

Creed and Deed

Toward a Christian Theology of Social Services in the Salvation Army

by

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Foreword

The papers in this volume are excerpted from presentations made at the Catherine Booth Bible College, during a symposium on "The Theology of Social Services." This was an effort to identify and define the roots of social service in the Scriptures, in Christian traditions, in theology, and in contemporary revelations of the Holy Spirit.

Since there are several authors, writing on similar or related subjects, it is inevitable that there should be some duplication. Also, a variety of writing styles and philosophical viewpoints emphasizes the individuality of each of the contributors.

The papers were written largely from a Salvation Army perspective, since the Army has been combining social services and Christian evangelism for most of its 120 year history. However, the rationale used, and the conclusions reached, will be of interest to all those in other traditions who seek to express their Christian faith in terms of service to people in need.

Appreciation is expressed to the President and Faculty of the Catherine Booth Bible College for the creative initiative out of which the symposium was convened. Named after the co-founder of The Salvation Army, the College not only honours her memory, but also perpetuates her spirit of "aggressive Christianity." The College received its first students in September, 1982. In August, 1983, by an Act of the Manitoba Legislature, the College was authorized to grant academic degrees—the only Institution in the Salvation Army world so accredited.

The College is dedicated to Biblical Studies and Leadership Training, aiming to prepare students for Christian ministries through a program of biblical, general, and professional studies. It is open to qualified students representing all Christian traditions. At present there are students from Canada, The United States, Australia, Bermuda, and other countries in the Caribbean and Europe.

In addition to the academic curriculum, the College has become a major centre for intellectual and scholarly inquiry and research. The symposium on The Theology of Social Services was part of a series of

symposia designed as catalysts for the development of, and increased understanding of Salvation Army theology, policy, philosophy, and ministry.

The Officers and Laymen from whose papers these chapters have been excerpted are all people of outstanding professional competence and spiritual insight. They have addressed a subject upon which there is very little print, and have done the Christian church, including The Salvation Army, a distinct service. We express our heartfelt appreciation.

Let us pray that this volume will stimulate further discussion, leading to a better understanding of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in all of its dimensions. As the late General Clarence D. Wiseman wrote, "The contract to stand by the needy, lift up the fallen, help the helpless and shelter the homeless, and to present Christ as world Redeemer and Life-giver, has been transmitted to us."

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Introduction

Chapter 1. The Whole Gospel

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How does The Salvation Army relate to the social gospel, to a stress on individual salvation, to the evangelical renaissance of social conscience, to the tension between the evangelistic and cultural mandates with reference to the mission of the church, to the matter of evangelistic priority over that of social responsibility, to the social service and social action avenues of the cultural mandate? What has been our heritage? What is happening now?

And even more importantly, how *should* The Salvation Army relate to those issues from a properly understood theological perspective? What is the Word of God for The Salvation Army in this generation and for the future? What is the whole gospel?

The papers of this symposium would suggest that The Salvation Army is at a crossroad, that there are some crucial decisions to be made concerning our future. This symposium itself might very well be one of the agents to contribute to a more complete understanding of where we ought to be headed as it addressed some of the above questions, and issues such as the following:

1. Should The Salvation Army's emphasis be that of a balanced ministry between evangelism and social responsibility, the whole gospel to the total human personality?^[1] If so, is it possible for that balanced ministry to involve an equal partnership between evangelism and social responsibility, or is prioritization inevitable as the Church Growth

Movement would suggest?^[2]

2. Should The Salvation Army expand into sociopolitical action concerning social ethics instead of relegating itself to evangelism and social service, even at the possible risk of a diminishing church growth?^[3]

3. With many areas of social work now passing into secular and government hands or funding, should The Salvation Army maintain involvement in those areas in fulfillment of the cultural mandate, or withdraw from areas of ministry in which there is little or no room for fulfilling the evangelistic mandate because of government or secular restrictions?^[4]

4. Is it possible to maintain a Christian social services program without the bulk of the workers in that program being persons who have experienced an individualistic reconciling conversion? In other words, what is the present-day relevance to The Salvation Army of the Social Gospel/Fundamentalist controversy of the 1920s and 1930s?^[5]

5. More explicitly and perhaps in summary, is it possible to develop a theology of social service which goes beyond Christocentric examples to something more developed, something which does approach theological rationale and a theological world-view?

Many words were read and spoken and heard during this symposium. Critics of such exercises might question the value of such a multiplicity of words to the cause of either evangelism or social responsibility. Perhaps the Founder of The Salvation Army himself might say to us as he said to his son Bramwell when he learned of men sleeping out all night by the bridges of London: "Go and do something! Something must be done!"^[6] But there is little value in doing just for the sake of activity, doing without direction. And there is wisdom in engaging in the business of thinking and planning and theologizing before doing, in order that the doing might not be our own—but God's. In following this pattern, we are perhaps not far from following our Lord Himself. In the midst of doing, and even before doing, He sought the Father's will and He read words which gave direction to a ministry of taking the whole gospel to the total human personality:

The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.

([Luke 4:18-19](#), NIV)

May we be similarly anointed by the Spirit of the Lord to proclaim good news and freedom and recovery and release to a world desperately in need of such proclamation and ministry as we seek to be faithful to the whole counsel of God, the whole Gospel!

Part 1 - The Historical Perspective

Chapter 2 - The Wesleyan View of Salvation and Social Involvement

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In his important volume *Creation and Chaos in Primeval and Eschatological Times (Schöpfung und Chaos in Urzeit und Endzeit)* published in 1895, Hermann Gunkel pointed to the correspondence between conceptions of the original state of creation and conceptions of its salvation. He argued that when biblical authors attempted to describe salvation they did so by portraying it as a restoration of the paradisiac conditions of Eden prior to the catastrophic entry of sin into the world. Although Gunkel applied this principle primarily to biblical materials, it is important to understand from the very beginning of our study that the same principle is found in John Wesley's theology. The salvation which God wrought through his Son should be seen as an attempt to restore the conditions which existed prior to human transgression.^[1] If applied rigidly, this principle would allow one to draw a one-for-one correspondence between pre-Fall existence and those conditions which obtain in the time of salvation.

With this in mind, I begin my outline of Wesley's theology of salvation with a consideration of his view of the results of the entry of sin into the world.^[2]

In his sermon "The New Birth," Wesley has given a concise explanation of the fundamental points in his doctrine of original sin.^[3] When God created human beings, he made them in his own image. For Wesley this involved three aspects. First, through the natural image

humans were furnished with immortality, understanding and free will. Second, through the political image humanity was given dominion over creation. Finally, with the moral image humankind was created with holiness and true righteousness.

With the entry of sin into the world several things happened. First of all, humanity died. This was the natural consequence because it was the curse or threat which had been attached to disobedience ([Genesis 2:17](#)). But Wesley interpreted this death to be spiritual in nature. "He (Adam) died to God,—the most dreadful of all deaths. He lost the life of God: He was separated from Him, in union with whom his spiritual life consisted."^[4] This death involved a loss of knowledge of God. "Spiritual death" is an appropriate way to describe Wesley's perspective at this point because he painted the consequences of Adam's fall in the strongest terms.

Without the knowledge and love of God, the moral image of humankind was doomed.^[5] True holiness and righteousness could no longer exist in humanity. Wesley went so far as to describe the consequence of Adam's rebellion as an exchange of the image of God for the image of the devil in pride and self-will.^[6] Thus the natural human is unable to do any good and humanity's only hope rests with the grace of God. Human beings, in their natural state, are "totally depraved," totally devoid of the possibility of pleasing God. At this point, Wesley is in agreement with Luther and Calvin.

Another consequence of Adam's sin is that all humans have become guilty before God. However, this guilt which is shared by all of humankind is not a dominant theme in Wesley. He is far more concerned with the guilt which is the result of the individual's sins than he is with the guilt which individuals share as a result of Adam's sin. This is consistent with the Wesleyan emphasis on personal responsibility.

When his doctrine of total depravity is combined with his rejection of divine election, Wesley can be perceived to have been drawn into a fundamental contradiction. Because the totally depraved individual can do nothing to please God, that person can have no share in the process of salvation. Even a response to the divine initiative and offer is impossible. And if Wesley, through his denial of divine election, denied God's

sovereign role in the salvation of the individual, surely no one can be saved. There is no bridge between human inability and divine initiative without election. But according to Wesley, people are saved. How can this be?

Wesley's escape from this contradiction is provided by his teaching of preventing or prevenient grace. While he held to the doctrine of total depravity, Wesley claimed that all have received some measure of grace from God. Although he identified this with natural conscience, Wesley considered it to be supernatural. It is from outside of humanity; it is from God.^[7] The completely natural person is a "logical abstraction."^[8] He does not, in fact, exist.

This prevenient grace draws the individual to God. It makes one aware of right and wrong. In a sense it restores the freedom of choice which was taken away with the Fall. Through this prevenient grace God once again makes the individual responsible. The recipient of this grace now can choose right or wrong.^[9]

Prevenient grace is universally operative. At least, it is given universally. It may be stifled by the individual, but that is the individual's choice. God does not determine the response. Therefore, if a person is not saved, it is because that person has chosen not to be saved. The responsibility for whether or not an individual is saved rests with the individual, not God.

The universality of prevenient grace allowed Wesley to dispense with predestination. God has already taken the initiative and has done this universally. The individual can choose to accept or reject the offered grace of God.

By means of his teaching of prevenient grace Wesley was able to overcome the apparent contradiction which was raised by his acceptance of total depravity on the one hand and his rejection of election on the other. Because prevenient grace restores some measure of free-will and free-choice, God is not forced to be arbitrary in the salvation and damnation of individuals. Clearly God wills all people to be saved. The fact that they are not all saved can be attributed to the will of the individual. Wesley summed this up in his sermon, "On Working Out Our Own Salvation."^[10] While discussing the practical implications of

depravity, he made the following statement:

Yet this is no excuse for those who continue in sin, and lay the blame upon their Maker, by saying, "It is God only that must quicken us; for we cannot quicken our own souls." For allowing that all the souls of of men are dead in sin by *nature*, this excuses none, seeing there is no man that is in a state of mere nature; there is no man, unless he has quenched the Spirit, that is wholly void of the grace of God. No man living is entirely destitute of what is vulgarly called *natural conscience*. But this is not natural: It is more properly termed, *preventing grace*. Every man has a greater or less measure of this, which waketh not for the call of man. Every one has, sooner or later, good desires; although the generality of men stifle them before they can strike deep root, or produce any considerable fruit. Every one has some measure of that light, some faint glimmering ray, which, sooner or later, more or less, enlightens every man that cometh into the world. And every one, unless he be one of the small number whose conscience is seared as with a hot iron, feels more or less uneasy when he acts contrary to the light of his own conscience. So that no man sins because he has not grace, but because he does not use the grace which he hath.^[11]

The individual is responsible for his or her own fate because God has acted universally through prevenient grace, making a real choice possible. The response of the individual is the determining factor.

Having said this, it is of the utmost importance to recognize that this prevenient grace is in fact *grace from God*. That is why Wesley hesitated to identify it with "natural conscience." He wanted to stress the fact that it comes from God. It is not inherent in human beings even though it is given universally.

Against this background of Wesley's view of original sin and its impact and his doctrine of prevenient grace, it is now possible to consider his view of salvation, which is comprised of several elements.

In a sermon from the year 1746, "Justification by Faith," Wesley discussed the meaning of justification.^[12] He carefully drew the perimeter of what he meant by justification:

The plain scriptural notion of justification is pardon, the forgiveness of sins. It is that act of God the father, whereby, for the sake of the propitiation made by the blood of his Son, he "showeth forth his righteousness (or mercy) by the remission of the sins that are past." This is the easy, natural account of it given by St. Paul, throughout this whole epistle.... His [the justified person's] sins, all his past sins, in thought, word, and deed, are covered, are blotted out, shall not be remembered or mentioned against him, any more than if they had not been. God will not inflict on that sinner what he deserved to suffer, because the Son of his love hath suffered for him. And from the time we are "accepted through the Beloved," "reconciled to God through his blood," he loves, and blesses, and watches over us for good, even as if we had never sinned.^[13]

Here Wesley makes clear that he has a relatively narrow view of the nature of justification. It is confined to pardon or forgiveness and the resulting restoration of the divine-human relationship. Within his theology it is a first step; it is not the whole of salvation.

How does justification take place? In its simplest terms, Wesley would respond that it takes place "by faith." In the wake of his Aldersgate experience in 1738 Wesley described this faith as follows:

Christian faith is then, not only an assent to the whole Gospel of Christ, but also a full reliance on the blood of Christ; a trust in the merits of his life, death, and resurrection; a recumbency upon him as our atonement and our life; *as given for us*, and *living in us*; and, in consequence hereof, a closing with him, and cleaving to him as our "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption," or in one word, our salvation.^[14]

The justification of which Wesley spoke is a change in status before God. It destroys the alienation between ourselves and God which existed because of sin. Based on the atoning work of Christ, justification removes the guilt of humans before God. Thus justification reverses the consequences of sin through which the original relationship between God and humankind had been destroyed. In this sense it can be understood as

a restoration of the original relationship between the Creator and his human creatures. One result of the Fall has been overruled by the action of God and the acceptance of that action by human beings.^[15]

While justification is emphasized by Wesley as constituting a relative change between humanity and God, by itself it would not be an effective salvation. It would leave humans in a situation where they could receive forgiveness or pardon for their sins, but could in no way change their behaviour. They would constantly have to appeal to God for forgiveness for every action. They would have no other recourse. To Wesley, such a situation was unthinkable.

Wesley constantly insisted that along with relative change there had to come a subjective change within the individual. While justification, as the relative change, is something that God does *for us* by pardoning our sins, the new birth signifies what God does *in us*.^[16] The new birth is the renewal of our fallen nature by the regenerative power and work of the Holy Spirit. In his sermon, "The New Birth", Wesley summed up his view succinctly:

It [new birth] is that great change which God works in the soul when he brings it into life; when he raises it from the death of sin to the life of righteousness. It is the change wrought in the whole soul by the almighty Spirit of God when it is 'created anew in Christ Jesus'; when it is 'renewed after the image of God, in righteousness and true holiness'; when the love of the world is changed into the love of God; pride into humility; a passion into meekness, hatred, envy, malice, into a sincere, tender, disinterested love for all mankind. In a word, it is that change whereby the earthly, sensual, devilish mind is turned into the 'mind which was in Christ Jesus'.^[17]

A few things in this quotation must be noted. First of all, it is important to observe that Wesley saw the new birth as a partial solution to the problem of the destruction of the moral image of God within humanity, that is, the image of righteousness and true holiness. Whereas he had spoken of fallen humanity as having been stamped with the image of Satan, Wesley would speak of regenerate humanity as having that image replaced by the restored moral image. The change and its

implications should not be minimized. It is seen by Wesley to be fundamental to any religious life which is pleasing to God.

We must also take note of the mention of a "sincere, tender, disinterested love for all mankind." We must not misunderstand Wesley's use of the term "disinterested love" to refer to an apathetic, aloof or indifferent love. Such adjectives, when combined with the word love, produce an impossible contradiction. What Wesley meant by disinterested love is a love which is impartially directed to all of humanity. It shows no preference or prejudice. It is a love which is given without thought to its own reward. In this sense it is disinterested.

For Wesley, this radical, subjective change is what makes "good works" possible on the part of the Christian. Before actions pleasing to God can be taken, one must be changed within. The corrupt heart cannot produce good actions. But the regenerate individual, who has been restored to the moral image of God, can perform acts which reflect and flow from the righteousness and true holiness which are now part of his or her own nature.

Wesley had little patience for those in the reformation tradition who maintained that an individual was incapable of good works even after justification and new birth. He rejected any tendency toward quietism and antinomianism. He would dispute vehemently the position which argues that Christians have only an imputed righteousness derived from Christ. While he did not want to minimize the importance of Christ's righteousness for our justification, Wesley maintained that the regenerate Christian has a real righteousness as a result of the restoration of the moral image of God, and the consequent obedience which reflects that image.

The tendencies which are apparent in Wesley's view of the new birth are carried to their completion in his teaching about sanctification. The goal of the new birth is sanctification, or holiness.^[18] The entire sanctification of which Wesley spoke was, in a sense, the full accomplishment of the transformation which was commenced with new birth.

Some time after justification and new birth (which were understood by Wesley to be simultaneous), it was thought there would rise up within the individual the old urgings and desires of sin. By the first acts of

salvation, sin had been stunned but not destroyed. For Wesley, however, this revival of sin and its urgings within the Christian was not the ideal. It was not intended by God to be permanent and should not be accepted by the Christian.

Therefore, Wesley spoke of a further act of grace whereby these urgings and desires of sin could be removed or rendered inoperative. In some ways it was understood to parallel justification because the Christian appropriated it by means of an act of faith, but in other ways, it was a further work of grace which carried the restoration of the moral image to a new level of completion.

Most often Wesley referred to this state as Christian perfection, partly because the term was scriptural. But the use of the term perfection necessarily brought with it misconceptions. Just how could Christians be perfect? Such a claim appears foolhardy and perhaps even blasphemous.

Wesley went out of his way to demarcate the limits of the perfection which is attainable by Christians through God's grace. Christians are not perfect in the same way as Adam was before the fall, nor are they perfect in the same way as are angels. Christians are not perfect in knowledge. Because of their limited knowledge, Christians are not free from making mistakes. They are not free from infirmities and they are not free from temptations.^[19]

What is then the perfection of which man is capable while he dwells in a corruptible body? It is the complying with that kind command, "My son, give me thy heart." It is the "loving the Lord his God with all his heart, and with all his soul, and with all his mind." This is the sum of Christian perfection: It is all comprised in that one word, Love.^[20]

This perfect love, of which Wesley spoke as being the keynote of Christian perfection, is twofold. It is an unqualified (disinterested) love for both humanity and God. This perfect love is not a love with mixed motives, attempting to manipulate God or other humans to one's own advantage. It is a selfless, perfect love which focuses not on oneself but upon others.

Wesley also described Christian perfection as having the mind of Christ. In this sense, it is a conformity to that kind of love and existence

which Christ led, with special reference to [Philippians 2:1-11](#). Having the mind of Christ could not be reduced to a mindless imitation of Christ's individual actions, mode of dress or turn of phrase. Wesley was referring to the spirit of self-emptying or *kenosis* which was characteristic of Christ, and was certainly part of his concept of Christian perfection.

Wesley's concept of perfection can also be described in terms of the absence of sin. From the time of their justification and new birth, Christians need not sin. To put it more positively, they could live obedient lives. There was no necessary reason for Christians to wilfully transgress known divine laws and commands. While this was true of the regenerate individual, it was even more true of the "perfect" Christian. Therefore, Wesley taught that people could live obedient, righteous lives.

Finally, it is important to note once more that for Wesley, Christian perfection, perfect love, and entire sanctification, all referred to the restoration of the moral image of God which was characterised by righteousness and true holiness. In this sense, it was a remedy for sin. Justification which remedied the guilt of sin, and the new birth which commenced the transformation of the Christian, reached their goal in Christian perfection, producing obedient Christian lives that blossom faith from the restored image of God.^[21]

Having outlined briefly John Wesley's theology of salvation, we can now ask how this might influence one's view of society and motivate social involvement. It seems to me that there are several directions which one can take here.

In the first place, I would draw attention to Wesley's teaching concerning prevenient grace. The belief that all human beings, no matter how low or desperate, have received some measure of grace from God, brings with it a fundamental affirmation of the dignity of human life. There is no human being who is unworthy of Christian concern, because all have been worthy of God's prevenient grace.

This may not sound startling because Christians have affirmed for centuries that Christ died for all. That in itself should give some value to human life. However, when the doctrine of total depravity is given a dominant role in Christian thought, there is a tendency to minimize the value of human beings and their actions, in spite of the above

affirmation. Wesley did not succumb to this tendency. The importance of humans was affirmed by his belief that all had received God's grace in a very practical way and that they could then respond favourably or unfavourably to the offer of salvation.

The actions of human beings are also given importance by Wesley's view of prevenient grace, because he asserted that they did have a role to play in their own salvation. Humans are responsible for their salvation not in the realm of its provision, but in its appropriation.

Wesley's emphasis on the value of human effort is carried further in his view of the Christian life and Christian perfection. Throughout his life, Wesley was accused of preaching salvation by works because he placed an emphasis on the importance of living obedient Christian lives. He taught that not only do Christians share the righteousness of Christ (i.e. imputed righteousness), but also that they have an inherent righteousness as a result of the transformation which takes place within them. This righteousness then comes to expression in Christian action.

Theodore Runyon has shown how Wesley's teaching on Christian perfection carried these tendencies even further.^[22] The good works which were performed before salvation may be identical to the works which are performed after justification, new birth and sanctification. What has changed is the motive for performing them. Whereas before salvation they had been oppressive in that they were imposed from outside the individual and were out of harmony with the internal reality of the person, after salvation they flow from within. They are now consistent with the internal harmony which exists between God and the individual.

This view also brings into focus the responsibility of the individual to live an obedient life which shows itself to be Christian by the actions which it calls forth. Christian effort is the hallmark of the Christian life. In order to understand the character and direction of that responsible Christian living, we must however, look more deeply into the implications of Wesley's theology.

Christians in Wesley's time were agreed about one thing (at least): the ultimate goal of the Christian is to see God and that is possible only if one is holy. For Roman Catholics, although such holiness was possible in this life, the vast majority of people did not attain it. Therefore, after

death the requisite purification was thought to take place in Purgatory. After that cleansing, the individual was ready to enter the presence of God.

Many Protestants, in contrast, did not believe that holiness was attainable in this life. They wanted to steer clear of salvation by works. Thus, they tended to emphasize human depravity and the view that human efforts are devoid of any righteousness, even for the Christian. Therefore, they denied that the holiness required to see God was possible in this life. But they also would not accept the Catholic teaching regarding Purgatory. What now? Their solution to the problem was to assert that at the moment of death God himself cleanses individuals, clearing the way for them to enter His presence.

Wesley was distinctive in that he maintained that the holiness required to see God is not possible only after death, but that it is possible in this life. This is the real thrust of Wesley's teaching of Christian perfection. It is a purification and holiness which prepares one to see God. It is a preparation for the entry into heaven.^[23]

It is important to notice the implications of such a shift. For Wesley, the Christian ideal of holiness was attainable in this life. The time at which the goal of Christian life could be met was shifted from a point at or after death, to a point prior to death. This led to the desire to appropriate the Christian ideal in this world. The conception of the Holy Life could become a reality in the life of every Christian. The eschatological goal has become present in this life.

This undoubtedly brings with it a seriousness about the Christian life and reaffirms the value of Christian actions. There is the belief that God stands ready to transform the individual. What is necessary is the full consecration of the individual to that holy life and act of faith in God's ability to effect the transformation.

Such a view leads to an optimistic, hopeful stance toward the future. In a real sense, we can understand Wesley's views to assert that the eschatological promises of God are being fulfilled here and now. Theodore Runyon has expressed it well:

When *Christian perfection* becomes the goal of the individual, a fundamental hope is engendered that the future can surpass the

present. Concomitantly, a holy dissatisfaction is aroused with regard to any present state of affairs—a dissatisfaction that supplies the critical edge necessary to keep the process of individual transformation moving. Moreover, this holy dissatisfaction is readily transferable from the realm of the individual to that of society—as was evident in Wesley's own time—where it provides a persistent motivation for reform in the light of "a more excellent way" that transcends any status quo.^[24]

The Christian idea of perfection, on both the individual and societal levels, provides an ideal for which to strive. As Runyon has said, it functions both as a propellant, driving us forward into a future more and more in harmony with God's intentions, and as a tool which can critique our present satisfaction with less than God's ideal.

In my view, this characteristic of Wesleyan theology and its optimism is fundamental to involvement in society. It points out that the involvement in society which is based upon Wesleyan theology is not satisfied simply with providing a service, but is directed toward the establishment of a future which is more and more in keeping with God's intentions for humanity and the world. It is not just making the best of a bad situation, but the construction of a new society.

Finally, we consider Wesley's characterization of Christian perfection as "perfect love." Such love flows from the Christian to all, unconditionally. It is this love which has accounted for much evangelical involvement with the disinherited of society. This is a love which is willing to sacrifice freely of itself. It is a love which places the well-being of others before personal comfort. In many cases, it appears to be a love which knows no bounds.

Norris Magnuson, in his study of evangelical social involvement, draws attention to perfect love as a primary motivating factor in the early development of The Salvation Army social concern. This perfect love was fundamental to the early Salvationist's identification with the needs which they confronted. It was also fundamental to their desires to transform the situation of those with whom contact was made.^[25]

In this paper, then, we have seen that several aspects of Wesleyan

theology lead to a serious involvement in society. But it is true, nonetheless, that these same aspects can be understood to promote an individualistic brand of Christianity which shows little or no social conscience. In a further paper, we will consider the concept of the Kingdom of God as an ideal which can safeguard against such a perversion of Wesley's theology.

Chapter 3 - Secular Humanism and Social Holiness

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Before going further we must consider the historical environment in which the words of social holiness were coined.

Five years before Wesley's warmed heart experience, a certain John Kay invented the flying shuttle. This revolutionised the textile industry in Britain and triggered an industrial revolution. Broadly speaking 1738 is seen as the beginning of the Evangelical Revival and 1733 as the start of the Industrial Revolution. These two great movements grew up together, the one poured out from heaven, the other, generated on earth.

The industrial, greatest of all revolutions transformed society. Like a great wave it swept humanity into the modern age. After two hundred and fifty years it shows no signs of losing momentum. It industrialized the world, urbanised the masses, developed socialism, communism, democracy, general education, social sciences, rapid transportation and instant communication; on-going developments in health caused world population to explode from one billion in 1870 to four billion in 1970. Our world used to be a mysterious place with distant civilizations and savages; technology has shrunk it to a cosmic town in which we know everybody, suffer intractable problems, implacable enmities and mass weapons of eschatological finality. Man still builds his towers of Babel. This time, from dizzy heights one false move will plunge him into the abyss. Modern man surveys his handiwork unsettled by two powerful emotions—Pride and Fear. Pride drives him on; Fear gnaws at his heart. Brilliantly successful in so many ways, man sees no way out. Notwithstanding the wisdom of his philosophers, Gurus, scientists, sociologists, rulers, secular humanist society is trapped. Mankind ardently yearns for peace while feverishly preparing for war. This is fallen man's historic dilemma. Jesus wept as He looked across the Kedron valley at the doomed city of Jerusalem; "If you only knew today

what is needed for peace! But now you cannot see it... because you did not recognise the time when God came to save you." ([Luke 19:41-44 GNB](#))

Never did humanity stand in more need of a clear word of authority from God and for His people to go about doing good, as Jesus did. People, ordinary people, young people, anxious people need understanding and tender, loving care, with no strings attached.

In Wesley's day and as recently as William Booth's, God's people took the initiative in caring. They blazed the trail; taught the nations, inspired by the life and teaching of Jesus and empowered by His Spirit. Today, powerful secular humanist-government departments in welfare, health and education lay down the law according to materialist concepts and keep non-governmental agencies in line by funding policies.

What is Secular Humanism?

By and large, society is secular. Secular means among other things, "concerned with the affairs of this world; not sacred; temporal; skeptical of religious truth." What then are we to understand from the words of Jesus, "they are wrong about judgment, because the Ruler of this world has already been judged" ([John 16:11 GNB](#))? Three times in John's gospel, Jesus names Satan as Prince or Ruler of this world. Secular society then is under the dominion of "that ancient serpent, named the Devil, or Satan, that deceived the whole world" ([Revelation 12:9 GNB](#)). This is a fundamental doctrine for believers, especially Christian social workers.

Man's alienation from his Maker through disobedience, created a vacuum at the heart of his spiritual and intellectual universe. God became remote; the serpent of the temptation had vanished. Nature abhors a vacuum so, fallen man filled it with himself. This is humanism; man occupying the place which properly belongs to God.

Humanism as a state of mind existed before the tower of Babel. Humanism as a philosophy also has a long history. Centuries before Christ, Greek philosopher Protagoras taught, "Man is the measure of all things." He believed in man with all his heart and soul and mind; concerning God he was agnostic. That is humanism and it rejects the first

and great commandment, "Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your strength" ([Deuteronomy 6:5](#) GNB). A humanist has in fact, turned his back on God!

Modern humanism emerged in fourteenth century western Europe. The re-discovery of the classical authors was a factor in the liberating, creative movement known as the Renaissance. Protagoras was one of the authors studied. His maxim, "Man is the measure of all things," both influenced and explicitly expressed the mood of the times.

So, whatever is to be thought or done, man can do it; if he cannot do it, it can't be done! To the' humanist of antiquity, the humanist of the Renaissance, the humanist of our own brilliant, bloodstained civilization—God is irrelevant.

How Did Secular Humanist Social Welfare Arise?

In his Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services (1942), Sir William Beveridge identified "five giants" in the path of social progress, "want, disease, ignorance, squalor, idleness." He urged that a comprehensive social security service should be achieved by co-operation of government along with the efforts of private individuals to "combat" these five giants. In the reforming dynamism following World War II, the legislative foundations were laid for Britain to become a welfare state.

Development of a welfare state is an exciting experience. There is the vision of a better, more humane, more just world; large numbers of trained people are needed: public servants, administrators, social workers in the varied aspects of social welfare. Teachers, students, researchers rally with enthusiasm to the cause. New university departments in the social sciences are set up; principles of social welfare enunciated; regional, national and international conferences are held; an international literature begins to serve the needs of academics and practitioners alike. Theoretical workers look to authorities of powerful intellect and immense prestige— Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Herbert Spencer, Sigmund Freud and others, some of them atheist, most secular humanist. Social welfare theory and practice becomes a deep, fast flowing, sometimes turbulent stream fed constantly by research, argument,

experimentation.

Beveridge knew William Booth's Darkest England scheme. Soon after 1907 he made an evaluation of it which was published in a *"Life of General Booth"*. Beveridge, a thirty year old scholar looks at the social work of eighty year old Booth, known as the "prophet of the poor." The younger man is not sparing in his criticism of some aspects of the scheme which had been operating for almost twenty years, but he concludes with an important acknowledgement:—"The religious enthusiasm of The Salvation Army gives it one of the great qualifications for success. It should not be impossible to engraft thereon the other great qualifications, the spirit of knowledge and self criticism." The founder of the British welfare state identifies three requirements for successful Christian church organised social work; Religious enthusiasm—Knowledge—Self Criticism.

However, the social welfare services which arose from his massive studies, grew up in secular humanist society and developed their own ethos. Less is heard of religious enthusiasm; more and more of knowledge. What is more, with the complete secularisation of social studies, "religious enthusiasm" has come to be seen as inappropriate. I read a letter from a socialist minister of health expressing disapproval of reference to Christian conversion in a report of a government funded Salvation Army alcoholic treatment programme.

This is the climate in which our people are trained for a degree or diploma in social work. It would not be so bad if Christian students were equipped theologically as their lecturers are equipped theoretically in their disciplines. But they are not so equipped!

Bishop Peter Hollingsworth of the Melbourne Brotherhood of St. Lawrence writes: In a theological sense, church and society questions have never been regarded as a high level priority in the on-going life of the church, and they are absent from the curricula of the theological colleges." Speaking as a churchman he continues; "Most of our resources have been placed in the areas of liturgy and worship, Christian education, overseas missions and fostering a sense of fellowship within the life of the congregations."

Our General Frederick Coutts also lends his experience in acknowledgement of long continued neglect of a theology of social

holiness. After reading portions of the keynote address, "An Approach to a Theology of Social Services" published in *The Officer* magazine in late 1978, he wrote: "This is a valuable approach in a largely unexplored field."

Until they are given strong theological foundations of social holiness, Christian students are seriously at risk as they commence and continue social work studies. Some come through with faith strengthened and with a deeper understanding of the Word of God through the struggles of student days. But many do not, and lost their faith because they have no answers to prevailing materialism.

The need for a theology of social holiness must be seen against a world backdrop of secular humanist educational attitudes. This is shown by Dr. Raymond Moore, former Federal education officer and now director of the Hewitt Research Foundation. He writes, "When I was with the U.S. Office of Education, we handed out fortunes, on Federal terms, to colleges and schools. A kind of regimentation took over. Educational creativity was largely guided by a few Federally captive minds. As a result the somewhat diffused humanism that had mainly guided American education... came into focus like sunlight through a magnifying glass. It has burned the nation and virtually cauterised God out of the schools. Although Godly trust is still written into our pledge of Allegiance.... it is all but burned out as a guiding philosophy in the operation of our schools." This situation to a greater or lesser degree will be found in most nations of the western world. And in the nations founded on dialectical materialist principles, God is out!

It is time to look at the basics of a theology of social holiness.

Chapter 4 - A Historical Salvation Army Perspective

- I. The Ministry Of William Booth**
- II. William Booth's Later Theology Of Redemption**
- III. The Timing Of William Booth's Later Theology Of Redemption**

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Introduction

There is no area in the history of The Christian Mission and The Salvation Army which is more misunderstood than this broad area of the social services. Both within and outside of the Army there is the generally misunderstood notion that the initial concerns and ministries of William Booth and his fledgling organizations were to relieve the physical plight of people before preaching the gospel of salvation from sin to them. William Booth is identified as a nineteenth century social reformer, and often perceived as a man of compassion for the poorest and neediest of England's nineteenth century society. Likewise, The Salvation Army is often immediately recognized for its social work programs which assist alcoholics and feed people at Christmastime. Salvationists themselves often misunderstood both William Booth and their own denominational history, and, when asked, identify their organization as one for which "soup, soap, and salvation" has always been, and still is, a motto. Our own professionally calculated public relations add to the confusion and sometimes completely misrepresent denominational history and present denominational loyalties.

As an introduction to this historical perspective of the theology of social services, it must be emphasized that what moved William and

Catherine Booth as they surveyed Whitechapel Road on the East End of London was that men and women were living their lives in rebellion against God. They were sinners who needed to be saved, and the preaching of both Booths called sinners to repentance and raised up the saints in the way intended by God. Once The Christian Mission was established, its missions were called preaching stations, and the purpose of the mission was to save sinners and raise up saints after the model provided by William and Catherine Booth and George Scott Railton and others. This emphasis was continued after the founding of The Salvation Army in 1878. The Booths were not unsympathetic to the physical plight of people, but that aspect of ministry was relatively unimportant to them initially.

There are many ways to approach an historical perspective of the theology of social services of The Salvation Army. I have chosen to present such a perspective by dealing with the theology of William Booth, which ultimately encompassed a rationale for social services. There was a dramatic change in the later theology of Booth. After 1889 his theology evolved to include an understanding of salvation as not only personal but social as well, and that theology provided legitimacy, organization, and direction for the social ministries which had eventually found their way into the work of The Salvation Army. In order to demonstrate such change in the theology of Booth, this paper will deal with three important aspects of the change.

First, it will show that Booth's later theology of salvation was articulated after The Salvation Army had increased its activity to include the dual mission of personal salvation and social salvation. After some preliminary observations, regarding social sensitivities which were evident in both Booth and The Christian Mission before the founding of The Salvation Army, this paper will then consider the second mission undertaken by The Salvation Army. It will provide some historical account of both Booth and The Salvation Army as they came to understand the social dimension of salvation.

Second, this paper will explain Booth's later theology of salvation. Third, it will explain when that theology came to focus. This third section will show that Booth focused his theology of social salvation from 1889 to 1890. My first task, however, is to demonstrate the context

of the change in the theology of William Booth, and this paper now will move to that task.

I. The Ministry of William Booth

Preliminary Observations

It is clear that Booth's major focus in his earlier theology reflected his revivalism. This theology evolved, however, to include a double mission. The theme of redemption had always been central to his theology and preaching, but eventually that theme incorporated social redemption as well. Likewise, the practice of Booth's Army evolved to embrace the mission of social redemption, having engaged in the work of personal redemption since Christian Mission days. By 1890 The Salvation Army and William Booth were well launched on a dual mission. The events leading up to that theological shift must be considered. These preliminary observations demonstrate that Booth's social sensitivities were evident even during his time in Nottingham, and that The Christian Mission embraced a second form of activity for a short period of time.

Booth was thoroughly exposed to and immersed in the life of industrial Nottingham. His father died when he was only fourteen, and as the only surviving son of the family William Booth had to support his mother, his sisters and himself by an apprenticeship to a pawnbroker, a trade in which he witnessed the desperation of people to meet their daily needs. There is no indication, from any of the biographers of Booth, that this period was marked by anything other than poverty. The nineteenth year of his life was the lowest point for he was out of work for a year.

He and his closest friend, one Will Sansom, showed a penchant for two activities on Sundays and in the evenings after work—they enjoyed conducting religious street meetings, and they assisted some of the less fortunate people whom they met on the streets of their city of Nottingham. "Will Sansom and he rescued a tatterdemalion old woman from the extremity of poverty and put her in a cabin and provided for her."^[1]

The importance of noting such instances in Booth's life in Nottingham is not only in the fact that he early demonstrated some ability in

preaching, but he also demonstrated some genuine sensitivity toward people less fortunate than he and his family. He was compassionate toward poor people, and that compassion would be one of his finest characteristics throughout his lifetime. It never diminished, but only increased with time and experience. Precisely how he channeled that compassion will be noted.

During the time of his relationship with New Connexion methodism and of his independent revivalistic ministry from 1861 to 1865, his attention was given to preaching to sinners and converting them. This was his only emphasis. With the founding of what was to be known as The Christian Mission, in 1865, that resolve remained initially unchanged.

However, an incipient second form of activity entered into the programs of the preaching stations of The Christian Mission in the manner of soup kitchens, set up to feed the poor. This was not gratuitous feeding for free, but a programme designed to provide inexpensive and nourishing meals for the poor. These feeding stations were placed under the control of Bramwell Booth. However, even this initial institutionalization of feeding stations lasted only four years, from 1870 to 1874. The need for them became less and less evident, and they were closed. The first and primary mission of The Christian Mission continued to be preaching the Gospel to sinners, and Booth's writings at this time reflect only that mission. There is no sign yet of Booth's application of theological terms such as salvation or redemption to the physical realities around him. Salvation was still only salvation of the soul, and not yet social salvation.

The Second Mission of The Salvation Army

Adherence to a single mission would remain true for Booth up to the founding of The Salvation Army in 1878 and for sometime afterward. In explaining the name change from The Christian Mission to The Salvation Army, Booth affirmed this single mission. "We are a Salvation people—this is our speciality—getting saved and keeping saved, and then getting somebody else saved, and then getting saved ourselves more and more, until full salvation on earth makes the heaven within, which is finally perfected by the full salvation without, on the other side of the

river.... My brethren, my comrades, soul saving is our avocation, the great purpose and business of our lives. Let us seek first the kingdom of God, let us be SALVATIONISTS indeed."^[2]

In presenting the work of The Salvation Army to the Wesleyan Conference in August of 1880, Booth stated that "We go on the three broadlines of Repentance, Faith, and Holiness of Heart."^[3] One would search in vain in this entire address (in which he set forth the principles of The Salvation Army), and many similar addresses during this period, to find any reference to soup kitchens or lodging houses, let alone any theological justification for the extended ministry of social salvation. William Booth and his Salvation Army were still involved in the single ministry of converting sinners. That, it was thought, was the highest service that could be rendered to the poor.

However, others in the movement began to recognize the complexity of their ministry, and there dawned an awareness in some of Booth's officers and soldiers that it was not enough to preach the gospel to the poor, but that preaching had to be complemented by taking care of the physical needs of the poor. And so it is a fact of history that the organized social work of The Salvation Army did not begin at the initiation of William Booth in the East End of London, but with Salvationists in Melbourne, Australia in 1883, with the establishment of a half-way home for released prisoners. The center was opened on December 8, 1883. Previous to this, in May of that year, a rescue home for women was opened in Glasgow, Scotland, but that home was evidently closed by March of 1884. Therefore, it is Australia which holds the distinction of beginning the sustained organized social work of The Salvation Army.

It was not until May of 1884 that social work began in an organized fashion in Booth's backyard, as it were. A rescue home for prostitutes was opened at Hanbury Street, Whitechapel, at the instigation of a soldier of The Salvation Army, one Mrs. Cottrill. From evidence gleaned from the operation of this home, and with the encouragement and support of the journalist, W. T. Stead, the Booths and the Army became involved in 1884-1885 with the issue of the white slave trade and prostitution in England, and were influential in raising the age of consent for girls from thirteen to sixteen under the Criminal Law Amendment

Act of 1885.

In the meantime, various officers and soldiers continued to involve themselves in diverse aspects of social work. In Toronto, Canada in 1886 the Army opened the first institution to give special attention to alcoholic women, and in 1887 there was the opening of a day care centre in one of the "slum posts" of London (Borough) so that working mothers could be relieved of the responsibility of their children. The crippling London dock strike in 1888 "tested the faith of settlers and Salvationists who responded with sympathy, enthusiasm and practical aid."^[4] A food and shelter centre for the homeless was established in the West India Dock Road. In 1889 a women's shelter was opened on Hanbury Street, and on June 29, 1890 The Salvation Army opened the first 'Elevator,' a "sheltered workshop"^[5] for men.

However, until 1889 Booth was still making no public pronouncements about these social operations. He was not condemning these operations, and was apparently pleased with the initiative which his people were showing. But his theology still reflected only a single purpose for his Army—that of winning souls. A typical article of Booth's is found in *The War Cry* of January, 1887. After a thirteen week journey of 16,000 miles, he wrote:

I have come back with the impression that the need of the world was bigger than ever I thought it was, and I have also come back with the impression that The Salvation Army is equal to it, if The Salvation Army will only do its duty.^[6]

In the entire article Booth made no reference to a second mission, to social salvation, to social work. His references were only to the soul-saving mission of The Salvation Army and to spiritual redemption.

The magnitude of the social problems which The Salvation Army was addressing came to sharp focus during the middle 1880s in England. Booth's sensitivity to the poor, to whom he had been preaching for many years, was heightened through the experiences of his Army. A severe economic depression had taken its toll in England, and the effects of that depression manifested themselves in the places where Booth's Army was at work, "1873 being the date normally given for the beginning of the 'great depression' and 1874 as the beginning of the nineteenth century

disaster to British agriculture."^[7]

A serious analysis of poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and religion in the East End of London entitled *Life and Labour in the East of London* was written by Charles Booth in 1883, and was eventually expanded into the seventeen volume work entitled *Life and Labour of the People of London*, of which volume one was published before William Booth published his *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. William Booth made use of Charles Booth's work, and was impressed by the plight of the people with whom the Army and he, had been working and to whom the gospel had been preached.

Finally it was decided that an office be created to deal with the social reform operations of The Salvation Army. Therefore, by 1890 these tentative efforts of The Salvation Army at social reform were placed under the office of what became known as the Social Reform Wing of The Salvation Army, commanded by Commissioner Frank Smith.

With the establishment of a Social Reform Wing, The Salvation Army entered into a new stage of its ministry. It finally recognized institutionally the importance of the second mission which had gradually gained acceptance. Between 1889 and 1890 the commitment to social salvation became fixed. This time was significant in the history of The Salvation Army. Hitherto its chief concern had been for personal salvation from sin, and social concerns were secondary, but increasing in importance. Now, however, the movement was engaged in two works—personal salvation and social salvation. It now had, as has been mentioned, a dual mission.

The surest expression of this mission came from Booth himself. In October of 1890 he published *In Darkest England and the Way Out* in which he gave theological expression to the necessity of social salvation in which The Salvation Army had already been engaged. A description of that work, and, its significance, will be treated later in this paper.

Some Reasons for Entering into a Second Mission

The question needs to be asked: why did the transition take place, and why was Booth ready to focus his enlarged vision of salvation as a double mission? Indeed, W. T. Stead himself, who assisted Booth in the

writing of *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, stated the following in *The Star* on January 2, 1891: "Everyone knows perfectly well that two years ago, nay, even one year ago, General Booth did not see his way to the utilization of The Salvation Army as an instrument of social reform."^[8]

There are many possible answers to this question, and many factors, both personal and institutional, coalesced at this time and gave rise to an expanded ministry. The first has already been noted, but bears repeating. Booth demonstrated social sensitivity, especially toward the poor and needy, in Nottingham, in Whitechapel Road, and in the ministry of The Salvation Army. However, at one time these social concerns were fleeting compared with his concern for the personal conversion of men and women. Experience, both personal and institutional, had heightened his sensitivities about people's physical condition. He wanted to do something to help them.

This heightened sensitivity was shared by many who had joined Booth's Army, and culminated in the 1880s through their continual exposure to the stark realities of depressed urban life in London and in other parts of the world. The experiences gained by Booth and the Social Reform Wing, especially in the context of a great depression in England in the 1880s, caused them to come to grips with the fact that people were not interested in an escapist gospel, but welcomed a gospel which sustained them physically as well as spiritually. W. T. Stead himself noted that the experience gained by the increasing social wing of The Salvation Army "encouraged the General to take a decided step in advance."^[9]

William Booth certainly recognized that virtually hundreds of other people and organizations were engaged in social work.^[10] Much of the work in England was under the auspices of an agency known as the Charity Organization Society, a group which consequently saw no need for the Army's social work, and often opposed it. The work, so claimed the Charity Organization Society, was already being done. However, if the reports of Charles Booth were correct, the work was inadequate and certainly was not having any lasting results, especially in the area of serious unemployment with its attendant problems. Booth, believing that

he was now ready to improve on the work being done, offered the following criticism:

And yet all the way through my career I have keenly felt the remedial measures usually enunciated in Christian programmes and ordinarily employed by Christian philanthropy, to be lamentably inadequate for any effectual dealing with the despairing miseries of these outcast classes. The rescued are appallingly few—a ghastly minority compared with the multitudes who struggle and sink in the open-mouthed abyss. Alike, therefore, my humanity and my Christianity, if I may speak of them in any way as separate one from the other, have cried out for some more comprehensive method of reaching and saving the perishing crowds.^[11]

Thirdly, much of the Church demonstrated an unwillingness to enter into a second mission, and by 1890 Booth, convinced that it was theologically correct to address the issue of social redemption systematically, was willing to commit himself in a way which he wished for the Church. He was at times critical of the Church for not understanding the necessity of or the nature of social redemption. "Why all this apparatus of temples and meeting houses to save men from perdition in a world which is to come, while never a helping hand is stretched out to save them from the inferno of their present life?"^[12]

Also important to Booth was the authoritarian structure of the Army, which was well in place and functioning by 1889. Booth related that structure to this second mission—he believed that his organization was best suited for redemption in two worlds because of its authoritarian structure. The dual redemptive mission of The Salvation Army would succeed through proper management where other less authoritarian or individualistic enterprises had failed. He wrote that "so far from resenting the exercise of authority, The Salvation Army rejoices to recognize it as one great secret of its success, a pillar of strength upon which all its soldiers can rely, a principle which stamps it as being different from all other religious organisations founded in our day."^[13]

Another possible reason why Booth was now ready to enter into this second mission revolved around the changing influential persons in his

life and ministry. Two of the most significant persons in Booth's life were Catherine Booth and George Scott Railton. Both were adamant that the primary work of the ministry—the chief work of The Christian Mission and The Salvation Army—was the conversion of sinners and the raising up of saints. However, there was a diminishing influence of these people upon Booth with Catherine Booth's death in 1890 and with Railton's continuing lack of sympathy with the growing social emphasis of The Salvation Army, climaxing with his protestations in 1894 of the launching of a Salvation Army Assurance Society.^[14]

Catherine Booth had been ill for quite some time previous to 1890. Her influence in the Army was chiefly in the realm of encouraging the officers and soldiers, and preaching and teaching such doctrines as holiness and the role of women in ministry. This is not to say that she did not have some sympathy with this second mission. William Booth consulted her on the writing of *In Darkest England* and dedicated the book to her. However, it remains a moot question of precisely how critical Catherine Booth would have been of the new direction of redemption once she saw it fully inaugurated.

On the other hand, Railton at this time was a tireless itinerant evangelist, opening up and guiding the work of the Army in many parts of the world. He was, therefore, far removed from Booth and the organizational and administrative development of The Salvation Army in London. Those closest to Booth in the development of the Darkest England Scheme were Bramwell Booth, W. T. Stead, and Frank Smith. Bramwell Booth, the eldest son and Chief of the Staff, had long been convinced of the necessity of social ministries. W. T. Stead was a journalist whose sympathies were for the betterment of society by any possible means, not the least of which was the work of The Salvation Army. He helped Booth with the writing of *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. Frank Smith was the Commissioner in charge of the Social Reform Wing of The Salvation Army before the Darkest England Scheme was proposed to the public.

Thus, by late 1890 The Salvation Army was well launched on a second mission. It was now a movement which was committed to both spiritual redemption and social redemption. Likewise by late 1890 William Booth had developed a doctrine of redemption which embraced

both spiritual and social redemption. The next section of this paper will examine Booth's later theology of redemption.

II. William Booth's Later Theology of Redemption

Personal Salvation from Sin

Corresponding to this watershed of activity one finds a shift in the theology of William Booth. This section of this paper will examine his later theology of redemption, and the next section will examine precisely when Booth formulated this theology of redemption.

The first point that needs to be made regarding his later theology of redemption is this: it would be incorrect to say that the social concerns of Booth in his later life diminished his doctrine of justification by faith for the individual. This was still a theme in his later years. His later theology of redemption still embraced his belief that Jesus Christ came into the world for the basic work of redemption and atonement. Even in his later theology he did not develop an elaborate theology of justification by faith or atonement, nor did he deal in a sophisticated way with the many nuances of these doctrines. He was, however, still sure of this: people needed to be at one again with God since the fall; and people could not accomplish this themselves because of their state of rebellion against God.

Therefore, God came to earth in the person of Jesus Christ, and by dying on the cross in the place of all sinners, Jesus Christ satisfied God's demand for justice. The necessity laid upon each individual was personal repentance of sins and personal belief on Jesus Christ by faith. This emphasis upon faith, upon the will of people, upon people's consent toward their own salvation, was constant throughout Booth's theology, and it was present still in his later theology of redemption. As late as May 18, 1912 he wrote an article entitled "Will You Let Me In?" in which he stated:

He wants to come to bless you. But He cannot come in without your consent. There is a condition. He has made you a free agent. You have the power to keep Him out. That is almost as wonderful as He wanting to come in. He cannot come in if there

remain lusts, devils, filthy passions in your soul. What can I do with them? Open the door and let Him in, and He will soon sweep them out; they will fly at His presence.^[15]

Social Salvation from Evil

The critical change in the theology of William Booth came when his doctrine of salvation took on social dimensions. In his later theology of redemption, salvation was not only individual, personal, and spiritual; salvation was also social and physical. Accentuating the imagery of Christ as the model soldier. Booth insisted that Christ came to earth not only to die on a cross, but to be raised from the dead. And in His resurrection He conquered such unholy alliances as evil and death and initiated the redemption of the whole world—spiritual and physical.

This being the case, it was necessary for believers to follow their model, and to take the side of the conquering Christ in the work of redemption of the world. The dimensions and dynamics of salvation were both personal and social. Christ, therefore, was "the Deliverer,"^[16] and the will of God and of Christ was not only that personal sin be destroyed, but "that devils should be sent back to hell."^[17]

He applied the language of salvation to social redemption. He held that people could enjoy spiritual salvation by faith, and he likewise believed that people could enjoy physical salvation from the evils that beset them in this earthly life. "As Christ came to call not saints but sinners to repentance, so the New Message of Temporal Salvation, of salvation from pinching poverty, from rags to misery, must be offered to all."^[18]

The Possibility of Universal Social Redemption

Upon one point Booth became absolutely insistent—there was the possibility of complete spiritual and social redemption. Because he believed in the possibility of universal redemption, he found himself opposed to any doctrine that taught that salvation was limited for the elect of God. Catherine Booth once wrote that "He believed that there had been an ATONEMENT made, sufficient for every sinner, and that by true repentance and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, the very worst

might enter upon a new life."^[19] Booth wrote of himself that he was "thrown, almost at the onset of my religious career, over head and ears as it were, into the Calvinistic Controversy; but I was strengthened, perhaps, in my views of Human Responsibility as to the outcome."^[20]

To reiterate—nowhere was the theme of the universality of salvation more important to the later theology of Booth than in his understanding that salvation included social, as well as personal, reclamation. If spiritual salvation was limited, it followed naturally that social salvation was also limited, and that the mission of the Church in social salvation was seriously hindered. He wrote:

No one will ever make a visible dint on the Mass of Squalor who does not deal with the improvident, the lazy, the vicious, and the criminal. The Scheme of Social Salvation is not worth discussion which is not as wide as the Scheme of Eternal Salvation set forth in the Gospel. The Glad Tidings must be to every creature, not merely to an elect few who are to be saved while the mass of their fellows are predestined to a temporal damnation. We have had this doctrine of an inhuman cast-iron pseudo-political economy too long enthroned amongst us. It is now time to fling down the false idol, and proclaim a Temporal Salvation as full, free, and universal, and with no other limitations than the "whoever will" of the Gospel.^[21]

However, Booth maintained a consistency theologically in his view of the universality of the gospel. He held that just as people could by wilful consent reject personal salvation from sin, so people could by wilful consent reject social salvation. The responsibility rested with those to whom either gospel had been preached. "But we who call ourselves by the name of Christ are not worthy to profess to be His disciples until we have set an open door before the least and worst of these who are now apparently imprisoned for life in a horrible dungeon of misery and despair. The responsibility for its rejection must be theirs, not ours."^[22]

These, then, were the primary characteristics of Booth's later doctrine of redemption: his later theology of redemption still included personal salvation from sin for the individual who believes by faith; his later theology of redemption developed in such a way that it included social

salvation from the evils that beset people in this world; and just as there was the possibility of universal spiritual redemption (i.e. salvation was not limited to the elect), so there was the possibility of universal social redemption. People were, however, responsible for either accepting or rejecting the offer of salvation. The paper moves now to explain when Booth's later theology of redemption was focused.

III. the Timing of William Booth's Later Theology of Redemption

"Salvation for Both Worlds"

Booth's theology of salvation underwent a dramatic transition from 1889 to 1890. That theology was expressed first in one of his most important articles, and then in the most important book which he wrote. The first instance of this changed theology of salvation is found in an article appropriately entitled "Salvation for Both Worlds" published in *All The World* in January, 1889. That article is illuminating for four reasons.

First, it indicates that Booth underwent a kind of second conversion experience. His language in the article is the language of conversion. It is the language of seeing the light. It is the language of new direction. In that article Booth wrote of this second conversion in the following way:

Now I shouted, "I have found the remedy indeed!" Now I saw that this was the work that Jesus Christ came to accomplish—that he manifested to dispossess all these fiends of evil for the souls of men, to destroy the works of the devil in the present time, and to set up in the soul the kingdom of heaven instead.

And I said to myself, and I have been saying to others ever since, "Christ is the Deliverer for time as truly as for eternity. He is the Joshua who leads men in our own day out of the wilderness into the promised land, as His forerunner did the children of Israel thousands of years ago. He is the Messiah who brings glad tidings! He is come to open the prison doors. He is come to set men free from their bonds. He is indeed the Saviour of the world!" Men can have liberty, gladness here and now

through Him, and I will consecrate my life to persuade them to apply to Him for the deliverance that He came to bring.^[23]

Secondly, Booth admitted that although he had always been aware of the physical impoverishment of the people to whom he had preached, having experienced poverty himself, he nevertheless saw no remedy for it, and was determined to save these people's souls even if he could not help them in this world. "The very thought that there was no lightening of their lot in time, quickened and stimulated me in seeking to brighten their condition in eternity."^[24]

Thirdly, his experiences with the poor had provided him with an education. He became aware of the physical and institutional dimensions of evil. He gradually learned from experience "that the miseries from which I sought to save man in the next world were substantially the same as those from which I everywhere found him suffering in this."^[25] He broadened his doctrinal understanding and his theological language to take into account his own changed theology. Experience had shaped his theology in such a way that he now conceived of hell not only as a place of endless punishment for the wicked, of which alienation from God in this life was a sign, but he now wrote of the outward hell of "poverty, drunkenness, debauchery, crime, slavery, war, and every other form of outward misery."^[26]

Lastly, concomitant with his heightened awareness of evil was a belief that he now had two gospels to preach—a gospel of redemption from personal sin and a gospel of redemption from social evil. Again, he broadened his theological language to take into account his changed theology. He added new dimension and new meaning to the theological language which he had been expressing for years. Salvation was now social as well as personal. Booth wrote:

But with this discovery, there also came another, which has been growing and growing in clearness and intensity from that hour to this; which was that I had two gospels of deliverance to preach—one for each world, or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both. I saw that when the Bible said, "He that believeth shall be saved," it meant not only saved from the miseries of the future world but from the miseries of this also. That it came

with the promise of salvation here and now; from hell and sin and vice and crime and idleness and extravagance and consequently very largely from poverty and disease, and the majority of kindred foes.^[27]

In Darkest England and the Way Out

Ten months after the writing of "Salvation for Both Worlds," designed obviously to prepare his own people for a personal and institutional allegiance and commitment to a double mission, Booth began writing *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. The Salvation Army had already demonstrated a willingness and capability to enter into social ministries. William Booth was convinced of the theological justification of both social salvation and personal salvation, and with the writing of this book he was now ready to commit his Salvation Army to war on two fronts. He wrote *In Darkest England* to explain developed theology to the public, and thereby explain the evolution which had taken place in his own thinking and in the mission of the Army which was increasingly placing itself before the public eye. And the date of the publication of *In Darkest England*, October of 1890, was a critical date in the theology of William Booth because it most clearly represents not only his broadened theological vision of redemption to include social as well as personal categories, but it represents his desire and his willingness to act in a way that was consistent with his own theology.

In Darkest England was Booth's most extensive work and proved to be his most widely read work, read not only by Salvationists but also by the general public for whom it was intended. Once the book was published it did not escape notice, and certainly did not escape criticism. Booth had his critics, many of them caustic, and some vitriolic. He also had his share of defenders. "As Canon Dwyer pointed out, all of England became divided into Boothites and Anti-Boothites. Among Booth's sympathizers were Cardinal Manning, Archdeacon Farrer, Sir E. Clark (the Solicitor-General), and the Marquis of Queensberry; among his critics, Thomas Huxley, C. S. Loch (Secretary of the Charity Organization Society), Bernard Bosanquet, and Canon Dwyer. But even a critic like Dwyer had to admit Booth had the right objectives in mind, although he was going about the matter quite wrongly."^[28]

The book is basically Booth's description of his Darkest England Scheme, which was a crusade to assist the "submerged tenth"^[29] of England's population, those whose lives were characterized by poverty, homelessness, drunkenness, vice, prostitution, and any number of circumstances which kept these people from the security of work, income, home, family, or safety. Booth expected this scheme to help not only England but the world by providing a model of social salvation. Therefore, it was also necessary for Booth to articulate in the book his broadened view of redemption which now included social redemption. The redemptive theology which he had formulated provided the basis for the work which he outlined in the book.

Briefly, Booth built his Darkest England Scheme around what he called his Cab Horse's Charter, finding it a stigma and an enigma in nineteenth century civilized society "that our horses are better treated than our labourers."^[30] At the beginning of the book he explained the charter in the following way:

These are the two points in the Cab Horses's Charter. When he is down he is helped up, and while he lives he has food, shelter, and work. That, although a humble standard, is at present unattainable by millions—literally by millions—of our fellow-men and women in this country. Can the Cab Horse Charter be gained for human beings? I answer, yes. The Cab Horse standard can be attained on the Cab Horse terms. If you get your fallen fellow on his feet again, Docility and Discipline will enable you to reach the Cab Horse ideal, otherwise it will remain unattainable. But Docility seldom fails where Discipline is intelligently maintained.^[31]

The first part of the book dealt with an analysis of the problems, and this part he called Darkness. The second part of the book, labelled Deliverance, proposed solutions to the problems, these solutions being divided among the city colony, the farm colony, and the colony overseas, each colony designed to bring light to specific aspects of England's darkness.

Recognizing that other people and other groups were proposing various plans to deal with the social maladies of nineteenth century

England, Booth admitted that "All that I want is to have the work done."^[32] He wrote: "If you have any better plan than mine for effecting this purpose, in God's name bring it to the light and get it carried out quickly. If you have not, then lend me a hand with mine, as I would be only too glad to lend you a hand with yours if it had in it greater promise of successful action than mine."^[33]

It is important to note that Booth believed that his expanded understanding of redemption was divinely blessed, as well as was his plan to work in a way consistent with that understanding. He held that this aspect of his theology, like all others, had roots "in the very heart of God Himself."^[34] It was necessary for him to hold this. It was that conceptualization which provided ultimate theological legitimacy for the expanded and organized social work of The Salvation Army after 1890. "I want it to be clearly understood," Booth wrote, "that it is not in my own strength, nor at my own charge, that I purpose to embark upon this great undertaking. Unless God wills that I should work out the idea of which I believe He has given me the conception, nothing can come of any attempt at its execution but confusion, disaster, and disappointment."^[35]

This theme of divine blessing ran consistently throughout the book, and was expressed in many ways. Restating this theme, Booth wrote:

But seeing that neither Governments, nor Society, nor individuals have stood forward to undertake what God has made appear to us to be so vitally important a work, and as He has given us the willingness, and in many important senses the ability, we are prepared... to make a determined effort, not only to undertake but to carry it forward to a triumphant success.^[36]

The importance of *In Darkest England* to this paper, however, is in its relationship to the change in Booth's theology of redemption. In that light it is necessary to point out that throughout the book, Booth struggled to explain the relationship between personal and social salvation. It is true that *In Darkest England* provided statistical data and institutional goals which would help to alleviate the miseries of people. However, those who read and interpret the book only in that light will seriously miss an

important intention of the book, and in doing so will misinterpret William Booth. The book is also, and at times primarily, an expression of Booth's expanded conception of redemption.

Booth's theological intentions in the book were clear—he did want to maintain the delicate balance between personal and social salvation. Striking the balance became an important theme for Booth in defending his conception of the place of social salvation in the scheme of things, and in defending his expanded vision of the participation of his Army in social redemption. The nature of such a balance was important to Booth for at least two reasons. First, he feared that social salvation would break loose from its ties to spiritual salvation, thus rendering The Salvation Army merely an ineffectual social agency. Second, he wanted to respond to his critics on the one hand who denied the validity of his social work, and his critics on the other hand who denied the validity of his religious work.

Booth was not equally clear, however, in spelling out those intentions. There were times when his whole redemptive picture included social redemption and personal redemption—side by side. Social and personal redemption were two sides of the same coin. Social redemption was an equal and natural part of the whole redemptive picture, and it would ultimately help God redeem this world and establish a physical kingdom of God on Earth.^[37]

At other times the imagery of redemption is different, and Booth goes to great lengths to explain that social salvation is not an end in itself, and that the work of The Salvation Army in the social realm was not an end in itself. Here Booth attempted to explain the natural order of redemption as he believed God had ordained it and as he understood it. The work of physical or social redemption was preparatory, necessarily, to the work of spiritual or personal redemption. Experience had taught him that people were so disastrously oppressed by their present physical circumstances that "these multitudes will not be saved in their present circumstances."^[38]

Using the natural order of redemption as his imagery, Booth was convinced that "if these people are to believe in Jesus Christ, become the servants of God, and escape the miseries of the wrath to come, they must

be helped out of their present social miseries."^[39] He wrote:

To change the nature of the individual, to get at the heart, to save his soul is the only real, lasting method of doing him any good. In many modern schemes of social regeneration it is forgotten that "it takes a soul to move a body, e'en to a cleaner sty," and at the risk of being misunderstood and misrepresented, I must assert in the most unqualified way that it is primarily and mainly for the sake of saving the soul that I seek the salvation of the body.^[40]

This understanding of the natural order of redemption is evident in Booth's writings even outside of his *In Darkest England*. In a letter to his officers years after the publication of *In Darkest England* he wrote the following:

But while you strive to deliver them from their temporal distresses, and endeavour to rescue them from the causes that have led to their unfortunate condition, you must seek, above all, to turn their miseries to good account by making them help the Salvation of their souls and their deliverance from the wrath to come. It will be a very small reward for all your toils if, after bringing them into condition of well-being here, they perish hereafter.^[41]

In any case, there was a dramatic shift in the theology of William Booth. His vision of redemption evolved from solely personal and spiritual salvation to include also social and physical redemption. His theology of redemption was much more inclusive in his later theology after 1889 than it had been earlier, and, for better or for worse, Booth and his Army would be perceived from 1890 onward as a man and a movement engaged in social reclamation.

Conclusions

It has been shown above that Booth's later theology of salvation, which constituted his most significant theological change, was articulated after The Salvation Army had increased its activity to include the dual mission of personal and social salvation. William Booth was an

autocratic presider over an institution that had gradually assumed the mission of social redemption. This climaxed between 1889 and 1890 with the establishment of the Social Reform Wing of The Salvation Army.

Likewise, as The Salvation Army began to commit itself to a dual mission, the theology of Booth underwent a critical change. Booth experienced a kind of second conversion which allowed him to see the validity of social redemption as well as that of spiritual redemption. This climaxed also between 1889 and 1890. The timing of the change in Booth's theology of redemption is very close to the change in activity and mission of The Salvation Army.

The nature of Booth's later theology of redemption has also been shown above. That theology still included personal salvation from sin for the individual who believes by faith, but developed in such a way to include social salvation from the evils that beset people in this world. Just as Booth's theology of personal redemption allowed for the possibility of universal spiritual redemption, so his newly formulated theology of social redemption included in it the possibility of universal social redemption.

The time when Booth's later theology of redemption was focused was also demonstrated above. His theology of salvation underwent a dramatic transition from 1889 to 1890, and that theology was best expressed in an article entitled "Salvation For Both Worlds," and in his most important book entitled *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. The second mission was practiced by Booth's officers and soldiers in a more systematic way after his changed theology was clearly defined. After 1890 the Army was encouraged to see itself as engaged in a war on two fronts—the war for souls, and the war for a rightly ordered society.

His newly formulated theology of redemption was sustained and supported by other aspects of his theology which he had articulated previous to 1889-1890. He had already conceived of his Army as a part of the universal Church that was blessed by God and sanctified by the Holy Spirit. He had developed his imagery of Christ to include the conquering Christ who was the model for deliverance from the evils of this world as well as the evils of the next world. He believed that evil was not finally triumphant, but that universal redemption, both spiritual

and social, was possible. He believed in an ultimate eschatological goal—a goal which would embrace both spiritual and social redemption, and he held out that goal as hope for ultimate redemptive victory. Interestingly, his most important article dealing with this eschatological goal was written in August of 1890, the same time as he was finishing the writing of *In Darkest England and the Way Out*.^[42]

Finally, the question needs to be raised—was Booth completely happy with the direction which The Salvation Army took, especially after 1890? At the very least, there appeared to be some question in the mind of Booth as to whether the decision to enter into social ministries was a wise one. This question is raised both within and outside of the Army, and is a question which demands serious consideration if clear historical perspective is at all important in shaping present and future commitments of The Salvation Army.

In his book entitled *The Salvationists*, John Coutts refers to the issue of the Army's opening up a full fledged medical work in India in 1893. Bramwell Booth tried to persuade William Booth of this necessity, and Coutts wrote that "The old man took some persuading. Might not the care of sick bodies divert attention from the salvation of perishing souls? But at last he agreed."^[43]

One of the finest Church historians of the nineteenth century, Owen Chadwick, in his two volume work entitled *The Victorian Church*, raised the same question. He stated that, "The most revivalist of sects was now willing to allow that a Christian had other duties to his neighbor apart from his duty to convert him. Yet in Booth's lonely old age... he sometimes wondered whether he had been right to allow the Army to divert its energies from conversion."^[44]

It is a historical fact that The Salvation Army entered into the difficult work of social ministries. This constituted a distinct historical change after the founding of The Salvation Army. This paper has dealt with the context of that change, the way in which the change was theologically articulated and theologically legitimated and justified, and the timing of that change. The critical questions, however, still lie before us as we take the historical and theological facts into consideration. Was the move by The Salvation Army to include a double mission justified? Did such a

move raise biblical and theological questions which remained unresolved in the mind of William Booth and others? And, finally, is The Salvation Army of the twentieth century bound by the changes which occurred in the early history of our movement, or does The Salvation Army, in the light of that history, have the present responsibility to clarify both for ourselves and for the Church and the world precisely what our ministry must be?

Chapter 5 - The Contemporary Scene

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Jesus returned to Galilee in the power of the Spirit, and news about him spread through the whole countryside. He taught in their synagogues, and everyone praised him.

He went to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, and on the Sabbath day he went into the synagogue, as was his custom. And he stood up to read. The scroll of the prophet Isaiah was handed to him. Unrolling it, he found the place where it is written:

'The Spirit of the Lord is on me, because he has anointed me to preach good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and recovery of sight for the blind, to release the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor.'

Then he rolled up the scroll, gave it back to the attendant and sat down. The eyes of everyone in the synagogue were fastened on him, and he began by saying to them, 'Today this scripture is fulfilled in your hearing.'

([Luke 4:14-21](#), NIV)

In accepting the prophecy from [Isaiah 61](#) as having reference to His own ministry, our Lord interpreted His mission as that of applying the gospel, the good news, to the total human personality. He had associated Himself with the baptism of John, a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins ([Luke 3:3](#)). But in this passage He makes it clear that the proclamation of the good news was not just related to a spiritual release from the guilt of sin. It included as well, an application to the physical and social aspects of the personality: the physical healing of the blind, and the healing of those social ills which caused imprisonment and oppression and slavery. He had come to proclaim the whole gospel for

the total person—body, soul and spirit, with those aspects of personality considered in relation both to man as an individual and to man as a social being.

Such a holistic approach to the gospel has not always been as diligently pursued by our Lord's followers, as by our Lord Himself. Particularly has that been so with reference to the emphasis of the gospel which has to do with social responsibility. Peter Wagner, in his book *Church Growth and the Whole Gospel*, suggests for example, that evangelicals during most of this century have chosen to "concentrate largely on individual soul saving."^[1] He quotes Wes Michaelson in his observation that the evangelical heritage has been that of "dominant individualism", with its great emphasis on "converting", while assigning a peripheral status to "questions of discipleship, justice and the shape of the church."^[2]

The Social Gospel

Until recently, evangelicals have been generally suspicious of what has been termed "the social gospel," believing that such an emphasis has neglected the central content of the gospel, that of the redemption of the individual through the sacrifice of Christ on Calvary. Richard Coleman, in his book, *Issues of Theological Conflict: Evangelicals and Liberals*, sees the issue of the social gospel as one of the major areas of conflict between evangelicalism and liberalism in this century. On the one hand, the evangelical criticized the liberal for neglecting the priority of reconciling man to God and compromising the mission of the church by involving it in a sphere where it had no special authority, that of attempting to transform society by changing its organizational structures. And on the other hand, from the liberal's perspective, the evangelical was seen to have a shallow social conscience and a limited gospel which exaggerated individuality and overlooked the degree to which man had become societal and his world political.^[3]

The social gospel issue became prominent in American Protestantism around 1865-1915,^[4] with its most able exponent being Walter Rauschenbusch.^[5] Rauschenbusch claimed that the individualistic gospel had not provided an adequate understanding of the sinfulness of the

social order and its share in the sins of all individuals within it.^[6] He therefore promoted a social gospel with its emphasis on social rather than individual redemption, the necessity of releasing humanity from those social wrongs which lead to evil,^[7] believing that it was possible for human relations to be so reconstituted that human society could be transformed into the Kingdom of God on earth.^[8]

The Great Reversal

Evangelicals, or the fundamentalists of that era, reacted strongly to what they considered to be a betrayal of the biblical stress on individual redemption. They thus underwent what later became known as the "Great Reversal" of the evangelical tradition of compassion and social concern present in the Wesleyan movement and in American social concern associated with other evangelical awakenings.^[9] In their over-reaction to the social gospel, they insisted that "environment has no saving power," that "regeneration is what men need," that "we cannot have a regenerate society without regenerate individuals," that "we do not live for this world but for the life to come," that "it is not the function of the church to deal with economic questions," and that the real Kingdom of God would not be realized until the return of Christ and the setting up of His millennial reign so that "any effort to change the social order before the coming of the Lord is fore-doomed to failure."^[10]

Rauschenbusch dismissed such contentions as "half truths" produced by "a half way system of theology."^[11] But then there were two world wars, and there was the subsequent severe criticism of the social gospel by the Niebuhrs who saw it as a theology naively optimistic,^[12] and the "half-truths" of fundamentalism appeared to have an edge.

An Evangelical Renaissance

At the same time as the Niebuhrs were rendering their criticisms however, fundamentalism was being renewed to evangelicalism, and conservative American Protestantism was undergoing a countermovement to the "Great Reversal" of the 1920s and 1930s. American Christianity's "prefundamentalist social concern of the

previous century" was being rediscovered in an "Evangelical Renaissance" of social conscience.^[13]

Peter Wagner suggests that most observers date the beginning of that renaissance to the publishing in 1947, of Carl F. H. Henry's book, *The Uneasy Conscience of Modern Fundamentalism*.^[14] In that book, Henry wrote: "The 'uneasy conscience'... is not one troubled about the great biblical verities,... but rather one distressed by the frequent failure to apply them effectively to crucial problems confronting the modern mind. It is an application of, not a revolt against, fundamentals of the faith, for which I plead."^[15]

The new concern with social responsibility which was associated with that "uneasy conscience" was reinforced by a number of other significant developments in the forties and fifties, including the founding of Fuller Theological Seminary (1947), World Vision (1947), the Evangelical Theological Society (1949), and *Christianity Today* (1956).^[16] And all of those developments, along with others, led to evangelicals "awakening to their inconsistencies" and "returning to the totality of the Christian Gospel" by the conclusion of the sixties.^[17]

A large part of the evangelical church had come to agree with the proponents of the social gospel at least to the extent of understanding that the gospel of Christ and the mission of the church involved "the whole man, body and soul, and all areas of human affairs, political, social, economic."^[18]

Continuing Tension

There is however continuing tension amongst various sectors of the church concerning what constitutes the essence of the gospel of Christ and a proper understanding of the mission of the church with reference to the physical and the spiritual, the social and the individual, social responsibility and evangelism. Peter Wagner, and the North American Church Growth movement, name the two opposite poles to that tension: the cultural mandate of the gospel and of the church on the one hand, and the evangelistic mandate on the other.^[19]

Wagner sees the cultural mandate as that obligation that devolves

upon Christians to make a positive impact upon their physical and social surroundings, upon the culture in which they find themselves. He suggests that this mandate finds its origin in the "delegated sovereignty" over God's earthly creation given to our first parents in [Genesis 1](#).^[20] It has to do therefore, with "distribution of wealth, the balance of nature, marriage and the family, human government, keeping the peace, cultural integrity, liberation of the oppressed," and promoting peace and love amongst the human race to the greatest extent possible.^[21]

The evangelistic mandate on the other hand, according to Wagner, is that obligation that devolves upon followers of Christ to "go and make disciples of all nations" ([Matthew 28:19](#)).^[22] In making this distinction, Wagner recognizes that there are those who would claim that the fulfillment of social and cultural responsibility is itself evangelism, evangelizing the structures of society as a more worthy aim of evangelism than "winning souls," a "presence evangelism" which provides for the presence of divine peace and love in the world.^[23]

It is this concept of the cultural mandate as evangelism over against a narrower concept of the evangelistic mandate which form the extremities of tension concerning the mission of the church in the world today. An article on "The Church in the World" in the journal *Theology Today* suggests that "the strong emphasis in ecumenical circles on mission as the humanizing and liberating activity of the churches, often in collaboration with revolutionary movements, has caused many Christians to sense that this trend may de-emphasize the necessity for and reality of a converting experience and a salvatory relation with Jesus Christ. Salvation, according to this view, takes place on the horizontal level by which man is brought into the abundant life of human well being."^[24]

At the other extremity is the view of the evangelistic mandate which would claim that the Christian's primary obligation is that of proclaiming the good news, and that, while the cultural mandate needs to be fulfilled, it is not a "legitimate component of biblical mission."^[25]

There are however, several points of balance between those two extremes, and there are hopeful signs that both evangelicals and liberals are coming closer to what might be thought of as the "whole gospel." From the perspective of the evangelical for example, Ronald Sider in the

general preface to a series on "Contemporary Issues in Social Ethics" says that "an historic transformation is in process. In all parts of the world, evangelical Christians in growing numbers are rediscovering the biblical summons to serve the poor, minister to the needy, correct injustice and seek societal shalom. The Chicago Declaration of Evangelical Social Concern (1973), the Lausanne Covenant's Section on social responsibility (1974), the Evangelical Fellowship of India's Madras Declaration on Evangelical Social Action (1979) and the Evangelical Commitment to Simple Lifestyle (1980) are symptomatic of far-reaching change. A fundamentally new worldwide movement is emerging. It seeks justice and peace in the power of the Spirit. It consists of biblical Christians passionately committed to a new search for social justice that is thoroughly biblical, deeply immersed in prayer, and totally dependent on the presence of the Holy Spirit."^[26]

This trend is not viewed as a denial of the primacy of individual salvation as was the interpretation of the fundamentalists with reference to the social gospel. On the contrary, the spiritual dimension of the reconciling relationship with God through Christ is seen as the basis for bringing meaning to the material and social and political dimensions of humanity, and in itself is considered to be social action which brings about transformation in relationships.^[27] And it is because Christians have come to some understanding of the perfect will of God through reconciliation with the divine that they sense an obligation to do what they can towards human reconciliation. Theme 5 of the Lausanne Covenant of 1974 puts it this way: "Although reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation, nevertheless, we affirm that evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty."^[28]

Further, social involvement has been seen as a means of leading to individual salvation. Peter Wagner points out that one rapidly growing church in the United States has as its model for ministry, "Find a need and fill it; find a hurt and heal it," and thus uses social service as an evangelistic means to reach the unchurched.^[29]

John R. W. Stott is critical of this last point, that of regarding social action simply as a means to evangelism. He suggests that the smell of

hypocrisy hangs around our philanthropy and quotes Gandhi who said in 1931: "I hold that proselytizing under the cloak of humanitarian work is, to say the least, unhealthy... why should I change my religion because a doctor who professes Christianity has cured me of some disease...?"^[30]

He rather favours the concept of social action being regarded as a partner of evangelism, belonging to each other and yet independent of each other,^[31] a concept which is fairly representative of modern evangelical thought. Evangelism and social responsibility, the evangelistic mandate and the cultural mandate, looking after man's spiritual needs on the one hand and his physical and social needs on the other, following the great commandment to love your neighbour and the great commission to go and make disciples—these are linked in a partnership. They are seen as two parts of the whole gospel for the total human personality. A religion concerned only with saving the soul forgets, Stott says, "that God did not create souls but body-souls called human beings."^[32] As a body-soul, man has his material and social needs which must be addressed along with, and sometimes even before, the communication of the gospel of individual salvation.

Some evangelicals suggest that the partnership must be considered an equal partnership. Ronald Sider for example, says that "The time has come for all biblical Christians to refuse to say, 'The primary mission of the Church is...' I do not care whether you complete the sentence with 'evangelism' or 'social concern.' Either way, it is unbiblical and misleading. Evangelism, social concern, fellowship, teaching, worship—all these are fundamental parts of the mission of the Church. They must not be confused with one another, although they are inextricably interrelated. Scripture shows that the Church has many tasks, and it does not give us a choice of which to obey."^[33]

The Matter of Priorities

It is on the point of whether or not social responsibility and evangelism ought to be considered as equal partners that evangelicals are now themselves engaged in some tension. This was an issue which emerged at the International Congress on World Evangelization in Lausanne, Switzerland, 1974. The Lausanne Covenant affirmed "that

evangelism and socio-political involvement are both part of our Christian duty" (Article 5), and thus endorsed the concept of the "holistic mission" of the church.^[34] It did not however, endorse the concept of "holistic evangelism," that is, that there is no legitimate distinction between evangelism and social ministry.^[35] Rather, Article 5 stated: "reconciliation with man is not reconciliation with God, nor is social action evangelism, nor is political liberation salvation" (Article 5).^[36]

And it also denied the concept of an equality of partnership between social responsibility and evangelism when it stated that "in the Church's mission of sacrificial service evangelism is primary" (Article 6).^[37] John R. W. Stott comments on that statement by saying that "Anything which undermines human dignity should be an offense to us. But is anything so" destructive of human dignity as alienation from God through ignorance or rejection of the gospel? And how can we seriously maintain that political and economic liberation is just as important as eternal salvation?"^[38]

Donald McGavran in his classic text, *Understanding Church Growth*, also supports the principle of the priority of the evangelistic mandate. He admits that "under some circumstances" and "for a limited time, Christianizing some aspect of the social order may legitimately be assigned a higher priority and receive greater attention than evangelism."^[39] Normally though, both social responsibility and evangelism suffer when the evangelistic mandate is not given priority. To underline that point, McGavran quotes George Hunter in the March, 1977 *Church Growth Bulletin*: "Whenever the Christian mission has neglected disciple-making and concentrated on the other facets of Christ's work, we have not made many disciples or planted many churches and have not had much social influence either! Our social causes will not triumph unless we have great numbers of committed Christians."^[40] In other words, it partially comes down to a matter of numbers—the more persons who are evangelized and become Christians, the greater the impact of the Church on society.

There is another matter of priority associated with social responsibility itself to which Peter Wagner draws attention. He suggests that there are two avenues of social responsibility: social service and social action.^[41]

Social service is geared to meet the needs of individuals and groups in a direct and immediate way through relief and development, while social action is geared toward changing structures through socio-political change.^[42] And then, on the basis of research on the growth and decline of churches, Wagner postulates a pragmatic church growth principle: "When churches are involved in social ministries, the churches which specialize in social service tend to attract more new members than the ones specializing in social action."^[43] He even goes so far as to say that "To the degree that socially involved churches become engaged in social action, as distinguished from social service, they can expect church growth to diminish."^[44]

From a pragmatic church growth approach then, the order of priority would be evangelism first, social responsibility second; and within the area of social responsibility, attention being given to social service rather than social action. There is however, room for each of those emphases in the "Whole Gospel" of [Luke 4:18-19](#):

... he has anointed me to preach the good news to the poor.
He has sent me to proclaim freedom for the prisoners and
recovery of sight for the blind,
to release the oppressed,
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor (NIV).

And it is to that "Whole Gospel" that the church must continue to direct its attention in fulfilling its commission of its Lord in the world today!

Part 2 - Toward A Theology Of Social Services

Chapter 6 - Toward a Theology of Social Holiness

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I was talking recently with one of its (The Salvation Army) most famous leaders, and particularly about their journal which has the audacity to call itself the "War Cry."

*But notice that it is the very Salvation Army which has dedicated itself with more charity than any other body, to the succour of the most wretched outcasts of society and which demonstrates the greatest theological tolerance in imposing no dogmas upon its members. It is as if by freely admitting its warlike intentions, which other churches carefully conceal, it is able to liberate charity because it has brought its aggressiveness out into the light of day. (Paul Tournier, *The Violence Inside*)*

The above quote is an attempt by a contemporary author to understand the motivation behind Salvation Army Social Services. It behoves us as Salvationists, to attempt a systemization of our theology of social services so that our motivations are never misunderstood as the expression of latent aggression as Tournier has mused here.

I will not attempt an apologia here for the need of such a work. I do experience a certain excitement however about a theology that comes even as a rear guard! I trust that our symposium will serve as an opportunity for us to reflect; to deepen our understanding and

commitment to social services performed over these past 92 years as a simple act of obedience.

Methodological Questions

It is important for us to realize that modern academic theology, with its particular methods, is just one of the ways in which the historical church has thought through its faith as it relates to pragmatics.

Consider for instance the "episcopal theology" which began with the burning issues in the life of the first century church; that first Corps Council of sorts that hammered out the necessary qualifications of those who would minister the 'kuppah' and the 'tamhui' funds so that the apostles might not "neglect the ministry of the word of God."^[1]

The great riches of modern academic theology must be acknowledged but I do not think that the Salvation Army needs to look at it as a universally normative, timebound product of an age. Perhaps in the absence of an ideology we have become one however, to Christian churches who would look to us for guidance in impacting their world in the effective way we historically have.

Some pressing questions of methodology do need addressing. For instance, should social science take the place of philosophy as the privileged method for interpreting human experience? How should we use these sciences? Are they to be "auxiliary" or "constitutive" in theology? How do they affect our hermeneutics both of scripture and of our history? How is the question of "ideology" to be faced? I merely raise these questions here with no intent to address them in this paper, however addressed I feel they must be.

Our unique heritage demands much as the rising social conscience in the Christian Church turns its questioning eyes to us for a clue to social relevancy. May we take the time and in so doing experience something of the 'entdeckungsfreude' (joy of discovery) that Jurgen Moltmann thought he saw in some of us as we address the issue.

Towards A Theology Of Social Services

If theology is to remain theology through and through, it will best

fulfill its vocation of systemizing what God has called us to do in the area of social services by retaining its specificity and refusing to dissolve its fundamental epistemological principle, that is, a knowledge of faith rooted in God's self-revelation, centered and fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Moreover, this basis must be articulated in its full trinitarian dimension. The living triune, Holy God is the only reality from which we can face the complex social, economical, and (while cognizant of our non-partisan stance) political issues which a theology of social services must address if it is to be relevant and meaningful for the witness of Christ and The Salvation Army in a contemporary nuclear society.

How then do I propose to approach this challenge? Is there a theologically responsible way of reading the biblical testimony from within my present situation? Can I possibly bring out a reserve of meaning in the biblical testimony without arbitrarily reading into it my own ideology. (I am profoundly convinced of the truth which Jesus himself celebrated: "I thank you Father... because you have hidden these things from the learned and powerful, and have revealed them to the little ones.")

I have come to the conclusion that any articulation of the biblical witness in terms of our challenge, has to be mediated by a deep consideration of the basic biblical "motifs," such as holiness, peace (shalom), justice, love (agape) and hope, especially as revealed in the Godhead. I do believe that orientation and enrichment to our commitment will result if we but keep the reflection of these basic motifs closely bound with the story of God's acts. One more trained and educated than I must perform the marriage of the socio-analytical and the hermeneutical. I will here and now simply raise some of the implications for social services drawn from the first of these motifs—holiness.

Implication For Social Services From The Holiness Of God

The foundation for a divine-human convergence is laid by God's holiness. Firstly, this holiness is communicated through revelation. Secondly, this holiness is communicable through God's sharing something of His nature and suffering with those who obediently

embrace His will.^[2]

The first provides a standard for man to see himself as he really is. The resulting violent, emotional experience is best summed up in the words of the prophet Isaiah. "Woe to me! I am ruined!, For I am a man of unclean lips, and I live among the people of unclean lips, and my eyes have seen the King, the Lord Almighty" ([Isaiah 6:5](#), NIV). For us, the redeemed, the implications of this statement are painfully clear. Because we have learned to live with unholiness and look upon it as natural and expected, unless we truly see ourselves as God sees us, we will not be disturbed and vexed by the conditions around us, and consequently moved to do something about it.

Catherine Booth realized that there was little else that would motivate Christians to action. She writes. "As the stories come to me from Hackney Wick, Seven Dials, St. George's the Borough... stories of destitution, sickness, sorrow and suffering, no less than of sin and crime and shame, what can I ever say that will arouse God's professed people to some concern and care...?"^[3]

I postulate that any other motivational factor falls into an ignoble category of confrontation of the unholy simply because it threatens our comfortable way of life!

Secondly, God's holiness communicable, challenges us to see God's purpose realized—not only in our own lives, but also in the lives of those degraded by the effects of sin sickness. Consider that God's first concern for His creation is its moral health (i.e. its holiness) and anything that opposes this falls under His divine wrath. In order to preserve His creation from irreparable moral collapse, God has historically destroyed, in wrathful judgement, that which would destroy it. Both the flood and the destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah were seen as acts of Holy preservation. The holiness of God, the wrath of God and the moral health of His creation are synonymous. God hates sin as a mother hates the poisonous snake that would strike and kill her child.

To Israel first and later to His Church, God said "Be holy, because I... am holy" ([Leviticus 19:2](#), NIV). While God imparts a relative and contingent holiness to redeem men on earth by imputation, God is so absolutely holy, so incomprehensibly and infinitely full of purity, that no

honest man could ever say, "I am holy as God is holy." Herein lies the dilemma. We take solace in the promise that the broken and contrite heart God will not despise. Broken and contrite we are, as Isaiah was, as Luther was, when we see ourselves truly as God sees us. Tozer compares us to Moses. He writes:

Caught in this dilemma, what are we Christians to do? We must, like Moses, cover ourselves with faith and humility while we steal a quick look at the God whom no man can see and live. We must hide our unholiness in the wounds of Christ as Moses hid himself in the cleft of the rock while the glory of God passed by. We must take refuge from God in God. Above all we must believe that God sees us perfect in His Son while He disciplines and chastens and purges us that we may be partakers of His holiness.^[4]

Can the result be any less than a hungry and depraved world viewing an army clothed in humility and faith, carrying on its social services while reflecting a charismatic glory and holiness not beyond the comprehension of the unregenerate because of its medium-love? Can it do less than to arouse what Rudolf Otto called mans' "numinous" to seek out and discover more of the "mysterium tremendum"^[5] that motivates these "peculiar" people called Salvationists.

Christ's Provision For The Work Of Social Services

"When Moses came down from Mount Sinai with the two tablets of the Testimony in his hands, he was not aware that his face was radiant because he had spoken with the Lord" ([Exodus 34:29](#), NIV).

What are the dynamics of reflecting this glory, this holiness of God to an unholy world?

The premise upon which most of the lifestyle, or friendship evangelism books are being written these days, is that the majority of Christians have lost their ability to relate in a significant way to non-Christians. The glory which the average Christian reflects to his neighbour, is not necessarily the Lord's. More often than not, the Christian has withdrawn from significant contact because his church/corps misunderstands the biblical doctrine of separation. The unsaved are seen as enemies rather than victims of the Enemy.

Spirituality is viewed as separation from the unsaved and vile.

As Joe Aldrich puts it, "The new Christian is told he has nothing in common with his unsaved associates. Quite frankly, he goes on to say, I have a lot in common with them: a mortgage, car payments, kids who misbehave, a lawn to mow, a car to wash, a less-than-perfect marriage, a few too many pounds around my waist, and an interest in sports, hobbies, and other activities they enjoy."^[6]

It is well to remember that Jesus was called a "friend of sinners." Aldrich is speaking here about the inability of the Christian who finds himself in the socio-economic bracket called "middle class", to cross over a barrier to his middle-class neighbours for the purpose of evangelism. Consider for a moment, the incredible gap that exists when the typical North American middle class Christian tries to cross the cultural and social chasm separating him from the truly poor.

Yet, as we read the Kenosis hymn we witness Christ crossing over the greatest social barrier of all! "Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant being made in human likeness" ([Philippians 2:6, 7](#), NIV).

Jesus' birth was secular, that is, totally concerned with this world: "The Word became flesh" and no less was His death. His death was not mystically religious in any way, but the stark secular fact of Calvary.

Don Benedict, one of the founders of the East Harlem Parish may have been right when he identified "the biggest problem facing the church today is not how to get more people into the church, but how to get those who are in, out of it."

Wesley wrote "Holy solitaries" or solitary saints, "is a phrase no more consistent with the gospel than holy adulterers. The gospel of Christ knows of no religion, but social; no holiness but social holiness. Faith working by love is the length and breadth and depth and height of Christian perfection."^[7]

What is it that holds Christians back from the challenge to reflect the glory of God to a needy people? Is it fear of contamination? Is it fear of losing their testimony? Do they really think that the job is already being adequately done without them? Is it fear of being tainted by the language

and lifestyle of those we euphemistically call the "underprivileged"? Perhaps it has been in our willingness to leave the comfort and familiarity of the "sacred" for the discomfort and uncertainty of the so-called "secular" that the Salvation Army has seen its success in social mission.

Many are familiar with the John Wesley statement recorded in his journal following Aldersgate "I felt my heart strangely warmed." Very few are familiar with a journal entry following the challenge of Whitfield to field preaching which stated, "I submitted myself to be more vile."^[8]

Consider a few verses of scripture which speak directly to this.

We have an altar from which those who minister at the tabernacle have no right to eat. The high priest carries the blood of animals into the Most Holy Place as a sin offering, but the bodies are burned outside the camp. And so Jesus also suffered outside the city gate to make the people holy through his own blood. Let us, then, go to him outside the camp, bearing the disgrace he bore.

([Hebrews 13:10-13](#), NIV)

At first glance this passage, and indeed, the whole of the Epistle to the Hebrews, seems weighted down by the intricacies of outworn rituals and remote details of religious history. However, through all its minute comparisons and contrasts with the religious life of a bygone theocracy, this book is trying to make clear the presence of Christ in the secular world.

Bishop Wescott sees the passage as reference to the eucharist or Holy Communion sacrament which is closed to the non-Christian Jew. He is not alone in this popular commentary interpretation. More recently, it has been suggested^[9] that we can read "from-which-those-who-minister-have-no-right-to-eat" as a kind of long spelled out adjective describing what kind of sacrificial altar the writer is speaking about. A priest could of course partake and eat of sacrifices and in fact identified himself with the sacrifice by eating part of the sacrificed animal. There was one sacrifice which he however was forbidden to eat; that of the Day of Atonement, the rituals for which are described in Leviticus chapter 16. Now says the author of Hebrews, we Christians have an "atonement"

sacrifice as well: Calvary!

Why am I going through all this? What does this have to do with a Theology of Social Services? Everything, I answer. For the main similarities between the Jewish Day of Atonement rituals and Christ's sacrifice are all centred around the phrase "exo parembole" (outside the camp). To the Jew, the phrase "outside the camp" must have a decidedly distasteful meaning. It meant to be cut off from the security and salvation of the sacred community; it meant being an outcast. This was the place where blasphemers and other grievous sinners were stoned to death. Even the person who was appointed to take the body of the sacrificial animal "outside the camp" made himself unholy and polluted by doing so. He could not return into the sacred camp until he had purified himself with ritual washings, for having been "outside the camp" with the sacrificed body, he was tainted by the unholiness of the world.

Similarly then, Jesus died "outside the camp." But the conjunction "*hina*" introduces a clause of purpose. His suffering was not aimless, but was designed with a specific purpose in mind "to make his people holy!"

Not only that, but he calls us to be with him "outside the camp" and never to return to the safety of the sacred camp. By contrast, we are made clean, not polluted by leaving the specially sacred place. The "holy place", the place of God's presence, is then outside the gate in the secular world, once thought of as the unholy place! To emphasize this contrast the author of the Hebrews goes on to say that we must bear the abuse which was heaped upon Christ. To align oneself with Christ is to be called a blasphemer, or even irreligious. The contrast here, then is not between true and false religion, but between a religious, sanctuary-centred attitude, and a faith which comes alive in the realities of an encounter with the secular situation.

What a heritage is ours, as we consider the converted dance-halls and theatres that housed our early Salvation Army meetings. Let us never forget that Christ was not crucified on the plush carpeted platform of a modern Army "temple" between the gleaming silver instruments of an Army band and the prim and proper protocol of the uniformed songster brigade, but rather between two convicts on the city garbage dump where soldiers gambled and thieves talked smut. Perhaps more of the great Wesleyan revival hinged upon the statement "I submitted myself to be

more vile" than on the warm heart experience of Aldersgate.

While some concern might be expressed about Bonhoeffer's great concern of the world passing the church by, he makes a great contribution to the "outside the camp theology" when he states "Non-religious theonomy drives a man into the world to work for God's kingdom on earth. Being thus caught up in the messianic event is the essence of a mature faith. Such a faith is truly worldly."^[10]

The most trenchant insight into the prodigality of God sharing Himself through His people is portrayed in the judgment scene recorded in [Matthew 25:31-46](#). Here is the greatest challenge of all to "go outside the camp."

The account envisions the final gathering of all nations before the throne of the King. A separation follows in which the righteous are placed on the right hand and the unrighteous on the left. The announcement directed to the righteous is as follows: "Come, you who are blessed by my Father; make your inheritance the kingdom prepared for you since the creation of the world." The reason that they had become worthy of such a reward is astoundingly because; "When I was hungry... you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you invited me in, I needed clothes and you clothed me, I was sick and you looked after me, I was in prison and you came to visit me."

The righteous were amazed at this announcement for they had no idea that they had ever rendered such social services. The explanation given to their inquiry was clear. God so involves Himself in the lives of secular men that what happens to them, happens to Him. He literally declared their hunger as His hunger, their thirst as His thirst, their hurt as His hurt, their burden as His burden, and their suffering as His suffering. As Keith Green points out so forcibly in his contemporary song "The Sheep and the Goats", "My friends, the only difference between the righteous and the unrighteous was what they did and didn't do."

By The Power Of The Holy Spirit

Jesus was commissioned as the Messiah or "Christed" by the coming of the Holy Spirit to rest upon Him. In so doing He could claim that the

prophecy of [Isaiah 61:1](#) had been fulfilled. "He has anointed me (enchrisen) to preach good news to the poor."

We experience difficulty in proposing a nice tidy doctrine of the Holy Spirit from the pages of Scripture. He truly remains the mysterious, unpredictable "ruach adonai." One thing is certain however. Luke who has much to say about the Holy Spirit, over and over emphasizes that it was the Holy Spirit who empowered Christ for His earthly ministry, and indeed it is the Holy Spirit who will empower His disciples to carry His work on. Luke makes it clear that mission did not originate in the early church in the minds of the Church leadership. It was not Peter, Paul, or any other mortal who said "What about our going outside the camp to work the works of Christ and do a bit of social services?"

The fact that the Holy Spirit was the author, the controller and the energizer of the Church's mission, is vital to our understanding of a theology of social services. The Comforter came not to make Christians comfortable, but to empower them to comfort the comfortless. To go forth in the power of the flesh, that is to do social services, without His empowering, is to be relegated to a host of 'do gooders' involved in the same dimension of life.

Francis Schaeffer wrote in his final book,

If we depend on the flesh rather than the work of the Spirit, it is easy to say we are showing holiness and yet it is only egotistical pride and hardness. Equally, in the flesh rather than the work of the Spirit, it is easy to say we are showing forth love and it is only egotistic compromise, latitudinarianism, and accommodation. Both are equally easy in the flesh. Both are equally egotistic. To show forth both simultaneously, in personal matters or in the church and public life, can only be done in any real degree by our consciously bowing, denying our egotistic selves, and letting Christ bring forth this fruit through us—not merely as a "religious" statement, but with some ongoing reality.^[11]

The Holy Spirit was linked with empowerment for ministry with the words of Christ "But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you: and you will be my witnesses..." The result, as we know was

dramatic to say the least. The impact on society could best be summed up by the King James rendering of the verse, "These that have turned the world upside down..." ([Acts 17:6](#), KJV).

We have then, the promise of Scripture that the "cut to the heart" experience will happen in the lives of those who see the holiness of God reflected in the lives of Spirit-filled Christians. The Holy Spirit is the "secret weapon" for invincible witness in the ministry of social services.

Conclusion

Eternal attentiveness is needed to keep an organization such as the Salvation Army at the human level from being controlled by the flesh.

A vision of the holiness of God and the resulting separation that it creates; the bridging of this awesome gap by the atoning work of Christ with the subsequent empowering work of His Spirit in the form of the Holy Spirit, will help us to avoid the tragic pitfall of human manipulation.^[12]

When the Godhead is exalted in such a way, vibrant, aggressive Christianity will be the prevailing atmosphere in our social services.

We have accepted the mandate to win the world to God. The Social Services of The Salvation Army have provided a God given opportunity to reflect His holiness. I conclude with the words of a French Hymn by Rene-Louis Piachaud:

D'un nouveau monde, Qui sur Dieu se fonde, Compagnons, Nous jetons, Les assises profondes. Vont couvrir le monde entier...

('Friends, we are laying deep the foundations of a new world built on God. See how our building-sites are going to spread the whole world over...')

Chapter 7 - Toward a Re-integration of the Salvationist Mission

- I. Theological Foundations
- II. Operational Paradigms For Today

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I. Theological Foundations

In this section we shall deal with theological norms for constructing an adequate theology of social service. The four headings of Biblical, Wesleyan, Salvationist, and contemporary theology are actually convenient rubrics for organizing interpretations based on the special historical emphases of certain movements and times. It is intended that *all* of the theological principles affirmed will be faithful to the Scriptures and defensible from its teaching.

Biblical Theology: The Covenant of Social Responsibility

The opening lines of the Old Testament set the inspired Book on a course from which it could not turn back. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth" ([Genesis 1:1](#)). Dualism was denied. God was creator of all. Nothing was to be held back from His Lordship.

Included in His Lordship were human social relationships. It is no accident that six of the Ten Commandments have to do with social relationships and that the Old Testament is replete with social imperatives about righting injustices, advocating the cause of the poor, the outcasts, and the disadvantaged, and offering concrete support to the sojourner, the widow, the fatherless, the brother in need. The Psalmist

cries out:

Give justice to the weak and the fatherless,
maintain the right of the afflicted
and the destitute.

Rescue the weak and the needy;
deliver them from the hand of the wicked.

(Psalm 82:3, 4, RSV)

The prophets intensified awareness of this Covenant of social responsibility, often contrasting it with self-centered religious piety. In his first series of oracles, Isaiah, acting as spokesman for God, rails at Judean piety:

Bring no more vain offerings;
incense is an abomination to me.

When you spread forth your hands,
I will hide my eyes from you;
Even though you make many prayers,
I will not listen;
your hands are full of blood.

Wash yourselves; make yourselves clean;
remove the evil of your doings
from before my eyes;

cease to do evil,
learn to do good;
seek justice,
correct oppression;
defend the fatherless,
plead for the widow.

(Isaiah 1:13a, 15-17, RSV)

Throughout the Old Testament there is a recognizable movement toward a more universal outlook in which the entire human community is seen as one family under God and the individual becomes complete only

as a responsible and caring participant in the larger community. R. Duane Thompson summarizes:

If there is a conscience in the Old Testament, it most frequently is turned toward sensing the injustices of a people; if there is a spiritual vitality, it is realized in group participation; and if there is freedom to be exercised, it is for the purpose of the establishment of a community of joy and equality, not for the purpose of exercising the individual's desires and prerogatives.

[1]

Sin had brought alienation not only from God but also from other persons, and the future to which God was calling His people included the healing of social wounds and the exaltation of social rejects:

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me,
because the Lord has anointed me
to bring good tidings to the afflicted;
He has sent me to bind up the
brokenhearted,
to proclaim liberty to the captives,
and the opening of the prison to those
who are bound...

([Isaiah 61:1](#),RSV)

The New Testament gives witness to Jesus as the one in whom this hope is realized. In fact Luke records that Jesus read this same passage from Isaiah in a Nazareth synagogue service and followed the reading with a brief but revolutionary comment: "*Today* this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing" ([Luke 4:2b](#), RSV). The Christian's point of departure in the matter of social responsibility, therefore, is that in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus, there is the restoration of the social Covenant and the empowerment to live by it. If in his death Jesus "has made us both one, and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility ..." ([Ephesians 2:14b](#)), then we have an unavoidable calling to reach out to the alienated and prove the whole truth of what the Gospel of reconciliation is able to do.

Indeed, according to Paul the purpose of God in Christ is "to reconcile

to himself *all* things, whether on earth or in heaven ..." ([Colossians 1:20b](#), RSV), and the Christian, the one who has in fact *personally* experienced this reconciliation through Christ's death on the cross, is now called to "the ministry of reconciliation" ([II Corinthians 5:16-20](#)). He is an ambassador for Christ on a peace mission. As such he calls the world to accept the new reality that has come in Christ: peace with God and recovery of the community of healing and love.

In Christ, then, the social Covenant is restored and the people of God are called to live by it. Even those who are the self-declared enemies of God and those who violate His law are now to be treated with the respect and love of family members, regardless of their denial of the reconciliation which has come in Christ. The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew, chs. 5-7) offers a social ethics which is radical not only in its demands but also in one of its basic assumptions—namely, that followers of Jesus are to live *as if* all persons were brothers and sisters.^[2] Jesus himself sets the pattern of this new order of social relationships by considering himself both friend ([John 15:15](#)) and servant ([Luke 22:27](#)). Although he is Lord, he loves with the intimacy of a brother and serves with the selflessness of a slave. The message to his disciples thereby becomes clear: those who would call him Lord must become servants of all.

Pleading with a Philippian Church which had suffered some internal division, Paul lifts up the model of Christ as the solution to selfish competitiveness:

Have this mind among yourselves,
which you have in Christ Jesus,
who... emptied himself, taking
the form of a servant...

([Philippians 2:5, 7a](#), RSV)

The new social Covenant is fulfilled by those who in love take the form of servants.

What do the Scriptures say about who is to be the primary focal point of this servant love? The answer is clear: the poor, the captives, the blind, the oppressed ([Luke 4:18](#)). Jesus once suggested that he was

incarnate especially in the persons of the poor and oppressed and that the ministry of his true followers therefore related to these persons in a decisive way. ([Matthew 25:31ff](#)).^[3] We are compelled to conclude that the mission of the Church is authentic only where the poor and oppressed are being ministered to. Ministry which by its very nature excludes the poor or is insensitive to their needs is no real ministry at all because it has lost the Gospel's focus.

The Gospel's focus on the poor and oppressed is not exclusive. Rather, it is the only way realistically to affirm the *inclusiveness* of salvation offered through Christ. The poor and oppressed can be defined as those who are excluded from most of the benefits of a society, even the religious benefits. It is the natural propensity of sinful man to assume that poverty and deprivation are either punishments for a weak will or arbitrary prescriptions in the order of things. Hence, any Gospel which is truly universal—or, as Salvationists would say, "for the whosoever"—must clearly identify the poor and oppressed as the first ones to be addressed and invited to enter the new Kingdom. The easiest ones to exclude must be the first ones included. Otherwise, the Gospel's whosoever is in jeopardy.

What conclusions do we now draw with regard to a theology of social service which is faithful to the Scriptures? At this point we have come to the following conclusions:

- 1) Social relationships are an important part of God's covenant with His people, and an unmistakable sign of man's sinfulness is his social irresponsibility and insensitivity.
- 2) The poor and oppressed are the special focus of the social covenant inasmuch as their position in society tends strongly to exclude them from its benefits and opportunities.
- 3) God's will for man's social relationships, expressed in the Old Testament law, is made possible through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus.
- 4) Christ calls his church to servanthood and empowers his people to carry out a mission which is truly universal because it pays special attention to those whom society has excluded.

We move from these to two specific conclusions regarding a theology of

social service:

- 5) The starting point of a theology of social service is the covenant of social responsibility which was commanded in the Old Testament, established through Jesus Christ, and realized in the calling of his disciples.
- 6) From this perspective it is impossible for social service to be perceived as charitable acts toward less fortunate people. Rather, it is to be understood as concrete steps toward realizing the new reality of social reconciliation which has come in Christ. Social service takes place within the new human family which Christ makes possible. There is no condescension in it. It is based upon the deepest respect for persons as potential members of the household of faith.

Wesleyan Theology: The Social Conscience of the Sanctified

It is often forgotten that the Wesleyan Revival in 18th century England sparked a great deal of interest and action in areas of serious social concern. John Wesley himself crusaded for better treatment of prisoners, the elimination of liquor traffic, and the eradication of slavery. He became involved in numerous humanitarian efforts. "The gospel of Christ," he once said, "knows no religion but social; no holiness but social holiness."^[4]

Social involvement was an inseparable component of Wesley's keystone doctrine of sanctification. He affirmed that necessary to sanctification were these good works:

First, all works of piety

Secondly, all works of mercy ...

feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, entertaining the stranger, visiting those that are in prison, or sick.... This is the repentance,

which are necessary to full sanctification.^[5]

It can be argued convincingly that many of Wesley's successors abandoned this emphasis on the social conscience as integral to the life of holiness for a more privatized, individualistic interpretation.

But this was not the case with the mid-nineteenth century revivalists in America, as described by Timothy L. Smith in his landmark book, *Revivalism and Social Reform*. The mid-century revival, according to Smith, was basically Wesleyan in its theology and strong in its emphasis upon the life of holiness and the necessity of social involvement as proof that the experience of God's sanctifying power was authentic. One of the results of the revival was that "ethical concerns replaced dogmatic zeal in evangelical preaching and writing."^[6] Smith notes that:

... liberalism on social issues... was the dominant note which evangelical preachers sounded before 1860. The most influential of them... defined carefully the relationship between personal salvation and community improvement and never tired of glowing descriptions of the social and economic millenium which they believed revival Christianity would bring into existence.^[7]

Hence, it was Wesleyan revivalism in mid-century America that carried by far the greater this-worldly emphasis. The liturgical and antirevival groups tended to be more other-worldly in outlook and socially conservative in practice.^[8] The revivalists, on the other hand, believed that society must be reconstructed through the power of the sanctifying Gospel.^[9]

If these American revivalists kept the Wesleyan social conscience alive in North America, the Salvationist movement in Britain rediscovered and reactivated it across the Atlantic. As we have already noted, Booth did not lead his Army into large-scale social projects as a result of conclusions reached through doctrinal studies. Nor did he initially intend any such involvement. But as he was later to testify,

The Bible and my own observation concurred in showing me that the highest service I could render to man was to rescue him from antagonism to the divine government. Alongside of this aspect of his condition, any temporal modification of his lot

appeared trivial—nay, almost contemptible.... But as time wore on, the earthly miseries connected with the condition of the people began to force themselves more particularly on my notice.^[10]

Booth the evangelist became Booth the social activist. An ardent Wesleyan committed to saving souls was led to rediscover the social implications of the sanctified life as taught by Wesley himself. Salvationist social service came into being as a faithful expression of the Wesleyan spirit.

Following on Smith's thesis, Norris Magnuson has researched and chronicled the development of social involvement on the part of evangelicals in the latter part of the nineteenth and the early part of the twentieth century.^[11] Again, the primary focus is on evangelical groups which emphasized Christian holiness, and The Salvation Army occupies the center of the stage. Booth's social crusade helped to keep alive the Wesleyan social conscience and served as a reminder that sanctified living without commitment to social service was a serious depletion—and probably a Scripturally unacceptable interpretation—of the experience.

This brings us to the seventh conclusion regarding a theology of social service:

7) Social service is not to be treated as distinct from the doctrine of sanctification—the one as concerned only with the community and the other as a matter of purely private spiritual experience. Rather, social service is to be subsumed under the rubric of sanctification and elucidated as the concrete expression of a sanctified social conscience. All Christians are called to social holiness.

Salvationist Theology: The Commitment to a Total Ministry

In addition to the distinctly Wesleyan perspective on social service, the Salvationists discovered yet another important Biblical insight which became a significant norm in guiding its social mission. This discovery came about gradually as they grappled with their evangelical mission to the poor and oppressed. It was the realization that God had created

human life in many dimensions and that redemption, in order to be complete, must touch upon all of them. Hence, God spoke to William Booth through the realities of the human condition to which he had been called. Man was not a soul captured in a worthless body surrounded by meaningless social forces. Man was an embodied soul profoundly related to other persons in a distinct social context. One could not minister to the soul and ignore either the health of the body or the effects and relationships of the social environment. To do so would be to ignore dimensions of life that God Himself had created.

It is worth noting that in moving step by step into social work operations, the Army was actually transcending the earlier, more narrow view of evangelist William Booth. It is well known that the Founder had been suspicious of his movement's involvement in social relief work, fearing that it would divert from the soul-saving mission and encourage insincerity, manipulation, and greater dependency on the part of recipients. But social relief efforts began to spring up spontaneously, and Booth, sometimes reluctantly, allowed them. Released prisoners *had* to be helped with a halfway house, rescued prostitutes *had* to have an environment which gave them a decent chance to begin a new life, laws which encouraged and even facilitated the exploitation of innocent human beings *had* to be challenged,... and so on—until in 1888 Booth himself had become so sensitized to temporal human suffering that *he* insisted—demanded—that something *had* to be done for those homeless people huddled under the bridges at night.

The transformation had taken place. Evangelical Salvationists had discovered the social dimension of the healing Gospel. After all, their Saviour had come preaching a Kingdom which centered around love for God and love for one's neighbor—never one or the other, but *both* ([Luke 10:25-28](#))—and his ministry had focused on social outcasts and countless people in need of physical, emotional, and spiritual healing. He had commanded his followers to love him by caring for the neighbor in need ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)), and one of his great Apostles was to instruct the flock to minister to the brother in need as palpable proof of their love for God ([1 John 3:15-18; 4:20, 21](#)).

Early on in the life of the Church in Jerusalem, a pressing social problem had emerged: the needs of the Hellenist widows. Because these

needs were not being met adequately, the entire work of the Church was suffering. The solution was the appointment of seven godly men to become deacons (= servers). This event is recorded in [Acts 6:1-6](#), the first known instance of Church social service. George Carpenter calls this chapter "our charter for social work as a distinct arm of The Salvation Army."^[12] It represented the Church's first formal recognition that it must address itself in ministry to the social as well as the spiritual dimensions of human life.

It was a long way from the diaconate of the Jerusalem Church to Booth's 1890 'Darkest England' Scheme, and then on further to the sheer volume and variety of Salvationist social services today. But the basic theological assumption is the same: God created man as a unity of soul, mind, body, and relationships; and any ministry based on the comprehensiveness of redemption in Christ must therefore be characterized by positive responsiveness to all these aspects of human life. Coutts remarks about the 'Darkest England' Scheme that "there was hardly a community need for which it did not seek to provide."^[13] In reviewing the most recent *Salvation Army Yearbook*, one is overwhelmed by the comprehensiveness of combined Army services throughout the world. An examination of a sampling of American corps community centers today would reveal a spiritual ministry coupled with any number and variety of community services addressing specific physical, emotional, and social needs. Salvationist service is a total ministry, each aspect of which contributes to the overall redemptive experience and process. William Booth was once asked if "The Salvation Army proper" had suffered from the competition of social operations. His reply was a classic statement of the unity of the Army's evangelical and social ministries:

I know what you mean; but in my estimation it is all The Salvation Army *proper*. We want to abolish these distinctions, and make it as religious to sell a guernsey or feed a hungry man as it is to take up a collection in the barracks. It is all part of our business, which is to save the world body and soul, for time and for eternity!^[14]

Thus have we come to the eighth conclusion for a theology of social

service:

- 8) Social service is properly understood, interpreted, and practised only as part of a total ministry based on the gospel of a thorough redemption—that is, a redemption of soul, mind, body, and relationships. As such, it neither stands alone as if it were its own justification, nor suffers the status of an unwanted but necessary stepchild, as if it lacked true spirituality. It is the gospel speaking through human concern and concrete help.

Contemporary Theology: The Search for Community and the Affirmation of a Future

Two central concerns of twentieth century theology have been the restoration of human fellowship and relationship in Christ (Koinonia), and the eschatological hope to which the risen Christ beckons. Both of these concerns are important in shaping a theology of social service. First, Christian social service is interested in helping to foster community life which intimates the Kingdom that has come in Christ. Second, it offers hope to clients only as an expression of the hope that was concretely offered by the resurrected Lord.

Community

Social philosopher Robert Nesbit asserts that "alienated man" is the key figure of twentieth century thought and that "the quest for community" is the most impressive fact in twentieth century Western society. He notes that profound dislocations in the primary associative areas of society have caused contemporary man to seek reintegration into new primary groups.^[15] If this be true, if modern man is heir to a fragmented, technocratic society in which his need for meaningful relationships and worthwhile group associations is not met, then the message of salvation must offer the real possibility of fellowship.

We have already seen that the restoration of the social Covenant in Christ opens the door to a new community in which "the dividing walls of hostility" have been broken down, and that those who have entered this community (Christians) are called to prove the power of this reconciliation by reaching out to those who are alienated. One of the

purposes of Christ's coming was the restoration of community, and one of the important functions of the Church in mission is to be a vehicle through which that restoration can be demonstrated and shared.

An important way of looking at the early Salvationist movement is to see it as a redemptive mission to alienated groups, offering not only personal salvation but also membership in a community of faith and practice. To people who felt worthless, the Salvationist community offered acceptance and affirmation. To those who were rootless, it offered identity and belonging. To those who were alienated, it offered a caring fellowship. To those who were wandering aimlessly, it offered a community with values and a clear sense of direction. To the unstable and weak, it offered group support, discipline, and edification. I dare say the world would hardly have heard of The Salvation Army today had this evangelical movement not crossed social and cultural barriers to offer real *community* to the poor and oppressed.

A truly Biblical theology of social service must take the restoration of fellowship through Christ seriously. It must insist on acceptance of the challenge to cross physical, emotional, social, and cultural barriers in order to include those who are cut off. It interprets social service not only as service to the needs of people in Christ's name, but also as community expansion. Hence, our ninth conclusion for a theology of social service is:

9) Social service is the offer not only of help but also of fellowship, so that even if the recipient is an unbeliever, he is served as if he were a brother and with utmost respect. The real challenge of social work, therefore, is not to master techniques but to open oneself to the enlargement of the service community to include and support those who differ socially and culturally. Social services are concrete steps to expand the community of faith by demonstrating that community's ability to reach beyond its own borders and offer a caring fellowship to the whosoever.

Hope

Theologies of hope have commanded considerable attention in recent years. In grappling with widespread despair over the future of civilization and the existence of numerous groups who seem to have no

livable future for themselves, the Church has rediscovered the prominence of hope in Biblical theology. The Old Testament prophets predicted a future when God would come to re-establish righteousness and restore His rule on earth. Jesus announced that the Kingdom of God was now present, but he also made clear that its consummation would be in the future.^[16] The book of Revelation resounds with the certainty that history will end with this consummation, the advent of "a new heaven and a new earth," the perfect fellowship of God and man, the completion of the work of Christ through history.^[17] The New Testament concludes with the tantalizing promise of its Lord, "Surely I am coming soon," and the responsive prayer of his Church, "Amen. Come, Lord Jesus!" ([Revelation 22:20](#), RSV)

The Church lives by hope. It knows that its Lord will come. In the midst of a world of slavery and futility, it affirms its hope that "... creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and obtain the glorious liberty of the children of God" ([Romans 8:21](#), RSV). Its mission in the world anticipates the realization of this hope. Indeed, it seizes the hope. ([Hebrews 6:18](#), RSV) It actively searches for intimations of the coming Kingdom and seizes upon these as the unfolding and enduring reality.

Because it lives by hope, the Church must *offer* hope, especially to those who are most despairing—the poor, the oppressed, the victimized, the handicapped, the sick. The New Testament Gospel was preached especially to them. They were told of the Christ who had come to set them free ([Luke 4:18](#)), the Christ who would come again to establish his righteous Kingdom (Revelation of John), the Christ in whom all things in heaven and earth would be united ([Eph. 1:10](#)). The image of the coming Christ became a powerful symbol of hope in the early Church, and thousands of despairing people allowed this Christ to transform not only their lives but also their futures.

This was no pie-in-the-sky theology. Some of the earliest Christians thought it was, and had to be reminded that the Christ who was to come was the Christ who came now, that readiness for the coming Kingdom implied that intimations of the Kingdom were now being sought, that the hope given in Christ was a hope which was already at work transforming the now, and that the Church was therefore given the task of searching

for, and working towards, the reconciled life and the reconciliation of life characteristic of the Kingdom.^[18] Any theology of hope which is truly Biblical is a theology which brings the Christian hope into the present as a transforming, joyful reality which allows the believer to experience God's future in anticipation.

One reason the Salvationist movement was the most successful of any Christian mission to the poor in the industrial slums of Victorian England was that it gave the working man a hope which centered not only on a heavenly, but also on an earthly Kingdom. The Kingdom hereafter was promised, but the Kingdom here also became a consuming passion for William Booth once he had launched his plans for social redemption. It is noteworthy that one of the criticisms which he drew over his Darkest England Scheme was that he was attempting to establish his own Kingdom of God on earth. There was some truth to this observation. He believed that it was possible to make a new life on earth available even to the most abject poor, but he knew that such a condition could come about only through a massive organization with the capability of providing extensive economic and social alternatives for them. This he sought to do; and whereas the plan was not implemented in all its details, William Booth never let up on his belief in the Gospel's power to transform both human life and social conditions.

Our tenth, and final, conclusion for a theology of social service, then, is:

- 10) Social service takes place in the Biblical context of a hopeful future and in the specific context of the affirmation of hope for the client's future. It is undertaken, therefore, not as "temporary help" but as a concrete offer of support for the client's decision to move toward God-given possibilities for his future.^[19]

II. Operational Paradigms For Today

Having developed the theological foundations of our social service, we now move on to the construction. Our concern is the reintegration of the total Salvationist mission for today. Since that mission can basically be described as twofold—evangelism and social service—and since this paper focuses on the latter, we will be dealing here with both the nature

of Salvationist social service as such and the relationship between our social service and our evangelism. Our intent is to develop some paradigms for social service which will help us better to integrate our total Salvationist mission in the contemporary world.

Two Arms, One Task: Evangelism and Social Service for the Redemption of Human Life

The first paradigm for social service is a person hard at work on an important task. Both of his arms are fully involved in getting the job done. The goal is the redemption of fallen man, and it will require that both arms work together in co-ordination. These two arms are evangelism and social service.

Acceptance of this paradigm means that there can be no true Christian evangelism without a social ministry, and no true Christian social service without evangelism. There must be a real marriage. A healthy marriage exists not to serve the purposes of only one of the partners but both. In the case of the marriage of evangelism and social service, the larger purpose is to proclaim the Kingdom of God in the world and to help people to enter it.^[20]

The Salvation Army affirms "the unity of our spiritual and social work." But what is meant? We see four possible interpretations.

First, the phrase has sometimes been used in the United States to affirm *the indivisibility of our use of funds, such that we have insisted on our freedom to utilize community, United Way, and other nonsectarian funds for our total program, including the religious.* We see this interpretation as indefensible from two perspectives. To begin with, it is not justifiable to take funds given for nonsectarian community service and use it to promote a particular sectarian cause, especially when people in the community may give directly to the Army with no strings attached or in order specifically to support our religious work. Second, using community money to support our religious work undermines any attempt to challenge our people to spiritual growth through the stewardship of giving—i.e., they see no need to support their corps financially when 'other money' can always be found to make up the deficit.

Second, the reference to unity can be interpreted to mean that the two

are tied together in the sense of one being the means and the other the end. *Social service is seen merely as an exercise in 'evangelical prudence'—i.e., a necessary program in order to be able to reach more deprived classes of people with the Gospel.* It is approached only as a means of evangelism. The result is a diminution of the reality of social, emotional, and physical needs, which are seen only as bothersome roadblocks to evangelism.

Behind this view lurks the Gnostic heresy. Gnosticism is based on the assumption that the body is really not important since it is part of the physical world which was not created by God but rather by an evil demigod. God is therefore not interested in matters physical, emotional, and social, only in freeing our souls from physical and social imprisonment. Man is not saved *in* this world, therefore; he is saved *out* of it.

In condemning the creation-denying theology of the Gnostics, the early church took a firm stand against dualism. Gnosticism, however, is still with us in more insidious forms, and it raises its dangerous head whenever we disparage the physical, emotional, and social dimensions of human experience—dimensions which are distinct aspects of God's creation. Our social ministry is an affirmation that God is Creator and Lord of all and is therefore interested in every aspect of human life. It is not a mere ruse for getting at the soul. It is a partner with evangelism in a marriage endeavor called the Church's mission in the world.

There is a third interpretation of the unity of our spiritual and social work. It is the view that they are equal but separate. Our social work is seen as *an expression of our devotion to Christ, an obedience to his commands focused on radical love, a practical demonstration of new relationships in the Kingdom ushered in by Christ.* In contrast to the previous interpretation, here we have *social work with no ulterior motive*, a pure expression of unselfish love and no more. It is a view, of course, with which our secular funding sources would be the most comfortable.

But it is a distinct departure from the operative theology of the early Salvationists. The movement began as an evangelistic force. The social work developed out of this evangelical impetus. To become involved in social service as an *independent* expression of concern for the physical,

economic, psychological, and social dimensions of people's lives is to undermine a good marriage out of which our movement grew.

Clearly this approach is attempting to eliminate the kind of insincere manipulation which can take place in social service—on the part of both client and social worker. For example, the client responds to religious persuasion and thereby manipulates the helper into providing economic assistance. Or, the helper manipulates the client into making a religious 'commitment' as a condition for economic assistance. Such tactics are pure hypocrisy.

Although opposite from 'prudent charity,' this view is also dualistic. It separates the realms of human experience and need so radically as to create an inevitable mutual disparagement. From the social service side, the helper wants the spiritual ministry kept separate so as to avoid taking unfair advantage of the client in his susceptible condition.

What is clearly needed here, in our opinion, is a renewed emphasis on the interdependence of all dimensions of human experience, and training in relating them to one another in the helping ministry. *All* crises and problems have a spiritual dimension which ought to be addressed by the person. To fail to recognize this fact and operate out of it is *not* to do Salvationist social work.^[21]

In our view, a fourth interpretation of the unity of our spiritual and our social work best elucidates the paradigm of the two arms working together toward the completion of the same task. According to this interpretation, *our social service is part of a total ministry which addresses a person in every dimension of his experience and need.* Hence, we do not do social work merely as such. We are never *only* interested in the social dimensions of a person's life—just as we are never *only* interested in the spiritual.

Our social workers, therefore, are those who are trained to be professionally helpful when the *presenting problem* is social, but they also have developed an awareness of the related implications of the social problem and are able to be helpful here as well, even though these areas are not within their professional expertise. Also, they have the perception to make good referrals when greater expertise is needed. (An example would be a referral to the corps officer for more in depth spiritual counseling.) They are able to make important connections in the

network of related needs because of their holistic approach to their ministry.^[22]

This interpretation of our social work as partner with our spiritual has perhaps been best summarized in General Coutt's now familiar quotation:

If we ourselves, for want of a better way of speaking, refer to our evangelical work and also to our social work, it is not that these are two distinct entities which could operate one without the other. They are but two activities of the one and the same salvation which is concerned with the total redemption of man. Both rely upon the same divine grace. Both are inspired with the same motive. Both have the same end in mind. And as the gospel has joined them together we do not propose to put them asunder.^[23]

It has also been well expressed in a letter from Captain David Major, Regional Commander in Fiji, to John W. Wiggins, Director of SAWSO in Washington, D.C., January 10, 1983 in which this missionary officer states that there is "no conflict whatsoever between evangelization and development" in the Army's various projects for economic and social rehabilitation in Fiji. In training unemployed youths to become productive fishermen, ex-offenders to develop a trade, and rural young people to stabilize their lives rather than drift aimlessly in the urban areas, the Army has found that a number also respond to the Gospel and are attracted to the Christian way of life.^[24] The two arms can, and should, work together.

Social Service and the Redemptive Community: The Overflow of Christian Caring

The second paradigm for social service is a fountain running over. The fountain itself is the flow of ministry within the Church fellowship, represented by the pool. It is Christians ministering to one another in love through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. But the water from the fountain is more than the basin was ever intended to hold. In fact, the basin was never supposed to absorb all the water, not even the

major part of it; it was intended to overflow. The overflow is the mission of the Church in the world, including its social service.

There are two very important implications of this paradigm. The first is that *social service is of a piece with all caring ministries within the fellowship of believers*. As Christians minister to one another they are preparing one another to minister in the world. In social service the community of faith opens its communal love to the whosoever, and by doing so, invites persons to become part of the new community in Christ. Consequently any form of condescension on the part of the helper is entirely out of place. The water that overflows is the same as the water that is in the basin. Social service is a spillover of the mutual caring ministry within the Christian fellowship. If social service derives from any other source, it is not Christian social service. Conversely, if the water in the basin does not overflow, there *can* be no Christian social service.

This brings us to the second implication of the paradigm: *social service is a ministry of the fellowship*. It is not a segmented sphere of Christian service activity which functions independently from the local congregation. On the contrary, it is, and must only be, a part of the missional outreach of the congregation. In saying this we are not diminishing the status of social work as a special ministry in its own right. Nor are we in any way suggesting that social service exists primarily to serve congregational ends.^[25] Rather, we are saying that to the extent that Christian social service becomes isolated in practice from the local congregation's participation, a divorce takes place which undermines the character of the service as truly Christian. By pulling it away from the place of nurture, edification, support, recruitment, theological reflection, worship—namely, the fellowship of believers—the source of water supply is removed and the Christian social worker is faced with the ultimately impossible task of attempting to do Christian social work in isolation. We submit that social work, like any other ministry of the Church, must be an expression of the life of Christ's Church, an overflow of our Lord's empowering love experienced in the fellowship of his followers.^[26]

What has happened over recent years is cause for some concern. In our attempt to professionalize our services—and who can question the

desirability of doing so?—we have too often placed those services in the hands of workers who have no identification with our basic mission or who have no stake in our fellowship. A non-Christian social worker may do very effective social work, but it is not a genuine expression of the Army's Gospel-motivated mission. A non-Salvationist Christian social worker can do social work from a Christian perspective and minister to the soul as well as the body, but he will usually not work intimately with the corps, not be able effectively to utilize the resources and strengths of the soldiery in his helping, and probably not relate his ministry well to other ministries and programs within the corps.^[27]

We hold that the solution to this divergence between much of our social service and the corps itself is a return to the paradigm of the overflowing fountain: let our social services be an expression of the commitment and concern of our soldiery, and let the soldiery be intimately involved in our social services. Begin to bring our outreach services under the umbrella of the corps, and bring the corps out from under their protective umbrella and into the downpour of human need. Adopt the model of the *corps community center* as the comprehensive expression of Army life and mission in a community. To do so would be to implement the Founder's vision for his corps around the world:

A citadel is not only a house of prayer, but a centre of every humanizing and spiritualizing influence and activity.^[28]

Social Service as Sacrament: A Celebration of the Gospel

The third paradigm for social service is a man kneeling by the roadside to help an injured man. He is not kneeling to help because he is the only person available; other persons have already passed by. Nor is he doing it because he is the most qualified to do what needs to be done; there are others equally qualified, and some more so. What he is doing is performing a sacrament. He is celebrating the grace of God in Christ Jesus. He is exercising the Gospel's power to free man from himself by enabling him to be for others. He is doing that which flies in the face of every sinful impulse: he is obeying God and loving his neighbor. He is performing what William Booth used to call "the sacrament of the Good

Samaritan."

This paradigm has some very positive implications for our social ministry. First, *it gets right at what Christ came to do for us*. As we have seen, in Christ the social Covenant has been restored and the dividing walls of hostility broken down. Because relationship with God has now been made available through Christ, relationships of care and trust with other human beings are exciting possibilities. Our social ministry is one of the best opportunities we have to experience and prove Christ's power to build bridges and form caring relationships.

Second, the paradigm, in describing social service as a sacrament, *portrays this ministry as something God graciously does in the helping relationship*. At its heart, Christian social work is not helping deeds that the Christian carries out on behalf of others. Rather, it is primarily a recognition of God's healing presence with the person in need and His call to us to join Him at this place of need, followed by our allowing Him to work through us to bring healing and hope. This perspective helps to free us from our concern over what *we* do or don't do in social work, and enables us to go on with the business of making ourselves available to persons in need with whom God is already at work.

Third, the paradigm *emphasizes the missional calling of the Church and places social service in the context of that calling*. The Salvation Army has a missional understanding of the Church. It believes that the Church does not exist for its own sake but for the sake of its mission in the world. The Salvationist is called to go out into the world and preach the Gospel in word and deed. When William Booth told son Bramwell to "Go and do something!" he was summarizing a missional maxim of his Army. Salvationists are doers. They have an inveterate inclination to do something immediate about problems and needs. Most of them do not have the interest or the time to learn about social, economic, and political theory and to participate in long-range crusades for change in the social structure. They see their role as that of change agents in people's lives and are usually content to leave the change of basic structures of society and government to others.^[29] They come to establish a beachhead of hope for the present based on their confidence in God's providence for eternity.

Salvationist social services are a vital part of this missional thrust.

They are an expression of the missionary nature of the movement, a fertile opportunity to become involved in the terrain of human need, and a challenge to prove the power of the Gospel to change lives. In many, probably most, countries, they are the salient feature of our organization. Therein we have the responsibility through this ministry to demonstrate what Christ calls all of us to become and to do. The Sacrament of the Good Samaritan is probably our most powerful witness to the world.

Fourth, and lastly, the paradigm *places emphasis upon the often neglected social dimension of holiness by providing an evocative image of Christian neighborliness*. The lawyer wanted to know who this neighbor was that Jesus wanted him to care for, and Jesus told the story of the man stopping to help a wounded traveler on the roadside. "Go and do likewise," he commanded the lawyer. (Luke 10:25-37) Our social work, at best, is obedience to this command to love as neighbor *anyone* whose need cries to be met, especially those we discover outside our comfortable bailiwick who cannot reciprocate our kindness—wounded, powerless people disposed of alongside the roads.

Carpenter equates holiness with being "a true neighbor" and pleads for an interpretation of the doctrine which will place greater emphasis upon the social dimension.^[30] This view is certainly in keeping with Scriptural teaching on the God-ordained and Christ-restored social Covenant, the Wesleyan doctrine of sanctification with its emphasis upon social holiness, the Salvationist commitment to the social aspects of the Church's mission, and the contemporary hunger for relationships. In Christ, neighbor-hood is restored; the sin which made us enemies has been defeated, and we find ourselves to be neighbors in God's neighborhood. Sanctification is the gracious act of God by which we are enabled to do His bidding by living fittingly in His new neighborhood—in short, by being good neighbors to the whosoever. Christian social work is perhaps best understood in the context of this new neighborhood setting. As a paradigm of social service, the image of the man helping the stranger in need is perceived aright only when the underlying reality is grasped—the reality that a ditch alongside a dangerous road in a foreign country is neighborhood and a strange, battered man who appears to be very much unlike us is neighbor. Once that reality is grasped, the story is in place and the ministry of the reconciling Christ is revealed in human

life. Christian social service is a very potent opportunity to minister within this reality.

Perhaps the greatest threat to evangelical social service is the loss of neighborliness. The social worker who cannot be a neighbor before he is a professional will never be really helpful. The social worker who cannot be a friend before he is a counselor will leave his client cold. The social worker who cannot be compassionate before he is competent will fail to build a bridge of trust. The social worker who stays in his own house—in his office behind a desk—and never ventures out into the larger and more uncertain environment of the neighborhood of need will never find a stranger in the ditch and never really perform the Sacrament of the Good Samaritan.

Salvation Army social services have come through years of development and specialization. Institutionalization has set in; standards of conformity have been developed; and bureaucracies have tended to stifle creativity. Increasingly, we have come to control the turf and the terms of delivery of services. Clients come to us, fill out forms, and we tell them if they qualify. Communication takes place in an office which has a business-like atmosphere. Relationship with the client tends to be limited to office time.

We are not questioning the necessity of many of these standardized procedures. What we are doing is pleading for the Sacrament, the Sacrament which has been our Army's special way of presenting Christ's redemptive sacrifice to the world. We are pleading for the re-integration of our diverse ministries into the one sacramental act which is unashamedly both spiritual and social. We are pleading for a social service ministry which, while initiated in many instances only as short-term assistance, reaches deeper, and if the client is open affords the social worker the opportunity to become a neighbor and advocate, and often a minister. We are pleading for a social ministry which is as comprehensive as the Gospel is and as concentrated as caring relationships must be. We are pleading for a social ministry which exemplifies and realizes what Christ came into the world to do: free us from every enslavement to sin and restore us to the community of love which the enemies of God have always conspired to break up. We are pleading, quite simply, for the Gospel, and for a social ministry which is

a convincing celebration of its reality.

Concluding Note

This attempt at developing a Salvationist theology of social service has concentrated on the context of Christian social ministry, the evangelical basis of social work, the integration of spiritual and social ministries, and the relationship of social outreach to the community of faith. What have been omitted—due to lack of time and space—are the dynamics of the client-helper relationship itself. There are important questions about that relationship which ought to be addressed theologically. What *is* help? When is the worker being helpful? When is the client being helped? How does the Gospel enter into the relationship and how does the relationship enter into the Gospel? How does our theology help us to see what our role is in support and advocacy and how far we should go with the client? How do we honor and protect his freedom of choice and still give witness to the Gospel as the power of God unto Salvation? And so on.

These issues must be included in any truly comprehensive theology of social service, and we are confident they will be.

Chapter 8 - Some Basics of a Theology of Social Holiness

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As speech comes before grammar, so Christian living comes before theology. Social holiness lived is the reality of which a theology is the study. Many people are living social holiness without realising it. History and biography have recorded lives of social holiness over the ages and there is "a vast throng, which no one could count, from every nation, of all tribes, peoples and languages, stand in front of the throne and before the Lamb" ([Revelation 7:9](#), NEB) whose lives of social holiness have never been recorded on earth. These people had no theology of social holiness, so why do we need one?

A sound theology never comes amiss but in our day, it is very important. Today, throughout the world there is a campaign of error directed by secular humanist activists. If we are to hold our ground for the truth and win battles we must know how to use "the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God." This is where theology is so important, teaching what God has revealed in the scriptures.

Before theological foundations can be laid, the site must be cleared of error, misconception, compromise, shards of half-baked theology. Then we have to establish our position regarding the supernatural.

There are two ways to knowledge; one is the way of science; the other is the way of divine revelation. Human experience is two dimensional—material and spiritual. Together, the material and spiritual encompass the perceived, potential experience of man.

Man is insatiably curious about himself and his universe. He can see, hear, feel, smell and taste his world. He hungers for experience; he experiments, asks questions and seeks satisfactory answers. He has found an effective method in the pursuit and practical application of knowledge. The scientific method continues to yield ever increasing

knowledge and power within the material dimension.

But, the scientific method cannot operate within the spiritual dimension; so inadequate is it that many scholars and philosophers deny the spiritual absolutely. The spiritual is invisible; cannot be heard, touched, tasted, smelled or recorded on a machine. By his own efforts man cannot bridge the chasm which separates him from his Maker.

How then can the spiritual Reality be known? Because He loves His lost children and yearns to bless them, God took the initiative. In His redemptive response to the fall God revealed Himself unmistakably to chosen people; Abel and Cain, Enoch, Noah, Abram, Moses and many others of their clan and the Hebrew nation. Part of the historic vocation of the Hebrews was to receive, record, protect and teach God's revelations to them. What they recorded is generally known as the Old Testament of the Bible.

Although man is fallen from God, he retains spiritual faculties. These may be and often are dormant, but divine revelation quickens them. It is to these awakened faculties that revelation is made. Despite magnificent achievements, scientific man is limited in his perceptions of reality, within time and space. Not so those who have access by revelation to the spiritual dimension. Scientific man stumbles to a halt in the dark; revelation says simply, "In the beginning God created the universe" ([Genesis 1:1](#), GNB).

By revelation we now meet with Faith, a servant of God to open the door from the material to the spiritual—from the visible to the invisible. Moses "was resolute, as one who saw the invisible God" ([Hebrews 11:27](#), NEB). And Jacob, an earthy character seemingly without a decent instinct, meets Faith as he flees the murderous resentment of his brother Esau. Jacob's dream of a stairway to heaven awakened his dormant spiritual faculties. When he awoke "he was afraid, and said, 'How dreadful is this place! This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven,'" ([Genesis 28:17](#), AV). God through faith, transformed Jacob, deceitful, and ruthless, to become Israel, a "prince" with God.

Because of faith, and the experience which comes through its exercise, the spiritual faculty accepts divine revelation as trustworthy

and proceeds to act upon it. Those who "live by faith" move freely in a large place where the material and spiritual, merge in a continuum greater even than Einstein saw. Jesus said, "Lay not up for yourselves treasures on earth... but lay up... treasure in heaven" ([Matthew 6:19-21](#)). "On Earth" and "In Heaven" are equally real to Jesus—and to believers. John writes, "Everything the world affords, all that panders to the appetites or entices the eyes, all the glamour of its life, springs not from the Father but from the godless world. And that world is passing away with all its allurements, but he who does God's will, will stand for evermore" ([1 John 2:16-17](#), NEB).

Faith opens a magnificent future; without faith...? A recent TV interview with a popular, go-getter, "I'm still young enough to enjoy many more adventures before I reach the ultimate blackness."

Scientific man speculates on the origin and the future of the universe. This is all he can do; there is no vantage point in the material dimension from which he can see into this mystery. Revelation in God's Word is clear, simple and much more credible than the 'big bang' and 'steady state' theories.

By thee Lord, were earth's foundations laid of old,
and the heavens are the work of thy hands,
They shall pass away, but thou endurest;
like old clothes they shall all grow old;
Thou shalt fold them up like a cloak;
yes, they shall be changed like any garment.
But thou art the same, and thy years shall
have no end ([Hebrews 1:10-12](#), NEB).

Our God does not create a blind, meaningless universe—exploding, expanding, contracting, collapsing. He is a God of purpose and what He creates, He rules.

Thy throne O God, is for ever and ever, and the sceptre of...
justice is the sceptre of His kingdom, Thou has loved right and
hated wrong ([Hebrews 1:8](#)).

A theology of social holiness is revealed from the eternal realities of

the spiritual dimension; its foundation deed, the two great commandments;

The Lord and the Lord alone is our God. Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your strength. Never forget these commands that I am giving you today. Teach them to your children. Repeat them when you are at home and when you are away, when you are resting and when you are working... write them on the doorposts and your gates ([Deuteronomy 6:4-9](#), GNB).

The second great commandment is like it in every way. Proceeding from the spiritual and worked out in the material dimension: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ([Leviticus 19:18](#)).

Now we go forward on firm ground, guided, directed, empowered by God, clear as to our relationship with other people, our neighbours. Here then are some of the basics as we prepare for a theology of social holiness.

1. We find no discrepancy between the results of replicable research and the Word of God for both are true. God is both the author of science and is the only source of truth. As it may be useful to our theology, we will have no hesitation in making use of scientific knowledge. We do not quarrel with the established findings of science but we judge secular humanist conclusions as to the nature of man, his origin and destiny, by the Word of God.

2. Jesus said, "You will bear witness for me." Theology of social holiness will be obedient to the divine commission. It will not argue the merits or demerits of a theory of evolution. It will bear witness to the divine revelation;

Then God said, 'And now we will make human beings; they will be like us and resemble us...' ([Genesis 1:26](#), GNB). So God created the human beings making them to be like Himself. He created them male and female, blessed them and said, 'Have many children so that your descendants will live all over the earth and bring it under their control' ([vv 27-28](#)).

What is man? He is God's creation. He is like God. He is subject to

God his Creator. He is directed by Him and responsible to Him. He is given a role, to build a social order and rule over it. God gave man a free spirit, with a will of his own. God gave him wide freedoms, "You may eat the fruit of any tree in the garden." But God said No as well as Yes; He restricted man's freedom in one particular and warned him of the consequences of non-compliance.

3. The theology will not debate secular humanist doctrine that man is improvable through evolution, education and supportive environment. It will witness to the revelation in the scriptures that man did not comply with God's directive; his Godlike nature was corrupted (fallen) through rebellion; our first parents became sinners and every member of their race is "born in sin and shapen in iniquity" ([Psalm 51](#)). "It was through one man that sin entered the world, and through sin death, and thus death pervaded the whole human race, inasmuch as all men have sinned" ([Romans 5:12](#), NEB).

4. The theology will witness to the scriptural revelation that the only way fallen man can be improved is by a change in nature through a new birth. Jesus taught, "I am telling you the truth: no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again... a person is born physically of human parents, but he is born spiritually of the Spirit" ([John 3:3-8](#), GNB).

The theology will trace evidences of the fall of man in the scriptures. It will look historically for signs of man's improvement, from the flood to the threat of nuclear war,—and find none!

5. The theology will not argue the secular humanist view that the Bible is a collection of myths to be equated with the sagas of other ancient peoples. The writing will be seen as the vehicle for divine revelation. "No prophetic message ever came just from the will of man, but men were under the control of the Holy Spirit as they spoke the message that came from God" ([2 Peter 1:21](#), GNB).

The scriptures will be seen as a record of God's redemptive response to the fall and man's response to God's revelation, God's law and God's love.

The law of God as revealed in the scriptures will be seen as God's way of letting fallen man know how he stands in relation to God. It will

draw attention to the underlying principle of God's love for man and man's love for God and neighbour. It will witness that the law is good and attainable through the new birth and the baptism of the Spirit. "I will take away your stubborn heart... and give you an obedient heart. I will put my Spirit in you and see to it that you follow my laws and keep all the commands I have given you" ([Ezekiel 36:25-30](#), GNB).

The theology will witness that the kind of life God has planned for His people is robust and does not need a favourable environment in which to operate. To the believers in the heathen city of Philippi, "Do everything without complaining and arguing, so that you may be innocent and pure as God's perfect children, who live in a world of corrupt and sinful people. You must shine among them like stars lighting up the sky as you offer them the message of life" ([Philippians 2:14-16](#), GNB).

6. A theology of social holiness will not try to make the Bible intellectually acceptable to contemporary secular man; to rationalise the supernatural; demythologise the records which an educated modern finds "incredible."

It will witness to the revelation of the scripture. For example—Jesus believed in Satan. He was tempted by Satan; He warned Peter—"Satan has desired to have you that he may sift you like wheat" ([Luke 22:31-32](#)).

The theology will witness that a life of faith will include the most ordinary, seemingly non-religious everyday living as well as the miraculous happenings as God reveals Himself in our day. It was in this way that Jesus lived at the time of His incarnation. His people will be like Him in our day.

Most of us have been influenced to a greater or lesser degree by the secular humanism of our education and of society in general. We are daily bombarded and saturated by a worldly philosophy which rejects God's revelation to His fallen world. It is time for all our sakes and for the world, to prepare a theology of social holiness, free from the taint of secular humanist attitudes, faithful to God's revelation in the scriptures, simple so that it can be grasped by all, uncompromising in authority and clear;

If the trumpet call is not clear, who will prepare for battle ([1 Corinthians 14:8](#), NEB).

Chapter 9 - Deacons and Samaritans: Christian Reflections on Professional Social Work

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Theology and social work. Two professions: one ancient, the other so new many say it's still emerging. Two professions in a world where everything and everyone is becoming professionalized. Have they anything to contribute to each other; or are they destined for ever-increasing apartness?

I

There is ample evidence that social work has sought separateness. It has been loosening its ties to religion over the few decades it has existed as *a profession*. Historians admit that most modern forms of social work have "essentially religious origins: in a church program, a religiously-inspired social movement, or in the individual acts of Christian and Jewish clergymen and laymen following the dictates of their consciences."^[1] Nonetheless, mention of this heritage or of the possible theological foundations of the profession is nowadays minimal.

That God and other things religious are seldom mentioned in social work theory as it is currently taught in the colleges and universities of North America is fairly easy to demonstrate. One need only inspect the Tables of Contents and Indexes of the textbooks and journals. I cannot claim to have done an exhaustive search, but what I discovered (or perhaps 'failed to discover' puts it better) is representative, I think.

Arthur E. Fink's text, *The Field of Social Work*, now in its 7th edition,

aims to give the college undergraduate a basic "understanding of the social services and the skills of social workers."^[2] There are chapters on social services for the elderly, for children in school, for criminals in jail and for patients in hospitals. But there is no treatment of social work in what the profession calls "sectarian" settings. In each case, it is assumed that the setting is not church-related and that the service is publicly-funded.

The text also has worthwhile chapters on the major *methods* of social work—social casework, social group work and community organization work. The authors of these chapters discuss not only the surface methodologies but also some of the metaphysical and ethical presuppositions of the methods. For that I am grateful. Let me say here, however, that none of the presuppositions are identified as distinctively Christian, not even when the chance presents itself clearly, as, for example, when Morris Cohen describes the community organizing work of Martin Luther King, Jr. Cohen admits that "Dr. King's leadership, his philosophy, and his advocacy of non-violent mass resistance greatly influenced community - change tactics and strategies used in the civil rights struggle."^[3] But there is no mention of the Christian beliefs that constituted Dr. King's "philosophy." Is it possible, one wonders, to have a true understanding of King (indeed of the whole civil rights movement amongst American blacks) without bringing Christianity into the explanation?

The third section of Fink's text locates the bases of social work in human need, human compassion, and the belief that charity can and should be made "scientific" (to use the phrase of Thomas Chalmers, an 18th century Scottish reformer). The activities of the church and the explicitly theological motivations of social workers are mentioned as significant *historical* bases for the modern profession; but that is all.

Among social work journals there are two in which one would find theological themes prominent. They are *Social Thought*, published by the National Conference of Catholic Charities, and *Paraclete*, published since 1974 by the National Association of Christians in Social Work.

The story is quite different, however, with the principal journal of the National Association of Social Workers. In its almost thirty years of

publication, *Social Work* has had one article on Roman Catholic social services (Kenneth Westhues, "The Roman Catholic Church and the Field of Social Work," *SW*, 16, 3 (July 1971), one on the role religion plays in juvenile delinquency (Don Hager, "Religion, Delinquency and Society," *SW*, 2, 3 (July 1957), one on problems faced by church-sponsored social service agencies in a society that preaches the separation of church and state (Bernard Coughlin, "A Growing Issue in Church and State," *SW*, 10, 4 (October 1965), one entitled "The Church and Neighborhood Community Organization" (Thomas Sherrard and Richard Murray, *SW*, 10, 3 (July 1965), one on future-shock problems shared by clergy and social workers (Herbert Stroup, "The Common Predicament of Religion and Social Work," *SW*, 7, 2 (April 1962), one on the moral and religious beliefs of social work students (Dorothy Hayes and Barbara Varley, "The Impact of Social Work Education on Students' Values," *SW*, 10, 3 (July 1965), and only one on the theological foundations of social work theory (Sue Spencer, "Religion and Social Work," *SW*, 1, 3 (July 1956). So far as I could tell these are the only articles in *Social Work* in which religion plays a major role in the argument. When one remembers that the journal has published several hundred articles since its inception in 1956, these few seem very few indeed.

Equally telling is a look at the *Encyclopedia of Social Work* (also published by the NASW), whose editors present it as an attempt at an "exhaustive work" in the field of social work.^[4] One finds in the *Encyclopedia* no articles on God, theology, Christianity, or religion and social work. In the latest two editions, the extensive and diverse operations of the Catholic charities, the Jewish social services and The Salvation Army are covered in one short article entitled "Sectarian Agencies." While there are some interesting observations to be made about the 112 biographies in the 1977 edition of the *Encyclopedia*— for instance, that 40 are of women—there is no biography of any of The Salvation Army pioneers in social work, not even of William Booth or his daughter Evangeline, who did so much to expand social work in the United States. But not to give the impression that The Salvation Army is unduly slighted. There is no biography of Wesley or Finney or Chalmers or Loyola or Benedict; nor of any of the Church Fathers, Paul or Jesus

himself. This although one could argue each satisfies the *Encyclopedia's* criteria for biographical mention, namely, "that the individual is accepted by the field as having influenced social work development or is considered to be an innovator and/or has markedly, as a personality, influenced social work and/or the progress of contemporary welfare organization."^[5]

Let this suffice. Queer as it may be from a historical point of view, the conclusion is inescapable: God is not an evident part of the present day social work theorist's ontology.

II

We ought to be careful not to infer too much from this observation. It is doubtless true that there are many secular humanists in the ranks. And many marxists and Jews and old-fashioned liberals too. But none of this necessarily implies that social work theory is *unchristian*.

I think Christian theologians would do well to see the situation in modern social work as possibly analogous to that in modern theoretical physics. No one supposes that the fact that textbooks and journals in physics don't mention God shows that physics is unchristian.

According to Sue Spencer, "it seems clear that there is nothing in our basic professional literature which is anti-religious, but rather that our basic professional philosophy coincides with the principal teachings of the Judeo-Christian faiths.... If social work omits specific reference to man's relationship to God, this does not constitute a denial of the individual's right to affirm this nor does it deny the value in human well being of such affirmation."^[6] William Reid says much the same thing in the *Encyclopedia of Social Work*: "whether practice is based on religious conviction or on scientific humanism, social work's fundamental commitment... is rooted in Judeo-Christian precepts."^[7]

And what precepts are those? "Social work ethics are deeply rooted in Judeo-Christian principles," agrees Alan Keith-Lucas, "especially those that emphasize justice, equality, and concern for others. Even the concept that man must be served according to his needs and not his deserts... was originally a religious principle and was particularly

stressed by St. John Chrysostom in the fourth century."^[8] Justice, equality, concern for others—what Christian can take issue with these? Or with dignity, integrity and freedom—words which show up in Leonard May's eloquent presidential address to the National Conference of Social Work in 1948:

Prominent in any expression of our philosophy and purpose must be a simple declaration of our articles of faith set forth in language of unmistakable clarity: our concern for people; our respect for the dignity, integrity and rights of individuals; our abhorrence of injustice as one of the greatest foes of freedom; our responsibility to speak and act with respect to the causes as well as the results of social mal-adjustment; and our major concern, not only for prevention, restoration and rehabilitation, but for helping create relationships, homes, neighborhoods and nations in which human beings may live out their lives and develop their full potentialities as free people.^[9]

The most recent NASW "Statement of the Purpose of Social Work," published in 1981, is surely similarly unobjectionable from a Christian perspective. According to this Statement, "the purpose of social work is to promote and restore a mutually beneficial interaction between individuals and societies in order to improve the quality of life for everyone."^[10]

I honestly think the theologian's first reaction to these declarations should be to rejoice and give thanks to God that, devoid of explicit Christianity though it may be, social work theory (as it presently exists in our part of the world) is admirably congruent with our theology. This, in my opinion, is no small point. It makes possible a dialogue that would be hopeless otherwise.

The theologian's second reaction ought to be to want to aid in the perpetuation of these values. It is an unfortunate fact but words such as dignity, freedom, justice and so on can, like the words of a patriotic song, continue to evoke emotional responses long after their substantive meaning has vanished. The theologian could help social work escape this danger, by offering ethics courses (for which theologians are

professionally trained) and encouraging their inclusion in all social work programs. Since the values social work declares have meaning only in the context of very *general* ideas of what man is and what the function of human society is, theologians should be committed to presenting their "big picture" in terms that each new generation can understand—and presenting that picture to all who will look, not only to fellow theologues. And since these values have meaning only as they are applied to the particularities of empirical experience, theologians should be committed to a casuistry modern social workers will find relevant.

Third, I hope Christians who are social scientists will feel an obligation to help the profession of social work appreciate the contribution Christians have made and are making within the field. Historians are needed to work up suitable biographies for the next edition of the *Encyclopedia*, for example. And Christian sociologists are needed to study, document and, where possible, recommend improvements in the social services being given by agencies such as The Salvation Army.

III

Such are some of the ways theologians and other Christian professionals can buttress and supplement what is already good in social work. But let me confess that I think this will not be enough. Not everything is good without qualification. Theology must also, therefore, be ready to serve social work by critiquing it.

Since the early part of the twentieth century the field of social work has consciously and intentionally (some might say, obsessively) sought *professional* status for itself.^[11] What I want to show is that, from a Christian perspective, this is an ambivalent goal to seek.

To see my point we must begin with a question of definition: What is it for something to be a profession? Although the answer to this question is, as a matter of fact, the subject of significant debate, I will assume, with Talcott Parsons, that "the core criteria... seem to be relatively clear;"^[12] and proceed to identify that core.

First, professions are service occupations. They are "occupations" in the sense that they are jobs at which people work full-time for a living, in contrast to hobbies or pastimes. But, more than that, professionals *serve*. Money-making is not (supposed to be) the professional's chief end. His goal and fundamental motivation is rather to satisfy the important needs of others.

Second, professions are learned occupations. The professional is someone with practical skills of a complex sort, which have been acquired through training under others who are already masters. He is no mere technician, however; for, in addition to his practical training, the professional will have been schooled in the science (the abstract empirical laws and philosophical underpinnings) of his field.^[13] A more *general* education in the breadth of human learning is yet another traditional criterion of professionalization.^[14] All of this education is "formal" in the sense that it is "accompanied by some institutionalized mode of validating both the adequacy of the training and the competence of trained individuals."^[15]

Third, professions are prestige occupations. Professionals make relatively good money. But equally important are the non-material honors that are theirs: titles, distinguishing forms of dress, special social privileges and special duties. The non-professional elements of society are expected to "look up to" professionals; and, by and large, they do.

Fourth, professions are relatively autonomous. This is meant in two senses. 1) Individuals who have this status are expected to be mature people, self-directed and self-disciplined. "Constraints and limitations surround every form of work, to be sure. Still, the professional is free to set his hours and fees, to choose his clients and to make his own judgments about their needs, all in a manner and to an extent unparalleled by most other forms of work."^[16] 2) The profession as an association of individuals is autonomous. In the words of Eliot Friedson, a profession is "an occupation which has assumed a dominant position in the division of labor, so that it gains control over the determination of the substance of its own work."^[17] Medicine, for example, unlike janitorial services, is a field defined and controlled by those within it. Society at large lets Medicine determine the content of medical

education; gives Medicine the exclusive power to grant and revoke licenses; allows doctors to frame their own codes of ethics; and expects doctors to have major, if not (as in socialist societies) absolute, control over their fees and other employment conditions. Society accepts what Medicine says counts as disease and as acceptable therapy, since medical professionals alone are presumably the ones who know such things.

The development of social work as a profession has come with the acquisition of analogous autonomy. Social work associations now determine the schooling requirements of new members; they alone grant the credentials; they establish their own standards of practice and codes of ethics; and, to a growing degree they are gaining the monopolistic right to say who is in need of aid and what sort of aid is prescribed.

The rationale for the existence of professions lies in the need for a division of labor. No one is self-sufficient. Left without social organization the life of the individual would be "solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short." What is needed is that the group divide up the jobs to be done according to the needs to be satisfied and according to the various talents of those in the group, building in mechanisms to ensure the continuing smooth and efficient delivery of quality goods and services.

So far as I can tell, Biblical revelation does not contradict this reasoning. The societies of the Old Testament show little professionalization in the modern sense, it is true; we must also grant, however, that they did have their priests and lawyers and rulers, and these certainly approximated modern professionals. As for the New Testament, remember that the church was at no time an undifferentiated collection of believers. Jesus called aside twelve for special training; and amongst these there was some further division of duties.^[18] We are told Christians in the "primitive church" shared much in common, but let us not ignore the lesson of [Acts 6](#). Seeing that some important needs risked being overlooked, seven "deacons" were selected to "wait on tables", thus freeing the Twelve for prayer and ministry of the word ([Acts 6:1-6](#)). Soon, elders, overseers and other offices emerged because the welfare of the church depended on an appropriate division of tasks. Duties and privileges were to be determined according to the maturity,

learning and God-given aptitudes of the people concerned; and all were in their own way to be occupied in the service of the common good. While putting it this way lacks the vitality of Paul's image of the Body, it does help us see that leadership criteria then were remarkably like those for professionals now.^[19]

So long, therefore, as the emergence of social work as a profession is linked with more just, more loving, more efficient distribution of services, nothing in reason or revelation opposes it. It was in the 18th century that Reverend Thomas Chalmers urged the practice of "scientific charity." If that was needful in his day, it is equally so now. It is now true that help for the poor and disenfranchised is not left only to the good will of philanthropists as was the case in Chalmers' day, but far too much wealth is being gobbled up by our welfare machinery. Who has the "science" to tell us the solution? Now we find people trapped in poverty cycles—money given to lift them out of difficulty acts as a reinforcement for the dependent behaviors which keep them out of productive society. Now we find millions without the traditional support of family, because of social mobility, divorce and longer life expectancy. Now we find an aging population at risk for depression because they have nothing left to live for. Hasn't each of us some time wanted to help a drunk or runaway or divorcee and found himself at a loss to know how to do it? These are complicated problems confronting us. Realizing this makes the need for "scientific charity" evident. The modern social work movement says "We can make the experts needed."^[20] If this is so, and I have no reasons to deny it, Christians should welcome the emergence of the professional social worker. Today's church should see their value within the Body just as the first-century church saw the value of deacons.

Let us not be too sanguine, though. Christianity reminds us that this is a fallen world; and that as a consequence even the best of men and the best of social structures are capable of perversion.

1. That there should be differences in prestige attaching to different functions within society is perhaps inevitable, even God-blessed ([I Corinthians 12:22-24](#)). That certain jobs should carry with them special privileges as well as special duties is perhaps essential to the proper

performance of the job. The rights of social workers, doctors and clergy to protect confidential information from judicial probing may be such a privilege. But not all honors, privileges and symbols of status are similarly justifiable. And with respect to them Christians ought to be conscience-pricked. For, Christians take as exemplar one who, for the salvation of the world, took thorns for a crown and a cross for a throne. Our Lord had little patience with those who flaunted status; and so should we.

While all professionals need to be on guard against pride and elitist attitudes, there is something especially dangerous in this for social workers, I think. Isn't it particularly important that those whose life work is amongst those who are alienated from the mainstream of society be people who are not on ego-trips? It may be possible for an elitist social worker who has developed his network of powerful friends to "pull the strings" or "cut the red tape" to get a client a job more quickly than a social worker with more egalitarian sensibilities, but efficiency is not everything. There ought to be those who can feel with their clients. There need to be those whose picture of helping others is not the hand reached down to grasp the social inferior. Alan Keith-Lucas put this well:

The helping relationship must be one in which negative feelings can be expressed without fear of blame, anger, sorrow or loss of face. This means in turn that it cannot be a relationship of superior and inferior, saint and sinner, wise and foolish, judge and judged, or even their modern equivalent, adjusted and unadjusted. These things may be objectively true... but as helped and helper struggle together to understand, to come to a point where the helped person makes his essential choice, they must struggle as equals either of whom could have felt and thought like the other. This is what we mean when we use the rather glib phrases such as 'respect for human dignity' and 'accepting people as they are'; that both helper and helped are, for all their difference, fallible and imperfect creatures who, if not capable of the particular weaknesses in question, are capable of many others.^[21]

2. As was said earlier, professions are learned service occupations. In order to be of real service, the recipients of the help must have some real need. What one takes to be a human need depends upon what one takes to be the right (good, proper, fulfilling) ends for humanity, since needs are those things one lacks in order to live in a way befitting a human being. "Need", in other words, is unavoidably a value term. Consequently, if one has a mistaken or corrupt view of human nature one risks having a corrupt view of human need as well (and of what it takes to help people out of their need).

Now, Christianity claims that the "worldly" view of man is wrong; and that its view is right.^[22] "Thou hast made us for Thyself, and our hearts are restless until they find their rest in Thee," said Augustine, expressing part of Christian anthropology. If what he says is true, the implications for the practice of social work are surely very powerful, because professional social workers claim to be experts in helping people experiencing problems in their relationships.

Are our schools of social work teaching that man has a Godwardness built into him that creates distinctive relationship needs? Are social workers in their practice permitted to help their clients find their rest in Him? If not, the professional social worker who would be truly Christian must be prepared to witness to the distinctives of his faith (and be assured of the assistance of the larger Christian community).

3. Not only are professions instruments for the delivery of quality services, they also tend to become the *sole* instruments for delivering their particular kind of service. Medicine is the current paradigm, but other professions approximate it: only priests can administer the sacraments; only lawyers can give legal counsel; only trained educators can teach our children. And as social work establishes itself as a profession, it acquires its own monopoly. The day may come within The Salvation Army when one will not be allowed to serve on a crisis intervention line or work in a "children's village" or counsel addicts in a Harbour Light unless one has credentials as a professional social worker.

Rights of this magnitude, when they are justified, are justified on the grounds of the professional's vastly superior knowledge and/or practical

skill. What happens in practice, however, is that the professional is treated as if he still deserved his monopoly even when his specialization is not actually needed. One bad consequence of this is that feelings of superiority are needlessly encouraged. A second is that people lose the ability to care for their needs independently. (There are those who argue quite reasonably, for example, that we have overmedicalized normal birthing and dying in our culture with the result that we are less able to cope with these events than more "primitive" peoples.^[23]) Yet another result of this—a result on which I wish to focus—is that the rest of us, the laymen, are allowed to avoid our responsibility to provide for the needs of others when we can, offering the excuse that that is someone else's job.

When Jesus spoke of those who clothed the naked and fed the hungry and welcomed the stranger ([Matthew 25](#)), He was not, I think, suggesting that these be activities undertaken only by some—the professionals. The Lord teaches, rather, that we *each* have duties to be ready and willing to meet basic human needs. I believe this teaching was in part motivated by Jesus' awareness of the dangers of the overprofessionalization of life. One of the messages of the Good Samaritan story is to resist this temptation.

On one occasion an expert in the law stood up to test Jesus.

"Teacher," he asked, "what must I do to inherit eternal life?"

"What is written in the Law?" He replied. "How do you read it?"

He answered: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your strength and with all your mind, and, Love your neighbor as yourself."

"You have answered correctly," Jesus replied. "Do this and you will live."

But he wanted to justify himself, so he asked Jesus, "And who is my neighbor?"

In reply Jesus said: "A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he fell into the hand of robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and

when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, took him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two silver coins and gave them to the innkeeper, 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.'

"Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise," ([Luke 10:25-37](#)).

Observe that most of the people in this account are identified by occupation. There is Jesus, the "Teacher"; and "the expert in the law" ([v. 25](#)). There are the "priest" and the "Levite" ([vv 31-32](#)). Those mentioned so far are described as what we would today call professionals. The "innkeeper" ([v. 35](#)) and the "robbers" ([v. 30](#)), while not in the same class, are also identified by their 'jobs.'

The Samaritan is identified by his nationality. His *job* is not mentioned and is not relevant; but *what he does* is at the heart of the matter.

The one other figure, in some ways the central figure, is—significantly, I think—identified neither by occupation nor by nationality. He is just "a man" ([v. 30](#)). Except for his action of going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, he is not known for what he does, but rather for what is done to him. Passive and anonymous, he is the nobody Jesus uses to signify anybody.

The priest and the Levite see and pass by. We are to infer, obviously, that they should not have. But what is the ground of Jesus' criticism? It is possible that He was objecting to some professional negligence on their part. According to R. K. Harrison "medical responsibilities of the early Hebrew priests were closely connected with their religious

duties....The responsibility for propagating and enforcing these enactments (in the medical sections of Leviticus especially) rested with the priests."^[24] On this reading, Jesus would be understood as denouncing the priest and Levite for failing to "do a job that had been specifically assigned to them. (There are ample parallels of Jesus denouncing them for failing to do their professional *religious* duties as they ought.)

The more usual interpretation—and the one I think more likely correct—is that the Lord is objecting to the fact that they lacked simple human caring. Perhaps their rationalization for passing by would have been that they were *religious* officials, that their job was solely in the Temple. By Jesus' day "the offering of sacrifice [in the Temple]... [had become] the essential function of the Israelite priesthood;"^[25] Levites were a lower class of clergy, charged with numerous religious duties as singers, servers and Temple doorkeepers.^[26] Perhaps they would appeal to the call of pressing duties in Jerusalem. Or a fear of ritual contamination. We cannot say confidently. But Jesus seems to be saying that, no matter how justifiable the professional division of labor may be in other contexts, no matter how allowable honor and privilege may be, they do not justify coldly passing a man lying naked and beaten on the road. At some point our divisions must be set aside so we see that we are in this together, that the man in the road might be any one of us. Says Yahweh through Isaiah, "I have more than enough of burnt offerings... Stop bringing meaningless offerings: Seek justice, encourage the oppressed" ([Isaiah 1:11, 13, 17](#)).

The lawyer came to "test" Jesus ([v. 25](#)) and stayed "to justify himself ([v. 29](#)). Was he trying to justify himself in the bad sense—that is, was he trying to rescue his good reputation? Or was he sincerely asking Jesus how he could do the right thing? The text is unclear. In a sense it is unimportant, for regardless of the motivation, Jesus is critical of his question, "Who is my neighbor?"

The lawyer is acting as a typical professional lawyer. It's *his job* to give the law precise definition. A fuzzy law is unenforceable. Surely the term "neighbor" *needs* clarification if the great commandments are to be enforced. How otherwise can anyone, God or man, know whether a

person is *entitled* to "inherit" eternal life?

While I do not think Jesus meant to condemn the legal profession as such, He did know the errors of the professional lawyer's mindset. He knew, first, the trap of mistaking defining for doing. It was easy in his day as it is in ours for lawyers to define mountains of duties so long as obeying them fell to others ([Luke 11:46](#)). "Casuistry in framing laws can well be accompanied by skill in giving the impression of keeping them while avoiding their minute demands. And this reflects a lack of love for the people who are forced to bear the yoke while the framers of the law themselves go scot-free."^[27]

Jesus knew, second, that the historical definition of "neighbor" served not only formal taxonomic purposes, but also to divide people from each other. The function of the definition was largely to tell who was to be *excluded* from one's care, who one could pass by without guilt. As I have said, this is a danger inherent in all professionalization, not just law. Professions exist by carving out an area of responsibility for themselves and taking exclusive control of what happens in that area, then treating everything outside as someone else's business.

Jesus' story is to teach that "neighbor" is a term that refuses to be carved up this way. Christ came to tear down the dividing walls. "He came and preached peace to those who were far away and peace to those who were near" ([Ephesians 2:17](#)). "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus" ([Gal. 3:28](#)). If a word can be defined only by contrast with an opposite, Christians cannot define "neighbor."

Jesus knew, third, that a lawyer who didn't know the right meaning of "neighbor" in the great commandment also would not know the meaning of "love" in that same commandment. Lawyers—and professionals generally—want clear terms of reference. What precisely is my sphere of responsibility? What are the limits on my competence? How much is enough and how much is too much? These are the questions that come with the "scientific" mind and education. But they are just the sort of questions that *unfit* a person to *love*. That which counts the cost too finely is not really love. By pouring on the oil and wine, carrying the man to the inn on his own donkey, paying for the man's immediate care

and promising further payment if necessary, the Samaritan demonstrates the uncalculating nature of the love God expects. He has not asked who, or how much, or whether it's really *his* job: he was a man and he had a need the Samaritan could meet. That was enough.

IV

Where does this leave us? As there was a need in the early church for deacons and ministers of the word, so there is today a need for professions and the complexity of human social need justifies the creation of a profession of *social work*. Christians in this profession should work as diligently as any of their peers to satisfy the needs they have the unique expertise to satisfy. But Christian social workers ought also to live with the realization that Christ himself brought professions and professionals under judgement both for failing to do what they were designed to do, and for over-valuing their justifiable boundaries. In our fervor to professionalize everyone we must not divide the world up more than the Lord allows. The Parable of the Good Samaritan capsulizes Jesus' criticism. There must remain ways for each to minister each—in love.

Part 3 - Social Reform

Chapter 10 - To Establish the Kingdom

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The Lord's Prayer ([Matthew 6:1-13](#)) contains the earnest plea, "Thy Kingdom Come." We as Christians have taken over this prayer and long for the time when God's Kingdom will come in its fulness. Evangelical Christians in North America in the 19th Century were convinced that this Kingdom was about to be established in just this fulness. In fact, they understood themselves to be establishing the eschatological reign of God with His help.^[1]

Having said this, we have not advanced very far, for it is likely that if we were asked to describe what we mean when we speak of the Kingdom of God, most of us would have difficulty going beyond a very general, one or two sentence statement. It is, therefore, the purpose of this part of the paper to develop some of the major themes which appear to me to be essential to an understanding of the import of the Kingdom of God.^[2]

If we go back to the very beginning of an idea of the Kingdom of God, most likely we shall find it in the Old Testament concept of Yahweh, the God of Israel, as the divine King. Within the experience of the Hebrews, Yahweh was the King of Israel. There are many places in the Old Testament where the conception of God as King is clear (e.g. [Exodus 15:18](#), [Numbers 23:21](#), [Judges 8:23](#)). But perhaps the most graphic description of Yahweh as the divine King comes in [Isaiah 6:1-5](#), where the prophet Isaiah is overwhelmed by the vision of Yahweh's throne, robes and attendant seraphim with their resonating proclamation,

"Holy, Holy, Holy, is the LORD Almighty; the whole earth is full of his glory" (NIV). For Isaiah, Yahweh is the King and all schemes and machinations of human authorities are petty in comparison.

As the chosen people of God, Israel can be understood to be the Kingdom of God. They were expected to give absolute loyalty to Yahweh and to treat one another with respect, fairness, and fraternity.

One of the best places to see the high standard of conduct expected within Israelite society is Deuteronomy. The book of Deuteronomy sees itself as a statement of the special covenant relationship between Yahweh and Israel. As such, it often deals with the exclusive loyalty which Israel owes to its Lord and King ([Deuteronomy 4:39-40](#); [6:4-5](#)). But it also devotes a good deal of attention to relationships within the covenant community. While individual Deuteronomic laws and regulations might be boring, and, if read through at one time, seem oppressive, it is worthwhile to read them with an eye to the ideal which they attempt to enact. The book of Deuteronomy speaks of the relationships which should exist within the Israelite community as a nation which is under God's rule—as the Kingdom of God.

There are several areas of conduct to which we could direct our attention. We could note, for example, that it was not acceptable to charge a fellow Israelite interest on a loan ([Deuteronomy 23:19-20](#)) because one Israelite could not take advantage of a fellow Israelite's misfortune. Furthermore, debts were to be forgiven every seven years in order to prevent anyone from being buried under a burden of debt.

We could also direct our attention to the legislation regarding the ownership of land. All land in Israel was an inheritance from Yahweh to specific tribes and families. Therefore, it could not be sold permanently, but was to be returned to its rightful, ancestral owner at regular intervals, either seven or seventy years. As a result, no Israelite was to be consigned to poverty permanently because he had been forced to sell his land.

But the real barometer of how high a standard of behaviour was expected can be seen in the way in which Israelites were expected to treat those who had no rights or means of support within Israel. Essentially, there were three such groups: widows, orphans and aliens.

The widow and orphan had no individual rights because they had no male adult through whom their rights could be secured. The foreigner was not an Israelite and therefore had no voice in the Israelite community. The fact that they did not have rights also meant that they could not do such things as own land and therefore secure a livelihood from agriculture. These three groups were likely to be the poorest and most easily oppressed of Israelite society.

The amazing thing, however, is that in Israelite law, which attempts to give expression to the fraternity which should exist within Israel as a community ruled by God, it was precisely these three weak and easily oppressed groups which received special attention. This was not simply because their plight tugged at the heartstrings of other Israelites. It was, rather, because God Himself was seen to be the special advocate for these people ([Deuteronomy 10:18](#)). The God of Israel was the protector of the widow, the orphan and the alien in the land. When all others deserted them or took advantage of them, Yahweh would rise up to defend them. Unjust actions and attitudes toward these groups were equivalent to rebellion against Yahweh, the divine King.

The practicality of the ways in which this concern for these people was expressed is striking. For example, because they could not own land, the widow, the orphan and the alien had no means of growing food. Therefore, at harvest time, the farmers were not to go through their fields a second time to gather up the grain or other produce which had been missed in their first trek through the fields. Rather, these were to be left for the poor. It was simply a way of making sure that these groups could survive (with some dignity).

In [Deuteronomy 14:28-29](#), in the legislation regarding tithes, it should be noted that every third year the entire tithe was to be stored in towns so that it might be given to those who have need of it. The point of the legislation was to make sure that those in need did not suffer. Provision had to be made for them. This was not optional. It was a fundamental element of Israel's existence as the community under divine rule.

[Deuteronomy 24:14-15](#) points out that there is to be honesty and sensitivity in one's relationship with the poor and foreign workers. They are to be paid fairly and to be paid immediately so that they would not suffer hardship because of the neglect of the employer. Such groups

would not be able to wait a long time for payment without having to endure considerable hardship and hunger. The infliction of such hardship upon these groups was to be avoided.

Obtaining a loan in Israel was not a matter of going into debt in order to purchase the luxuries of life. One obtained a loan only under the most severe circumstances, when it was a matter of life and death. However, if a person got into a situation where a loan was necessary, that individual was to be treated with respect ([Deuteronomy 24:10-13](#), [17-18](#)). Part of the procedure of obtaining a loan was to give some collateral or pledge. It is important to notice, however, how the integrity and privacy of the individual is to be respected. The lender was not to enter the borrower's home and take just anything he wanted. Rather, the lender was to remain on the outside of the house and to wait for the borrower to bring out the pledge. The fact that an individual had fallen on hard times did not mean that a lender had the right to invade his privacy and assault his self-respect.

Further examples of the legislation which is meant to protect the poor and easily oppressed could be given. However, we already have seen how far reaching this protection was to be. In fact, it was to be a hallmark of Israel as the Kingdom of God.

Unfortunately, in the history of Israel the high ideals of Deuteronomy were seldom, if ever, achieved. In practice, Israel fell far short of being the Kingdom of God. The prophets of Israel often functioned as the individuals in society who stood before their King and fellow Israelites and pointed out these shortcomings. Often their attention was devoted to indictments of their people for their failure to exemplify the high standards of justice and righteousness which were expected of them.

When we turn to the New Testament, we find that many of the emphases of the Old Testament conception of divine rule are carried forward. But the overriding impression which one receives from reading the gospels is that the situation itself has changed. Whereas in the Old Testament the Kingdom of God was associated with Israel, and its hopes and aspirations were frustrated by the people, in the New Testament we are met with the proclamation that the Kingdom of God is at hand ([Mark 1:15](#)). It is possible, and I would maintain necessary, to read the New Testament in such a way as to impress upon us the fact that with

the advent of Christ came the advent of the Kingdom. Perhaps it awaits its full establishment, but this should not be allowed to diminish the importance of maintaining that in fact it has come.

The Kingdom of God in the New Testament, as a present (as well as a future) reality, maintains the critical edge which it had in the Old Testament. When the concept of the Kingdom is applied to the society of early Christians, it is seen to be critical of that society. No society is sacrosanct.

The inaugural address of Jesus in Nazareth in [Luke 4:16-30](#) is controversial. His quotation of [Isaiah 61](#) does not aim simply at a spiritual transformation, but a transformation of society itself. He does not proclaim simply the provision of "Christian" care and concern for the poor, prisoners, the blind and the oppressed. He announces good news to the poor who seldom hear it. He proclaims freedom for the captives. He promises sight for the blind and release for the oppressed. These are not simply services provided for those in need. They are promises of deliverance from their affliction. It amounts to a radical social transformation of their situation. Nothing less will do justice to the proclamation of Jesus. It is this challenge, I think, which creates the hostility displayed by his listeners.

Finally, Paul's famous verse in [Galatians 3:28](#) amounts to what might be called a "Kingdom Manifesto." "There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus." The proclamation is that the divisions in human society which have been established by human beings have been removed through Jesus Christ. Racial, socio-economic, and sexual divisions have no place in the new kingdom.

When in the 19th century the Wesleyan teaching of Christian perfection came into contact with a staunch belief in, and commitment to, the present establishment of the kingdom, the results were astonishing. Timothy L. Smith claims that it was this combination which produced the intense involvement of American evangelical Christians in vast projects of social reform.^[3] Now I want to illustrate how this combination can be seen to bring about a vital Christian involvement in society.

First of all, the Kingdom of God is a concept whose efforts cannot rightly be confined to individuals. It is, first and foremost, a concept which is focused on society. It is social in its orientation. It was the *nation* of Israel which was understood to be the Kingdom of God. This language was transferred to the Christian *community*. Therefore, if we are to appropriate the biblical teaching regarding the Kingdom of God, we must be prepared to see it as having implications for our society, not just for us as individuals.

This point is important, for while Wesleyan Christian perfection does have social implications, these are easily forgotten. Historically, there has been a tendency to reduce entire sanctification to an article of faith about what God has in store for individuals. There has been a growing tendency to define it and quantify it. Unfortunately, this tendency lives on. In a major recent statement of Wesleyan theology, there is one chapter which deals with social concerns, and that chapter does not make reference to the importance of Christian perfection as a motivating experience.^[4] In the chapter which deals with Christian perfection, there is little, if any understanding of the societal thrust of Wesleyan theology.^[5]

In the light of this, a focus on the Kingdom of God can function as a corrective to this individualizing tendency. It can help to make us aware of the social responsibilities which flow not only from the quest for the Kingdom, but also from Wesley's own theology of salvation.

Secondly, a commitment to the present establishment of the Kingdom of God relativizes all obstacles that stand in its way. It is the Kingdom *of* God. The "of" here should be understood in two ways. In the possessive sense we must see it as God's Kingdom over which he rules. That in itself should warn us against giving too much heed to apparent obstacles. In addition, the "of" should be understood in terms of derivation. The Kingdom, while its establishment is assisted by our commitment to it, ultimately rests upon God's will and intent to establish it. We must take at face value the proclamation of Jesus and the early Church that the Kingdom has arrived. Obstacles which stand in the way of the further establishment of the Kingdom may seem insurmountable. But the assurance that God stands ready to bring his

Kingdom to fruition should allow us to see those obstacles for what they are—stumbling blocks perhaps, but not the Great Wall of China.

Thirdly, the presence of the eschatological Kingdom of God here and now complements Wesley's teaching that the eschatological blessings of holiness can be experienced here and now. The eschatological ideal of the Kingdom of God as the divinely ordained society is paralleled by the eschatological ideal for the Christian. They provide a perspective from which to see the shortcomings of society and our own lives. But they also provide us with an ideal toward which we strive. For the Christian who embraces Wesley's teaching of entire sanctification as well as the presence of the Kingdom, the eschaton is now.

Fourth, the action of the Christian is to be directed toward the removal of all barriers between people, be they based upon ethnic and racial distinctions, socio-economic distinctions, or sexual distinctions. ([Galatians 3:28](#)) The history of evangelical social involvement in all three areas should challenge us.

Fifth, the Kingdom, both in Scripture and in our present circumstances, should be characterized by a concern to establish justice and righteousness. This concern should not be thought to be exhausted when we have signed a petition in favour of justice and righteousness in our land, or against Sunday store openings. We should not rest content with a concern for personal piety. The justice and righteousness of the Kingdom is far more volatile. It is a justice and righteousness which threatens to overturn our societal standards and expectations. It will shake us to our foundations. It will involve an active advocacy for the poor and dispossessed in our society—the modern counterpart of the widow, the orphan and the alien.

Finally, I want to make a *sixth* point. From this consideration of the Wesleyan theological foundations for a commitment to social involvement, I have come to what is to me, at least, a surprising conclusion. Wesleyan theology, when linked with a commitment to the establishment of the Kingdom of God, should not motivate us so much to the provision of social services which are merely ameliorative or cosmetic. The commitment to the Kingdom motivates us to strive for social reform or perhaps more appropriately, social recreation. The shift in terminology from "social reform" to "social service" represents more

than just a change in name. It represents a change in focus.

Evangelical Christians in the last century were committed to social reform. Their actions were directed toward the reformation of society. They relieved suffering because there was the possibility of eliminating it. They worked with the poor in order to solve the problem of their poverty, not simply to keep them alive.

I would argue that to the extent that we have shifted our focus from social reform to the provision of social services, we have lost the evangelical Wesleyan vision which motivates Christians to strive for the establishment of God's kingdom.

Chapter 11 - Modern Social Ethics: The Gospel And Society

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Christianity transformed the world's social order in the first four centuries A.D. After that the Church's principle attitude to the world was one of acquiescence, right through the Middle Ages until the startling events of the sixteenth century. The Reformation may have had a lasting impact on Christianity in England, but nowhere did it change the social order as in Switzerland. In Calvin's Geneva, citizenship and churchmanship went together. A man's relationship to the secular authority was the same as to the spiritual, for the Church ruled the cities. It was as close to a theocracy as the West has come. Calvin and his followers found that their understanding of the New Testament forbade any divide between the Gospel and society. The Gospel had to be given full and free reign to save the social order, to transform social institutions as much as to save and transform the individual lives of citizens. This is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that the Reformation in Germany did not lead to the same result. There the strong secular princes welcomed religious change to fortify their own political independence and they were not about to hand on a plate to the Church, albeit reformed, that which they had wrung from the Holy Roman Emperor or the Papacy. So it was that Luther's thinking allowed the Gospel to stand distinct from all other elements in society. If Calvin saw the Church as synonymous with society, Luther saw the two as co-equal partners working in the world for God.

Elsewhere in Reformation Europe a variety of views took root which ranged from Calvinistic to Lutheran and much else in between. In England church and state remained distinctly separate although society

was pervaded by religion (if not discipleship to Christ!). The Puritans (of Calvinist conviction) wanted the Gospel to reform everything. Here is an extract from a sermon preached in 1641 by the Puritan minister Thomas Case to the House of Commons:

Reformation must be universal... reform all places, all persons and all callings; reform the benches of judgment... the universities, the cities, the Sabbath, the worship of God.... Every plant which my Heavenly Father hath not planted shall be rooted up. (Quoted by Nicholas Wolterstorff in *Until Justice and Peace Embrace*, Eerdmans' 1983.)

These words are illuminating. They lay the blame for the world's ills not only at the feet of evil people but evil social institutions. Social structures are seen as the result of human decision, not as divinely ordained. They are man-made and therefore man-alterable. They are fallen and corrupt. Not only are the persons who create the structures fallen and in need of grace but so too are the social structures those persons have spawned. The institutions and the laws are seen to be in need of salvation.

World-Formative Christianity

This is a world-formative Christianity. It is Christianity seen as relevant to the whole of man's life on earth in all its many and diverse aspects. Nothing is beyond the interest and will of God. At its worst it can lead to ecclesiastical repressiveness as in Calvin's Geneva. At its best it can bring the world aglow with reformed and transformed social structures.

Where then does the Army stand in all of this? I do not know for certain. I have looked at our origins, at our history and development, and have looked at our present practice and I reach a shaky, far from sure conclusion. It goes something like this. The Army, in its heart of hearts, does not have sufficient conviction that social structures need to be changed in conformity to Christ's will. Rather, we concentrate upon saving men one at a time so that each man's standing with God is changed. Then we send that man, saved and kept, back into the world to share his faith and live for God. But the world he re-enters, even though

he is now equipped with the whole armour of God, is still fallen and, somehow, one man's conversion does not render it less fallen. Moreover, supposing not one man, but millions were to be saved thus, would the social order and our social institutions be thereby transformed? Presumably, insofar as they would now be administered by persons obedient to Christ, things would be better; but that basic, radical (I want to avoid using words like revolutionary), all-pervading about-turn would still have to be brought about. That which happens in individual lives which are yielded to Christ's cleansing flame, must happen too to the ways in which men order themselves in national and international life.

The Army is often spared the charge of not caring about such things because everyone sees the work of our social services and no one has the heart, or lack of it, to say, 'You feed and house and clothe, but you are treating the symptoms only. What about the root causes? What are you doing about those?'

I think it is time to mention a third danger here. It is the danger of interpreting the Gospel solely in political terms. This is the error of the so-called 'liberation theologians' and I, for one, would not have the Army repeat that error. Through good Christian men like Gustavo Gutierrez and Muguez Bonino, liberation theology (with its roots in Latin America) has come to equate the spiritual salvation offered in Christ with political freedom, even if it is achieved by revolutionary and violent means. Let it be clear that the advocates of liberation theology have often demonstrated their willingness to meet the demands of self-sacrifice and more than one has felt the stern weight of the secular authority as he has aligned himself with the oppressed. Admiration for the spirit of these men ought not to blind us to the wrong-headedness of their theology which tends to promote Marxist economics in place of saving faith in Jesus, Son of God. Liberation theology has relegated grace. But it is, nevertheless, a rebuke to those who say personal piety is enough.

What has the Army done, what is it doing, to change society, to be world-formative? Unavoidably we begin with William Booth and his Darkest England scheme. It is not only Salvationists who see this as an historical landmark, for *In Darkest England and the Way Out* is essential reading for any student of western social history. When it was published in 1890 it caused a storm of controversial debate, but today it is no

longer questioned that the tasks and projects envisaged by Booth in his scheme—tackling homelessness, providing jobs, rehabilitating the criminal offender, caring for the orphans, offering counsel, rescuing the fallen—properly belong to the welfare state. At the same time, religious agencies want to operate schemes and services parallel to state services by way of support or plugging gaps in the secular system. Ideally, of course, Christians will pioneer new paths in social aid, thereby prompting the secular arm to extend its own efforts, to push back continually the frontiers of need. Church and state also act in concert when the former is given funds by the latter to carry out a caring ministry.

It is my belief that we can forget too easily just how far things have progressed in the last hundred years. Then, the notion that governments should act on a national basis to meet material need was in its infancy. Today, it is taken as the norm. In Britain and elsewhere, a large portion of the credit must go to Booth and his inspired Darkest England scheme. It was and is a striking instance of world-formative Christianity. But lest we get carried away, thinking that 'schemes' are the answer to men's problems, let us hear again the Founder's words, used by him in the Preface to *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. He is keen to keep his priorities in order:

If we help the man it is in order that we may change him.... I see the folly of hoping to accomplish anything abiding, either in the circumstances or the morals of these hopeless classes, except there be a change effected in the whole man as well as his surroundings.... I have no intention to depart in the smallest degree from the main principles on which I have acted in the past. My only hope for the permanent deliverance of mankind from misery, either in this world or the next, is the regeneration or remaking of the individual by the power of the Holy Ghost through Jesus Christ. But in providing for the relief of temporal misery I reckon that I am only making it easy where it is now difficult, and possible where it is now all but impossible, for men and women to find their way *to the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ*.

With typical pragmatism Booth then executed a Trust Deed declaring

the objects and trusts of the Darkest England scheme. I have the Deed on my desk as I write. It still governs the operations of The Salvation Army Social Work in the United Kingdom and has naturally been used as a model for similar work in Jesus' name elsewhere.

Politics

A highly significant comment was made on all of this by the Army's sixth General, Albert Orsborn. He said, "The Founder put a dream on the map and made *practical politics* of the social implications of Christianity." I emphasize the expression, "practical politics," because it prompts me to look now at the willingness, or otherwise, of the Army to engage itself in political or quasi-political activity in the cause of world-formative Christianity, that is, in the cause of bringing to bear on our laws and social institutions the necessary implications of Jesus' words and life.

I want to look in some detail at two case histories, but first I should make very clear that I am conscious of speaking not only from the United Kingdom but also out of a background of British law and politics. Nevertheless, what I say may prompt you to look again at what is happening—or not happening—in your own part of the Army world when it comes to engaging the political powers for the sake of the Gospel and righteousness. Perhaps also, before getting down to detail, I may be allowed a generalization. It seems to me that our track record in this area is pretty mixed. Our general attitude to secular government is ambivalent in that we frequently adopt a policy of quiet co-operation or at least non-opposition even when the nature or policies of that government fly in the face of Christ's teaching. This is done "to protect our work", so that we may be allowed to go on functioning in a particular place. The dilemma is real. Yet sometimes fidelity to Jesus and His truth will cost us the chance, for the time being, of operating as we might wish. It is possible to compromise the Gospel, albeit ever so sincerely, for the sake of our work.

Yet again, sometimes we do tell a government we will take them on and do battle and it is to a couple of such episodes that I now turn attention. Both instances have involved my office at International Headquarters in recent times. They involve very different issues.

Freedom Of The Streets

The first has to do with the Army's freedom to march on the public highway. This is a right held dear by British Salvationists and indeed the law in England and Wales on the matter is enshrined in the pronouncement of the court of the Queen's Bench Division in 1882 in the case of *Beatty v Gillbanks*. Generations of English law students have studied this precedent. The infant Salvation Army was marching through the seaside town of Weston-super-Mare. In that year of 1882 the number of soldiers of the Army known to have been knocked down or brutally assaulted in the U.K. was 642. More than a third were women and 23 of them were children. Sixty Army buildings were wrecked by the rabble, urged on by the Skeleton Army (see Ch. IV, *Echoes and Memories*, Bramwell Booth, 1925). The riot at Weston-super-Mare ended with the arrest of the Salvationists who were charged with an unlawful assembly. The court decided, and this is still the law here, that to march or demonstrate peacefully is not unlawful merely because of the known intentions of others (The Skeleton Army in this case) to disrupt the march with violence. (It is satisfying to note that Article 11 of the European Convention on Human Rights affords a similar right of assembly and procession, even in the face of likely disruption and disorder.)

The Army saw this right as so precious that in 1885, when the south-coast town council in Eastbourne obtained statutory powers overriding the Common Law on street processions, we went to the extraordinary lengths of obtaining a private Act of Parliament (the Eastbourne Improvement Act, 1885, Amendment Act) to have the offending provisions repealed. Again, as I write, I have before me the Minutes of the Select Committee of the House of Lords from that occasion. Since then there have been innumerable occasions when the Army has fought very hard and sometimes very publicly to preserve the right to march.

Now I do not say that the right to process, as an Army, along the public highway is a legal privilege on which hinges the rightness or wrongness of our social structures or our laws. But I do say that here is something over which, not only in Britain, the Army has repeatedly been willing to flex its muscle and to challenge governments. It is something

on which we are well informed and on which we are sure of ourselves and therefore we will enter the public arena with confidence. Would that this were true of much else that needs defending by God's people.

It was with all this in the background and in our minds that we discovered in 1981 the intention of Mrs. Thatcher's government to enact legislation granting fresh powers to regional and city authorities in Scotland. A bill was published with the title Civic Government (Scotland) Bill. It contained clauses on street processions which, in short, would have taken the Army off the streets in Scotland for all practical purposes. This was far from the government's intention, which was primarily to control more tightly, political demonstrations in Glasgow that were linked with events in Northern Ireland. The Army could easily recognize the practical difficulties facing local authorities, but could not sit idly by and see historically enshrined legal privileges swept away at a stroke. There began a long series of negotiations, consultations and correspondence in which my predecessor, Lieut.- Colonel W. B. Baird, distinguished himself. As matters reached a climax he farewelled and one of my first engagements on taking office was to meet the Minister of State at the Scottish Office with Commissioner Eva Burrows, then Territorial Commander for Scotland. We were accompanied by our Parliamentary Agent, Mr. Jeremy Francis, whose expert knowledge of Parliamentary procedure and the workings of Whitehall were invaluable. We told the Minister very plainly that we could not let the matter rest. In fact, we had been lobbying Members of Parliament and members of the House of Lords very hard indeed. The Opposition spokesman on Scottish Affairs, Mr. Donald Dewar, had visited International Headquarters at our invitation and had indicated his willingness to put the Army's case in the Commons if the government proved obdurate. Well, the meeting with the Minister went smoothly and courteously, but he did not accede then and there to our request that the Bill be amended to exempt marches like those of the Army which are commonly and customarily held. Nevertheless, he had taken the point and after we had left, and as we know now, clearly gave instructions to the legal draftsmen at the Ministry that the Army's concerns be met. One month later the Solicitor-General for Scotland rose in the House of Commons to announce that Her Majesty's government had decided, after further thought, to modify

the street processions clauses in the Bill. He went on, "In this group of amendments we are seeking to meet the representations made to us... principally by The Salvation Army. It is worth recording that the approach made by The Salvation Army was a model of the way in which outside bodies should lobby... Whilst The Salvation Army put forward a strong point of view to which it stuck assiduously, it nevertheless recognized the responsibilities and duties of the Government...." This was naturally very gratifying. We had won.

We had helped, once again, to shape new legislation, even though it was on a subject which would hardly shake the world. I regard that episode as significant. It proved to me, as a relatively young officer, that the Army *could* still engage minds with the best and, the cause being right, win the day. There must be many other examples of the same in other lands. It seems to me we have a duty under God to do this sort of thing more often and perhaps even better. If we are to be truly a world-formative Army, then the skills and resources we are able and willing to deploy to protect "yellow, red and blue" interests must also be as readily deployed to protect and promote Gospel values in society generally. We *can* do it. We *are* articulate. We have a war to fight and win, and any measure of loss of confidence is a doubting of God's grace and willingness to go on making use of us.

The Age Of Consent

This brings me to my second case history and a matter which has not yet been concluded. It has to do with the Army's battle, again carried out boldly and with assurance born of knowing we are in the right and doing God's will, the battle to raise the age of consent. You will know the story of Eliza Armstrong and W. T. Stead and Bramwell Booth and so I need not rehearse those facts in this paper. Suffice to say that in 1885 the Army exposed a cruel trafficking in young girls and Parliament responded by raising the age of consent from 13 to 16 years of age. It was a resounding victory—the result of a willingness to see ourselves as agents for God in world-formative Christian action. Now we face problems again here in Britain. Pedophile groups have risen up and even so-called respectable bodies are questioning the need for the Sexual Offences Act 1956 which, inter alia, makes it an offence to have sexual

intercourse with a girl under sixteen. In recent months the Army has had to decide whether or not to enter the battle once more. The immediate need for a decision was an appeal for help from those supporting a Mrs. Victoria Gillick and her campaign to have the government take action against the prescription of contraception to girls under sixteen without the knowledge or consent of the child's parents. Mrs. Gillick embarked on court proceedings, seeking a declaration that such action by a doctor was unlawful. That litigation is still alive and we await, in the course of the next few weeks, a hearing in the Court of Appeal. However, concurrent with the court action, Mrs. Gillick launched a massive Petition to Parliament asking for legislation to clarify the law and to enshrine protection for girls under the age of consent, which age was being undermined indirectly by medical practice on contraception. The Army determined to come out strongly in favour of the Petition and the corps network in Britain was used to collect signatures. An all-time record number of Members of Parliament presented the Petition in the Commons. The Army has given press, T.V. and radio interviews and has afforded every cooperation to Mrs. Gillick and her supporting team. The story is unfinished, but what is going on is another attempt to allow our Christian convictions to act upon the shape of our laws and social institutions.

Not Victims, But Crusaders

I have outlined two specific instances of the Army entering the public arena to fight for right. From where I stand, there is no realistic alternative to getting involved. As I speak to Salvationists and fellow officers about these and other crusading issues it is easy to see that morale increases in proportion to the extent the comrades feel the Army is helping to shape the world about it. Which of us does not feel pride in learning again of social evils the Army has challenged? Indeed, we were able in 1946 to publish a book under the title, *Social Evils the Army has Challenged* (S.P. & S. Ltd.), telling the story of world-formative deeds of valour in days gone by, none perhaps more thrilling than that of Charles Péan and Devil's Island. I wonder if we were to sit down today to write a second and similar volume, covering say the last 40 years, just what we could include?

I am conscious that in modern times opportunities still present themselves for the Army, and others of like Christian conviction, to apply pressure or indeed take direct action to affect society on a large and formal scale so that society, whilst still secular in a very real sense, is nevertheless, little by little, subjected to a process of Christianization. One particular issue which crops up over again is that of homosexuality. It is not unknown these days for city councils to apply fiscal levers to movements like the Army in an attempt to enforce a homophile philosophy through executive policy. They say, "Change your views on homosexuality or we will withdraw our funds for your social programmes." At first, it is tempting to say, "Then keep your money." But further reflection reveals such a barefaced onslaught on goodness and truth as, in fact, a great opportunity for us to be God's agents in world-formative Christian action. It is a chance to question the very basis on which such conditions are laid down. Instead of retreating in defence of our "position", we have a wonderful opportunity to raise our "position" as a rallying cry to all who follow Jesus and to challenge, even by formal legal proceedings if need be, the right of secular authorities to act in such a way. Instead of being victims, we become crusaders, fighting for right and opposing the wrong. The result can be a reinforcing of the Christianizing of society, and certainly a sense of being God's people *in* the world, His corporate leaven in society.

We cannot read the New Testament as if it were for a man purely in his private and individual life. It *is* this, but not only this. The Gospel of Jesus cannot be understood as neutral or indifferent to worldly institutions and conditions. It is here that I find help in the writing of the German martyr, Dietrich Bonhoeffer (see his *Ethics*, Fontana, 1964). He stresses, and in my view rightly, that it is mistaken to regard the Gospel either as exclusively for a man's private soul or exclusively for man in society, a member of a group. Rather, the Gospel is for *the salvation of the world*. "There is nothing, neither persons nor things, which stands outside the relation to Christ. Indeed it is only in relation to Christ that created things have their being. This is true not only of man but also of the state, economy, science, nature, etc." (*Ethics*, page 322). Bonhoeffer refers us to [Colossians 1:16, 17](#); [Ephesians 1:10](#); [John 3:16](#)—in Christ God loves "the world." All people and all things, including laws and

social structures, are subject to Christ's commandment and claim. It follows that Christians—perhaps *especially* Salvationists—have a responsibility for the shape of secular institutions and laws:

The Lord spoke to Moses and said, Speak to the Israelites in these words: I am the Lord your God. You shall not do as they do in Egypt where once you dwelt, nor shall you do as they do in the land of Canaan to which I am bringing you; you shall not conform to their institutions without fail: I am the Lord your God. You shall observe my institutions and my laws: the man who keeps them SHALL HAVE LIFE THROUGH THEM. I AM THE LORD.

(Leviticus 18:1-5, NEB)

Part 4 - The Primary Motivation

Chapter 12 - Social Service: the Divine Imperative

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Christianity presents to the world a gospel for the total man, for its message can neither be fully comprehended nor translated into action, in human isolation. Christianity transforms relationships—between God and man, between man and his neighbour. Christianity inflames the human heart with divine forgiveness and love, stirring the individual to selfless action on behalf of others, his family, his neighbour, and even his enemy. Reaching out to others through helping relationships is both the natural outcome of the Spirit-filled life and the divine requirement for all who would identify with the name of Christ.

Throughout the Bible man's obligation to his neighbour is a constant theme that warrants thorough study and consideration. This paper will attempt to initiate this study by the presentation of selected New Testament writings which have challenged the heart of the author to the urgency of Christ's claims upon the Church and the individual Christian for social service.

What Is Social Service?

Social service can be defined as organized philanthropic assistance to the sick, destitute, or unfortunate. This rather broad definition encompasses the wide range of programs that have been recognized as "social services" within The Salvation Army. William Booth defined social work as "those operations of The Salvation Army which have to

do with the alleviation or removal of the moral and temporal evils which cause so much misery of the submerged classes and which so greatly hinder their salvation." He listed these evils as "grinding poverty, disease, lust, crime, war, despair, atheism."^[1]

Both of these definitions describe social service in terms of the predicament faced by those in need. It may be helpful to consider social service in terms of the action undertaken by those who intervene. I believe that Christian social service is "love in action." Love perceives the need and responds. The Founder said, "social service is only the expression of the life which abides in the soul and forces into activity the desire to take upon one's self the burden of humanity."^[2]

Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

Beloved if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another...

If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and His love is perfected in us ...

And this commandment have we from Him, that he who loveth God love his brother also.

(1 John 4:10-12, 21)

Love for others, demonstrated in acts of loving concern and practical caring, is the natural outcome of God's love operating in the human heart.

This is how we know what love is: Jesus Christ laid down His life for us and we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers. If anyone has material possessions and sees his brother in need but has no pity on him, how can the love of God be in him? Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth (1 John 3:16-18, NIV).

It is impossible to love God without loving our neighbour; it is impossible to serve God without serving our neighbour.

Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me (Matthew 25:45).

The following definition provides a theological understanding of the

role played by the Christian social worker, whether he be the professional, involved in structured social service, or the individual Christian living out in his daily life the divine imperative to meet the needs of his fellow man. "In principle the Christian accepts the Saviour's law of love and becomes the channel of that divine love which, shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Spirit, flows forth in generous service to others."^[3]

The Salvation Army has from its inception been concerned about a social gospel—the application of Christian principles to the social problems presented by man and society.

Today The Salvation Army serves in 86 different countries, and operates social service programs through over 3,000 agencies and centres around the world. In addition to the formalized, structured social service activities, hundreds of thousands of Salvationists take seriously the command of Christ to reach out in love and practical caring to one's fellow man, and only eternity will reveal the measure of loving and caring acts which have been performed daily and hourly in the name of Christ and for His sake.

But why? Why should The Salvation Army and the Christian Church be involved in social service? What is the theological basis for such a commitment of time, energy, manpower and resources to the alleviation of social problems? Should not the Army as a branch of the Christian Church, leave social service to the community and government sponsored agencies, and get on with the more "spiritual" issues of life?

The answer to these questions may become clear as we examine the lessons provided for us in the New Testament, in our attempt to discover the theological basis of social service.

What Is "Theology Of Social Service"

Dr. Samuel Wakefield defined theology as "That science which treats of the existence, the character, the attributes of God; His laws and government; the doctrines which we are to believe, the moral change we must experience, and the duties we are required to perform."^[4]

In relation to social service this definition speaks to us of God's law regarding our obligation to our fellow man, the example of Christ in His

all encompassing love, His compassion, His willingness to share in the human situation, and His willingness to sacrifice His life to save mankind. It reminds us of the possibility of regeneration in our own lives and in the lives of our fellows, and challenges us to discover and to fulfill the duties which God has ordained, particularly toward our fellow man.

In our quest for a theology of social service we would do well to consider the Scriptural sources upon which these realities are based.

William Burton Pope defined theology as "The science of God and divine things, based upon the revelation made to mankind in Jesus Christ, and variously systematized within the Christian Church."^[5]

The difficulty for us is that the theology of social service has not yet been systematized. But Scripture provides rich and abundant resources ready to be mined; the challenge is ours to grasp.

I would suggest that the theology of social service has been a practical theology, worked out in the lives of Christians who, motivated by love, have been so busy fulfilling Christ's commands that they have had little time to contemplate or theorize on the philosophical or theological basis of their mission.

William Booth himself did not think out a complicated and systematized theology of social service. He became gripped with the need, compelled by love, and simply did what needed to be done! Later on, he did systematize his plan for social service, in his renowned book *In Darkest England And The Way Out*. But he did not spend time in putting into place a systematic theology of social service for the guidance and illumination of future Salvationists. Perhaps he considered the theological basis for social service self evident.

William Booth did leave to the world the challenge of his example, the record of a life compelled by love and inspired by the conviction of Christ's claims upon the individual and the Church for social service. His actions confirmed his understanding of the underlying theology, and his commitment to the Divine imperative:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind... (and) Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ([Matthew 22:37, 39](#)).

As we move into a second century of service let us pause to reconfirm our mission, and to state with clarity the theological basis which has undergirded the social service ministry of The Salvation Army from its inception, and which may inspire future generations to devote their lives in selfless service so that the world might come to know Christ.

The Mythical Dichotomy: "Spiritual" Versus "Social"

The Bible demonstrates the integrated yet multifaceted nature of man. The fact that he is a physical being is self-evident. His spiritual nature has been stamped:

... In the image of God... ([Genesis 1:26](#)).

His emotional capacity, his reasoning ability, and his moral discernment all set him apart from God's other creatures. The social nature of man is described in The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine.^[6]

In the divine intention, man is a social being, incapable of achieving his intended development and destiny in isolation. His life is bound up with that of others in terms of both dependence and of obligation to serve. There is a solidarity of the human race by which are shared both benefit and hurt.

Since human existence moves in physical, social, emotional and spiritual dimensions, any separation of these dimensions in a helping relationship is an artificial exercise.^[7] Jesus responded to the presenting needs of an individual by making available the healing, renewing and integrating love of God which could permeate and restore every dimension of life. To those who were hungry He provided not only physical bread, but the bread of life. To those who were sick, He not only restored physical health, but also offered the restoration of body, soul and spirit. To those who were tormented with evil spirits, he not only cast out the tormentors, but made available the indwelling Spirit of God. In restoring life to the widow's son, the ruler's daughter and Lazarus of Bethany, Jesus offered the gift of eternal life.

The New Testament record of Christ's intervention in the lives of

people confirms that he addressed the immediate need within the context of the total needs of the individual. His response to human need was comprehensive.

The biblical record indicates that not all whom Jesus touched responded to His offer of wholeness. Many were content with the solution to the immediate need only. Of the 5,000 whose physical hunger was satisfied by Christ, many went away without the awareness of their spiritual hunger, and without the life - giving "Living Bread." Of the 10 lepers who were healed, 9 went away, grateful for their physical restoration. One came back, perhaps recognizing the completeness of Christ's healing within his life. In our social service ministry to others, not all are ready or willing to avail themselves of the full measure of resources that we can bring to them as channels of Christ's redeeming love. Christian social work is an extension of Christ's ministry on earth, and through such services, complete resources are available to meet the total needs of mankind, physical, spiritual, emotional and social. Salvation provides the answers to man's deepest needs and helps him to find the solution to problems in all other areas of his life. Secular social work may address the individual needs of troubled persons, but without the message of salvation which can restore the individual to wholeness and completeness in Christ, the remedy is insufficient.

The message of the Gospel brings mankind into a redeeming, healing relationship with Christ, and the New Testament record teaches that this can be done effectively through an integrated message that reaches the physical, psychological, spiritual and social needs of mankind.

The social service movement in The Salvation Army is not a regretful spin off of "spiritual" ministry. Instead it is an integrated part of the whole. Lieut.-Colonel George Carpenter said, "Christian social service is not peripheral to our mission of soul-saving, it is indissolubly bound up with it. Christian social service speaks in every tongue without learning it. Christian social service is what holiness looks like out of uniform."^[8]

Referring to the total ministry of The Salvation Army, General Frederick Coutts said, "If we refer to our evangelical work and also to our social work, it is not that these are two different entities which could operate the one without the other. They are but two activities of the one and the same salvation which is concerned with the total redemption of

man. Both rely on the same divine grace. Both are inspired by the same motive. Both have the same end in view, and as the gospel has joined them together we do not propose to put them asunder."

Theological Considerations In Social Service

Every individual, being created in the image of God, is of ultimate worth and deserving of the highest respect and dignity.

Jesus recognized even in the most destitute person, the image of God. He realized the potential for holy living that could be unleashed in that life through the application of divine love and forgiveness. His approach was not to condemn but to introduce the possibility of a new way of life.

In an early example of "correctional" work, Jesus sought out Zacchaeus, the dishonest tax collector, and through Christ's transforming love, Zacchaeus's life was changed.

To a young woman facing a terrifying situation, Jesus reached beyond the presenting sin in order to give hope and the opportunity for a new start in life. His goodness, gentleness and understanding spoke to her heart, and the principles by which He handled this situation set the example for The Salvation Army's ministry to "fallen women" from early days until now.

He treated her with gentleness, dignity and respect. By taking the focus of attention from her to the accusers, He dispersed the crowd, and provided a refuge from the condemnation of others. Then He spoke to her directly about her situation, "Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more" ([John 8:11](#)).

He met the immediate need—for safety, but He also gave to her the opportunity for salvation, a remedy that would permeate every area of her life.

In spite of this divine origin, individuals are subject to internal and external influences which impede functioning and detract from self-esteem and effective living.

Sin is the major internal influence that leads to problems in relationships between man and himself, between man and his neighbour, and between man and God. The doctrine of the sinful nature of man is well documented in theological text books, and is confirmed by human

history and experience. The New Testament provides numerous examples of those whose lives have been marred. The woman of Samaria, who met Jesus at Jacob's well, was burdened with guilt and ostracized from her community because of her way of life.

Sin affects not only the sinner but his family and those around him. For example, the influence of alcohol in the home can have a deleterious effect upon spouse and children, causing physical, psychological and social disruption within the individual and within the home.

External influences such as illness, loss of work, poverty and disaster can place the individual in a position of need. For the person without a living faith within his life, such setbacks often result in psychological and social upheaval for the individual and the family.

The effect of internal and external influences on fallen man creates a world that is filled with social and spiritual problems, desperately needing the love and ministry of Christian social service.

Jesus defined three ways in which deleterious influences affect the lives of people. ([John 15](#))

1. Those who are affected by the carelessness or hurtfulness of others (the Lost Coin).
2. Those who are affected by external influences because they do not have the capacity to deal with the problems (the Lost Sheep).
3. Those who wilfully respond to evil influences (the Lost Son).

Through these parables Jesus demonstrates the constant love of the Heavenly Father, and His utter willingness and longing to receive the wanderer back into the fold. Equal care and loving concern are expended on behalf of the lost person, regardless of the reason for his failure. Those who have wilfully gone astray deserve the loving attention and ministry of the Christian social worker whose pattern is Christ.

Individuals may respond to positive, enhancing influences, and Christian principles embody these positive influences in an ideal way.

Through the positive influence brought to bear upon the situation of the young woman caught in the act of adultery, her life was transformed. ([John 8:3-11](#))

The act of service may have eternal outcomes.

The act of loving service demonstrates God's love which may lead an individual to a saving faith in Christ.

An act of loving service provides opportunity for divine intervention through the witness of the worker. This could be illustrated by Christ's interaction with the woman of Samaria.

When a person comes with a physical or social need, he may be open to the spiritual things in a way in which he has not been before, presenting an opportunity for sharing with him the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. It should not be considered, however, that the only purpose in caring for a person is to reach his soul for Christ. Jesus did not appear to merely meet the physical need with a single view to reaching the soul. Instead, He took whatever was the presenting problem and addressed the whole person.

An act of loving service may remove barriers that prevent people from receiving spiritual help. To those who criticised that it was not a part of the Church's duty to provide meals for the poor, William Booth replied, "It is impossible to warm men's hearts with the love of God when their feet are cold and their stomachs empty."

Acts of Christian service should not be done merely to fulfil these potential outcomes. Jesus showed us by example and precept that we must care and help the person at the point of need, simply because there is a need.

Meeting human need, whether physical, emotional or social, is often the means of bringing about spiritual awakening or awareness.

So Jesus had compassion on them and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed Him ([Matthew 20:34](#)).

The Example Of Christ

The example of Christian caring in the social service setting is provided by Christ and it sets the pattern for His followers who have been challenged to:

Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus... ([Philippians 2:5](#)).

Jesus willingly became the servant of mankind.

He took upon Him the form of a servant

([Philippians 2:7](#)).

But I am among you as one who serves

([Luke 22:27](#), NIV).

Those who follow in the footsteps of their Servant Lord may be found in Salvation Army hostels and hospitals, children's centres and senior citizens' homes, with "towel and basin," performing duties that are not pleasant, but are essential in meeting the physical, emotional, social and, yes, spiritual needs of someone who is most in need of loving care.

He was motivated by compassion.

Little is accomplished for the individual or the Kingdom, through service rendered without love.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels ...

Though I have all knowledge ...

Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor... and have not love, it profiteth nothing ([I Corinthians 13:1-3](#)).

In many settings, Jesus must have given evidence of His deep caring and compassionate concern as recorded by the authors of the Gospels.

So Jesus had compassion on them, and touched their eyes: and immediately their eyes received sight, and they followed him ([Matthew 20:34](#)).

When Jesus the Lord saw her (the widow at Nain) He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And he came and touched the bier... ([Luke 7:13](#)).

But when He saw the multitude He was moved with compassion on them, because they fainted, and were scattered abroad, as sheep having no shepherd ([Matthew 9:36](#)).

And Jesus went forth and saw a great multitude, and was moved with compassion toward them, and He healed their sick ([Matthew 14:14](#)).

And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him and sayeth unto him I will; be thou clean ([Mark](#)

1:41).

He was willing to share our human situation.

Jesus left His home in glory to be born into a lowly working class home. He knew poverty first hand. He experienced hunger. He had no resting place.

Foxes have holes, and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head ([Luke 9:58](#)).

He made certain that he was available to those in need.

He was often tired from the intensity of His ministry, the endless demands of people, and the pressure of crowds who moved in upon Him, but He stopped to meet their human needs. He was patient and kind.

When the disciples sent the children away He called them back and blessed them ([Matthew 19:14](#)).

He recognized the potential for good within each individual and gave opportunity for its release.

In the thief on the cross Jesus sensed the inner need and longing for forgiveness, expressed in his few words to Jesus. In that moment, Christ gave to him the gift of eternal life.

He condemned indifference to the needs of others.

Jesus provided a vivid description of the fate of the rich man who ignored the needs of the beggar, Lazarus, who sat at his gate. From the place of eternal torment he realized the error of his ways, but all too late.

He displayed a keen sensitivity to the needs of each person.

In each case of intervention by Christ, there was a presenting need, often symptomatic, of an underlying need. To those who were disabled or ill, He sensed the need for spiritual hopefulness and offered to them the gift of full restoration, physical and spiritual.

Sometimes the inner need was not recognized or acknowledged by the person who was helped.

Jesus sensed the inner need of the woman of Samaria. Because of this He engaged her in conversation through which she became aware of her need and receptive to the remedy.

The rich young ruler seemed to have everything. But Jesus was aware

of his spiritual problems and offered a solution.

* * *

This brief summary of lessons from Christ's Ministry may whet the appetite and stir the thoughts of others whose knowledge of New Testament writings could be tapped in a search for a theological basis for Christian social service.

Let us turn now to some of the recorded teachings of Christ on the subject of Christian service.

The Teaching Of Christ

An examination of the teaching of Christ, as revealed in the New Testament there is a significant emphasis on man's obligation to care for the needs of his neighbour. For those who may not be convinced of the divine imperative relative to the Christian's involvement in social service, Christ Himself has left eternal and gripping words which cannot be ignored.

Jesus was asked by one of the scribes (who was trying to fault Jesus and to bring Him under criticism), "Which is the greatest commandment of all?" Without hesitation Jesus replied:

Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength. This is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself ([Mark 12:30-31](#)).

In truth these two great commandments embody the intent of all the Ten Commandments. They also present in a concise and gripping way a summary of man's obligation to God, and to his fellow man. The Scribe and his colleagues who were listening, were undoubtedly astounded that Jesus should assess loving one's neighbour as equally important to loving God. But the obligation to one's neighbour was not a new concept. It had been presented in the Law in the Old Testament, and the frequent references to this commandment in the New Testament cannot fail to impress upon our hearts and minds its importance as a guiding principle for our living.

[Matthew 5:43](#)

Matthew 19:19

Matthew 22:39

Mark 12:31

Luke 10:27

Romans 13:9

Galatians 5:14

James 2:8

The Pattern For Social Service

The lawyer continued his questioning of Jesus with the words, "Who is my neighbour?"

([Luke 10:29](#)).

Jesus responded with a story that sets out a vivid and unforgettable picture of "love in action." This parable becomes the pattern for Christian social service and merits our keen attention to its lessons.

The Samaritan was willing to get involved.

Before his intervention two previous travellers had made their decision regarding their duty to a fellow traveller. The priest, a religious man, having come from or on his way to fulfil his ritualistic religious observances in the temple, felt no compassion or obligation to interrupt his journey for this needy, wounded victim on the road. Perhaps he was too busy. Perhaps his mind was on other more important matters. Perhaps he differentiated between the "spiritual" and the "social" and decided that this case had better be left to the community or government's social agencies so that he could get on with the duties of his "spiritual" calling.

The second man, a Levite, who served in the temple, was also on his way to or from the place of his religious obligations. More callous than the priest, he went and looked at the man, and then passed on. His indifference was the antithesis to the Spirit of Christ.

But the Samaritan dared to become involved. For him this matter required no decision. His response was a reflex action motivated by an inner conviction. His neighbour was in need and that very need drew

forth his generous and willing response.

The Samaritan crossed racial and cultural barriers.

The Samaritans normally had no dealings with the Jews. But this Samaritan forgot the racial barrier when confronted with the human need.

The Samaritan intervened, not to witness or proselytize, but simply because there was a need.

The Samaritan was moved with compassion.

All other New Testament references containing the word "compassion" refer to Jesus, His actions or His words. How significant it is that this word should be used by Jesus to describe the motivation of the Samaritan.

Commitment to the Divine Imperative for Social Service is costly.

The road was dangerous! Robbers roamed the hills and rocks along the way. Even while the Samaritan knelt to care for the wounded man, they could be lurking nearby waiting to prey on yet another victim! Unmindful of the danger, or willingly taking on the calculated risk of danger to his own life, the Samaritan takes time to bathe and dress the wounds before lifting him to his beast.

Caring is costly in terms of time! The Samaritan had the demands of his own busy life. To tend his fellow traveller he had to interrupt his journey, walk the long trek beside his beast, stop to transfer his injured passenger to the inn and make payment arrangements with the innkeeper. He did all of these things willingly and patiently with no thought of reward.

Caring is costly in terms of money and material investment! The Samaritan had generously and lovingly poured oil and wine to cleanse and heal the victim's wounds. These were valuable liquids, needed for the remainder of the journey, yet he shared unstintingly with no thought for himself. A characteristic of divine love is selfless giving, lavishly, generously and unmeasured.

The Samaritan took no thought for the possibility of soiling his hands or his clothes or the fine cloth or leather material that formed the saddle for his beast.

He spared no expense, willingly paying in advance room and board for the wounded traveller, and providing an I.O.U. if more was required.

Caring is costly in terms of emotional investment! The Samaritan "had compassion on him." The ability to feel compassion is linked to the ability to feel another's pain. To become involved in the hurts and troubles and woundings of another is to share to some extent the trauma of those circumstances.

Christian caring requires whole-hearted commitment! Did the Samaritan render token service only? No, he did all that he could with the resources he had. He could have stopped at any point in his service to this man, and felt justified that he had done his best, but instead, he followed through to the full extent of his ability to help.

The personal willing service rendered by the Samaritan signifies the responsibility of man toward his neighbour. This kind of service is given, not because of the possibility of recompense, not because of the opportunity to reach a man's soul, but simply because there is a need.

The Divine Imperative

The claims of Christ upon the Church and the individual Christian are clearly and consistently stated in the New Testament record of Christ's example and teaching.

Lest any doubt remain in the minds of His followers, Christ took a last opportunity to clarify His message, a few days before He went to the cross on Calvary. In a dissertation to his Disciples regarding the last day, the second coming and eternity, He concluded with an unforgettable description of the final judgment and the devastating punishment awaiting those who do not fulfil the requirements that are outlined. Everlasting punishment! What great sin merited such torment? There is no doubt that the disciples were astounded by the answer to this question.

Then shall He say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

For I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not

in; sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not; Then shall they also answer him saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal ([Matthew 25:41-46](#)).

The theological basis for social service is most dramatically presented in this passage. Direct, personal, loving service to our fellow man is not an option to be considered but a directive to be fulfilled.

Service to others should be the outcome of the Spirit-filled life. Christ's likeness reflects the example of Christ who went about doing good, feeding the hungry, healing the sick, restoring sight to the blind, and intervening in all manner of situations of human need. The highest aim of the Christian must be to follow in the footsteps of his Lord. Jesus said:

The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord ([Luke 4:18, 19](#)).

The Christian Church is an extension of the ministry of Christ in the world today. May we be challenged by the clarity of His claim upon us for Christian service, through organized social service programs, or through the loving, spontaneous ministrations of individual Christians.

With willing hearts, motivated by His love and purified by the Holy Spirit may we joyfully and sacrificially respond to the divine imperative for Christian service to a hurting and broken world.

Part 5 - What of the Future?

Chapter 13 - Quo Vadis the Social Services?

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Secretary For Social Services

The Salvation Army

Canada And Bermuda Territory

Francis Bacon wrote centuries ago, "Dreams and predictions ought to serve but for winter talk by the fireside." Despite his warning I will dare to take the role of a futurist. *First, some background reminders*

Canada is a caring country. Twenty-one point two per cent of our Gross National Product was devoted to social expenditures in 1980. Significant negative economic factors are making it more difficult for governments to maintain and improve their contribution to the welfare of Canadians however. The reduction of poverty seems to have been brought to a standstill. There is reluctance to raise further taxes to support social programs.

The voluntary sector has traditionally played a major role in initiating and delivering social services in Canada. The Judeo-Christian religious dynamic has sparked most of the people-helping programs in Canada. Theology has been transformed into conduct in a myriad of ways.

Governments and voluntary organizations have worked together in a common purpose—to assure the best good of all—families, individuals and groups in our society.

Joint ventures have abounded and both segments of service delivery have benefitted from the partnerships. There is no sign of slackening. In fact provincial governments have or are talking of "privatizing" some services. This trend could lead to the voluntary sector assuming significant services now provided by governments.

Governments have recognized the indispensibility of strong voluntary

bodies. The Salvation Army has been frequently cited by federal and provincial governments for effective and impartial provision of social services to our fellow Canadians. A recent example of this appreciation is the flood of accolades received in 1983 on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of our Correctional Services work in Canada. Amongst the voluntary organizations in this country we are highly respected. The general public continues to generously support us. The statistical evidence is profoundly impressive and the slogan "Where there is a need—there is The Salvation Army" has been fulfilled in countless situations. Responses to changing needs have been demonstrated also.

A recent modification in the administrative structure of the social services has resulted in the establishment of the office of Secretary for Social Services. Under that senior administrator the Health, Men's Social, Women's Social, Correctional and Senior Citizens Services Departments administer institutions and programs of great variety and diversity. The Family Services, Services to Addicts, and various other social services programs are under the senior administration of the Secretary for Program and the direct administration of Divisional Commanders. Statistics for 1984 indicate a 10% growth in the number of officers and employees directly involved in social services since 1981. Approximately 400 officers and 7,500 employees are so engaged today.

What of the future? Here are nine predictions which may prove to be more accurate than George Orwell's were for 1984.

1. *Our population is aging.* The graying of Canada is both good and bad news. This trend will gradually cause a reduction in the work force as more retire than enter working age. Eventually this should provide opportunities for the unemployed members of the work force. The aging trends will increase the burden on the Senior Citizens' Services. Increasing numbers of beds for elderly patients requiring heavier care will be required. There will be tremendous opportunities for initiating new programs to help older people remain active and independent of institutional care as long as possible. Innovative services for the elderly will highlight our future.

2. *The Salvation Army position on key moral and social issues* will bring it into direct disagreement with major funders such as governments. We may have to relinquish contracts and forego service opportunities because of our ethical and moral stand.

Increasingly we will take our stand in the face of a society with radically different values from our own. Unless a great spiritual awakening sweeps the land we will represent the views of a diminishing minority. Recently in New York City The Salvation Army refused to sign social services contract renewals worth \$4.5 million when the Mayor insisted that a clause stating that "No one may be denied employment because of sexual orientation or sexual preference" be included. An exemption from the bylaw requiring the clause was not allowed and on 30th June, 1984, the City funding for programs serving 1,400 people were to end. Alternative funding is being sought and it is hoped that some, if not all, of the programs can continue.

3. The 7th March, 1984, issue of the *Globe and Mail* highlighted the plight of the hundreds of thousands of *unemployed Canadian Youth* (aged 15-24). The Federal government every single day spends about \$3.2 million on youth employment programs. Studies have indicated that with the "hidden unemployed" the actual number of young people 15-24 out of work is close to 740,000. The human misery toll and loss of productivity are staggering. Social unrest is predicted for the years ahead. Teen-aged prostitution, petty crime, and teen-aged suicide are on the increase. Salvation Army social services will be challenged to respond to the needs of young people to a greater degree in the future. Existing services, some of which offer excellent prototypes, will provide the guideposts to new programs. 1985 is The United Nations and Salvation Army International Youth Year and this will provide added impetus to expanded youth services.
4. *What is ahead for the family!* If the past decade provides an accurate indication the family is in for more fracturing and separations. Marriage break-up has become so prevalent that of the 190,000 marriages in 1981, at least one of the partners in 80% of the cases had been married previously. One half million children

are the residue of broken families in Canada and. according to social scientists one in three or 170,000 of these children will experience significant emotional scarring. One of the two major situations that seem to contribute to teenagers' suicidal tendencies is family breakdown. There is considerable evidence that child and wife abuse are on the increase. Half of the child neglect occurs in single parent families which, by the way, now comprise four of every ten Canadian families.

Our Social Services are challenged on every hand by the disintegration of traditional family life and will be so for the foreseeable future. More than 120,000 families were assisted by our Family Services Department in 1983. New approaches to the primary problem of family breakdown are being made by The Salvation Army. An office of Pastoral Care has been established where "prevention" is the by-word. Through formal pre-marital preparation and post-marital follow-up programs, including marriage enrichment seminars, the Army is meeting needs where significant preventative measures can be taken. This program will expand beyond the current constituency as trained personnel are available and make a valuable contribution to the conservation of family life in Canada in the years ahead.

In future, people will live longer and marriages reaching golden and diamond anniversaries should be common. One spouse will become more important as the increasingly technological world becomes more impersonal. Helping families cope will provide a great challenge for our social services program planners.

5. *The revolution in communications* now gathering momentum will undoubtedly affect the future delivery and operation of Salvation Army social services. We have begun the use of computers for storing and distributing fiscal statistical data. This process will continue. It will help us significantly in the greatly expanded planning function which will be a key aspect of the more sophisticated management teams of the future. Innovation through well documented research will be typical in tomorrow's social services also. Our improved capacity for gathering, storing and quickly retrieving pertinent data will help us meet rising

expectations by our supporters for additional concrete evidence of our stewardship.

6. In the future Salvation Army social services will be involved more deeply in *issues associated with employee and client concerns*. These groups will want more say in how our services are provided. We will meet these challenges by thoughtfully and sincerely developing additional ways for our employees to participate in determining how the work gets done. We will seek to find further avenues for the users of our services to help us with the development and improvement of those services.
7. The emphasis by Governments on *de-institutionalization* will continue to provide challenging opportunities for us in services to the developmentally handicapped, the mentally ill, law-breakers, prison inmates, the physically ill and the elderly. Group homes, day care programs, community resource and residential centres, co-operative apartments, day hospitals and out-patient clinics will all continue to proliferate. Some of our larger residential care facilities may have to be replaced by smaller units and in other significant and expensive ways be modified in order to effectively serve in the future.
8. *The rationalization of services*— in the future we must try even harder to get the very best use out of every dollar. This includes the maximizing of the utilization of every resource from heating the building to providing services. It means ensuring that the deployment of personnel is at the highest level of efficiency and effectiveness. It means that the quality of service must be of the very highest order. Staff development will be a critical concern. A high level of co-ordination of social services and the most efficient administrative structure must be sought.

Another word which will be of increasing popularity is "*networking*". Networking implies the opening up of channels of contact and complementary service provision at the highest possible level. The Salvation Army is the envy of many social service agencies because we already have our own network of services. However, the challenge for us is to ensure that communication and co-ordination of those services is constantly maximized. The other

phrase which helps to fill out the concept of rationalization of services is the expression "*a systems framework*". By this we mean that all the elements that affect a particular problem situation are examined from the standpoint of how they interrelate with that particular problem and its solution. For example The Salvation Army has resources for the treatment of alcoholics but in some ways we are mutually exclusive in our approach to the needs of such people with the way our services are divided. We have some excellent general hospitals with out-patient and emergency services capable of caring for persons with acute alcoholic difficulties; we have Harbour Light Centres with their special treatment approach; we have Men's Social Services Centres with their rehabilitation facilities and we have our Salvation Army Corps where the strong family atmosphere and the emphasis upon Evangelism provides a location where many alcoholics have found new life. In the future, the rationalizing of services concept and the idea of networking to maximize the use of all resources through fully understanding what those resources are and applying them to the needs of a particular client, patient or needy sinner through a systems analysis approach could ensure that The Salvation Army more effectively reaches the man or woman or adolescent who is struggling with alcoholism and other social problems.

There will be more chaplaincy opportunities developed in social services settings. Closer links with Salvation Army Corps will be cultivated by our social services also. Thus there will be further strengthening of the relationships between services for the people we serve.

9. One final factor which influences the development of Salvation Army social services and we pray will more intensively influence it in the future is *the search for excellence*— that is, "surpassing the mediocre and striving for the ideal." In Salvation Army social services management, *excellence* will increasingly become a prime concept. Popular management philosophy says "if a thing is worth doing at all, it is worth doing well." It is psychologically a very sound principle to take pride in what you do, but it makes man the measure of all things. This is a humanistic approach. The Biblical

view makes God the measure of all things. Excellence then becomes not a basis for public comparison before man, but a basis for personal evaluation before God. And it is on this which Salvation Army Officers and employees who share our view of Scripture base our actions. The future of Salvation Army social services is assured by the fact that we are rooted and grounded in Christ Jesus. His standard of excellence is the one after which we strive. His standard of doing all things well is a standard to which we aspire. It is His standard of being the servant of all, of being willing to sacrifice even His own life that gives us the motivation for our service. Christ's standard of excellence will be seen in the quality of our service to others. It will appear in our management of our properties and our funds. It will show itself in our love for the least and the lowest and the lost. Bernard of Clairvaux said "Perfection consists in doing common and everyday things in an uncommon way, and not in doing great things or in doing many things."

The Salvation Army social services are sailing into the stormy seas of the mid 1980's and beyond with the same standard, with the same course, and with the same pilot that we had one hundred years ago. We are still "a spiritual force with an acute social conscience" recognized by Arthur Meighen, one of your noblest departed associates. There will be a continuing balancing of our evangelism and our social services in the corps, the community and institutional services.

Chapter 14 - Call to Renewal and Change

General Clarence D. Wiseman

OC, LLD, DD

International Leader Of

The Salvation Army (1974-1977)

The original title given to me for this paper was, "*Call to Renewal or Change*". No one would challenge the fact that we live in a period of rapid social change, and that future prospects point to an acceleration of change as high technology takes over in industrialized societies, with all its implications and uncertainties. Added to this factor is the spiritual malaise evident in many countries, with a consequent loosening of ancient spiritual loyalties and a steady slide toward secularism.

It is a fact, however, that The Salvation Army has thrived on change! Ever since its inception in 1865, it has experienced a perpetual diet of change and upheaval. It was born into an age of radical social dislocation. The Industrial Revolution in Great Britain had already lured people by the millions from countryside to city, crowding them into back-to-back houses in mean and narrow streets. Slums, sweatshops and poverty were the lot of the poor, while the few waxed fat and wealthy.

Since then the Army has weathered the vicious storms of change created by two World Wars, the desperate days of the Great Depression, the pain of the more recent economic recession, and the terrifying traumas of transition, famine and revolution in Third World nations. Change has always lurked in the wings and more often than not occupied history's centre stage throughout the whole of the Army's short lifespan. Not only has the Movement survived by God's abundant grace, but it has been granted wisdom to adapt policies and methods to the changing conditions, even if sometimes tardily. Without any degree of smugness, let me say that I see no reason why this should not continue, providing we hold true to our theological heritage.

I hope I shall be granted absolution for taking the liberty of altering the original title of the paper. One word has been dropped, because it disturbed me. Granted that this may have been simply a sign of my

obtuseness! But the fact is that word "or" bothered me to the point where I felt compelled to replace it with the ubiquitous conjunction "and." Thus instead of "Call to Renewal *or* Change", the title now reads: "Call to Renewal *and* Change."

Let me explain why. The bothersome word "or" suggested to me an uncompromising dichotomy—either you have renewal without change, *or* you have change without renewal! Now renewal without change would be no renewal at all, for change is implicit in the vitality of renewal. On the other hand, change without renewal wouldn't have a chance—it would fall flat on its face, dead as a dodo! I feel confident my interpretation of the original title was not the intention of its author, but this is the way it impressed me.

The answer to the impact of change on the Army's world-wide social ministry is not "either—or"; it is "this and that". We need, we have ever needed, we shall always need both renewal and change. They come together in complementary and fruitful conjunction. Were there no change it would be easy to settle down, to become complacent, even dormant. Life would lose its zest and challenge. Change evokes response, and response instructed by the Holy Spirit is positive and creative. It creates a channel for renewal! Instinctive in Salvationism is the wisdom that effective response to altering circumstances and conditions must recognize the spiritual parameters set from the beginning for the Movement, as part of the living Church. The history of the Church supports the conviction that within the context of a vital faith, change and renewal go hand in hand.

In 1904, by which time The Salvation Army was at work in many lands throughout the world, William Booth set out its function and purpose in clear, if somewhat "Victorian", language. The occasion was a great International Congress in London, England:

To make known to men the existence of, character, and will of God.

To proclaim to men the laws God has made for their guidance and the plan of salvation He has designed for their deliverance from sin, misery and hell.

To bring men to know, love, obey and serve God, and to be

conformed to His image.

To unite those who love God in Christ-like service for their fellows. To strengthen the government and extend the Kingdom of God on earth. Should the Army stray from these biblically-based theological principles which set its ministry within the ambience of God's grace, then indeed its effectiveness as a vital Christian force in society would falter and ultimately fail. It would stand under divine judgment, its very existence in jeopardy.

This is not to suggest that the Army should ignore human wisdom and ingenuity. Far from it! It has always been prepared to utilize new insights, ideas and devices of constructive value in its service for others.

Our social work has kept abreast of the times, utilizing modern techniques and insights and responding creatively to changing conditions. However, leaders have always been quick to explain that The Salvation Army is not a social service agency. It is a living part of the Church, the Body of Christ, and its motivation for social service springs from Christly love. The theology of Salvationists is the source of their Christian witness, authority and action.

What was said in 1975 is true now, and ever shall be as long as there is a Salvation Army! The unchanging dynamic of its social ministry the world over is found in the intelligent and sacrificial devotion, faith and compassion of those who witness and serve beneath its Flag. They have learned to express their love for God in concern for their neighbour.

This is what I meant when I said that change within our social services to meet the challenge of changing times and needs should be undertaken within the parameters established from the beginning. Only in this way can our given identity, purpose, and motivation be preserved. Probably the essence of our social work may be found in the simple statement of a homeless man who needed help. When the Army opened a residence for destitutes in an African city a few years ago, a new arrival commented, "I like it very much, for it has prayers and hot water."

One would not have to wear the mantle of a prophet to predict some of the pressures to which the Army's social services might be exposed in the foreseeable future. Indeed many of these pressures are already emerging.

Let me, therefore, raise a few warning flags over several particular areas. No doubt there are other areas of concern which those involved in social services and thus much closer to the realities of the situation would wish to add to my short list:

1. There is a tendency on the part of some authorities in our increasingly secularized society to disregard the fact that The Salvation Army is a Christian movement; treating us simply as another humanitarian agency engaged in good works from worthy, but not theological, motives.

We thank God for good people engaged in good works, who serve from humanitarian motives. It should not be construed as criticism of such people for Salvationists to insist that their motivation is the love of God "poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" ([Romans 5:5](#)). What Christians do in response to Christ's command to love one's neighbour as oneself is so instinctive as it were, so unself-conscious, that often they barely realize they are doing it, like the people in Matthew's Gospel of whom Jesus said, "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" ([Matthew 25:31-46](#)).

Love of God is the sign that stands above all Christian conduct and action, whether it be service for the neighbour, work, joy, sleeping, waking, eating, drinking! Everything comes under the command of love. The Christian cannot be a mere "humanitarian" if that means eliminating God from His sovereign place in human affairs. Salvationists are first citizens of the Kingdom of God to which they owe prior allegiance, then citizens of the world. By way of the Incarnation, Crucifixion and Resurrection of our Lord, and now through the faithful witness and service of His followers, the Kingdom of God continues constantly to break into the world with redemptive love, healing and wholeness. To conceal or in any way denigrate the theological motivation for the activities of The Salvation Army would be unworthy of our claim to be servants of the Servant Lord.

Under increasing pressure from secularized societies it is possible the Army will be tempted to compromise principles in order to maintain existing operations. Let me present as an example a situation which resulted in the Army losing considerable public funding. The Salvation

Army refused to sign a contract with the City of New York that would have required the Army, under certain circumstances, to hire homosexuals. A request for religious exemption was denied. Hypothetically, under the terms of the contract, The Salvation Army could have been required to hire not only homosexuals but pedophiliacs—those with sexual desires toward children—in their day care centres. The Army chose as it must always do, to abide by the teaching of God's Word, even at great loss of funding for its services. A statement issued by the Commissioner's conference in the United States upheld the movement's internationally recognized spiritual principles when it declared that "The Salvation Army has been established to provide humanitarian services consistent with the values and goals of the Christian faith. This factor will be considered in the employment of those members of the staff which the organization determines have the responsibility for transmission of these values."

Standing firmly, as it does, by the principles expressed by the Commissioner's Conference, it should be added that the Army believes it has an evangelical mandate to minister in Christian love and with sensitive awareness to the spiritual needs of all life-styles, without condoning them. This ministry is conducted in the name of the Redeemer Lord who extends salvation and healing to the "whosoever will."

Not only at the senior echelon of leadership as exemplified by the USA Commissioner's Conference, but at all levels, Army leaders should have such a thorough grasp of the theology of social services that they will be capable of safe-guarding the Movement against involvements that could lead to an erosion of the essential spiritual priorities which undergird the Christian system of values.

Care should be exercised by leaders not to get trapped into acceptance of contracts which might seriously restrict the sensitive transmission of the Christian message of love, healing and salvation. This message may be transmitted not by word only but also by actions, attitudes and conduct which recognize the dignity and worth of persons—even "the least of these my brethren."

It is quite clear that failure to provide this message in one form or another when delivering it, would be tantamount to a rejection of the Army's basic obligation to serve in the name of Jesus Christ. The two

kinds of "delivery" stand together in spiritual solidarity and it would be a sorry travesty if the Army's inspired name became a mere euphemism to mask the denial of this truth.

2. It is conceivable that the Army might be pressured to get involved with well-funded new forms of social service, notwithstanding the fact that others might be better equipped to handle the job, and even more important, that the new demand might drain off personnel and/or other resources from already over-taxed services for the poor, the handicapped, the alienated and the fallen. These are the people for whom Christ was particularly concerned; they have little chance of helping themselves.

Only those who fail to think things through, neglecting to study the question within the context of the Army's priorities, overall ministry, and existing commitments, would yield to such pressure. It should be made clear, however, that the Army recognizes that need is by no means restricted to those who have little of this world's goods, or to minorities within our society. Social and spiritual needs exist in every class—wealthy as well as poor and in all ethnic groups. But we dare not neglect those who require special care and help and have little prospect of being able to help themselves.

While on this subject, I should mention a principle which Salvationists are expected to maintain the world over: Help for those who need it is unconditional—it has nothing to do with religion, race, colour, class—it depends on need. So it was with the Lord.

3. There is an inbuilt pressure in virtually all forms of organization to expand and multiply structure and staff at management levels. The recent depression has put a curb on this tendency, but it will return. This is a pressure the Army should continue to resist.

I was intrigued by a cartoon in an English newspaper. It showed a towering skyscraper, with two little men standing beneath it. One said to the other, "What is that?" The other replied, "That is the hospital administration block!" "But where's the hospital?", was the rejoinder, "Not built yet," came the reply. "You see, we're out of funds."

Management is necessary, head offices are required, improved business techniques are important, new technology should be adopted where it can truly help. They should not, however, be overpowering or

threatening. Rather, they should be seen as servants of the Army's primary function: meeting the spiritual and material needs of people. Proper balance and supportive relationships should be maintained between those in management, and those who are meeting the needs of people at their place of need.

Though management should not be depreciated, it should be maintained at a *minimum* level compatible with efficiency. The truism that "efficiency and responsiveness" are essential requirements of a good system of government applies with equal force to good Salvation Army administration. Only a management team which handles its business efficiently, and is sensitively responsive to those directly engaged in service justifies its existence.

4. In order to ensure the future effectiveness and integrity of Salvation Army social services extreme care should be exercised in selection of personnel, both Salvationist and non-Salvationist. They should be people of quality who readily accept the basic theological assumptions which undergird our ministry. They should also possess the personal character, knowledge and skills necessary for their task.

People who lack the compassion needed in Salvation Army social services are often inclined to be cold, unsympathetic, even judgmental, especially when dealing with those whose morals, conduct and lifestyle they find reprehensible and offensive. Insensitive workers frequently do more harm than good.

Salvationists will find the key to a healing relationship with those they seek to help, in the teachings and example of Jesus. This is not a simplistic statement. In-depth study of the gospels provides an astonishing wealth of information and guidance for Christian social workers. Let me give one example.

The Lord, who explicitly extended the seventh Commandment, "Thou shalt not commit adultery," into the realm of imagination, refused to sit in judgment on the woman taken in adultery. But if He did not condemn her, it is equally true He did not pardon her nor condone her action. He sternly challenged her hypocritical accusers, and they fled as He bent and with His finger wrote in the sand. On the other hand, He was tender to the adulteress, though uncompromising in regard to her adultery which He

clearly classified as sin—"Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more". The Lord mercifully opened before her an opportunity to change her ways, for "He did not come to judge but to save." Here the attitude that Salvationist social workers should adopt when faced by similar situations is clearly established. Those who have sinned grievously are precious in the sight of the Holy Redeemer. May our care match His tenderness toward the erring.

5. The Army of the future must ensure the vitality and growth of the Corps. If Corps fail the whole Army fails. Quality leadership in Corps is an imperative. The Army should resist the temptation to overload Corps Officers with so many extraneous duties that their primary responsibility for building God's Army through the Corps is impeded.

As already emphasized, The Salvation Army is part of the universal Church and its rich diversity of ministries, among them the social services, cannot be properly understood unless seen in this light. At the heart of Salvationism is the Corps (Church) where its soldiers, adherents and friends worship. It is a "family place", a place of spiritual training and evangelistic outreach into the community.

Corps and Social should not be viewed as competitors but as partners in the supreme objective of building the Kingdom of God. The Army's world operations comprise a unified force dedicated to this task under the sovereign command of its Servant Lord.

Many Corps are involved in limited forms of family services, and in some Territories other social service activities are carried on from Corps centres. In Great Britain the Goodwill type of Corps has flourished, and in America there are Corps Community Centres—all with social service involvements. Great caution should be exercised; however, lest Corps Officers get so caught up in social service activities that Corps suffer from lack of spiritual planning and leadership.

It is both psychologically and spiritually important that Corps Officers should perceive their fundamental responsibility as that of building up the Corps both spiritually and numerically, at the same time extending their evangelical outreach in the community. If other activities are allowed to seriously interfere with these primary obligations the Corps will fail to achieve their God-given purposes.

A Corps Officer will find his hands full with his teaching, preaching, counselling and visitation activities. A good Corps Officer will also encourage his people to get involved, as circumstances permit, in some expression of caring service as well as evangelical endeavour throughout the community. In fact the two go together, and this is in agreement with the Lord's Great Commission to take the gospel to the "end of the world", and His Great Command to love our neighbours.

The well-trained Officer will not attempt to do everything himself. He will follow the example of the Lord Who, very early in His ministry, delegated responsibility to His disciples. He made clear what they were to do, where they were to go, to whom they should minister, how they should conduct themselves, and the message they were to deliver. The strategy of discipling involves a learning experience for soldiers of the Army and probably more attention should be given to this vital aspect of leadership in training colleges and schools. While the officer has, under God, the ultimate responsibility for the corps, true success will be measured by the extent that he is able to mobilize his local resources.

In an address entitled, "The Future of The Army" given by the Founder at the 1904 International Congress he described a Corps in the following manner:

And I see that Citadel (Corps) is not only a house of prayer and a Battery of Salvation, but a centre of every conceivable humanizing and spiritualizing influence and activity. I see that every Citadel is a centre from which proceeds the religious visitation of every house around it... I see that every Corps takes on its shoulders the responsibility for the regular visitation of every hospital, infirmary,... within its circle.... And then I see with blessed visions that salvation is offered in every market square, in every public thoroughfare, in every park, and, in short, at every public resort where there is opportunity

To General William Booth, salvation embraced the total person, and obviously he expected Salvation Army Officers and soldiers in our Corps to share the same vision.

As is well known, The Salvation Army's social services grew out of William Booth's epochal book, *In Darkest England And The Way Out*,

published in 1890. Francis Thompson (1859-1907), an eminent and spiritually sensitive English poet who wrote such classics as "*The Hound of Heaven*", had himself wandered the streets of London penniless, forgotten and homeless. Therefore he knew from bitter experience what he was saying when by special request he wrote a review of the Founder's great book. Let me quote part of his review, as given in General Frederick Coult's book, *Bread for my Neighbour*:

I had knowledge more intimate than most men of this life which is not a life; to which food is as the fuel of hunger; sleep, our common sleep, precious, costly and fallible, as water in the wilderness; in which men rob and women vend themselves; because I have such knowledge, I read with painful sympathy the book "In Darkest England" just put forward by a singular personality. I rise from the reading of it with a strong impression that here is at last a man who has formulated a comprehensive scheme, and has dared to take upon himself its execution.... In God's name, give him the contract! And, except in God's name, it were wanton to try it.

That contract to stand by the needy, lift up the fallen, help the helpless and shelter the homeless, and to present Christ as world Redeemer and Life-giver, has been transmitted to us. May we remember Francis Thompson's warning: "Except in God's name, it were wanton to try it."