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*A Publication of The Salvation Army*

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**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.

**Salvation Army Mission Statement:**

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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**Editorial Policy:**

Contributions related to the mission of the journal will be encouraged, and at times there will be a general call for papers related to specific subjects. The Salvation Army is not responsible for every view which may be expressed in this journal. Manuscripts should be approximately 12-15 pages, including endnotes. Please submit the following: 1) three hard copies of the manuscript with the author's name (with rank and appointment if an officer) on the cover page only. This ensures objectivity during the evaluation process. Only the manuscript without the author's name will be evaluated. The title of the article should appear at the top of the first page of the text and the manuscript should utilize *Word & Deed* endnote guidelines. All Bible references should be from the New International Version. If another version is used throughout the article, please indicate the version in the first textual reference only. If multiple versions are used, please indicate the version each time it changes.; 2) a copy on a 3 1/2 inch floppy disk, using Microsoft Word format; 3) a 100-word abstract of the article for use at the discretion of the editor (e.g. on The Salvation Army's web page or in advertisements about the journal). Please note that neither the hard copies nor the disk will be returned to the author and that all manuscripts are subject to editorial review. Once articles have been selected for inclusion, the deadlines for submitting final material for the journal are March 1 for the spring issues and September 1 for the fall issues. A style sheet is available upon request.

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# WORD & DEED

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Vol. 3, No. 2

May 2001

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*Editorial*

Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green ..... 1

*The Salvation Army and Missiology*

Paul A. Rader ..... 7

*Spiritual Leadership in The Salvation Army*

Jonathan S. Raymond ..... 23

*Christian Conversion*

Graham Harris ..... 35

*Book Reviews*

*The NIV Reflecting God Study Bible*

reviewed by Henry Garipey ..... 55

*Blood & Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army*  
by Roy Hattersley,

reviewed by Gordon Taylor ..... 63

*The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*  
by Grant R. Osborne,

reviewed by Harry Brocksieck ..... 67

*Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism* by Joel Carpenter, *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism 1870–1925* and *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* by George M. Marsden, *American Evangelicalism Embattled and Thriving* by Christian Smith, *No Place for Truth; or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology* by David F. Wells

reviewed by Roger J. Green ..... 69

*Readers' Forum* ..... 79

# Editorial

## *Janusian Thinking*

This issue of *Word & Deed* marks three years of the journal's publication. In its first three years the readership experienced six editorials, seventeen articles, one invited sermon, several book reviews and some letters from readers. Salvationist contributors hail from five countries and eight territories in Australia, Canada, England, Finland and the United States. Readership has included 1,413 subscribers from 28 countries.

The journal experienced a good beginning and promises an even better future. Nevertheless, key questions call for answers: Is the journal on track and is it fulfilling its intended purpose?; How can we go from strength to strength?; What might readers expect in the future? These are questions with which the editorial board will wrestle over the next year. Readers are invited to contribute to the journal's self-assessment by writing to the editors with answers to these questions.

### **As Janus Sees Things**

In the rhetoric of strategic planning, the exercise of looking back and looking forward is sometimes referred to as Janusian thinking after the Roman god, Janus, who had two faces. Janus looked simultaneously backwards at the past and forwards to the future. It is from the Roman calendar honoring Janus that we have the name of the first month of our calendar, January. As editors, we do not wish to embrace the connotation that we are "two-faced," but at the same time we see value in the exercise of thinking in a Janusian fashion and would even suggest that Janusian thinking is scriptural. In Isaiah 54:2, the Lord says to the people through Isaiah: "Enlarge the place of your tent, stretch your tent curtains wide, do not hold back;

lengthen your cords, strengthen your stakes.”

In this verse, lengthening cords and letting out the curtains are metaphors for the future—we look forward to growth, development and expansion. Strengthening one’s stakes refers to the past where we look to affirm and embrace core values, beliefs, our mission and lessons learned. The larger task is to see the connection of past and future as a journey in which the meaningfulness of life lived yesterday and the hope of the future both inform and impel our understanding of the present as we continue the journey.

### **Looking Back**

Three years of publishing *Word & Deed* has served as a kind of photo album. It has helped to preserve snapshots of our past as authors articulated 1) an understanding of our most central doctrinal belief—holiness, and 2) our identity as a people, a community of interest and commitment, and a part of the catholic (universal) Church. Contributors to the journal helped us look back at the biblical underpinning of holiness along with our traditional perspectives on holiness from John Wesley, Samuel Logan Brengle and Fredrick Coutts. Other contributors helped us look back at our history of becoming a unique part of the body of Christ in our collective journey from being an international movement and a peculiar sect, to our emergence, with ambivalence, as a church.

The exercise of reflecting on the past can be both dangerous and wholesome. The danger may be found in our basking in the reflected glory of our past, in romanticizing the past and in clinging to the icons of the past. The past can be a graveyard of present day idolatry. Still there are lessons that must not be ignored. There are truths of lasting value to be gleaned, gathered and preserved. There are promises and principles from God which are intended to guide and inform our vision and mission for the present and the future. The words inscribed on the United States Archives building in Washington, D.C. read, “The past is prologue to the future.” As we move forward into God’s future, may this journal help to make it so.

### **Looking Forward**

In the November 2000 issue of *Word & Deed*, the journal introduced the idea of juxtaposynthesis. The word is used to convey what happens when two phenomena are placed along side each other and an integration or synthesis takes place, bringing forth yet a new thing. We see green when blue and yellow are brought together.

We taste salsa when tomatoes and chili peppers are combined. Something new emerges out of the placement of the old and familiar, and we are liberated in our perspective of the future. This was the intention of the journal in the last issue. In the juxtaposition of holiness and community (ecclesiology), *Word & Deed* began to serve in a role as futurist and forecaster. We looked forward with the articles of Phil Needham on integrating holiness and community, Mary Docter on culture, and Lyell Rader on the work of The Salvation Army's International Spiritual Life Commission.

We continue to look back and forward at the same time with this issue. Paul Rader offers up several missiological issues confronting The Salvation Army through the lenses of an insightful missiologist. His text looks back at our history, presenting issues and themes which speak to our future. He highlights particularly significant themes: the integration and complementarity of the social and spiritual dimensions of the missionary task; the transformational development of communities as we work with rather than for others; indigenous control, autonomy, and self-support of The Salvation Army outside of London and the USA, especially in developing countries; women's latitude and equity of participation in leadership and decision-making in ministry; the Army's self-understanding as a church and therefore as a "legitimate and vital expression of the Church of Jesus Christ"; the accompanying issues of church growth and attention to the inner life of the Army still as a movement; and finally the internationalism of the Army as a strategic reality.

Jonathan Raymond has offered the reader his insights from a paper which he presented at The Salvation Army's International Conference for Training Principals held at the Army's Sunbury Court in England at the end of March and the beginning of April, 2001. In that paper he deals with the crucial theme of spiritual leadership in The Salvation Army today and treats five propositional truths about the nature of spiritual leadership, beginning with the centrality of personal holiness as essential to the character of the spiritual leader. From that biblical base he looks forward to the nature of the Army's spiritual leadership in the future in the context of the world which we will face in that future.

Likewise, Graham Harris brings into focus the critical matter of conversion. He attempts to capture the wide and varied array of thinking about the matter from Scripture, early church fathers, theologians and leaders over the ages as well as more contemporary writers in psychology. This author's contribution covers the

landscape of thinking about the experience of conversion, and for the most part looks backwards. But by capturing the universality and enduring nature of the concept of conversion, Major Harris points us to the future and raises the question “How shall we participate in and promote conversion experiences in the future as Salvationists?”

### Looking Over

From the perspective of Janusian thinking, looking forward and looking back, *Word & Deed* has attempted to be circumspect in its content. However, we have also provided overviews through another major genre, book reviews. In the past three years, we have attempted to present reviews of the very best works of contemporary Wesleyan theology, Salvation Army history and other aids and guides for thinking practically about Salvation Army theology and ministry.

The book reviews in this issue continue the task of exposing the reader to relevant works of enduring value. Gordon Taylor’s review of *Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army* by Roy Hattersley brings the special perspective of one who works daily in The Salvation Army’s International Heritage Center and who brings his expertise to the task as a careful researcher and trained scholar. *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation* by Grant R. Osborne is reviewed by Harry Brocksieck whose work as an educator of future Salvation Army officers for the Russian/CIS command makes him particularly sensitive to innovations that strengthen the capacity of future officers for biblically-based ministry. Finally, *Word & Deed* co-editor, Roger Green, presents a comprehensive overview of five recent works on the topics of fundamentalism and evangelicalism. These most recent works represent some of the very best writings on the topic by some of the best minds in evangelicalism today: Joel Carpenter, George Marsden (two books), Christian Smith and David Wells.

### What’s Next?

Looking forward to the next three issues, we are pleased to share the good news that *Word & Deed* will be the publication venue for The Salvation Army’s International Theology and Ethics Symposium, sponsored by the Army’s International Doctrine Council and the Canada and Bermuda Territory’s Ethics Center held at William and Catherine Booth College in Winnipeg, Canada. In the next issue, three papers will be featured: “The Theology of God the Father,” “Ecology in a Damaged

World,” and “Human Dignity in an Oppressive World.” The following issue in May 2002 will publish three more papers: “The Theology of God the Son,” “The Kingdom of the Risen Lord in a World Searching for a Future,” and “Jesus the Son in a Pluralistic World.” Finally, the third issue covering the symposium will feature three articles: “The Theology of God the Holy Spirit,” “Creating Community in a Fragmented World,” and “Holiness in a World of Changing Values.” The International Theology and Ethics Symposium brings together some of the finest thinkers and writers in The Salvation Army world, and the fruit of their labors should provide a rich treasury of writing which we look forward to capturing in the pages of this journal with the hope that it will contribute to an ever-emerging Salvationist theology and an ever-informed Salvationist expression of ministry.

In the meantime, the articles and book reviews of this issue of *Word & Deed*, along with those of the previous five issues, help us to understand ourselves and our past as Salvationists, as evangelicals and as pilgrims pursuing the path of Christian orthodoxy. In so doing, it is our hope that we will be better prepared to march into tomorrow. As we continue to look back, at the same time, by God’s grace, we continue to look forward.

JSR

RJG



# The Salvation Army and Missiology

*Paul A. Rader*

Missiology is properly understood as the scholarly discipline underlying, informing and facilitating the task of world evangelization. It is a field of study that applies insights gained primarily from the disciplines of theology, biblical studies, anthropology and history to the task of communicating the Christian gospel across cultures.<sup>1</sup>

Missiologists grapple with the witness of Scripture and its imperatives for mission in our time in the light of apostolic patterns and practices. They reflect on the theological foundations and the spiritual dynamics for mission. How is the Church to get on with the task of bringing the peoples of earth to “the obedience that comes from faith” (Rom. 1:5), according to “the command of the eternal God, so that all nations might believe and obey Him” (Rom. 16:26)? What are the supernatural resources available for mission? What is the central task or tasks for accomplishing the mission assigned the apostolic Church by the risen Lord Jesus? To disciple the diverse peoples of earth, preaching, teaching and gathering believers into witnessing, serving and reproducing communities of newborn Christians who are committed to Christ, His cause and His kingdom?

How do churches grow? In an increasingly pluralistic era, how does the Christian faith relate to other religious traditions? What is the meaning of the uniqueness and sufficiency of Christ as the world’s only Savior? What is the relationship of the Christian faith to culture and specifically, the cultures of those among whom the

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*Paul A. Rader served as the fourteenth general of The Salvation Army, and in March 2001 he was elected as the President of Asbury College. This paper was first presented as the Andrew S. Miller lecture at Asbury College in April 2000.*

seed of the gospel has been or is being sown? To what extent is the Church in mission committed to explore the “mechanics” of mission—methods, strategies, programs, technologies, insights gained by anthropological research and reflection, or from the study of linguistics, communication theory and the like; to what extent should the mission rely upon the demonstration of the Spirit and of power in answer to bold faith and fervent prayer as the gospel is preached by word and deed?

There are other related questions: What does the gospel say to a world where a billion people struggle to survive on less than a dollar a day, while Americans luxuriate in soul-suffocating and spiritually enervating prosperity, dreaming of being millionaires? What is the nature of poverty? And what is the proper goal of programs of community-based transformational development that seek to address the poverty and powerlessness of peoples in the thrall of systems and structures that grind the faces of the poor and deny them dignity and hope? How do these programs relate to the central task of mission?

What are the implications of a “full salvation” for mission? What is the place of “signs and wonders” in mission? What of “spiritual warfare”? What is the nature of evil and the enemy in relation to mission? What are the limits of evil’s power? What are the resources for power encounters? What is the work of the missionary spirit—the “Go-between God” in the fine phrase of John V. Taylor? These and a host of other related concerns are the purview of the missiologist.

Salvationist missionaries over the years have been practitioners of missiological principles, partly as a result of attention to biblical principles, and more often on the basis of innovative, often daring, and pragmatic approaches to the tasks of communicating the gospel, meeting human needs and building communities of Salvation soldiers. Motivated by love and a passionate desire to lead the lost to their only Savior, to bind up the hurting and to set the captives free, they have followed the wind of the Spirit, looked for fields white to harvest and demonstrated the power of the gospel lived sacrificially. In an historic memorandum dated 27 August 1886 the Founder wrote to Officers serving in India, calling for cultural appreciation, identification and adaptation:

You are not bound by any stereotyped or antiquated notions. What is being done in Europe or America, or what has been done in India in the past, or what is being done in the present, need not be any rule to you, unless you can see it is calculated to gain the end you have in view.

Go, my comrades, and pray and look about you, and thus acquaint yourselves with Indian modes of thought and feeling and action, and then adapt yourselves to them, so far as such adaptation shall be consistent with the doctrines of the Bible and the principles of The Army.”

The cost would be great and he knew it.

It will cost something to win India ... It cost something to win you and me and the handful of Soldiers Jesus Christ has in Europe. Rivers of blood have been shed to gain this result, and somebody must be willing to suffer for India, and, I thank God, that I believe many will be forthcoming.

And they were. Forty officers were commissioned for service in India as a result of the International Congress in 1886. And we pray for just such a compelling call to global mission to be sounded and responded to during the International Millennial Congress! That first contingent was processed and sent on their way within five weeks in the summer of 1886. Four months later, 20 other officers sailed for India, followed by another 50 in 1887 and the “Wedding Fifty” in August 1888, celebrating the marriage of Booth–Tucker to the Founder’s daughter, Emma Moss, who adopted the name *Raheeman*. The “Memorial Fifty” took ship for India in October 1890 to mark the promotion to Glory of the Army Mother. Today, there are 3,234 Indian officers, 217,000 soldiers and nearly 46,000 Junior Soldiers in the six Indian territories.

### **“Get Into Their Skins!”**

Led by the indefatigable Frederick Booth–Tucker, who took the name, *Fakir Singh*, the first Army missionaries to India had engaged in what must be regarded as one of the most thorough experiments in missionary identification and cultural adaptation since the Jesuit missionary to India, Robert de Nobili in the 17<sup>th</sup> c. (1577–1656). De Nobili, however, chose to identify with the higher caste Hindus. Booth–Tucker’s biographer underscores the influence upon him of the great 16<sup>th</sup> c. Jesuit missionary, St. Francis Xavier. Booth–Tucker himself refers to de Nobili and Constantin Josephus Beschi (1680–1746), who carried on de Nobili’s work. The Founder, for his part, had urged Tucker to “get into their skins!” The early Army “undauntables,” (so dubbed by the redoubtable Matilda Hatcher in her collection of stories of missionary heroism in India by that title) women and men, took the humble saffron and scarlet garb of the religious mendicant, assumed Indian names and moved barefoot from village to village, begging for their daily rations.

The more extreme forms of sacrificial identification proved impractical over time and were abandoned for more moderate, yet still controversial, practices that gave the Salvationists an acceptance among the people that was denied to others. Booth–Tucker began applying a distinctive caste mark to his forehead in the Army colors. So distinguished, he was travelling with Arnolis Weerasooriya, who was his second–in–command, when a fellow traveler inquired whether Booth–Tucker was, in fact, Weerasooriya’s disciple! But Colonel (Dr.) William Noble, the distinguished American surgeon who gave a lifetime to India and the Catherine Booth Hospital at Nagercoil, drew the line at accepting the practice of abandoning wedding rings for a thin scarlet cord about one’s wedding finger, for example.

In principle, all officers, national or expatriate, of whatever caste or social status, were regarded as equals. The Salvation Army has never deployed a mission organizationally distinct from The Salvation Army in a given region, or the Army internationally. Whatever else the Army may be, it has always been a “permanent mission to the unconverted.” While there has always been a popular use of the term “missionary officer,” it is technically inaccurate. Currently, officers serving out of their own countries are termed “reinforcement officers.” True, the reality did not, and perhaps does not, always match the ideal. Korean officers sometimes complained that expatriate officers who had served in India displayed a colonialist attitude toward them which they resented, not ever having been colonized by a Western nation. Indeed, long after the Presbyterian Church of Korea had come into its own as an independent church body, no Korean officers had attained to senior rank or responsibility. During the largely unrecorded visit of General Bramwell Booth to Korea in 1926, Korean officers demonstrated against what they regarded as patronizing policies toward them. There were en masse resignations and the entire Cadet body was sent home, although the incident was nowhere reported in Army publications of the time. The story is told in some detail in a biography of Colonel “Korea” Smith of New Zealand, written by his daughter–in–law and published in New Zealand in 1993. There are, of course, accounts of these events in Korean.

## **Appropriating the Great Commandment**

Few mission movements have in practice explored more completely the relationship between the Great Commission to disciple the nations (Matt. 28:19–20), to the Great Commandment to love God and neighbor (Matt. 22:37–40). The Founder

was given to speaking of Isaiah's call to "loose the chains of injustice, share food with the hungry, provide shelter to the poor wanderer, and clothing for the naked" (Isa. 58:6-12) as "The Salvation Army Charter." He references the text in his introduction to *Darkest England*. We may find quite cogent the thesis developed in Norman Murdoch's *Origins of The Salvation Army*, but while grateful for his extensive and original research, one remains unconvinced that William Booth, having failed in his evangelical mission, turned to programs of social service as a ploy for keeping his movement afloat. It is a thesis which had been propounded earlier by Peter J. Keating and summarily rejected by General Coutts: "As with any other man of open mind, William Booth had doubtless known a conflict of ideas as to the cause and cure of poverty ... But that he suddenly bethought himself of social service as a gimmick wherewith to restore his ineffective evangelical enterprise is a travesty of his thought and action."<sup>2</sup>

It is the effective integration of these interrelated dimensions of the missionary task that has occupied the thinking and practice of Salvationist missionaries. While the Founder declared that his people were social workers because of their evangelistic zeal and evangelists because of their compassionate commitment to the healing and helping of those they were winning for Christ, social services has, in some instances, become a separate wing of Army operations, distanced from the evangelistic and corps building programs of the movement. General Frederick Coutts, in an often-quoted address delivered in Westminster Abbey during the Centenary International Congress in 1965, affirmed the necessary unity and complementarity of these two dimensions of Army mission.

If we, ourselves, for want of a better way of speaking, refer to our evangelical work and also to our social work, it is not that these are two distinct entities which could operate one without the other. They are but two activities of the one and the same salvation which is concerned with the total redemption of man. Both rely upon the same divine grace. Both are inspired with the same motive. Both have the same end in mind. And, as the gospel has joined them together, we do not propose to put them asunder.<sup>3</sup>

Salvationists understand the price to be paid in holding these aspects of mission together, effectively integrating them in the one mission of redemption and renewal. The professionalization of social services in the United States, in particular, has contributed to the dichotomizing of Army mission. The funding of expanding services by a broad donor base which extends well beyond the Christian community

and a considerable dependence on government contracts with attendant imposition of standards and controls has also tended to isolate social service programming through the week from the spiritual ministries that center on weekend worship and witness activities. Colonel Phil Needham presents an operational paradigm for compassionate services of social concern flowing out of the life and love of the community of faith and service, the Army corps, overflowing in compassionate mission into the surrounding community and out to our parched and needy world.<sup>4</sup> General Albert Orsborn captures this vision poetically:

I must love thee, love must rule me,  
Springing up and flowing forth  
From a childlike heart within me,  
Or my work is nothing worth.  
Love with passion and with patience,  
Love with principle and fire,  
Love with heart and mind and utterance,  
Serving Christ my one desire.<sup>5</sup>

## Transformational Development

More recent reflection and practice have led to emphasis on community-based programs of sustainable development, working *with* rather than *for* communities to meet felt needs, accessing existing resources and empowering communities to identify potentials, mobilize resources and work cooperatively to accomplish common goals. In this regard, address to the growing crisis of HIV/AIDS has afforded an effective entry point for mission. Facilitating these mission initiatives while working toward a transformational development of communities has resulted in a series of well-documented Integrated Mission Workshops facilitated around the world by the International Headquarters HIV/AIDS Technical Assistance Team, headed by Captain (Dr.) Ian Campbell, International Health Services Consultant. These documents constitute a significant field-based contribution to missiological practice and reflection. The Army's distinctive role in this regard is presented in a broad array of case studies in a context of theological reflection in a book edited by a Salvationist physician, Dr. Graham Calvert, *Health, Healing and Wholeness: Salvationist Perspectives*. The book includes a vision and direction statement, growing out of two

historic consultations convened in Sri Lanka and Nagercoil, India in 1993 and 1994 under the theme, "Health, Healing and Wholeness." The statement merits ongoing reflection across the Army world as it engages every Salvationist. It includes the following:

Wholeness is an expression of holiness. In response to the example and command of Christ, and the presence and prompting of the Spirit, we are called to wholeness in all areas of life, and are given authority to participate in ministries of healing ... The Holy Spirit frees and empowers people to seek transformation in all areas of life, resulting in movement toward justice, community change and health ... Love in action is an expression of Salvationist mission. It helps to create an environment in which hope, mutual change and transformation can develop, through God's grace. We demonstrate and experience the Kingdom of God through participation with people in healing.<sup>6</sup>

#### **"The Sinews of the War"**

While idealistically the Army has from the first been committed to the principle of self-support in its overseas operations, it has always looked to the public for financial support, particularly of its service programs, and has too often allowed a mentality of dependence on external aid to be fostered. Self-support was a keystone of the Nevius Method in Korea, for example, that enabled the Presbyterians, who adopted the strategy in the most thorough manner, and the Methodists to multiply churches and believers at a remarkable rate, gaining a virtual denominational hegemony in the country before World War II. Meanwhile, Army operations in Korea were allowed to become dependent on allocations of financial and personnel assistance from London, and the possibilities for growth became limited by available resources from the international center. In 1940 when Japanese authorities ordered that all contact with London be severed and subsidies were discontinued, as they were later during the Korean Conflict as well (1950-1953), Army operations were no longer sustainable. More recently, under national leadership the Army in Korea has made impressive strides toward self-support as a vital aspect of their commitment to a bold growth strategy.

Self-support is a concomitant of self-government. As an international movement which seemed to be influenced more by the policies of Whitehall and the British Foreign Service than by mission theorists such as Roland Allen and Henry Venn in England and Rufus Anderson in the United States, the Army was generally

reluctant to relinquish administrative control (and related financial management) to national leadership. Historically, this has hindered the growth of the Army's work in some contexts. While the numbers of expatriate reinforcement officers have diminished markedly, the Army maintains that there is a continuing role for expatriate presence, though not necessarily, or even ideally, in top leadership roles, as representative of the connectedness of the Army locally to its international fellowship and, indeed to the Church universal. Workers are still urgently needed, both long-term and short-term, officer and lay. The contribution of short-term service and mission team workers is appreciated and has significance and influence far beyond the usefulness of their time on the field. Still, the need remains for those who will give no less than three years, who have the patience and commitment to the fulfillment of their calling that will surmount petty annoyances, administrative delays, necessary procedures and the trials and traumas of cultural adjustment to frighteningly unfamiliar settings and peoples. There are some things that cannot be done without learning the language, immersing oneself in the culture, "getting into their skins," thereby gaining credibility and acceptance.

### **The Globalization of Army Mission**

Under national leadership, significant cross-cultural mission ventures have been sponsored in recent years by traditionally receiving territories in Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean. The forays into Hindu states of Northeast India by the Mizo "Cross Soldiers," is an example. This is part of a growing phenomenon within the global Church of immense significance to the cause of Christ. Of equal importance for the Army has been the movement of personnel from east to west and south to north at various levels of administrative responsibility and front-line ministry. The burgeoning of ethnic ministries to Asian, Hispanic, African and other cultural groupings in Western lands has contributed to this movement. But the contribution of both officer and lay persons from the developing nations has not been limited to work among their own cultural communities.

### **Women in Leadership and Ministry**

The Army has from the beginning sought to afford women an opportunity to realize their full potential in ministry. This has been of particular importance in cultures where traditionally they have been denied access to leadership roles. Jesus Himself ignored social convention and culturally imposed attitudes toward women



as he regularly companioned them to dignity. It is an issue where the gospel and the culture of the kingdom may need to take precedence over local customs and entrenched attitudes and patterns of relationship which demean and disempower women. The training and empowerment of women leaders, both officers and lay, has immeasurably strengthened and advanced the Army's mission worldwide. Having now been granted rank in their own right, women officers, particularly married women officers, in Asia and Africa have assumed a new level of credibility. They are being taken more seriously as officers and are, indeed, taking their own calling and prerogatives as ordained ministers of the gospel and officers of The Salvation Army more seriously. The position and role of women within the Army has been significantly enhanced, and one has been gratified to receive moving expressions of this reality from officers from developing nations, but there is still much ground to be gained. The Army in the West must not allow a backlash reaction to radical feminism and a defensive response to threats to the American family to distance it from its heritage of biblical equality in life and leadership, in grace and gifting for ministry. To do so is to effectively deactivate upwards of half the force for effective mission that God intended to fully deploy.

### **Church Growth**

No area of missiological development has captured the interest of Salvationists more widely than church growth theory. Church growth as a school of missiological study was birthed in a cross-cultural setting. The acknowledged father of the church growth movement, Dr. Donald A. McGavran, sounded the first impassioned pleas to take seriously apostolic priorities in mission as a career missionary to India. His early studies, *Bridges of God* and *How Churches Grow*, explored the ways in which the gospel moves most effectively across cultures, the development of people movements to Christ and the realities of cultural barriers to acceptance of the gospel. McGavran insisted that whatever else the church may be called to do in mission, "a chief and irreplaceable aim of mission" is to so proclaim Christ to all peoples everywhere as to persuade them to become His disciples and dependable members of His Church. This focussed commitment to the salvation of the lost resonates with every true Salvationist.

More slick and simplistic versions of church growth theory have proliferated as it has been popularly adapted to the North American scene. These presentations, though not without value, have sometimes occasioned misunderstanding of the

motivation and methodologies developed in the first instance out of a passionate commitment to effectively communicate the gospel across cultures and to establish authentic, viable and reproducing companies of believers within each people group. Church growth theory was birthed, nurtured, refined, field-tested and extensively documented in the unevangelized world before it became widely known in the Western churches. The Army, for its part, has benefited immeasurably in both the West and other areas of the world by implementing church growth strategies. These have been of particular significance as the Army has come to terms with its ecclesial function as a legitimate expression of the New Testament ideal of the Church in community and mission.

### **The Army as Church**

In reflecting on the issue of motivation for Army “church” growth, it became evident that the will to grow would be determined by the Army’s self-understanding as a legitimate and vital expression of the Church of Jesus Christ. It was necessary therefore to establish the theological and biblical legitimacy of the Army model of churchly life and ministry. For institutional advancement is one thing, but the growth of the body of Christ is quite another. Only a biblically grounded understanding of the churchly being and function of the Army, as a movement and in its local corps expressions, adequately supports and motivates a commitment to growth. Only when the Army is understood as “Community in Mission,” to borrow Colonel Needham’s phrase, do we adequately reinforce growth as a priority goal, avoid the primacy of structure and method over mission, access the correction, direction, and motive power of the New Testament image of the Church militant over a formal militarism, and claim the promise of the Spirit’s life and the Savior’s lordship over and within the body. It is only so that we understand the dynamics and necessities of growth in the living organism, which is the body of Christ, Jesus Christ Himself the head “from whom the whole body, supported and held together by its ligaments and sinews, grows as God causes it to grow” (Col. 2:19).

Traditionally, the Army has eschewed ecclesiastical terminology as being more hindrance than help. And one notes the emergence of worship centers, temples and tabernacles among seeker-sensitive new church plants, assiduously avoiding the term “church” at least in their signage. One can appreciate the sensitivities of Booth’s early militants who did not want to be identified either with the staid institutionalism of the Anglican Establishment or with the sectarian squabbles of the noncon-

forming churches and chapels in Victorian England. Their concern was for demonstrating the reality of the Church and fulfilling its mission. They considered themselves above denominationalism, or “sectarianism” (which the Army Mother was given to denigrating in the most scathing terms). They were intent on being the Church rather than talking about it. So one can sympathize with the ardent rejection of churchly terminology even now candidly expressed on the International Headquarters’ web page discussion forum by the red-hot young Salvationist enthusiasts in Williams Lake, Canada.

Within the past decade, however, the Army has been unavoidably drawn toward an increased understanding and acceptance of its ecclesial identity and function and their implications for the life and ministry of the movement. This is clearly evident in the new handbook of doctrine for Salvationists, *Salvation Story*, in which chapter ten, for the first time in our history, articulates a doctrine of the Church. In particular, this has led to necessary reflection on the inner life of the movement and the ways in which we nurture and sustain that life, evident in the work of the International Spiritual Life Commission and its watershed report, which also merits continuing close review and discussion by Salvationists.

While the Army does not routinely observe the ritual of the Eucharist as part of its worship tradition, it is not anti-sacramental, and there is serious debate as to whether it can be thought of as non-sacramental. For it is the nature of the holiness experience and the Army’s *ethos* of compassionate engagement with the sin and suffering of the world in the name and spirit of Christ, to make the whole of life a sacramental offering: “Offer your bodies as living sacrifices ... this is your spiritual act of worship” (Rom. 12:1). The other reformation *notae* of the Church are clearly evident: the faithful preaching of the Word and the exercise of discipline. More germane to the Army’s distinctive expression of the life and being of the Church are those marks that focus not on the role of the pastor, but on the life of the people. The appropriate images are of the Church as pilgrim, apostle, servant and soldier. Stephen Neill speaks of the marks of “missionary vitality, suffering and the mobility of the pilgrim.”<sup>7</sup> Bishop Lesslie Newbigin questioned the adequacy of the marks for defining the Church at all:

The Church does not exist by virtue of something which it is in itself ... Every attempt to define it by marks ascertainable by simple observation and apart from faith, violates the law of its being ... It exists wherever God in His sovereign freedom calls it into being by calling His own into the fellowship

of His Son.”<sup>8</sup>

In 1881, *The Methodist* declared “Where the divine fire is at work creating in human hearts a real contrition for sin, consuming the deep-rooted selfishness in which all evil has its roots, turning the vile into the holy, the sot into saint—there is a true church. The Salvationists have reared their altar; best of all, the fire has fallen! ... Show us the bright flame upon your altar, and that settles your claim to the apostolicity.”<sup>9</sup>

Our authenticity as a vital expression of the New Testament ideal of the Church rests in our spiritual integrity as a holy people, fully alive in Christ, aflame with a passion for God and for souls, living under the lordship of our heavenly Captain, open to the wind of the Spirit, ready to serve out of love for Christ, committed to the mission of God for the redemption and healing of the world for which Christ died.

### Asburian Contributions to the Literature of Missiology

Asburians, professors past and present, and alumni, are contributing significantly to the literature of contemporary missiological reflection on the Army and its life and mission. Dr. Ed McKinley’s history of *The Salvation Army in America, Marching to Glory*, explores many strategically significant dimensions of the Army’s life and development as it was caught up in the vortex of historical dynamics in American life. No understanding of the uniqueness of the American expression of the Army is likely to be complete or accurate without recourse to McKinley’s history.

Dr. David Rightmire has produced an intriguing study on the interrelation of Salvationist national leadership and the cultural, historical and political factors which so profoundly influenced the perceptions and priorities of the fabled leader of Japanese Salvationists, Commissioner Gunpei Yamamuro, particularly with regard to the shrine issue. The book is *Salvationist Samurai: Gunpei Yamamuro and the Rise of The Salvation Army in Japan*. The study is of special interest because of our own long acquaintance with those who lived through the other side of the story in Korea during the period of Korea’s annexation to Japan from 1910 to 1945. Rightmire’s work on the Sacraments is also relevant to the issues we have surfaced in this review.

Dr. Norman Murdoch continues to produce historical studies which often deal with what might be described as the largely unexplored underside of Army history. And while one may not be inclined to accept his conclusions in every case, one can only appreciate and admire the diligence with which he pursues his original re-

search.

Dr. Roger J. Green has brought the perspective of his biblical and theological understanding to his reflections in *War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth*, as well as his contemporary biography *Catherine Booth: Co-founder of The Salvation Army*.

Lt. Colonel (Dr.) Lyell M. Rader Jr. has produced a community-based model for curriculum innovation in the formation of officers of The Salvation Army, drawing on his extensive experience in the development of continuing education and distance-learning models for officer training in Sri Lanka.

Major (Dr.) John Rhemick has contributed an insightful study which, among other things, traces the manner in which the Army effectively adapted its approach in mission to the image culture of the time. The fruit of his doctoral dissertation is distilled in *A New People of God: A Study in Salvationism*.

Dr. Jonathan Raymond, President of William and Catherine Booth College in Winnipeg, Canada, and Dr. Roger Green, chair of biblical and theological studies at Gordon College, have been the moving forces in the creation of the Army's first academic journal, *Word & Deed*. It is making a significant contribution to missiological reflection on the life and mission of the Army.

Dr. Ronald Holz continues to contribute significantly to the literature of Army musicology, exploring the unique contribution of music to the advancement of the Army's mission and the enrichment of its worship experience, including his definitive biography of Erik Leidzen. There is a doctoral thesis yet waiting to be written on Army ethnomusicology. The rich diversity of distinctive cultural expressions of Army music will be dramatically evident at the International Millennial Congress in Atlanta.

There are doubtless others who might be mentioned, but these suggest both the range of scholarly studies that have been produced and the manner in which they relate to Salvation Army missiology.

## **Strategic Internationalism**

Internationalism is more than sentimentality; it is a strategic reality. Global networking by means of the Internet and the proliferating use of computer technologies have not only facilitated communication in recent years, they have strengthened the sense of connectedness, cohesiveness and common purpose in mission.

The increasing movement of mission and work teams and youth service corps units across the world, not to mention musical sections, has heightened awareness of both need and opportunity for direct participation in mission. New measures are being implemented to facilitate broader sharing of resources in funding, expertise, and personnel globally with a view to more strategic and effective support to our mission objectives.

As the Army moves into the new millennium, it is infused with a new sense of global partnership in mission, a more mature awareness of its ecclesial being and mission, positioned, prepared and empowered to play its part in God's strategy for reaching all the peoples of earth with the saving gospel of Christ. What a time to be alive and a vital part of this global Army moving forward into God's future!

*Notes*

1. Arthur F. Glasser, "Missiology" in Walter E. Elwell, ed. *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Book House, 1984), p. 724.
2. Frederick Coutts, *Bread for My Neighbor: The Social Influences of William Booth* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978), pp. 18–19.
3. Frederick Coutts, quoted in John D. Waldron, ed. *Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army* (Toronto: The Salvation Army, 1986), p. 145.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
5. *The Song Book of The Salvation Army* (Verona, NJ: The Salvation Army, 1984), Song #522, verse #3.
6. Graham Calvert, ed. *Health, Healing & Wholeness: Salvationist Perspectives* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1997), pp. 179–182.
7. See John Howard Yoder, "A People in the World: Theological Interpretation" in Leo Garrett, ed. *The Concept of the Believer's Church* (Scottsdale, PA: Harald Press, 1969), pp. 261–262.
8. Lesslie Newbigin, *The Household of God: Lectures on the Nature of the Church* (New York: Friendship Press, 1954), p. 150.
9. *The Methodist*, quoted in Robert Sandall, *The History of the Salvation Army, Volume II, 1878–1886* (London: Thomas Nelson and Sons, 1950), p. 126.

# Spiritual Leadership in The Salvation Army

*Jonathan S. Raymond*

We live in a time of remarkable transition. We have left the industrial age and are entering some other unnamed age for which we have not yet formed an appropriate label. No matter how we manage to describe it—post-industrial, post-modernity, the space age, the information age—for sure it will not be characterised as “same old, same old.” The future will not be more of the same. Our ideas of leadership are changing with the times, and this includes how we think about spiritual leaders as well. The days may be gone when we think of spiritual leaders as super heroes of the faith who create dramatic change and occasion a worshipful following. New metaphors and paradigms for leadership are emerging and changing how we think of leaders, and in particular, spiritual leaders.

I want to thank Commissioner Norman Howe and this committee for the invitation to reflect and share on this topic —“Spiritual Leadership in The Salvation Army.” It has occasioned for me an opportunity for intentional exposure to writers I might not have entertained, for reflection on ideas I might have ignored and for dialogues into which I would have otherwise not entered. As a result, the journey to this moment of sharing some thoughts with you today has been illuminating and it con-

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tinues to deepen my convictions about the future of the Army.

In my remarks to you today, I wish to suggest five propositional truths regarding spiritual leadership in The Salvation Army. These reflect neither a comprehensive understanding of the topic nor one without its flaws and shortcomings. These five propositional truths about spiritual leadership in The Salvation Army emerge in my remarks to you today as follows:

1. Personal holiness in the context of a full salvation is Spiritual Leadership's essential character.
2. Social holiness in the context of Christian community is Spiritual Leadership's calling.
3. Ecological responsiveness is Spiritual Leadership's task orientation.
4. Responsiveness to a suffering world completes it.
5. A faith-based certainty (assurance) about identity and mission empowers spiritual leadership as partnership with the divine.

### **Personal Holiness**

A spiritual leader in The Salvation Army lives out the theology of the Army. Ours is a relational theology of grace and restoration. An orthodox understanding of our salvation is that it is far more than a forensic, legal moment of justification by faith in which we are saved from the uttermost of sin. Indeed, our salvation is truly a restoration to Christ-likeness and, therefore, to personal holiness. Whether as a commissioner or a newly commissioned local officer, Salvation Army spiritual leadership seeks to: 1) mature and grow by faith in holiness; and 2) experience purity of heart. With the words of the Psalmist, the spiritual leader pleads, "Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me" (Ps. 51:10–12).

As we may say of all humankind, Salvationists are a predestined people. We are predestined to holiness. It is God's plan from the beginning that all persons everywhere live as the *Imago Dei*, the "Image of God." This was God's plan and remains His plan for our lives, not in the "sweet by and by," but now, for all people at all

times. This is our destiny. Anything else and anything less is not an option. God does not offer a plan "B." The spiritual leader in The Salvation Army embraces his or her destiny. He or she responds to the call to holiness and is cleansed and equipped to serve with Christ to bring to all others the good news of our destiny, a full salvation and restoration. As the songwriter has written: "'Til the whole world knows, 'Til the whole world knows ..."

Spiritual leaders in The Salvation Army understand holiness to be a matter of both maturity and purity along a continuum of God's grace. The words of another old song in the Army speaks of the continuum of God's grace and goes like this: "Jesus is mighty to save! Jesus is mighty to save! From the uttermost [of sin] to the utter most [of Christ-likeness],/Mighty to save!"

General Fredrick Coutts, in his *Call To Holiness*, underscores the importance of an unfolding, maturing, increasingly intimate holiness experience when he speaks of Christian perfection and quotes three verses: Philippians 3:15, "All of us who are mature should take such a view of things"; Ephesians 4:13, "until we all become mature"; and Hebrews 6:1 "Let us ... go on to maturity."

For some Salvationists, Fredrick Coutts' emphasis on holiness as a process is much preferred over Samuel Logan Brengle's strong orientation to holiness as a crisis experience. A close reading of Coutts and Brengle reveals their mutual focus on both process and crisis, though emphases may differ. We find this discussion of process or crisis alive and carried on in contemporary Wesleyan scholarship. Recently, Randy Maddox, author of *Responsible Grace*, proposed more emphatically than Coutts that holiness is a matter of process and daily handling responsibly the grace God gives us. Maddox bases his position on his interpretation of John Wesley's writings on holiness as influenced by Eastern Orthodoxy and by the writings of the early church fathers. In contrast to Maddox's position on holiness as process is contemporary Wesleyan scholar, Kenneth Collins, in his work *The Scripture Way of Salvation* and subsequent writings. Collins attempts to correct Maddox's discounting of Moravian and Lutheran influences on Wesley which emphasize a tradition of holiness as crisis.

For the spiritual leader in The Salvation Army, I wish to propose a juxtaposynthesis of process and crisis to say that personal holiness is both and more. You intuitively know and experience juxtaposyntheses. When two colours, blue and yellow, are laid side by side, that is juxtaposed to each other, green emerges as a synthesis. When we add curry and hot pepper to sweet potato soup, a culinary

synthesis takes place, especially with a little lime juice added. Or when the *Pieta*, Mary holding the crucified Christ in her arms, is decorated with coloured Christmas lights, we may reflect on the vulgarities of Christmas commercialism. With God's wonderful gift of our minds, we experience juxtaposyntheses in which the whole is truly greater than the sum of its parts.

I believe that holiness is our destiny. I believe it is a juxtaposynthesis of process and crisis, of Coutts and Brengle, of Maddox and Collins. I believe John Bunyan got it right in the first place in his *Pilgrim's Progress*. Personal holiness is sustained intimacy as both journey and encounter. Throughout the journey there are opportunities for qualitatively different processes and encounters. Not all encounters are crises of cleansing. Some encounters are of healing and reconciliation, some of cleansing, while others are of compassion. A consequence of faithfully continuing the journey with Christ, walking in the light of God and in the Spirit, is that by God's grace, and through encounters with his grace, we grow and mature in our likeness to Christ.

Another consequence is that we encounter Christ, and he encounters us along the pathway—the pathway of duty if you will—of obedience. This was Gideon's experience in the book of Judges. Gideon passed through a series of encounters with God; He encountered opportunities with risks, opportunities for obedience. God's responses to Gideon's obedience that lead to strengthened faith, followed by further encounters. Gideon experienced an interactive, dynamic relationship of deepening intimacy with God through the journey. This too was the disciple's experience with Jesus. It was the Apostle Paul's as well. The Founder, William Booth, captured the essence of the journey and its encounters when he penned Salvation Army doctrines 9 and 10:

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Jesus Christ.

We believe that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified and that their whole spirit, soul, and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Continuing in a state of salvation is continuing the salvation journey along the pathway of restoration to holiness and service. How the journey goes and what we encounter along the way depends upon our continual obedient faith in Christ. Acts 2:42 says the early church grew as they continually devoted themselves to the means

of grace—good teaching, fellowship, the breaking of bread and prayer. These means of grace were God’s means of being present and revealing Himself. They promoted a maturing of their faith. It was a sustained, obedient faith practicing together in community the presence of Christ in the Christian life. It remains so today. It is living the life, stepping out each day into a journey of continual consecration. What the spiritual leader consecrates, God sanctifies wholly, completely, entirely and makes holy, set apart for Him and with Him in service.

Another way of thinking about personal holiness as journey and encounter for the spiritual leader in The Salvation Army is that each new day Jesus meets us at our heart’s door. He is not there knocking to come in. Rather, He is at the door on the inside inviting us to go out with Him into His life to encounter His plan for the day and to encounter those He loves and those He plans to serve throughout the day in partnership with us. He invites us to journey with Him and to meet, and greet, and serve others. Together with Christ and with others, the spiritual leader provides leadership that creates the conditions for others to journey as well, and in so doing they experience restoration to holiness.

This is the heart of spiritual leadership—responding to the personal call to walk with Jesus each day in holiness as journey and encounters, and to bring others along as well.

### **Social Holiness**

Spiritual leaders, who contribute to creating the conditions for others’ journeys, encounters and restoration, do so as they are immersed in social holiness. John Wesley was known for saying “The gospel of Christ knows of no religion but social, no holiness but social holiness.” Brengle and Coutts agreed. We engage a relational theology of grace modeled after our Lord and the Trinity—The three—in—one relationally integrated yet distinct from one another—“Three persons in the Godhead undivided in essence,” in communion with each other and by grace in communion with the spiritual leader. The Trinity models community and the social life of God and God’s people.

Spiritual leaders, modeling after the Holy Spirit who is the *paraclete*, seek out others and come along side. The *paraclete* draws close, is a presence, brings comfort and guidance and remains available as a companion for the journey. Social holiness is not a euphemism for The Salvation Army’s social services, though we would pray that all Army social services were settings of social holiness. Perhaps a

more powerful, more succinct understanding of social holiness in spiritual leadership is the social ecology of holiness and restoration. In Acts 2:42, as the early church continually devoted themselves to the means of grace, there must have been spiritual leaders who created, promoted and fostered the conditions for new Christians' journey, growth and encounters. The conditions are often not only personal, but also social.

Colonel Phil Needham makes this point when he writes in the most recent issue of *Word & Deed* (Fall 2000) that holiness is not unidirectional. It does not just work in one direction. A holy people are not merely an aggregation of Spirit-filled individuals that achieve a critical mass of holiness. The spiritual ecology of Christian community represents the conditions within which the Holy Spirit moves and does its best work in the hearts of others. Spiritual leadership in the West may struggle with this idea of a social ecology of holiness and often fails to create the conditions for immersion, growth and encounter. This is because in the West we are shackled to a belief system that honors rugged individualism, personal striving and cultish acts of hero-worship. We love to think of holiness in John Wayne, Clint Eastwood, and Bruce Willis (or Bruce Lee) terms. Leadership, including spiritual leadership, particularly in the West, is defined as driving change. It celebrates and idolizes as a hero one who faces crisis and makes those changes which resolve the crisis. This leads to one-way thinking, that if we can gather together enough holy individuals to establish critical mass, we will achieve social holiness of community. The opposite may actually be more the case. When the community of believers comes together as a people set apart in the presence of a holy God, holiness and restoration can and does follow. This was true in the life of the early Church. This was true of the Methodist movement and its social transformational power in John Wesley's day. This was also true of The Salvation Army throughout the world in its beginnings.

Scripture reminds us: "if My people, who are called by My name, will humble themselves and pray ..." (2 Chron. 7:14); "I bound the whole house of Israel ... to be My people for My renown and praise and honor ..." (Jer. 13:11).

Spiritual leaders help others come together as a people to seek God's face, experience His presence and know in whose presence they stand. Spiritual leaders create the conditions of immersion for others in the ecology of holiness found in relationship to God and to each other. Spiritual leadership promotes a social holiness that is lived out in community, in righteousness and in social justice. They promote the conditions in which sanctification spills over into liberation. There is a direct tie

between social holiness and social justice and the fulfillment of Scripture: "And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God" (Mic. 6:8).

### **The Social–Ecological Nature of Spiritual Leadership**

Leadership is traditionally viewed as having vision and driving change toward that vision. The spiritual leader jumps metaphorically into the driver's seat and manipulates the gears and wheels of heavy equipment to change the direction and speed of the machine we call the church or corps. This is a metaphor which is a vestige of the industrial age where machines and skilled operators reigned. But it is the wrong metaphor. Leading is not driving change by manipulating and operating heavy equipment as powerful and effective as such imagery may be.

A more powerful and more biblical metaphor is the leader as gardener. Is it of any consequence for our discussion that the God–man interface first took place in a garden? Scripture says that we are like a tree planted by a stream ... Jesus says of Himself and of our relationship to Him—"I am the vine and you are the branches. My father is the gardener" (John 15:1, 5). Ecological metaphors are abundant. Rather than thinking of spiritual communities as a large machine to be driven somewhere, a more profound way is to think of them as "communities of interest" which have a capacity to bring forth new realities, as does a well–cared–for garden. Gardening requires vision—an image of a desirable future—but it also requires intentional acts of sowing seeds, nurturing growth conditions, including pulling weeds, pruning, watering and regulating temperatures.

Spiritual leaders tend to their gardens even when it means their own self–denial. We read in Scripture that Greeks sought to speak with Jesus just before Passover and His journey to the cross. There is no mention that Jesus ever actually spoke with them. Instead, Jesus says to His disciple Andrew, "I tell you the truth, unless a kernel of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains only a single seed. But if it dies, it produces many seeds" (John 12:24).

Spiritual leaders in The Salvation Army must think, live and die to self ecologically. They must be like the gardener promoting the conditions for the community to live and grow together in holiness, producing the fruit of the Spirit. No one ever commanded seeds to grow. No gardener stands over the seeds and shouts "Grow seeds, grow!" Instead, the gardener goes about his or her work, not controlling the seeds, but rather influencing the conditions under which the seeds will realize their

potential, their destiny, God's design for their existence. When is the last time you thought of cadets as seeds and the training college as a garden?

### **Spiritual Leadership in the Context of Suffering Humanity**

In the provocative words of General John Gowans, The Salvation Army was invented to save souls, grow saints and serve suffering humanity. The Canada and Bermuda Territory has captured this statement in a lovely poster. The USA Southern Territory has reduced the statement further to an easily remembered three S's: Souls, Saints and Service. Such efficiency of words, however, may be achieved at a price of potentially forgetting who it is we are called to serve—suffering humanity.

Spiritual leadership does not forget! We must not forget, and we work so that others may remember. We remember a suffering world where:

-32,000 children under the age of five die of preventable causes each day. For every child that dies, two more live with significant mental and/or physical impairment.

-140 million children are missing out on primary education each year because they must work at home, in the fields, in sweatshops or on the streets.

-30 some countries in Africa, Asia and East Europe suffer from armed conflict in which 90% of the casualties are civilian.

-In Chechnya, 40% of civilian casualties are children, and in Sarajevo in 1995, 25% of all children were wounded by the conflict.

-One in five of the world's six billion people (1.2 billion) struggle to survive on an income of less than one dollar a day.

-More than 50% of the world's population are under the age 25.

-One billion of the world's young people are teenagers deciding whether to smoke, drink alcohol, experiment with drugs or have their first sexual encounter. These are high-risk years with life-long consequences.

-Half of all HIV and AIDS cases occur among young people under the age of 25.

-In the African continent, 2.5 million people are infected with AIDS and 95% don't know it. Only 20,000 Africans are receiving drugs for AIDS.

-30 percent of women in Latin America and 50% to 60% in sub-Saharan Africa have their first child as teenagers.

-The poor account for 80% of the world's youth.

Europe is filled with young refugees, Africa with child soldiers, Latin America with street children, and Asia with child labourers while North America's children are overweight, overly entertained and numbed by affluence.

At no other time in modern history has such a large degree of the world's human resources been so youthful. The world's population is now expanding by 90 million people a year. This is roughly the population of Mexico. Ninety-seven percent of the population growth between 1990 and 2050 will be in developing countries. Of the 1.1 billion adolescents in the world today who are 10 to 19 years of age, 913 million live in the world's poorest nations.

Employment opportunities will not keep pace with population growth. Between 1990 and 2010, North Africa's economically active population, for example, is expected to grow by 29 million, but only 5 million new jobs will be created during the same time. The gap between the world's "haves" and "have-nots" is widening. The share of global income of the poorest 20% of the world's population has dropped from 2.3% to 1.4% since the late 1960s. The assets of 358 people in the world is greater today than the combined annual income of 45% (2.6 billion) of the world's people.

Add to this a litany of related issues that include racism, intentional female illiteracy, crime, violence, child prostitution, sexual abuse and exploitation and it brings us a deeper appreciation of the words of Jesus: "Let the little children to come to me ..." (Matt. 19:14), and Scripture which says:

When He saw the crowds, He had compassion on them, because they were harassed and helpless, like sheep without a shepherd. Then He said to His disciples, "The harvest is plentiful but the workers are few. Ask the Lord of the harvest, therefore, to send out workers into His harvest field" (Matt. 9:36-38).

We remember Jesus' fulfillment of scripture from Isaiah when He said:

The Spirit of the Lord is on Me, because He has anointed Me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent Me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (Luke 4:18-19).



Spiritual leadership sings General Albert Orsborn's words: "Except I am moved with compassion, how dwelleth thy Spirit in me?"

Spiritual leadership sees the connection between social holiness and social justice. It does not forget the poor, the disenfranchised, the marginalized, the despised, the oppressed and the abused. It does not suffer amnesia nor is it distracted by the entertainment cultures of affluence and materialism. Spiritual leadership, from commissioners to commissioned local officers, advocates for the poor, washes their feet, and works for their redemption, restoration and liberation. Spiritual leadership identifies with Jesus by identifying with the poor, remembering Christ's words: "Whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers of Mine, you did for Me" (Matt. 25:40).

Spiritual leadership identifies with the Scripture verse in Isaiah 49:6: "It is too small a thing for you to be My servant to restore the tribes of Jacob and bring back those of Israel I have kept. I will also make you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring My salvation to the ends of the earth."

Spiritual leadership sees that it is too small a thing to just stop at personal holiness and that social-ecological holiness must be expressed in social justice, that the Great Commandment is expressed in the Great Commission, that the only thing that truly counts is faith expressing itself in love, actively identifying with a needy, suffering world.

### **Identity and Mission**

Spiritual leadership in The Salvation Army finds its identity and mission in the midst of God's grace and salvation. It is central to our Wesleyan distinctive that as we practice various means of grace, or in Randy Maddox's terms, as we respond to the grace God gives us, we come to be increasingly aware of God's presence and of His identity. It is in the context of an increased awareness of God's presence, and an understanding of His identity, that faith grows and matures. This is why Jesus says "Abide with me! Walk with me! Journey with me!" It is in His presence and by seeing His identity as He reveals Himself to us that we discover our identity—who we are in Christ and who we were and would be outside of an intimate relationship with Him. And in His presence, taking on our unique expression of His identity, we too have a presence in this world. Christ has a presence through us. From His presence and identity in us, by His grace given and received, we have a new identity and a profound presence in the world. We are salt and light, preserving, illuminating and

restoring that which was lost. This is the story of the woman at the well, who one day in Christ's presence and by the revelation of His identity, encountered Jesus and became a transformed, restored presence in her village.

Spiritual leadership in The Salvation Army seeks God's presence, identifies completely with Jesus Christ, seeks the Holy Spirit's constant in-filling and actively seeks to be a Spirit-filled presence in the world, co-labouring with Christ for His glory.

Identity reflects being. Mission is doing. Mission is always informed by identity as the doing always comes out of being. Spiritual leaders attend to their being—being in Christ, being holy as He is holy, being responsible to handle the grace God gives them and then to do mission and ministry. Out of this grounding in being like Jesus, spiritual leaders help others to fulfill their destiny of restoration to Christ-likeness, and to come also to be co-laborers with Jesus serving Him and others.

You have a very high privilege, by the grace of God, to prepare spiritual leaders for The Salvation Army in the form of cadets who as officer spiritual leaders will go on to prepare others. It is a most sacred trust. With Christ Jesus, you are up to the task as you live out our ninth doctrine remembering the Apostle Paul's words to the Philippians: "continue to work out your salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God who works in you to will and to act according to His good purpose" (2:12, 13). And John Wesley's favorite Scripture verse: "The only thing that counts is faith expressing itself through love" (Gal. 5:6).

God bless all Salvation Army Training Principals!

# Christian Conversion

*Graham Harris*

“Men become Christians in different ways. There can be no stereotyping of conversion.”<sup>1</sup>

## **Religious Conversion**

There is a felt human need for change. This may, or may not be, common to the whole of the human race, but change from what is regarded as “worse” to “better” is inimical to most major religious faiths.

The Salvation Army *Handbook of Doctrine*, simply indicates that “Conversion is an inward spiritual change wrought by the Holy Spirit.”<sup>2</sup> It may be helpful if we consider the history of this important term and consider what has contributed to Christendom’s understanding of it.

Personal change in the religious vocabulary of ancient Christians, Jews and pagans was termed “conversion,” and it was understood to be remarkable. It is reported by Lucian of Samosata that one early convert to faith in the chief god of the Greek pantheon said, (in words that might be used by any Christian convert of Jesus Christ’s action in their lives): “Don’t you think it wonderful? In the name of Zeus, that once a slave, I am now free! ... once witless and befogged, now saner?”

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**Christian/Biblical Conversions—Definitions**

Conversion can imply the “conversion of [from] the original experience.”<sup>3</sup> In this theory, the word “conversion” has the meaning of renewal by means of a return to the original source. Such a view may have something to say to the field of religious conversion in terms of a return to the creator/God/the truth. However, since the research of Freud, the word “conversion” may be found in pathological psychology, where it has naturally acquired an entirely different significance. “Conversion hysteria” means the transformation of an unconscious psychic content into a phenomenon of the somatic sphere, such as a tic, convulsions or other visible disturbances. In this sense, conversion implies a mutation from psychic to somatic phenomena that are equivalent or, better, correlative.<sup>4</sup> In such, the dramatic is regarded as very important.

In the study of Christian conversion there are certainly to be found evidences of hysteria, and in particular of what some have called “mass hysteria.” But, by no means can this account for the results of Christian conversion which are those dramatic and long-lasting changes which may or may not be manifested by physical evidences, whether these are of a physical, sociological or psychological nature.

In other cases religious conversion has become identified with those spiritual attitudes which are merely aspirations toward the attainment of an immediate peace, or the achievement of a death without fear. Christianity, on the contrary, whether it be specific or generic (that is “religiousness”) necessarily implies the appropriation of values, which are more universal and transcendent, and have to do with definite change.

Conversion is the subject of many descriptions. Editors Newton Malony and Samuel Southard<sup>5</sup> described a variety of types and methods of religious conversion, including Islamic and Hindu conversions, and methodologies of organization such as The Unification Church and Hare Krishna. But the specific subject which will concern us here is that of Christian conversion as, first of all, defined by the various authors and participants in the Scriptural dialogue.

The word “conversion” does not often appear in the Bible. There are other words and terms that are deemed to explain just what is meant by this term, such as “repentance,” “regeneration,” “being born again” or “born from above.” It is important to note that in the New Testament all of these words are related to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

In biblical theological thought there is an expressed need for conversion. Man

has turned away from God and from God's purposes for human life. Colossians 1:32 expresses this in terms of estrangement, and Romans 6:23 indicates the great gap that exists between God and His creation. Sin is depicted in Scripture as a turning away from God. The result is that all people share the same state.

The consistent call in both Hebrew and New Testament Scriptures is for people to return to God. In the Hebrew Scriptures repentance is often expressed by such words as "turn" and "return." The idea behind the use of these words in a religious sense is that of rebellious subjects coming back to serve their rightful king, or a faithless wife returning to her husband. The call to "turn" is most poignantly expressed in Jeremiah 3:1-4:4, and in particular 3:12,13: "Return, faithless Israel," declares the Lord. 'I will frown on you no longer, for I am merciful,' says the Lord; 'I will not be angry forever. Only acknowledge your guilt—you have rebelled against the Lord your God.'"

The problem for humankind may be couched in the question, "How can people return to God?" Scripture indicates that the individual cannot accomplish the transition: "No one can come to Me [Jesus Christ] unless the Father who sent Me draws him" (John 6:44). Paul adds the reassertion of the essential activity of God: "to open their eyes and turn from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, so that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me" (Acts 26:18).

The New Testament indicates that there are two different kinds of life (in Galatians 5:16 these two forms are described as "flesh" and "Spirit") in which a person may share, and the passing from one form of life to the other is both momentous and radical. This passage is described in 2 Corinthians 5:17 as a "new creation." And the believer is encouraged to "clothe yourselves with the new self," (Eph. 4:24), and a new birth (John 1:13, 3:1-8, 1 Pet. 1:3, 23, 2:2, and James 1:18). Thus, the writers see the change that has come to be called "conversion" as momentous and radical. This change was an utterly sincere repentance and was in strong contrast to the attitude of Pharisaic religion, which stressed outward observance rather than inward turning (Mark 7:6, Luke 18:9-14).

The earliest commandment of Jesus Christ regarding life changing seems to be encapsulated in the words of the "Great Commission" of Matthew 28:19: "Therefore, Go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:19).

Here are combined two conversion terms: "make disciples" and "baptism." Thus

began the “conversion” work; this was the purpose of the apostolic work and preaching. The mark of its success was baptizing new converts. Christianity thus began in a preaching–revival atmosphere that quickly spread across the known world. The earliest additions to the Church occurred because of the Apostle Peter’s preaching on the day of Pentecost. According to Acts 2:4 some 3,000 people were converted. It is not recorded what the changes were to these people’s lives.<sup>6</sup>

However, New Testament conversion came to have a variety of meanings marked by the authors of various books in particular ways: “No student of the New Testament can fail to notice the various phrases and analogies which are used to describe the way[s] God seeks to deal with the souls of men.”<sup>7</sup>

It might have been thought that the process of conversion would be identical with the churches’ early practice, which flowed from its theology. But this was not altogether so, because in theology, conversion was comprised of a variety of meanings even though they might be now classified under the single term “conversion.” For example, conversion in the book of Acts comprises not only the sense of repentance, but also faith in Jesus Christ (Acts 5:31, and in the preaching of Stephen in Acts 7, and in the message of John the Baptist in Acts 13:23–25).

In theology, conversion came to be recognized and defined in terms of two basic elements of which it is thought to consist: grace and aspiration. By that it would appear that religious conversion is a work of the unmerited favor of God and that it is carried out in response to the creation of lofty desire in the convert. In this theory, conversion would seem to be largely the work of God, and the human part is “aspiration.”

## Conversion in the Biblical Record

In the Synoptic Gospels the language and dynamics of conversion are penitential, and they prefer the Greek term *metanoia* used among other sects. From the moment that John the Baptist appears, *metanoia* is the essential condition of entry into the kingdom of God. In proclaiming the kingdom, however, the synoptic Jesus joined conversion and belief, that is, belief in the good news that the kingdom has come: “The time has come ... The kingdom of God is near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15; see also Matt. 4:17). The fusion of these two elements proved important for later generations because faith, both as an emotional and intellectual response, soon entered the world of conversion and became part of the

confessional creed of those entering into Christianity.

The word *metanoia* would seem to have a very detailed meaning. A study of classical literature indicates that conversion means: (1) to know after, after-knowledge; (2) to change the mind as the result of this after-knowledge; (3) in consequence of this change of mind, to regret the course pursued; and (4) a change of conduct for the future, springing from all the preceding.<sup>8</sup>

*Metanoia*, in fact, means making a 180 degree turn. That is, going in the opposite direction than one that has been followed up to that point. Here emerges the important element that will be repeated, that conversion was regarded as radical change.

### Paul's View of Conversion

To understand the Pauline idea of conversion it is also necessary to understand the Pauline concept of sin. Paul views sin as serious. Though he is not obsessed with it, as some of his detractors suppose, he does regard people at large as being "slaves to sin" (Rom. 6:17, 20). He used the most vivid imagery to indicate this when he said that people are "sold as a slave to sin" (Rom. 7:14), just as a slave may be sold by its master. Paul sees this sin as pervasive. But it is possible for people to change from a life of sin and disobedience to God to one of freedom in Christ (Rom. 8:1,2,9).

Paul uses the metaphor of baptism to illustrate the change that is brought about in life:

Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life (Rom. 6:3,4).

A second image that Paul used to describe conversion is the new creation. Paul believed that the key to transformation is God's revelation in Christ and that after an encounter with Christ a person is made new. This revelation is one that wholly disrupts a person's life. Paul's life prior to his conversion had been one of darkness from which he was delivered. Although it was a life in which he faithfully maintained all that pertained to Judaism, he came to consider it as rubbish (Phil. 3:8). For both the apostle and the disciples, the revelation means transformation from death to life in Christ, that is, a living bond with the risen Savior, rooted in sharing life with Him in the here and now. As a result of this transformation the person is made a new creation:

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to Himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ, not counting men's sins against them. And He has committed to us the message of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:17–19).

This new creation is also described by Paul as being a “new self” (Col. 3:9–10) and also as a dying to self and rising again to new life in Christ (Rom. 6:2–8). For Paul this changed state gave him an utter aversion toward his former life.

### John's View of Conversion

John also viewed conversion as a transformation. In conversion, a person goes from darkness into light, and one who so moves has “the light of life” (John 8:52). Such a transformation involves an event as traumatic as birth. To the potential convert Nicodemus, Jesus makes the point unmistakably:

‘I tell you the truth, no one can see the kingdom of God unless he is born again ... no one can enter the kingdom of God unless he is born of water and the Spirit. Flesh gives birth to flesh, but the Spirit gives birth to spirit’ (John 3:3–6).

The issue is not simply the renewal or even the reformation of the subject, but a new origin, a birth from above that breaks one's ties with this world and its evil ways.<sup>9</sup>

Using the dramatic contrast for which John's work is noted, conversion may be understood in terms of a translation from “death to life” (John 5:24). This new life is bestowed by Christ. When Jesus asks for a drink from Jacob's well from the Samaritan woman, she is puzzled not only by the fact that a Jew would ask a Samaritan for a drink but also by Jesus' statement that He gives “living water” (4:10) that becomes a “spring of water welling up to eternal life” (4:14). Here it is the Christ who so bestows the life.

In John it is significant that conversion is set in the radical terms of a new birth, which is also associated with the rite of baptism (3:5).

### Luke's View of Conversion

Luke prefers to speak of conversion in terms of repentance terminology, especially *metanoia*. This he expands in his gospel to include joyful reconciliation and forgiveness. It is suggested that the model for Luke's theorizing about conversion is



the parable of the lost sheep (Luke 15:4–7) in which astonishing, even drastic, measures are taken. The shepherd leaves the 99 in the desert and embarks on a search for one who did not exactly stray, but got lost. The shepherd mounts the lost one on his shoulders, then gathers his friends and neighbors to rejoice with him because, “I have found my lost sheep” (Luke 15:6).

Conversion is the major theme in Luke’s second volume, Acts. Luke weaves 21 conversion accounts into his work. He continues to use the language of repentance. The Lucan Paul sums up his entire apostolic career in one verse: “First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and to the Gentiles also, I preached that they should repent and turn to God,” a call that initiated the process of conversion.

But according to Luke, it is a process, one that begins with faith. It is important to also consider here the place of the evangelist’s message by asking the question, “Can one have faith without first hearing the gospel?”

Luke has a marked preference for the phrase, “to become a believer,” and frequently calls converts “believers.” He characterized believers in his version of the gospel parable of the sower as “those with a noble and good heart, who hear the Word [this is what Luke means for one to “believe”] retain it, and by persevering produce a crop” (Luke 8:15). This believer is one who has been involved in an act of repentance and has faith in Christ. As a consequence, he is forgiven and becomes reconciled to God.

Conversion in Luke and Acts is effected by a conscious decision. Acts 8:22 says, “Pray ... that ... the intent of your heart may be forgiven you” (NRSV). This is a deliberate turning from self to God and is an action of faith.

Significant among the conversion accounts of Acts are those of Paul (9:1–31) and Cornelius (10:1–46), with Peter being the active agent in this latter conversion. There is one common denominator to both conversion accounts—that of a vision or theophany. In Paul’s account this is the appearance of Jesus in a flash of blinding light, while in the Peter/Cornelius case there is the instructive dream that Cornelius is not unclean because he is of another race. Both visions have a teaching quality about them.

Three accounts of the conversion of Paul are included in Acts (9:1–19; 22:1–21; and 26:1–23). Paul’s experience was both dramatic and decisive. But it was not the decision of the moment, having both precedents (observation of the testimony and death of the saintly Stephen, Acts 7:1–8:1) and antecedents (Paul apparently spent

three years in Arabia considering what had happened to him Gal. 1:17,18). This dramatic event needs to be balanced with other gentler and more subtle changes/conversions, such as Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1–10), Matthew (Luke 5:27) and Lydia (Acts 16:14). However, there can be no doubt as to the radicalness of this experience. Paul was changed from being the chief persecutor of the Christian faith to being the champion of that faith.

Although conversion necessarily engages faith both as an act and as content, repentance (turning about) is indispensable, and forgiveness, which Luke sometimes equates with salvation, is its first effect. In the conversion of Cornelius, Luke has Peter sum up what appears to be his own outlook: "Everyone who believes in Him [Jesus] receives forgiveness of sins through His name" (Acts 10:43). So, Christian conversion is thought of as radical and related to the person and work of Jesus Christ.

### Conversion in 1 Peter and Baptism

A Judaic idea of conversion, which dates from pre–New Testament times, was connected with that of proselyte baptism. This was closely tied with the idea of the *cultus*. Clement pointed out that the regeneration alluded to in 1 Peter 1:3,23, which seems to derive closely from the injunction of the Holiness Code of Lev. 17 and 18, as to the admission of the "stranger" to membership of Israel, is explicitly connected with the historical fact of Christ's resurrection and the preaching of the Word. What the convert is instructed in is no secret myth or ritual, but the facts of the gospel are widely attested and openly declared, and a sacramental rite (baptism) was used as a public confessional. (The "necessity" of the baptism rite in conversion–ritual is also mentioned in Mark 16:15,16 and in 1 Peter).

In 1 Peter, as in John, conversion is also thought of as a transfer out of darkness into light (1 Peter 2:9).

A summary of the conversion concepts in the New Testament might be described by the terms which indicate radical change, and that change is variously thought of as a "new birth," a movement from "death to life," and being made into a "new creation." This radical change involves the elements of forgiveness [by God] and repentance [by man]. Further, conversion is focused on Jesus Christ. It is God's work, in Jesus Christ, that makes conversion possible.

## Post–New Testament Conversion Descriptions

Irenaeus termed salvation as *anakephalaiosis*, or *recapitulatio*, which literally means “recapitulation.” Building upon Ephesians 1:10, he developed the idea that what was broken in Adam is resumed and restored by Christ. He believed that the work of salvation was a captalization upon a work that was already present in people, believing that, “Without paper or ink, [they] have salvation already written on their hearts.”<sup>10</sup>

From the 4th century until the 7th, what was called conversion was, in fact, the “renunciation of the life of this world,” in order to devote oneself to the sacred orders, or the monastic regime.

In the middle ages work or effort of the person was much emphasized, and this came, partly, because of the influence of Pelagius. Then there was the influence of the reformation which asserted the inability of the individual to choose the good. According to the reformers, redemption was by grace alone. Augustine found “ammunition” for his argument against Pelagianism in the words of Chrysostom who had written that salvation was “not by your own righteousness, but that of God . . . For you do not achieve it by toilings and labor, but you can receive it as a gift from above.”<sup>11</sup>

John Calvin (1509–64) emphasized both repentance and faith in conversion. But the prime mover in both is God. The process of conversion is by the action of God, who alone is able to move the will.<sup>12</sup> That is, the very origin of conversion is within God. Calvin, on this basis of the motivation of God in the conversion process also indicated that this change is substantial. He believed that a person is “created anew.”<sup>13</sup>

John Wesley described the primal Christian experience as being “born again.” In his sermon on John 3:7—“You must be born again”—Wesley particularly developed his teaching on conversion. He argued that it is not enough to do no harm to any person, not enough to do all the good you can, not enough to go to church twice a day, or to go to the Lord’s table every week, or say ever so many prayers, or hear good sermons or read good books:

None of these things will stand in the place of the new birth; no, nor anything under heaven. Let this therefore, if you have not already experienced this inward work of God, be your continual prayer: “Lord, add this to all thy blessings—let me be born again! Deny whatever thou pleasest, but deny not this; let me be ‘born from above!’”<sup>14</sup>

Wesley believed that the process of conversion was two-fold: repentance, a turning away from sin; and conversion, a turning toward God.

Revivalism has been the driving force for many ideas and instances of Christian conversion. In North America there were two widespread revivals. The first was simply termed, "The Great Awakening," (1734–1744), and was followed about 50 years later by the "Second Great Awakening."

The Great Awakening actually began in the 1720s, and lasted about 20 years. Two of the leading figures in this revival were Jonathan Edwards and George Whitefield. It had its beginnings in Europe and spread to the British colonies. This revival reasserted the theology of Calvinism into American religious life by emphasizing such ideas as salvation by grace alone and the electing will of God. It is significant that after the registered date of George Whitefield's great preachment (in July 1741), this revival lost much of its force and popularity as considerable numbers of people were repelled by certain extravagances of action and speech, including groans, convulsions, faintings and ecstasies. Though, by some, these were thought to be the manifestations of conversion.

The outcomes of this awakening were various. There was a general quickening of religious life and a revival of personal religion.

The Second Great Awakening started both in the eastern states of America and also in the south, in the later days of the 18th century. This second awakening inspired renewed missionary and educational efforts founded principally to train preachers. It also led to the establishment of several Protestant colleges.

Both awakenings stressed that when a person was "born again," change was so evidenced that it was blatantly recognizable. Thus people would not be admitted to fellowship who did not evidence a clear Christian life.<sup>15</sup>

## **Some Contemporary Views of Christian Conversion**

### **Preface**

Social scientists have developed a model of conversion that can be especially useful in organizing the more settled findings applicable to a study of conversion in early Christianity. The model's principal characteristics include a convert's: (1) situation in his or her social, cultural and religious world, as situated in the total context

or setting; (2) experience of an identity crisis; (3) active search for a new identity, meaning and purpose in life; (4) encounter with a new religious reality that engages his or her emotional, intellectual and cognitive needs; (5) continual and mutual interaction with the community that emboldens the new religious reality; (6) clear-cut choice between his or her previous way of living and a new way.<sup>16</sup>

### **Conversion According to Charles Grandison Finney**

Charles Grandison Finney developed a scientific and philosophized view of conversion, which departed radically from the Calvinist theology of Edward and Whitefield.<sup>17</sup> He claimed that conversion is ascribed to four different agencies: to men, to God, to the truth, and to the sinner himself:

The Scriptures ascribe conversion to four different agencies ... In the conversion to a sinner, it is true that God gives the truth efficiency to turn the sinner to God. Not only does the minister cry: "Stop," but through the living voice of the preacher, the Spirit cries: "Stop." The preacher cries: "Turn ye, why will ye die?" The Spirit pours the expostulation home with such power, that the sinner turns. Now, in speaking of this change, it is perfectly proper to say, that the Spirit turned him; just as you would say of a man who had persuaded another to change his mind on the subject of politics, that he had converted him; as, in a case when the political sentiments of a man were changed by a certain argument, we should say that the argument brought him over. So, also with perfect propriety, may we ascribe the change to the preacher, or to him who had presented the motives; just as we should say of a lawyer who had prevailed in his argument with a jury, he has got his case, he has own act, the turning is his own turning, while God by the truth converted the jury. It is also with the same propriety ascribed to the individual himself, whose heart is changed; we should say that he has changed his mind, he has come over, he has repented. Now it is strictly true, and true in the most absolute and highest sense, the act in him has induced him to turn; still it is strictly true that he has turned, and has done it himself.<sup>18</sup>

Finney knew that many of his hearers had been schooled in a doctrine of original sin which indicated much about the fallen nature of man. If people needed only the motivation to be engaged, then how was the doctrine of depravity to be understood? He did not believe that people were governed by a fallen human nature. Rather, the action needed to convert lay in the will to do so.

This revivalist, because he placed so much emphasis upon human decision making as the essential part of the conversion, also made much use of an "anxious bench"

to which he urged seekers after salvation to come.

According to Finney conversion was described as a “deeper work of grace,” which fit the convert to do the work that God calls him to. This deeper work of grace required total obedience to Christ: “Enjoy religion just as well without obeying Jesus Christ? It is false on the face of it. He overlooks the fact that religion consists in obeying Jesus Christ.”<sup>19</sup>

The change then, according to Finney, was substantial, accomplished by grace and required complete obedience to Christ. However, it might seem that the change as thought of by Finney, which was the change wrought at conversion, was very great, and its well-spring was within a person’s action.

This idea of conversion being the work of the individual would seem to be somewhat peculiar in view of Finney’s comments on his own conversion in which he says: “Salvation, instead of being a thing to be wrought out by my own works, was a thing to be found entirely in the Lord Jesus Christ ... the question seemed to be put, ‘Will you accept it now, to-day?’ I replied, ‘Yes; I will accept it today, ...’”<sup>20</sup>

Because of his strong emphasis on personal effort in religious life Finney also urged his converts to move on from this personal regenerating experience to engagement in social action generally, and to involvement in the antislavery crusade in particular.

For those who study Christian conversion from a psychological perspective, William James would probably be considered prime. James devoted two lectures to conversion, which he described as the process “gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided or consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy becomes unified and consciously right, superior and happy, by consequence of its firmer hold on religious realities.”<sup>21</sup>

James identified the fundamental psychological characteristics of the process as (1) a severe crisis of conflict, guilt and other trials ultimately resolved by (2) an intense and sudden transformation. Conversion represented a prime example of the unification of the divided self.<sup>22</sup>

Although James acknowledged the existence of conversion as a gradual process, religion for him was first and foremost an individual experience prior to any rational, intellectual understanding of it. What individuals experience in their solitude as they stand in relation to “whatever they consider divine” was important to James. He also thought of the divine in terms of what individuals experienced in their solitude as they encountered the divine in a new way, prior to any rational

understanding of it.

William James built much of his psychology of conversion on the statistical analysis of conversion experiences carried out by Edwin Starbuck.<sup>23</sup> Much that Starbuck had to say reinforced one point: Christian conversion was largely a crisis of adolescence. In fact, Starbuck indicated that this was most likely to occur between ages 11 and 23.

The ordinary "conversion" which occurs in young people brought up in evangelical circles is to that growth into a larger spiritual life which is a normal phase of adolescence in every class of human beings. The age is the same, falling usually between fourteen and seventeen. The symptoms are the same—sense of incompleteness and imperfection; brooding, depression, morbid introspection, and sense of sin; anxiety about the hereafter; distress over doubts, and the like ... Starbuck's conclusion as to these ordinary youthful conversions [is that conversion] is in its essence a normal adolescent phenomenon incidental to the passage from the child's small universe to the wider intellectual and spiritual life of maturity.<sup>24</sup>

It is possible to argue on the evidence of James/Starbuck for either a punctiliar or a substantially longer process in conversion, but there would seem to be little doubt that they both thought of this in terms of crisis, that is, an experience that affects a person at some considerable depth, although that effect may not be long-lasting. James concluded that conversion changed a person's center of energy.

Robert Ferm particularly commented on teenage conversion and agreed that adolescence was the time when most of life's decisions are made, such as the choice of a vocation or a life partner. But he also indicated that most of those who have made decisions at Billy Graham crusades were beyond the adolescent age grouping. Ferm further supported his belief by the authority of an investigating psychologist. These findings would also be in keeping with those of Wesley whose journals indicate that conversion among young people was more of a novelty than the usual activity.<sup>25</sup> Robert Ferm concluded in his review of writers on adolescent conversion that the majority of these conversions were more emotionally driven:

If the vastness of the universe as viewed on a clear night and the impressiveness of a Gothic cathedral can induct an emotional stimulus, even without any clear conception of deity, and if in the period of adolescence we are seeking desperately for the answers to the multitude of problems of life, both physical and metaphysical, little wonder that many individuals in this age-category report deeply moving religious experiences that are entirely satisfying to them.<sup>26</sup>

A.D. Nock contributed to thought on conversion by basing his study on an historical view of conversion in Greco-Roman times. He declared that, save for Judaism and Christianity, there was to be found no crossing of religious boundaries. He felt that at that time people did not leave their old spiritual homes for new ones, that is, they did not convert. They might readily accept new forms of worship as supplements, but such acceptance involved neither a crisis nor a new set of convictions nor self-surrender. They continued to adhere to their old gods, even if under new names, with different dress and in new ways. However, Judaism, Christianity and Islam tended to be more exclusive. These demand a rejection of all other religious paths and require the total obedience of their followers.<sup>27</sup>

Nock was also prompted to distinguish between "adhesion" and what he considered to be true conversion. Conversion, according to Nock, demanded a decision to reject the old as wrong and accept the new as right. This was radical and this "radicalism" was redefined in terms of both belief and conduct. Put simply, Nock thought that conversion required a reorientation of the soul. It may be readily seen that this is not substantially different from the view of James or of that put to Nicodemus by Jesus.

In current usage among Catholic writers on ecclesiastical matters, conversion has meant a passage from unbelief (or from a non-Catholic religion) to Roman Catholicism. The same term, however, has come to be adopted also in the case of a return to that religion after a period of wandering from its precepts. It is also employed to denote cases of "acknowledgment" or "recognition" (of Catholicism) after many years of religious indifference.

In non-Catholic, English-speaking countries, conversion has acquired a special meaning. It usually means a change from paganism, atheism or non-belief to Christian belief. The element of radicalism is present but the connection with Jesus Christ is not as readily seen.

Iain Murray made a careful study of what Finney had to say about conversion and theorized that the preacher said what he did to encourage people to make a public act of submission to God. This, in turn, led Finney to use public means of confession.

In *The Connecticut Evangelical Magazine*, Murray reviewed the ways in which people are converted as recorded and concluded that there is no one way in which this is carried out. Murray did indicate certain essentials were necessary for true conversion. The first of these was a change of nature, that is, a change from "su-



preme selfishness to universal love, from enmity against God to supreme attachment to Him."<sup>28</sup>

Murray believed that it was natural for pastors to endeavour to persuade people to engage in an external act as an aid to conversion, even if this was not the act of conversion. Those whom God brings to salvation will repent, believe and confess Christ.

Bryan Green, working on the basis of the New Testament evidence and projecting forward to the present, said that, "the experience which qualifies a man (sic) to be a Christian is a personal encounter with the living God in Christ."<sup>29</sup> Green reasoned that this encounter was so substantial that he described the convert as being one who is literally "turned about."<sup>30</sup> This "turning about" took place in "an ever-increasing degree [as people are] turned toward God."

While speaking about conversions that took place during a revival at Hartford Connecticut in 1820, one commentator said that certain elements were present in those who converted: conviction of sin was often deep and poignant, and lasted from two to three and four weeks, or longer, and then was succeeded by submission and peaceful hope.

Some evangelicals consider the conversion experience to be consequent upon God's work of regeneration, which is thought to be the act of God who is the originator of spiritual life. As such, conversion is the act of man, consequent upon the action of God: "Regeneration is a cause; conversion is an effect."<sup>31</sup>

Conversion, it would seem, is part of the salvific work of God, but it is the most important part of the process. It is the change that results from action on the part of the individual. It is frequently marked by a sharp crisis, no matter how long or short that crisis may be. Because of this it may also be thought of as taking place in the conscious rather than the subconscious life of a person. The consciousness is that part of the human mind where a person has faith in God; it is where we throw ourselves on the mercy of God. That is the element of aspiration in conversion. Here is introduced yet another element in conversion: humility before God. The Christian convert needs to have a sense that not only is there one who can change himself or herself but that such assistance must be actively sought. It must also be admitted that in the case of Charles Finney the human element goes beyond aspiration to be the actual converting element.

The converted person is one who evidences the conversion by a changed mode of life. The testimony of Paul and other New Testament writers is that this work

within the soul is one in which a person flees from the old life of sin and turns to a life of communion with God. Though even within this experience there may be times in which the convert feels that he is estranged from God.

A summary of the opinions generated to this point in the study of Christian conversion points to three factors, the first of these being that Christ/God is involved in the conversion process, by grace or by a life-changing encounter with Him. The second is that this change is a radical one—what A.D. Nock described as, “A total transformation [which] occurs through the mediation of social, cultural, personal, and religious forces.” It is not simply adjustment or gentle movement from one stream of consciousness to another; it is life-changing. Thirdly, this alteration has the fundamental human element of aspiration or desire.

It is understood that those who study Christian conversion from a psychological perspective (i.e. James and Starbuck) have not bothered greatly about the importance of Christian conversion being related primarily to the person and work of Christ. They recognized that some change had taken place and are interested in what happens to or within a person rather than examining the catalyst for that change.

Iain Murray summarized the effects of revivalism in the United States America in *The Connecticut Evangelical Magazine* and indicated that these were, firstly, radical: “a change from supreme selfishness to universal love, from enmity against God to supreme attachment to Him—and that no one will be conscious of their need of such a change until brought to see their true character and condition.”<sup>32</sup>

Secondly, the revivalists of America appeared almost universally to believe that the change wrought by conversion would be evidenced in altered conduct and that this alteration was an indication that Christ was working out His will in the converts.

It is possible to see all three of these factors encapsulated in the life changing experience of the Scriptural character of Zacchaeus, a tax-collector of Jericho whose life was transformed through contact with Jesus (Luke 19:1–10). There is the element of aspiration; Zacchaeus sought Jesus Christ. The change in his life was radical; he became generous instead of being niggardly. And the change was brought about by encounter with Jesus Christ. These same elements are found in the salvation of the woman with a hemorrhage in Matthew 9:20–22 and the curing of the blind men found directly after that in Matthew 9: 27–31.

The point that Salvationists may take from this is that in pressing for conversion we are standing in a tradition that is strongly supported in Scripture and emphasized

in the Christian tradition. Conversion is regarded as the change that is brought about by the action of the Holy Spirit who applies the work of Christ to individual lives. Also, as Salvationists have come to expect, this change is a radical one.

## Notes

1. Bryan Green, *The Practice of Evangelism*. (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951). p.34
2. *Handbook of Doctrine* (Great Britain: The Campfield Press, 1969) p.5
3. Marvin J. Parrish disagreed with the idea that religious conversion was a 'necessity' before one could be defined as a Christian: "I am a Christian, but I have never been converted. Do I need to be? Or is my continued adherence to inculcated childhood teaching enough? Before one can be converted into something new one has to be something old first. I have not been converted at all. When I was "converted" I did not transform or turn from anything ... I have done far more changing, hopefully for the better, since my "conversion" than before it. ... I am wondering if a child can be converted when he has been "brought up in the way he should go." Marvin J. Parrish, *Internet, Mission Messenger*, 1973 p.35
4. Sante De Sanctis, *Religious Conversion* (London: Kegan Paul, 1927). p.28
5. H. Newton Malony & Samuel Southard, eds., *Handbook of Religious Conversion* (Birmingham, Alabama: Religious Education Press, 1992).
6. However, if it may be assumed that the majority of those in Jerusalem on that festal occasion were Jews of the Diaspora (Acts 2:9-11), then their conversion would certainly be of a radical nature—from orthodox Judaism to faith in Christ.
7. Bryan Green, *The Practice of Evangelism* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1951), p.30.
8. As quoted in Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology* (London: The Banner of Truth Trust, reprint, 1971). p.480.
9. It has been suggested ideas concerning the "new birth" had been taken over from the pagan mystery religions. C.H. Dodd in his work, *Johannine Epistles* (p.68), maintains that this was the case. But C.E.B. Cranfield makes the further comment that this was unlikely because there appears to be great differences between the ideas of renewal in the NT and those of the mystery religions. The NT has no idea of a rebirth worked by magical cult-act, but rather is a matter of faith in Christ. C.E.B. Cranfield "Birth" in *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (London: SCM Press Ltd, reprint 1965), p. 31.
10. Seeburg: *Text-Book of the History of Doctrines*, vol I (Not seen).
11. *Hom. In Rom ii*, PG 60.409.
12. John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*. vol 1, John T. McNeil, ed, (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, n.d.) p.296.
13. *Ibid.* p.297.
14. John Wesley, *Sermons on Several Occasions*. (London: The Methodist Publishing House, 1771) p.642. Wesley also believed, emphatically, that conversion was an instantaneous process. It did not take place over a protracted period.
15. Joseph Tracey, *The Great Awakening* (Oxford: The Banner of Truth Trust, Reprint, 1989), p.12ff. Edwards is further quoted in these works as indicating that the change that was wrought in converts was one characterized by happiness and calmness.
16. Finn, *op.cit.*, p.33
17. In his *Lectures on Revivals of Religion*, Finney repeatedly argued that men must have the ability to commit themselves to Christ, otherwise God would never command it: "When God commands us to do a thing it is the highest possible evidence that we can do it ... He has no right to command, unless we have the power to obey." If the influences of the Spirit are "indispensable to enable us to perform the duty, the bestowal of them would be a matter of common justice." (*Lectures on Revivals of Religion* (New York and London, 1910). With introduction and original notes by W.H. Harding, pp 116-117. It would appear that Finney goes well beyond the idea that the human side of conversion is only aspiration.
18. *Ibid* p. 32 It does seem that Finney, for the most part, did believe that conversion was the work of man and human decision-making. "It is apparent that the change now described, effected by the simple volition of the sinner's mind through the influence of motives, is a sufficient change, all that the Bible requires. It is all that is necessary to make a sinner a Christian. Quoted in review in *Biblical Repertory and Theological Review* (1832) p. 295. Finney was strongly criticized for this view of Christian conversion which some labelled as "Pelagian."
19. *Ibid.* p. 32.
20. *Chas. G. Finney, The American Revivalist*. (London: The Salvation Army, n.d.), p. 12. (On the other side of the Atlantic the most outspoken critic of revivalism was C.H.Spurgeon who urged faith and prayer as the means by which the spiritual life was nurtured (*Metropolitan Tabernacle*

*Pulpit*, vol 17 (London, 1872), p.499.

21. William James, *The Varieties of Religious Experience* (Great Britain: Collins, Reprint, 1974), p.104

22. Sante De Sanctus, *Religious Conversion*, pp. 32-47.

23. Edwin Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion* (London: Walter Scott, 1901).

24. James, *The Varieties*, p. 203.

25. Robert O. Ferm, *The Psychology of Christian Conversion* (London: Pickering and Inglis, n.d.) p.86.

26. *Ibid* p. 86.

27. A.D. Nock, *Conversion* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1933). pp. 9,10.

28. Iain H. Murray: *Revival and Revivalism*, (The Banner of Truth Trust, 1994). p. 249.

29. Bryan Green, *The Practice of Evangelism*, p. 30.

30. *Ibid* p. 30.

31. *Ibid* p. 30

32. Murray, *Revival and Revivalism*, p. 209. The great changes wrought by conversions which took place in revivals during the time that this author worked were tabulated by others as, "excitement of animal feelings," "awful distress of soul," "sinners ... agitated with awful anxiety,' etc. These were variously interpreted as evidences of the work of God or the Holy Spirit. Some thought that such were the activities of an evil power and thus were to be discouraged.

## Book Reviews

*The NIV Reflecting God Study Bible* Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000. 2171 pp.

Reviewed by Henry Gariepy, Toms River, New Jersey

The greatest single theological influence on William Booth was John Wesley, having an impact to this day upon the movement that Booth founded. Wesley was the human hero that Booth held always before him in his long journey towards his destiny. "To me there was one God," Booth would avow, "and John Wesley was his prophet. I had devoured the story of his life ... and all that was wanted, in my estimation, for the salvation of the world was the faithful carrying into practice of the letter and spirit of his instructions."

Wesley, as Booth, was denounced as unorthodox and a firebrand. He preached in the open-air, addressed grimy congregations, used unordained laymen to preach the gospel, encouraged the working class and crusaded for decency. For the poor he opened a labor factory, a free medical dispensary and a bank, and he visited and ministered in some of the vilest English prisons. Wesley, as Booth, professed and taught a social as well as a holiness gospel and had no desire to start a separate denomination. One of his greatest legacies was his teaching and preaching on holy living as God's will for the believer. Indeed, William Booth was a heavy debtor to John Wesley as his model and mentor.

Our self-understanding as Salvationists requires an understanding of Wesleyan history and how it impacts on our own theology. Within this legacy of the Wesleyan tradition we accept the Bible as the authoritative Word of God, which reveals His will for the believer for a holy life, fully cleansed by the Spirit.

### **The Word of God**

Wesley confessed: "I am but a creature of a day, passing through life as an arrow through the air. I want to know one thing—the way to heaven; how to land safe on that happy shore. God Himself has condescended to teach the way. For this very end He came from heaven. He has written it down in a book. O give me that book. At any price, give me the book of God!" Salvationists echo this passionate longing.

We are each an incalculable debtor to this divine revelation, this anthology of inspired thought, this index to eternal truth, this priceless treasure of God's very own word to us. William Barclay, eminent Bible expositor, confesses: "I have touched only the fringes. There is a certain limitless quality about Scripture." Peter proclaims, "The Word of the Lord stands forever" (1 Pet. 1:25). Indeed, it is eternal, immutable and totally trustworthy. As believers, ours has been the unspeakable privilege of testifying to its treasured truths, proclaiming its peerless promises and sharing its eternal verities.

The Y2K millennium madness has passed, and we have all survived. A January 2000 article in *Newsweek* predicted the swift demise of materials printed on paper as electronic forms of communication take over society's reading preferences. Its grim prophecy read: "The physical object consisting of bound dead trees in shiny wrappers is headed for the antique heap. Books are goners, as far as being the dominant form of reading." Indeed, some of us have subscribed to the amazing CDs that contain on one disk facile navigational aids for multiple translations of the Bible, commentaries and assorted Bible references!

But the tradition of holding a Bible in our hands, rustling through its pages, turning to the desired text, has not been replaced by curling up in a chair with a laptop or sitting at a desktop PC. Apparently someone forgot to tell Christian publishers about the death knell being sounded for paper and ink. Scripture continues to come in more flavors in a plethora of updated translations with refinement of vocabulary and sentence structure and in-text notes, including the niche market (e.g., Bibles designed for women, for teens, etc.). So for now at least, we do not listen to the doomsayers who are writing the obituaries for printed material at the dawn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **New Translations**

The explosion of new English translations initially posed a dilemma for many of us who had been weaned and nurtured on the King James Version. Should we stay

with the venerated KJV, or should we make the transition to a modern one? And if the latter, which one? A story is told of a devout church member coming to her pastor after his reading from a modern translation and informing him that since the King James Version was good enough for the Apostle Paul it was certainly good enough for her!

Indeed, we of the older generation are incalculable debtors to the KJV. Its light on our path led us to the Savior and our salvation. Its insights schooled us in our theology, and its inspiration nurtured us in the faith. Its sacred texts were channels for the high privilege of leading souls into the kingdom. The lofty phrases and lyrical cadences from this "noblest monument of English prose" lifted us to heights of holy meditation. In times of testing it came to our defense. In days of trouble it sustained us. It had been our guide, our comfort, our companion, our dearest treasure. I confess, the decision some years ago to go with a new translation inflicted for me a painful parting. My memory was so saturated with the timeless texts that the KJV was a very part of me.

As new translations and versions continue to emerge, we are ever confronted with the challenge: Why read or transfer to a new edition? Several arguments emerge in favor of new editions.

First, language is in constant flux, always changing, and most dramatically in our time. Obsolescence plagues every dictionary before it comes off the press. We no longer speak in the Elizabethan language of 1611, such as when the Psalmist was translated as saying, "O Lord, in the morning shall my prayer prevent thee" (88:13). Back then the word *prevent* meant "to go before." The KJV's obscure text: "From there we fetched a compass" (Acts 28:13) is now rendered, "From there we sailed around." Jesus' admonition, "Take no thought for tomorrow" (Matt. 6:34) suggests that He is teaching improvidence, whereas He is counseling what is accurately translated in modern versions as "Do not worry." Change ever continues its impact upon language.

Second, there has been continued progress in translation accuracy. Since the KJV, research has turned up texts that are as many as 1,000 years closer to the originals, including 4<sup>th</sup> century codices and the 1949 landmark discovery of the cache of Dead Sea Scrolls. Previously exclusive New Testament words have turned up in discoveries of private letters, legal papers and documents that shed light on their definition. Translators are now better equipped than ever to render precise meaning of New Testament words, with scholars taking full advantage of these fruitful dis-



coveries.

Third, our world is split into a kaleidoscope of subcultures. Each has its own linguistic and reading habits. Connoisseurs of Shakespeare and Bunyan may still prefer the stately KJV, but tabloid readers & teens are more at home with the brasher liveliness of Peterson's *The Message*.

Fourth, we have a need for theological integrity in Bible study notes. The Salvationist does not espouse the theology of Calvinism, or other "isms" inconsonant with our doctrinal position. The Holy Spirit will use the insights and inspiration that come from a scholarly and devotional exegesis on those texts that elucidate our doctrine of holiness, a hallmark of the tenets of The Salvation Army and our brothers and sisters of the Wesleyan-Holiness persuasion.

This latter principle provides the rationale for the new *NIV Reflecting God Study Bible*, launched at the Army's International Millennial Congress. It adheres to the three criteria that guided the translating of the NIV: (1) accuracy—true to the integrity of text; (2) clarity—readable and understandable; (3) literary quality—retaining lyrical loftiness of the Word. Concern was for the NIV to be idiomatic but not idiosyncratic, contemporary but not dated. The NIV seems destined to be the Bible for use among evangelicals, including The Salvation Army.

Four main translation methods are currently used: (1) The Paraphrase simplifies or expands on the author's word to make meaning more clear, such as *The Living Bible*, and *The Message*; (2) Grammatical Equivalence provides a word-for-word and clause-for-clause correspondence with the original as far as possible. The risk here is stiffness of style and unnatural English; (3) Dynamic Equivalence seeks to convey the substance and force of the original, expressed in contemporary idiom, such as the *Good News Bible*; (4) Eclectic renderings aim at the best of both worlds, with as much grammatical literalness and punchy vividness combined as they can manage. The NIV has established itself as the most popular of this type, currently the best selling of all the translations.

Now at the start of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, for the Salvationist and those of the kindred Wesleyan tradition, there comes to us the *NIV Reflecting God Study Bible*. Its title declares its primary thrust of responding to the heart's cry for a life that reflects God. Its study notes are designed, in the Wesleyan holiness tradition, to aid in the pursuit of a deeper, biblical spirituality and God's empowerment to lead a holy life.

In my own Bible teaching ministry I continually emphasize that it is not enough to get into the Word, but the Word must get into us. The two spiritual dimensions

that must take place in our Bible reading and study are insight and inspiration. We must both penetrate the Word for its meaning and personalize it for its application. We must find it to be not only revelational, but also relational. The Word must not only enlighten us, but it must also enrich our lives. The Holy Spirit would lead us from facts to acts, from explanation to experience, until the Word becomes its own living translation within and through us, as we reflect God Himself through a life of holiness. This is the grand design of the *NIV Reflecting God Study Bible*.

### **The Salvation Army's New Era of Theological Understanding**

The Salvationist is not theologically neutral. We are a part of the New Testament *ekklesia*, the "called-out people of God." General Paul Rader (R) has stated, "The Salvation Army is now passing through a critical metamorphosis of identity and self-understanding. Traditionally, we have shied away from identifying ourselves as a church. Until 1969, editions of the Doctrine Book assiduously avoided the use of the word "church." The Army's own idiosyncratic brand of aggressive Christianity was a mission, not ecclesiastically based, but apostolically energized."

True, our public persona has become more often that of a social services provider and relief agency than an evangelistic movement. But recently, there has been a significant shift in our self-understanding, with an increased identity as part of the ecumenical family of churches. As Rader acknowledges: "We have entered a new day of historical reflection, theological discussion, spiritual formation and strategizing for corps growth."

At least five recent and dynamic developments can be identified as contributory to this new understanding of who we are, theologically and ecclesiologically.

First, the more recent international Mission Statement of The Salvation Army asserts that we are "an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church." This is the most unequivocal and unabashed formal statement in the Army's history on its ecclesiastical status. It should forever put to rest the haunting question through the years as to whether the Army is a "church." Of course we are a church, with our own distinct tradition and contribution to the "called-out people of God."

Second, the advent and ongoing thrust of this very publication, *Word & Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry*, was commenced in 1998 for the avowed purpose to help Salvationists discover their own missiological history and heritage. Its two scholarly and stalwart Salvationist editors, Roger Green and Jonathan Raymond, upon its advent stated, I believe prophetically: "By the grace of God this

is a critical theological moment in the history of The Salvation Army.”

Third, *Salvation Story*, our doctrine book with its newly minted title, revamped, rewritten, and more readable, is our first handbook of Salvation Army doctrine to introduce Salvationist ecclesiology and its implications for our life and mission. Its introduction states that our doctrines are:

consistent with the classical Christian creeds and identify Salvationists as members of the universal church. They also express the fundamental evangelical convictions of Wesleyanism, the branch of the church out of which The Salvation Army grew.

Fourth, the *International Spiritual Life Commission*, convened by General Rader in 1996, encapsulated for the first time in our history the essence of a careful review and vigorous debate on Salvationist theology and ecclesiology.

Fifth, the Army's international magazine, *The Officer*, with its new and revolutionary format, reflects a new depth in its forum on essential issues of the Army, including its theological and ecclesiological foundations. Among its insightful reflections was the 11-part series by Colonel Earl Robinson, *Wesleyan Distinctives of Salvation Army Doctrine*, tracing the Army's doctrines to their Wesleyan roots, and *Natural Church Development* by Captain Henrik Andersen.

Finally, I suggest *The NIV Reflecting God Study Bible* (RGSB) is now another major advance in taking our place in the ranks of the evangelical Christian Church. The imprimatur of The Salvation Army on this landmark edition makes an emphatic statement that we are a part of the evangelical church in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition. The Army, among the 22 sponsoring denominations, was cited by a Zondervan staff member at the Congress as having placed the largest initial order for the RGSB, including a copy for every active Army officer in the States, a witness to its commitment to the Word of God and its place in the evangelical mainstream. Salvationist readers will note the three Army contributors to the edition: Roger Green as one of the reviewers, and Colonel William Francis and this author among the 16 essayists on the reflecting God theme, placing the Army in the vanguard of participants for this major ecumenical production of the Word of God. Anyone noting this input of The Salvation Army in this Wesleyan-Holiness Bible could never again doubt who we are or what we are about.

There is also a spate of books emanating from the broader world of scholarship about The Salvation Army. Such releases include Glen K. Horridge's *The Salvation Army Origins and Early Days: 1865-1900*, Norman H. Murdoch's *Origins of The*

*Salvation Army*, and Diane Winston's much discussed *Red-Hot and Righteous*. The outside presses continue to roll with new releases that provide fresh perspectives on who we are, where we have come from and where we ought to be going.

### **The Salvation Army's Partnership in the Reflecting God Study Bible**

The Salvation Army has long been an active member of what is now called the Christian Holiness Partnership (CHP), previously known as National Holiness Association (NHA) and Christian Holiness Association (CHA). With these holiness denominations, we share common doctrinal beliefs and participate in ecumenical programs within the evangelical community. The Army's partnership in the sponsorship of the RGSB, with its Wesleyan-Holiness notes as a tool for study, teaching and preaching, is one of the most major statements in its history of its identity as a holiness movement within the evangelical Christian church.

The RGSB is a Wesleyan adaptation of the NIV Study Bible, the original edition done by over 100 scholars working directly from the best available texts, with transnational and interdenominational participants, safeguarding the translation from sectarian bias. The user of this new edition will find among its features: comprehensive book introductions and outlines; text divided into paragraphs as well as verses, sections organized with headings; 80 in-text charts and maps; 23 pages of full-color maps and timelines; over 100,000 entries in its cross-reference system; and a 145-page concordance with over 35,000 references as the largest ever in an English Bible. Its hallmark is the nearly 20,000 study notes located on the same pages as the verses and passages they explain, with the initial NIV study notes now edited and revised by leading holiness scholars to provide a distinctively Wesleyan emphasis. The emphasis on holiness of heart and life resonates with our desire for a closer fellowship with God that we may reflect the beauty of his holiness.

For example, the following new study note written by Dr. Roger Green has been added for 1 Thessalonians 5:23, with its elucidation on the text quoted for the Army's tenth doctrine on sanctification: "Here is a prayer for entire sanctification, whereby the believer is freed from sin and empowered to live a holy life ... [This] demonstrates that God's will for us is that holiness be pursued in this life and not be postponed until after death.

This joint venture of Zondervan Publishing House and Christian Holiness Partnership (of which the Army is a member), has combined the best biblical scholarship of Wesleyan-Holiness denominations, and the extensive notes of the best-

selling NIV Bible translation. Doctrinally it reflects traditional evangelical theology. "This combination," writes a reviewer, "makes it the perfect study Bible for Christians who want to understand the life-transforming insights of the Holiness tradition."

### **Affirming Our Heritage**

General Arnold Brown, in describing his dream for The Salvation Army, stated: "I dream of an Army rooted in tradition and flowering in contemporary relevance." Indeed, we need to know and keep true to our roots, for we cannot know where we are going unless we know where we have come from. The prophet of old challenges us with his dictum from the Lord: "Look to the rock from which you were cut and to the quarry from which you were hewn" (Isa. 51:1). "No movement can know and fulfill its mission unless it has a clear understanding of its history. What convictions sparked its beginning? What were the fires in which its traditions were forged? What commitments kindled its passion and progress?"

We cannot have theological understanding and integrity without going to our roots, such as the seminal Church Councils at Nicea and Constantinople, the historic breakthroughs in theology and the church by Luther, Wesley, and William Booth himself. We affirm our Wesleyan heritage in considering the tradition of the Church to be of vital importance in determining theological truth and religious authority. For example, the Wesleyan quadrilateral provides a sound foundational method for Scripture interpretation, with its four keys of Scripture, tradition, reason, and experience.

In the first issue of *Word & Deed*, Lt. Colonel Marlene Chase reminded us: "Salvationists need to discover their own missiological history and heritage." In this new millennium, The Salvation Army has indeed been rediscovering its roots and its *raison d'être*—its reason for being—which gives further motivation and direction for its mission today.

Hattersley, Roy. *Blood & Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army*. London: Little, Brown and Company, 1999. 471 pp.

Reviewed by Gordon Taylor, The Salvation Army International Heritage Centre, London, England

With the publication of *Blood & Fire*, Roy Hattersley, the British politician and writer, has entered a crowded field, adding to the considerable volume of biographical literature on William and Catherine Booth already available. There are the official biographies: *The Life of General William Booth*, by Harold Begbie (1920) and *The Life of Catherine Booth*, by Booth-Tucker (1892), as well as other major biographies: *God's Soldier: William Booth*, by St John Ervine (1934), *Catherine Booth: The Story of Her Loves*, by Catherine Bramwell-Booth (1970) and, more recently, *Catherine Booth: A Biography*, by Roger Green (1996). There are also shorter contemporary biographies, including *General Booth* (1891) and *Mrs Booth* (1900) by W T Stead, and the popular biographies of General Booth, by George Scott Railton (1912), *Catherine Booth*, by Mildred Duff (1901), and *The General Next to God*, by Richard Collier (1965). Hattersley acknowledges his debt to the earlier biographers, notably Begbie and Booth-Tucker, particularly where they quote extensively from original documents which have since been destroyed and are therefore no longer available to the researcher today.

With such a wealth of existing resources, was there a need for another biography of William and Catherine Booth? Although there may not be any major new sources of information waiting to be discovered, every generation needs to make a fresh evaluation of its heroes and heroines, to reassess their enduring significance, and every writer has a unique point of view, contributing something original to the overall picture.

Hattersley brings an independent perspective to the task, writing as he does from outside the organization. He clearly understands the Christian motivation of The Salvation Army (though he does not share it), and he briefly explains the symbolism of the Army flag and the significance of the Army's motto, "Blood and Fire," which he chose as the title of his book. As a politician with a strong interest in social action, he makes interesting observations on aspects of 19th century social history, and he devotes three chapters to an analysis of William Booth's Darkest England scheme and the Army's response to social conditions in Britain, including the Maiden Tribute campaign in 1885.

In the early chapters of the book, the author guides us through the significant events of William Booth's early life in Nottingham and the disputes and controversies that led to the fragmentation of Methodism during the 19th century. Hattersley uses local newspapers alongside the personal letters of William and Catherine Booth to test William Booth's claims for the success of his ministry, and he notes how seldom the Booths referred to contemporary events in their correspondence. There was a passing reference to the General Election in 1868, but little evidence of William Booth's interest in politics, though he was becoming increasingly concerned about the poverty that he saw around him. In later years, he tried to remain on friendly terms with politicians of all parties, and regretted that he sometimes had to take sides.

Everything that happened in William Booth's early ministry seemed like preparation for the creation of The Salvation Army: taking the gospel on to the streets, care and compassion for the poor, their advocacy of total abstinence from alcohol and female ministry, their experience and teaching of holiness, the development of military metaphor, and increasingly autocratic leadership. These were all evident in the Christian Mission, if not earlier. Brass bands, uniforms, flags and the Army's distinctive attitude to the sacraments quickly followed in the early years of The Salvation Army.

Hattersley concludes that The Salvation Army came about through the combination of William Booth's vision, Catherine Booth's determination, Railton's impatience and Bramwell's industry, all held together by the force of William Booth's character. The spirit and organization of the Army fitted the needs of its time. Despite opposition, persecution and imprisonment, the work expanded worldwide in places as far apart culturally and geographically as Switzerland and India.

William Booth's social program was an extension of his ministry to save souls. Even through the early years of the Darkest England program, he remained largely detached from criticism and controversy. Travelling in Britain and abroad, he held highly publicized meetings with emperors, kings and political leaders, promoting the work and advocating his social schemes. Though he mixed with crowds and his work was increasingly acclaimed, as an old man he was lonely. Without Catherine, there were few people he could trust and confide in. Single-minded and resolute, he remained a preacher to the end.

Booth family relationships form a dominant theme throughout the book, from Catherine Booth's dislike of children, or at least unruly children, through the strict,

if not harsh, regime of their family life. Although concerned for the education of their children, the Booths feared the corruption of ungodly influences. Catherine's letters to the children were full of moral instruction and spiritual advice, but the assurances of their mother's love did not engender confidence and security in the children.

When the diagnosis of Catherine Booth's cancer was confirmed in 1888, Bramwell's concern for the future without his mother echoed her concern for the family after her death. As Chief of the Staff, Bramwell, who was destined to succeed his father as General, assimilated his father's autocratic style of leadership. His brothers and sisters resented working under his authority. When Ballington, Katie and Herbert, in succession, left the Army, family bitterness was deep and unresolved. William Booth's inability to forgive the members of his family who left him led Hattersley to conclude that he was a great man, but an unsympathetic human being. Except in his marriage, he lacked warmth, sympathy and understanding. "Born leaders," says Hattersley, "often do" (p. 437).

Boswell, in his monumental *Life of Samuel Johnson* (1791), said of his subject: "He will be seen as he really was; for I profess to write, not his panegyrick, which must be all praise, but his life, which great and good as he was, must not be supposed to be entirely perfect." *Soldier Saint*, Bernard Watson's life of George Scott Railton, published in 1970, set a new standard for Salvation Army biography, presenting the portrait of a real man, not a stained-glass window saint. In *Blood & Fire*, Hattersley follows in this tradition. He argues that earlier biographers did William and Catherine Booth no service by portraying them as saints, and we benefit from the honesty and humanity of his assessment.

*Blood & Fire* is not an anecdotal biography. Hattersley ignores many of the familiar, but often unsubstantiated, incidents and quotations that other, more popular biographies include. Researched and written in some haste, it is not essentially a scholarly biography. Despite several pages of endnotes listing the principal sources, it does not include a comprehensive list of references that would satisfy an academic examiner. However, what it loses in rigour it substantially makes up through the vigour and energy of the writer, whose enthusiasm for his subject is evident throughout.

Although there are a number of elementary errors that could easily have been corrected by more careful proofreading, the occasional misprints in names and dates do not generally detract from the overall thrust of the book. Perhaps most surprising



is Hattersley's mistaken impression that William Booth lingered on his deathbed for two months after losing consciousness on 17 August 1912. Actually it was two days before he laid down his sword on 20 August, not 20 October. He was a man of simple faith and died in the certainty of resurrection and eternal life.

It seems unfortunate that Hattersley appears to lose interest in William Booth after the death of Catherine, as there is interesting material about William Booth's later years which could have been more fully explored. For me, the best part of the book is the introduction, an eight-page summary of the main themes and conclusions. By comparison, the epilogue seems disappointing. However, biography is an individual evaluation, the author's personal appraisal. Hattersley's *Blood & Fire* will not satisfy everyone. It will not be the last word on the subject, but it will undoubtedly stimulate further thought and discussion.

Grant R. Osborne, *The Hermeneutical Spiral: A Comprehensive Introduction to Biblical Interpretation*, InterVarsity Press, Downers Grove, Illinois, 1991. 499 pp.

Reviewed by Major Harry Brocksieck, Principal, Institute for Officer Training, Russia/CIS Command, Helsinki, Finland

How do scholars interpret the Bible? What procedures do they use? What skills do they put into practice? Hermeneutics comes from the Greek word meaning, "to interpret." *The Hermeneutical Spiral* is a methodological study that helps us to know the techniques, skills and procedures scholars use to assist in the interpretation of the Bible.

Osborne notes three perspectives critical to understanding the interpretive task:

- 1) It is a logical, orderly classification of the laws of interpretation; a scientific act.
- 2) It is an acquired skill demanding imagination and an ability to apply the "laws" to selected passages or books; an artistic act.
- 3) It depends on the leading of the Holy Spirit; a spiritual act.

The book systematically assists the reader in fulfilling all three perspectives. The reader learns the technical aspects of the task as a science, with the use of the imagination of the artist and the spiritual insight needed to arrive at the understanding of the biblical text.

The introduction gives the reader Osborne's theological view of Scripture with which the Salvationist will feel quite comfortable. Osborne then works through the large issues of hermeneutics, that is, context, grammar, semantics, syntax, and historical and cultural backgrounds. He discusses the methodology of genre analysis, which interprets Scripture in light of the form it takes, be it narrative, poetry, wisdom, prophecy, apocalyptic, parable or epistle, and cites the weaknesses of this methodology. His final section deals with biblical theology and systematic theology and then assists the reader in applying the truths through homiletics in contextualization and the sermon. His appendices are also informative, discussing the problems of "the reader" and "the text" from author-centered hermeneutics through structuralism and deconstruction, concluding with the author's helpful and comforting views. He also helps work through the "Problem of Meaning" from "Sociology of Knowledge" to "Paradigm Change" to "Probability Theory." If this

work is not enough to satisfy the interested student of the Word, the 63 pages of notes and bibliography will further stimulate the inquiring mind.

The subject matter is technical, but the explanations assist the interested reader in understanding the language of the interpreter. A variety of charts and diagrams assists the reader in seeing the overall issues and the details of how to do the work. Examples from Scripture further aid the understanding and application the author makes.

The book begins with the logical working of the mind in approaching Scripture; it broadens the reader's understanding and skills and then teaches the reader how to apply the message to himself and to the larger population through applied hermeneutics, including a helpful chapter on sermon preparation. There are many technical terms that are not necessary for the average officer, minister or interested soldier. However the terms are fully explained so that the reader can apply the terms while not getting lost in them. The new student of the Word may find the text too much to wade through, although it may help the novice in understanding how much further there is to go to "rightly divide the truth" (2 Tim. 2:15). The seeker of biblical truth will find the skills useful. The book is not helpful to the officer trying to prepare next Sunday's sermon but for personal long-term development of biblical insight and interpretation.

Osborne presents issues of biblical interpretation and the various positions scholars take on the issue. He brings the reader back to his premise that the Bible is the Word of God and we ought to find the truth revealed and apply that truth to our lives personally and corporately. I appreciate his commitment to this foundational truth.

I discovered the book while I was involved with my annual summer study on one of the books of the Bible. The methods of *The Hermeneutical Spiral* were applied to the study of 1 Peter. Six months of consistent study and applying the skills the book offers have given good insight that will surely prove useful for ministry.

Carpenter, Joel A. *Revive Us Again: The Reawakening of American Fundamentalism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997. 335 pp.; Marsden, George M. *Fundamentalism and American Culture: The Shaping of Twentieth-Century Evangelicalism 1870-1925*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1980. 307 pp.; Marsden, George M. *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*. Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1991. 208 pp.; Smith, Christian. *American Evangelicalism Embattled and Thriving*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1998. 310 pp.; Wells, David F. *No Place for Truth; or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1993. 318 pp.

Reviewed by Roger J. Green, Gordon College

This journal has emphasized the importance of knowing the theological and social history of The Salvation Army, and therefore the editors have thought it necessary to stress the Wesleyan background of the Army. There is, however, a broader evangelical tradition which helped to shape the Army, particularly in its British and American expressions, and any self-understanding should include a study of evangelicalism. There is no lack of recent writings to guide one's study of evangelicalism, as these five books bear witness. However, these represent only some of the best recent works on evangelicalism, their extensive notes and bibliographies pointing the reader beyond these excellent sources to countless other books and articles on the subject.

The most recent of these works is Joel Carpenter's masterful book on the history of fundamentalism and evangelicalism entitled *Revive Us Again*. This book builds on the scholarship which has gone before, such as Marsden's and Sandeen's analyses of fundamentalism and evangelicalism or David Wells' and Mark Noll's criticisms of evangelicalism. The basic thesis of *Revive Us Again* is that many historians of society, religion and culture have tended to write off American fundamentalism and its British counterpart as being on the margins of cultural life, especially after the national debacle of the Scopes Trial in 1925.

However, as Carpenter clearly demonstrates, American fundamentalism, far from being marginalized, became a thriving force in American religious and cultural life after the Scopes Trial, and indeed paved the way for the formation of evangelicalism in America which took shape with the formation of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942 and the rise of the popular preacher Billy Graham. And so

Carpenter deals with the historical realities that shaped fundamentalism in the 1930s at the beginning of the book and the rise of Billy Graham at the end of the book. And in the center of the book he wrote about how and why fundamentalism took form in the context of Western culture.

Fundamentalism appealed to the grassroots of American cultural and religious life beginning in the 1930s and gathered momentum as the century progressed. While on the one hand many fundamentalists felt alienated by the wider culture in the 1930s, they were remarkably active on the other hand in forming and shaping institutions and a cultural life which would find success in the pluralistic American culture. The undeniable fact was that mainline Protestantism was running out of steam because of the bankruptcy of liberalism which had dominated Protestant thought in America since the turn of the century. Fundamentalism and eventually evangelicalism met the theological and social needs of Protestants who became disenchanted with their weak churches and finally recognized the disestablishment of mainline Protestantism in a growing pluralistic culture.

Carpenter well demonstrates the development of the institutional life of fundamentalism with the rise of Bible colleges, liberal arts colleges, theological seminaries and parachurch movements, as well as the influence on American cultural life with radio ministries, the mass appeal of urban evangelism, and theologies which provided comfort and encouragement to people who were perplexed by the increasing problems of the 20th century. In fact a compelling case is made in the book that fundamentalism, especially in its dispensationalist expression, was much more realistic in facing the tragedies of the 20th century than many Protestant liberals who still held on to an ideal growing kingdom, regardless of the blatant realities of the holocaust and the threat of nuclear annihilation. At the same time Carpenter deals with the critical tension within fundamentalism of a separatist tendency from a sinful world on the one hand but a desire to save the world on the other hand. Some fundamentalists came to the conclusion that perhaps some accommodation was, after all, necessary to be able to speak to the culture, regardless of how godless the culture might be.

There were leaders within the movement who thought that fundamentalism was too separated from the world and therefore failed to establish a biblical theology which spoke to the great political and social needs of the world. The ranks of fundamentalism were definitely broken with the establishment of the National Association of Evangelicals in 1942 under the leadership of such national figures as Harold

J. Ockenga. These new evangelicals set an agenda for the second half of the 20th century which was built on the theology of fundamentalism but which consciously broke away from some of the perceived anti-intellectualism of fundamentalism as well as some of the strident divisiveness of fundamentalism.

Questions have been raised as to whether or not historians such as Carpenter have given enough attention to the Wesleyan and Pentecostal roots of fundamentalism and evangelicalism, and the reader will have to make that determination. Salvationists should be especially interested in discerning how the Wesleyan heritage is dealt with in this book. In any case, here is a classic treatment of this topic, and any reader will not only be enriched by the reading of this work, but, I think, will be intrigued by the very telling of the story. Carpenter brings to life the men and women and the institutions which helped to reawaken American fundamentalism, which in turn helps us to understand the impact of fundamentalism and evangelicalism upon our own history and tradition, and therefore upon our present institutional life.

Carpenter was indebted to the work which George Marsden has done on the themes of fundamentalism and evangelicalism, and in order to understand Marsden one should first read his book entitled *Fundamentalism and American Culture*. Although this book was written in 1980, its impact continues to be evident not only by the fact that it is still being published, but in an even more tangible way at a recent meeting of the American Academy of Religion where there was a session devoted to the writings of George Marsden. The panel consisted of scholars from the Protestant, Roman Catholic and Jewish faiths, and all gave witness to the influence of the writings of Marsden on religious studies in American life. This book was the one most noted by the panelists.

The greatness of the book, of course, lies in its groundbreaking study of fundamentalism and the impact it had on American culture. As has been mentioned, many scholars before this time had completely ignored the relationship of Protestant fundamentalism to the wider culture and had failed to give due recognition to fundamentalism before Marsden's work. Marsden was appreciative in this book, however, of such works as Ernest Sandeen's 1970 book entitled *The Roots of Fundamentalism*, which was invaluable for rejecting social explanations for fundamentalism and finding the roots of fundamentalism in "genuine doctrinal traditions" (p. 4).

Marsden traces the historical development of fundamentalism and especially looks at the many facets of fundamentalism such as dispensationalism, holiness

traditions and the impact of Presbyterianism on fundamentalism and eventually on evangelicalism. Two final sections of the book are very helpful in understanding the rise of fundamentalism. In one section he develops four views of Christianity and culture which arose at the beginning of this century, and in another section he provides four interpretations of fundamentalism: as a social phenomenon, as a political phenomenon, as an intellectual phenomenon, and finally as an American phenomenon. He ends the book with the Scopes Trial of 1925.

Anyone interested in studying the history of fundamentalism and evangelicalism should read this book carefully. There is historical insight and analysis here which is invaluable. As with the Carpenter book, the reader can determine whether or not Marsden gives enough credit to the Wesleyan and Pentecostal traditions in the shaping of fundamentalism, and critics of Marsden such as Donald Dayton provide a needed balance in the study of the rise of fundamentalism and evangelicalism. There is a challenge in reviewing the work of both Marsden and Carpenter to make sure that the Wesleyan story is told and that the impact of Wesleyanism upon fundamentalism and evangelicalism is clearly set forth. However, within that Wesleyan framework we Salvationists have an even greater challenge because William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army do not often receive the attention that they deserve, either in their shaping of a movement such as fundamentalism or in their impact upon the American culture. Books like Diane Winston's recent *Red-Hot and Righteous* begin to fill in the historical gaps which have been missed.

Marsden followed his *Fundamentalism and American Culture* with *Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism*, published in 1991. It is extremely helpful to read both books to get Marsden's overview of these movements. Between these two works he had written the history of Fuller Theological Seminary entitled *Reforming Fundamentalism: Fuller Seminary and the New Evangelicalism*. That work certainly contributed to Marsden's status as an insightful historian of these movement, and with *Understanding Fundamentalism and Evangelicalism* Marsden's analysis continues.

Anyone who has studied these movements may well be familiar with the contents of the book because the book is a collection of essays which the author wrote during the 1980s as chapters for books dealing with Christianity in America or as articles for journals. Certainly the best of all worlds is to read these essays within the context of those works. However, with the distance of time since the 1980s many of those original essays are not immediately accessible to everyone, and so this book is recommended.

The book intends to serve as an introduction to fundamentalism and evangelicalism and provides an interpretation of those movements as well. Marsden's essays, collected here, fulfill that intention well. After an all too brief introductory chapter in which Marsden defines both fundamentalism and evangelicalism, he divides his work into two parts: Part One: Historical Overview and Part Two: Interpretation. The reader will find both parts of the book helpful, but the second part is where the author's command of the material shows forth.

His analysis of these traditions, especially in their views of science and politics, and thus their relationship to the broader American culture and ethos, is insightful, critical and fair. He is incisive and focused in his interpretations, and weaves an interpretive thread through each chapter. This gives the reader both a context for understanding the relationship of those movements with science and politics, as well as a well-developed analysis with which to agree or disagree. Indeed, his final chapter is one on J. Gresham Machen, not because Machen was the typical fundamentalist, but because "he was a pivotal one, especially for the sort of evangelical who reads serious books" (p. viii), and because Machen was well aware of the broad issues relating Christianity and culture.

Aside from the facts that the reader of this book will benefit from the author's historical overview of fundamentalism and evangelicalism and from his interpretive skills, there are two practical reasons why this book is an invaluable resource for anyone interested in fundamentalism and evangelicalism or in the broader topic of religion and American life. First, the author is to be commended not only for his scholarship but because he writes so well. Anyone who has read Marsden has learned to appreciate his skill as a writer. It is his clear writing which carries his analysis so well, and which therefore provides opportunity for agreement or disagreement with his analysis. There is much in this area of study, especially when authors are dealing with interpretation, which is obtuse and obscure. Marsden breaks through all of that and can be enjoyed not only for what he says but also for the way he says it.

Second, only the first essay, written originally for the popular *Eerdmans Handbook to Christianity in America*, has no footnotes. The remainder of the essays have footnotes which provide a virtual goldmine of resources if one is interested in pursuing the many issues raised in this book. The footnotes are not long and cumbersome, but will point the reader to many of the resources which are still viable and which one will want to read. This is very helpful because so much continues to be written on fundamentalism and evangelicalism, and Marsden's notes point to some



rich historical material.

What this book sets out to do it does well. One could wish for more, especially in giving more attention to the Wesleyan/Methodist background to fundamentalism and evangelicalism, but the book is invaluable as an introductory text to fundamentalism and evangelicalism. Moreover, it has stimulated countless readers to further reading, study and research, and thus has accomplished its most important purpose.

Christian Smith's *American Evangelicalism Embattled and Thriving* is one of the most recent sociological analysis of fundamentalism and evangelicalism written by a Gordon College graduate and an assistant professor of sociology at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill. The advertisement of the book well summarizes the purpose of the book in this way:

Based on a national survey of hundreds of personal interviews with evangelicals and other churchgoing Protestants, this study provides a detailed analysis of the commitments, beliefs, concerns, and practices of this thriving group. Examining how evangelicals interact with and attempt to influence secular society, this book argues that traditional, orthodox evangelicalism endures not despite, but precisely because of, the challenges and structures of our modern pluralistic environment. This work also looks beyond evangelicalism to explore more broadly the problems and prospects for traditional religious belief and practice in the modern world.

Basically the work is divided into the two sections promised in the title of the book: the first half of the book deals with an analysis of why evangelicalism is thriving in the modern world, and the second half deals with why evangelicalism is embattled in the modern world. The book is the result of carefully designed and extensive research methods in an attempt to understand the place of evangelicalism in today's world. Added to this purpose is an analysis of whether or not it is possible to sustain traditional religion in a complex modern world. For those interested in the research methods of this work, there are four appendices at the end of the book which give detailed explanation of the research conducted and the methods used by which the author and his assistants were able to draw their conclusions.

Both of the main purposes of the book are a challenge to other analyses, which have preceded this book, some of which claimed that evangelicalism would not fare well in a pluralistic, secular society. Indeed, the great discovery of the author is that after looking at the six dimensions which characterize religious faith, evangelicalism is neither diminished nor weakened by modernity, but indeed "appears to be the strongest of the major Christian traditions in the United States today" (p. 20). Evan-

gicalism is more than ever capable of engaging the modern world and providing an ideology in contrast to some of what modernity holds sacred. Secular pluralism, instead of decreasing the religious fervor of evangelicalism, has allowed for a venue in which evangelicalism flourishes. Evangelicalism is vigorously engaged with pluralistic modernity.

Likewise, the research demonstrates what is now widely agreed to—that liberal Protestantism is greatly diminished in its influence in American religious life, and indeed no longer has the strength of purpose for what originally characterized liberal Protestantism such as the Social Gospel. It also shows that there is a biblical vitality to evangelicalism that is lacking in Protestant fundamentalism. This is probably true because of the defensiveness and the separatistic tendencies of fundamentalism which have rendered it unable to engage the modern world in as great a way as it once set out to do.

This carefully researched work can assist Salvationists in many ways as they understand not only their Wesleyan heritage and theological tradition, but as they also come to grips with the 19th and 20th century evangelicalism which helped to form the Army, especially in Britain and America. This may be especially critical as the Army shapes its life and ministry in the modern world. In a time when there is some tendency in the Army to want to become another community church without any distinct identity, the book offers a word of caution. In the final analysis, Smith contends that it is only those groups that have a very clear identity that will be able to thrive in the modern world. Pluralism is most vigorous when groups in the society identify themselves with clarity and precision. And so Smith says:

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 most effective churches in an increasingly pluralistic world, therefore, are those which are clear about who they are and accentuate their unique contributions. This is a challenge to Salvationists to articulate such contributions as our doctrine of holiness, our belief of women as well as men in ministry, our commitment to social holiness, the military metaphor by which we live, as well as many others as we fulfill what God's vision is for the Army in this world.

There is one word of caution for the reader which is important. This book is not an easy read because of some very technical arguments, which are articulated from the discipline of the sociology of religion. Occasionally there are assumptions that the reader is familiar with some of the theories against which the author argues. The book needs to be read carefully, but such a reading will provide the reader with an invaluable understanding of evangelicalism and will assist the reader with his or her thinking about the place of religion in our world today.

Aside from the historical and sociological analyses of evangelicalism today, there is also well-deserved criticism of evangelicalism from within the movement. Perhaps the most outstanding of these works is Mark Noll's *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*. Probably equally as important, however, are the works of David F. Wells of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. One of the most incisive of those works is his book entitled *No Place for Truth; or Whatever Happened to Evangelical Theology?* Professor Wells begins this book by looking at the place of the Church in common culture in America up to the 20th century, and the valued place of both the Church and the biblical truth which the Church proclaimed in that world. In many ways the teaching of the Church has been co-opted by the modern world, and likewise the Church has failed to be faithful to the truth of the gospel which has shaped the Church and which the Church has been committed to proclaim faithfully throughout the centuries.

One would certainly agree that the modern world is in large measure not moved by great ideas, but by technology controlled by managers. This world, Wells contends, is one that is dangerous because the Church has caved into to such mentality and instead of speaking to the culture has been shaped by the culture. What then becomes critical to the Church is its managers and its counselors rather than its biblically trained pastors and teachers. This, for Wells, is a reflection of the disappearance of biblical truth and theology in the central life of the Church. He wrote that:

The disappearance of theology from the life of the Church, and the orchestration of that disappearance by some of its leaders, is hard to miss today but, oddly enough, not easy to prove. It is hard to miss in the evangelical world—in the vacuous worship that is so prevalent, for example, in the shift from God to the self as the central focus of faith, in the psychologized preaching that follows this shift, in the erosion of its conviction, in its strident pragmatism, in its inability to think incisively about the culture, in its reveling in the irrational. And it would have made few of these capitulations to

modernity had not its capacity for truth diminished. It is not hard to see these things; avoiding them is what is difficult" (p. 95).

Above all things Wells bemoans this disappearance of theology as well as the lack of nerve in evangelicalism which has failed to embrace genuine biblical theology, and which has caved in to the worship of the self instead of the worship of God. Some leaders, such as Robert Schuller, come under Wells' criticism for putting forth a pseudo-Christianity that is more faithful to the values of modernity than to the values of the Bible. "Schuller is offering in easily digestible bites the therapeutic model of life through which the healing of the bruised self is found. He is by no means alone in this; he is simply the most shameless" (p175).

This critique of evangelicalism is critical for the health of evangelicalism and, indeed, for the health of the Church. One would do well to read the sequel to this work entitled *God in the Wasteland: The Reality of Truth in a World of Fading Dreams*. However, two words of caution are necessary which I hope will make the reading of *No Place for Truth* helpful. The first is that the obvious remedy which Wells espouses for the troubles of the Church today is to get back to the timeless truth of the revealed Word of God in Scriptures. It is interesting, however, that Wells uses Scripture very little in this analysis and in his criticism both of the evangelical church and of the modern world in which the Church works. One would expect more of an analysis rooted in the biblical text, especially given the author's criticism of the lack of the use of the Bible in the Church today.

Second, one needs to read this work in the light of Christian Smith's analysis of evangelicalism, which was written later than *No Place for Truth*, and then to find a balance between the two books. Smith finds a vibrancy in evangelicalism, which thrives not in spite of the modern world, but rather because of the plurality of the modern world. Smith also finds an allegiance to the biblical text which identifies evangelicalism today. It may be that some of Wells' pessimism is challenged by Smith's analysis. As a balance to Wells, one would also do well to read Alister McGrath's *Evangelicalism and the Future of Christianity* in which McGrath makes a very compelling case that evangelicalism represents the best hope for the institutional Church in the next millennium.

In any case, Wells' work is critical reading for anyone interesting in understanding fundamentalism and evangelicalism today. There is no virtue in ignoring those aspects of our religious life which prevent us from accomplishing what God has purposed for us to do for the kingdom of God in the present age. On the other hand,

there is also no virtue in becoming paralyzed by the problems of the Church, but rather view those problems realistically and seek ways to overcome them that continue to shape us as the people of God.

In conclusion, I reiterate that the better we understand fundamentalism and evangelicalism the better we understand ourselves—our own history and tradition, and the context in which the Army grew and developed, especially in the Western cultural context. As the works cited in this review assist the reader towards such an understanding they will have accomplished the purpose for which they were written.

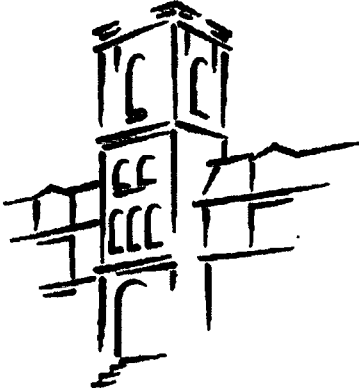
## Readers' Forum

I read with great interest the article *Faith Teaching Across Cultures* by Mary Doctor in your Fall 2000 issue. However, as an officer who has and does work in other cultures I believe that Mary Doctor took the easy way out in her examples and case studies. Most of us will never travel to Africa to do re-inforcement work, but many (if not all of us) must minister in "near" cultures. For example, I grew up in an area that was for the most part wealthy. The idea of success was getting a university degree and a job that made a lot of money. My first appointment was to an area where the idea of success was finishing high school and working at Wal-Mart. My current appointment is in Germany. It is a different culture from America but not to the extent of African cultures. When dealing with these "near" cultures, how can the principles that Mary Doctor mentioned be applied? The line that differentiates the cultures is not as clear. Perhaps if some case studies could be done with cultures closer together, we would be able to better apply this well-done article.

Daniel Freeman, Lt.  
Corps Officer  
Cologne, Germany

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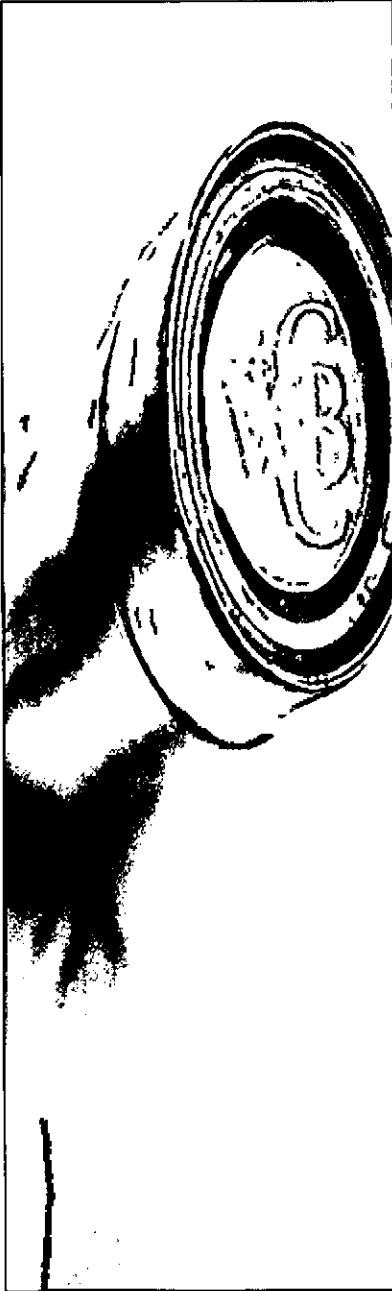


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## *Celebrate the Feasts of the Lord* by William W. Francis

This critically acclaimed book offers a fresh perspective on the sacred Jewish festivals and reveals their relevance to modern-day Christians. The book reveals how Jesus participated in the feasts and how, in Himself, their meaning was fulfilled. Study questions at the end of each chapter make this book perfect for group or individual study.

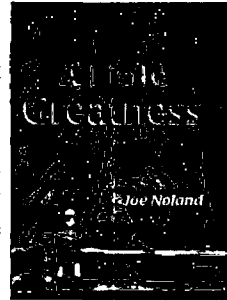


***Pictures from the Word* by Marlene J. Chase**

This collection of 56 meditations brings to life the vivid metaphors of Scripture, addressing the frequent references to the vulnerability of man met by God's limitless and gracious provision. The author's writing illustrates passages often so familiar that their hidden meaning eludes us. *Pictures from the Word* will enrich your time of personal devotion and deepen your understanding of the Word.

***A Little Greatness* by Joe Noland**

Using word play and alliteration, the author explores the book of Acts, revealing paradoxes in the life of a believer. In following the story of the early Church, readers find the contemporary relevance of all that took place. A Bible study and discussion guide for each chapter helps the reader to fully apply the lessons of Scripture, making this an ideal resource for individual or group study.



***Romance & Dynamite: Essays on Science and the Nature of Faith* by Lyell M. Rader**

"Whatever God makes works, and works to perfection. So does His plan for transforming anyone's life from a rat race to a rapture." This and many other anecdotes and insights on the interplay between science and faith are found in this collection of essays by one of The Salvation Army's most indefatigable evangelists.

***Who Are These Salvationists? An Analysis for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century* by Shaw Clifton**

A seminal study that explores The Salvation Army's roots, theology and position in the Body of believers, this book provides a definitive profile of the Army as an "authentic expression of classical Christianity." Salvationists and non-Salvationists alike will find in *Who Are These Salvationists?* a penetrating and illuminating look back at the growth of this branch of Christianity and an optimistic view of the Army's prospects for the twenty-first century.



***Easter Through the Years: A War Cry Treasury***

This Easter, spend time reflecting on the wonderful gift of salvation God has given by reading *Easter Through the Years*, a companion volume to *Christmas Through the Years*. Articles, fiction, poetry and artwork culled from the last 50 years' *Easter War Cry* will recount the passion of Christ and unpack in unique ways the events surrounding the cross and the numerous ways Easter intersects with life and faith today.

***Slightly Off Center! Growth Principles to Thaw Frozen Paradigms* by Terry Camsey**

Camsey seeks to thaw frozen paradigms of what is "Army." He challenges us to see things from a different perspective, and urges us to welcome a new generation of Salvationists whose methods may be different than those of the Army of the past, but whose hearts are wholly God's. *Slightly Off Center!* is ideal for stimulating discussion in group settings and will encourage corps officers, soldiers and corps councils to renew their vision and fine-tune their purpose and ministry.



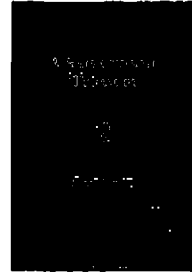


***He Who Laughed First: Delighting in a Holy God***  
by Phil Needham

This invigorating book questions why there are so many sour-faced saints when the Christian life is meant to be joyful. Needham explores the secret to enduring joy, a joy that is not found by following some list of prescriptions, but by letting God make us holy, by letting Him free us to become who we are in Christ: saints. *He Who Laughed First* helps the reader discover the why and how of becoming a joyful, hilarious saint.

***A Salvationist Treasury*** by Henry Garipey

This book brings to readers the quintessence of devotional writings from over a century of Salvationist writers. From Army notables to the virtually unknown, from the classics to the contemporary, this treasure trove of 365 inspirational readings will enrich your life, and is certain to become a milestone compilation of Army literature.



***Our God Comes: And Will Not Be Silent***  
by Marlene Chase

This book rests on the premise that, like the unstoppable ocean tide, God comes to us in a variety of ways and His voice will not be silent as He reveals Himself throughout all Creation. This book of poetry, the first of its kind for Crest Books, invites the reader to contemplate life's experiences and God's goodness to us.

Upcoming Release:

***Fractured Parables: And Other Tales to Lighten Your Heart and Quicken Your Spirit* by Kenneth Wilson**

At times it is both fun and beneficial to apply the truths of Scripture to contemporary situations. The people of the Bible were as real as we are today. We tend to consider them as little more than quaint people with quaint stores from a time that has little or nothing to do with where we are today. We do well to view them in a new light. *Fractured Parables* helps us do this by recasting Jesus' parables in contemporary circumstances and language. Wilson also challenges and entertains the reader through short articles written in his inimitable style. He sees the humor in the mundane and deftly unpacks the spiritual application. This book will surely lighten your heart and quicken your spirit.

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A Journal of Salvation Army

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Volumes four and five will include papers delivered at the upcoming International Theology and Ethics Symposium at William and Catherine Booth College in Canada.

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