: they meet one another as bringers of the message of salvation. As such, God permits them to meet together and gives them community.[5]

It is an act of courage to relinquish a measure of control to the "centers of energy and creativity" found at the local level, to confess that "The really innovative ideas for reshaping the church will come from people who are addressing the needs of people in their churches and communities, not from denominational officials."[6]

It is an act of poise to forge an intentional framework for deliberation drawing upon the Salvationist heritage in Wesleyanism and Quakerism: the Wesleyan quadrilateral of Scripture, reason, tradition and experience,[7] and the Quaker impulse to reach a "sense of the meeting" by active waiting in patience and tenderness.[8]

The commission came to the Bible strategically, believing that the final word of interpretation has not yet been spoken. They sought that "potentiality of meaning which is waiting to break forth as it engages real life situations by the Spirit."[9] And they found that for those who tarry, "God intrudes into the comfortable space we

cling to for self-definition and calls us out to a wider truth."[10]

To hear and to honor the polyphony of Salvationist perspectives, especially the diffident and less articulate voices, commission membership was called from every continent, laity and officers across the spectrum of rank. Hundreds of submissions were received. Meetings were structured heuristically with an evolving structure. Formal presentations alternated with plenary and small group discussion. Input of biblical scholars outside The Salvation Army was valued. Worship was central.

The commission signaled, perhaps, a new seriousness in the theological task of The Salvation Army, helping people consciously to choose and critically to support their faith commitments. Significantly, in the year of the commission's report, a revision of the Army's compendium of doctrine was completed, written for the first time at a popular level, entitled simply *Salvation Story.*[11]

Nowhere was the delicacy and power of the discernment process tested as clearly as in the contentious issue of sacramental practice. The sacraments of baptism and the Lord's Supper have not been observed in The Salvation Army since 1883 when William Booth wrote:

> If (i) the Sacraments are not conditions of Salvation, if (ii) there is general division of opinion as to the proper mode of administering them, and if (iii) the introduction of them would create division and heart burning, and if (iv) we are not professing to be a church, nor aiming at being one, but simply a force for aggressive salvation purposes, is it not wise for us to postpone any settlement of the question, to leave it over to some future day, when we shall have more light, and see more clearly our way before us?"[12]

The commission considered the argument that the "future day" is now, "more light" is evident now, and the traditional sacraments should be re-adopted now, according to the lights of Salvationists in their varying contexts. Thus would Salvationists more accurately fulfill the intent of the Lord's command, keep faith with their deepest values, express solidarity with other Christians, and enhance nurture and mission. The commission also considered the rebuttal: that while for many Christians obedience to Christ's words (Luke 22:19; 1 Corinthians 11:24) entails participation in a symbolic meal in the context of the church at worship, the New Testament allows freedom to explore manifold settings in which one may hallow common meals by remembrance of Him: and again, while for many Christians obedience to Christ's words (Matthew 28:18–20) entails infant or believer baptism in water, the New Testament allows freedom for culturally appropriate ceremonies of

incorporation, emblematic of the Spirit's baptism of the believer into the body of Christ.

After prolonged consultation, debate and prayer, a concordant document was framed on the Lord's Supper:

> God's grace is freely and readily accessible to all people at all times and in all places.
>
> No particular outward observance is necessary to inward grace.
>
> The Salvation Army believes that unity of the Spirit exists within diversity and rejoices in the freedom of the Spirit in expressions of worship.
>
> Salvationists are free to share in communion services conducted in other Christian gatherings.
>
> Christ is the one true Sacrament, and sacramental living—Christ living in us and through us—is at the heart of Christian holiness and discipleship.
>
> Throughout its history The Salvation Army has kept Christ's atoning sacrifice at the center of its corporate worship.
>
> The Salvation Army rejoices in its freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all meals and in all meetings, and in its opportunity to explore in life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and His friends and by the first Christians.
>
> Salvationists are encouraged to use the love feast and develop creative means of hallowing meals in home and corps with remembrance of the Lord's sacrificial love.
>
> The Salvation Army encourages the development of resources for such events, which will vary according to culture, without ritualizing particular words or actions.
>
> In accordance with normal Salvation Army practice, such remembrances and celebrations, where observed, will not become established rituals, nor will frequency be prescribed.[13]

A mediating document on water baptism was also released:

> Only those who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord may be considered for soldiership in The Salvation Army.

> Such a confession is confirmed by the gracious presence of God the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and includes the call to discipleship.
>
> In accepting the call to discipleship Salvationists promise to continue to be responsive to the Holy Spirit and to seek to grow in grace.
>
> They also express publicly their desire to fulfill membership of Christ's Church on earth as soldiers of The Salvation Army.
>
> The Salvation Army rejoices in the truth that all who are in Christ are baptized into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).
>
> It believes, in accordance with Scripture, that "there is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all; who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:5–6).
>
> The swearing–in of a soldier of The Salvation Army beneath the Trinitarian sign of the Army's flag acknowledges this truth.
>
> It is a public response and witness to a life–changing encounter with Christ which has already taken place, as is the water baptism practiced by some other Christians.
>
> The Salvation Army acknowledges that there are many worthy ways of publicly witnessing to having been baptized into Christ's body by the Holy Spirit and expressing a desire to be His disciple.
>
> The swearing–in of a soldier should be followed by a lifetime of continued obedient faith in Christ.[14]

The keynote is freedom, as the report acknowledges:

> William Booth's statement to Salvationists [regarding the sacraments] was not intended to stand for all time. It was provisional. We believe that this provisionality should remain in place, and is an expression of the freedom of Salvationists to continue to respond in constant and instant obedience to the light the Holy Spirit sheds upon the Word of God.[15]

The commission issued a "Call to Salvationists," to the effect, in sum, that the "The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit and in the study of God's word."[16] Recommendations were made to the General and international leaders and resources provided for local reflection and action.

Perhaps, as importantly, the commission provided a simple, replicable model for corporate discernment. "We are waiting for a theophany about which we know nothing except its place," wrote Martin Buber, "and that place is called community."[17] The circle of discernment forms a halo against the imperious dark.

Notes

1. Each meeting lasted five days: July and November, 1996, March, July and September/ October, 1997. Commissioner Ian Cutmore served as chairman, initially, succeeded by Lt. Colonel Robert Street. Ten corresponding members were appointed, several of whom participated in commission meetings.

2. Terms of Reference, International Spiritual Life Commission.

3. Address of General Paul A. Rader to the commission, July 4, 1996.

4. These qualities are associated by Simon Chan with the work of discernment: *Spiritual Theology: A Systematic Study of the Christian Life* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1998), pp. 199–224. He draws upon *The Spiritual Exercises* of St. Ignatius. See *The Text of the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, 5th ed., rev., London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1952.

5. Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *Life Together*, translation, John W. Doberstein (San Francisco: Harper, 1954), p. 23.

6. For development of these themes see Gordon T. Smith, *Listening to God in Times of Choice: The Art of Discerning God's Will* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1997).

7. See Donald A.D. Thorsen, *The Wesleyan Quadrilateral: Scripture, Tradition, Reason and Experience as a Model of Evangelical Theology* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1990).

8. See Dean Freiday, *Speaking as a Friend: Essays Interpreting Our Christian Faith* (Newburg, OR: Barclay Press, 1995), pp. 24–25; William Wilstar Comfort, *The Quaker Way of Life* (Philadelphia: The Blakiston Co., 1945), pp. 51-52; and Parker J. Palmer, "The Clearness Committee: A Way of Discernment," *Weavings* 3:4 (July-August, 1988), pp. 37-40.

9. Clark H. Pinnock, "Biblical Texts, Past and Future Meanings," *Wesleyan Theological Journal* 34:2 (Fall, 1999), p. 140.

10. Luke Timothy Johnson, *Scripture and Discernment: Decision Making in the Church* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1996), p. 24.

11. *Salvation Story: Salvationist Handbook of Doctrine* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1998).

12. William Booth, "'Sacraments' Must Not, Nay, They Cannot, Rightly Be Regarded as Conditions of Salvation," *The War Cry* (January 17, 1883) cited in John Read, "The Sacraments," paper presented to the commission.

13. "The Sacraments: A Statement on Holy Communion," in "International Spiritual Life Commission Report for Submission to the General and the International Conference of Leaders," February, 1998.

14. "The Sacraments: A Statement on Baptism" in "International Spiritual Life Commission Report for Submission to the General and the International Conference of Leaders," February, 1998.

15. "Rationale on the Sacraments" in "International Spiritual Life Commission Report for Submission to the General and the International Conference of Leaders," February, 1998.

16. "The Call to Salvationists" in Robert Street, *Called to be God's People: The International Spiritual Life Commission; Its Report, Implications and Challenges* (London: International Headquarters, 1999), p. 7.

17. Quoted in John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (London: SCM Press, 1972), p. 16

The International Spiritual Life Commission Report

The Salvation Army has a God–given freedom in Christ which, if used fully, could enrich the Army's spiritual life and total ministry in ways far beyond those already enjoyed.

This freedom should never be underestimated, undervalued, or neglected, but be warmly embraced and positively engaged to the glory of God and for the extension of His kingdom. It is firmly rooted in the Army's tradition, has always been at the heart of its most inspiring and effective initiatives and points the way ahead for what God has planned for His people.

This is the conviction of the International Spiritual Life Commission, convened by the General to examine and identify aspects of the Army's life which are essential or integral to the spiritual growth of individual Salvationists and the movement itself.

In its five week–long meetings the Commission became increasingly aware both of the rich cultural diversity possessed by the Army in the 103 countries in which it is working, and of the unifying power found in its shared universal beliefs and practices.

The commission also took note of the correspondence, papers, suggestions and support given by fellow Salvationists who took the worldwide opportunity to share

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The International Spiritual Life Commission was convened in London and held meetings throughout 1996 and 1997 to discuss how best to cultivate and sustain the spiritual life of The Salvation Army.

in this challenging and exciting task.

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

It was when giving consideration to practices of other churches that the value of the Army's freedom in Christ was particularly evident. The setting of fixed forms of words or acts is not part of Salvationist tradition, though the value placed upon them by some other denominations is recognized.

A great deal of time, prayer and consultation was given to examining the value of introducing or reintroducing a form of Holy Communion. In addition to considering the large amount of correspondence on the subject, the Commission held a number of Bible studies, gave time to further prayer and also arranged for the visit of a former chairman of the Church of England's Doctrine Commission. Many points of view from various persuasions and convictions were considered, and the members of the Commission itself helpfully reflected those differences. Although such differences still exist, the Commission has been able to present its recommendations in a spirit of unity and harmony, recognizing the vast potential for innovative worship and ministry within the freedom which the Army already enjoys in Christ.

Sacraments

It was recognized that the forms of worship used by Christians of the early Church (including the common meal) were not known as sacraments, yet the importance of keeping Christ's atoning sacrifice at the center of corporate worship has always been vital to the spiritual life of the Army. Recognizing the freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all meals and in all meetings, the Commission's statement on Holy Communion encourages Salvationists to use the opportunity to explore together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and His friends and by the first Christians. It also encourages the development of resources for such events, which would vary according to culture, without ritualizing particular words or actions.

The Army's long-held belief that no particular outward observance is necessary to inward grace, and that God's grace is freely and readily accessible to all people at all times and in all places were unanimously reaffirmed, as was every Salvationist's freedom to share in communion services conducted in other Christian gatherings.

When considering the subject of baptism the Commission recognized the scrip-

tural truth that "there is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:5–6). All who are in Christ are baptized into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:12–13).

Swearing–in

There are many ways in which Christians publicly witness to having been baptized into Christ's body. Water baptism is one of them, but the ceremony, like that of the swearing–in of a Salvation Army soldier, is essentially a witness to the life–changing encounter with Christ which has already happened. The ceremony itself is not the encounter and should not be confused with the act of becoming a Christian. Bearing this in mind, the Commission recommends that the Soldier's Covenant, signed by new soldiers, should incorporate reference to each soldier's baptism into Christ by the Holy Spirit at the moment of conversion.

Specific recommendations made by the Commission to the General highlight ways in which preaching and teaching of the word of God should be given prominence. They encourage cultural expressions of worship and give special emphasis to Bible study, education and training. The importance of Salvationists being better informed and more adequately educated on matters of faith was frequently highlighted in the Commission's deliberations.

There is also a strong recommendation that Army leadership at every level should conform to the biblical model of servant leadership. To assist with this, a re–evaluation of structures, ranks and systems is urged, as is the need to make spirituality an essential quality and qualification for leadership in the movement. Training and development of officers and local officers to assist their spiritual development is also regarded as a priority.

Study

In addition to making recommendations at the General's request for his consideration (together with the Army's international leaders), the Commission makes a call to Salvationists world–wide to recognize that any outward movement of love for the world requires first of all an inward movement from each Christian toward God. The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the

Spirit, and in the study of God's word. Twelve specific calls are made, together with complementary affirmations (See pg. 56).

In the call the Commission expresses its belief that each Salvationist's equipping for spiritual warfare must come from God and be rooted in the conviction of the triumph of Christ. The living out of the Christian life in all its dimensions—personal, relational, social and political—can only be achieved by embracing Christ's lordship and the Holy Spirit's enabling.

The Commission has recognized the impossibility of providing (and the foolishness of attempting to provide) guidelines and strategies that would suit all countries and cultures in which the Army operates. One of the Army's greatest strengths is its diversity of culture, methods and resources.

Nevertheless, the Commission is ready to assist with relevant resourcing by providing material that can be used for teaching, clarifying and supporting fellow Salvationists as they respond to a new and revitalized recognition of what God can do in and through His Army by His Spirit and in the freedom which Christ gives.

A Statement on Baptism

After full and careful consideration of The Salvation Army's understanding of, and approach to, the sacrament of water baptism, the International Spiritual Life Commission sets out the following points regarding the relationship between our soldier enrollment and water baptism.

1. Only those who confess Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord may be considered for soldiership in The Salvation Army.

2. Such a confession is confirmed by the gracious presence of God the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer and includes the call to discipleship.

3. In accepting the call to discipleship Salvationists promise to continue to be responsive to the Holy Spirit and to seek to grow in grace.

4. They also express publicly their desire to fulfill membership of Christ's Church on earth as soldiers of The Salvation Army.

5. The Salvation Army rejoices in the truth that all who are in Christ are baptized into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).

6. It believes, in accordance with Scripture, that "there is one body and one Spirit ... one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all

and through all and in all" (Eph. 4:5–6).

7. The swearing–in of a soldier of The Salvation Army beneath the trinitarian sign of the Army's flag acknowledges this truth.

8. It is a public response and witness to a life–changing encounter with Christ which has already taken place, as is the water baptism practiced by some other Christians.

9. The Salvation Army acknowledges that there are many worthy ways of publicly witnessing to having been baptized into Christ's body by the Holy Spirit and expressing a desire to be His disciple.

10. The swearing–in of a soldier should be followed by a lifetime of continued obedient faith in Christ.

A Statement on Holy Communion

After full and careful consideration of The Salvation Army's understanding of, and approach to, the sacrament of Holy Communion*, the International Spiritual Life Commission sets out the following points:

1. God's grace is freely and readily accessible to all people at all times and in all places.

2. No particular outward observance is necessary for inward grace.

3. The Salvation Army believes that unity of the Spirit exists within diversity and rejoices in the freedom of the Spirit in expressions of worship.

4. When Salvationists attend other Christian gatherings in which a form of Holy Communion is included, they may partake if they choose to do so and if the host Church allows.

5. Christ is the one true Sacrament, and sacramental living—Christ living in us and through us—is at the heart of Christian holiness and discipleship.

6. Throughout its history The Salvation Army has kept Christ's atoning sacrifice at the center of its corporate worship.

7. The Salvation Army rejoices in its freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all meals and in all meetings and in its opportunity to explore in life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and His friends and by the first Christians.

8. Salvationists are encouraged to use the love feast and develop creative means of hallowing meals in home and corps with remembrance of the Lord's

sacrificial love.

9. The Salvation Army encourages the development of resources for fellowship meals, which will vary according to culture, without ritualizing particular words or actions.

10. In accordance with normal Salvation Army practice, such remembrances and celebrations, where observed, will not become established rituals, nor will frequency be prescribed.

**Terminology varies according to culture and denomination, and is not always interchangeable.*

A Call to Salvationists

1. We call Salvationists worldwide to worship and proclaim the living God, and to seek in every meeting a vital encounter with the Lord of life, using relevant cultural forms and languages.

2. We call Salvationists worldwide to a renewed and relevant proclamation of and close attention to the Word of God, and to a quick and steady obedience to the radical demands of the Word upon Salvationists personally and upon our movement corporately.

3. We call Salvationists worldwide to recognize the wide understanding of the mercy seat that God has given to the Army, to rejoice that Christ uses this means of grace to confirm His presence and to ensure that its spiritual benefits are fully explored in every corps and Army center.

4. We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in our freedom to celebrate Christ's real presence at all our meals and in all our meetings and to seize the opportunity to explore in our life together the significance of the simple meals shared by Jesus and His friends and by the first Christians.

5. We call Salvationists worldwide to recognize that the swearing–in of soldiers is a public witness to Christ's command to make disciples and that soldiership demands ongoing radical obedience.

6. We call Salvationists worldwide to enter the new millennium with a renewal of faithful, disciplined and persistent prayer; to study God's Word consistently and to seek God's will earnestly; to deny self and to live a lifestyle of simplicity in a spirit of trust and thankfulness.

7. We call Salvationists worldwide to rejoice in their unique fellowship: to be

open to support, guidance, nurture, affirmation and challenge from each other as members together of the Body of Christ, and to participate actively and regularly in the life, membership and mission of a particular corps.

8. We call Salvationists worldwide to commit themselves and their gifts to the salvation of the world, and to embrace servanthood, expressing it through the joy of self–giving and the discipline of Christ–like living.

9. We call Salvationists worldwide to explore new ways to recruit and train people who are both spiritually mature and educationally competent; to develop learning programs and events that are biblically informed, culturally relevant, and educationally sound; and to create learning environments which encourage exploration, creativity and diversity.

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

11. We call Salvationists worldwide to join in the spiritual battle on the grounds of a sober reading of Scripture, a conviction of the triumph of Christ, the inviolable freedom and dignity of persons and a commitment to the redemption of the world in all its dimensions—physical, spiritual, social, economic and political.

11. We call Salvationists worldwide to restore the family to its central position in passing on the faith, to generate resources to help parents grow together in faithful love and to lead their children into wholeness, with hearts on fire for God and His mission.

Our Mission

The founders of The Salvation Army declared their belief that God raised up our movement to enter partnership with Him in His "great business" of saving the world. We call upon Salvationists worldwide to reaffirm our shared calling to this great purpose, as signified in our name.

Salvation begins with conversion to Christ, but it does not end there. The transformation of an individual leads to a transformation of relationships, of families, of communities, of nations. We long for and anticipate with joy the new creation of all things in Christ.

Our mission is God's mission. God in love reaches out through His people to a

suffering and needy world, a world that He loves. In mission we express in word and deed and through the totality of our lives the compassion of God for the lost.

Our identification with God in this outward movement of love for the world requires a corresponding inward movement from ourselves towards God. Christ says "come to me" before he says "go into the world." These two movements are in relation to each other like breathing in and breathing out. To engage in one movement to the exclusion of the other is the way of death. To engage in both is the way of life.

The vitality of our spiritual life as a movement will be seen and tested in our turning to the world in evangelism and service, but the springs of our spiritual life are to be found in our turning to God in worship, in the disciplines of life in the Spirit and in the study of God's word.

Worship

The Meeting

1. We affirm that God invites us to a meeting in which God is present, God speaks and God acts. In our meetings we celebrate and experience the promised presence of Christ with His people. Christ crucified, risen and glorified is the focal point, the epicenter of our worship. We offer worship to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit, in our own words, in acts which engage our whole being: body, soul and mind. We sing the ancient song of creation to its Creator, we sing the new song of the redeemed to our Redeemer. We hear proclaimed the word of redemption, the call to mission and the promise of life in the Spirit.

Preaching

2. We affirm that when the gospel is preached God speaks. The Bible is the written Word of God. Preaching is that same Word opened, read, proclaimed and explained. When in our human weakness and foolishness we faithfully proclaim and explain the word, the world may hear and see a new thing; God speaks and God acts. To respond in obedient faith results in a decisive encounter with God. We affirm that God speaks profound truth in simple words, common language, and potent metaphor, and we confess that at times our words, too often shallow, obscure, archaic or irrelevant have veiled, not revealed, our God.

The Mercy Seat

3. We affirm that the mercy seat in our meetings symbolizes God's unremitting call to His people to meet with Him. It is not only a place for repentance and forgiveness but also a place for communion and commitment. Here we may experience a deep awareness of God's abundant grace and claim His boundless salvation. The mercy seat may be used by anyone, at any time and particularly in Army meetings when, in response to the proclaimed word, all are invited to share loving and humble communion with the Lord.

The Hallowing of Meals

4. We affirm that the Lord Jesus Christ is the one true sacrament of God. His incarnation and continuing gracious presence with His people by means of the indwelling Holy Spirit is the mystery at the heart of our faith. We hear our Lord's command to remember His broken body and His outpoured blood as in our families and in our faith communities we eat and drink together. We affirm that our meals and love feasts are an anticipation of the feasts of eternity and a participation in that fellowship which is the Body of Christ on earth.

Soldiership

5. We affirm that Jesus Christ still calls men and women to take up their cross and follow Him. This wholehearted and absolute acceptance of Christ as Lord is a costly discipleship. We hear our Lord's command to make disciples, baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We believe that soldiership is discipleship and that the public swearing–in of a soldier of The Salvation Army beneath the Army's trinitarian flag fulfills this command. It is a public response and witness to the life–changing encounter with Christ which has already taken place, as is the believers' water baptism practiced by some other Christians.

The Disciplines of Life in the Spirit

The Disciplines of the Inner Life

6. We affirm that the consistent cultivation of the inner life is essential for our faith life and for our fighting fitness. The disciplines of the inner life include solitude, prayer and meditation, study and self–denial. Practicing solitude, spending time alone with God, we discover the importance of silence, learn to listen to God

and discover our true selves. Praying, we engage in a unique dialogue that encompasses adoration and confession, petition and intercession. As we meditate we attend to God's transforming Word. As we study we train our minds towards Christ–like–ness, allowing the word of God to shape our thinking. Practicing self–denial, we focus on God and grow in spiritual perception. We expose how our appetites can control us, and draw closer in experience, empathy and action to those who live with deprivation and scarcity.

The Disciplines of our Life Together

7. We affirm the unique fellowship of Salvationists worldwide. Our unity in the Holy Spirit is characterized by our shared vision, mission and joyful service. In our life together we share responsibility for one another's spiritual well–being. The vitality of our spiritual life is also enhanced by our accountability to one another, and when we practice the discipline of accountability our spiritual vision becomes objective, our decisions more balanced, and we gain the wisdom of the fellowship and the means to clarify and test our own thinking. Such spiritual direction may be provided effectively through a group or by an individual. Mutual accountability also provides the opportunity to confess failure or sin and receive the assurance of forgiveness and hope in Christ.

The Disciplines of our Life in the World

8. We affirm that commitment to Christ requires the offering of our lives in simplicity, submission and service. Practicing simplicity we become people whose witness to the world is expressed by the values we live by, as well as by the message we proclaim. This leads to service which is a self–giving for the salvation and healing of a hurting world, as well as a prophetic witness in the face of social injustice.

Training in God's Word

Cultivating faith

9. We affirm that our mission demands the formation of a soldiery which is maturing and is being equipped for faithful life and ministry in the world. In strategic and supportive partnership with the family, the Christian community has a duty to provide opportunities for growth into maturity by means of preaching and teaching, through worship and fellowship, and by healing and helping.

Teaching holiness

10. We affirm that God continues to desire and to command that His people be holy. For this Christ died, for this Christ rose again, for this the Spirit was given. We therefore determine to claim as God's gracious gift that holiness which is ours in Christ. We confess that at times we have failed to realize the practical consequences of the call to holiness within our relationships, within our communities and within our movement. We resolve to make every effort to embrace holiness of life, knowing that this is only possible by means of the power of the Holy Spirit producing His fruit in us.

Equipping for war

11. We affirm that Christ our Lord calls us to join Him in holy war against evil in all its forms and against every power that stands against the reign of God. We fight in the power of the Spirit in the assurance of ultimate and absolute victory through Christ's redemptive work. We reject extreme attitudes towards the demonic: on the one hand, denial; on the other, obsession. We affirm that the Body of Christ is equipped for warfare and service through the gifts of the Spirit. By these we are strengthened and empowered. We heed the injunction of Scripture to value all God's gifts and rejoice in their diversity.

Helping the family

12. We affirm that the family plays a central role in passing on the faith. We also recognize that families everywhere are subject to dysfunction and disintegration in an increasingly urbanized world in which depersonalization, insignificance, loneliness and alienation are widespread. We believe that in the home where Christ's Lordship is acknowledged and the family is trained in God's Word, a spiritually enriching and strengthening environment is provided.

Fellowship Meals

Recognizing that every meal may be hallowed, whether in the home or with a congregation, there are strategic occasions when the planning of a fellowship meal may especially enrich corporate spiritual life. Such occasions could include the following:

-In preparation for and during the Easter period.

-At the beginning of a mission or spiritual campaign.

-At a corps celebration such as an anniversary, a New Year's Eve Watch Night service or the opening of a new building.

-At a soldiers' meeting.

-For the census board or corps council, particularly when important decisions need to be made.

-For the launching of the Annual Appeal when the significance of work/service being undertaken in Christ's name could be emphasized.

-Harvest thanksgiving.

-Between meetings when a meal is required and members of the congregation are unable to travel home to eat because of distance.

-When there has been a breakdown in relationships and healing is sought by reflecting on Christ's great act of reconciliation through the Cross.

-Whenever it is thought that such a gathering would strengthen the spiritual life and wider fellowship of the corps or center.

-Small group meetings, especially house groups, mid–week meetings or (for example) at the conclusion of a recruits' preparation for soldiership course.

-Corps camps, fellowship weekends or retreats.

Two features of the common fellowship meal in the early New Testament Church were the scope for spontaneity and the element of charity, with the poor being included. These elements are also worth noting.

Book Reviews

The SPCK Handbook of Anglican Theologians. Edited by Alister E. McGrath. London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 1998. xiv + 236 pp.
Reviewed by Patrick Terrell Grey, The General Theological Seminary, New York, New York.

In the "Introduction" to his book *The Renewal of Anglicanism* (Harrisburg, PA, 1993), Alister McGrath writes, "The renewal of Anglican theology depends on the prior renewal of Anglicanism. It is not theology that brings a church into being. Theology is what erupts from a self-confident and reflective community of faith, in possession of a vision of why it exists and what it proposes to do. It is the expression, not the cause, of that vision." (pp. 3–4) That McGrath would edit The SPCK Handbook of Anglican Theologians could be taken as a sign that Anglicanism, at least from his perspective, has regained its sense of "self confidence" and that Anglican theological reflection can now begin anew. Indeed, the handbook is offered as a resource to help this process of rejuvenation by engaging with the rich heritage of Anglican theology. The volume is divided into two sections, one a global survey of Anglican theology and the other "an analysis of a selection of nearly 100 Anglican theologians who are held to be of continuing relevance to the Anglican Communion" (p. xi).

The survey of eight global regions in which Anglicanism "has established a significant presence" (p. xi) is perhaps unavoidably weighted towards its development in Great Britain and the USA (more than half of the section consists of these two essays). Yet these longer essays read like church history rather than a theological survey, which is not surprising given the fact that they are written by professors

of church history. The question arises, however, as to whether this section of the volume is a survey of Anglicanism or Anglican theology. Granted, these two are not always easy to sift out, but it is the six shorter essays of the eight that, for the most part, sustain a theological survey and analysis. The awkwardness of the essay on the USA combined with the jumbled medley of the others unfortunately does not live up to being an "indispensable resource" (p. xi) as McGrath claims.

The contributors to the second section on individual theologians are an impressive group of Anglican theologians themselves, but it quickly becomes apparent that almost half of the entries were written by two graduate students at Oxford. Perhaps this is unavoidable in any project of such size, but it is unfortunate when so many of the minor entries written by the students seem to be based mainly on information from other dictionaries, particularly *The Oxford Dictionary of the Christian Church*.

There is also a problem with the layout of this section. Some entries are not listed in alphabetical order (Dennis Joseph Bennett comes after William Dwight Porter Bliss). Others contain redundancy of thought, as in F. J. Hall's entry where we read, "Hall's Dogmatic Theology stands alone as the most comprehensive Anglo Catholic presentation of Anglicanism in the twentieth century" (p. 134) followed a few sentences later by "Francis J. Hall's Dogmatic Theology remains the most thorough Anglo-Catholic work of its kind in the twentieth century" (p. 134). Some rather unfortunate typographic mistakes occur as well, where Richard Hooker is said to have gathered insight from "the Renaissance and Reformation Divides (sic)" (p. 143). Also, the stylistic writing of some of the entries detracts from its scholarly impact. For instance, in an overzealous usage of simile, Lancelot Andrewes' Response to Cardinal Bellarmine is said to read "like a Bentley car driving along with effortless style, huge amounts of power in reserve, and a faultless engine" (p. 75).

The biggest problem with the handbook, however, has to be the exclusion of certain individuals. McGrath claims that those who made their way into the handbook "have been identified on the basis of a worldwide consultation" (p. xi), which makes it all the more surprising that some important figures have been completely ignored. There are, of course, the obligatory entries of Cranmer, Hooker, Gore and Temple, but F. D. Maurice is noticeably absent, despite the fact that a number of the entries refer to his significance. Nor do the choices seem to follow a recognizable pattern. Why an entry for John Donne, but not for George Herbert? And one for T. S. Eliot, but not for C. S. Lewis? Only one woman is included (Evelyn Underhill),

and the stark absence of entries concerning people of color is disturbing, especially when giants such as Desmond Tutu are passed over. Until these and Anglicans like Hobart, Pittenger, Seabury, Keble, Pusey, Wiles, Westcott, Muhlenberg, Latimer and Beveridge find their way into this volume, McGrath will not have fully accomplished his task of providing an essential resource for the renewal of Anglican theology. Perhaps this will be remedied in a second edition.

This review first appeared in *Anglican Theological Review*, Winter 2000.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *The Real Jesus: The Misguided Quest for the Historical Jesus and the Truth of the Traditional Gospels*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1996. 182 pp.

Johnson, Luke Timothy. *Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel*. New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 1998. 210 pp.

Reviewed by Roy R. Jeal, William and Catherine Booth College, Winnepeg, Manitoba

This book is New Testament scholar Luke Johnson's highly polemical attack against the widely publicized products of some of those engaged in the search for the "real Jesus" of history, particularly the "Jesus Seminar." By the time Johnson, who is the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of New Testament and Christian Origins at Candler School of Theology, Emory University, published this book in 1996, the Jesus Seminar and the writings of a variety of authors had gained either fame or notoriety (depending on one's point of view) at the popular level. Johnson sees their work as an attack on both Christianity and appropriate scholarship. He is clearly angered by what he calls "ersatz scholarship taken for the real thing" and "the effort by scholars to bypass the ordinary contexts of their activity to effect cultural change" (p. v).

Johnson takes aim by presenting an overview of what the Jesus Seminar has produced and laying down the bases for his disagreement, indeed his dismissal of it. He claims that the Seminar does not demonstrate or even effectively argue a case for its conclusions about the historical Jesus. The Seminar's well–publicized color–coded version of the canonical Gospels and the Gospel of Thomas (*The Five Gospels*; see also the more recently published *The Acts of Jesus*) is criticized on several grounds, particularly the methodology used in the attempt to determine what Jesus actually said and did not say. Johnson indicates his primary difficulty with their approach: the false view that the Gospels are valuable only so far as they can be seen to be purely historical sources for Jesus. Due to this view, the Seminar aims to oppose "...all those who subscribe to any traditional understanding of Jesus as defined by the historic creeds of Christianity, that is, in some sense as risen Lord and Son of God" (p. 23). Johnson asserts that what results is that the Jesus Seminar has become, paradoxically, the very thing that it opposes. It is not objective, and is as fundamentalist about its own views as are Christian fundamentalists on the other extreme who read the Gospels literalistically.

When the premise "... that *historical knowledge* is normative for faith and for

theology" (p. 55) is co–opted into Christianity, the result is confusion because history, not faith, becomes determinative for convictions about who Jesus really was. With this in mind, Johnson lays out his central argument: there are limits to doing history. Critical historical study is seriously restricted by its inability to know all the details of persons, events and places of the past. Complete information is simply not available, making historical knowing a very uncertain business. History necessarily interprets on the basis of accessible information. It cannot perform empirical testing to prove scientifically what Jesus did or did not say (or do). The over–zealous statements of the Jesus Seminar and other historians of Jesus must not, according to Johnson, be taken as final because there is no way in which they can be supported with certainty. Johnson is strongly supportive of scholarly historical study of Jesus and earliest Christianity, but only when the limits of such study are clearly in sight. The religious experiences of people of the past are not capable of scientific historical evaluation. Making definitive statements about their inauthenticity is, consequently, just not on, and democratic voting by a few historians will never resolve either their truth or falsity. Johnson is troubled, however, that such voting and the definitive sounding statements get a lot of press.

Johnson goes on to address the issue of what can certainly be known historically about Jesus. He concludes that the historical veracity of the Gospels is highly *probable*. The Gospels are, nevertheless, narratives of faith. This points to the basic problem of how one can critically examine documents that are inherently theological and meant to be understood by impression, identification and personal experience at least as much as by historical analysis. We can know much about Jesus historically. But Christian faith has always, from the earliest times, been based on the conviction that the "'real Jesus' is first of all the powerful resurrected Lord whose transforming Spirit is active in the community" (p. 166). Many early Christians (including the Apostle Paul) said they saw Jesus alive again, and centuries of Christian experience testify to it. Christian faith is not derived solely from history but from experience and conviction. Johnson points out that the entire New Testament witnesses to this conviction, and scholarship that is interested only in the historical cannot adequately deal with this reality. In addition to being historical in character, the New Testament documents are also human, literary and religious compositions (pp. 172–173). Reality is greater than what can be known historically.

Johnson is right on track in his criticism of those who seek to describe Jesus only historically. He cuts through the fog surrounding historical Jesus studies, mov-

ing to the core issues. He admits that there are New Testament scholars who will disagree with him (some have). Some readers will think Johnson's anger is too strong and that in a few places his criticism is too strident. But strident criticism is needed when people attempt to speak authoritatively in public while presenting only their own opinionated views. Johnson has courageously written a scholarly book that stands for the traditional and historic faith understandings of Jesus.

Living Jesus: Learning the Heart of the Gospel, the sequel to Johnson's *The Real Jesus*, is vastly different in tone. No longer angry and polemical, Johnson presents a truly profound description of Christian spirituality. By "spirituality" Johnson "... means not the cultivation of the human spirit, but the response of human freedom to the Holy Spirit of God" (p. ix). The foundation of this spirituality and indeed of everything about Christian existence is found in the historic conviction that Jesus Christ has been raised and is still now alive. In fact this is "the most important" issue of inquiry about Jesus: "Do we think he is dead or alive?" (p. 4). If Jesus is dead and merely an important character from the past, then Christianity and the transformation and renewal it claims occurs in the name of Jesus does not come from Him. If, on the other hand, Jesus is alive, then His story continues and salvation and transformation are real at the present moment.

Johnson divides his book into two parts of six chapters each. In Part One, "The Truth That Is In Jesus," he asks "In what sense is Jesus alive?" and argues that the resurrection is not only something that occurred in the past, but that it continues. If it is true that Jesus is alive now and is the Saviour, it follows that other persons can experience the new life that His resurrection implies. How, though, can one have a deep conviction of faith in the raised and living Jesus and in the reality of new life? Johnson provides his answer in what follows in the book. Jesus is "learned" (that is, one moves through a process of coming to know Him) through and within several media: tradition, the witness of the church, personal experience and Scripture.

By "Learning Jesus Through Tradition" Johnson means that Jesus becomes known to people within the context of the Church which is the Body of Christ and within whose members the Holy Spirit dwells. This is what has been handed down through the centuries (hence tradition) and is the appropriate context for relationship with Christ. Tradition is not to be accepted uncritically, but it does call for genuine loyalty to Christ and the knowledge that comes by faith rather than by empirical certainty. The Christian tradition calls for recognition of the canon of Scripture (which

should be read aloud in worship), historic creedal forms ("I believe in One God ...") and respect for the teaching role of the church. Jesus is learned through the witness of the church in that the church testifies to the reality of the raised and living Christ in its worship (particularly in the Lord's Supper), in the lives of the saints (i.e., in the holy, transformed living of Christians who have conformed their lives to Christ and serve as examplars) and in the lives of "the little ones"—those ordinary people of which the Church is comprised and whom it serves.

The process of learning Jesus is personal and experiential. In explanation, Johnson provides some personal and moving insights from his own marriage. Johnson was a Benedictine monk who chose to leave the priesthood, marry and raise a family. He likens coming to know Jesus Christ to his marriage relationship where there is "the deep moral certainty of the heart" that he and his wife act for each other's good in all situations (p. 64). This kind of deep mutual knowing may be difficult to explain in words, but to Johnson it describes how one can know Jesus.

Nearly two thirds of Johnson's book (Chapters five and six in Part One, and almost all of Part Two) describe how learning the living Jesus cannot be accomplished apart from reading Scripture. Scripture is revelatory, that is, it reveals the person of Jesus to its readers. Johnson surveys the New Testament documents, finding clear and remarkable consistency in their portrayal of Jesus. The four Gospels, which Johnson discusses at length, present distinctive perspectives on Jesus and, consequently, give us a rich description of the person and character of the Jesus people should come to know.

In his final chapter, "The Continuing Mystery," Johnson drives home the point that the "process of learning" Christian spirituality "is necessarily both continuous and complex" because it has to do with "the mystery of a living person in the present" (p. 195). Appropriate Christian spirituality involves serious discipleship that seeks to reflect the behaviour of Jesus. Such discipleship is not devoted to personal ambition and success, but to obedient service and suffering. It means being faithful regardless of the circumstances.

Some readers might react to Johnson's views and their reflection of his own background. Some might say that the Bible is enough, that there is no need for tradition, creed or the saints of the past. But that would be to deny or ignore the richness of Christian history and miss a treasure of honest spirituality. Luke Johnson has written a book that takes the fruit of scholarly thought and makes it practical and understandable. He points to a profound spiritual sensibility often lacking among

those who make the loudest professions of Christian faith. He demonstrates how a scholar can be a deeply spiritual Christian. Despite all the theological arguments, all the historical study, all the defensiveness, all the publicity, all the doubt, the message that draws people and converts them is very simple: Jesus died and is alive and transforms you. There is, therefore, love, hope, compassion and new life. You should read this book to deepen your grasp of this simple gospel.

Readers' Forum

We are pleased to inaugurate the Readers' Forum with this issue of Word & Deed *and encourage readers to respond to what they read in the journal. We pray that the contents of the journal will elicit conversation and dialogue from our readers, and this forum provides opportunity for that. Responses may have to be edited as space dictates. The comments in the forum do not necessarily reflect the opinions of The Salvation Army or the editors.*

I have read with interest Hazzard's article "Marching on the Margins" in the May 2000 issue. It is good to see attempts at quantitative research into matters concerning the Army. However, I would like to raise two concerns.

The first is an error of fact. On page 15, Hazzard claims to be quoting our doctrine of the Scriptures. He uses the phrase "given by the inspiration of God." In fact, the doctrine says that the Scriptures were "given by inspiration of God." It is a matter for those who have the theological expertise I lack to argue the difference between the two wordings. My concern is that Hazzard has been careless in his quotation, casting doubt on his whole argument. If he is to critique our doctrines, he should at least read them carefully and quote them exactly.

My second concern is the assumption that the situation in the USA is mirrored throughout the world. Hazzard is not the only writer from the USA to make this mistake, but he does so in a quite unjustified (I almost said "arrogant") way. In his first few sentences, he claims that, "Most people think of The Salvation Army as a charitable organization ... [but] ... few people think of The Salvation Army as a religion or a church." This might well be true of the United States but is by no means

true of other parts of the world. In my own country, the attitude is summed up by my doctor, who described The Salvation Army as "the only church I have any respect for." The respect might be based on our charitable works, but it is usually accepted, in Australia, that we do them "for Jesus' sake." Most Australians respond to the slogan, "Thank God for the Salvos."

In third world countries we are clearly identified as Christian, although some of our unthinking brethren patronizingly call us a sect.

The insularity which limits the Army to its American expression is also very evident in Diane Winston's *Red Hot and Righteous* reviewed in the same issue. Indeed *Word & Deed* is somewhat guilty itself. When IHQ's address is given, we are told that it is in London, England, but when National Headquarters is mentioned, we are told that it is in Alexandria, VA, and we are expected to know what that means.

To return to the question of the wording of the eleven principal doctrines, I accept that we are currently bound by the wording enshrined in the 1980 Salvation Army Act of the UK Parliament. However, we might resonably discuss whether the language is still as meaningful as it was 120 years ago. Hazzard's error, made by many—both Salvationists and others—points to one difficulty. Another arises in the latter part of the same doctrine where we insist on the primacy of Scripture by saying that "they only" are to be the yardstick of Christian faith and practice. Every time I hear this doctrine read or recited, the word "only" is attached to the word "constitute." This problem might be mitigated by printing a comma after the word "only" but our meaning will only be made really clear by some rewording.

Perhaps it is time for the Doctrine Council to grasp this nettle and make some recommendations for the General to consider. After all, we do not hesitate to translate the doctrines into a new language when we move into a new country. The English of the 21st century world is a different language from the English of the 19th century Britain. Perhaps a translation would make the original meaning clearer to a new generation.

Your readers might like to consider these matters.

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I was very pleased to see an issue of *Word & Deed* devoted to the topic of ecclesiology, with the promise of another issue to come. I had been hoping that before long this rather elusive theme would be addressed head-on.

The papers included in the issue were most interesting, and on the level of scholarship we are beginning to expect from the journal, I was disappointed, however, at the limited degree to which the submissions reflected a concern with the biblical concept of ecclesia. That was the clear intention of Robinson's paper ("The Salvation Army—Ecclesia?"). Unfortunately, Robinson accepts, quite uncritically, Berkhof's analysis of the usage of the term in the New Testament. Closer examination would suggest that, rather than the five distinct uses of ecclesia identified by Berkhof, there are actually only two: There is no clear distinction in Scripture between local church and "house church"; the *place* of meeting would hardly be the basis for such a distinction. Thus, the first two uses identified by Berkhof are in fact one. Further, there is no clear distinction in Scripture between the Church catholic or Church universal, on the one hand, and the Church militant and the Church triumphant, on the other. God's eternal perspective would seem to demand acceptance of the concept of one Church, irrespective of limitations of time and space. The Acts 9:31 reference to "the church throughout Judea, Galilee and Samaria," then, is simply a reference to a regional, temporal manifestation of that one Church. It requires a might stretch, culturally determined, to see here any "correspondence to the present day *denomination*" (emphasis supplied).

This is more than a quibble. If ecclesia—and, thus, church/Church—takes only two distinct meanings, the question "Is the Salvation Army a church" (or "To what extent is The Salvation Army ecclesia?") itself takes on a different meaning. It then makes sense to answer the question in the affirmative. With respect to the Church (universal), it can be said—as in our mission statement—that "The Salvation Army ... is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church." With respect to church (local), there can be no question that the group that meets on Sundays and throughout the week in Manchester, Connecticut—like similar groups meeting all over the world—is a church. It has all of the requisite features, and Jesus comes in among us, just as He promised. In this connection, I enjoy the Spanish word that is used to translate corps: *cuerpo*. It means, simply, "body."

It seems to me that this straightforward interpretation renders moot the sect/church question Power addresses in his paper "Towards a Sociology of Salvationism"—because, by and large, Power accepts the common practice of confusing church

with denomination. Does the terminology really matter? Jewett's concern ("An Examination of Ecclesiastical Authority in The Salvation Army") has the merit, at least, of being a more pragmatic one—although he also confuses the two terms.

As I see it, the really practical issue is our failure, at the local level—in the United States, that *is*—to identify The Salvation Army as a church (with a small "c"). It certainly stands in the way of church growth! Of course, as is so often the case, what appears to be a strictly local problem has a broader dimension. There is marked reluctance at divisional and territorial levels to promote the church identity of the Army, partly because of a concern over the possible reactions of secular funding sources.

In any event, I hope that future ecclesiological discussions will emphasize biblical definitions over sociological ones.

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