MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

A Study in Salvationist Doctrine and Practice

Understanding the essentials of:
A SOLDIER'S COVENANT

Brian R. Slous

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Mobilized for Mission:
A Study in Salvationist Doctrine and Practice

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Course Introduction

Welcome to *Mobilized for Mission*. The purpose of this manual is to introduce the basic essentials of faith and practice represented by the doctrines of The Salvation Army and the affirmations of the Soldier's Covenant to people who desire membership in the church universal as Salvation Army soldiers. As a discipleship resource, *Mobilized for Mission* is also designed to provide participants with the tools they need to promote the gospel of Christ to a lost and broken world, the Army's primary missional objective.

The use of "soldiership" as a metaphor to describe the Christian is not unique to The Salvation Army. In writing his young protege, Timothy, the Apostle Paul encourages him to "Join with me in suffering, like a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2 Timothy 2:3).

In the same way, the battle against sin is a biblically based paradigm that has been adopted by The Salvation Army to fulfil the mandate of Christ's great commission to "go and make disciples of all nations" (Matthew 28:19). Achieving this goal is no simple task. The enemy of our souls is strong and the resistance to the cause of Christ at times is very intense. As the Apostle Paul addressed the church in Ephesus, he noted: "For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms" (Ephesians 6:12).

The Apostle John, however, encourages us in the battle by reminding us that "the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). This is confirmed by the testimony of Christ, himself, who said: "In this world you will have trouble. But take heart! I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

In *Mobilized for Mission*, it is recognized that the resources required for spiritual warfare come from God through the power and authority of his written Word, and the presence and power of his Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. It is important that this resource is understood to be an introduction to the essentials for one's preparation for engagement in the mission and ministry of The Salvation Army as a soldier. In writing to the church in Ephesus, Paul writes: "Therefore, put on the full armour of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand" (Ephesians 6:13).

Although it is possible to work through this material alone, *Mobilized for Mission* has been designed and is best suited for the small group setting. In this regard it is advised that a group facilitator guide the participants through the lesson material. This individual should be a mature Christian who models and has a firm grasp of Salvationist doctrine and practice.

Facilitators should recognize that although it is possible to deal with the content of each lesson in a one-hour session, there may be instances where more time is required. The commitment of the participants to read ahead and work on the material before each session will be a key factor for this issue.

In order to receive the greatest benefit from this material, each participant should also have access to the current edition of *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* and *Chosen to be a Soldier: Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army*. These two volumes represent the Army's official position in areas of doctrine and mission, and should be familiar to all individuals wishing to become soldiers in The Salvation Army.

To assist in the learning process, each lesson contains seven key components, specifically designed to guide the participant through the various aspects of the study. Therefore, it is important to understand the purpose of each section and its relevance to the lesson as a whole. The following, therefore, is an outline describing the content and purpose of each of these components and how each should, in turn, form the basis for an effective study.

A SOLDIER'S COVENANT

At the beginning of each section, boxes containing the specific statements of doctrine and mission, relevant to that lesson, can be found. These statements have been drawn directly from A Soldier's Covenant (Articles of War). As this is the document signed by each individual who wishes to become a soldier in The Salvation Army, a clear understanding and acceptance of each statement is vital to this process. These become, therefore, the foundation on which the lesson material has been developed.

COMMUNIQUE

The primary offensive weapon for the Salvation soldier is the Word of God. Each lesson begins with a key passage of Scripture, which captures the essence of the primary biblical precept to be discussed. Since every Christian is encouraged to apply God's Word to memory, this component of the lesson should be used as a tool to facilitate the discipline of Scripture memorization. Taking special note of the key verse at the beginning of each lesson will assist in bringing the content of the lesson into focus.

FOCAL POINT

This section is intended to provide an initial encounter with the key missional issues that will be explored in the lesson. Through informal discussion, each participant will be given opportunity to identify these issues and to begin discovering the relevance of the lesson material for mission and living. This introductory discussion should be kept to a brief 15 minutes.

BRIEF

Once the key issues have been raised, the "Brief" will serve to outline the key learning objectives of the lesson to follow. These objectives include a learning, feeling and action response. It is hoped that each participant will learn something through this study, develop a sense of ownership of the material and have his/her life affected in a measurable way.

In addition, each participant will be made aware of the direction of the lesson by means of a brief outline of the lesson content. By doing so, participants will receive some assurance that the issues coming out of the Focal Point will be answered in due course.

FIELD MANUAL

This section presents the instructional material for the lesson. It is intended that each participant will learn by engaging in study and dialogue as the text directs. Discussion will be best facilitated if the participants have read through each lesson prior to the group meeting. If this is accomplished a greater amount of time can be spent discussing and working through the exercises contained within the text and not on the reading of the text itself. The time allotted for working through this component will vary. The material, for the most part, should direct itself. To encourage worthy and relevant discussion, the facilitator should work ahead through the material to ensure adequate flow. The time allotted for this section should be approximately 35 minutes.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Each lesson will conclude by promoting some aspect of specific application as it relates to the life of the participant in relation to the mission of the church and The Salvation Army. Each group member will be encouraged to apply in some tangible way the principles that have been discussed in the lesson. The response to these items may be personal in nature, therefore the time spent on this as a group may require no more than five or 10 minutes.

REINFORCEMENTS

Much of the material presented in these lessons will merely serve to supply a basic understanding of the various topics discussed. It is hoped that by introducing the participants to these topics they will be motivated to build upon that which they have learned. At the end of each lesson, a listing of additional reading material will be supplied from *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* and *Chosen to be a Soldier: Orders* and *Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army.* These will serve to further support and enhance the content of the lesson. By the conclusion of the course, the entire content of each of these volumes will have been suggested as reading.

LEADER'S NOTES

These notes are designed to assist the group leader in facilitating the discussion resulting from the various exercises in the lesson material. Most questions in these lessons are rather open-ended. There are often a variety of potential "right" answers. The purpose of this guide, therefore, is to give further insight to the writer's intent surrounding the exercises themselves, in order to stimulate meaningful and relevant discussion.

As you begin *Mobilized for Mission*, may you go forward in confidence knowing that the battle is already won and the victory is secure in Christ. May the material which follows serve to strengthen your faith and equip you for your mission as a soldier of God's Army.

Lesson 1
OUR SOURCE OF REVELATION

Doctrine 1
We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

COMMUNIQUE

"All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting, and training in righteousness, so that the man of God may be thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

FOCAL POINT

There are many different belief structures at work within our society. As the global community has become increasingly smaller and more diverse, the influence of these many philosophies is having an ever increasing impact on our communities and culture. Through this process, we have become a more tolerant society, priding ourselves in our ability to accept and respect the beliefs and practices of others. It has also caused many to re-evaluate and adapt their beliefs based on the new concepts to which they have been introduced. Consequently, many, who would still identify themselves as "Christian" have, in some cases, abandoned many foundational biblical truths. In doing so, they have allowed the governing trend of public opinion to guide their actions and determine their beliefs.

It is within the context of this cultural backdrop that The Salvation Army continues to carry out its mission of reclaiming lost souls for the kingdom of God. Because of this, it is essential that Salvationists have a clear understanding of who God is, as well as the nature of our relationship with him. This becomes the basis upon which our 11 articles of faith are established. The Bible, therefore, becomes the key that reveals not only the person and nature of God, but how a relationship with him is nurtured and developed.

As we begin to explore the foundation of our faith, and the precepts that govern the way we live, take a few brief moments to* discuss *the following questions:

What are some of the basic principles by which I live my life?

What are the various sources of these principles?

Why do I trust these sources?

What basic principles can I see at work in the lives of others around me?

What may be the sources of these differing perspectives?

Can I trust any of these sources? Which ones?

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to identify the Holy Bible as the primary source of divine revelation. Participants will:

- learn why The Salvation Army holds fast to the Bible as God's inspired Word.
- gain confidence in the Bible's ability to address the issues and concerns of this generation.
- be encouraged to make the reading of the Bible a regular part of their daily routine.

To reach this objective the following concepts will be included in this week's Field Manual :

- Divine Revelation
- The Meaning of Inspiration
- Canonization
- The Relevance of Scripture for Today

FIELD MANUAL

Divine Revelation
As we discuss the validity of the Bible's claim to be the inspired Word of God, many questions naturally emerge. Many of these questions centre on the theme of divine revelation. In a society filled with many religious structures and beliefs, how can we be sure that the Bible is God's only true Word?

Natural Revelation
It is true that God has chosen to reveal the truth about his existence and nature in a number of ways. Nature, itself, works to draw humanity toward the conclusion that there must be some creative force behind the origin and preservation of the world in which we live, and the universe as a whole. This common witness of the existence of God is referred to as "natural" revelation, our initial introduction to our Creator God. All who live and breathe in this world have the opportunity to see God revealed in this way. It is from this viewpoint that the Bible also begins to unveil the nature of God.

> "In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth." (Genesis 1:1)

We are given opportunity to verify, from the very first statement of Scripture, that which we had been given good reason to consider from the start.

Use the following chart to* reflect *on the various witnesses in nature to the existence of God.* Discuss *together the ways in which these help to verify God's involvement with his creation.

	What I Have Observed	How God Has Been Revealed Through This
In Nature		
In Personal Experience		
In History		

Other aspects of "natural" revelation are also evident when we look at concepts such as our own intuition; our tendency to look heavenward in times of trouble, to pray and to worship. There is an unmistakable inherent consciousness in each one of us of the

presence of the divine, one greater than ourselves. History also bears its own witness to both divine presence and activity. Events with no other explanation but that the hand of God was present, consistently emerge from our lives and the lives of others.

Special Revelation

It is against this backdrop of history and nature that God is revealed throughout the pages of Scripture, the climax of which is the revelation of God through the person of Jesus Christ. As the writer to the Hebrews states:

> "In the past God spoke to our forefathers through the prophets at many times and in various ways, but in these last days he has spoken to us by his Son, whom he appointed heir of all things, and through whom he made the universe." (Hebrews 1:1-2)

At this point we progress in our understanding of God from within the sphere of "natural" revelation to that which is called "special" revelation; the revelation of God as it is communicated through his Word and ultimately through his Son.

Through the Scriptures, God is revealed gradually and likewise so is his plan for his children. God is also revealed through the experiences and perspectives of those who have written the 66 books that make up our Bible. Consequently, the information that has been passed on to us has not only been written over a vast number of years, but it also reflects the perspectives and contexts of people who existed long before the post-modern era in which we live. Yet, the Bible continues to be relevant and vibrant even in today's society, which is one of the many reasons we can adhere to it with confidence and assurance.

As Scripture unveils the nature of God and his plan for our lives, it also continues to unveil his standard for our conduct. We discover, for instance, that God is holy and he expects that we, as his disciples, should be holy as well (see Leviticus 19:1).

Finally, Scripture points us toward the ultimate destiny we have with God, through Christ, for eternity. Here is the consummation of this relationship, which begins at the point where we accept Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour and is ultimately realized at our time of death.

Trace ***how the following passages demonstrate the gradual revelation of God, and the unveiling of his requirements for us, his children.***

The Nature of God Revealed	God's Requirements Revealed
Genesis 1:1	Genesis 2:15-17
Exodus 20:5	Exodus 20:1-17
Numbers 14:18	Deuteronomy 6:5
Joshua 24:19	Matthew 6:33
Psalm 11:7	John 3:16
John 14:9	James 1:27

The Meaning of Inspiration
The idea of divine inspiration raises a number of questions: How did God inspire his people? How do we know they were inspired? How is this different from the inspirational writings of today? These are just samples of the inquiries we may receive, yet each is valid and important to our understanding of this topic.

Our key verse for this session, taken from 2 Timothy 3:16-17, indicates to us that "all Scripture is God-breathed," which means that the "breath" or "Spirit" of God was actively involved in its authorship. It is the extent of this involvement that often creates the greatest discussion. While some will argue that God dictated the exact words to the writers of Scripture, others maintain that they were inspired in concept and thought and the words were left up to the individuals. In fact, there is evidence that would point us in both directions right from within Scripture itself. In Revelation 1:19, John is told to write down what he sees. This would indicate that the description of his vision has been left up to him to communicate. However, in the same book we also see that in some cases he was writing down what had been said to him directly (see Revelation 10:4). This would indicate to us that God has inspired his word in different ways according to the message that is being conveyed. This in no way means that some Scriptures are less inspired than others, but that they are simply inspired differently.

One aspect which serves to strengthen this assertion is the harmony of thought and purpose that exists throughout Scripture. This level of unanimity bears witness to the fact that the ideas presented by the writers were inspired by the same source. It is possible for us to see this concept illustrated in our society today. In the world of architecture, for instance, it is not too difficult to recognize the influence of different cultures and schools of thought represented in the design of a particular building. For example, the awning on the entrance of a particular restaurant might bear a resemblance to the type of tiled roof structure one would find on a building in China. This may lead the observer to assume or conclude that the restaurant serves Asian cuisine, even before entering or looking at a menu. In the same way, the books of the Old and New Testaments bear the distinct markings of works, which have been inspired by the same author, God himself.

Canonization
It is the identification of these similar "markings" throughout the different books of the Bible that has resulted in what we call "canonization," or the process by which it was determined what books were to be included in Scripture. All other inspirational books, Christian and otherwise, should always be evaluated against what is written in the Bible. In this way, it serves as a standard (or rule) by which issues of faith and practice are measured. This enables the true disciple of Christ the ability not to be "tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching" (Ephesians 4:14).

The Relevance of Scripture for Today
One of the most important things we should remember when we read Scripture is the purpose for which it was written in the first place. Scripture's primary function is to reveal God and to direct us in our relationship with him. This is why our first doctrine clearly states that the Scriptures "**constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice**." When reading Scripture it is true that we are confronted with the cultural and scientific viewpoint of the period from which the book originates. However, one must never allow such issues to get in the way of the principles of faith and practice that arise from that same text. In it we not only see God revealed, but we see ourselves in relation to him as well.

Identify ***the key elements of faith and practice that can be drawn from the selected texts.*** **Discuss** ***the relevance of each passage for us today.***

Passage	Relevance Today
Exodus 23:1-9	
Psalm 100	
Matthew 5:14-16	
Philippians 2:5-11	

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Having determined the importance of the Bible in relation to our lives, **explore** ***ways in which it can play a more vital role in your daily routine.***

How often am I prepared to read and study the Bible on my own?

_____

_____

At what point in my daily routine will this be best accomplished?

_____

_____

What am I willing to do to ensure that I will follow through with this goal?

_____

_____

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Chapter 1: Word of the Living God

Appendix 1: The Classical Creeds

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army, London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 4: Maintaining Contact with the Life Giver

Unit A: Lesson 1
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Pages 11-12: This exercise is designed to assist the participant in examining some basic principles at work in his/her life. These may include simple things, such as being kind or not stealing. The discussion should conclude that not all people in our society are functioning from the same point of reference. It should end by considering the influences that are beneficial to society, and those that are not.

FIELD MANUAL

Page 13: Participants are encouraged to see God at work in various ways. This simple exercise is not meant to take a great deal of time, but to reflect on ways in which God can be seen at work in our world. Participants may only fill out the first column at first, and then fill out the second column as the discussion unfolds. For example: A person might observe God's involvement in nature during the spring as the trees are budding. In this case, this might reveal something of God's continual involvement in his creation as it replenishes itself.

Page 15: This exercise has two parts. Each participant should look up a verse in the first column and attempt to identify something that reveals an aspect of God's nature. It is hoped that the participants will identify how God is gradually revealed in Scripture. Not only is God revealed, but his expectations of his people are also revealed in a similar manner. For example: In Genesis 1:1, God is revealed as Creator. In Genesis 2:15-17, the requirement would be one of simple obedience. Therefore, as with any relationship, knowing both the person and the expectations involved is of vital importance to the quality of that relationship.

Page 18: This exercise can best be accomplished if each member of the group spends a moment or two looking at one specific passage. The key to this discussion centres on the issue of relevance. Participants are encouraged to link the situation represented in the passage to a similar situation that may exist today. By this, it is hoped that each will discover that the Word of God is living and applicable to every generation of reader.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 18: As a final activity, participants are encouraged to evaluate their personal devotional life. After having discussed, through the lesson material, how important and relevant God's Word is, it is hoped that participants will be encouraged to make the regular reading of God's Word an important element of their lives.

Lesson 2
OUR BELIEF IN GOD

Doctrine 2
We believe there is only one God who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

Doctrine 3
We believe there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

Doctrine 4
We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that he is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

COMMUNIQUE

"In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (John 1:1-5)

FOCAL POINT

In the first lesson we explored how the Bible is the one source that truly reveals the nature of God and his plan for humankind. We have also discovered that our society often plays an influential role in how many people view God. In this lesson, we will consider the nature and character of God as understood in doctrines two, three and four.

List ***some of the attributes of God. Compare your answers with the other members of your group.*** **Discuss** ***briefly why you believe what you do about God.***

Attributes of God Observed	

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to identify the attributes and nature of God as disclosed in Scripture. Participants will:

- explore the nature and attributes of the triune God of the Bible in contrast to the gods of the society in which we live.
- examine what it means to fear God but also experience security and comfort in his presence.
- be encouraged to make worship a regular part of their daily living.

To reach this objective the following concepts will be included in this week's Field Manual:

- The Attributes of God
- The Nature of the Trinity
- The Person of Jesus Christ

FIELD MANUAL

As we explore The Salvation Army's doctrines on the personality and nature of God revealed in Scripture, we will discover how awesome our God is. This lesson will focus on the attributes of God in

relation to our second doctrine and his unique nature as identified in the third doctrine. Finally, we will see God as revealed through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Saviour.

The Attributes of God

As we explore our first doctrine, it is important that we can affirm that God is "one" God. Our second doctrine states, "**We believe there is only one God**." In this is an understanding that there is no being like him in the entire universe. The prophet Isaiah writes:

> "I am the LORD, and there is no other; apart from me there is no God." (Isaiah 45:5)

As we discovered in the first lesson, people instinctively search for God. Some claim there is no God, while others seem to find him in elements of his creation, in objects such as trees and stars or in certain individuals. Although it may be possible to identify aspects of God as revealed in his creation and his created beings, it must be understood that until one encounters the God of the Bible, that person has not truly found God.

History has shown that humankind has had a tendency to create God in whatever image suits us best. Today's culture encourages us toward spirituality, to getting in touch with our "god-selves." We are encouraged to find God out experientially—for ourselves. "Whatever works for you" has become the common means toward a spiritual end. With this in mind,* discuss *the following questions:

What dangers can you identify in this type of thinking?

_____

_____

_____

Who is being worshipped when an individual is in touch with his/her god-self?

_____

_____

_____

Why are we unqualified to determine who (or what) God is?

_____

_____

_____

Who or what should be the source of this revelation?

_____

_____

_____

The God of the Bible is identified as one who is "**infinitely perfect**." This concept directs us to the attributes of God which pertain to the absolute uniqueness of his being. He stands alone above all creation; he is infinite in his existence and perfect in every way.

We can also conclude from Scripture that God is all-powerful (omnipotent), all-knowing (omniscient) and all-present (omnipresent). In this way God is identified as the only true source of absolute power and authority in the universe. Scripture tells us that the world was created from nothing, simply by the spoken word of God. This alone is a direct example of his supreme power or omnipotence.

Look up ***the account of creation as found in Genesis 1 and briefly* discuss** ***the answers to the following questions:***

What three words are consistently recorded which signify the cause of all creation?

_____

_____

_____

What does this tell us about God's omnipotence or absolute power?

Because God is all-knowing, or omniscient, it is impossible for him to be fooled or surprised. David, the psalmist, understood this when he wrote:

> "You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar. You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways." (Psalm 139:1-3)

Later on he wrote:

> "Great is our LORD and mighty in power; his understanding has no limit." (Psalm 147:5)

As the "**Preserver**" of all creation, we can clearly identify his omniscience.

The fact that God is all-knowing carries with it both a level of comfort and perhaps a level of fear. We are often quick to identify God's omniscience as a reason to fear him, but it can also be seen as a reason to take comfort from knowing he is always near and in total control of the world in which we live.* Explore *these dynamics with the group by discussing the answers to the following questions:

In what ways does the fact that God is all-knowing bring comfort to you?

In what ways is this fact a frightening one?

In what ways is the preserving power of God evident in our world?

As "**Governor of all things**," something of God's omnipresence is revealed. One who governs well is seen as having a good understanding and perspective of what is going on in the kingdom under his/her supervision. God's ability to be everywhere present is one reason why he is able to govern perfectly. Therefore we can confidently declare that God is "**the Creator, Preserver and Governor of all things**."

This second doctrine concludes by stating that God "**is the only proper object of religious worship**." The attributes already mentioned will cause us to stand in fear and awe before God. However, Scripture clearly demonstrates that as much as God is to be feared, he is also most worthy of our worship.

The two primary elements of his character that present themselves in perfect balance, and compel us to worship and adore him, are "holiness" (or "righteousness") and "love." Because God is holy, he is consistently good. Because we cannot experience this degree of righteousness or absolute good for ourselves and in our earthly relationships, we must not think of God's holiness in a negative way or as an impossible standard to which we may never measure up. God's holiness is a representation of absolute purity, not only in his nature but in his dealings with us. He has no hidden motives or secret feelings of dislike or mistrust. He works in all things for our benefit.

Look up Matthew 7:9-11. In this passage our heavenly Father is compared to his earthly counterparts.* Explore *the contrast between God's holiness and ours as lived out in our relationships with others.

What does this passage reveal about human nature?

What does this passage reveal about God's nature?

It is through the light of God's holiness that we are able to understand the immensity of his love. This is why John, in his first epistle, is able to write:

> "There is no fear in love. But perfect love drives out fear, because fear has to do with punishment. The one who fears is not made perfect in love." (1 John 4:18)

God loves us with a perfect holy love that we need not fear. His actions toward us demonstrate this balance in perfect harmony. God knows we are unable, on our own merit, to have fellowship with him, simply because we are unholy beings. Yet, because he loves us, he has offered us a way to enter into a relationship with him through his Son. As the writer to the Hebrews states:

> "Let us then approach the throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need." (Hebrews 4:16)

The Nature of the Trinity

The Trinity has often been described as a "revealed mystery." A careful study of Scripture shows that God, although one, is referred to in plural form. In the New Testament, one sees Christ revealed as God. Subsequently, Christ reveals the person of the Holy Spirit.

There are no adequate terms in our language to describe the Trinity. Yet we do know two things from God's Word. Firstly, we

know that God is one. Yet, secondly, we see revealed the person of the Father, the person of the Son and the person of the Holy Spirit, all as God. Because each of these "persons" has a distinct personality and function within the Godhead, they cannot be simply identified as different manifestations of the same deity since there are recorded instances in Scripture where all three "persons" of the Trinity are present at the same time. One such event is recorded in Matthew's Gospel at the time of the baptism of Christ by John the Baptist:

> "As soon as Jesus was baptized, he went up out of the water. At that moment heaven was opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting on him. And a voice from heaven said, 'This is my Son, whom I love; with him I am well pleased.' " (Matthew 3:16-17)

Perhaps one of the most familiar analogies to describe the Trinity is in one of the world's most common substances, H_2O. In solid form this substance is known as "ice," in liquid form as "water" and in vaporized form as "steam." Yet in every aspect all are the same substance. As all analogies are somewhat limited in application, here also is an exception: Where the members of the Trinity are concerned, any one person is not, or does not become, another. The Father is always the Father, the Son is always the Son and the Spirit is always the Spirit.

Look up the following verses in Scripture and **record** *what each says about the person and office (role) of each member of the Trinity.*

	Person	Office/Role
Father	Ephesians 4:6	1 Corinthians 11:3
Son	Colossians 2:9	Romans 8:34
Holy Spirit	John 14:16	John 16:13-14

The Person of Jesus Christ

In examining our fourth doctrine, we discover a most unique quality of the second person of the Godhead that is not shared by the other two. For a while, God, through the person of Jesus Christ, resided on earth as a man. The Apostle John exclaims:

> "The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

Through this miraculous event, known as "the Incarnation," we discover that "**in the person of Jesus Christ the divine and human natures are united, so that he is truly and properly God and truly and properly man**."

Look up the following verses of Scripture. **Determine** *whether each is speaking about the "divine" or "human" nature of Christ and place it in its appropriate category. Be prepared to* **compare** *your answers with the other members of your group.*

Scripture	Divine Nature	Human Nature
Mark 11:12		
Luke 2:52		
John 1:1-2		
John 4:6		
John 11:35		
Philippians 3:20-21		
Colossians 2:2-3		
Hebrews 7:26		

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

During the course of this lesson we have explored the attributes and nature of God.* Consider *how a right understanding of who God is directly informs the quality of our worship (see Romans 12:1-2):

How does having a God who is, in many ways, beyond the scope of our human understanding impact our worship of him?

_____

_____

What are some ways that I am able to worship him daily?

_____

_____

What am I prepared to do to follow through with this?

_____

_____

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Chapter 2: Creator of Heaven and Earth

Chapter 3: The God Who is Never Alone

Chapter 4: God's Eternal Son

Unit A: Lesson 2
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 23: Many of the attributes identified in this first exercise will serve as a review of what was discussed in the previous lesson. In addition, it will set the stage for the lesson to follow. In discussing the answers, opportunity will be given to help discover the many attributes (character traits) of God. It may also serve to reveal some misconceptions, which may need to be addressed further on in the lesson.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 24-25: The key to this exercise is to allow participants to recognize they are each God's creation and not vice versa. Our tendency to create our own gods has resulted in disaster at every bend. Opportunity is therefore given to discuss the importance of recognizing God for who he is. It should also further enforce the authority of the Word of God as the primary source of divine self-revelation.

Pages 25-26: In this short exercise, participants are encouraged to reflect on the power of God's spoken Word. The key phrase, in this case, is: "and God said...." The Word of God, therefore, is all powerful.

Pages 26-27: This exercise is designed to enforce that nothing happens in this world without God's infinite knowledge. Because of this, we can be confident that God is in control. Whether this brings a level of comfort, or fear, may indicate something of the relationship one has with God.

Pages 27-28: This short exercise will reinforce the truth concerning the nature of God's relationship with his children. Participants should be brought to realize that God has their best interests in mind at all times because of his perfect holiness and love, two attributes that are often less than pure in the human context.

Pages 29-30: This short exercise is meant to give participants a basic understanding of the distinct nature and role of each person in the Trinity. It is hoped this will help establish an understanding of how each, being God, has a specific personality and function within the Godhead.

Page 31: This exercise is best accomplished by each member of the group reading a specific passage, and the others deciding in which column it belongs. Participants should begin to grasp how, in Christ, we see a perfect blending of the divine and human nature.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 32: Through this exercise, participants will reflect on how our limited knowledge of God is an issue of faith. God is greater than our scope of understanding and yet he is worthy of our continual worship. Participants are given an opportunity to take "worship" out of its Sunday morning box and see it as a daily activity.

Lesson 3
SALVATION'S PLAN

Doctrine 5
We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocency, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

Doctrine 6
We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by his suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

COMMUNIQUE

"For since death came through a man, the resurrection of the dead comes also through a man. For as in Adam all die, so in Christ all will be made alive." (1 Corinthians 15:21-22)

FOCAL POINT

One of the most difficult questions asked of any Bible student is: "How can a world created by a perfect God, who is holy in every way, have such a problem with the presence of sin and evil?" One would expect that the world should have none of the problems that we observe from day to day if it has been created by a perfect God. For some, this idea is so difficult to grasp that it blocks their ability to accept the presence of God as a reality.

Reflect ***on today's news and*** **answer** ***the following questions:***

What events of today remind you of the presence of sin and/or evil in our world?

_____

_____

_____

How have these events caused you to react?

_____

_____

_____

How do you think God has reacted to these?

_____

_____

_____

One of the most familiar stories in the Bible, which reveals God's response to sin, is that of Noah. Look up Genesis 6:5-7 and **answer** ***the following question:***

How does this passage describe God's response to sin?

_____

_____

_____

We know from the story of Noah that even with the fresh start humankind had in establishing its relationship with God, the problem of sin still plagues our race.

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to discuss the nature of sin and God's solution to the sin problem. Participants will:

- discover what the Bible has to say about sin.
- discover how God has solved sin's dilemma once and for all.
- learn to develop an aversion to sin and its negative result.
- determine to take the steps necessary to live a life that is pleasing to God.

To reach this objective, the following concepts will be included in this week's Field Manual:

- The Nature of Sin
- The Effect of Sin
- The Result of Sin
- God's Remedy for Sin

FIELD MANUAL

The Nature of Sin

To understand why sin exists we must first understand what it is. Sin can be defined as, "anything which is not in harmony with the will and nature of God." This definition may seem simple, but it compels us to examine truths about God and his relationship with his creation, and ultimately with us, his created beings.

The first thing we must come to terms with is that not only are we created *by* God, but we are created *for* God, *in* his image. In the Book of Revelation, the Apostle John envisions the throne room of God in heaven. As those sitting around the throne worship him, they say:

"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive glory and

> honour and power, for you created all things, and by your will they were created and have their being."
> (Revelation 4:11)

This verse identifies the concept of being created by God's will as well as the purpose of our existence: that we might worship him and bring glory to his name. Because we have been created for God we must understand that we belong to him in the most intimate of ways. Adam and Eve, our first parents, understood this relationship perfectly. Our fifth doctrine declares that they "**were created in a state of innocency**." This means that there was nothing in their nature that would give them a natural desire towards disobedience or sin.

The initial inclination to sin came entirely from an external influence. Satan, cloaked in the image of a serpent, suggested to our first parents that serving God and allowing him to remain in control was less desirable than being in control of their own destiny. Challenging them to question God's motive in forbidding them to eat the fruit of one of the trees in the garden, he says:

> "For God knows that when you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil."
> (Genesis 3:5)

Reflect ***on the verse above and*** **discuss** ***the following questions:***

When people are encouraged to question the motives of another, what is the result?

What effect does this have on any relationship we may have had with that person?

What choices do we have in this type of situation?

The Effect of Sin

Sin entered the human race by a single act of disobedience to God's command. Our first parents made their choice to question God, rather than to trust him. Sin's lasting effect, separation from God, has been with us ever since. Until the time they chose their own course of action, they lived in complete harmony with God. Scripture speaks of the human relationship with God as perfect in every way. They enjoyed his constant fellowship and favour. They had authority to govern over his creation. Their task was simply to rule and care for the earth, along with their offspring so that they, too, might enjoy fellowship with God and the blessings of his provision.

Through a single act of disobedience, all this came to an end. Humankind's perfect fellowship with the Creator had been severed. That which is described in our fifth doctrine as "**purity and happiness**" was lost. The human race found itself detached from the very one who gave it life, just as God had warned.

> "And the LORD God commanded the man, 'You are free to eat from any tree in the garden; but you must not eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for when you eat of it you will certainly die.' " (Genesis 2:16-17)

The concept of separation is understood in many different ways. **Respond** ***to the following questions and be prepared to*** **share** ***your answers with the other members of your group:***

What images would you use to describe separation?

What emotions are involved in these images?

The Result of Sin

The lasting result of sin is a condition defined as "total depravity." Our fifth doctrine states, "**in consequence of their fall all men have become ... totally depraved**."

When we speak of total depravity, it does not indicate a condition of "absolute evil" as some may suggest. It means that on our own, we are absolutely unable to return to the original condition of purity and happiness that our first parents knew before the entrance of sin into our world. Our natural human tendency toward self-determination continues to deprive us of perfect fellowship with our Creator. We remain in a state of separation from him.

In some respects, we have tried to become as "little gods," attempting to carve our own destiny, prolong life and pursue happiness. Ironically, such a pursuit would eventually lead us back to the Garden of Eden where we began.

It is no wonder that God is grieved and angered by our disobedience. The idea of being "**justly exposed to the wrath of God**" is not unreasonable here. We find ourselves in endless pursuit of a quality existence defined by elements such as love, joy, peace and happiness, the very existence we abandoned when we turned our backs on God.

Read ***the story of the Prodigal Son in Luke 15:11-24, a depiction of the human condition in relationship with God told by means of a parable.*** **Discuss** ***the following questions:***

Why would the father in this parable have a right to be angry with his son?

Why would the son be more preoccupied with his fear of the father's judgment than his love?

In what ways are we able to identify with the son?

In what way does the ending of this story come as a surprise?

God's Remedy for Sin

The key to the Prodigal Son's story is the theme of perfect love and forgiveness. Although the son was justly exposed to his father's wrath, and that knowledge caused him to fear rejection by his family, it was not long before he understood that it was the wish of the father all along that he would one day return and be reunited with the family. So it is with God and his relationship with us. Although he has every right to be angry with us, he loves us and wants us to be reunited with him as it was at the beginning of creation.

It is for this reason alone that Christ came to earth. According to our sixth doctrine, "**Christ has by his suffering and death made an atonement**" for us. This simply means that he has made it possible for us to return to God and experience the fullness of his forgiveness.

The scriptural concept of "atonement" is first introduced in the Old Testament. Each year the high priest entered the holy of holies in the temple and sacrificed a goat on the altar as a sin offering on behalf of the people of God (see Leviticus 16:9). After this took

place, he placed his hands on the head of another goat, which represented the transfer of the sins of the people onto the goat. This "scapegoat" was then sent into the wilderness to symbolize the removal of the sins from the community (see Leviticus 16:10). Because this was only a symbolic act, it needed to be repeated regularly to remind the people of their need for God's forgiveness.

In the New Testament, it is the shed blood of Christ that has accomplished the ultimate atonement for our sins. Concerning Christ, the writer to the Hebrews states:

> "He did not enter [the holy of holies] by means of the blood of goats and calves; but he entered the Most Holy Place once for all by his own blood, thus obtaining eternal redemption." (Hebrews 9:12)

In his second letter to the church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul reinforces this by saying:

> "God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Corinthians 5:21)

Christ's sacrifice was more than a symbolic act. By his death on the cross he literally paid the penalty for all sin for all time. This concept is often defined as an "unlimited atonement." We believe that Christ's atonement is enough to deal with the sin of the entire world, past, present and future, "**so that whosoever will may be saved**." In other words, no person need be excluded from receiving this free gift from God. Unfortunately, some remain unwilling to accept this gift of salvation and, consequently, they remain separated from God by sin.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Discuss *the nature and scope of Christ's atonement. Turn to the following passages in Scripture and* **reflect** *on their impact upon your life. Be willing to* **share** *something of your testimony with the other members in your group.*

Scripture	How This Passage Impacts My Life
John 3:16	
Romans 6:23	
Hebrews 4:15-16	
Romans 8:38-39	

What can I do to ensure that my life continues to be a living testimony to the saving power of Christ?

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_____

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Chapter 5: Distorted Image

Chapter 6: Atonement Through Christ

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 2: The New Birth

Unit A: Lesson 3
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 36: This exercise is designed to assist participants to see sin as God sees it. Sin affects God in many of the same ways it affects us as believers. It may be helpful to allow the participants to scan through news events of the past day or so, as they enter into this discussion.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 38-39: Adam and Eve were given cause to question God's motive in commanding them not to eat of the forbidden fruit. This exercise is designed to focus on the concept of mistrust and its effect on any relationship. Participants are encouraged to make a choice to trust more freely and not be on a constant lookout for hidden motives.

Pages 39-40: Many people can relate, in one way or another, to feelings of loss or anger that are often caused by separation. It is hoped that this short exercise will bring participants closer to an understanding of the effect of sin on one's relationship with God.

Pages 40-41: As the group looks at the story of the lost son, the key element for this discussion should centre on the father's posture and response. Here is found a perfect contrast between what we deserve as sinners and the forgiveness that is offered through Christ.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Pages 42-43: This exercise gives an opportunity for each participant to reflect upon his/her relationship with Christ, and to place themselves in the context of the promises of Scripture. This should help each to craft and validate his/her testimony against God's Word. It is hoped that by doing so, each will have more confidence in sharing his/her faith with others.

Lesson 4
SALVATION'S JOURNEY

Doctrine 7
We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.

Doctrine 8
We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

Doctrine 9
We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

COMMUNIQUE

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is from God—not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

FOCAL POINT

In the previous lesson we learned that it is only through Christ's suffering and death that humankind's severed relationship with God can be restored. We have also learned that this restored relationship is available to all who will receive it. Every individual who desires to become a Salvation Army soldier must be certain that his/her relationship with God has been established through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ.

It is necessary, therefore, for us to redirect the focus of our study from our understanding of God to the quality of our relationship with him.

Take a few minutes to* reflect *upon your relationship with God and answer the following questions:

What words would you use to describe your relationship with God right now?

_____

_____

_____

How do you know that you are saved?

_____

_____

_____

How would you describe "salvation" to an unsaved person?

_____

_____

_____

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the implications of the salvation message for the life of the believer. Participants will:

- gain insight into the nature of free salvation.
- gain confidence in their assurance of salvation.
- become motivated to share their experience of salvation with others who have not yet been introduced to Christ in a personal way.

To reach this objective, the following concepts will be included in this week's Field Manual:

- Repentance
- Faith
- Regeneration
- Justification
- Assurance
- Obedience

FIELD MANUAL

There are many terms and phrases used to describe "salvation," many of which come from the analogies used in Scripture. For instance, the term "born again" comes from the analogy used by Christ as he explained the process to a man named Nicodemus (see John 3:1-21). No matter what term is used to describe the experience, there are some essential elements that are necessary to make this experience a reality in the life of the believer. Our seventh doctrine highlights three of these: repentance, faith and regeneration.

Repentance

When we speak of repentance, the term is often understood solely in its religious context. This word, however, is not necessarily a religious term. In fact, a definition would be, "the process of turning away from something and heading toward another." In the biblical context, repentance is understood as a turning away from sin and a turning toward God. Because this is a process, certain conditions must be met for it to be made complete.

First of all, repentance requires conviction of sin. Every individual who desires to be saved must come to terms with the presence of sin in his/her life. This goes far beyond the idea of being "sorry" for what you have done. Many people are brought to what they think is the point of repentance simply because they are faced with the consequences of their actions. The outcome of such repentance is often no more than regret. True repentance toward God is not contingent on the observable presence of consequence. It

recognizes sin for what it is and makes a conscious decision to turn from it. Look at what the Apostle Paul writes in his second letter to the Christians in Corinth:

> "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death." (2 Corinthians 7:10)

Pause for a few moments to* reflect *upon the difference between the concepts of repentance toward God and worldly sorrow. Be prepared to* discuss *the following questions:

Feelings of regret are directly related to the consequences of sin. Why, on their own, do they not constitute true repentance?

Can true repentance come about as a result of being faced with the consequences of one's sin(s)? How?

Why is it important for us to hate sin before we can know true repentance?

Can you honestly say that you hate sin? Why?

Faith

Our seventh doctrine goes on to indicate that the second vital necessity for salvation is "**faith in our Lord Jesus Christ**." It is one thing to understand the doctrine of the atonement; it is another to take ownership of it.

If we have faith in something or someone, it means that we put our trust in that same thing or person. Faith that saves puts its trust in Christ and his ability to make one right with God. Saving faith, therefore, must be a personal faith.

Furthermore, one's faith in Christ must go beyond the initial salvation experience and continue in the life of the believer. Concerning Christ, Scripture states:

> "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9)

The implications of this verse are clear. Not only is Christ's sacrifice enough to forgive us of our sins at the point of conversion, but his power reaches into the day-to-day aspects of our lives and is able to purify us from all that is unlike God.

Determine what implications the following verses have for your faith. What impact does each verse have on you personally? Be willing to* share *your answers with the other members of the group.

Scripture	Implications	Impact
Romans 10:17		
Ephesians 1:13-14		
Hebrews 11:6		
1 John 3:21		

Regeneration

The third essential element necessary for salvation is "**regeneration by the Holy Spirit**." Regeneration is a term that is used to describe the giving of life or, in this case, the process of being reborn into the family of God. Here is the point at which the believer receives the presence of the Holy Spirit of God in his/her life. It is through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit that it is possible for the believer to remain in constant communion with God. In his letter to Titus, the Apostle Paul explains how this regeneration by the Holy Spirit is an essential part of the salvation process:

> "But when the kindness and love of God our Saviour appeared, he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy. He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour, so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life." (Titus 3:4-7)

Look up the following verses of Scripture and* identify *how this process of regeneration is described in each.

Scripture	Description of Regeneration
John 5:24	
Ephesians 5:8	
1 Corinthians 6:19	
Romans 5:5	
1 Peter 1:23	

People can often become confused when they attempt to make a distinction between the presence of Christ in their lives and the presence of the Holy Spirit, as these terms are essentially one in the same.

As Christ began to prepare the first disciples for his bodily departure from earth, he spent time explaining to them what the ministry of the Holy Spirit was all about. He wanted them to know that it was through the ministry of the Holy Spirit that they would remain connected to him.

> "But when he, the Spirit of truth, comes, he will guide you into all the truth. He will not speak on his own; he will speak only what he hears, and he will tell you what is yet to come. He will glorify me because it is from me that he will receive what he will make known to you." (John 16:13-14)

Justification

Our eighth doctrine states that we are "**justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ**." When we accept the gift of salvation offered through Christ, we can stand with confidence before God with the full assurance that our sins are forgiven and that we are now in a right relationship with him. That which we have done in the past is not counted against us and we stand as righteous before God. This is the essence of justification.

The term "justification" is a legal term that suggests the issuing of a pardon or to be declared, "right." In the Old Testament, the people of God looked to the law for their justification. In the New Testament, our justification is found in Christ. Read Romans 4:1-8 and* answer *the following questions:

What does this passage have to say about the justification Abraham received from God?

_____

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According to this passage, of what benefit is boasting about one's works?

What is the benefit of being justified before God?

As the "communique" for this lesson indicates, this position, which is enjoyed by every believer, must be understood as a gift from God. It is by the grace of God, alone, that this privilege has been granted us to stand blameless before God. It can be seen as something of a divine invitation. God has taken the initiative, made all the arrangements, and all we have to do is accept it by faith and enter into his presence.

Assurance

The second part of the eighth doctrine states: "**and he that believeth hath the witness in himself**." Simply put, this means that every saved person has the witness of the Holy Spirit within to testify to the fact that he/she is a child of God. It should not be confused with an idea that the believer receives a special feeling of the presence of God at the point of conversion that stays with him/her forever. This is rarely the case. What we do have is the inner witness of the Spirit that God's Word, concerning our salvation, is trustworthy and we can have confidence that it is true. John, speaking of the person of the Holy Spirit, writes:

> "Whoever believes in the Son of God accepts this testimony." (1 John 5:10)

Reflect ***upon the presence of the Holy Spirit in your own life and on the lines below*** **identify** ***some of the ways in which you can***

know he is present with you. **Share** ***your experience of assurance with the other members of the group.***

Obedience

Our ninth doctrine serves as a reminder that salvation is an ongoing relationship and not merely an event in time to be recorded in the life of the believer. As discussed, true repentance is not only a turning away from sin, but it is a turning toward God. As with all relationships, believers have a personal responsibility to ensure that their relationships with God are properly maintained. Spiritual health and well-being are essential to ensuring this most important relationship is as strong and vibrant as it can be. As we live our lives in accordance to God's will and purposes, we are confident that our relationship with him is intact. It is only when we turn our back on God that we experience the sense of a strained or severed relationship with him once again. This undesirable condition is known as "backsliding."

Scripture is full of words of encouragement to the believer to persevere in the faith, knowing that such perseverance will end in eternal reward. As the Apostle Peter wrote to the members of the early church, he encouraged them to live a life of faith and obedience to God.

> "Therefore, my brothers and sisters, make every effort to confirm your calling and election. For if you do these things, you will never stumble, and you will receive a rich welcome into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:10-11)

If our salvation is a free gift of God, many wonder why our obedience to God makes any difference at all. One will want to remember that the life that has rejected sin and has been turned over to God, will desire to reflect his nature. Yes, people will make mistakes. However, when a person constantly and continuously turns again toward a life of sinful (selfish) indulgence, then it is evident that the repentance once made is no longer in effect in his/her life.

The writer to the Hebrews gives a sober warning to those who would attempt to have it both ways:

> "If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the truth, no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God." (Hebrews 10:26-27)

In this section we have seen how necessary it is for the Christian believer to maintain an open and honest relationship with God.* Discuss *the following as a group:

What can the believer do to ensure that his/her relationship with God remains intact?

_____

_____

_____

Can God be fooled when we hold on to some area of sin in our lives? What is the consequence of continuing this practice?

_____

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_____

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

In Matthew 13:45-46, the kingdom of heaven is compared to an expensive pearl. A merchant finds it and sells all that he has in order that he might have it to sell for a great price. Our experience of salvation should resemble this analogy in some way. It should be seen as a most valuable treasure to the one who finds it, but it should always be made available to those who would want to enjoy it as well. The only difference is that salvation is a free gift available to all. Reflect upon the following question and discuss your answer with the others in your group:

In what ways does the gift of salvation resemble a prize pearl or treasure?

_____

_____

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Chapter 7: The Process of Salvation

Chapter 8: The Nature of Salvation

Chapter 9: Maintaining Salvation

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 3: Living with God

Unit A: Lesson 4
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 46: Carrying on from where the discussion ended in the previous lesson, this exercise is designed to reinforce the fact that not only is God willing to save, but that he does save, and has indeed saved us as believers. It will also serve to discover, from within the group, what this means for each individual.

FIELD MANUAL

Page 48: One important element to the process of salvation has to do with the difference between "regret" (or worldly sorrow) and "repentance." This exercise is designed to highlight the key difference between the two. Feeling badly about being caught, and developing a "hatred" for sin, are two very different things.

Page 49: This exercise is designed to allow the participant to see how Scripture interacts with one's life. When looking at the "implications," participants are encouraged to determine what the passage means for them. In determining "impact" they are establishing how it affects them personally.

Page 50: "Regeneration" is a term that is often difficult to understand. Each passage describes this process in a different way. By examining these passages, participants will gain a greater understanding of this term and its implications for their lives.

Pages 51-52: This short study is designed to assist the participant in understanding the concept of "justification." The key to this discussion will be the discovery that there is nothing a person can do to bring this about. It is God's gift.

Pages 52-53: In this exercise, a shift has been made from the cognitive to the experiential. It is one thing to know the facts; it is another to know the witness of the Spirit within. Participants are encouraged to share openly about how they are aware of the

presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives, and how this awareness further provides them with the assurance of salvation.

Page 54: This exercise gives a brief opportunity to share ways in which believers can enjoy an open and honest relationship with God. Participants are also encouraged to discuss the consequences of not being honest with God.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Pages 54-55: The group has discussed the richness of the salvation they have in Christ. They are now given an opportunity to identify those whom they would like to see receive this gift as well. It is hoped that this will encourage them to be more diligent in the sharing of their faith with others and know the true blessing of being a "transformational influence" in their world.

Lesson 5
SALVATION'S OUTCOME

Doctrine 10
We believe it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless until the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doctrine 11
We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

COMMUNIQUE

"May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it." (1 Thessalonians 5:23-24)

FOCAL POINT

The choices we make from day to day have their own consequence; either positive or negative, and sometimes both. In the Christian life, there is no exemption from this rule. Everything we do and say has its impact upon others as well as ourselves. This impact can be very small and short lived; others may have eternal consequences. For example, a child may choose to take a peanut-butter cookie from a cookie jar and eat it. In most cases this decision would have a temporary impact—either the child will like the cookie and go away satisfied (or ask for another) or will not like it and throw it away. If the child took the cookie without the permission of a parent, the consequences may be greater. Here the child may learn the importance of asking permission to take something that is not theirs. That same decision for another

child could have an even further reaching consequence. If it was discovered through the eating of that same cookie that the child had a serious aversion to peanuts that could be potentially fatal, the child would learn to stay clear altogether from anything that may contain peanuts.

The experience we gain by the choices we make over time should serve to teach us how to make good decisions. As a group, take a few moments to* discuss *the following:

Can you think of choices you have made which have had a lasting impact on your life?

_____

_____

_____

How did these choices impact you (or others) in a positive way?

_____

_____

_____

How did they impact you (or others) in a negative way?

_____

_____

_____

Were they right choices?

_____

_____

_____

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to focus on the eternal outcome of the Christian life. Participants will:

- learn what it means to live a holy life before God and people.
- come into a fresh awareness of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit within their lives.
- become motivated to live their lives within the context of an eternal perspective.

To reach this objective, the following concepts will be included in this week's Field Manual:

- Sanctification
- Immortality
- Judgment
- Glorification
- Eternal Punishment

FIELD MANUAL

"I'm not perfect, just forgiven." Perhaps you have seen this slogan stuck to the rear bumper of an automobile or posted on a church billboard. Maybe you have used it to rationalize the residual presence of the human nature, which has betrayed your faith in front of others. In any case, there comes a time when everyone who has accepted Christ as their personal Saviour comes to terms with the fact that although Christ, through his death and Resurrection, has dealt completely with the consequence of sin, the battle of the will continues on, even after conversion. This is clearly demonstrated for us in Scripture as the Apostle Paul works his way through this dilemma in his letter to the church in Rome. He writes:

> "So I find this law at work: When I want to do good, evil is right there with me. For in my inner being I delight in God's law; but I see another law at work in me, waging war against the law of my mind and making me a prisoner of the law of sin at work within me. What a wretched man I am! Who will rescue me from this body that is subject to death?" (Romans 7:21-24)

Sanctification

The good news is, in the same way that God has provided for our salvation, he has also provided for our sanctification. God recognizes that in our own strength, even after conversion, we are still powerless to deal with the presence of sin in our lives. Through the ministry and work of the Holy Spirit, God makes it possible for the believer to live a holy and blameless life here on earth.

At some point in the Christian walk, the believer becomes aware of the need to rely on the presence and the power of God the Holy Spirit to guide him/her safely through the battleground of sin. The result is a desire to seek an even deeper cleansing. The point at which this declaration of the will is made is what we call "initial" sanctification, that single moment when our will becomes united with God's. For some this comes at the point of conversion, for others it may come at a later time following a period of repeated failure, trying to live the Christian life in their own strength. In any case, the believer must come to terms with the fact that the power to conquer sin, past and present, can only come from God.

Sanctification, like salvation, is identified as a process rather than an event. Consequently, "growth in grace" is the outward evidence of the "work of grace" continuing to take place in the life of the believer. For the Apostle Paul, the ultimate solution to the sin problem becomes quite clear:

> "Those who live according to the flesh have their minds set on what the flesh desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires." (Romans 8:5)

Some people misunderstand the concept of sanctification as referring to a state where people are brought to a condition where they are no longer able to sin.* Look *at the verse above carefully and* answer *the following questions:

What does it mean to have one's mind set on something?

Does this mean you will always meet the mark?

How is the mark of living in accordance with the Spirit met with some level of consistency?

How does this help us gain a clearer idea of what sanctification really means?

For something to be "sanctified" simply means that it is "set apart" for some purpose. For the Christian, this means we are set apart for God. This is accomplished by the submission of one's will to the will of God, in the manner which was perfectly demonstrated for us by Christ. So when we speak of "sanctification" or "holiness," what we are really talking about is "Christlikeness." When our lives are given over to living as Christ lived, and our will is brought into perfect submission to the will of God, this is what is termed as "entire" sanctification.

It is important to understand that there still remains the possibility of humans to make errors in judgment that would be classified

as sin. The difference is that when the sanctified individual makes such an error, once made aware of his/her shortcoming, an effort is made to seek God's will and make the situation right.

As a group, take the next few minutes to* explore *what Scripture has to say about sanctification and the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Beside each verse,* record *the truths revealed.

Scripture	Truths Revealed
Ephesians 3:16-19	
Philippians 2:12-13	
1 Thessalonians 4:3-4	
2 Peter 1:3-10	

Immortality

Living Christlike lives has both temporal and eternal benefits. On earth, we have the confidence of knowing that we are living according to God's will and purpose for us. As Christ indicates in John 10:10, he has come that we, "may have life, and have it to the full." The quality of our life is, therefore, not measured by our status or income, but by the quality of our relationship with Christ.

God's plan for our lives, however, reaches far beyond what we know as our earthly existence. Our 11th doctrine makes a number of statements concerning what we believe about the eternal existence that is promised us in God's Word. In stating that "**we believe in the immortality of the soul**," we are affirming what is written in God's Word that God's plan for us is eternal and we have been created as eternal beings.

In his second letter to the church in Corinth, the Apostle Paul, a tent-maker by trade, uses the analogy of a tent to describe the promise of a transition from a state of mortality to immortality.* Read *2 Corinthians 5:1-5 and* discuss *the following questions:

What would you consider to be key differences between a tent and a building?

What contrast is Paul making between our earthly dwelling and our heavenly one?

What becomes our assurance that this transition will take place?

Judgment
The choices we make while "in the body" have eternal consequences. The greatest of these, of course, is not only allowing Christ to become our Saviour from sin but also the Lord of our lives. Scripture teaches that at an unknown moment Christ will return to establish his eternal kingdom. At this time, a general judgment will occur when the righteous will be forever separated from the unrighteous.

One of the most familiar passages of Scripture dealing with the general judgment is found in Matthew 25:31-46. As you* read *through this passage, prepare to* discuss *the following questions:

Who are the "sheep" in this passage?

Who are the "goats"?

How has the righteousness of the "sheep" been demonstrated?

Why are they just as surprised as the "goats" that their acts of kindness have been observed in this way?

What is the eternal destiny of the righteous?

What is the eternal destiny of the unrighteous?

In what ways are our deeds linked to our faith?

Glorification
At the point of Christ's Second Coming, Scripture also teaches that the dead in Christ will be physically raised. Our old mortal bodies will be replaced by immortal incorruptible bodies. This process is referred to as "glorification." Our perfect bodies will live on forever in the kingdom of God, free from the trials of all sin and suffering. The Apostle Paul writes:

> "Listen, I tell you a mystery: We will not all sleep, but we will all be changed—in a flash, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet. For the trumpet will sound, the dead will be raised imperishable, and we will be changed. For the perishable must clothe itself with the imperishable, and the mortal with immortality." (1 Corinthians 15:51-53)

Our 11th doctrine speaks of this state as being "**the eternal happiness of the righteous**." This is the culmination of God's salvation plan for the believer—the point in time where the kingdom of earth and the kingdom of heaven are brought together in perfect unity for all eternity.

There are many differing views concerning heaven and eternity. God's Word gives us only a glimpse of this eternal reward. Spend a few minutes as a group to* explore *some of what Scripture reveals concerning heaven.

Scripture	Revealed Aspects of Heaven
John 14:2-3	
Revelation 7:15-17	
Revelation 21:1-7	

Eternal Punishment
Scripture also teaches that all who have died will be raised and clothed in immortal bodies. Our 11th doctrine, while affirming the "**eternal happiness of the righteous**," also points to the reality of the "**endless punishment of the wicked**." The distinction between these two groups is that the unrighteous will experience what is known in Scripture as the second death, an existence of eternal banishment from the presence of God.

> "But the cowardly, the unbelieving, the vile, the murderers, the sexually immoral, those who practise magic arts, the idolaters and all liars—they will be consigned to the fiery lake of burning sulphur. This is the second death." (Revelation 21:8)

Although it is unwise to isolate the fear of hell as one's primary motivation for turning to God, this endless existence of divine punishment is clearly marked out in Scripture as a reality. This can present great difficulty for some people. The common question is asked, "How can a God who is love send people to hell?" For some, this is a way to justify their sin and blame the consequences on God. The reality is that a life lived on earth without God is as much a foretaste of hell as a life lived with God is a foretaste of heaven. It is God's will that all would be saved and come into a relationship with him (see 1 Timothy 2:4). Those who choose to ignore God do so out of their own free will.

While on earth, each individual has been given free access to the presence of God. In times of trouble, humans will often cry out to God, even if they are unsure if he really exists. In hell, this access will be eternally cut off. God will no longer be available to answer prayer.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

During this lesson we have seen how important it is to live a life that is set apart for the purposes of God. We have also discussed the eternal result of living such a life, in contrast with the consequences of deciding to turn our backs on God.

In light of these truths, conclude your time together by* discussing *the following:

Why is it important that our lives be "set apart" for God?

Is there anything about the way you live your life that you hope God hasn't noticed?

How do these things affect your relationship with God?

How can keeping an "eternal perspective" assist you in making the right decisions?

What are you willing to do to ensure you are aiming toward the right goal?

What difference does your eternal perspective make in the world in which you live?

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Chapter 10: Full Salvation

Chapter 11: Kingdom of the Risen Lord

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 6: Holiness of Heart and Life

Unit A: Lesson 5
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 59: As the group begins a study on personal holiness, this exercise will help them focus on the ability they have to make choices. This will lay the groundwork for what is to come in this lesson, as holiness is seen as an ability to consistently make the right choices or decisions, through the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 61-62: In this exercise it is important that participants understand that being perfect and the constant striving toward perfection are two very different things. We are unable to be perfect in our own strength, but we do have the capacity to consistently strive toward perfection (holiness). This is what God requires from us.

Page 63: The passages in this exercise will assist the participant in discovering how God is at work in the sanctifying process. It is designed to take the focus off of human effort and focus on God's work within the life of the believer.

Pages 63-64: This brief exercise reminds participants that we are only on earth for a short time. Paul contrasts a tent (temporary dwelling) and a building (permanent dwelling) to illustrate this point.

Pagse 64-65: This exercise helps to illustrate how our deeds are related to our faith. Although it is not our deeds which save us, they do become a living and tangible example of the genuineness of our faith.

Page 66: This exercise will give the participants opportunity to explore some of what Scripture reveals about heaven. Although this study is in no way exhaustive, it is important that each participant becomes aware that the most important element of heaven is being in God's presence.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Pages 67-68: To summarize the lesson, participants will answer questions to demonstrate that they have gained something of the "big picture" (an eternal perspective) of God's plan for their lives.

Lesson 1
CHRISTIAN VALUES

A Soldier's Covenant
I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to his leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible.

I will make the values of the kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.

I will uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

COMMUNIQUE

"Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will." (Romans 12:1-2)

FOCAL POINT

We live in a society where issues that relate to morality, values and many other types of lifestyle choices have become a simple matter of personal preference. If people can convince themselves that what they are doing is OK and has no negative effect on others, what would motivate them to stop what they are doing? Many people feel that they have the right to decide for themselves what their lifestyle choices are going to be. Many have declared this freedom to be the ultimate expression of liberty—the people's right to choose for themselves what is right or wrong. For many, any external influence that would impose a code of morality or value is looked upon as an infringement on their rights.

As we hone in on this week's Focal Point, take a few moments as a group to* discuss *the following questions:

What are some issues relating to basic values or morality that have changed over time?

In what general direction do these changes seem to be heading?

What impact have some of these decisions had on our society?

What does this say about the human capacity to make such determinations on our own?

In what ways does this trend affect the church?

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the benefits of maintaining a biblically based personal value system. Participants will:

- understand the importance of Christian values and lifestyle as they relate to today's society.
- become aware of their need for the power and presence of the Holy Spirit to guide them in all matters of truth and conduct.
- be encouraged daily to live out their lives in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

To assist in achieving this objective, the following topics will be discussed in this week's Field Manual:

- The Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit
- Kingdom Values
- Christian Integrity

FIELD MANUAL

We have already established the Word of God as the primary "**rule for Christian faith and practice**." There are times, however, that the Bible does not speak directly to situations specific to this day and age. For instance, you will not find a clear directive in God's Word that speaks into one's use of cocaine or other illicit drugs. Yet, many principles contained in the Bible do relate to these very issues. It is up to discerning Christians to apply these principles to our everyday living. For this we ask God the Holy Spirit to guide and direct us continually.

Read ***the following verses and*** **record** ***what present practice might be addressed by the principle revealed.***

Scripture	Principle Revealed	Practice Addressed
1 Corinthians 6:19		
1 Corinthians 8:9		
Philippians 4:8		

The Presence and Power of the Holy Spirit
Throughout the Old and New Testaments, the Bible makes reference to the Holy Spirit. In the Old Testament, he is often referred to as the "Spirit" or "breath" of God. In the New Testament, he is introduced to us by Christ as the "Counsellor" or the personal presence of God. During the final meal he shared with the disciples, Christ prepared them for the eventuality of his physical departure from their presence. It was at this point he made them aware that it was not God's intent that they would be left alone but that his presence would remain with them. Christ said:

> "If you love me, keep my commands. And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another advocate [Counsellor] to help you and be with you forever—the Spirit of truth." (John 14:15-17)

Many people, however, have misguided ideas as to the nature of the Holy Spirit's ministry. In our society there are many "spiritual" voices calling out to be heard. Through the influence of many eastern religions, the occult and New-Age thinking, a heightened interest in a brand of secular (godless) "spirituality" is developing among people from all walks of life. Because of this, many people are confused and, consequently, unable to detect the authentic voice of God. As the "Spirit of truth," the Holy Spirit becomes the only reliable voice by which this confusion is resolved. In his first Epistle, the Apostle John encourages the believer to "test the spirits."

> "Dear friends, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world." (1 John 4:1)

John continues to describe the nature of this test. The first and primary item of truth which will give an evil spirit away is what it says concerning Christ. In other words, the Holy Spirit will never disown or dishonour Christ (see 1 John 4:3). However, if the Spirit acknowledges that Christ is from God, then there is good reason to believe that you are dealing with the Holy Spirit of God (see 1 John 4:2).

Another way to test the spirits is to test them against the Word of God. Take a few moments to* read *the following passages, which give us some further insight regarding the "Spirit of truth." Record *any new insights you have gained and* share *the same with the other members of the group.

Scripture	New Insights into the "Spirit of Truth"
John 14:15-18	
John 16:7-15	
John 17:17	

What connection do you see between the "Word of truth" and the "Spirit of truth"?

Why is this important?

Kingdom Values

The values of the kingdom of heaven are clearly articulated in Scripture. As we have determined in this week's Focal Point, the value system of the world in which we live is constantly changing. In contrast to this, the values of the kingdom of heaven have remained constant through history. Accordingly, God's people are called to be a holy people, a sanctified people, a people who reflect his likeness in all their dealings with those around them. A person who is living according to the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit will, by the very nature of that relationship, strive to uphold these kingdom values.

Therefore, it is only through the Spirit's presence in the life of the believer that one can truly become "Christlike" or "holy." The most compelling evidence one can present confirming the presence of the Holy Spirit in one's life is that of personal holiness. For a while, people may be convinced by the things we may say or do, but eventually it becomes a life marked by integrity and consistency, which truly bears witness to the presence of the Holy Spirit in their lives. In Scripture this is what is referred to as the fruit of the Spirit—those identifying marks in one's character that truly identify one as a child of God.

The following list represents the fruit of the Spirit as identified in Galatians 5:22-23. Take a few moments and* underline *those characteristics that you feel you portray on a regular basis in your life. Circle *the ones that need a bit of work. As a group, take time to* identify *these fruit in the lives of each other.

LOVE **JOY**

PEACE **PATIENCE**

KINDNESS **GOODNESS**

FAITHFULNESS **GENTLENESS**

SELF-CONTROL

Christian Integrity

We have identified the Holy Spirit as a Spirit of truth and of holiness. He is also a Spirit of power. As much as the Holy Spirit wishes to work in our lives, he also desires to work through our lives. For this reason, the Bible teaches that the Holy Spirit will grant various gifts to believers. Each of these gifts has a specific application to the ministry he has for each one of us. The Spirit-filled individual is able to accomplish much in the name of Christ through the wise use of these spiritual gifts. As the Apostle Paul states in his first letter to the church in Corinth:

> "There are different kinds of gifts, but the same Spirit distributes them. There are different kinds of service, but the same Lord. There are different kinds of working, but in all of them and in everyone it is the same God at work." (1 Corinthians 12:4-6)

Spend a few moments to* explore *the following passages, which identify some of the gifts of the Spirit. As you read,* record *the gifts you believe you have, and those you can identify in the lives of others in the group. Be prepared to* encourage *each other to reach their full God-given potential through the sharing of your answers.

Scripture	My Gifts	Gifts in Others
Romans 12:6-8		
1 Corinthians 12:7-11		
Ephesians 4:11-13		

Unfortunately, there are those who have also gone out in the name of Christ, exhibiting signs of great "spiritual" power, who have come crashing down along with their ministries. We have seen it in the media, but we have experienced it in the local church as well. The key to guarding against this from happening to the believer is a simple thing called integrity. Integrity can be defined as "living truth." It is this "living truth" that essentially becomes the "living proof" of the Spirit's presence in the life of the believer. Christian integrity means being honest with God, ourselves and those around us.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

The key to this lesson is found in the promise made by all soldiers, to be responsive and obedient to the Holy Spirit in all areas of living. During this closing time, individually* reflect *upon the following questions:

What are the areas of my life where I am confident the Holy Spirit has full control?

_____

_____

_____

What areas of my life have I not yet fully yielded to him?

_____

_____

_____

As a group,* pray *for the things listed that still need to be given over to the Holy Spirit's control. Pray also that each person present will, by God's help, give the Holy Spirit full control over these things.* Renew your commitment *to living a life of integrity before God and those with whom you come in contact.

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

The Church: Study Notes
D. Spiritual Gifts

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army, London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 7: Renouncing the World, Its Ways and Works

Unit B: Lesson 1
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 73: This exercise gives an opportunity to contrast Christian values and the values of the world. This will serve as an introduction to the lesson to follow which will discuss the implications of these two value systems functioning side by side.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 74-75: This exercise will assist participants to apply scriptural principles to the areas of their lives that may not be specifically addressed in the context of biblical times.

Page 76: The ability to maintain a high level of Christian values is a result of the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer. Understanding the connection between the Holy Spirit and the Word of God is important to one's ability to discern his voice and leading.

Page 77: This exercise gives an opportunity for each participant to identify the way in which the Holy Spirit has had an effect on his/her life. In addition, participants will be encouraged to affirm these attributes in each other.

Page 78: In a similar way to the previous exercise, participants will have an opportunity to explore the different gifts of the Holy Spirit and identify them in themselves and each other.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 79: As a final act of reflection, participants are encouraged to evaluate the level at which the Holy Spirit has control in his/her life, and then to commit to his control the areas that have yet to be surrendered.

Lesson 2
CHRISTIAN RELATIONSHIPS

A Soldier's Covenant
I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow Salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

I will uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life.

COMMUNIQUE

"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity." (Colossians 3:12-14)

FOCAL POINT

Apart from our relationship with God, our relationships with each other are essential for our personal growth and development as human beings. We need human interaction to stimulate our minds, develop our social skills, to learn and develop language, as well as to acquire a host of other skills necessary for our very survival.

There are many influences in our society which affect the way we define our human relationships. As we become a more pluralistic and secular society, the influences of preference, differing lifestyles and cultures will continue to have an impact on these views. Sorting out how these different perspectives are viewed in the eyes of God is not always an easy task with easy answers.

As we prepare to explore issues of how human relationships have changed over the past number of years, spend a few minutes as a group to* discuss *the following questions:

What elements in our society have had a direct influence on the way we view human relationships?

In your opinion, has the "value" of human relationships increased or decreased over the past number of years?

As you see it, what has contributed to this trend?

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the issues surrounding human relationships from a Christian perspective. Participants in this study will:

- gain insight into the biblical principles governing human relationships.
- gain confidence in the validity of these biblical principles within the context of secular society.
- be encouraged to apply these biblical principles to all areas of human relationships.

To achieve this objective, this week's Field Manual will focus on the following issues:

- Relationships in the Family
- Relationships in the Body of Christ
- Relationships in the World

FIELD MANUAL

From the very beginning of creation, God has included human relationship in his design and purpose for us. Throughout the creation narrative we read that all God did was seen by him as good, and in the end—very good (see Genesis 1:10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31). However, following the creation of man, these words are recorded:

> "The LORD God said, 'It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him.' " (Genesis 2:18)

Here we can identify the first indication of the divine provision for human relationship—the creation of the first family. It is at this point where we will begin our study of human relationships. We will then move out from the intimacy of that unit and look at relationships within the body of Christ and finally within the community at large.

Relationships in the Family

In a society that continues to define and redefine the term "family," it becomes difficult at times for the Christian to defend and uphold the biblical perspective on what family is all about in the eyes of God. Yet, if the biblical concept of family does not represent the sole ideal to which we must all strive, then we, too, become caught up in an endless quest to find meaning and purpose in our most intimate relationships. It is within the context of the family unit that the most intimate of human relationships can be found—the relationship of marriage.

The Salvation soldier promises to "**uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life**." The Salvation Army affirms that the biblical model for marriage is the union of a man and a woman in an

exclusive relationship that is designed to last a lifetime.

The biblical model for marriage and family life is the ideal on which all Salvationists are encouraged, to the best of their ability, to base their own marriages and family living. Undoubtedly there will be those for whom this ideal is not a present reality. In this regard, the phrase, "**the sanctity of marriage**" becomes the most crucial aspect of this discussion. Because marriage is the most intimate of earthly relationships, it becomes, in many ways, an example (or symbol) of our relationship with Christ.

A vivid comparison between the marriage relationship and the relationship we have with Christ is found in Ephesians 5:22-33. As you* read *this passage, be prepared to* discuss *the following questions:

What are some ways that married couples can show love and affection to one another?

_____

_____

_____

How can the marriage relationship be seen as an example (or symbol) of our relationship with Christ?

_____

_____

_____

Why is it important to have this view of marriage?

_____

_____

_____

In addition to the marriage relationship, the relationship between family members is the next most intimate of relationships. Parents and children are encouraged throughout Scripture to work to build caring relationships based on love and mutual

respect. In the same way, siblings within the family unit are also encouraged to love and care for each other. When Christ is at the centre of the family unit, it can grow and develop into a living example of the quality of relationship we can enjoy within the greater family of God.

The following verses of Scripture speak to the issues of relationships within the family unit. In each case* identify *the person(s) for whom each applies.* Discuss *how the principles apply to the different kinds of relationships that are at work in the family unit.

Scripture	Person(s)	Application
Proverbs 20:11		
Proverbs 22:6		
Romans 12:10		
Ephesians 6:1		

In many ways, the ideals that Scripture lays out for the family unit are very difficult to attain. Many factors may be at work that have had an irreversible negative impact on this aim. Scripture addresses such issues and encourages individuals within various family units to do their part, as much as it is possible, to reflect the nature of Christ in their own unique situation.

As the Apostle Paul wrote his first letter to the congregation in Corinth, there were many family issues raised, which Paul addresses. One such issue centred on the various marital arrangements in which new converts found themselves. As they came into an awareness of the biblical ideal, many questions were asked. In 1 Corinthians 6:18-7:40, Paul identifies many different marital and family situations. In each case, however, he points out that although some of these may fall short of this ideal, each Christian should

strive to do what he/she can to honour God within the context of his/her situation. For example, addressing the people of the church who were married to unbelieving spouses, Paul writes:

> "And if a woman has a husband who is not a believer and he is willing to live with her, she must not divorce him. For the unbelieving husband has been sanctified through his wife, and the unbelieving wife has been sanctified through her believing husband." (1 Corinthians 7:13-14)

Here we can see the fact that the believing spouse becomes the spiritual link for the household and because of his/her godliness, the family is influenced for the good. The underlying principle, however, for all such situations is found in verse 17 of the same chapter:

> "Nevertheless, each person should live as a believer in whatever situation the Lord has assigned to them, just as God has called them. This is the rule I lay down in all the churches." (1 Corinthians 7:17)

The most important thing to remember from this is that each person who is identified as a "Christian" must strive to honour God in all situations, and not to dishonour him in our most intimate of relationships.

Relationships in the Body of Christ

Our relationships within the body of Christ also play a most important role in developing our sense of Christian community. One of the hallmarks of the early church that drew men and women into it was the way in which the members of the fellowship loved, and were loved by, each other. These days when so many people are lonely and isolated, the church has a wonderful opportunity to extend this kind of love to those who need it most.

The Army developed as a church primarily because individuals who were converted under its ministry felt that it was where they were most welcomed and accepted. Therefore, to continue in this ministry of love and acceptance, especially to the otherwise outcast of our society, would be in keeping with the principle behind our divinely appointed mandate. It is a strong motivating factor behind the Army's desire to maintain opportunities to integrate the mission of the local corps and social services ministries that are

provided by the Army in the community. This will allow us to more intimately participate in the scriptural admonition which states:

> " ... 'Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.' " (Matthew 26:40)

The relationships of love and acceptance people receive in the body of Christ must be genuine. Luke describes something of the "body life" of the early church in Acts 2:42-47.* Read *this passage together and* answer *the following questions:

What are some of the things these people did to show their genuine love for each other?

_____

_____

_____

What are some of the ways in which your corps shows this same kind of genuine Christian love?

_____

_____

_____

How do you demonstrate true Christian love to those around you?

_____

_____

_____

Relationships in the World

Our relationships with other people in the community can also be marked with the kind of love and understanding shown by Christ. Although we are called to be set apart from the values of the world, we are equally commissioned to go out into the world and share the good news of the gospel. In doing this we become agents of

transformation in our communities. In order to be effective in this, we must maintain some connection with non-Christian people. This often creates some challenges for many believers. As people grow in the faith and in their relationships within the church, the relationships and activities enjoyed outside the community of faith often begin to dwindle. This is a natural occurrence as people become more aware of the damage some secular environments can have on their spiritual well-being. However, unless the Salvationist consciously strives to establish and cultivate some "outside" relationships, the potential for winning new souls and becoming a transformative influence for the kingdom is greatly diminished.

In the end, the way in which Christians conduct themselves in their communities will often be the greatest, if not the only, point of influence they may have. Whether this is played out in the workplace, the school or at informal gatherings, the intentional desire to witness through a life of consistency and integrity will often draw people to Christ. The Apostle Peter encourages us in this as he writes:

> "Live such good lives among the pagans that, though they accuse you of doing wrong, they may see your good deeds and glorify God on the day he visits us." (1 Peter 2:12)

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

One of the greatest gifts we have received from God is the gift of relationship—the ability to love and be loved. In all cases, however, our relationships with each other should reflect our relationship with God. This principle is highlighted in 1 John 3:16-20. As we prepare to close this study,* read *this passage and* discuss *your answers to the following questions:

Is there anything in your life for which you can say is worth dying? If so, what is it and why is it so important to you?

_____

_____

Can you identify instances in your life when you have loved with a "sacrificial" love where it really cost you something?

_____

_____

Can you identify a situation in the present where you can take advantage of an opportunity to love, not merely with "words or speech but with actions"?

_____

_____

Commit ***to doing what the Lord has revealed to you in this exercise. Once you have carried through with it,*** **record** ***the blessing you received from God in return and be willing to*** **share** ***your experience with other Christian friends.***

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

The Church: Study Notes
- A. Essential Characteristics
- B. Historical Summary
- C. The Salvation Army and the Church

Appendix 3: The Lausanne Covenant

Appendix 5: The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 8: Christian Standards of Sexual Morality

Chapter 9: Human Relationships

Unit B: Lesson 2
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Pages 82-83: The way Salvationists are to view human relationships is the focus of this lesson. Participants will be encouraged to think of the ways in which society views such relationships. Elements that influence our view on relationships could be things such as the media or societal shifts and norms reflected in the lives of our peers. When assessing "value," one might consider elements that reflect how relationships seem to be somewhat "disposable" in our culture.

FIELD MANUAL

Page 85: This text study should help participants to see how earthly marriage can become a living sacrament, reflecting the relationship between Christ and his church. Those who are not married will be challenged to recognize how important it is to keep all their relationships pure in God's sight. This will also serve to add validity to the sacred union of marriage within the body of Christ.

Page 86: Relationships within the context of the family unit can all bear witness to one's relationship with Christ. Each participant is encouraged to identify how Christ can be reflected in the context of their varying family relationships.

Page 88: Christlikeness is also reflected in one's relationships with those outside the immediate family. Certainly this should be true of the family of God. Participants will identify how this dynamic can be demonstrated in his/her own life and in the local context.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 89: This final exercise is designed to highlight the concept of sacrificial love—a love which is not self-seeking but self-giving. To love in this way is to love as Christ loved.

Lesson 3
CHRISTIAN STEWARDSHIP

A Soldier's Covenant
I will be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.

COMMUNIQUE

"But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving." (2 Corinthians 8:7)

FOCAL POINT

Suppose you move into a new neighbourhood and discover you have a neighbour who sits on his front porch all day and night, gazing up to the sky. After speaking with some of the other neighbours you discover that he has not ventured beyond his porch for almost a year.

Eventually a time comes when you can no longer resist finding out what this individual is doing, and so you ask, "Why do you sit here day after day?"

His quickly replies, "Don't you read your Bible?" He then quotes the following:

> "Therefore keep watch because you do not know when the owner of the house will come back—whether in the evening, or at midnight, or when the rooster crows, or at dawn. If he comes suddenly, do not let him find you sleeping." (Mark 13:35-36)

He goes on to explain that he is sure Christ will return at any moment and because he does not want to be caught sleeping, he has decided to "keep watch." He no longer goes out in public; he quit his job and is content to sit all day on his porch.

Some time passes and one day you discover the man is no longer there. You read in the paper that he has died. From the obituary you also find out that this man was at one time involved in the local church, located a few blocks from where you live. In his house a small fortune of cash was discovered stuffed in the mattress of his bed. There are no next of kin to be found and it appears that there is no will.

Some might view this as "a total waste" of a life that was full of potential. Living one's life to the fullest of its potential, and making wise use of the resources with which one is blessed, can be understood as good stewardship of the gifts that God has given to each of us.

From the above scenario, a number of elements that relate to the issue of Christian stewardship can be identified. As a group,* determine *what these elements are and how each relates directly to this issue.

Element	Relationship to Christian Stewardship

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the various key components of Christian stewardship. Participants in this lesson will:

- gain a clearer understanding of the biblical basis for Christian stewardship.
- become more sensitive to the issues surrounding Christian stewardship.
- be willing to apply these principles to their daily lives.

To achieve this objective, the Field Manual will explore Christian stewardship under the following headings:

- The Stewardship of Time
- The Stewardship of Gifts and Abilities
- The Stewardship of Financial Resources
- The Stewardship of Mind and Body

FIELD MANUAL

Whenever the issue of Christian stewardship is raised in the corps, there will always be those who think immediately about money. Although the way in which we as Christians handle our finances is one element of Christian stewardship, there are many other factors involved in this important spiritual discipline. In fact, "spiritual discipline" is the first key to successful Christian stewardship. Good stewards are, by nature, disciplined in the handling of the affairs of life.

"Christian" stewardship, therefore, assumes that in the handling of the matters of life, the believer will remain focused on God's will and purposes for his/her life, and in doing so, will seek to manage his/her affairs accordingly. Therefore, every aspect of our living becomes an issue of "stewardship" in one way or another. Observed consistency in this area of living is often identified as an essential for spiritual leaders within the body of Christ.

The Stewardship of Time

In our busy society, there are many demands on our time. Each of these demands has its own merit and level of importance. There was a time when the activities and schedule of the local church was the focal point of social interaction in the community. Over time, other options in society have served to create diversity for social opportunity and involvement. Consequently, Christians today need to be far more intentional and innovative in the way they reclaim the time spent with friends and colleagues for the purposes of extending the kingdom of God through their witness and lifestyle, which will often seem at odds with that of their peers.

Take a few moments to* reflect *on the way your time is spent during the week. On the chart below,* outline *the major external demands on your time.* Determine*, on a scale of one to 10, what kind of priority you place on each item (one is low; 10 is high).

Activity	Time (hours per week)	Priority

Often, the amount of time we spend on something becomes a way by which we can measure its true level of priority in our lives. Christians should always seek to measure this against what we believe God's priorities would be. In doing this we become more sensitive to the things that are most important to God.

Throughout Scripture, the people of God are encouraged to be diligent in all they do. Solomon wrote:

> "Lazy hands make for poverty, but diligent hands bring wealth." (Proverbs 10:4)

This principle is also true where the things of God are concerned. In Christ's "Sermon on the Mount," this familiar passage is found:

> "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moths and vermin do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also." (Matthew 6:19-21)

Although this passage is often linked with one's handling of finance, it also speaks to the priority of time. Many people spend a great deal of time and effort building and sustaining their earthly kingdoms while devoting far less time and effort to that which is eternal. One of the best ways to demonstrate the importance one places on that which is eternally significant is to give them a high priority of time and effort while here on earth.

Every activity of life in which we choose to be engaged gives us opportunity to assess each against the values of the kingdom of heaven and the priorities of God. In doing so, we demonstrate our willingness to let God to have the kind of priority he deserves.

Take a few moments and* return *to the chart you filled out at the beginning of this section. Are there any adjustments that you need to make where your priority of time is concerned? If so,* record *these in the "Priority" column and* commit *to making these adjustments today.

The Stewardship of Gifts and Abilities

Another area of Christian stewardship is our gifts and abilities. The effective use of these talents is one tangible way we can actively demonstrate the priorities of God in our lives. God's Word tells us that we are each given gifts and abilities that are to be used for the sake of the gospel. Christ said:

> "You are the light of the world. A town built on a hill cannot be hidden. Neither do people light a lamp and put it under a bowl. Instead they put it on its stand, and it gives light to everyone in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your Father in heaven." (Matthew 5:14-16)

There is no member of the kingdom of heaven who is unable to do something to fulfil the great commission of the church to "**go and make disciples**" (Matthew 28:19). In fact, when we suggest that there is "nothing we can offer" we are not looking honestly at ourselves and are insulting the God who created us in his image. The Apostle Peter writes:

> "Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God's grace in its various forms. If anyone speaks, they should do so as one who speaks the very words of God. If anyone serves, they should do so with the strength God provides, so that in all things God may be praised through Jesus Christ. To him be the glory and the power for ever and ever. Amen." (1 Peter 4:10-11)

Spend a few moments as a group and* affirm *the gifts and abilities present in each member* by discussing *the following:

List the gifts and abilities you see at work in your own life.

_____

_____

_____

Without disclosing your list to the group, have each of the other members indicate the gifts they can identify in you. Circle the items which are the same and record any new items below.

Record ways you can make this list a part of your personal mission to be an agent of grace and transformation in the world. Make a personal commitment to follow through with these.

The Stewardship of Financial Resources

The way in which Christians handle their finances is also a measurable indication of the principle of stewardship at work in their lives. Of all the various expressions of Christian stewardship, this area of financial accountability to God often causes the greatest amount of contention. Financial demands are continually upon each one of us. At times there just does not seem to be enough to make ends meet or pay the bills, let alone give to the church and to God. Yet, God's Word not only teaches a principle of a 10-percent tithe but the New Testament encourages a level of giving which goes beyond this minimum standard set in the Old Testament. Our key verse for this unit states:

> "But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving." (2 Corinthians 8:7)

A few key elements of this aspect of Christian stewardship need to be addressed at this point. Firstly, the biblical precedent points to the local church as the recipient of the tithe. In the Old Testament, the tithe was brought into the local centre of worship in order that the Priests and the Levites, who had no other livelihood,

would be cared for so that they could give their entire time to the ministry. In addition, it was a way to care for those who are in need in the community (see Deuteronomy 14:22-29).

In the New Testament, local congregations were not only encouraged to be self-sufficient but to also be generous in the giving of their resources for the furtherance of the gospel. This principle is demonstrated in Paul's letter to the church in Corinth. As a further encouragement to them in this matter, he writes:

> "This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God." (2 Corinthians 9:12)

These days, there are many ways in which God's people can show generosity in giving. However, it must be understood that the ministry to which we are directly responsible, and where God has placed us, must be our first point of contact in this regard. If those who are ministering directly to us and on our behalf are side-tracked and held back in that ministry by insufficient resources, then we become accountable for this before God.

For the Salvationist, this means that one's first response to the Lord's work should be to the general operating fund of his/her local corps. Specified gifts to various funds and projects within and outside the ministry of the corps are greatly encouraged, but should not be given at the expense of the local ministry of which each Salvationist is a part.

Although the matter of personal finance is a matter between each individual and God, members of the group are encouraged to* reflect *upon his/her response to the principle of giving. To assist in this process, the following questions should be considered:

How consistent am I with my giving?

Am I giving as much as I am able to the ministry of my local corps?

What do I need to do to bring my personal giving in line with what I now believe God expects from me?

The Stewardship of Mind and Body

The final aspect of Christian stewardship to be discussed in this lesson deals with the care of the mind and body. Every believer is responsible before God for what is permitted entry into the mind and body, as well as the uses for which the mind and body are given.

There are essentially no built-in filters or safeguards in society that limit the kind of information that can be received into the minds of people. With the instant access we have through the Internet and social media, not to mention unlimited access to media, the film industry and television, there is very little standing between the believer and a vast array of material, which is damaging to the mind and soul. Today's Christians need to be vigilant in recognizing that which is potentially damaging to their minds, and ultimately their faith, and to stay as far removed as possible from the evil influences at work within our society.

In the same way, every Christian believer should work to protect and preserve his/her body in such a way so it can be used effectively in the service of Christ. Poor mental and physical health, brought on by poor eating habits, neglect and/or misuse only hinder our ability to function at our best level for the cause of the gospel.

The following passages of Scripture address certain aspects pertaining to the stewardship of the mind and body.* Read *each passage and* discuss *with the group what this means for you, today.

Scripture	Today's Application(s)
Psalm 1	
Matthew 5:27-30	
Matthew 6:22-23	
Romans 12:1-2	
1 Corinthians 6:12-20	
Galatians 5:16-21	

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

As we have discovered, Christian stewardship encompasses every aspect of our lives. It is a measurable way to determine one's spiritual health. The following exercise will assist you in working toward improving your spiritual health through Christian stewardship.

Drawing from each of the four areas of this lesson's study, in the chart below* identify *one key element where you see a need for improvement and* list *steps you are willing to make to begin to address them in the coming week.

Area of Study	Element for Improvement	Action Steps
Time		
Gifts and abilities		
Financial resources		
Mind and body		

Hold yourself accountable to this process by sharing these goals with one trusted friend.

REINFORCEMENTS

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 11: The Salvation Soldier

Unit B: Lesson 3
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 93: Participants are encouraged to think broadly about stewardship and the issues in this story that reflect elements of Christian stewardship. One's ability to identify these issues will assist in determining the participant's understanding of the subject.

FIELD MANUAL

Page 95: The contrast between the amount of time spent on something, against the priority it has been given will generate much discussion. It should be noted that time and priority will not always line up. However, much time spent on meaningless activity (such as watching too much TV) may be a worthy point for discussion.

Pages 97-98: This exercise will highlight some of the ways in which the participants can see each other making wise use of their individual gifts and abilities. This will encourage them to evaluate their gifts and how these can be best used for God.

Pages 99-100: This exercise seeks to place the stewardship of giving into the broader context of Christian stewardship. There is some danger in making this a group activity, as people can often become defensive in this area. Group leaders should be sensitive to this dynamic and encourage participants to reflect on and apply what God lays on their hearts in this area of their lives, even if this means they will not necessarily share these openly with the group.

Page 101: Each passage represents a different area of Christian stewardship, especially as it relates to the care of the mind and body. Many different applications may come out of this, depending on the nature of the group. It is hoped, however, that by reading these passages, participants will be encouraged to apply the principles unearthed.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Pages 101-102: As the lesson concludes, opportunity is given for a time of personal reflection and determination. Four areas of Christian stewardship have been discussed in this unit. Participants should not be forced to disclose what they have written, but encouraged to be held accountable for it. Those who are willing to share should be encouraged to do so.

Lesson 1
OUR HERITAGE OF SALVATIONISM

A Soldier's Covenant
I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to him, and in his name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.

COMMUNIQUE

"Brothers and sisters, think of what you were when you were called. Not many of you were wise by human standards; not many were influential; not many were of noble birth. But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him. It is because of him that you are in Christ Jesus, who has become for us wisdom from God—that is, our righteousness, holiness and redemption. Therefore, as it is written: 'Let the one who boasts boast in the Lord.' " (1 Corinthians 1:26-31)

FOCAL POINT

Many people in our society find themselves, at one time or another, on a quest to discover something about their past. Whether it is a casual look back into one's family history, or an earnest searching to discover a link that will unlock the key to one's identity, people will take time to look back to their roots to gain insight into the present and direction for the future.

People will make many important decisions based on family history. For example, a young couple may think seriously about starting a family if there is a history of a certain birth defect that will be invariably passed on through one of the spouses. People may choose to attend a certain college or university because every member of their family has gone to that particular school

and the family name is held in high esteem there. Some will enter certain fields of employment based on the affirmation of certain gifts and abilities received through the school years. Certainly the past plays an important role in the decisions and goals of the future.

As we look at this week's Focal Point, spend a few brief minutes* reflecting *on a decision you have made recently, or a goal you have set for yourself, based on information from the past.* Discuss *your findings with the members of your group:

How important was the past to this situation?

_____

_____

_____

Would you have done things differently if the information from the past was unavailable? If yes, in what way?

_____

_____

_____

What lesson(s) have you learned from this situation?

_____

_____

_____

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the heritage of Salvationism that is ours within The Salvation Army. Participants will:

- learn some key events of Salvation Army history that have worked to shape our movement into what it is today.

- gain a sense of pride in our identity as members of this body of believers.
- be encouraged to take ownership of the integrated mission of the Army in such a way that these become a catalyst for service to God, both in the present and the future.

To assist in achieving this objective, the following topics will be covered in this week's Field Manual:

- The Purpose of Proclamation
- The Purpose of Persuasion
- The Purpose of Provision

FIELD MANUAL

Salvationists enjoy a rich heritage of faith and service. Over the years, many books and articles have been written which speak to the success of our movement. From its early beginnings in the East End slums of 19th-century London, England, to the present day, The Salvation Army has established itself as an organization eager to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ to a needy and hurting world.

In 1865, William Booth, a Methodist minister, had been conducting evangelistic meetings in London's poorest district. The cry of human need, both physical and spiritual, was so intense that Booth could not allow himself to be separated from this newfound mission field, a mission largely abandoned and forgotten by the established churches of Victorian England.

With no intent to introduce a new denomination into the Christian community of his day, Booth's plan was to set up a Christian mission with the idea that it would become a point of integration between the already established churches and the people of East End London. Unfortunately, Booth's new converts were regularly cast aside in the churches and returned to find a sense of belonging and acceptance within the fellowship of the mission.

By 1878, "The Christian Mission" had become a well-organized centre of evangelism and outreach resulting in the transformation of many lives. Many converts had begun to find purpose and ministry within what was now becoming a movement. Subsequently, during that same year, the name of the mission was changed to "The Salvation Army."

Over the years, The Salvation Army has grown and developed to such an extent that its name and reputation is recognized around the world. The Army is now operating in more than 126 countries worldwide.

The Purpose of Proclamation: "Blood and Fire"

One of the primary goals for the Army since its inception has been to proclaim the transforming gospel of Jesus Christ to the entire world. In the early years, it was thought that if this was accomplished, it would hasten the long awaited Second Coming of Christ, based on the message of Matthew 24:14.

> "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in the whole world as a testimony to all nations, and then the end will come." (Matthew 24:14)

To facilitate this goal, a quasi-military organizational structure was put in place, with a central headquarters in London to co-ordinate the Army's efforts around the globe.

As with all military operations, The Salvation Army quickly adopted much of the standard equipment used on most battle fronts. The Army flag, rich in symbolism and colour, became the banner under which the Army would fight. To this day, the Army's motto, "**Blood and Fire**," is clearly displayed in the centre of the flag on a bright yellow star, surrounded in red, representing the fire of the Holy Spirit and the blood of Christ respectively. The blue border, around the entire flag, represents the holiness of God.

Officers and soldiers dressed in military-style uniforms which clearly identified them with the movement and as soldiers of Jesus Christ. A ranking system among the officers and soldiers distinguished between the various levels of authority and responsibility. Over time, the Army and its members have become easily recognized anywhere in the world where the Army is at work. Because of this, the Army has enjoyed the privilege of having many doors

opened to it that may have otherwise been closed to groups who do not have the same reputation or level of visibility.

In reviewing the Army's past, one can identify many factors that have contributed to the Army's success in proclaiming the gospel. On the chart below,* highlight *one such item and* share *its significance with the members of the group.

Significant Factor	Contribution to the Army's Success

Take a few moments to* consider *the following:

Identify ways in which the Army is visible in your community today.

_____

_____

_____

Discuss what impact this visibility has on the proclamation of the gospel.

_____

_____

_____

What do you believe is required to give this purpose more visibility in your community?

_____

_____

_____

The Purpose of Persuasion: "Saved to Save"
The word "Salvation" in "The Salvation Army" speaks to the true purpose for which we exist as a movement. Above all else, The Salvation Army is in the business of seeing lives transformed by the grace of God offered through the cross of Christ and the power of the Holy Spirit. Therefore, everything we do has as its final goal the salvation of souls. If people are not won into the kingdom of heaven through our ministries, then these ministries, however virtuous they might be, have failed.

In The Salvation Army, this is referred to as "soul-winning." Although the "S"s on the lapel of the Salvation Army uniform represent the first letter in the word "salvation," it has often been understood that the two, side by side, mean, "Saved to Save."

Even though we affirm that "Salvation" comes only through the shed blood of Christ, Salvationists are called to be agents by which people are brought to this point of awareness and commitment.

Not all people feel comfortable with the idea of proclaiming the gospel in a direct way. However, each of us can be agents of persuasion through our witness and lifestyle each and every day. With this in mind,* answer *the following questions:

What can a person do to show that soul-winning is a top priority?

_____

_____

_____

How do you demonstrate this priority in your life?

_____

_____

_____

How fruitful have you been in this aspect of your life to this point? (Have you led anyone to Christ?)

_____

_____

_____

In what ways can you improve upon your effectiveness in this area?

_____

_____

_____

The Purpose of Provision: "Heart to God and Hand to Man"
One of the elements of Salvation Army ministry for which we are most known is our ready response to human need. It has been this response and commitment to the human condition and issues of social justice that have often brought us the most public support. However, we must never lose sight of the fact that our end desire is to reach people for Christ. If we become nothing more than a social agency then we lose this critical component. On the other hand, it is this very aspect of our makeup that keeps us in touch with our roots in the East End of London, and the vision for souls, which was given to William and Catherine Booth.

In society today, there are many social agencies, as well as many churches. Secular social agencies will attempt to meet the need of the individual without dealing with the root cause of sin. Many churches work to fill their buildings with people from common socio-economic backgrounds and lifestyles to create a sense of unity and financial security.

There still remains a need for a movement such as The Salvation Army who will continue to minister to and advocate for those who do not fit the acceptable mould as defined by society. The Army continues its tradition of ministering to the total person—mind, body and spirit—without discrimination. This was certainly the approach Christ took during his earthly ministry:

> "When the teachers of the law who were Pharisees saw him eating with the sinners and tax collectors, they asked his disciples: 'Why does he eat with tax collectors and sinners?' On hearing this, Jesus said to them, 'It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners.' " (Mark 2:16-17)

In making use of the analogy of the physician, Christ gives us some insight into the end goal of healing and restoration that comes through the power of the gospel. Therefore, the "purpose of provision" does not end with acts of social service, but also commends initiatives of social justice and advocacy that will address and confront societal norms and systems that work against improving the condition of the marginalized.

Throughout Scripture we can identify situations where Christ ministered to and advocated on behalf of those who were otherwise cast aside by the society of the day.* Read *the Scripture verses listed below and* identify *some of the kinds of people with whom Christ associated while on earth, then* answer *the questions:

Scripture	**The Recipients of Christ's Ministry/ Advocation**
Luke 19:5-10	
John 4:4-18	
Luke 14:1-14	
Luke 5:1-11	
Luke 17:11-19	

Identify ***groups of people who could represent modern equivalents to those mentioned in these verses.***

What does this tell us about the extent of God's love?

How has the historical mission of The Salvation Army reflected this?

How is it being reflected in your community through your corps at present?

What are the areas of human need in your community that could be met through the ministry of your corps?

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Although the Army is a large organization with many programs and ministries in place designed to reach out to and advocate for others in the name of Christ, there remains a great need for committed individuals within its ranks to take interest and ownership of these same ministries. Take a moment to* reflect *on your personal involvement in the Army's ministries and* respond *to the following questions:

In what ways does your level of Army involvement support the "purpose of proclamation" on behalf of the gospel?

_____

_____

In what ways does your Army involvement support the "purpose of persuasion" as you strive to be a transformational influence in your community?

_____

_____

In what ways does your level of Army involvement support the "purpose of provision" as you address issues of human need?

_____

_____

Now that you have identified areas where you can help fulfil the purposes of The Salvation Army through your personal involvement, it is up to you to carry these out. In doing so you will be doing your part to further the ministry of the Army and carry out its mission in the world.

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

Appendix 6: Salvation Army Covenants

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 1: Some Features of Salvationism

Chapter 10: The Salvation Army, Its Structure and Leadership

Unit C: Lesson 1
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 106: This exercise will help participants recognize that many choices are based on wisdom from the past. Not only is this principle true at the individual level, but at the corporate level as well. Salvationists, at times, need to look to the past to determine what is good for the present. The lesson that unfolds will highlight the importance of this principle.

FIELD MANUAL

Page 109: This exercise has two parts. The first section is designed to assist participants to identify why the Army has been successful in its proclamation of the gospel. Participants should be encouraged to share their answers with other members of the group. Secondly, participants are encouraged to assess the effectiveness of their local corps in the proclamation of the gospel. Are there principles that can be drawn from the past for added effectiveness in this area?

Pages 110-111: As the proclamation of the gospel is central to the mission of the Army, this exercise will help participants identify ways they can be effective in this area.

Pages 112-113: This exercise will highlight the kinds of people to which Christ ministered, many of whom remain "untouched" in our society. This exercise is designed to create an awareness of the need for the Army's historical mission in the present.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 114: As prospective Salvationists, participants are encouraged to think of ways they can make a meaningful contribution toward the mission of the Army in their local corps.

Lesson 2
SALVATIONISM AND MISSION

A Soldier's Covenant
I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult, and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of Salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

COMMUNIQUE

" 'I have the right to do anything,' you say—but not everything is beneficial. 'I have the right to do anything'—but not everything is constructive. No one should seek his own good, but the good of others." (1 Corinthians 10:23-24)

FOCAL POINT

There are many situations in life where it is necessary for individuals to change their behaviour for the sake of others. In the home, for example, a news report that might be too intense for a young child might be turned off if the child is in the room. In a similar situation, it would be considered unwise, and even negligent, to place solvents and other cleaning supplies in a location where a curious small child could gain access to them. All reasonable people can recognize that in situations such as these, it is vital to consider the safety and security of small children over the convenience of an adult.

In many ways the Christian life is very much like this. Although the Bible tells us that in Christ there is freedom from the legalistic application of the law, there are many situations in life which, in themselves, will dictate the right and proper behaviour. The way we handle such circumstances demonstrates our ability to be in tune with the principles or spirit of the law.

As we look at this week's Focal Point, spend a moment to* recall *a situation in your life where an action was performed which was purely in the best interest of another person. As you* reflect *on this event,* answer *the following questions:

What caused you to make the decision you made in this situation?

_____

_____

_____

How did you feel during the event?

_____

_____

_____

How did you feel following the event?

_____

_____

_____

How do you know that what you did was the right thing?

_____

_____

_____

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to examine the Army's mandate in the context of its mission field. Participants will:

- gain a clear understanding of the Army's mission in the world and its influence upon the Salvationist lifestyle.

- gain a measure of confidence to face the challenges of living a godly life in a godless world.
- seek to develop a disciplined personal lifestyle as a means of witness and service.

To assist in achieving these objectives, the following topics will be discussed in this week's Field Manual:

- The Spirit of Salvationism
- Loyalty in The Salvation Army
- Salvation Army Principles and Practices
  1. Uniform Wearing
  2. Abstinence

FIELD MANUAL

In order for the Army to remain as effective in the present as it has been in the past, it is important that everything we do and everything we are is linked in a meaningful way to the integrated mission set out before us. Although the environment in which we work and live is very different than what it was in the early days of the Army, the pain and misery caused by our fallen nature is having the same destructive effect on individuals and families. Because of this, there is still much that the Army can do to carry out its mission to the present generation.

Identifying that mission is not as simple as it used to be. For example, The Salvation Army is no longer simply an inner-city operation. As corps have grown, from generation to generation, many have moved out into the suburbs of our communities, into the neighbourhoods close to where the membership now live and work. Therefore, in addition to meeting the basic needs of those who live and survive on the street, the Army is called to disciple people who have never known a life of destitution to any degree.

The challenge before us, therefore, is not only to identify our mission for today, but to know how it might be effectively

represented and carried out through our various corps and institutions. In many ways, our integrated mission to upper- and middle-class suburbia should be viewed as opportunities to be "preventative" or even "pre-emptive" in nature. Many identifiable "street people" have arrived there from the centre of affluence, as lifestyles of unchecked indulgence have left them at the point of destitution.

The Spirit of Salvationism

The various aspects of Salvationism can be applied and are relevant in any social context. The concept of "infectious joy," for instance, is something which can transcend all social and economic barriers. Therefore, our expression of praise and worship to God should reflect the joy we have in our relationship with Christ.

In addition, The Salvation Army is seen, universally, as an organization that has learned to love unconditionally and advocate for members of society who have long been cast off as worthless and burdensome. Maintaining a meaningful link to such individuals through our corps and personal ministries will continue to ensure that we have not abandoned our "first love." Equally important is the fact that "our people" will have a voice when dealing with issues such as oppression and prejudice.

One of the most familiar passages of Scripture that speaks to this issue is found in Luke 10:25-37. Here a so-called "expert" in the law was attempting to justify himself with respect to his responsibility to his neighbour. The key question for this passage is, "And who is my neighbour?" (Luke 10:29)

As a group,* read *Luke 10:25-37 and* discuss *how the parable of the Good Samaritan applies to ministry today* by answering *the following questions:

What is involved in loving your neighbour as yourself?

How does this become an expression of one's love for God?

In Christ's time, the Samaritans were seen as unclean and despised by the Jews. What effect would having a Samaritan as the "hero" of this story have had on the Jewish people?

Today, there are many groups and individuals who would see themselves as being "outcast" in same way. Identify groups of people Christ could have used today to get the same point across.

In what ways can you see your "neighbourhood" being extended to include those who may not be acceptable to others in today's society?

Loyalty in The Salvation Army

At times The Salvation Army finds itself on the receiving end of poor public opinion and support. This can occur when, as an organization, we pursue justice in an ethical issue, confront the status quo or take a stand in any number of situations that go against the Word of God.

Unfortunately, there are also times when individual members of

the organization bring criticism upon the whole group by not standing firm when the cause of Christ is challenged. Additionally, there will be those who, through their disobedience to Christ, bring dishonour to his name and cause, which can have significant impact on those who serve alongside them, and are served by them.

In each of these situations, it is impossible for the members of the Army to not feel some effect, especially when the issues hit close to home. It is during these times that Salvationists must be sure of the object of their loyalties. Obviously, our first loyalty is to Christ who has called us into this relationship with him in the first place. However, our loyalty to each other, as brothers and sisters in Christ, must be just as strong as we strive to work out our salvation in a fallen world. As long as people are involved, mistakes will always be made.

The key, then, is to link loyalty to the "ideal" and not the "individual." In most cases this will be demonstrated by loyalty to those who are placed in authority over us "in the Lord." However, when we are let down or disappointed by such an individual, it is important to remember that the organization is bigger than that one person. Our loyalty is then tested by our ability to faithfully continue to serve the greater cause.

The following passages of Scripture speak to the issue of loyalty within the church.* Read *each passage and* identify *the key elements in each:

Scripture	Key Elements
Romans 12:9-21	
1 Corinthians 16:15-16	
Hebrews 13:7, 17	

Salvation Army Principles and Practices

Due to the nature of our mission to the world, Salvationists are encouraged to be people of principle. Maintaining a high level of personal integrity and discipline will enable each Salvationist to carry out the mission of the Army with dignity and efficiency. Therefore, everything that we do (or don't do) is linked in a meaningful way to the principles of ministry. Two such examples of this are found in the wearing of Salvation Army uniform and the Army's position of total abstinence.

1. Uniform Wearing

In the previous lesson we discovered some of the obvious benefits of the Salvation Army uniform as it relates to visibility and accessibility. There are, however, some basic principles of ministry that are also assisted through the wearing of the uniform. One of the most important is simply being identified as a people "set apart" for Christ. In many ways, the Salvation Army uniform is our "priestly" garment. Nowhere else in the Christian world does one find such a tool that identifies us as the "priesthood of all believers." More importantly, this privilege is not just reserved for the clergy (officers). The Apostle Peter wrote:

> "But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light." (1 Peter 2:9)

Over the years, many traditions in our society have adopted certain articles of clothing to set themselves apart in society. The wearing of such "symbols" becomes the way and means for one to be identified with certain religions or causes.

By wearing the uniform, the Salvationist has a unique opportunity to be identified in a visible way with Christ and his gospel. Tolerance and acceptance of all cultures and religions is a principle that is valued in many secular societies. When many philosophies and religions are competing for the hearts and souls of people, the church cannot afford to be invisible. The uniform gives us a unique opportunity to "stand up" and "stand out" for Christ.

On the chart,* identify *some of the common "symbols" people wear to identify themselves with certain groups and causes.

Symbol	Group/Cause

What items on your list have been the most effective? Why?

_____

_____

_____

In what ways has the ministry of the gospel been assisted by the Salvation Army uniform?

_____

_____

_____

How can the uniform continue to be effective today?

_____

_____

_____

2. Abstinence

Another significant missional principle that is expressed in practice is the Army's position on total abstinence. Although there are many branches of the Christian church that do not insist on the same level of discipline in this area, there is good reason for the Army to continue to maintain its position. A careful examination of the specific areas of concern will reveal that in the majority of cases, the result of overindulgence and abuse has led to a life broken or a family destroyed—in many cases, both.

The Salvationist, therefore, chooses not to become involved, in any way, with such activities in order that he/she may be an encouragement to those who are either presently enslaved by these vices, or to support those who are recovering addicts who realize that for them there is now no choice. We become "safe company" for those who may struggle in these areas, even silently. By voluntarily abstaining from all substances and activities that can enslave the body, mind and soul, the Salvationist is demonstrating that such activities are not necessary for living a fulfilled and joy-filled life, and that the true answer of all life's problems can be met in Jesus Christ.

Living according to this disciplined lifestyle keeps the Salvationist in tune with the mission of the Army and should be seen as an opportunity to live out a life of mission and ministry and not merely as an obligation or regulation. To adopt such a perspective will enable each soldier to ensure the individual and collective effectiveness of the witness of the Army.

The key verses for this lesson are found in 1 Corinthians 10:23-24. As a group, take a few minutes to* discuss *how the principles at work in this short passage apply to our mission and ministry to each of the individuals listed on the following chart:

Individual	Application of 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

Individual	Application of 1 Corinthians 10:23-24

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Through this lesson we have discovered ways our lifestyle choices affect our mission. The potential to impact this generation for Christ is great. As you prepare to go out in his name, spend a few moments to* reflect *on the following questions:

At present, what areas in my life hinder me from being an effective constant witness for Christ?

_____

_____

What am I prepared to do to deal with these hindrances?

_____

_____

Are there any areas of ministry within The Salvation Army for which I know I am well suited?

_____

_____

Am I willing to do what it takes to fulfil this role?

_____

_____

REINFORCEMENTS

Chosen to be a Soldier—Orders and Regulations for Soldiers of The Salvation Army. London, England: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1977.

Chapter 5: The Doctrines of The Salvation Army

Chapter 12: The Army Spirit

Unit C: Lesson 2
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Page 118: The key to this exercise is to demonstrate the importance of thinking about others, in the context of mission. By recalling situations where others have been blessed by their efforts, participants will be encouraged to continue to engage in ministry from this selfless perspective.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 120-121: This exercise will encourage the participant to reach beyond his/her comfort zone for the sake of ministry.

Page 122: This exercise will establish a biblical basis for loyalty within the church. Participants will recognize that their leaders have been placed over them by the Lord, and that they, too, are accountable to Christ. How people function with respect to those in authority is a good measuring rod to how they respond to Christ's leading in their lives.

Pages 123-124: This exercise is designed to establish how the Salvation Army uniform is an important symbol of faith and witness. As participants identify symbols worn by others, such as crosses or turbans, they will be encouraged to see how the uniform can be used effectively today.

Pages 125-126: This short exercise should assist the participant to recognize that the Christian is encouraged to function in the context of mission on a daily basis. Because of the Army's ministry to those who have been enslaved by various addictions, it is important to apply this principle to one's life.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Pages 126-127: Participants are given opportunity to reflect on those things which get in the way of effective personal mission and ministry. Further reflection on how one might contribute to the local body is also considered at this point.

Lesson 3
SALVATIONISM AND SACRAMENT

A Soldier's Covenant
I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of Salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

COMMUNIQUE

"Religion that God our Father accepts as pure and faultless is this: to look after orphans and widows in their distress and to keep oneself from being polluted by the world." (James 1:27)

FOCAL POINT

As society becomes increasingly secular and godless, people (even Christians) have tended to compartmentalize their faith. Often faith, or the expression of faith, is limited to the activities centred in the church or local corps. Other activities, at home, at school or in the workplace are often not necessarily seen as "spiritual," and, in fact, they may clearly be identified as "secular." As we have discussed, days when the activities of the community are centred on the weekly calendar of the local church are no longer the reality for most. Today's church finds itself in competition with the world for the time and attention of its members. Consequently, what once was a way of life is now, in many situations, just one of the pieces of a very complicated puzzle that we call life.

As we zoom in on the Focal Point for this week's lesson, take a few moments to* react *to the list of activities on the following chart.* Indicate *the level and type of impact each activity has on your relationship with Christ.* Consider *the quality and quantity of time spent on each activity, both positive (+) and negative (-), when assessing the degree of impact on a scale from -2 to +2.

Activity	-2	-1	0	+1	+2
Sunday Worship					
Personal Devotions					
Work/School					
Church/Corps Activities					
Television Viewing					
Community/ Political Activities					
Leisure Time with Friends/Colleagues					
Time Spent at Computer/Internet					
Meal Time					

BRIEF

The purpose of this lesson is to explore the concept of sacramental living within the context of a Salvationist's life and worship. Participants will:

- be introduced to the biblical and historical foundations underlying the Army's unique sacramental position.
- begin to know something of the joy of living a sacramental life at all times and in all places.
- be encouraged to develop a lifestyle that will result in the development of a meaningful relationship with Christ.

To assist in achieving these objectives, the following topics will be discussed in this week's Field Manual:

- Sacramentalism as a Rite
- Sacramentalism as a Ritual
- Sacramentalism as a Relationship

FIELD MANUAL

When people hear the word "sacrament" they will often think of the ceremonies of the church, such as "communion" or "baptism." The Salvation Army has often been identified by others in the Christian community as "non-sacramental." At times, we have even been misinterpreted as being "anti-sacramental" in our practice and position. In reality, the Army has worked diligently to present itself as an "ultra" or "pan" sacramental organization whose members not only portray but enjoy a living, vibrant relationship with Christ.

Because the Army's sacramental expression differs significantly from those around it, the essential elements of the sacramental lifestyle will be discussed in this lesson. The uniqueness of the Army's expression and example on this issue are critical to our understanding of the same. In many circles of Christian faith, the traditional sacramental practices have been, and are today, a true source of blessing and encouragement in the faith, and we would be wrong to suggest otherwise.

A key issue for The Salvation Army, however, centres on the danger that these symbols of faith can replace what they are designed to represent. For example, some individuals believe that they are saved by using the right formulas or observing the right ceremonies. Not doing them means their position in Christ is in question.

Salvationists should never think they are in a "superior" position because of their unique expression of faith nor think less of their spiritual position as a result on non-participation in traditional sacramental expressions. Salvationists should consider their position

as an opportunity to humbly witness to the saving grace of Christ and the empowering of his Holy Spirit given freely to those who ask.

Sacramentalism as a Rite

The first element of sacramentalism to be discussed centres on the concept of rite. Rites which many Christians associate with the church usually include such ceremonies as baptism, marriage and funerals. Some nominal Christians also think that the rite of infant baptism or a church funeral, for instance, will guarantee safe passage into heaven. For others, a church-sanctioned marriage is seen as an insurance policy toward the lasting success of the relationship, even if there is no real commitment of faith made by the couple.

A careful reading of the New Testament will reveal some very different views on this subject from those commonly observed by many in our society. Scripture teaches that the eternal destiny of the individual is not dependent on the observance of a ritual or ceremony, but is entirely an act of God's grace through the sacrificial work of Christ on the cross as stated in the Apostle Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus:

> "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

The early church came out of a culture and religion steeped in rite and ritual. It was very difficult for many to understand that access to God's saving grace came simply through an individual's renunciation of sin and a confession of Christ as Saviour and Lord. This point is illustrated in the Book of Acts when Peter was a guest in the house of Cornelius, a Gentile in Caesarea.

> "While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit came on all who heard the message. The circumcised believers who had come with Peter were astonished that the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out even on the Gentiles. For they heard them speaking in tongues and praising God. Then Peter said, 'Surely no one can stand in the way of their being baptized with water? They have received the Holy Spirit just as we have.' " (Acts 10:44-47)

It is at this point in the early history of the church that the Jewish Christians discovered the ritual of water baptism is not a prerequisite for an individual to be fully received by God and infilled by his Holy Spirit. It reveals that the Holy Spirit can truly enter the life of one who believes, without human ritual or intervention.

Read ***Acts 10 together as a group and*** **answer** ***the following questions:***

For the Jew, keeping the Old Testament food laws was one way of ensuring one's position before God. What new lesson did Peter learn from his vision of the sheet?

What is the primary message of Acts 10:43?

What was the evidence that those who heard Peter's message had been saved?

What role did the rite of baptism play in this process?

Was this baptism necessary for the salvation of these individuals?

Sacramentalism as a Ritual

Over the years, sacramentalism has traditionally been associated with ritual. A careful study of the New Testament model of the common meal or "Lord's Supper" will reveal something very different to the more formal communion ceremony or ritual practised today in many churches.

The first reference to the Lord's Supper is found in the Gospels. All four Gospels contain accounts of the events surrounding Christ's final meal with his disciples in the upper room. As Scripture indicates, Christ and his disciples had met to share in the Passover meal together. This Jewish ceremony celebrates the salvation of God as it is relates back to the most significant event in the history of Israel—"the Exodus." During the celebration of this meal with the disciples, however, Christ takes the opportunity to project toward an even greater act of salvation which was about to take place. The wine, which spoke of the blood of the Passover lamb, now represented the blood of the Lamb of God through which the believer would pass from death into *eternal* life. The bread, which spoke of how quickly the Israelites would have left Egypt, now spoke of the immediacy of Christ's death on the cross—the breaking of his body for our sins. As the Jewish community continued to celebrate the Passover, it was hoped that those who came to recognize the greater Passover Lamb would reflect on his final act of deliverance for his people from this point forward.

The Book of Acts records that the church experienced a great deal of persecution as it began to grow. One way to deal with the hardship was to pool resources. Acts 4:32-35 states that the Christians readily shared their possessions and took care of each other. Eating in fellowship was a way of life that ensured no one among them was going without the food they needed. As they met, they took the opportunity to thank God for his goodness to them and reflect upon the salvation that was theirs through the broken body and spilled blood of Christ.

In most Christian traditions, however, this meal, which was shared by the community of believers, has been replaced by a ritual celebrated as a reminder of Christ's sacrificial death. In a meaningful way, people are invited to share once again in the message of the cross.

In Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth, it is discovered that the Lord's Supper, which was meant to unify the body of believers, had become a source of division and dispute.* Read *1 Corinthians 11:17-34 together as a group and* discuss *the following:

What was happening at these common meals that troubled Paul the most?

How did this atmosphere of selfishness and greed affect the life of the church?

Where does Paul encourage those who seem to want to fill up on all the food and drink, to eat?

What affect would this decision have on the poor in the congregation?

What element of the common meal is lost through this dispute?

What can be done to bring the church of today closer to the kind of fellowship and communion depicted in the New Testament?

Sacramentalism as a Relationship

Although The Salvation Army does not apply the sacramental life in terms of "rite" or a "ritual," it does promote sacramentalism in the context of a person's ongoing relationship with Christ. As we have established, one's position in Christ is not determined by rite or ceremony but in the acceptance of Jesus as Saviour and Lord. Accordingly, fellowship with him, in his suffering and death, is also not a question of established ritual but of ongoing relationship. Salvationists are encouraged to live out every area of their lives as a sacrament unto God.

In practical terms, Salvationists are encouraged to daily share in the death and Resurrection of Christ. For example, every time Salvationists sit down to eat and drink, whether at home or as a body of believers, they should be given opportunity to reflect upon and remember the sacrifice of Christ. The "Army grace," which was pronounced at many meals shared by early Salvationists, afforded such an opportunity to link the story of the Passover with the ultimate deliverance from sin provided by Christ's sacrifice on the cross.

"We thank thee Lord for this our food,
Much more because of Jesus' blood.
Let manna to our souls be given,
The Bread of Life sent down from heaven."

Glorifying God through the consistent use of the gifts and abilities given by the Holy Spirit will also serve as a continual witness to the baptism of the Holy Spirit upon an individual's life. Salvationists are encouraged to model the substance of their relationship with Christ at all times and in all places. The wearing of the Salvation Army uniform can also serve as a consistent reminder to the Salvationist and to others of one's enrolment or "confirmation" of faith, which in many denominations is the term used to identify a "believer's baptism."

Times and situations remain where, through an act of commitment or a special ceremony, Salvationists are given an opportunity to reflect on God's rich blessings. The dedication of a small child will continue to serve as a reminder of the parents' commitment to provide a godly environment for that young life entrusted into their care. The public enrolment of soldiers and adherents serves to reinforce the realities of relationship with, and responsibility to, Christ. As discussed in an earlier lesson, the Christian marriage ceremony is the beginning of a sacrament of love, modelling the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church. The Army funeral celebrates the "promotion to glory" of those who have followed the Lord faithfully here on earth.

As a final word on this issue, although the Army does not administer the traditional sacraments of baptism and communion, it is important to affirm that at no time should Salvationists feel discouraged to participate in such ceremonies while engaged in fellowship with Christians from other traditions. Ultimately "communion" speaks of the "community" of faith, of which we are an integral part. The Army's greatest witness to this community may be in its continual ministry and mission to serve "the least," "the last" and "the lost."

John's account of the Last Supper that Christ shared with the disciples is very different from the other Gospel writers. Although his account of the meal encompasses two full chapters, nowhere does he mention the incident with the bread and the wine. Instead, the most significant act of Christ, according to John, was that he took on the role of a servant and washed the disciples' feet.* Read *John 13:1-17 together as a group and* discuss *the following:

How did this act of Christ serve to demonstrate the full extent of Christ's love for his disciples?

In the end, how did Christ ultimately demonstrate the full extent of his love for us?

What are some practical ways in which we can demonstrate this love to others?

How can this be seen as a sacrament?

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Through this lesson we have discovered that sacramental living is much broader than the observance of certain ceremonies or rituals. Take a few moments to* examine *your daily routine.* Ask *yourself, "How can I make this area of my life a living sacrament unto God?"* Record *your responses on the following chart:

Activity	My "Living Sacrament"

Are there any additional activities that would enable you to live more sacramentally before God?

_____

_____

Are there any activities in your daily routine that you should discontinue?

_____

_____

REINFORCEMENTS

The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine. London, United Kingdom: Salvation Books—The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2010.

The Church: Study Notes

E. The Sacraments

F. Issues for Salvationists

Unit C: Lesson 3
LEADER'S NOTES

FOCAL POINT

Pages 130-131: This opening exercise is designed to increase the awareness of the influences of common activities on the life of the believer and the effect these might have on one's witness. As the lesson unfolds, issues surrounding true sacramental living will be discussed.

FIELD MANUAL

Pages 134-135: The purpose of this exercise is to illustrate that water baptism is a symbol of a greater work of grace. The individuals involved had already received the Holy Spirit, without the ceremony.

Pages 136-137: This exercise will provide a biblical context for the Lord's Supper as a common meal and assist participants to recognize the role of this practice today. Suggestions on practical ways to bring about the kind of fellowship enjoyed by the early church are encouraged.

Pages 138-139: This exercise will highlight that for the Apostle John, the events of the Last Supper had a very profound impact on his life, in a different way than for the other Gospel writers. For John, Christ demonstrated the full extent of his love, symbolically as a servant, and ultimately, on the cross. This represents the true essence of the sacramental life.

MOBILIZED FOR MISSION

Page 139: Participants are encouraged to see their lives as living sacraments unto God.

RESOLVE

A Soldier's Covenant
I now call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to his service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

Written by Major Brian Slous, *Mobilized for Mission* is an 11-lesson in-depth study of Salvationist doctrine and practice. This senior soldier preparation course contains five lessons on doctrine, three on Christian lifestyle and three on Salvationism. It is an updated and revised version of Preparing for Battle, which has been widely used and well received, both territorially and internationally.

"To be a soldier in The Salvation Army requires intelligence and character, not mere rote compliance. As an educator, Major Brian Slous understands the need. *Mobilized for Mission* gives information, but it also poses real questions, open questions, questions that engage Salvationists in a personal commitment to the mission of The Salvation Army. It is a book to be commended to new recruits and long-time soldiers alike."

—*Dr. James E. Read, Executive Director, The Salvation Army Ethics Centre*

"We have used this material in four corps, in four different provinces. The teaching has made a huge impact in the lives of new Christians, those who have grown up in other churches and those who have been raised in the Army. It reaches young and old alike and is inclusive for many different backgrounds. We are excited to use this new edition."

—*Majors Steven and Corinne Cameron*

Major Brian Slous is a fifth-generation Salvationist and a long-service officer in the Canada and Bermuda Territory. Brian has ministered as a corps officer, a training officer and in divisional and social services appointments. He holds a Master of Arts in Christian Studies from Trinity Western University, majoring in church ministries and Christian (Wesleyan) theology. Brian is deeply committed to the historical, missional and theological underpinnings of our Salvationist heritage and desires that these continue to inform and guide our mission and ministry into the 21st century.

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