



A Publication of The Salvation Army

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.

Editorial Address:

Manuscripts, requests for style sheets, and other correspondence should be addressed to Major Ed Forster at The Salvation Army, National Headquarters, 615 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22314. Phone: (703) 684-5500. Fax: (703) 302-8623. Email: Ed_Forster@usn.salvationarmy.org.

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 manuscripts 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, 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 disk or CD, using Microsoft Word format; 3) a 100-word abstract of the article to be used at the discretion of the editor (e.g., on The Salvation Army's web page or in advertisements pertaining to 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 and September 1. A style sheet is available upon request.

Editor in Chief: Ed Forster, Salvation Army National Headquarters

Co-Editors: Roger J. Green, Gordon College
Jonathan S. Raymond, Trinity Western University

Editorial Board:

| | |
|----------------|----------------|
| Donald Burke | Cathie Harris |
| Joan Canning | Brian Jones |
| Edward Chagas | Cheryl Maynor |
| Peter Farthing | Michael Reagan |
| | Jeffrey Smith |

Vol. 12 No. 1 November 2009 ISSN 1522-3426

Word & Deed is indexed in the Christian Periodical Index.

Copyright 2009 The Salvation Army. All rights reserved.

Printed in the United States of America

Word & Deed

Vol. 12, No. 1

November 2009

Editorial: The Ebb and Flow of Fidelity

Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green 1

Guest Editorial: Bilateral Theological Dialogue: The Salvation Army with the World Methodist Council

William J. Francis 3

The Divine Imperative: To Make Disciples of All Nations

Jonathan S. Raymond 11

Fulfilling the Great Commission in the 21st Century

An Ecclesiological Statement

Philip Cairns 29

To Make Disciples: A Corporate Ecclesiological Response

Paul W. Chilcote 47

Book Review: Salvationist Samurai

Micah Raymond 65

Book Notes

Roger J. Green 70

The Ebb and Flow of Fidelity

Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green

Every generation is challenged with appropriating the wisdom of the past and finding its own words to express and advance its understanding of first things: God, the created order, God's self-revelation, the nature of mankind, the *Imago Dei*, and God's salvation story. Each generation encounters the opportunity to self-assess and critique whether its faithfulness to the Lord's directive to make disciples is experiencing ebb or flow. Our challenge is to reclaim Jesus' basic teaching on discipleship and live in fidelity to his divine imperative.

We find ourselves at the cross-roads of self-assessment and reflection. At this juncture, it is fortuitous that The Salvation Army continues its bilateral dialogues with its spiritual, theological first cousins from the World Methodist Council focusing on the timely topic of The Great Commission. Commissioner William Francis, chairman of the Army's International Doctrine Council, agreed to author this issue's guest editorial introducing in more detail the background, history, and nature of the three dialogues to date and the themes of the most recent, third dialogue on Christ's divine imperative. The papers that follow in this issue and the next are selected from the third dialogue. It is our prayer that God blesses both The Salvation Army and the World Methodist Council as we strive to be faithful to our Lord's directive to make disciples of every nation. JSR, RJG

Guest Editorial

William W. Francis

Bilateral Theological Dialogue The Salvation Army with the World Methodist Council

Dialogue within the Church is nothing new. From discourse among Jesus' disciples to conversations between Peter and the Jerusalem Council (Acts 15 and Galatians 2), through a succession of ecumenical (world-wide) Church Councils beginning with Nicea in the fourth century, the early church formed the abiding creeds of Christendom.

However, bilateral dialogue between Christian World Communions in the later 20th and early 21st centuries is relatively recent. The Salvation Army's participation in what is now known as Bilateral Theological Dialogues commenced in 2001.¹ In an International News Release of September 24, 2001, The Salvation Army announced its intention to enter into bilateral dialogue with the World Methodist Council. The news release read as follows:

At the World Methodist Council meetings in Brighton, England, the

Commissioner William Francis and his wife, Commissioner Marilyn Francis, are territorial leaders for The Salvation Army's Canada and Bermuda territory. Since 2007 he has served as Chairman of the International Doctrine Council.

following motion was passed: "In the light of correspondence with General Gowans, the Council officers ask that the World Methodist Council be open to an exploration with The Salvation Army as to how the two bodies might reach a new, if informal, recognition and relationship as sister Communion sharing the same tradition."

This motion arose from earlier recognition by officers of the Council that The Salvation Army is a Christian World Communion in its own right, as is the World Methodist Communion, both bodies having membership in the Conference of Secretaries of Christian World Communions. That recognition acknowledged that The Salvation Army would not therefore be likely to seek membership in the World Methodist Council. However, the suggestion was made that the common heritage of both communions provides grounds for a closer informal relationship. The two communions are both rooted in the historic Wesleyan tradition of saving faith in Christ, committed to the proclamation of the gospel wherever people are found, and have a shared concern for holiness of life.

The first dialogue between The Salvation Army and World Methodist Council (then representing 77 denominations of Methodist roots) was convened at Sunbury Court Conference Center, Sunbury-on-Thames, Middlesex, England, from June 2-5, 2003. Dr. George Freeman, General Secretary of the World Methodist Council, and Colonel Earl Robinson, then Chairperson of The Salvation Army's International Doctrine Council, served as Co-Secretaries. Dr. Paul Chilcote (WMC) and Dr. Roger Green (SA) led the dialogue in their rôles as Co-Chairs for this historic assembly.²

The declared goal for the initial dialogue was "the strengthening of relationships among the member churches of the World Methodist Council and The Salvation Army for the purpose of united witness and service in the world."² Two subsequent dialogues have retained this shared ultimate desire to strengthen relationships and unite in witness and service. Both groups acknowledge the value of mutual encouragement and enrichment of life that comes from working together.

The World Methodist Council hosted the second dialogue at their world headquarters offices and conference center in Lake Junaluska, North Carolina, USA, from January 10-13, 2005. As has become the pattern for

each gathering, the International Doctrine Council conducts its regular semi-annual meeting immediately before or after the three-day dialogue.

Sunbury Court Conference Center was the venue for the third bilateral dialogue, which was in turn hosted by The Salvation Army from March 29 – April 1, 2009. Although the result of past gatherings shaped the agenda, in many ways Sunbury Court 2009 was a “new beginning” for the dialogue. Of the 15 conferees, 11 attended for the first time. The dialogue opened with a review of the report prepared following the previous convocation entitled “The Salvation Army and the Methodists.”

Eight members of the International Doctrine Council met with seven representatives of the World Methodist Council for three days. The principal theme of the third dialogue considered our response to the Great Commission of Jesus as found in Matthew 28:16-20.

The dialogue sessions focused on four sets of companion papers as follows: The Divine Imperative: To Make Disciples of All Nations, Dr. Jonathan Raymond (SA) and Rev. Karen Jobson (WMC); Ecclesiological Statement – Corporate Response, Lt. Colonel Philip Cairns (SA) and Dr. Paul Chilcote (WMC); Teaching to Obey, Relevance for Holiness/Evangelism – A Personal Response, Colonel Brian Tuck (SA) and Dr. Won Jae Lee (WMC); Social Justice – Outworking of the Response,³ Lt. Colonel Karen Shakespeare (SA) and Dr. Dennis Dickerson (WMC).

General Shaw Clifton warmly accepted the report covering the third dialogue and has approved the publication of selected papers by Word & Deed editors. The reader will find the exceptional papers presented by Dr. Jonathan Raymond, Dr. Paul Chilcote and Lt. Colonel Philip Cairns and published in this issue of Word & Deed to be informative, inspiring and challenging. Extensive collegial and forthright discussion followed each presentation.

The May 2010 issue of Word & Deed will include the equally outstanding papers presented by Lt. Colonel Karen Shakespeare, Colonel Brian Tuck and Dr. Dennis Dickerson.

While the deliberations focused on the eight addresses, a number of noteworthy issues emerged during the conversations. Each topic was candidly discussed, resulting in greater mutual understanding, if not general agree-

ment. The following are the foremost topics of mutual interest that were considered:

Discipleship-small groups

Delegates frequently mentioned the immense importance of discipleship. The Methodist practice of utilizing small groups, historically called class meetings, was considered as a primary means of Christian education and discipleship training for their churches. The Army's historic discipleship programs of Junior Soldiers and Corps Cadets are declining in many parts of the world. Representatives of both denominations expressed concern that effective discipleship groups are rare, highlighting a shared challenge. The dialogue affirmed the incalculable importance of developing and promoting groups that provide a setting for fellowship, accountability to the Christian community and the opportunity to mature and develop spiritually. When discipleship forums are abandoned, the church fails to disciple its people. This subject generated enthusiastic discussion concerning appropriate alternative, contemporary forms of discipleship training, as well as a plea for a resurgence and revitalization of small groups.

Sacramental issues

It was natural that the topic of Sacraments was referenced. This gave opportunity for both Salvationists and Methodists to clarify and answer questions on the sacramental positions of their denominations. Salvationists explained The Salvation Army's position, particularly concerning the Eucharist, and the Methodist clarified their viewpoint. There was a mutual support and acceptance of both understandings, which it was agreed are not at all diametrically opposed, but in fact mutually supportive. As one colleague expressed it, "The theological and practical positions of both groups are in reality mutually supportive. They are two sides of the same coin."

Responsiveness and adaptability in times of societal change

Responsiveness remains a foundational, historic strength of both Salvationists and Methodists. There was general agreement and celebration that adaptation remains a significant strength of The Salvation Army. However, accepting these dual strengths posed the following questions, which were debated: How can established churches that have become settled and institutionalized retain and/or recapture flexibility? How can the church

respond to the ever-changing needs of society? Can Salvationists and Methodists stand in solidarity in response to societal shifts? The succinct agreed answer to these questions is that we must mutually inform, learn from and support each other as we struggle with identical challenges.

Ecclesiological issues - essence and form

Salvationists contended that mission as expressed in Acts 2 and 3 is at the heart of the Army's ecclesiology and mission. Although the forms in which mission is expressed differ, The Salvation Army and Methodist churches are in harmony with the essence of our parallel, biblically based missions. Nonetheless, profound and extended discussion ensued on the matter of recurrent tension between spirit and structure (essence and form) in our churches. Forms that should naturally change in order to more adequately address culture tend to become ends in themselves and consequently are treated as if they were the essence of our beliefs. There exists ample evidence of this occurrence in the Army and in Methodism. The discussion prompted a unanimous call for renewal and revitalization of essentials. Crucial and weighty questions surfaced — How can a settled institution reclaim the dynamic spontaneity of their early movement? Is it too simplistic to assert that the early responsiveness was a good that should be reclaimed in contrast to a “settled conservatism” of the established denomination? There was general agreement that essence should guide the form, but form must be relevant to culture and context. Form must be flexible to adapt to societal change, without abandoning essence.

Evangelism

Considerable discussion took place around the importance and value of proclamation as the foundation for evangelism. The specific challenges and opportunities of the South African and Korean contexts were highlighted as presenters shared from personal experience. Similarly, the danger of imposing “mission initiatives” from the outside without reference to the needs of the local community was discussed. Emerging questions included: How do we prepare officers and ministers to serve in a contemporary, multicultural context? How do we evangelize in the 21st century? What is a biblically based definition of “integrated mission”?

Social Justice

An enlightening comparison between the development of the American Methodist Episcopal Church and the origins of The Salvation Army revealed that the concentration on social justice was more prominent in the early days of both movements. The respective contributions of lay and ordained people were discussed, noting that often clergy and laity are working to establish justice in the local situations. However, this involvement and contribution is necessarily different from that of the denomination on a regional or global level. Social justice must be understood as a natural outcome of the process of salvation. Transformation must extend from the individual, to the community and to the structures of society. The difficulties of seeking justice in difficult or dangerous situations were noted and discussed. However, there remained firm resolve that neutrality on issues of social justice is not an option.

A way forward...

The dialogue concluded with discussion concerning a fourth dialogue that is now approved to take place at the World Methodist Council international headquarters at Lake Junaluska, North Carolina from March 21-23, 2011. Suggestions that it should focus on ways in which this group can provide resources and models for local churches that will enable them to share in effective dialogue with one another, were warmly welcomed and will be explored further.

During the three days of shared dialogue, worship and fellowship, it was clear that the differences between the denominations represented are exceedingly less than the history, theology and ecclesiology we share. The suggestion that the Methodists and The Salvation Army are "first cousins" with countless family resemblances is accurate. While our mutual heritage is important to understand and celebrate, more significant remain the common challenges we share in developing our ministry to fulfill our God-given mission. A recurring theme throughout the dialogue was the need for the church to respond to the needs, challenges and opportunities of the 21st century through its discipleship, mission, ecclesiological structures and response to issues of social justice. The opportunities for mutual understanding, sharing of resources and working in cooperation are beneficial to both the World

Methodist Council and The Salvation Army.

As succinctly and energetically affirmed in second stanza of Charles Wesley's well-known hymn, the united prayer of Salvationist and Methodists participating in the third bilateral dialogue remains:

To serve the present age,
My calling to fulfill,
O may it all my powers engage,
To do my Master's will!

Having participated in bilateral dialogues with three Christian World Communions, I have come to consider structured discourse between faith-based communities essential to fulfilling the Great Commission in our time. There was a time when denominations, including The Salvation Army, believed that God had called them to labor independently at best, and exclusively at worst, to "win the world for Jesus." That day has thankfully past. We live in an age of partnership, where brothers and sisters in Christ, while celebrating their denominational heritage and utilizing their God-given strengths, at the same time wrap their arms of Christian love around all who serve in the name of Christ, and "press on together" toward the mutual goal of fulfilling the Great Commission ("make disciples" – Mt. 28:19) and the Great Commandment ("love your neighbor as yourself" – Mt. 19:19) in our time.

Notes

1. For more information on the history of The Salvation Army's participation in bilateral dialogues see Earl Robinson's editorial in the November 2005 issue of *Word and Deed* (Vol. 8, No. 1), pgs. 5-13
2. *Report of the International Dialogue Between The Salvation Army and the World Methodist Council*, World Methodist Council, Lake Junaluska, NC, 2006, pg. 10.
3. Commissioner M. Christine MacMillan, Director of the International Social

Justice Commission, and Dr. James Read, Executive Director of The Salvation Army's Ethics Centre in Winnipeg, MB Canada, were invited guests who participated in the dialogue following both presentations on the topic of Social Justice.

The Divine Imperative To Make Disciples of All Nations

Jonathan S. Raymond

And Jesus came and spoke to them, saying, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given. Therefore, go and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age." (Matthew 28:19&20)¹

In the previous dialogues between The Salvation Army and the World Methodist Council, several papers were published in *Word & Deed*, The Salvation Army's journal of theology and ministry.² In the editorial introducing the dialogue papers, the editors remark that The Salvation Army's 141 years of existence (now 144) since 1865 represents about seven percent (7%) of two thousand years of church history. In the previous Salvationist/Methodist reflection and dialogue, we rediscover a longer history and deeper grounding in the rich tradition of Christian orthodoxy that goes back in history well before the arrival of William and Catherine Booth and the Christian Mission in East London. We find that "the social, doctrinal, and spiritual underpinnings of Salvationism" found in William and

Jonathan S. Raymond is the president of Trinity Western University in Langley, British Columbia (Canada), co-editor of Word & Deed, co-chair of TSA/WMC Council third dialogue, and a member of the International Doctrine Council.

Catherine Booth, in their lives, thought, and callings were “deeply grounded in Methodism and the enduring influence of John and Charles Wesley, the Anglican Reformation, and the long history of the church dating back to the Patristics and the early faith communities found in the book of Acts.”³

In this third dialogue, we begin by acknowledging again our shared, common theological heritage with Methodists worldwide, our indebtedness to Methodist scholarship, and the development of Christian orthodoxy and orthopraxy by Methodist friends over the years that help provide a Wesleyan lens through which we may approach Scripture to inform Salvationist theology and practice. It is through this Wesleyan lens that we proceed to share the following discussion of The Divine Imperative: The Great Commission - To make disciples of all nations.

Viewing the text: The Great Commission

The text of Matthew 28:19-20 gives us The Great Commission. It is a straightforward passage of Scripture that lends itself to clear, practical interpretation and application. As a direct word from Christ, it is a divine imperative that speaks into the future. Christ does not commend. He commands. Contextually, it is important to note the time and place that this “Great Commission” takes place and its audience. In this post-resurrection event, Christ intentionally takes his eleven disciples away into Galilee, to a mountain he has chosen for this retreat. In fact it is not a retreat, but rather an advance. The text suggests intentional intimacy with the disciples with whom Christ has spent three years of ministry and to whom, though scattered during the crucifixion, he desires to bring together away from Jerusalem to Galilee. His purpose is to give them explicit direction for the future.

Matthew captures the post-resurrection imperative of the victorious Christ in remembering and passing on to the reader Christ’s exalted, sovereign position and reign in the Kingdom of God. He quotes Christ saying, “*All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.*” This proclamation sets the tone of the serious intent and missional expectation he has for the eleven disciples, now apostles. He says, “Therefore, go” or more accurately, “*Therefore, as you go . . .*” The “therefore” grounds the ensuing divine directive in the absolute authority and sovereignty of the resurrected Christ and it is to be obeyed as they naturally go about each day living under the

authority and reign of Christ.

Because Christ is revealed as the resurrected Messiah, the Son of the Living God, God with them, the eleven disciples are to go forward in the authority of Jesus Christ and make other disciples of all the nations. They are to replicate themselves without geographical, political, social, cultural, gender or economic boundaries. Christ is casting the world's future on a small group of disciples that he has nurtured and drawn into intimacy with him for three years.

Jesus does not merely give them a broad, abstract directive. He unpacks what he means by "make disciples" by two further, more explicit directives. First, he says they are to baptize new disciples in the name of each one of the Trinity affirming their faith in the triune God. Then with their identity and faith confirmed, they are to teach obedience to Christ's commands. The eleven are to begin the exponential growth of disciples whose lives are to be obedient to all that Christ had commanded the eleven. Baptizing new disciples is not the very beginning of their journey and "make over." It is the point at which, having accepted Christ as Lord and Savior, they are resolved to witness to that fact. Their baptism is a witness to their decision to die to self and rise again to Christ.

The directive starts with the words "make disciples" leaving open the possibility of God's grace working preveniently (convincingly) to bring them to a point of repentance and confession first. The process of making disciples starts with engagement of persons who are not disciples, but can become followers of Jesus in response to the grace that comes to them. Christ's prevenient grace is the grace that comes and brings one to faith in Christ. It is convincing grace. It comes convincingly through the various means by which the pre-believer experiences the presence of God and comes to recognize the God who is present.⁴

It is convincing grace that occasions faith and belief. Then baptism follows as a public sign and testimony of a person's intent to accept Christ for who he truly is and to live a life of obedience to his direction. We use the term "baptism" broadly to mean the various forms of testimony that one has died to self and sin, risen to new life in Christ, and taken on the essence (being, identity) of Jesus as a follower (disciple) of the risen Christ. Possibly

most compelling in the text is the emphasis Jesus places on the missional importance of teaching as the means of establishing new disciples in the Kingdom of God. It is not enough that new believers are baptized. They are not to be ignored and left to fend for themselves in their faith journey prior and subsequent to their conversion.

Nor is the new life in Christ to be static and isolated from the grace that comes from God through others. Rather, the text suggests that the disciples' obedience to be teachers is intended to foster the obedience of new disciples to the commands of Christ. Here Jesus is instructing them to bring people to the point of faith that results in their testimony, but not to leave them there. The evangelical work of fidelity to this Divine Imperative is "to establish them in the Kingdom."⁵ Through the missional act of teaching, they are to move forward in their development. They are to learn and practice obedience to Christ's direction that, having been given to the eleven, is to be passed on to all peoples, to all nations.

To what directives are they to live and teach obedience? It is to all the commands he gave them while they were with him. The text does not provide a listing, but it is certainly implicit in the audience to whom he is speaking. He gives this Divine Imperative to the eleven Apostles who have spent three years with him hearing a litany of directives beginning with the Sermon on the Mount and including instruction taken from the (Old Testament) Scriptures as well as new directions. Some directives, like the Great Commandment to love the Lord and one's neighbor, are mentioned only once. Others are repeated. Some directives are strategically placed in the gospel narrative with repetition like John 15 ("*remain in me*" v. 4, 5, 6, 7) and (v. 10 & 12 – "*If you keep My commandments, you will abide in My love, just as I have kept My Father's commandments and abide in his love . . . This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you*").

The eleven Apostles are not left to their own devices in their obedience to the Great Commission. Jesus is co-missional. The eleven are invited into a partnership with Jesus by his reminding them "*and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.*" They can take courage and encouragement knowing that he is with them giving them the strength and wisdom to complete this task knowing that the presence and authority of the risen Christ is their

sufficiency.

The application of this straightforward text for us today is compelling. We take a high view of Scripture. We believe that the Scriptures of God's Word were given by inspiration of God and occasions the inspiration of God's Word by the Holy Spirit to our hearts and lives today. This makes The Great Commission passage relevant, appropriate, compelling and binding upon us today. As we go through each day, each venue and social context, each of life's circumstances, we are to do so in obedience. Baptizing and making disciples along the way, teaching them likewise to obey all that Christ commands, is not an option. It is to be the way we live, in obedience to the Great Commission.

The fidelity of the early church

When we return to the life of the early, missional church, we discover that they were obedient to Christ's directive. In Acts 2:41 and 42, we read this:

Then those who gladly received his (Peter's) word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them. And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine (read teaching) and fellowship . . ."

Three realities are evident in the text: 1) In the Apostle's obedience, new believers "continued steadfastly" to be taught. It was making disciples by teaching. 2) Making disciples extended beyond teaching to more than conventional social life. It was also discipling through fellowship, a social life in Jesus name and to his glory. 3) The discipling, being taught while immersed in fellowship, resulted in a sustained obedience, a long obedience in the same direction, leading to intimacy with Christ by the Holy Spirit. It was the communal living-out of John 15:4 where Jesus said, "*If you abide in me and I abide in you, you will bear much fruit.*" And we read in Acts 2: 47b – "*And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.*"

It is important to note that the text of Acts 2:47 does not say "Those who were saved." Instead we see the phrase "were being saved." This suggests the on-going activity of development and growth in Christ-likeness and

holiness in the communal, missional life of the early Christian faith communities. The means by which God's grace was saving them was social, and communal engaging all participating peoples in the continuing life of Christ through fellowship, breaking bread, and prayer grounded in the Apostles' teaching of obedience to Christ's commands. We understand that the Apostles' teaching ministry was central and foundational to the mission of the early Christian faith community to not merely bringing others to faith in Christ. Its purpose was to establish new believers in the Kingdom of God.

We understand this to take place by the continual saving grace of God conforming and restoring them as individuals and as community to the image of God. In this way, the blessing of salvation continuing on to holiness was directly occasioned by learning and practicing continued obedient faith in Christ. They were not only saved **from** the sin of their past, but were being saved **to** and therefore being restored **to** the ultimate goal of the Christian life, the *Imago Dei*, the likeness of Christ.⁶ Teaching obedience to Christ's truths and commands was the instrumental means by which a "full salvation" was made possible, full in the sense of not only salvation from sin, but also to holiness.

This brings to light the full meaning of the Apostle Paul's teaching in his letter to the Colossians (2:6&9) – *As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, as you have been taught, abounding in it with thanksgiving . . . For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in him, who is the head of all principality and power.*" And to the Philippians (2:12&13) – *Therefore, my beloved, as you have always obeyed . . . workout your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God who works in you both to will and to do for His good pleasure.*" (See John Wesley's sermon – *On Working Out Our Own Salvation*, 1795).⁷ And Philippians 1:6 – *"Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ."*

Our doctrines and the Great Commission

As we go through life each day, we are to work to establish ourselves in Christ. But we are also to establish others in the Kingdom with no one left out. All are to offer public witness to their new life in Christ. All are to be

assisted in their journey to a full salvation of convincing, justifying, regenerating, sanctifying, and glorifying grace. All are to show their faithful response to God's grace by their obedience to all the Lord's commands and directives found in Scripture. Obedience to this divine imperative promotes a full salvation and offers a fresh interpretation to the ninth doctrine of The Salvation Army regarding continuance in a "state of salvation" dependent on continuing, obedient faith in Jesus Christ. Obedience to the Great Commission and to obeying all that Christ commanded leads inevitably by God's grace to holiness. Obedience links the ninth doctrine of the Army to its tenth doctrine:

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

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

We ask whether doctrinal teaching in The Salvation Army over the years has fostered an interpretation of the ninth doctrine suggesting something other than eternal security when the ordinal positioning of the doctrine and its juxtapositioning with doctrine number ten suggests something totally otherwise. The wording in the ninth doctrine - "continuance in a state of salvation" - does not refute the idea of eternal security. Rather, it clearly promotes the idea of a full salvation along a continuum of grace and a trajectory of progression toward holiness and sanctification.

This is what John Wesley referred to as the *via salutis*, the way of salvation. It reinforces the relationship of consecration (Doctrine nine - our obedience) with sanctification (Doctrine ten - God's work). The one naturally follows the other as a continuum of spiritual development. The language of these two doctrines together brings clarity to the implicit truth found in a juxtaposition of the two. Herein, our consecration is expressed in our obedience to the directives of Christ. It continues on the way of full salvation out of divine/human cooperation, a dynamic. This leads to the

Army's particularly Wesleyan structural soteriology implicit in its doctrines that celebrates "a transformation of *being* which is the result of the actualization of grace, ever taking a certain form. In a real sense, believers become different people at different points in their spiritual journey."⁸

Our roots in classic Methodism

The history of obedience to the Divine Imperative for The Salvation Army has its roots in classic Methodism. The Booths were thoroughly Wesleyan both having been nurtured and disciplined within contexts of Christian orthodoxy with strong Wesleyan Methodist characteristics. It is fair to say that their theology was Wesleyan in content and perspective. In their separation from the Methodist Connection, their break from the polity of Methodism and its institutional expressions, they nevertheless retained more than merely the flavor and nuances of Wesleyan thought. They retained much of the orthodoxy, the core Wesleyan theology of Methodism.

Paradoxically, however, theirs was not necessarily the orthopraxis of Methodism that was so successful in promoting the large-scale discipleship at the heart of Methodism, namely the social/spiritual ecology of the Class Meeting. In the early years of the Christian mission, much of Methodist practice was appropriated, but with time dissipated. In a communiqué to his son, Bramwell, William Booth wrote:

I have been reading Tyerman's Wesley in my illness and have, by comparing his experience with my own, I think, derived some important lessons. One is that, under God, Wesley made Methodism not (only) by converting sinners, but by making well instructed saints. We must follow in his track, or we are a rope of sand. He laid as much stress on visiting members privately, and in classes, as on preaching.⁹

While Booth came to appreciate the importance of Methodist orthopraxy represented by the structure and process of the class meeting in making disciples, or as he states it – "well instructed saints" – nevertheless there is little or no evidence that he or the Army subsequently embraced and implemented an intentional, strategic practice as such.¹⁰

Part of the reason for this may have been the post-millennial leanings of William Booth and his conviction that if Christ's return was immanent, there was little or no time for anything else but evangelism (saving souls) and bringing as many people into the Kingdom of God as quickly as possible. Until the early 1890s, this was the predominant posture of the Booths' ministry. It was first a "war on one front," the promotion of spiritual Salvation. Later, by the early 1890s, Booths embraced a "war on two fronts" the other front being "social salvation"¹¹ for which the Army is best known today.

In between the two fronts, William Booth seemed to under-appropriate the orthopraxy of Methodist communal life most effectively lived out in the Methodist societies. For this reason, discipleship in the conventional style of Methodism was not historically a priority for The Salvation Army. In the history of the early Army, is there any reference to or connection with the means of grace that characterize Methodist orthopraxy of discipleship? There appears to be no embrace of this enormous aspect of the history of Methodism and its seminal beginnings.

The genius of Wesley and Methodism

The "Holy Club" was John and Charles Wesley's small fellowship gathering of like-minded, like-hearted friends. Out of the seed of the Holy Club grew the powerful, effective organization of societies devoted to mutual religious improvement. Small group fellowship known as "Class Meetings" grew, divided, and multiplied resulting in a disciplined form of discipleship that emphasized the mutual edification and accountability of small group members. Out of a purely pecuniary, temporary impulse to wipe out the indebtedness of Methodist societies grew the weekly stewardship of leaders who, while collecting a penny a week on the average from each group member, facilitated the spiritual advice, reproof, comfort and exhortation as each member needed. According to Wesley –

At first they (the leaders) visited each person at his own house, but this was soon found not so expedient . . . it was agreed that those of each class should meet all together, and by this means a more full inquiry was made into the behavior of every person. Those who could not be visited at home, or not otherwise than in the company, had the

same advantage as other. Advice or reproof was given, as need required, quarrels made up, misunderstandings removed, and after an hour or two spent in this labor of love, they concluded with prayer and thanksgiving.¹²

In the beginning members in the Methodist societies numbered about twelve persons and while the number sometimes grew to twenty, fifty, and even larger in a single class, smaller classes were preferred and normative making it easier for leaders who were most commonly itinerants.

The Wesleys were not the first to promote small group discipleship. History gives the honors to a German Lutheran pastor turned Anglican priest, Dr. Anthony Horneck who drew up a list of rules and regulations for societies, the first six of which are recounted by Theodore Runyon:

- 1. All that enter the Society shall resolve upon a holy and serious life.*
- 2. No person shall be admitted into the Society until he (she) has arrived at the age of sixteen, and has been first confirmed by the bishop, and solemnly taken upon himself his baptismal vow.*
- 3. They shall choose a minister of the Church of England to direct them.*
- 4. They shall not be allowed, in their meetings, to discourse of any controverted point of divinity.*
- 5. Neither shall the discourse of the government of Church or State.*
- 6. In their meetings they shall use no prayers but those of the Church such as the Litany and Collects and other prescribed prayers.¹³*

The Wesley's seminal Holy Club and the ensuing Class Meetings that evolved out of them retained much of the early rules and regulations of an Anglican society. However, they adopted a variation on this regulatory framework providing a common structure that supported weekly meetings

that brought together a small group of members under a lay leader for prayer, Bible study, mutual confession and support. In Runyun's words (pp. 119-120) -

"In the class meetings ordinary people found their voice. Many learned to read in order to have access to the Scriptures and discovered, in a stratified English society that discounted them, that in God's eyes they mattered infinitely, that they were the objects of Christ's compassion, and that their lives were precious to the Lord. They discovered freedom in prayer, in their ability to address God directly in their own words and not only in the formal languages of the Prayerbook, sharing the deepest yearning of their hearts. They found that they could interpret Scripture, discover truth for themselves, and apply it to their life situations. All of this occurred within the context of the class meeting in interaction with others who identified with them, honored and cared for them. Moreover, they had a sense of being part of a larger movement, a "connexion," that far transcended their little group and that was making a concrete difference in the lives of persons everywhere."¹⁴

As the sheer volume of societies and class meetings grew, eventually, the Class Meeting evolved into a structure that reflected the expression of discipleship along a continuum of grace and spiritual maturity leading to other types of small groups including "bands" (class meetings for leaders of classes), penitents' groups (class meetings for back-sliders who wished to be reinstated into regular class meetings following dismissal), and a most advanced group of "saints" whose maturity in holiness occasioned a gathering of Holy Spirit filled individuals to bask together in the sheer glory of God's presence and grace.

The variations on the class meeting theme, while all characterized by mutually accountable discipleship, reflected Wesley's soteriological continuum of prevenient grace, justifying and regenerating grace, sanctifying grace, and glorifying grace with diminishing levels of accountability with continuing growth in grace and progress toward holiness and Christ-likeness. In

short, there was a class meeting discipling option for anyone and every one depending on where they were in their spiritual journey.

David Lowes Watson, in describing a typical class meeting states that they customarily opened with a hymn and a prayer, then the leader "related his own experience during the previous week, his joys, and his sorrows; his hopes and his fears; his conflicts with the world, the flesh and the devil." Each member was asked to follow suit and share the condition of his or her soul, "*not a particular confession, but generally what had passed in the mind during the week*" . . . followed by advice, reproof, and correction as appropriate, then a time of prayer with thanks, praise, and petition.¹⁵

Early Salvationist and Methodist comparisons

There appear similarities to the early Army in the early Methodists methods to promote discipleship on a very broad scale: There was a structure, discipline, and kind of hierarchy not unlike in some ways the Army. There was also an openness and inclusivity to the whosoever and an open door to the "Priesthood of All Believers" in the engagement of lay leaders. After the death of William Booth in 1912, the ending of The Great War (World War I) in 1917, and the radical change in polity with the election of a replacement General for Bramwell Booth, the world wide Army began to move away from its post-millennial dispensationalism and toward the essence and mission of a denomination, from sect to church.

With this shift in theology and polity came an innovative militarization of discipleship in the form of "Junior Soldier" (ages six to twelve), and "Corps Cadet" (ages thirteen to eighteen) brigades, and the adoption of Sunday Schools, mid-week prayer meetings and Bible studies all integrated into congregational life of the Army. It is not clear however whether these forms of discipleship are remnants of or variations on the practice of Methodist class meetings.

One innovation of the Methodists that did clearly carry over into the communal life of the Army was the "Love Feast." In Methodism, this innovation brought all the members of the bands (class meeting leaders) together on Sunday evenings four times a year (once a quarter) for instruction, exhortation, prayer and praise. Wesley called together band members for the various societies to meet and to "*eat bread*" as the ancient Christian did, with

gladness and singleness of heart declaring, "our food is only a little plain cake and water. But we seldom return from them without being fed, not only with the 'meat that perisheth,' but with 'that which endureth to everlasting life.'"¹⁶

The purpose of the Love Feasts seemed to be one of encouraging the fellowship of saints who provided the essential lay leadership for class meetings and perpetuated an effective system of discipleship. In short, Love Feasts were in large part for the purpose of leadership development in fidelity to the Great Commission. Though rare today, there are places and occasions in the Army that Love Feasts are practiced in much the same way as our Methodist roots, though not with the intention of instructing the saints for leadership of structured discipleship contexts, as did the historical Methodist love feast.

While from the start the Army did not appropriate and perpetuate the class meeting as an effective means of discipleship, those means and methods it did establish (junior soldiers, corps cadets, mid-week prayer and Bible study meetings, Sunday Schools) are less prevalent today in Army congregational life than in the past. Likewise, Methodist faith communities drifted away from the practice of class meeting discipleship. In the 1916 classic entitled *The Class Meeting (1916)*, author Wilson T. Hogue laments the decline of Class Meetings across the spectrum of Methodism in his day nearly one hundred years ago. After acknowledging that class meetings "have been among the most potent factors contributing to the success of Methodist bodies in all countries down to the present time," He says —

"There are painful evidences, however, that this once effective aid to the accomplishment of the great end for which Methodism was originally raised up — that of spreading scriptural holiness over the world — is not now held in as high regard, even by the people calling themselves Methodists, as it should be; and there is evident danger, too, of its so far falling into disesteem and change of character as to become only the nominal representative of what it once was in reality. In many quarters it is already very far gone from the original type; in other localities it exists, if at all, in name and appearance only; and in some places, it has become altogether a thing of the past . . . There

is certainly need of reformation in this matter at once. Restore the class-meetings of Methodism to what they once were, and the power and efficiency of Methodism in all its branches will be incalculably increased.”¹⁷

If we go forward in time to the mid-nineteen fifties, one is hard pressed to find class meetings operating in the congregational life of Methodist based faith communities. Some of the last venues of class meetings were the campuses of Free Methodist and Wesleyan Methodist liberal arts colleges who had held on to class meetings and required student participation as part of their spiritual formation in the co-curriculum. By the nineteen sixties, this curricular priority had disappeared.

The restoration of priorities

Hogue’s concerns about class meetings becoming a thing of the past sounds much like the Army’s loss of such early innovations as holiness and salvation meetings, open-air meetings, love feasts, and corps cadets. What may be most disconcerting is not so much the loss of gradually ineffective means, but the fact that there are not effective means to replace what is lost. The compelling matter to be addressed may not be in regard to the loss of the powerful means of grace that were class meetings, or any other means of discipleship, but the dissipation of the priority Methodist and Salvationist faith communities place on discipleship and a foundational obedience to the Great Commission as a Divine Imperative.

Would not complete obedience to the Divine Imperative within The Salvation Army mean a restoration of priorities and a renewed commitment to making the investment in structures, and leadership within structures, to achieve what Wesley deemed the ENDS – “Spreading scriptural holiness across the land”? Would it not be to put into play the means by which renewed Salvationist communities would make disciples who fully embraced and lived The Salvation Army’s ninth and tenth doctrines of consecration and sanctification?

If so, would not Salvationist discipleship promote obedient followers of Christ who were equipped and empowered to experience and witness to the reality of holiness and glorifying grace? Would not thorough, systemic,

organizational obedience to the Great Commission, which informed and drove institutional and personal priorities, revitalize and re-energize the missional life of The Salvation Army? Would it not exponentially occasion an impact on the world as it would for all within the Body of Christ who respond in full obedience to the Divine Imperative, The Great Commission?

We do not suggest here the exact replication and emulation of the Methodist class meeting in rethinking and renewing a commitment to aggressive discipleship. We do commend reflection and dialogue on the merits of the key elements that made Methodist Class Meetings so successful in making disciples. First, we suggest that Wesleyan orthodoxy guided Methodist orthopraxy. The *via salutis* which conveyed a full salvation was communally lived out through the social ecological and developmental context and structures of the class meetings.¹⁸

The result was spiritual-developmental progress along a continuum of (convincing, justifying, regenerating, sanctifying, glorifying) grace. The pastoral and practical orthopraxy of the various elaborated types of class meetings (penitent, classes, bands, and select saints), with an ever-diminishing need for accountability, was guided by a hopeful soteriology. Salvation from sin and to Christ-likeness and holiness was believed possible. Christ could be known as Savior and the Holy Spirit could be appropriated by infilling. The possibility of growth in grace was real. One's heart could be consecrated and sanctified. Theoretical theology could become the practical reality of daily living.

Obedience to Christ's directive is a matter of praxis. Salvationist orthopraxy of discipleship can inform our orthodoxy. The true meaning of our doctrines can come alive through a practical obedience in how we take action in response to the Divine Imperative. In the words of the twentieth century psychologist, Kurt Lewin, "There is nothing so practical as good theory" (read theology/orthodoxy) to which we would add that there also nothing so informative of our theology as seeing the results of right practice (orthopraxy).

In fidelity to the Great Commission, prudence would suggest that in making disciples, we strategically intend that Wesleyan theology guide our practice and that our practice inform our theological understanding. The

challenge is to hold the two together in awareness of their relationship, in continual reflection of their dynamic, and in a willingness to dialogue about how our efforts to make disciples are achieving Kingdom ends, spreading scriptural holiness across the land.

Twenty-first century obedience

The inter-relationship of orthodoxy and orthopraxy is one in which theology can be informed and affirmed by experience. For Salvationists the challenge of the Divine Imperative of The Great Commission in bringing theology into interactive play with practice may be to go back to a full embrace of our tradition beyond the founding of the Army and the births of William and Catherine Booth. Such an embrace would include not merely the sustained pursuit of a “War On Two Fronts” – Spiritual and Social Salvation, but also a transformational commitment to the practice of disciple making that follows the Methodist patterns of nurture and accountability within the structures of a continuum of grace.

It may mean the backfilling of a void that may have historically eroded the potency and efficacy of Army evangelism and promotes a sterility of Army social service. Without a commitment and resolve that occasions a paradigm shift of Salvationists’ missional calling to obedience to the Divine Imperative, William Booth’s words may prove to be prophetic. The Army may increasingly become with time “a rope of sand.”

For Methodists, the challenge may be to rediscover the genius and pursue the rich, effective foundation that Wesley and the early Methodists engaged with great success. That rediscovery and embrace of an historical Methodist approach to making disciples is evident in the Korean context as discussed by Wonjae Lee in his paper “Little Churches Within a Church” presented in the earlier Methodist/Army dialogue.¹⁹

What might the future hold? How might we go forward? Together with the remarkable interactive, social networking technology of the present age, Methodist and Salvationists may rediscover and re-engage variations on the effective, historical Methodist methods of disciple making for the twenty-first century. In fidelity to the Great Commission and with shared commitment and resolve, it may be possible for Methodists and Salvationists to surpass in impact the remarkable achievements of Wesley’s day in promoting

Kingdom ends. To end with questions:

- Are Salvationists and Methodists achieving the optimal obedience to The Great Commission?

- Did the Army miss something in the early days in its organizational development with its focus on a “War On Two Fronts” and is that something that Methodists gave up or let slip away?

- Is that something a Wesleyan orthopraxy – the structured grace continuum of mutual, accountable, small group discipleship as a means of spreading Scriptural holiness across the world?

- What must the Army and Methodism do to achieve optimal obedience to The Great Commission as the first order Divine Imperative?

- How might emergent social network technology assist in reclaiming lost opportunity for obedience to The Great Commission?

If we can address these questions, then we may be able to say in the words of John Wesley – “The best is yet to come.”

Notes

1. All Scripture quotes are taken from the NIV.
2. Selected papers from previous dialogues between the World Methodist Council and The Salvation Army were published in two issues of The Salvation Army's journal of theology and ministry, *Word & Deed*, Vol. 8, No. 1, November 2005 and Vol. 8, No. 2, May 2006.

3. Jonathan S. Raymond and Roger J. Green, Editorial: Refining Our Theology, Pursuing Our Mission, Word & Deed, Vol. 8, No. 2, 2006, p. 1.
4. Henry H. Knight III, *The Presence of God in the Christian Life: John Wesley and the Means of Grace*, London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1994, p. 13.
5. William J. Abraham, *Waking From Doctrinal Amnesia: The Healing of Doctrine in the United Methodist Church*, 1995.
6. Kenneth J. Collins, *The Scripture Way of Salvation*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997, p. 16.
7. Albert Outler, Sermons, 3:208, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation."
8. Collins, *Ibid.*, p. 187.
9. Roger J. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth Founder of The Salvation Army*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005, p. 120.
10. Personal communication with Roger Green, February 2009.
11. Roger J. Green, *War On Two Fronts: The Theology of William Booth*, The Salvation Army Publishing and Supplies
12. John Wesley, Works, Vol. V. pp. 179-180.
13. Theodore Runyon, *The New Creation: John Wesley's Theology Today*, Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998, p. 116.
14. *Ibid.*, pp. 119-120.
15. *Ibid.*, pp. 123-124.
16. Wilson T. Hogue, *The Class Meeting*, Chicago: W.B. Rose, 1916, p. 33.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 5-6.
18. Jonathan S. Raymond, "Social Holiness: Journey, Exposures, Encounters," in Kevin W. Mannoia and Don Thorsen (Eds.) *Holiness Manifesto*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2008, pp. 166-187.
19. Wonjae Lee, *The Genius of Small Groups in Early Methodism and in the Korean Context*, Word & Deed, Vol. 8, No. 2, May 2006.

Fulfilling the Great Commission in the 21st Century Ecclesiological Statement – A Corporate Response

Philip Cairns

Introduction

The Great Commission of Jesus Christ to “*go and make disciples*” (Matthew 28:19) should ensure that the church is constantly and dynamically growing as new people believe in Jesus and become his disciples. But the church of the Western world is not growing in any remarkable way and in many places is declining.¹ Coupled with this decline is the church’s diminishing influence on social attitudes and behaviors.

Has the church failed in fulfilling the Great Commission or has it failed to simply respond to the new generations and cultures that have developed? Does fulfilling the Great Commission need to be redesigned for each generation or, does the church itself need to be renewed?

These may seem broad-ranging questions in a paper intended to create understanding between the two Christian traditions of the Methodists and The Salvation Army. But for me, they highlight what seems to be a contradiction between “fulfilling the Great Commission” and the church itself. At the heart of these challenges is the relationship between *mission* and the *church*. If we are to grasp the idea of fulfilling the Great Commission in the 21st century then we

Philip Cairns is a Lt. Colonel in the Salvation Army and the Personnel Secretary of the Eastern Australia Territory in Sidney, New South Wales (Australia).

have to understand how *mission* and *church* are connected.

The Salvation Army is an interesting point of study in the question of church and mission. It has been around long enough to undergo change from a spontaneous, dynamic “mission” to an organized and settled denomination. Has its focus changed or is it still a cutting edge evangelical movement ready to fulfill the Great Commission in the 21st century? Does mission define The Salvation Army’s ecclesiology, or has mission simply become one of the functions of The Salvation Army?

The Salvation Army as “church”

There are interesting similarities between the beginnings of Methodism and The Salvation Army. Both began with revival movements that had a transforming effect on society. Their founders did not begin with the intention of starting a new religious denomination. John Wesley was always an Anglican and saw his movement within this context (even if others increasingly didn’t). William Booth was always a missionary who saw his revival as feeding into the existing churches – he even entered into negotiations with the Anglican Church at one point. It was only when he realized that his converts were not being accepted into the existing churches that he began to embrace the idea of local Salvation Army congregations. But even these weren’t for membership, but for “soldiership” where soldiers were engaged in soul-winning, and in seeking holiness.

There was also a significant difference between the two traditions. The heart of Methodist structure was the Methodist Society Classes “*for the pursuit of holiness ... in which all the members knew themselves to belong to each other as well as Christ.*”² Methodism was born in these classes.

Although there were attempts to recreate this sort of learning environment in the early Salvation Army (they were called Soldiers’ Meetings), the emphasis was “on the street” evangelism. Thus “open airs” were held every night followed by a salvation meeting. In broad terms, The Salvation Army *Corps brigades* replaced the Methodists’ *classes*.

By nature, The Salvation Army was an activist movement concerned with getting people saved. It seems logical that the hard work of grounding this “activism” in philosophical theology came later. The first attempts occurred in the areas of the activism – salvation, holiness and social reform. Next came the attempts to support the Army’s position on the sacraments. Finally came the

attempts to understand The Salvation Army ecclesologically.

For long periods of time the established churches did not consider The Salvation Army *a church* because it did not comply with the prescriptions of classical ecclesiology, particularly the Sacramental ordinances. Even though the early Army seemed to be achieving all the things that the "Acts" church achieved, it failed to meet the criteria of *church* when compared to the classical benchmarks of what determined *church*.

Ironically, some of this non-acceptance was also the fault of the founders of the Salvation Army who were skeptical of the hierarchical structures of denominationalism and proactively avoided the idea of The Salvation Army as a church. It has only been in recent years that The Salvation Army has made attempts to clarify its understanding of itself as a church.

Historically, however, the Army's place within the church has been somewhat clouded. For example, the founder William Booth occasionally called his officers "*clergymen and clergywomen.*"³ But he also stated, "*we are not a church. We are an Army – an Army of Salvation.*"⁴ There is no doubt that he was suspicious of the structures that made up the institutionalized church. Booth wrote:

*No one can deny that the religious world is full of forms which have little or no practical influence on the minds, or hearts, or lives, of those who travel the weary round of their performance day by day.*⁵

His reasons, however, were more profound than just "suspicion." In 1889, William Booth described The Salvation Army as "*... an Army for the purpose of carrying salvation through the land. It is neither more nor less than that.*"⁶ He goes on to say:

*Does this sound strange, my brother – not sacred, not ecclesiastical, not according to the traditions of the elders and after the patterns of existing things and institutions? It may be so, and yet it may be none the less true and scriptural, and none the less of Divine origin, and made after some heavenly pattern for all that.*⁷

When Commissioner Railton arrived in the USA in 1880 to start the work of The Salvation Army in that country, he said, "*We come here for the purpose of extending The Salvation Army ... (it is) not a society of unruly religionists defying or rushing into conflict with order, law and martyrdom; nor is it a sect or church, but an army for missionary purposes.*"⁸

From the beginning, the founders and early leaders of The Salvation Army saw themselves involved in something new, something that denied the terminology of "church." There can be no doubt that the early Salvationists believed the Army was of God and that its purpose was to "*win the world for Jesus.*"⁹ Because early Salvationists sensed that they were carrying out the spirit of the New Testament, it didn't concern them that they were part of something that did not fit into existing ecclesiastical models. And so, William Booth, fearful of creating another "denomination" style of church bound by rules and procedures, avoided terminology that would associate The Salvation Army or its people with the "church."

This ideal soon clashed with reality. As the Army grew and became more "respectable," its need to understand its place in the world became stronger. It was Bramwell Booth (William Booth's son and successor) who clearly stated that The Salvation Army was a church:

*Of this Great Church of the Living God, we claim and have ever claimed, that we of The Salvation Army are an integral part and element ... a living fruit-bearing branch of the True Vine.*¹⁰

It was also Bramwell Booth who was responsible for the development of the Orders and Regulations system that eventually locked in the denominational "forms" that the founder had resisted. In many ways this was unavoidable. The Salvation Army had become bigger than anyone had expected and therefore needed to be controlled and managed. It would appear however, that the language of "church" went hand in hand with the settling down of The Salvation Army as it developed into a conservative structured organization.

In recent years The Salvation Army has become intentional in stating its belief in itself as a church. The Army's most recent doctrine book *Salvation*

Story devotes an entire chapter to The Salvation Army as the “People of God”:

... we (The Salvation Army) identify with the historic Church through its confession of one faith, one Lord, one baptism of the Holy Spirit, one salvation, and one Church universal.¹¹

In 2008 The Salvation Army published the booklet *The Salvation Army In The Body of Christ*. The purpose of this booklet was to “clarify and consolidate present global thinking on our identity within the wider Body of Christ.”¹² It states clearly that The Salvation Army is a church of the denominational type and therefore has its role to fulfill within both the church universal and the church visible.

The Salvation Army under the one Triune God, belongs to and is an expression of the Body of Christ on earth, the church universal ...¹³

In spite of this, the debate has continued from both outside of The Army and within. Even in my lifetime I have been accused by ministers of other traditions as not being part of the church; and conversely, I have heard Salvationists criticizing anyone who would refer to The Salvation Army as a church. Such people were much more comfortable with descriptions such as mission, para-church or revival movement.

A spontaneous church

The early Salvationists did “church” spontaneously without knowing it and their denial of the language of “church” did not mean they were not being “church.” William Booth’s declaration that The Salvation Army is “... an Army for the purpose of carrying salvation through the land. It is neither more nor less than that”¹⁴ provides essential insight into what the Army was meant to be. They displayed an intuitive ecclesiology that was missional and did not need the sanction of the title “church” to carry it out.

Even the next generation learned this intuition from their immediate predecessors and in the process absorbed their passion and vision. The fol-

lowing generation again learned from their predecessors, but by now the intuitive drive of the founders was being replaced by the structures and processes of organization and institutionalism. Although this is a natural process in the developmental life of any organization, it does mean that each new generation is further and further removed from the spontaneity and intuitive ecclesiology of the early generations.

This pattern is not unfamiliar to the history of the church. The church that developed in the book of Acts was primitive by comparison with the contemporary institutions that we call *church* today. But there can be no doubt about the dynamic, spontaneous nature of this primitive church. It was dependent on the Holy Spirit; the gospel of Jesus was preached and thousands were saved; they happily met in groups for teaching and fellowship; and they reached out to each other using gifts and healing.

The New Testament itself does not begin by laying down a doctrine of the church ... [it is] first and foremost a happening thing.¹⁵

Only as the church grew and was faced with the need for organization did organizational structures begin to emerge. And as various heresies began to cloud the apostolic gospel, doctrinal clarification became necessary. In true human tradition the church began to settle under the human need to manage and control. The result is partly reflected in the criticism of six of the seven churches found in Revelation chapters 2–3.

This does not of course exclude the Holy Spirit's continuing direction and guidance of the church for indeed there have been numerous occasions when the Holy Spirit's outpouring has brought revival and renewal. We would also not doubt the Holy Spirit's presence in the less dynamic denominational church.

When developing ecclesiology however, it does raise the question of which "church" should be described. Should an ecclesiology reflect the dynamic spontaneity of the primitive church or the settled conservatism of the denominational church?

When developing an ecclesiology of The Salvation Army, should it

reflect the spirit of the early Army or the reality of the large organization that now exists?

Flexible ecclesiology

The term ecclesiology itself reflects the nature of the subject. Although only first applied in the nineteenth century, the practice of attempting to understand the nature of the church is as old as the church itself. Although founded in Biblical theology, understanding the church over the centuries has usually been affected by the changeable way the church has viewed itself over the generations and the tendency to define itself according to *itself* at various points in history.

Throughout most of history the nature of the church has been defined by divided Christians trying to establish the validity of their own existence.¹⁶

The problem with this is that the nature of the church has become the focus of ecclesiology. In fact, I have a suspicion that one of the weaknesses of the church throughout its history has been a tendency to focus on itself and not on the mission as expressed in the Great Commission. Its ecclesiology has been about its own existence rather than its purpose. Consequently, mission has become a function of the church rather than the reason for the church's existence.

Is mission something the church does, or is mission the very purpose for the church's existing and being? This paper proposes that there is no church and therefore no ecclesiology, without mission. Whereas the answer to this question is ecclesiological, it is how we understand the place of mission that will determine our ecclesiology.

There is no question that the church of the New Testament was mission focused. The lack of church structure in the New Testament and particularly in the Book of Acts suggests that mission was the heart of New Testament ecclesiology:

If one is to be true to the New Testament testimony, it must be acknowledged that there is a multiplicity of images and

concepts that contribute to an understanding of the nature of the church ... ¹⁷

Is this how the idea of the church needs to be considered? Something that is flexible and less bound by historical/hierarchical traditions? This approach would of course make ecclesiology a difficult discipline to become dogmatic about.

Hans Kung argues that “*ecclesiology is always conditioned anew by history ... a response and a call to constantly changing historical situations.*” ¹⁸ This would suggest that inherent within true ecclesiology is the possibility of diversity and therefore flexibility in describing the nature of the church.

Even in classical ecclesiology there is evidence of this diversity in the wide variety of descriptions of the church over the centuries – these have taken the form of both biblical images as well as lists of characteristics.

The Biblical images tend to find general agreement across the traditions and are summed up in images such as the “people of God,” the “body of Christ” and as the “temple (and sometimes fellowship) of the Holy Spirit.” The Salvation Army has itself used these images to describe itself.

The lists of characteristics however, do not find such agreement. The diversity seems to reflect the particular bias of the traditions with various lists of characteristics reflecting different periods of church history.

For example, the Council of Nicea listed the church as one, holy, catholic and apostolic; Augustine highlighted the Eucharist and loyalty to Rome; during the Middle Ages hierarchical structures dominated the characteristics; for Luther it was the return to the Word of God as well as Sacraments. In reaction to Luther, Cardinal Bellarmine defended the Roman church with 15 characteristics – “*Catholicity, antiquity, duration, amplitude, episcopal succession, apostolic agreement, unity, sanctity of doctrine, efficacy of doctrine, holiness of life, miracles, prophecy, admission of adversaries, unhappy end of enemies, and temporal felicity.*” ¹⁹ William Pope presents seven Protestant characteristics – “*One and manifold; sanctity and imperfection; visible and invisible; catholic and local; apostolic and confessional; indefectible and mutable; militant and triumphant.*” ²⁰

There is no church that fits within all these variations perfectly.

Therefore, an attempt to describe the church by the fulfilling of certain categories or requirements seems to be flawed. And yet, this diversity observed above is still called "church." Can we therefore look at ecclesiology in a flexible way that embraces all Christian expressions, but still retains something consistent that brings a unity to the whole?

The Salvation Army can "tick off" some of the categories of classical ecclesiology, but not all of them. This becomes problematic when observances such as Baptism and the Eucharist are included in the "lists." The Salvation Army does not fit into these classical descriptions of the church.

Using these sorts of lists would also have the Methodists and The Salvation Army in contradiction to each other. John Wesley's evidence of the church as the place where the "*pure word of God is preached and the sacraments are duly administered*"²¹ would see The Salvation Army left out because of its approach to the observance of the sacraments.

The connection between the two traditions however, is much stronger than this. Are there then other ways of viewing ecclesiology that would give us the common ground we need to view each other equally within the church universal?

Hans Kung uses the terms of *essence* and *form*²² to describe the nature of the church.²³ For Kung, the essence remains the permanent part of the church and should dictate the shape and nature of the church; the form on the other hand is the outer shape of the church which should change and adapt to each generation.

The challenge of the historical church is that it may have taken shape under the influence of the essence, but it often became bound by its form and then remained devoted to sustaining its form even when the form had ceased to be relevant to the new generations. This was always to the detriment of the essence and it usually took a revival or a reformation to restore the essence for a period of time.

It is the essence which contains the purpose of the church. This purpose should then drive the form as it shapes itself into a dynamic presence in the age and culture in which it exists. If the forms don't change, the church will become irrelevant; if the essence is changed, the church will cease to be the church. At all times the essence must guide and direct the form if the church

is to be true to its purpose. Essence is therefore the key to ecclesiology.

Because The Salvation Army does not fit into the classical images of the church, it needs to consider a more flexible and robust ecclesiology that is based on what it determines to be the essence of the church – a *mission essence* that leads to a *mission ecclesiology*.

Mission ecclesiology

When Kung applies essence and form to ecclesiology he argues that essence is given by God and contains the mission and message of the church. For the Christian, Jesus Christ and *his mission* are the essential characteristics of Christianity and therefore the heart of *essence*.

Because the New Testament book of Acts contains the only record of the creation of the church, it gives to us an essential insight into what the nature of the church should be: ²⁴

1. The Holy Spirit was the instigator of the church (Acts 2: 1-5)
2. Everyone was invited to join the church and all who believed in Jesus Christ were not only saved but became members of the new community (Acts 2: 38)
3. The purpose of the church is revealed in its first actions:
 - a. The first activity of the church was the proclamation of the gospel (Acts 2: 14-41)
 - b. The second activity of the church was to gather the believers together in fellowship and for teaching (Acts 2: 42-47)
 - c. The third activity of the church was reaching out into a suffering world with healing and comfort (Acts 3: 1-11)

As the early church grew, its shape and organization varied from place to place, but these principles remained consistent to each new expression of the church – they were dependent on the holy Spirit, it was a church for all people, and the purpose of the church was fulfilled ... preaching the gospel, fellowshiping with the believers, and looking after the poor. This was the *mission essence* which remained consistent throughout the New Testament, regardless of where and how each new church developed.

Some may argue that this is a primitive ecclesiology and that history has advanced the idea of “church” well beyond these basic elements. But I am suggesting that the church of today (including The Salvation Army) could

do well to re-visit its New Testament roots in determining its ecclesiology. This primitive church was spontaneous with people being saved a regular occurrence, new churches were being planted and within 30 years it had spread from Jerusalem to the center of the known world, Rome. The New Testament church reveals to us a mission focused church – the only reason it existed was to spread the good news of the gospel throughout the world. Does this church have something to say to modern day ecclesiologists?

It is acknowledged that the early church needed to establish organizational structures (Acts 6). Even when structures were put into place, however, their purpose was to allow the rest of the church to give their attention to “*prayer and the ministry of the word*” (Acts 6:4). The early church was underpinned by an “essence” which was mission focused. The forms of the church changed to reflect the society in which it existed; the *mission essence*, however, remained consistent.

As I read the story of the First Great Awakening and the evangelical activities of the early Salvation Army, I gain the sense that here was an expression of the same *mission essence* that marked the dynamic spontaneity of the primitive church. The early Methodists and early Salvationists were dependent on the Holy Spirit and had an excitement for what God was going to do through them. They had passion for the unsaved and a message for the “whosoever.” The new believers were immediately welcomed into the “church.” The gospel was preached, the new believers were called to the life of holiness and lives that were totally committed to God, and out of the holiness of life came the actions of serving the poor and marginalized.

In other words, they did *church* according to *mission ecclesiology*. It was a model in which the Great Commission was paramount. All that happened took place so that the expansion of the gospel would proceed.

Obviously the forms were different. For The Salvation Army, the street preaching (open airs), the uniforms and the military metaphor all reflected a particular way of “doing” mission. The heart of what was being done, however, mirrored that of the primitive church in both spirit and essence.

The Great Commission and the 21st century

One question remains: does this *mission essence* still drive The Salvation Army’s ecclesiology today? There are several answers to this question.

Firstly, the spirit and intent is alive and well. The Salvation Army's documents and writings articulate a mission ecclesiology. Salvation Story, the official Handbook of Doctrine of The Salvation Army states:

*The Holy Spirit is a missionary spirit; thus, evangelism should arise spontaneously from a Spirit-filled church. A church that is not a missionary church is contradicting itself and quenching the Spirit. Worldwide evangelization will become a realistic possibility only when the Spirit renews the church in truth and wisdom, faith, holiness, love and power. Only then will the whole church become a fit instrument in his hands, that the whole earth may hear his voice.*²⁵

The Salvation Army's ecclesiological statement, *The Salvation Army In the Body of Christ*, states: ... its commitment to the unceasing proclamation of the gospel and its insistence that this gospel is for the whosoever.²⁶

In a recent public meeting the Territorial Commander of the Australia Eastern Territory Commissioner Linda Bond said that The Salvation Army has no reason to exist apart from its mission of winning the world to Jesus Christ. The spirit of *mission ecclesiology* is alive and well in The Salvation Army and is embraced by most of its officers and soldiers.

Secondly, this spirit is observed in reality in developing countries where there is real evidence of dynamic growth and expansion. In many of the developing countries of the world (Africa and India in particular). The Salvation Army is experiencing significant growth. A quiet revival is taking place and the Army is growing faster today than at any previous time in its history.

The third answer to this question of whether the *mission essence* still underpins The Salvation Army's ecclesiology today is tempered by what is being experienced by most churches in the western world. There appears to be a disconnect between the "spirit" of mission essence and the reality of what is happening. This is not unique to the Army. David Watson suggests that Christians themselves have forgotten what the mission is:

... Christians in the West have largely neglected what it means to

be a disciple of Christ. The vast majority of western Christians are church-members, pewfillers, hymn-singers, sermon-tasters, Bible-readers, even born again-believers or Spirit-filled-charismatics - but not true disciples of Jesus. If we were willing to learn the meaning of real discipleship and actually to become disciples, the church in the West would be transformed, and the resultant impact on society would be staggering. ²⁷

The church in the West (including The Salvation Army) is not transforming the world and is not having a “staggering” impact on society. For many, survival has become the objective.

Many reasons are given for the decline including changing social paradigms. I would suggest, however, that the real problem is not the forces affecting the church from the outside, but that which is inside the church. When the mission essence is neglected or ignored, the energy of the church is expended on perpetuating the form. For The Salvation Army, evidence of focusing on the form rather than the essence is seen in attitudes such as:

- Reliance on corporate structures and economic prosperity
- Over emphasis on outcome based programs (e.g. Church Growth)
- Obsession with methodology
- Emphasis on power and authority
- Career minded clergy (officers)

The challenge for The Salvation Army in the West is to bring its forms and programs into harmony with its *spirit of the mission essence*.

As the 21st century unfolds, there are a growing number of Christian thinkers challenging the traditional ways of being and doing church. Rather than cling to the classical idea of church, they are proposing methods that more closely reflect the flexible ecclesiology of the New Testament.

For example, Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch²⁸ propose that the church of the future (starting now) requires revolutionary changes in style, methods and relevancy. This church needs to leave the safety of buildings and organi-

zational structures and must become “incarnational” within the community in which it exists. Discipleship will be found only as Christians living “in the world” and Christians themselves “become the message” of Christ to the people around them. Thus we have a picture of individual disciples interacting with small groups of people for the purpose of winning them to Christ through their personal influence as “disciples of Jesus.” The ideas of hierarchy and religious ordinance don’t exist.

Along similar lines the *Missio Dei*²⁹ movement promotes the idea that contemporary missional thinking must emphasize the “going out” incarnational styles of mission rather than the attractional models of mission that have been the typical models of church mission. Ironically, The Salvation Army itself has settled into attractional methods and is struggling with the challenges of modern generations who no longer “join” organizations or clubs.

David Watson, on the other hand, believes in the future of the present church, but only if true discipleship is embraced and fully lived. He focuses on returning to the real meaning of being a disciple of Jesus. Guided by scripture, we note that the essence of discipleship is the call of Jesus to the Great Commission. This will mean a total life of obedience to Jesus, serving Jesus, suffering for Jesus, and living simply for the sake of Jesus.³⁰ The focus is not on the church itself, but on the life and mission of the disciples of Jesus who make up the church.

Each of these expressions of the 21st century church displays the mission essence of the Great Commission and point towards a mission ecclesiology. They present challenges to The Salvation Army as it grapples with fulfilling the Great Commission in the 21st century.

Conclusion

The Salvation Army not only identifies with the church universal but also considers itself to be an integral part of the church and its mission of going into the world and making disciples. In doing so, it challenges classical ecclesiology by embracing a *mission essence* as the foundation of its *mission ecclesiology*.

Thus, the purpose of The Salvation Army finds its focus in the actions of the church immediately after its creation by the Holy Spirit in Acts 2. The

Salvation Army is absolutely dependent on the Holy Spirit. It proclaims Jesus as Savior and Lord and appeals to all who hear to be saved (Acts 2: 14 – 41 – *saving souls*), it gathers together in fellowship for the building up of the “body of Christ” (Acts 2: 42 – 44 – *growing saints*) and reaches out to a suffering world with healing in the name of Jesus (Acts 3: 1-7 – *serving suffering humanity*).

These purposes find The Salvation Army in harmony with the *mission essence* of Methodism. The resulting *mission ecclesiology*, along with a common theological foundation of Arminian/Wesleyan theology, creates a closeness of fellowship not found with other traditions.

The forms of “church,” however, are very different. The military shape of The Salvation Army is used to clearly articulate The Salvation Army’s purpose to fight sin and suffering in its mission of winning the world to Jesus Christ. The challenge for The Salvation Army in the 21st century is to recapture its early spirit of *mission essence* in ways that will cause it to be effective in its mission to fulfill the Great Commission.

Notes

1. This paper acknowledges its Western bias and reflects the authors own context in Australia where church attendance has declined an average of 7% in the five years 1999-2004 (National Church Life Survey).
2. Rupert E. Davies *Methodism* Penguin Books, Hammondswoth (1963) p.119
3. Roger Green and Jonathan Raymond *The Salvation Army and the Body of Christ*, Word and Deed Vol. 2, No. 1, (1999) p. 2
4. William Booth quoted in Earl Robinson ‘*The Salvation Army – Ecclesia?* Word and Deed Vol. 2, No.1, (1999) p.10
5. William Booth writing the Introduction to *O&R’s for Staff Officers* St Albans, the Campfield Press (1904) p. xv
6. William Booth *Salvation Soldier* John Snow and Co, London (1889) p. 27.
7. William Booth *Salvation Soldier* p. 28
8. Booth College Heritage Centre Paper (2007)
9. Roger Green *The Army As It Was/The Army As It Is/The Army As It Might be* Academic Paper (undated) p.7

10. Salvation Army International Headquarters *Salvation Story: Salvationists Handbook of Doctrine* MPG Books Ltd, Bodmin (1998) p.100
11. Salvation Army *Salvation Story* p. 114
12. Salvation Army International Headquarters *The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ* Salvation Books, London (2008) p.vii
13. op cit p.1
14. William Booth *Salvation Soldier* p. 27
15. Hans Kung *The Church* (Burns and Oats, Tunbridge Wells 1995) p. 5
16. Walter A Elwell (Ed) *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* Baker Book House Grand Rapids (1984) p. 231
17. Walter A Elwell (Ed) *Evangelical Dictionary of Theology* p. 231
18. Hans Kung *The Church* p.13
19. Horton Wiley *Christian Theology Vol III* Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City (1943) p.111
20. William Pope *Compendium of Christian Theology Vol III* and quoted in H. Orton Wiley *Christian Theology Vol.III* Beacon Hill Press, Kansas City (1943) pp.111-112
21. John Wesley *An Earnest Appeal To Men Of Reason And Religion*. Edited by Gerard R. Craig. Oxford University Press (1975) p.77, quoted in Douglas Mill's paper, *The Doctrine Of The Church And The Methodist Church*, Word & Deed May (2008) p. 23
22. I first borrowed this framework in a paper entitled *People of God: Salvationist Ecclesiology - Foundational Discipleship, Education and Training* in 2006. It is further developed in this paper in an attempt to clarify the relationship between mission and church.
23. Hans Kung, *The Church*, p. 3ff
24. I believe these principles remain intact regardless of what particular biblical critical approach is applied to Acts.
25. The Salvation Army *Salvation Story* p.145
26. The Salvation Army *The Salvation Army In the Body of Christ* p. 6
27. David Watson *Discipleship* London, Hodder and Stoughton (1984) p.16
28. Michael Frost/Alan Hirsch *The Shaping of Things to Come* Hendrickson Publishers, Peabody (2004) p.154
29. *Missio Dei* as a term and concept became increasingly popular in the church from the second half of the 20th century and is a key concept in missiology being used by

theologians such as David Bosch, Lesslie Newbigin, Alan Roxburgh, David Dunbar, Martin Robinson and William Storrar as well as missional networks such as the Gospel and Culture Network, Forge Mission Training Network Australia, Together in Mission UK, and the Allelon Foundation.

30. David Watson *Discipleship* pp.19-33.

To Make Disciples: Ecclesiological Statement – A Corporate Response

Paul W. Chilcote

Salvation Army/World Methodist Council Bilateral Dialogue
Sunbury Court Conference Center, London, England
30 March – 1 April 2009

John and Charles Wesleys' rediscovery of a "mission-church paradigm" in 18th century England fueled the renewal of the church and offers a model of enduring significance for global Christianity today.¹ This paradigm, drawing committed Christian disciples perennially to Jesus and to one another in community (centripetal movement) and spinning them out into the world in mission and service (centrifugal movement), reflected an apostolic vision of the people of God in their view. This essay examines those aspects of Wesleyan theology that provided the foundation for this vision and the hymns of Charles Wesley that inculcated missional praxis.

Theological foundations of a mission-church paradigm

A robust theological foundation undergirded the missional vision that gave birth to a dynamic movement of spiritual renewal under the leadership of the Wesleys. In the mind of these Anglican reformers, mission began with

Paul Chilcote is Professor of Historical Theology and Wesleyan Studies and Director of the Center for Applied Wesleyan Studies at Ashland Theological Seminary, Ashland University, Ashland, Ohio, and co-chair of TSA-WMC third dialogue.

God and not with them.² They conceived a “missionary God” because the God they had come to know in Jesus Christ was a God of love who was always reaching out from self to others—an expression of God’s love and grace they described as God’s prevenient action.³ The missional practices of the Wesleys and of the Methodist Societies they founded mirrored this understanding of God’s nature and character. Moreover, they firmly believed that God was active and at work in the world to save and restore all creation. These primary convictions led the Wesleys to reclaim mission as the church’s reason for being and evangelism as the heart of that mission in the world.⁴ They developed a holistic vision of mission and evangelism that refused to separate faith and works, personal salvation and social justice, physical and spiritual needs.

The Wesleys anchored this missional vision in the fundamental affirmations of the Christian faith, namely, in the doctrines of Creation and Redemption, Incarnation, and Trinity, all of which point to the “centrifugal nature” of God’s activity. They understood God’s creation of all things out of nothing, for example, as a sheer act of grace, an extension of God’s love motivated by nothing but God’s loving character.⁵ The Incarnation—God taking on human flesh in the person of Jesus of Nazareth—demonstrated the same missional quality. In the fullness of time, God entered human history and reached out to the beloved through Jesus Christ in order to re-create and restore all things in Christ. God’s mission—God’s evangelistic activity—God’s proclamation and embodiment of Good News—in their view, began in creation, continues through redemption, and stretches out toward the consummation. This description of God’s missionary character, in fact, ever reflects God’s Triune nature.⁶

The Wesleys built their theology of mission upon the understanding of a Three-One God postured in perpetual, grace-filled, outward movement—Father, Son, and Holy Spirit in perennial interaction with one another and the world in a great dance of love. While mission belongs to God, the Wesleys believed that all people have the privilege of participating in God’s mission through their own proclamation and embodiment of the Good News of God’s love in Christ. In the same way that God entered human his-

tory and took on flesh in the person of Jesus, the Wesleys sought to live incarnationally by investing themselves in the lives of God's children wherever they found them. Charles Wesley used a powerful image to communicate this understanding of mission and God's call to be "Gospel-bearers." He described the Christian as a "transcript of the Trinity." That means essentially that God writes God's self into our very being so that when other people "read" our lives, they perceive God in us:

Cloath'd with Christ, aspire to shine,
Radiancè He of Light Divine;
Beam of the Eternal Beam,
He in God, and God in Him!
Strive we Him in Us to see,
Transcript of the Deity.⁷

The theological method of the Wesleys reinforced this foundational vision. Instead of setting aspects of the Christian faith over against each other—for example, forcing a choice between *either* personal salvation *or* social action—the Wesleys tended to see matters of faith from a *both/and* perspective.⁸ Personal salvation, they would argue, must be held together with social action, works of piety with works of mercy, in Christian discipleship. This approach to Christian thought and praxis shaped their understanding of mission and evangelism—and their doctrine of the church, as we shall see momentarily—in profound ways. Several excerpted couplets from a hymn by Charles Wesley illustrate this synthetic method:

Let us join ('tis God commands),
Let us join our hearts and hands
Still forget the things behind,
Follow Christ in heart and mind
Plead we thus for faith alone,
Faith which by our works is shown.⁹

Note the intimate connection of hearts and hands, heart and mind, faith

and works. The words of brother John reveal the direct application of this principle to the missional vocation of all Christians:

By experience [the genuine Christian] knows that *social love* (if it means the love of our neighbor) is absolutely, essentially different from *self-love*, even of the most allowable kind, just as different as the objects at which they point. And yet it is sure that, if they are under due regulations, each will give additional force to the other, "till they mix together never to be divided."¹⁰

Genuine love of self, rooted in God's affirmation—God's prior love—must find expression in love of others. The two must always be held together. One of the most important legacies left by the Wesleys is this effort to hold faith and love, the form and power of godliness, love for God and love of neighbor together in a growing, dynamic, vital expression of the Christian faith.

This conjunctive method informed the Wesleys' conception of the church and the relation of the Methodist Societies to that larger body, while the cultural and ecclesial context in which they lived helped them to clarify their peculiar vision and mission. Rupert Davies has provided the most incisive analysis of this dynamic tension and identifies, perhaps, the most unique quality of early Methodism:

A "society" acknowledges the truths proclaimed by the universal church and has no wish to separate from it, but claims to cultivate, by means of sacrament and fellowship, the type of inward holiness, which too great an objectivity can easily neglect and of which the church needs constantly to be reminded. A society does not unchurch the members of either church or sect . . . it calls its own members within the larger church to a special personal commitment which respects the commitment of others.¹¹

The Wesleys designed the Methodist Societies, in other words, to func-

tion like catalysts of renewal within the life of the larger church. Having rediscovered a mission-church paradigm within the life of their own *ecclesiolae in ecclesia* ("little churches within the church"), their hope was that the leavening action of these small groups of committed missionaries would re-awaken the Church of England to its primary vocation in the world, namely, the *missio Dei*. The Methodist Societies were like little dynamos, spinning inside the church and building momentum in order to re-establish a centrifugal force in the church itself, spinning it out in turn in mission. There can be no doubt that the cell structure of the Methodist organism accounts for the dynamism and growth of the movement and its influence.¹²

It is not too much to claim that three concepts taken together, then—church, evangelism, and mission—defined early Methodism. A missional ecclesiology emanated directly from the Wesleys' theological vision and method. God forms gospel-bearers in and through the community of faith which is itself a manifestation—imperfect though it may be—of the gospel in the world. The Wesleys concluded that the central purpose of the church is mission—God's mission. They attempted to replicate the model of the church they discovered in the pages of the New Testament. The church, they believed, is not called to live for itself, but for others. It is called, like Christ, to give itself for the life of the world. It is not so much that the church has a mission or ministries; rather, the church is mission. The church of Wesley's England had exchanged its true vocation—mission—for maintenance, a confusion that often slips into the life of the church in every age. It desperately needed to reclaim its true identity as God's agent of love and shalom in the world. The Wesleys firmly believed that God raised up the Methodists specifically for the task of resuscitating a mission-church.

This vision, as you might well expect, was deeply rooted in scripture. When John Wesley adapted the Puritan Covenant Renewal Service for use in his own communities, he linked this annual event with one of Jesus' most poignant images for the church, namely, the vine and branches of John 15. In this passage Jesus presents a picture of the church. As we abide in Christ—who is the true vine—we take nourishment from Him as the source of all life. We are constantly drawn into the center, to the core, to the source. There is something similar here to the centripetal force of the wheel, some-

thing that persistently draws us closer to Christ and closer to one another.

But the purpose of the vine is not simply to be drawn in, to revel in our connectedness and fellowship. The vine does not exist for its own benefit, but for the benefit of others through its fruit. What continues to give vitality to the church is the centrifugal force that spins us out into the world with the fruit of the Spirit. As we share this fruit with others, they are enabled to taste and see that God is good.

The Wesleys came to believe that a church turned in on itself (that is only centripetal) will surely die, for it has lost its reason for being. But a church spun out in loving service into the world (that is also centrifugal) rediscovers itself day by day. "Offering Christ," to use Wesley's own terminology for the work of mission, involves both word and deed, both proclamation and action; it connects the gospel to the world. Jesus' mission was characterized by healing those who were sick, liberating those who were oppressed, empowering those who stood on the margins of life, and caring for the poor. In all of these actions He incarnated shalom, God's vision of peace, justice, and well-being for all, and his disciples, the Wesleys taught, are called to do nothing less.

In this dynamic conception of a mission-church, the Wesleyan genius was to hold mission and evangelism together without pitting personal salvation against social justice. Mission for the Wesleys meant partnering with God in the realization of shalom in the world. Such a task is necessarily rooted in Christ, for we cannot speak of God's reign apart from Christ, or of Jesus without God's reign. The way in which the Wesleys envisaged this essential connection between evangelism and mission is, perhaps, one of their greatest contributions to the life of the church today.

In her attempt to present an authentic Wesleyan perspective on this relationship, Dana Robert has made recourse to St. Paul's image of the church as a body.¹³ In this paradigm, an organic relationship exists between these two crucial practices of the church; while evangelism is the heart, mission is the body itself. The body moves in different contexts, interacting, engaging, constantly at work. But the heart sends the life-giving blood throughout the whole. Without the heart—without Jesus at the center—there is no vitality, no abundant life. But the body lives to continue the mission of

Jesus in the world, namely, to announce and demonstrate the reign of God. The heart and the body, evangelism and mission, Christ and culture, are interdependent and interconnected, and this is the essence of the Wesleyan synthesis—the dynamism of the mission-church paradigm.

In his very last sermon, “On Faith,” written in January 1791, John Wesley asked the all-important question about the goal of the Christian life: “How will [the faithful] advance in holiness, in the whole image of God wherein they were created!” He responded with reference to the dual foci of the Christian life and afforded a different language to contemplate the interface of evangelical piety and mission: “In the love of God and man, *gratitude* to their Creator, and *benevolence* to all their fellow-creatures.”¹⁴ Benevolence, here, is Wesley’s term for mission.¹⁵ But in his sermon “On Family Religion,” he demonstrated how the family of God must build this mission upon the foundation of gratitude—the two being distinct but not separate. “And if any man truly love God he cannot but love his brother also,” Wesley maintains. “*Gratitude* to our Creator will surely produce *benevolence* to our fellow-creatures. If we love Him, we cannot but love one another, as Christ loved us. We feel our souls enlarged in love toward every child of man.”¹⁶

The Wesleys believed that God calls the community of faith to live for others. The primary method of mission in the Wesleyan tradition is for those within the family of God to become God’s partners in the redemption of the whole world. As I have written elsewhere:

The primary question for the Methodist “is not, am I saved? The ultimate question is, for what purpose am I saved? For the Wesleys, the answer was clear. My neighbor is the goal of my redemption, just as the life, death and resurrection of Christ are oriented toward the salvation of all humanity.¹⁷

“Benevolence,” for the Wesleys, consisted in all efforts to realize God’s shalom in the life of the world. This mission, this good-will toward our fellow-creatures, this ministry of reconciliation, this benevolence manifests

itself in particular ways in the Wesleyan tradition, but none more distinctive than outreach to the marginalized and resistance to injustice, both actions expressed through works of mercy that bear witness to God's rule over life.¹⁸ "The first Methodists, who intended to revive the life of the original Christian church," as Tore Meistad attempted to demonstrate, "made a just distribution of economic, educational, and medical resources their top priority. This is evident in John Wesley's sermons as well as in Charles's hymns."¹⁹

The mission-church paradigm reflected in Charles Wesley's hymns

Methodism was born in song, and the followers of the Wesleys learned their theology—that is to say, they discovered their missional vocation—by singing it.²⁰ Mission-church images pervade the hymn corpus of Charles Wesley. Even the most famous of all the hymns, "O for a thousand tongues to sing," is nothing other than a mission manifesto, calling all believers "To spread through all the earth abroad/The honors of thy name."²¹ Another favorite hymn reminds all singers of their responsibility before God:

A charge to keep I have,
 A God to glorify,
 A never-dying soul to save,
 And fit it for the sky;
 To serve the present age,
 My calling to fulfill;
 O may it all my powers engage
 To do my Master's will.²²

These words communicate an extremely important principle: God has chosen the faithful for service, not to privilege, and the primary vocation of Jesus' disciples is "to serve the present age" by bearing the gospel in word and deed to everyone, everywhere. Jesus' disciples are called to use all their gifts, all their powers, to declare the amazing love of God to all.

In one of the great Trinitarian hymns included in John and Charles Wesley's *Hymns on the Lord's Supper*, the singer beseeches God:

Claim me for Thy service, claim
All I have and all I am.
Take my soul and body's powers,
Take my memory, mind, and will,
All my goods, and all my hours,
All I know, and all I feel,
All I think, and speak, and do;
Take my heart—but make it new.²³

The disciple of Christ asks the Three-One God to claim every aspect of his or her life in an oblation that can only be described as covenantal. In typical Wesleyan fashion, a series of “alls” characterizes the plea. All I have, all I am, all my goods, all my hours, all I know, feel, think, speak, and do. The all-encompassing sacrifice of self—the offer of one’s whole being in service to God—rests secure, as Charles makes abundantly clear throughout, on the foundation of a heart transformed by God’s prevenient action.

One can hear echoes of the baptismal covenant, perhaps, in Charles’s use of language. The Sacrament of baptism, of course, is that place where discipleship begins, that event in which God claims each person as God’s own. It also signals the commitment of the individual and the community to God’s mission. Baptism establishes the mission-church and the Sacrament of Holy Communion sustains it. The ambiance of many Wesley hymns elicits a profoundly missiological vision of Christian community and engagement with the dominion of God in the world. In hymns like these, Charles Wesley cultivated a profound vision of servant vocation modeled after that of Jesus—a missional conception of Christian discipleship summarized tersely in the simple phrase: “Claim me for Thy service.”

Charles Wesley goes to great lengths to specify the character of this Christian service.²⁴ In the practice of mission, the servant simply offers to others what he or she has freely received from God. “This only thing do I require,” sings Christ’s co-missioned disciple, “Freely what I receive to give, /The servant of thy church to live.”²⁵ Servants, in other words, engage in an evangelistic mission in life—offering God’s grace to all in word and deed. The unique feature of Wesley’s vision, however, is the way in which he con-

nects the sharing of grace with the restoration of the mind of Christ in the believer. In a composite hymn, opening with a lyrical paraphrase of "Jesus and the woman at the well" (John 4:10-15), Wesley conjoins the "mind" of Philippians 2 with the "action" of James 1, yet another important conjunction in his missional vision:

Thy mind throughout my life be shown,
 While listening to the wretch's cry,
 The widow's and the orphan's groan,
 On mercy's wings I swiftly fly
 The poor and helpless to relieve,
 My life, my all for them to give.²⁶

To have the mind of Christ, in other words, is to care for the poor.

Happy soul, whose active love
 emulates the Blessed above,
 in thy every action seen,
 sparkling from the soul within:

Thou to every sufferer nigh,
 hearest, not in vain, the cry
 of widow in distress,
 of the poor, the shelterless:

Raiment thou to all that need,
 to the hungry dealest bread,
 to the sick givest relief,
 soothest hapless prisoner's grief:

Love, which willest all should live,
 Love, which all to all would give,
 Love, that over all prevails,
 Love, that never, never fails.

Love immense, and unconfined,
Love to all of humankind.²⁷

Notice in particular Wesley's language of "active love." A disciple with a living faith is the one whose whole heart has been renewed, who longs to radiate the whole image of God in his or her life *and therefore* hears the cry of the poor and wills, with God, that all should truly live! The Wesleyan vision of mission, thus understood, is not just an act, but *a life* that unites piety and mercy, worship and compassion, prayer and justice. It involves a humble walk with the Lord that is lived out daily in kindness and justice. Healing those who were sick, liberating those who were oppressed, empowering those who stood on the margins of life, and caring for the poor, it must always be remembered, characterized Jesus' mission and models that mission to which all are called in his name.

S.T. Kimbrough, Jr., articulates the essence of this missional vision succinctly: "to be emptied of everything but love is what it means to serve a God who in Christ was emptied of all but love."²⁸ Those who are truly servants of Christ in the world, and those communities that rediscover what it means to be a mission-church, empty themselves, like Jesus, and find their greatest reward in the realization of God's dream of shalom for all. Certainly, the fundamental vision of Christian mission is being sent to continue and participate in that movement of God towards humanity which began with the mission or sending of Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Wesleys and their followers realized that this is a mission of global proportions.

This Wesleyan vision of a "mission-church paradigm" offers much to a church needing to rediscover the central place of evangelism and mission as constitutive practices of the whole people of God. While evangelism includes all of those activities that draw others in, mission reaches out to all, and particularly to those dear to God's heart who are most vulnerable and in need. In imitation of Christ, a mission-church woos others into the loving embrace of God and then helps them to see that their mission in life, in partnership with Christ, is to be the signpost of God's reign in this world. In his hymn, "For a preacher of the gospel," Charles Wesley reminds us of this transforming call of God upon our lives:

I would the precious time redeem
 And longer live for this alone,
 To spend and to be spent for them
 Who have not yet my Saviour known:
 Fully on these my mission prove,
 And only breathe to breathe thy love.²⁹

Implications for contemporary Wesleyan communities

This mission-church paradigm entails critical implications with regard to those communities that seek to emulate the Wesleyan heritage in their life and witness today. While hardly exhaustive, five propositions provide ample stimulus to conversation and action.

First, making disciples is the vital center of something larger than itself, namely, the *missio Dei*. Welcoming new believers into the community of faith and providing opportunities for them to grow in the grace and love of God are central to the mission of the church; while evangelism is but one part of God's larger mission in the world, it is the essence – the heart – of all Christian mission.

Second, the community of faith participates in the Spirit's activities to make disciples of Christ over time through a process. Critical crisis events punctuate important junctures and spiritual discoveries in the life of the believer, but discipleship entails a lengthy process of grace-enriched life in Christ. Disciple-making is a process more than it is an event.

Third, making disciples for the transformation of the world is oriented toward the reign of God. The ultimate goal toward which this process moves is the realization of God's reign in human life. While not unconcerned with the salvation of the individual in and through Christ, initiating persons into an alternative community of God's people who give themselves for the life of the world is its end or goal. Wesleyan ecclesiology embraces a "holistic" vision of evangelism and discipleship that affirms both personal salvation and social justice.

Fourth, making disciples is a missional practice of the whole people of God. Discipling is not simply an activity, it is a practice – a habituated way

of being in community. While some persons may be particularly gifted as evangelists within the community of faith, God claims all of God's children as "evangel bearers" for the purpose of God's mission of shalom in the world.

Fifth, disciple-making is inescapably contextual. Just as all Christianity is contextual, the culture of the practitioner shapes the practice of discipling and the culture of those evangelized determines the nature of the relationship and the practice. The process of cultivating Christian disciples, in other words, engages the Christian community in a complex inter-relational dynamic in both intra- and cross-cultural experiences of evangel-sharing. For this reason, the rhythms involved in making disciples are both intricate and energizing. There is nothing static about being a faithful Christian in the world.

The mission-church paradigm that shaped the Wesleyan Revival in dynamic ways, drawing committed Christian disciples perennially to Jesus and to one another in community and spinning them out into the world in mission and service, not only reflects an apostolic vision of the people of God (a biblical ecclesiology), but its rediscovery holds the key to spiritual renewal in our own time.

Notes

1. I have discussed the centrality of this "mission-church" theme related to the Wesleyan heritage elsewhere. This essay is based, in large measure, upon these previous publications and addresses, including *Recapturing the Wesleys' Vision: An Introduction to the Faith of John and Charles Wesley* (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2004), esp. chapter 7; *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002); "Evangelistic Practices of the Wesleyan Revival," in *Methodist Evangelism: Wesleyan Mission*, ed. Lacey Warner, *Equipping Global Ministry: Wesleyan Studies Project* (Washington: Wesley Theological

Seminary, forthcoming); "Servants of Shalom in the World," *Covenant Discipleship Quarterly* 18, 3(Summer 2003): 1-2; "Emergent and Wesleyan Christians in Conversation," Address to the Annual Meeting of the Academy for Evangelism in Theological Education, Ashland Theological Seminary, October 2007; and "'Claim Me for Thy Service': Charles Wesley's Vision of Servant Vocation," Address to the Wesley Studies Working Group, Oxford Institute of Methodist Theological Studies, Christ Church, Oxford, August 2007.

2. This vision is consonant with a contemporary missiological consensus summarized in the term *missio Dei*, or the "mission of God." As Darrell Guder has argued, "mission is the result of God's initiative, rooted in God's purposes to restore and heal creation" (Darrell L. Guder, ed., *Missional Church: A Vision for the Sending of the Church in North America* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1998), 4.

3. See the discussion of John Wesley's understanding of prevenient grace in Randy Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley's Practical Theology* (Nashville: Kingswood Books, 1994), 83-84. Of particular interest is Wesley's sermon "The Promise of Understanding," in which he expounds how "we cannot know till hereafter how God works [graciously] in many cases which are daily before our eyes." See Albert C. Outler, ed., *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 4, Sermons IV, 115-151* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1987), 281-91. Hereinafter *Works*, 4.

4. It is important to note that the Wesleys made this discovery without ever using this more contemporary language concerning it. The words "mission" and "evangelism" hardly ever appear in the Wesleyan corpus, but the Wesleyan Revival was at once profoundly missional and evangelistic in nature. David Bebbington has argued that one of the "striking symptoms of discontinuity" between the Evangelical Revival under the Wesleys and the previous two centuries was "a new emphasis on mission." The impetus for this development, in some measure, was the triumph of Wesleyan Arminian theology over entrenched Calvinism by the end of the 18th century. See David Bebbington, *Evangelicalism in Modern Britain: A History from the 1730s to the 1980s* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1989), 40.

5. See John Wesley's "Thoughts Upon God's Sovereignty," in *The Works of the Rev. John Wesley, M.A.*, ed. Thomas Jackson, 14 vols. (London: Mason, 1829-31), 10:361-63.

6. For an interesting discussion of the interface of God's mission and God's Triune being, see John Wesley's sermon, "On the Discoveries of Faith," in *Works*, 4:29-38.

7. John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (London: William Strahan, 1739), 178.
8. I explore this “conjunctive methodology” in *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision* where I identify eight primary syntheses, including faith and works, Word and Spirit, personal and social, form and power, heart and head, pulpit and table, Christ and culture, and piety and mercy. Cf. Kenneth J. Collins, *The Theology of John Wesley: Holy Love and the Shape of Grace* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007) where the author employs essentially the same interpretive framework.
9. Franz Hildebrant and Oliver A. Beckerlegge, eds., *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 7, A Collection of Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1983), 698. Hereinafter *Works*, 7.
10. Quoted in Chilcote, *Recapturing the Wesleys’ Vision*, 47; from John Wesley’s *Plain Account of Genuine Christianity*, 6.1.6.
11. Rupert Davies, ed., *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 9: The Methodist Societies, History, Nature, and Design* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1989), 3.
12. Mike Henderson has identified eight major principles that led to the success of Wesley’s system, all of which have missiological import: 1. Human nature is perfectible by God’s grace. 2. Learning comes by doing the will of God. 3. Mankind’s nature is perfected by participation in groups, not by acting as isolated individuals. 4. The spirit and practice of primitive Christianity can and must be recaptured. 5. Human progress will occur if people will participate in “the means of grace.” 6. The gospel must be presented to the poor. 7. Social evil is not to be “resisted,” but overcome by good. 8. The primary function of spiritual/educational leadership is to equip others to lead and minister, not to perform the ministry personally. See *John Wesley’s Class Meeting: A Model for Making Disciples* (Nappanee, IN: Francis Asbury Press, 1997), 127-60.
13. See Dana L. Robert, *Evangelism as the Heart of Mission*, Mission Evangelism Series, Number 1 (New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1997).
14. *Works* 4:196. Emphasis added.
15. See the exceptional study of Tore Meistad, “The Missiology of Charles Wesley: An Introduction,” *Proceedings of The Charles Wesley Society* 5 (1998): 37-60. “Because Wesleyan soteriology begins in the creation and ends in the new creation,” he observes, “the transformation of the person becomes a part of the transformation

of the entire cosmos (*cf.* Col. 1:15-23; *cf.* Rom. 8:33-39)" [49]. In his examination of "The Messianic Kingdom and the Year of Jubilee," Meistad argues that the concept of "jubilee" shaped the common life of the early Christian community, leading them to share resources and care for the poor. The early Methodists modeled their lives after this pattern.

16. Albert C. Outler, ed., *The Works of John Wesley, Volume 3, Sermons III, 71-114* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1986), 336. Emphasis added. *Cf.* Wesley's discussion of St. Paul's conception of "neighbor love" in his exposition of 1 Cor. 13:1-3, in which he observes: "such a love of our neighbour as can only spring from the love of God. And whence does this love of God flow? Only from that faith which is of the operation of God; which whoever has, has a direct evidence that 'God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself'" (*Works* 3:295).

17. Chilcote, *Recapturing the Wesleys' Vision*, 101.

18. For a helpful discussion of "works of mercy" and their intimate connection to mission, see Rebekah Miles, "Works of Mercy as Spiritual Formation: Why Wesley Feared for the Souls of the Rich," in *The Wesleyan Tradition: A Paradigm for Renewal*, ed. Paul W. Chilcote (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2002), 98-110.

19. Meistad, "The Missiology of Charles Wesley," 51.

20. See *Works*, 7:1. Not enough research has been devoted to the topic of how Christian hymnody shapes, or misshapes, mission theology. Certainly, there have been periods in the history of the church in which "mission hymns" have encouraged a triumphalist model of Christian mission. How choral traditions, from "praise songs" to "classic hymns," form the attitudes of believers today with regard to mission remains a major area of concern. It is a part of my argument that the Wesley hymns helped to form a missional vision among the early Methodist people and inculcated healthy practices that balanced evangelism and mission, physical and spiritual concern, warm-hearted faith and compassionate engagement for justice in the world.

21. See the incisive analysis of the entire hymn by Tore Meistad in "The Missiology of Charles Wesley," 52-55. S T Kimbrough, Jr. observes that stanzas often omitted from contemporary hymnals "fuse praise with mission and remind us of the inclusiveness of the gospel" (S T Kimbrough, Jr., *A Heart to Praise My God: Wesley Hymns for Today* [Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1996], 143).

22. *Works*, 7:465.

23. John and Charles Wesley, *Hymns on the Lord's Supper* (Bristol: Farley, 1745),

155:3-4.

24. The limited space of this essay does not permit elaboration of these particular areas of service. Suffice it to say that texts such as Luke 4:16-19 and Matthew 25:31-46 establish something of a template for mission service in the world. In many of Charles Wesley's lyrical eulogies for Methodism women, these images figure prominently as he celebrates the legacy of their mission in God's world. See in particular, Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Journal of the Rev. Charles Wesley, M.A.*, 2 vols. (London: John Mason, 1849), 2:323-98.

25. *Works*, 7:101.

26. *Ibid.*, 522.

27. S.T. Kimbrough, Jr., ed., *Songs for the Poor* (New York: General Board of Global Ministries, The United Methodist Church, 1997), Hymn 1.

28. S T Kimbrough, Jr., "Kenosis in the Nativity Hymns of Ephrem the Syrian and Charles Wesley," in *Orthodox and Wesleyan Spirituality*, ed. S T Kimbrough, Jr. (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary Press, 2002), 283.

29. *Works*, 7:597.

Book Review

R. David Rightmire. *Salvationist Samurai: Gunpei Yamamuro and the Rise of the Salvation Army in Japan*. The Scarecrow Press, Inc.: Lanham, Md. 1997

Reviewed by Micah Raymond, Asbury Theological Seminary

Salvationist Samurai, by Dr. David Rightmire, deserves to be widely read by Salvationists around the world. I would argue that the name Gunpei Yamamuro should be as familiar to soldiers and officers as that of William Booth, Samuel Logan Brengle and Frederick Coutts. Here is a figure in our history that belongs not only in the archives of Japanese history, but one that should be claimed by the broader Army world. It is imperative for Salvationists not simply to have a firm grasp on our rich history but as Brengle urged, to embrace in the fullest sense the holiness birthright and evangelistic fervor that are the essence of our movement.

Rightmire's title, *Salvationist Samurai*, was taken from Yamamuro's obituary in the 1941 Salvation Army Year Book. It is a fitting description of his life as a warrior for Christ. Even his birth name "Gunpei," Rightmire states, means "soldier of peace" (19). The warrior had humble beginnings. He was born in 1872 to farming peasants as the last of eight children. The

poverty of his childhood and later living with an uncle who ran a pawn shop dramatically impacted young Yamamuro who became “deeply affected by the plight of the poor” (21). When he gave his life to Christ at the age of fifteen while attending an evangelistic campaign, he immediately began to do battle for Christ by preaching daily on the street. Shortly after his conversion he would pray,

“O God, I am only a weak, insufficient and unworthy servant of yours. But, as I offer my body, soul, and all to you, will you not accept me and cleanse me? And will you use and lead me to work for the salvation of the common people, to be a man who conveys the message of the gospel in a language to be understood by the uneducated, one who writes the truth in a way that anyone can read it and be enlightened? I ask this in the name of Jesus, Amen” (26).

As Rightmire so clearly illustrates, God’s prevenient grace is evidenced in that three years prior to the Army’s “opening fire” in Japan, Yamamuro had read Booth’s *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. When the Army finally arrived, Yamamuro concluded that his life for Christ would be best lived out by joining its ranks, stating that “if their spirit and principles were adapted to the Japanese they would save Japan” (35).

Commissioner Yamamuro’s lasting achievement perhaps was being able to contextualize the message of salvation for the poor of Japan in his book “Common People’s Gospel.” It sold over three million copies and was reprinted over 530 times (63). Yet another of his remarkable feats was enacting a change in the laws concerning prostitution, which was rampant in that day. His impact was clearly felt throughout all strata of Japanese society, even up to the emperor and royal family. More than this, though, Yamamuro had a lasting international impact through evangelistic campaigns in 22 countries. He authored over fifty books and hundreds of articles (55-56). His relentless pursuit of God and his passion for the lost was rooted in an incredible prayer life, regularly praying for over eight-hundred people (67). These are just a few of the highlights from the remarkable life of the Salvationist

samurai.

Of special interest is Yamamuro's emphasis on entire sanctification and the need to wait on God for this gift of the Holy Spirit. Undoubtedly, Yamamuro's passion for the lost came from the fact that his was a life that was entirely sanctified to God for his mission. Upon joining The Salvation Army, Yamamuro actively sought entire sanctification in his own life for a period of six months until he finally experienced a union with Christ of "perfect love" (38). It is very interesting to note that Yamamuro's experience paralleled almost exactly that of his contemporary, Samuel Logan Brengle. Both men actively pursued and waited on God for his gift of entire sanctification and both described their experience (unknowingly) with the same metaphor. According to Rightmire, the two men were friends and also corresponded. (See Rightmire's *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle*, Crest Books, 2003).

Rightmire's work has huge missiological significance and implications for the Army's methods and practice of rooting and grounding the gospel cross-culturally. The acceptance of the Salvation Army as a Japanese movement, more so than European, was due to Yamamuro's success in contextualizing the movement and the gospel to the Japanese. This resulted in a fast growing indigenous Army, where European leadership was limited. In comparison, it could be argued, the Army did not experience the same rate of indigenous growth in India under Booth Tucker. More than forty years after his arrival there, only one-third of staff officers were native born. (See Booth Tucker's *Forty Years in India*).

The only downside of this work perhaps, is that it leaves the reader wanting to know more about Yamamuro. Future works might explore his writings on holiness, his friendship with Samuel Logan Brengle, and further insight into his extensive international ministry.

We owe David Rightmire a debt of gratitude for the years of dedication spent in researching Yamamuro so that Salvationists might have a deeper appreciation for our own heritage. As the son of Salvation Army officers, Rightmire had the privilege of growing up in Japan and learning of the importance of this Salvationist samurai in relation to Japanese social history and the development of the Army's ministry in that land. For several years

he labored through archival material he had microfilmed in Tokyo, in order to compile the first scholarly work in English on the life of Gunpei Yamamuro. The value of this work and its place in the history and theology of The Salvation Army as a movement is unquestioningly profound. Yamamuro's life teaches and reminds officers and soldiers alike of the need for constant prayer in the life of a soldier-warrior, the necessity of entire sanctification, active evangelism, and serving the poor and the marginalized.

Micah Raymond is a PhD student in Intercultural Studies at Asbury Theological Seminary in Wilmore, Kentucky.

Book Notes

by Roger J. Green

Buschart, W. David. *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Invitation to Theological Hospitality*. Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 2006.

Have you ever wondered what other Protestants believe and why they believe what they do? This book examines the doctrine, history and worship of eight Protestant traditions, and notes the strengths and attractions of those traditions, inviting the reader, as the subtitle suggests, to theological hospitality. The eight traditions are: Lutheran, Anabaptist, Reformed, Anglican, Baptist, Wesleyan, Dispensational, and Pentecostal. Both diversity and consensus are noted in this book. For we of the Wesleyan tradition this book is especially helpful in comparing and contrasting our tradition with the other Protestant traditions. This book is invaluable in learning about Protestantism beyond our own family history.

Marty, Martin, *Martin Luther*. New York, NY: Viking Penguin, 2004.

Martin Marty is one of the most distinguished Church historians today, and has written voluminously and broadly in areas of Church history. This is one of many biographies in the Penguin Series, and is an excellent and readable biography of Martin Luther. There have been many biogra-

phies of the great Reformer, some of them written undoubtedly for the academic world. But this biography was written more for the general audience. The story of Martin Luther moves along with both exciting narrative as well as literary beauty. Of course, reading this book may encourage the reader to press on with other works about Martin Luther, and should that be the case the author has ended the book with a section on For Further Reading. For readers who have never read a biography of Luther, this is an excellent place to begin.

Murray, Wendy. *A Mended and Broken Heart: The Life and Love of Francis of Assisi*. New York, NY: Basic Books, A Member of the Perseus Books Group, 2008.

I was first attracted to this book because I was asked to be on a panel along with the author to discuss the book. I had known something about this very important figure from the history of the Church, but had never read a biography of St. Francis, the founder of the Order of the Friars Minor (O.F.M.:Franciscans). Here is a very compelling biography, well researched, that portrays Francis with all his strengths and weaknesses, and as a person obviously used by God in a very critical period in Church history. While Francis belongs in the Roman Catholic Church (he was canonized by the Roman Catholic Church in 1228, only two years after his death) there are lessons from his life that can be well learned in the Protestant tradition as well. Like the biography of Martin Luther mentioned in the previous Book Note, this also is a biography easily readable by a general audience. A Selected Bibliography at the conclusion of the book gives suggestions for further reading for the interested reader.

Oden, Thomas C. and Leicester R. Longden, *The Wesleyan Theological Heritage: Essays of Albert C. Outler*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 1991.

Occasionally in these book notes we have taken the attention of our readers back to some classic works, sometimes forgotten. Here is a very use-

ful book for every generation, and understanding Albert Outler is invaluable to understanding the Wesleyan tradition today. As the editors of this book state, Albert Outler, who died in 1989, was a "leading interpreter of John Wesley's theology" (p. 7). The essays in the book are taken from various works of Albert Outler, and are divided into three categories: Wesley as Theological Mentor, Spirit and Church in the Wesleyan Tradition, and Epilogue: Visions and Dreams. Reading Albert Outler is invaluable for understanding the Wesleyan heritage of the Booths and The Salvation Army, and also for understanding the broader Evangelical tradition in which the Booths were reared and The Salvation Army was founded.

The Ebb and Flow of Fidelity



A Journal of Salvation Army
Theology and Ministry

The Salvation Army finds itself at the crossroads of self-assessment and reflection. It continues its bilateral dialogue with the World Methodist Council, focusing on the timely topic of The Great Commission. Commissioner William Francis, chairman of the Army's International Doctrine Council, authors the guest editorial, describing the background, history and nature of the three dialogues to date and the themes of the most recent dialogue on Christ's divine imperative to go and make disciples. The papers in this issue and the next are chosen from the third dialogue.

Yes! Please begin my subscription to *Word & Deed:*
A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry.

Gift* 1 year (2 issues) – \$18.00 2 years (4 issues) – \$36.00

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

*Donor (if gift) _____

Credit Card Orders: Call 1 – 800 – SaArmy (725 – 2769)

Please list additional gift subscriptions separately. International orders: Canada adds \$4 per year for each subscription. Other international destinations add \$8 yearly for each subscription. Back issues of *Word & Deed* are available by contacting the circulation manager at National Publications.

Make check or money order payable to: The Salvation Army
(United States currency only, U.S. funds drawn on U.S. bank).
Send to: Circulation Manager, National Publications, P.O.
Box 269, 615 Slaters Lane, Alexandria, VA 22314. All sub-
scriptions must be pre-paid. Billing is not available.