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2. 'O Boundless Salvation'¹

'Save Souls, Grow Saints, and Serve Suffering Humanity' – The Army's Holistic Vision

James E. Pedlar

One of The Salvation Army's great gifts to the broader Christian tradition is the holistic nature of Salvationist mission. When General John Gowans stated that the Army's mission was to 'save souls, grow saints, and serve suffering humanity', he immediately caught the imagination of Salvationists worldwide, because he so aptly captured the Salvationist story and ethos. These three aspects of Christian mission are integrally connected in Salvationist thinking. Evangelization is intended to lead to holy living, or 'full salvation', and both evangelization and holy living require the embodied demonstration of the gospel in service to the most vulnerable.

While this holistic vision was the intended basis of Salvationist mission from the early days of the movement, I will argue in this essay that the articulation of this mission in holistic terms was initially hindered by a dualistic conceptual framework, which bifurcated evangelism and holiness on the one hand, and the spiritual and social mission on the other. Thus, a two-stage view of Christian salvation undermined an integrated view of personal redemption, and a strong 'spiritual' vs. 'social' distinction undermined an integrated understanding of redemption in its corporate and social dimensions. Starting in the middle of the twentieth century, however, Salvationists began to move away from these dualistic conceptualizations, and to re-articulate their understanding of salvation, and therefore of their world-wide mission, in more holistic and integrated ways. This holistic theological perspective, which has emerged from the unique Salvationist history and ethos, offers the church catholic a compelling vision of salvation and Christian mission.

Toward the Reintegration of Sanctification and Salvation

While the early Salvation Army was primarily an evangelistic mission, the Booths had always maintained that "full salvation" was an essential aspect of the gospel they preached. Booth addressed the 1877 Conference of The Christian Mission with these words, which are well-known to students of Salvation Army history:

¹ William Booth, *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*, 298

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Holiness to the Lord is to us a fundamental truth; it stands to the forefront of our doctrines. We write it on our banners. It is in now shape or form an open debatable question as to whether God can sanctify wholly, whether Jesus does save His people *from* their sins.²

The Booths associated themselves with a historic Wesleyan understanding of salvation, as interpreted by the transatlantic Holiness Movement. This meant that William Booth 'was sure that sanctification was a second, definite work of grace in the heart of the believer',³ and that he stressed an instantaneous account of entire sanctification. In *Purity of Heart*, Booth outlined his understanding of entire sanctification in terms that echoed those of many other Wesleyan-Holiness preachers, clarifying that entire sanctification does not imply freedom from suffering, temptation, falling, or infirmities.⁴ The 'pure heart' then, Booth states, is a heart that has been cleansed by the Holy Spirit from all sin, and enabled to please God in all it does; to love him with all its powers, and its neighbour as itself.⁵ Catherine Booth likewise taught that believers could move from a justified state, where they had 'power over sin', to a 'platform where the believer abides so abides in Christ that he sins not, that he Loves God [sic] with all his heart, and soul, and mind, and strength'.⁶

Scholars have debated the extent to which various early Salvationist thinkers should be more closely identified with John Wesley's theology or Holiness Movement perspectives on entire sanctification. For example, John Read's recent book does an excellent job of teasing out various influences in Catherine Booth's holiness doctrine, noting that Palmer, Finney, Mahan, Broadman, and others had influence, but that she was most firmly rooted in the Wesleyan tradition as read through John Fletcher.⁷ David Rightmire has argued that Samuel Logan Brengle brought Salvationist thinking back to a more authentically Wesleyan view, nuancing some of the more Holiness Movement-influenced articulations of the first generation of Salvationist

² William Booth, 'Holiness: An Address at the Conference', in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed by Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 81.

³ Roger J. Green, *War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth* (Atlanta: Salvation Army Supplies, 1989), 35.

⁴ For the original source of these common disclaimers, see John Wesley's Sermon 40, 'Christian Perfection', §§1.1-9, in Albert C. Outler, ed., *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 2 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1985), 100-105.

⁵ William Booth, *Purity of Heart*, Reprint. (London: Salvation Books, 2007), p. 14.

⁶ Catherine Mumford Booth, *Papers on Godliness: Being Reports of a Series of Addresses Delivered at James's Hall, London, W., During 1881* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1896), 153.

⁷ See chapters 3 and 4 of John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene, Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2013). Read insightfully notes that Catherine was closest to Palmer where Palmer was closest to Wesley. *Ibid.*, 81.

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leaders.⁸ Although there certainly are minor differences between the perspectives of the Booths and Brengle, they all display a Holiness Movement-influenced focus on the instantaneous character of sanctification – an idea which is present in Wesley, but not to the degree that it was taught by early Salvationists and their Holiness contemporaries. As Brengle put it, the transformation of entire sanctification was “not to be a slow, evolutionary process, but an instantaneous work, wrought in the heart of the humble believer by the Holy Ghost.”⁹ The instantaneous nature of the change was linked to another Holiness Movement-related characteristic of early Salvationist teaching on holiness: the idea that the sinful nature was ‘destroyed’ or ‘removed’ in the instantaneous work. ‘Entire sanctification supposes *complete deliverance*’, William Booth wrote. ‘Sin is *destroyed* out of the soul, and all the powers, faculties, possessions, and influences of the soul are consecrated to the service and glory of God’.¹⁰ While Wesley did write about inward sin being ‘destroyed’ in a few isolated places, it was neither his characteristic, nor his best way of explaining Christian perfection.¹¹

Further research and analysis regarding the degree to which the Booths and their early Salvationist contemporaries diverged from eighteenth-century Wesleyan theology is warranted and worthwhile. My reason for noting their particular emphasis on the instantaneous and eradictory nature of sanctification as a second work of grace is not to enter into such a debate, so much as to underscore the way in which this focus on a second crisis led to a markedly two-tiered view of salvation. In fact, it led to an unfortunate distinction between ‘salvation’ and sanctification, wherein conversion, new birth, and justification were identified with ‘salvation’, and sanctification was thereby conceived as something *additional to* salvation, rather than an *integral aspect of* salvation. This is a common issue in popular evangelical piety, wherein being ‘saved’ is equated with conversion. There is certainly a sense in which this is true – those who are justified *are* saved. And yet God’s work of

⁸ R. David Rightmire, *Sanctified Sanity: The Life and Teaching of Samuel Logan Brengle* (Alexandria, VA: Crest Books, 2003).

⁹ Samuel Logan Brengle, *Heart Talks on Holiness* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1897), 4–5.

¹⁰ William Booth, “Holiness,” in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed by Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 88.

¹¹ The language of ‘destruction’ has been criticized by many twentieth-century Wesley scholars, who are keenly aware of its dangers, in part, because of the vigour with which this language was taken up by nineteenth century Wesleyans such as the Booths. As Randy Maddox has noted, Wesley’s more helpful alternative was to speak of “‘holy tempers” (i.e., enduring affections) *presently* reigning to the point of “driving out” opposing tempers (though these may return)’. Randy L. Maddox, *Responsible Grace: John Wesley’s Practical Theology* (Nashville, Tenn.: Kingswood Books, 1994), 188. For example, see Q.12 in *Farther Thoughts Upon Christian Perfection* (1763), where Wesley writes of Christian Perfection as ‘love filling the heart, expelling pride, anger, desire, self-will...’ in Paul Wesley Chilcote and Kenneth J. Collins, eds., *The Works of John Wesley*, vol. 13 (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2013), 100.

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salvation is not yet complete, as Salvationists have always understood; salvation is a past, present, and future reality. The integral nature of the salvation experience, however, was subtly undermined by the markedly two-tiered soteriology of early Salvationism, in which “salvation” became equated with conversion, and sanctification was narrowly defined in terms of a subsequent instantaneous experience.

General Frederick Coutts is generally acknowledged as the driving force behind a shift in Salvationist soteriology in the mid-twentieth century. Coutts discussed holiness in a way which shifted the focus away from a strictly crisis-focused understanding of the second work of grace, and towards a more relative and process-oriented view. The characteristic of Coutts’s approach to the question is his Christocentrism. He considered it ‘one of the laws of spiritual life’ that ‘the experience of holiness is best understood in the light of the example of Jesus’.¹² Coutts still wrote of ‘salvation’ and ‘sanctification’ as if they were two different experiences,¹³ but his focus on Christlikeness helped to move away from an overly static and dualistic framework.

Holiness is ‘both a crisis and a process’,” writes Coutts, describing the crisis as the beginning of holiness, for there “‘can be no experience without a beginning, but no beginning can be maintained without growth’.¹⁴ Though he discussed both process and crisis, he downplayed the crisis experience, and explained it a more anthropocentric manner than his predecessors. In early Salvationist literature, the crisis was primarily conceived as an act of the Holy Spirit that provided radical cleansing and empowerment, even if preceded by human ‘conditions’, and it was precisely because it was *God’s* action that this experience was thought to enable ‘instantaneous’ sanctification. Coutts, on the other hand, while acknowledging that divine action is more important than human action, gives most of his attention to the ‘act of full surrender’ on the part of the believer.¹⁵ He has much less to say than his forebears regarding what happens when the Spirit is received, and places his focus on what follows:

The crisis must be followed by a process. In the initial act of surrender I receive of the fullness of the Spirit according to my capacity to receive. But that capacity grows with receiving – as a bandsman’s facility to play grows with playing, or to speak with speaking or to follow his craft by practising it.¹⁶

While it would be accurate to over-state the relative difference on this point.

¹² Frederick Coutts, *The Call to Holiness* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1957), 15.

¹³ For example, ‘...to pass from salvation to sanctification is for some like passing from clear sunshine into a damp and clinging sea mist which hides every landmark and blankets all sense of direction’. *Ibid.*, 8.

¹⁴ Coutts, *The Call to Holiness*, 34.

¹⁵ Coutts, *The Call to Holiness*, 35.

¹⁶ Coutts, *The Call to Holiness*, 36.

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there is nevertheless in Coutts's theology of holiness a magnification of the process of sanctification, and a lessening of the priority on the crisis moment, which includes less focus on the effects of the Spirit's role in the crisis of sanctification. Thus, in his characteristic manner, Coutts writes, 'a full surrender is the beginning of the life of holy living; the end of the experience I do not – I cannot – see'.¹⁷

Coutts's thinking proved influential, in part because he went on to serve as General, and was able to oversee a radical revision of the Salvation Army's *Handbook of Doctrine*. The change in Salvation Army holiness thinking is thus dramatically illustrated in the differences between the 1955 and 1969 editions of the *Handbook*. In the 1955 edition, the bifurcation of sanctification and salvation is quite explicit and clear:

*The chief difference between salvation and sanctification is that: i. Salvation takes place when we are regenerated, and is deliverance from outward sin and the love of it. ii. Sanctification takes place usually some time after regeneration, and is deliverance from both inward and outward sin – from sin in disposition as well as in deed.*¹⁸

The 1955 *Handbook* repeats many of the teachings of early Salvationism, often in very similar language, displaying all of the characteristics of early Salvationist thinking about salvation: a two-tiered perspective, in which sanctification is conceived primarily as an instantaneous experience which includes the destruction of inborn sin. In this model, as noted above, 'salvation' is basically equated with conversion (including regeneration and justification), and sanctification has been equated with instantaneous entire sanctification.¹⁹

While the 1969 *Handbook* does speak of the 'sanctified state',²⁰ and addresses the topic of 'full salvation' towards the end of the chapter,²¹ its overall emphasis is a re-casting of Salvation Army holiness thinking around the category of 'Christlikeness'. The 'completeness' of sanctification here is defined, not in terms of a complete destruction of sin, but in the sense that sanctification "leaves no part of the personality untouched."²² Jesus Christ is the Holy One, in whom 'this experience was both perfected and made available for every believer.'²³ As in Coutts's personal writings, an attempt is made to balance both crisis and process, but the crisis is here defined primarily in terms of 'the initial dedication when the commitment is made', rather than on a

¹⁷ Coutts, *The Call to Holiness*, 37.

¹⁸ *Handbook of Doctrine* (London: The Salvation Army, 1955), 118.

¹⁹ Hence the following statement, intended as a clarification, is very telling: 'When in the Army we speak of sanctification we usually mean entire sanctification...' Ibid., 124. Indeed, the 1955 *Handbook* chapter on sanctification is entitled 'Entire Sanctification'.

²⁰ *Handbook of Doctrine* (London: The Salvation Army, 1969), 148.

²¹ *Handbook of Doctrine*, 163.

²² *Handbook of Doctrine*, 145.

²³ *Handbook of Doctrine*, 148.

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radical work of the Spirit which destroys inbred sin.²⁴

One can see, therefore, how Coutts's perspective brought fresh vision to Salvationist thinking about holiness, though he was not without his detractors.²⁵ Coutts was aware that many would receive this new approach as a 'watering down' of Army holiness teaching, but he insisted that the Christological focus actually made holiness 'more demanding', because it provided a 'sharply marked outline' and incarnate standard of holiness.²⁶ Regardless of how one might assess Coutts's perspective, it must be acknowledged that it is less dualistic, and more holistic, in its view of salvation. By softening the hard line of early Salvationist 'entire' and instantaneous sanctification, Coutts introduced a less rigid standard of holiness, one which is more easily integrated within the doctrine of salvation as a whole.

While the Couttsian shift in the mid-twentieth century helped move Salvationist thinking towards a more holistic viewpoint, it was the work of the International Doctrine Council at the turn of the twenty-first century that produced the next watershed moment in Salvationist holiness theology. The Doctrine Council's work on *Salvation Story* - another revision of the *Handbook of Doctrine* - brought the Army's soteriology to a more fully-integrated perspective.

This was accomplished, first, by beginning the discussion of 'full salvation' with reference to salvation as the work of creating us in 'the likeness of his Son, Jesus Christ', which is in fact a restoration of 'the true image of God'.²⁷ Conversion, therefore,

inaugurates a journey during which we are being transformed into Christ's likeness. Thus salvation is neither a state to be preserved nor an insurance policy which requires no further investment. It is the beginning of a pilgrimage with Christ. This pilgrimage requires from us the obedience of separation from sin and consecration to the purposes of God. This is why 'obedient faith' is crucial: it makes pilgrimage possible.²⁸

Thus sanctification is set more helpfully within the framework of salvation itself as a journey toward Christlikeness. The account still maintains the traditional stress on the need for redemption beyond the initial change of conversion, as 'the answer to this dilemma' of the Christian's frustration with their failure to live a holy life.²⁹ It is in this sense that *Salvation Story* addresses the crisis / process question, though the overall thrust of the text is

²⁴ *Handbook of Doctrine*, 159.

²⁵ See Glen O'Brien, 'Why Brengle? Why Coutts? Why Not?', *Word and Deed: A Journal of Salvation Army Theology and Ministry* 13, no. 1 (November 2010), 11–12.

²⁶ Coutts, *The Call to Holiness*, 24–25.

²⁷ *Salvation Story: Salvationist Handbook of Doctrine*. (London: Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1998), 85.

²⁸ *Salvation Story*, 86.

²⁹ *Salvation Story*, 87.

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clearly more process-oriented. 'Experienced as a crisis, sanctification becomes a lifelong process', which has an 'already but not yet' quality, as we are 'becoming what we already are in Christ'.³⁰ *Salvation Story* stresses that this ongoing work of sanctification is 'not a new experience unrelated to saving faith and the experience of regeneration'. Rather,

The same grace at work in our lives both saves and sanctifies. We advance towards the fulfilment of that which our conversion promises – victory over sin, the life of holiness made actual, and all of the graces of salvation imparted by the presence and action of the indwelling Holy Spirit and his sanctifying power.³¹

It is *Salvation Story's* framing of salvation as renewal according to the image of God which allows the text to avoid a problematic understanding of 'salvation' as simply the avoidance of eternal damnation. Thus holiness is not an add-on to a 'state' of salvation, but rather an intrinsic aspect of the gift of salvation, which has both past, present, and future dimensions. Holiness therefore is 'the work of God' which 'makes it possible to live according to the purpose for which we were created'.³² This integrated soteriology is capped off by an affirmation of the category 'wholeness' as a way of talking about 'the comprehensiveness of God's saving work in Christ and of the Spirit's sanctification'.³³

From Dual Mission to Integrated Mission

The other dualistic conceptual framework that existed within early Salvationism's comprehensive vision was the contrast between 'spiritual' and 'social' mission. The earliest Salvation Army did not did not engage in social ministries on a large scale, and generally considered these to be of secondary importance in relation to the work of converting sinners by the preaching of the gospel. Salvationists did engage with the poor and seek to alleviate various needs on a local basis, but there were no systematic social action programs.³⁴ In the 1880s this began to change through several grassroots initiatives. William Booth did not draw attention to these developments, however, and

³⁰ *Salvation Story*, 90.

³¹ *Salvation Story*, 87.

³² *Salvation Story*, 88.

³³ *Salvation Story*, 93.

³⁴ See, for example, the social ministries outlined in the first published report of The East London Christian Mission, issued September 1867, in Appendix I of Robert Sandall, *The History of The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1947), I: 265–266.

continued to speak of Salvationism as a purely evangelistic movement.³⁵ But Booth's thinking did shift around 1889 and 1890, as can be seen in his articulation of an expanded understanding of God's work of redemption, in his article 'Salvation for Both Worlds', and in the establishment of the Darkest England scheme.³⁶ I will not outline Booth's mature position on these questions in detail, since Roger Green has discussed this topic extensively in his chapter in this volume, as well as his previous writings.³⁷ For the purposes of my argument in this essay, it is sufficient to note that Booth believed that the disordering of human desires by sin and the rebellion against God which this disordering entailed were the cause of *both* eternal and temporal suffering. Thus he now believed that he had 'two gospels to preach – one for each world, or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both', and that the gospel '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 woes'.³⁸ This new conception of Salvationist mission gave rise to the elaborate 'Scheme of Social Salvation' that Booth proposed in *Darkest England*.³⁹ Thus the concept of a 'dual mission' was established both theologically and institutionally at this time.

The challenge that Salvationists have faced from the very beginning is how they should conceptualize this 'dual mission'. Does evangelistic ministry remain the priority, or are the two to be kept in balance? Booth's own statements on this matter are not as clear as they might have been.⁴⁰ However, if we give him a charitable reading, it would seem that *Darkest England* retains an evangelistic priority. Booth claimed that his 'ultimate design' remained the conversion of sinners to the gospel, but that if the plan failed in this respect, 'I shall at least benefit the bodies, if not the souls, of men'.⁴¹ So he maintained that 'if the inside remains unchanged you have wasted your labour. You must in some way or other graft upon the man's nature a new nature, which has in it the element of the Divine. All that I propose in this book is governed by that

³⁵ For an overview of these initiatives and Booth's response, see Roger J. Green, *The Life and Ministry of William Booth: Founder of the Salvation Army* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2005), 166–168.

³⁶ William Booth, 'Salvation for Both Worlds', in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed by Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 51–59; William Booth, *In Darkest England, and the Way Out* (London: Funk & Wagnalls, 1890).

³⁷ See Roger J. Green, 'An Historical Salvation Army Perspective', in *Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army* (Toronto: The Salvation Army, 1986), 45–81; Green, *War on Two Fronts*, 76–95; for a contrasting view, see Norman Murdoch, *Origins of The Salvation Army* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 146–167.

³⁸ Booth, 'Salvation for Both Worlds', 53–54.

³⁹ See Part II, which comprises the majority of the book, Booth, *Darkest England*, 85–285.

⁴⁰ See Green's comments, in 'An Historical Salvation Army Perspective', 69.

⁴¹ Booth, *Darkest England*, Preface (no page number).

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principle'.⁴² We should also note that the shift in Salvationist missional practice was under-written by broadening of Booth's understanding of redemption itself, which led Booth to believe that the 'one gospel applied alike' to the present and future worlds.⁴³ It was this expanded theological vision, along with his claim that personal conversion remained his ultimate priority, that allowed Booth to claim that the 'dual mission' was simply 'the plan to which the Spirit of God led me forty-four years ago' as a young preacher to the poor on the streets of Nottingham.⁴⁴

Subsequent generations of Salvationists have continued to sense a tension in their movement in the relationship between the 'social' and 'spiritual' aspects of their mission. This spiritual-social tension is certainly evident during Bramwell Booth's time as General. He convened an International Social Council in 1921, and the papers from this event were published and circulated as an authoritative statement of the Army's position on these matters.⁴⁵ In the context of explaining 'The Relation of Social to Field Work'. Bramwell Booth articulates a very broad vision for the Army's mission as 'a Movement designed to bring deliverance from evil to all classes'.

We shall only maintain that broad-minded view – broad as the mercy of God, deep as His love, and high as His wisdom – if our purpose embraces the whole world...And just as we would deplore, and do deplore, a contraction of the purpose of The Army as a whole, so we ought to beware of such a contraction in our Departments or in ourselves.⁴⁶

Bramwell is at pains to stress the unity of the worldwide movement, and that all its activities serve the purpose of spreading 'the Salvation of God' and 'the making of men and women into the disciples of His Son Jesus Christ'.⁴⁷ It is clear from the way that Bramwell proceeds with this argument that his ultimate aim is evangelical in the conversionist sense. He wants his officers to use 'every lawful means' to bring those who are helped by social work to the local

⁴² *Darkest England*, 45. See also 'The Millennium; or, the Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles', in *Boundless Salvation: The Shorter Writings of William Booth*, ed. Andrew M. Eason and Roger J. Green (New York: Peter Lang, 2012), 68.

⁴³ Booth, 'Salvation for Both Worlds', 53.

⁴⁴ Booth, 'Salvation for Both Worlds', 59. It is surely an exaggeration on Booth's part to claim that he had the same 'plan' as a young man in Nottingham, but his point is that he was able to see it as an aspect of his calling as an evangelist.

⁴⁵ The book was prefaced with the following notice: 'GENERAL ORDER. Whilst the Notes and Addresses contained in this Volume are not to be taken as having quite the force of Orders and Regulations, they nevertheless are the considered expression of the General's judgment on the matters referred to'. *International Social Council, 1921* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1921), vi.

⁴⁶ Bramwell Booth, 'The Relation of Social to the Field Work', in *International Social Council, 1921* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1921), 29.

⁴⁷ Bramwell Booth, 'The Relation of Social to the Field Work', 30.

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corps, and suggests that the 'ultimate success' of the social work 'must more and more be measured by the extent to which men and women and children are brought to the knowledge of Salvation, and passed on to The Army'. While stressing that social work that does not do this can still be considered a success in some sense, it is the move towards making disciples that 'distinguishes the Social Work of the Army' from other efforts.⁴⁸ Appealing to the revivalist origins of the movement, Bramwell stresses:

We did not start out to take away from the Poor Law or from charitable societies their work. We started out to make men and women new by the power of the Spirit of God, and we have proved that it can be done. There may be a place for work which goes no further than the temporary alleviation of misery, and we have always been glad to see some work of that nature done. But, strictly speaking, *it is not our work, except so far as it opens the way for effective deliverance of the people.* The bread that perisheth can never do the much good, unless it brings them to the Bread of Life.⁴⁹

The stress laid on this point seems to indicate a concern on Bramwell's part that The Salvation Army might be simply doing the social work of other agencies, without leading people to personal salvation in Christ. He closes by exhorting them to 'rise up in the power of the Spirit, and let us really make our Institutions what it was originally intended they should be [sic]', meaning that their success should be gauged by whether or not they produce Salvationists.⁵⁰

In spite of this clear prioritization of 'spiritual' over 'social', Bramwell included a chapter in his 1925 revision of the *Orders and Regulations for Corps Officers* (1925) on 'Relationship to Social and Other Work' in which equality between the two branches of the Army was stressed. Here officers are advised to 'constantly bear in mind that the various branches of The Army comprise substantially one whole', since the 'ultimate object of both Corps and Social Work is the same'. Therefore officers are sternly warned that they should 'never, either in private or in public, utter anything which suggests that one side of the Work is superior or inferior to the other'.⁵¹ The inclusion of such an explanation and warning suggests that some officers supported the superiority of one side or the other. Salvation Army social work continued to expand throughout the mid-twentieth century, and these tensions were certainly not eased as Salvationists became involved in health care.

⁴⁸ Bramwell Booth, 'The Relation of Social to the Field Work', 31–34.

⁴⁹ Bramwell Booth, 'The Relation of Social to the Field Work', 35. A similar account of the relation between social and 'spiritual' work is found in 'Brief Facts About The Salvation Army: What It Is,' in *The Salvation Army Year Book, 1925* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1925), 13–16.

⁵⁰ Booth, 'The Relation of Social to the Field Work', 36.

⁵¹ Bramwell Booth and William Booth, *Orders and Regulations for Corps Officers of The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1925), 308.

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education, and military chaplaincy.⁵² The ongoing concern about a fragmentation of Salvationist mission along social/spiritual lines is evident by the fact that Bramwell's 1925 chapter on 'Relationship to Social and Other Work' was retained word-for-word in editions of the *Orders and Regulations for Corps Officers* through the 1970s.⁵³ The need to articulate a clear understanding of how Salvation Army social work was related to the gospel was a constant issue for each generation of Salvationist leaders.

Once again, General Frederick Coutts proved to be a pivotal thinker, crafting one of the most-quoted statements on this topic at the Army's centennial celebrations in 1965:

...the salvation of which the New Testament speaks had always to do with the healing of the whole man...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.⁵⁴

Coutts was concerned to stress the unity of Salvation Army mission in part due to changes in public perception, as the movement sought increasing public support by emphasizing its social work, often without reference to its evangelistic mission. John Coutts's 1977 book *The Salvationists* acknowledged that 'the Army is often mistaken for a voluntary society like Oxfam or even the Red Cross: the Movement's own publicity does not always discourage this misunderstanding'.⁵⁵ But by this point in the movement's history even Salvationists, in articulating an apologetic for their social efforts, did not tend to prioritize the conversion of sinners over bodily assistance. Rather, as John Coutts puts it, 'the Salvationist's concern for man's present welfare is intended to be an expression of Christ's love'.⁵⁶ He notes that religious convictions are not forced on those who come to the Army's social services, but that the

⁵² For the origins of Salvation Army involvement in these areas, see Frederick Coutts, *The Better Fight: The History of the Salvation Army, Vol. 6, 1914-1946* (London: The Salvation Army, 1976), 248-256; 267-277.

⁵³ See *Orders and Regulations for Corps Officers of The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1976), 94-95.

⁵⁴ Frederick Coutts, addressing centenary celebrations in Royal Albert Hall, 1965, quoted in Frederick Coutts, *The Weapons of Goodwill: The History of the Salvation Army, Vol. 7, 1946-1977* (London: The Salvation Army, 1986), 187. See also his account of Booth's original motivations in *Bread for my Neighbour: The Social Influence of William Booth* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1978), 20.

⁵⁵ John Coutts, *The Salvationists* (London: Mowbrays, 1977), 81.

⁵⁶ Coutts, *The Salvationists*, 82.

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'Christian motivation' for such work 'is usually fairly obvious'.⁵⁷

In the late twentieth century, Salvationists continued to attempt to re-frame their social ministries in such a way that they were not so clearly seen as inferior to evangelistic work, by moving towards a holistic understanding of the gospel. A major event in this regard was the symposium convened at Catherine Booth Bible College, Winnipeg, in the mid-1980s, to consider 'The Theology of Social Services'.⁵⁸ Of particular interest is the essay by Philip Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of the Salvationist Mission', attempts to reframe the mission of the Army by drawing on the image of 'two arms' with 'one task', understood to be 'the redemption of human life'.⁵⁹ Needham discounts the idea of social service as 'charitable acts toward less fortunate people' in favour of a view that such ministry 'is to be understood as concrete steps toward realizing the new reality of social reconciliation which has come in Christ'.⁶⁰ Drawing on the idea of a boundless and comprehensive salvation, Needham argues,

Social service is properly understood, interpreted, and practised only as a 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 lacked true spirituality. It is the gospel speaking through human concern and concrete help.⁶¹

What this means is that Salvationists 'are never *only* interested in the social dimensions of a person's life – just as we are never *only* interested in the spiritual'.⁶² This integrated approach means that social service should not be separate from the life of the local congregation, but is properly understood as a ministry of fellowship – 'the overflow of Christian Caring'.⁶³

Needham's argument is an excellent example of contemporary attempts by Salvationists to re-integrate 'social' and 'spiritual' mission on a theological level. Movement towards integration remains the dominant

⁵⁷ Coutts, *The Salvationists*, 92.

⁵⁸ The papers from this conference were published in John D. Waldron, ed., *Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian Theology of Social Services in the Salvation Army* (Toronto: The Salvation Army, 1986).

⁵⁹ Phil Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of The Salvationist Mission', in *Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian Theology of Social Services in The Salvation Army* (Toronto: The Salvation Army, 1986), 141–145.

⁶⁰ Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of The Salvationist Mission', 129.

⁶¹ Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of The Salvationist Mission', 135.

⁶² Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of The Salvationist Mission', 144.

⁶³ Needham, 'Toward a Re-integration of The Salvationist Mission', 146. See also Needham's comments in *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (London: International Headquarters of the Salvation Army, 1987), 62–64.

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theological trend in Salvation Army thinking about mission.⁶⁴ The practical re-integration of these two aspects of Salvation Army remains an ongoing challenge. Theologically, however, great strides have been made, in this more integrated perspective. It allows both types of activity to be seen as aspects of the ministry of evangelization, as both words and deeds serving testify to the good news of the gospel for the whole person.

A Vision for the Twenty-first Century

Salvationists have always been committed to a holistic vision, but their theological categories have sometimes subtly undermined that holism. Salvationist thinking over the past 150 years has been moving away from overly dualistic views of salvation and mission, and finding ways to reintegrate sanctification within salvation as a whole, while also reintegrating spiritual and social mission. These are very positive theological developments, which must be matched by holistic missional engagement at the grassroots level. In engaging these issues, Salvationists can offer an important perspective on struggles that the church as a whole must face as we move forward in the twenty-first century. Maintaining the integral connection between salvation and sanctification continues to be a challenge in the face of a prevailing popular understanding of salvation as simply 'going to heaven'. And while contemporary evangelicals are rediscovering the gospel's social implications, there is still a lively conversation taking place regarding the place of social action and social justice in relation to traditional evangelism. With their particular history and identity, Salvationists are perhaps uniquely positioned to wrestle with these very questions.

⁶⁴ See, for example, *Mission in Community: The Salvation Army's Integrated Mission* (The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2006). http://www.samistryresources.ca/UserFiles/File/mission_in_community.pdf, (accessed May 28, 2014).