



Our Core Values

Worship Planning Resource

A worship series based on the core values
of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory



Produced by The Salvation Army Ethics Centre
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Our Core Values

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WORSHIP SERIES OUTLINES

In this worship series you will find a suggested outline for each of the core values of the Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory: Hope, Service, Dignity and Stewardship. A worship service outline is provided for each core value.

Each weekly outline consists of materials and suggestions for your worship service that can be used as-is or modified for your service.

For more resources visit salvationarmyvalues.ca

Worship Series Elements

Call to Worship

Song Suggestions: Each week includes a variety of contemporary and classical worship songs.

Children's Moment

Responsive Reading

Sermon: Each week includes a sermon resource to help guide and develop a sermon for each core value.

Benediction

Additional Elements

Values videos: Visit salvationarmyvalues.ca for videos centered around each of the four core values (to use when it works best in your service).

Series Challenge: Corps are challenged to select or create a small project that embodies at least one of the core values while the series takes place.

Corps are encouraged to add additional elements such as musical selections that focus on the value, testimonies that highlight the value in action etc.

Our Core Values - Hope

A worship series based on the core values
of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

We give hope through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ

Call to Worship

This week our core values series focuses on hope. Our values statement says, we give hope through the power of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

As we gather this morning let us be reminded of the hope offered to us through Jesus. Isaiah 40:31 says, “but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagle; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.”

Song Suggestions

Song Name	Song book No.	
In Christ Alone	0861	Tune book (2015) No. 132
Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing	0830	Hallelujah Choruses No. 17-189
On Christ the Solid Rock I stand/My Hope is Built on Nothing Less	0662	General Series No. 1512-2
Great is Thy Faithfulness	0026	Tune book (2015) no. 641
Ancient Words	N/A	Lynn DeShazo
It is Well With my Soul	N/A	Tune book (2015) No. 704 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 9-108
Because He lives	0219	Tune book (2015) No. 570
Victory in Jesus	0464	Tune book (2015) No. 908
Living Hope	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 288

Amazing Grace (My Chains are gone)	N/A	Instrumental Praise No. 6-1
No Longer Slaves	N/A	Jonathan David & Melissa Helser
Jesus Messiah	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 17-187
Everlasting God	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 19-206
Mighty to Save	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 26-272
Hosanna (Praise is Rising)	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 21-225
God of This City	N/A	Bluetree
Goodness of God	N/A	Bethel Music

Children’s Moment

[Invite children in the congregation to join you at the front of the sanctuary]

Narrator: When I was your age, I always hoped I would get to go to _____ . (Fill in the blank). What are some things you hope you will get to do or places you hope you will go?

[Have children raise their hands and invite a couple of them to respond]

Often when we think of the word *hope*, we think about stuff we really wish we had like a new toy or video game. Sometimes we think about stuff we hope will happen like getting a good grade or going to the zoo. But the Bible tells us that hope is something much more than wants.

When Christians talk about hope, it’s more than a wish. It means trusting that God will look after us. And when we trust in God, He gives us hope. And that makes us stronger, braver and gives us great joy!

Have you ever seen a beautiful bright sun shiny day? How about a cloudy, miserable, rainy day? Well sometimes when we have really rainy days, that keep us inside it can feel sad or frustrating. But we know the rain will stop and sunny days will come back soon. That is kind of like having hope in Jesus.

Even though some days are tougher than other days, we know that we can trust in God to love us and look after us.

Let's pray together. Dear God, thank you for always looking out for us. Thank you for giving us hope for bright sunny days even on the dark and cloudy ones. Help us to trust you everyday. Amen.

Responsive Reading

LEADER: Be strong and take heart, all you who hope in the Lord.

Psalm 31:24

RESPONSE: We wait in hope for the Lord; He is our help and our shield.

Psalm 33:20

LEADER: But now, Lord, what do I look for? My hope is in you!

Psalm 39:7

RESPONSE: Find rest, O my soul in God alone; my hope comes from Him!

Psalm 62:5

WOMEN: Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall; but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.

MEN: They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint.

Isaiah 40:30-31

LEADER: Hope does not disappoint us. God has poured out His love into our hearts by the Holy Spirit, whom he has given us!

Romans 5:5

ALL: Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for He who promised is faithful!

Hebrews 10:23

LEADER: Therefore, prepare your minds for action. Be self-controlled. Set your hope fully on the grace to be given to you when Jesus Christ is revealed.

1 Peter 1:13

Resource found at: <http://samistryhelps.ca/Toolkit/hope-christmas-responsive-reading-ppt/>

Sermon Resource

Outline by Colonel Edward Hill

Scripture: Mark 10: 46-52 and Luke 18:35-43

I. Introduction

Years ago, a team of Salvation Army officers visited the island of Ebeye in the Marshall Islands. This island is a very small and impoverished place, and terribly overpopulated. While traveling along, the officers drove by the city dump. They noticed dozens of children playing in the dump, looking for souvenirs and items that could be scavenged for their use.

The officers stopped and stepped out of the vehicle to look around. When the kids saw the officers, dressed in their SA uniforms, approaching the fence that separated the road from the dump, they ran toward the group. At the fence, the children reached through to greet the officers, repeating in broken English, “Salvation, salvation, salvation...”

This experience is emblematic of the plight facing so many in our world. Trapped behind the fence of poverty, despair, hopelessness, addiction, and loneliness, millions are crying out for salvation, salvation, salvation. They are crying out for hope.

Bartimaeus- poor, blind, and a beggar- was a person looking for hope (Mark 10:46). He struggled to survive as a member of the lowest level of society in the day of Jesus.

The good news for humanity is that hope is available today through a relationship with Jesus Christ. The Salvation Army has the privilege and the responsibility to share that hope with those in our community. Just as hope is a core value of the Canada and Bermuda Territory, so it was for Jesus Christ. Indeed, the character and ministry qualities of Jesus Christ- the ultimate hope bringer- and his example of service can guide Salvationists today to pursue a ministry of hope.

II. Exposition of the Text

A. Christ, the hope bringer, heard the man’s cry

- a. Bartimaeus was a nobody in the eyes of society—blind, poor, and a beggar. He sat by the roadside on the outskirts of the city of Jericho because society excluded people with illnesses. We see his social exclusion when we read that the crowd following Jesus “rebuked him and told him to be quiet” (Luke 18:39 and Mark 10:48). But Bartimaeus shouted for Jesus all the more:

“Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me!” (Luke 18:38-39 and Mark 10:47-48).

- b. Jesus heard the blind man’s cry. And he did not ignore it. Jesus paused his busy life to respond to the voice of Bartimaeus.
- c. Illustration: A loving parent stops whatever they are doing when they hear the voice of one their children crying out in need because they are tuned in and care for that child.
- d. When we cry out to Jesus, he will stop and listen to our voice. We are a priority to the Lord.

B. Christ, the hope-bringer, invited Bartimaeus into his presence

- a. Luke 18:40/Mark 10:49 says that Jesus “ordered the man to be brought to him.”
- b. Jesus was always willing to go to the places where people were. But, in this case, Jesus calls the crowds to bring Bartimaeus closer into the group, and close enough for Jesus to talk with him and find out what he wanted.
- c. It’s important that Christians bring people to Jesus.
- d. Illustration: In John 1:44-49, Philip brought Nathanael to Jesus. Despite the protest and doubts that Nathanael expressed about Jesus, Philip was persuasive. Both became disciples of the Lord.

C. Christ, the hope-bringer, brought hope to Bartimaeus by removing what hindered hope

- a. Jesus was able to hear Bartimaeus even over the noise of the crowd, despite the crowd hushing him.
- b. Bartimaeus was persistent in getting Jesus’ attention. But what was in the way of having hope? The crowd of Jesus’ followers.
- c. We read that Jesus, in his response to Bartimaeus, didn’t call to Bartimaeus directly. Instead, he spoke to the crowd telling *them* to bring Bartimaeus before him. Why? Because they were the ones getting in the way of Bartimaeus’ hope for healing.
- d. Once the crowds encouraged Bartimaeus to go to Jesus, that hindrance was removed. Mark 10:50 records that Bartimaeus threw his cloak aside, jumped to his feet, and came to Jesus!

D. Christ, the hope-bringer, invited Bartimaeus to express his need

- a. Jesus said to Bartimaeus, "What is it that you want me to do for you?" "Lord," Bartimaeus responded, "I want to see."
- b. Jesus did what the crowd did not. He gave this blind beggar his full attention. In a very real sense, the Lord of creation, the king of kings, the master of the universe, was at his service.
- c. We must not think of God as a server waiting to meet our every whim and desire. However, when we express our needs to God in all situations, he is responsive!

E. Christ, the hope-bringer, healed Bartimaeus

- a. Jesus did something else the crowd didn't do. He recognized Bartimaeus' faithfulness. He declared in Luke 18:42 to Bartimaeus, "Receive your sight; your faith has healed you."
- b. Jesus won't turn anyone seeking him away empty-handed, no matter who they are. He always proves faithful. He will always come through!
- c. Illustration: The most reliable companies in the world occasionally fall short. Even if UPS and FedEx deliver 99% of their packages on time, thousands are still late and lost every year.
- d. No prayer to God is ever lost; set aside or misdirected. Every prayer is answered according to God's will for what is best for us.
- e. What is the result of this encounter? We read that Bartimaeus is no longer separated from the crowd. He joins the crowd, praising God for the miracle in his life. In Luke 18:43, we see that his healing gives the crowd reason to praise God too.

III. Conclusion and Application

- A.** Like Jesus, Salvationist Christians must strive to be hope-bringers. We do that by serving, loving, and helping others.
- B.** Sometimes the only hindrances between people and the hope of healing and salvation is something we've put in place. Like the social exclusion of Bartimaeus. Like the fence of poverty, despair, hopelessness, addiction, and loneliness that entraps the children of Ebeye. In what ways are we like the crowd? Do we put any hindrances between people who need Jesus and the hope Jesus gives?

C. God is ready to bring hope to all who call upon his name. Let's do the work of being bridges, not barriers, for those who need hope.

Benediction

As we leave this place today, "may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit."

Romans 15:13

Our Core Values - Service

A worship series based on the core values
of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

We reach out to support others without discrimination

Call to Worship

This week our core values series focuses on service. Our values statement says, “we reach out to support others without discrimination.”

1 Peter 4:10 says, “Each of you should use whatever gift you have received to serve others, as faithful stewards of God’s grace in its various forms.” As we worship together today, let us be thankful to God for the blessings which have been poured on us. For the gifts which we have received and reflect on what we have to offer to others.

Song Suggestions

Song Name	Song book No. (2015)	
Boundless Salvation	0509	Tune book (2015) No. 506 (My Jesus I love Thee)
Have Thine Own Way Lord	0705	Tune book (2015) No. 888
Shine, Jesus Shine	0261	Tune book (2015) No. 822 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 8-99
They Need Christ	0935	Tune book (2015) No. 886 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 19-203
I Want to Sing It	0370	Tune book (2015) No. 685
I’ll Go in the Strength of the Lord	0959	Tune book (2015) No. 433
St. Denio (Immortal, Invisible, God Only Wise)	0037	Tune book (2015) No. 508
God of the Poor	0998	Tune book (2015) No. 638
Here I am to Worship	0114	Tune book (2015) No. 653 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 13-146

Heart of Worship	0635	Tune book (2015) No. 858 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 16-175
Servant Song	1005	Tune book (2015) No. 352
Mighty to Save	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 26-272
Here at the Cross (How Can I Better Serve Thee Lord)	0646	Tune book (2015) No. 15

Children's Moment

[Invite children in the congregation to join you at the front of the sanctuary]

Narrator: Raise your hand if you love summer. What is your favourite part about summer?

[Have children raise their hands and invite a couple of them to respond]

Well I love summer because you get to wear sandals! Put your hand up if you love wearing sandals. I just love the way it feels putting on my sandals after wearing boots and socks all winter long. In the summer, you can wear sandals anywhere, to the beach, to church, to your friend's house. And, it feels like you barely have anything on your feet!

While there are many great things about wearing sandals there are also a few bad things about them. For example, after wearing sandals all day long, how clean are your feet when you take them off? Probably not very clean. And I bet they are pretty stinky! That boot and sock that you wore all winter was keeping your feet clean but in the summer your feet get dusty and dirty in sandals.

In Bible times, people didn't have socks and shoes. Some people didn't even have sandals! So people's feet were really, really dirty. However, a new tradition formed because of it. Whenever you went to someone's house, one of the servants would wash your feet.

Would you want to wash other people's dirty feet? Do you think your teacher, or your principal or your soccer coach would want to wash your feet? It is not a very fun job. So it was pretty surprising when Jesus knelt down and washed his disciples' feet! Can you believe that? The Son of God, the King of Kings was washing dirty feet.

Why do you think He did that?

[Have children raise their hands and invite a couple of them to respond]

Washing dirty feet was one of the yuckiest jobs, but it was not too dirty for Jesus. If Jesus was willing to wash feet. We need to be willing to serve and love others just like He did.

Let's pray. Dear God, sometimes it can be hard to serve others. Help us to do our best serve and love others just like you. Amen.

Adapted from: <https://www.childrens-ministry-deals.com/pages/object-lesson-servanthood>

Responsive Reading

LEADER: Lord, You call us to service; to be your eyes and ears, hands and voice in this, your world.

RESPONSE: Open our eyes not only to the beauty and love which you create, but the injustice, hate and suffering that humankind generates.

LEADER: Open our ears not only to the chattering of this coming week, but the searching, fears and questioning of all whom we shall meet.

RESPONSE: Open our hands not only to those we choose our lives to share, but in welcome, love and fellowship to all who draw near.

LEADER: Open our mouths not only to speak platitudes and simple words, but the truths you lay upon our hearts. Your Word for this, your world.

ALL: You call us to service, to be your eyes and ears, hands and voice in this, your world.

Written by John Birch, found at:
http://www.faithandworship.com/liturg_Lent_3.htm#ixzz1IkU9wBx2

Sermon Resource

Outline by Captain Kristen Gray

Scripture: Romans 12:1-2 and 9-21

I. Introduction

World development indicators for 2019 suggest that almost 80% of those employed in the Canadian workforce are employed in the service industry. The Canadian service industry includes everything from software development to fast food and many things in between (i.e., transportation, financial services, health care, construction, banking, communication, retail, tourism, and government, to name a few!).

In The Salvation Army, we also know a little something about service. The Salvation Army is the largest non-governmental direct provider of social services in Canada. One element that The Salvation Army believes is essential to service is love. This is evident in the work of The Salvation Army and that is why this sermon focuses on love at the heart of leadership.

II. Exposition of the Text

A. Paul invites us to follow Jesus' example of offering ourselves as living sacrifices (Romans 12: 1-2).

- a. In Old Testament times, God's followers were required to offer animal sacrifices, but as new covenant Christians, in light of Christ's once and for all sacrifice for humanity, animal sacrifices are no longer required. Rather, as we recognize God's grace in our lives, Paul urges us to live out our new lives with obedience to the values which Jesus exemplified for us.
- b. "...This is true and proper worship" (v1). Worship is not only what we do on Sunday. It is also the way we live. We worship God by giving ourselves in sacrificial service to the Lord.
 - o Body: As physical beings interacting with a material world, we have the opportunity to demonstrate Christ's love through our actions.
 - o Mind: When we accept Jesus as Lord of our lives, we change the way we live, how we view each other, and what motivates our actions. We also know God loves every one of us regardless of the life choices we have made. Thus, part of the change we make to our lives is loving

others in the same way. So, we serve with love and without discrimination.

B. Paul outlines what “love in action” ought to look like (Romans 12: 9-21).

- a. “Love must be sincere” (v9). Sincere love breeds compassion and allows us to “see” those we serve as God sees them.
- b. “Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves” (v10). Our relationship with God, and our knowledge of his great love for us, is our motivation to love and to live in relationship with each other.
- c. “Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord” (v11). We can serve in Christ’s name with enthusiasm by allowing God’s Holy Spirit to be the agent who inflames our passion for the Lord’s work.
- d. “Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practice hospitality” (v13). Serving others, also means welcoming and walking alongside them.
- e. “Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position” (v16b). Jesus is our best example of what it means to serve with humility. In Matthew 20:25-28, Jesus specifically called his disciples to follow his example:

“...whoever wants to become great among you must be your servant, and whoever wants to be first must be your slave—just as the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many.”

C. Illustration (Provide an illustration of a service opportunity within your ministry unit and/or community.)

Example:

At Regina Haven of Hope, one of the great opportunities we have to serve without discrimination is our weekly “Lunch with Sally.” Each Thursday we open our doors to the community and provide a bowl of soup and a sandwich to anyone who wants or needs it. Those who join us as guests and volunteers come from all walks of life, but whether they are serving or being served, what they share in common is that they are each created and loved by God.

We have guests who are caught up in difficult circumstances including addictions, mental health issues, poverty, and homelessness, as well as some whose sexual preferences don’t align with our biblical beliefs. But no matter who they are or in what situations they may find themselves, most, if not all,

would testify to the fact that they witness “love in action” when a staff member or volunteer places a bowl of hot soup in front of them.

We don’t ask them to come through a food line. Rather, we invite them to take a place at the table and be served in Christ’s name. And I can testify as one of those servers each Thursday, that I have had many opportunities to talk with people, to build relationships and to love them as Jesus loves me—a sinner saved by grace. It is a beautiful opportunity to worship God through sacrificial service.

III. Conclusion and Application

A. How can we demonstrate love in action? (Adapted from Richard Foster’s, *Celebration of Discipline*)

- a. The service of common courtesy – acknowledge the value of the other person by using peaceable, considerate words: “yes, please” and “thank you” (Titus 3:2).
- b. The service of listening – we do not need to be trained in the skill of attentive listening to listen well. The most important requirements are compassion and patience (James 1:19).
- c. The service of bearing the burdens of each other – deep love is shown when we help carry each other’s suffering (Romans 12:15). We can also help alleviate the sorrows of others by bringing them to God in prayer (Galatians 6:2).
- d. The service of sharing words of encouragement – a word of encouragement offers hope and shares the grace of God with one another (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

B. Reflection

- a. What is your motivation for service?
- b. In what ways are you serving others by being a living sacrifice?
- c. What are some new ways you and your corps community can serve with love?

Benediction

May the Christ who walks on wounded feet, walk with you to the end of your road. May the Christ who serves with wounded hands, teach you to serve each other. May the

Christ who loves with a wounded heart, help you to love each other. When you go out, may you see the face of Jesus in everyone you meet and may everyone you meet see Jesus in you. Amen.

Resource found at: <https://saministryhelps.ca/Toolkit/if-you-care-reach-out/>

Our Core Values - Dignity

A worship series based on the core values
of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

We respect and value each other, recognizing everyone's worth

Call to Worship

This week our core values series focuses on dignity. Our values statement says, "we respect and value each other, recognizing everyone's worth."

As we worship together this morning, let us recognize the inherent dignity and worth of all people. Psalm 139: 13-14 says, "For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful; I know that full well." God, our Father, our Creator, breathed his breath into our lungs and gave us life. Let us rejoice and celebrate!

Song Suggestions

Song Name	Song book No. (2015)	
Heart of Worship	0635	Tune book (2015) No. 858 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 16-175
Mighty to Save	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 26-272
They Need Christ	0935	Tune book (2015) No. 886 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 19-203
Be Thou my Vision	0573	Tune book (2015) No. 568 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 18-191
The Potter's Hand	0355	Tune book (2015) No. 867 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 10-112
No Longer Slaves	N/A	Jonathan David & Melissa Helser
O Come to the Altar	N/A	Elevation Worship

Reckless Love	N/A	Cory Asbury
Jesus, All for Jesus	N/A	Robin Mark
Build my Life	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 287
Amazing Grace	0453	Tune book (2015) No. 57
You Are my All in All	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 12-138

Children's Moment

[Invite children in the congregation to join you at the front of the sanctuary]

Narrator: Has anyone heard the word dignity? Can you say that with me? Dignity.

When we talk about human dignity, we are talking about how every single person deserves to be treated with love and respect, because they are created by God.

Put your hands up if you like to play with bubbles. Do you like popping them? Do you like how they feel when they land on your skin? What is your favourite thing about blowing bubbles?

[Have children raise their hands and invite a couple of them to respond]

Can anyone tell me what you use to blow bubbles?

[Have children raise their hands and invite a couple of them to respond]

We blow bubbles by blowing air into them. We breathe into the bubble wand, and out comes one or two or even lots of bubbles! Did you know that when God created us, He did them same thing? He blew is breath into our lungs. How special is that?

Now as we know, from our bubble popping experience, bubbles are very easy to pop, so we have to treat them very carefully if we don't want them to burst. In the same way, we need to be careful with how we treat others. God created each of us, which makes all of us special, no matter where we come from, no matter where live or what we look like. And that means we need to treat everyone well. Because we are all made by God.

Let's pray together. Dear God, thank you for breathing life into us. Thank you for making each of us special. Help us to treat everyone with kindness, love and respect because they are yours. Amen.

Adapted from: <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/parenting/teach-kids-life-is-sacred/>

Responsive Reading

LEADER: Let us open ourselves to the grace of God, to the brokenness of our world, and to the call to be agents of healing and recreation. Where human greed has stripped the world of beauty and life, and robbed people of dignity and subsistence.

RESPONSE: We pray, O God, for a new vision of abundance, and a new commitment to nurture the world that feeds us and share with those who do not have.

LEADER: Where human hatred has severed relationships, and broken the connection that unites creation,

RESPONSE: We pray, O God, for love to be renewed, and compassion to draw us back into union.

LEADER: Where human loneliness, weakness, sickness and grief, and the suffering of our planet and its inhabitants hide the signs of your life,

RESPONSE: We pray, O, God, for healing, comfort and strength and for courage to keep hoping in the renewed creation to come.

ALL: O, God, restore our faith, revive our hope, rekindle our love, and hear our prayer; for we offer it in Christ's name. Amen.

Prayers of the People, written by John van de Laar, found at:
<https://foodgrainsbank.ca/product/let-us-open-ourselves-to-the-grace-of-god-2/>

Sermon Resource

Outline by Lieutenant Brian Dueck

Scripture: John 5:1-18

I. Introduction

A. Defining dignity – what does the word mean, what does it mean to feel dignified?

- a. Typing the word “dignity” into Google yields this definition: “the state or quality of being worthy of honor or respect; a sense of pride in oneself; self-respect.”
- b. As human beings created in the image of God, owning a sense of dignity is vital to our sense of worth to God and others—and even to ourselves. Where a sense of our own dignity is absent, we feel less than human. Perhaps we feel like inconveniences to others or like resources at the disposal of someone else.

B. Why must dignity matter to us as a people seeking to “share the love of Jesus Christ, meet human needs and be a transforming influence in the communities of our world”?

- a. Dignity is a basic, God-given human quality. Each person is created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27). While sometimes we can feel undignified, and while we can treat others in less than dignified ways, nothing can take away God-given human dignity.

C. In John 5:1-18 we will look at how Jesus actively respected the dignity of someone who had been demeaned by society, showing us how to do the same.

II. Exposition of the Text

As we seek to treat those around us—and ourselves—as human beings created with dignity, we must see ourselves not as Jesus or the afflicted one, rather as leaders who can put up barriers to dignity, like by saying we have the power to give dignity.

A. Jesus advocated for the dignity of those who were seen as “lesser than” in society.

- a. To set the scene, we need to understand why the pool was a gathering place for invalids. Verses 3b-4 are not included in the main text of most common

translations such as the NIV and NRSV because they were not part of the original, earliest manuscripts most modern translations are based upon. Nonetheless, these translations still include verses 3b-4 in a footnote, which provides helpful context. These verses say that an angel of God descended to the pool at certain times and stirred up the water. Whoever stepped into the pool first after the stirring would be healed. Thus the man's predicament stated in v. 7 is made clear to the reader.

- b. v. 5 – The Greek word *astheneia* describing the man as “ill” is a general term describing sickness or infirmity, so we are unsure as to what exactly he suffered from. That is obviously not important to the Gospel writer. What is important is that the ill man had been trying to reach the pool for 38 years. Jesus learned that this had been the man's lot. (The Greek word translated as “learned” is *ginōskō*, indicating Jesus' deep insight of the man's plight.)
- c. vv. 6-7 – Having known the man's predicament, Jesus proceeds to ask a seemingly obvious question: “Do you want to be made well?” I suppose in doing this he allowed the man to take some kind of ownership over what was about to happen. This man clearly felt powerless to help himself, so Jesus gives him the opportunity to have a say in his healing. Jesus was not in the business of patronizing people to strip them of dignity; quite the opposite, as we see from his treatment of this man.
- d. vv. 8-9a – Once the man indicated that he wanted to be made well, the stage was set for Jesus to perform a sign that pointed to the Good News he embodied. The man hoped someone might carry him into the pool so he could at least have a chance of being made well. Jesus turned a chance into a sure thing, going beyond what the man could imagine by providing instant healing. The result, of course, is that the man felt the incredible onrush of confidence at being able to walk away from the scene carrying his own mat.
- e. v. 14 – A further interaction between Jesus and the man takes place in v. 14. Here Jesus reminds the man of his healing, and this time turns the focus suddenly to what the man is to do with the “new life” he has received. Jesus' instruction is pointed: stop sinning! This is not meant to encourage the religious view of the time that physical illness was a result of one's sin and God's way of punishing sinners. Jesus, in fact, rejects this kind of conclusion in John 9:2-3. What Jesus does in v. 14 is affirm the potential in the man to live as someone truly healed. The man would have been used to people expecting very little of him; in contrast, Jesus affirms his potential by expecting the very most of him: He can stop sinning and live a life worthy of his own God-given value.

B. In contrast, we discover that the religious leaders—intentionally or subconsciously—tried to prevent the “afflicted” from receiving a renewed sense of dignity.

- a. vv. 9b-18 – One would think that the miracle of a 38-year affliction being cured would have been a cause for celebration amongst the religious leaders. Yet their only comment to the healed man was that he should not be carrying his mat on the Sabbath! This is a telling indication of how far the people had drifted from the spirit of God’s law—that is, love for God and for one’s neighbor—and towards legalistic rules separated from the true heart of worship. The religious leaders rightly observed that, according to Old Testament law, Jews were not supposed to work on the Sabbath, and carrying a mat was considered work. But surely if the religious leaders were attuned to the heart of God, they would not have been able to resist celebrating with the man who received healing! They would have seen that this man had been healed by God’s power, meaning that God’s concern was not legalism but valuing people and thus desiring them to be well.
- b. Of course, a crucial part of Jesus’ mission was to change the perception of what type of worship pleases God. Just before this encounter, in John 4:23, Jesus told a Samaritan woman that God desires his people to worship “in spirit and truth,” setting the stage for what transpires in John 5. To advocate for and celebrate the dignity of others would qualify as worship of the One who created each human life with equal value. The danger of legalism was that it led people away from true worship of God and honoring the value of other people; instead, it promoted power *over* others. Power can fatten our own sense of value at the expense of honoring the dignity of others.

C. Illustration

There is a poem by Myra Brooks Welch entitled “The Touch of the Master’s Hand” that tells of an old violin that went up for auction:

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But held it up with a smile.
"What am I bidden, good folks," he cried,
"Who'll start the bidding for me?"
"A dollar, a dollar. Then two! Only two?
Two dollars, and who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars, once; three dollars, twice;
Going for three..." But no,
From the room, far back, a grey-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow;
Then wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening the loosened strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet,
As a caroling angel sings.

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said: "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars, and who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand, once; three thousand, twice,
And going and gone," said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand.
What changed its worth?" Swift came the reply:
"The touch of the Master's hand."
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and scarred with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to the thoughtless crowd
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game — and he travels on.
He is "going" once, and "going" twice,
He's "going" and almost "gone."
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that is wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand.

The violin was seen as having little worth, but when a tune was played on it, its value shone through. It is so easy to miss the value of those around us – or even ourselves – based on apparent flaws. But the Master, our Father, sees us differently; he sees our inherent value, and when we give ourselves into his hands, what he can accomplish through us will astound! Perhaps the best

thing we can accomplish is recognizing the dignity of others and working to honor it!

III. Conclusion and Application

A. God sees our value and longs for us to live out his purpose for our lives, no matter where we have come from or where we find ourselves.

- a. There is a danger that the message concerning dignity we would pull from this passage is that dignity was restored to the man via his physical healing. But if we stop there, we are left with the unavoidable question: what about the rest at that pool who did not receive physical healing that day? Were they destined to live the rest of their lives without receiving a renewed sense of their own dignity? I can't imagine that's what Jesus intended. A message we can glean from this story is not that we need to be healed of every sickness, every "thorn in our flesh," or be at the point where our sinful flesh has no influence over us before we can be of value to God. The point is that, regardless of what illness we contend with from day to day—physical, spiritual or otherwise—God sees our value. All along, regardless of his physical limitations, this man had the ability to be a testimony of God's goodness. God has nothing against you and doesn't see you as less valuable than anyone else, and here's a miracle to prove it! So pick up your mat and get on with living as the intentionally created, inherently valued child of God you are!" I wonder if the others gathered at the pool who witnessed this event saw that God sent his Son to the world as an advocate on their behalf too.

B. There will always be those who will seek to demean and undermine the dignity of others.

- a. The religious leaders' zealousness for the law often caused the vulnerable to remain socially inferior, always longing to be healed and restored.
- b. The reality is, the power of evil at work in the world will always seek to imprison and demean, and label certain people as "lesser than," always finding ways to take issue with God's restorative work in the world. But the power at work within the Church—that is, the Spirit of the Living God—always calls God's people to actively recognize the dignity of "the least of these" and seek to support them as they are healed and restored to community..
- c. In light of this, we must challenge our own thinking with some difficult questions:

1. First, taking on the perspective of the religious leaders: How have I acted as an oppressor of my neighbor by seeing their limitations? When have I failed to uphold their dignity? How have I contributed to the oppressiveness of our current social order by ensuring there is always someone closer to “the bottom of the ladder” than me?
2. Second, taking on the perspective of the man who found healing: Do I see myself the way God sees me, as someone called to participate in his work? Or have I believed the Enemy’s lies that tell me I have little of value to offer?

C. Part of respecting a person’s dignity is not forcing our own expectations on them.

- a. How often do we assume we know exactly what people need to be “made whole”? Do we let people guide the way whenever possible? Jesus asked the man if he wanted to be made well before proceeding with healing him. We must be careful not to assume we know how to “fix” someone else and be willing to listen and walk alongside folks on their journeys of healing.
- b. Are we guilty of reaffirming people’s own low self-expectations? Jesus gave a surprisingly lofty instruction to the man to stop sinning after he had been healed. Perhaps we would not be so surprised if Jesus had asked this of a rabbi. We need to affirm that everyone is capable of turning to God and recognizing their own God-given value.

Benediction

As we go into the world today, may we see others through God’s loving eyes. Let us honor and respect the inherent worth with which we were each created. Let us not create barriers to dignity, rather remove barriers that obstruct the dignity of others and ourselves. Let us go humbly into the world and share the love of Jesus.

Our Core Values - Stewardship

A worship series based on the core values
of The Salvation Army Canada and Bermuda Territory

We responsibly manage the resources entrusted to us

Call to Worship

This week our core values series focuses on stewardship. Our values statement says, “we responsibly manage the resources entrusted to us.”

As we gather together today, let us celebrate God’s bounty and blessing. Let us proclaim God’s goodness and love. Let us remember the many ways in which God has provided for our needs and let us offer ourselves in the work of God’s kingdom. Praise the God of harvest and hope! Let’s worship together.

Resource found at: <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/product/we-gather-together-to-celebrate-gods-bounty/>

Song Suggestions

Song Name	Song book No. (2015)	
Come Thou Fount of Every Blessing	0830	Hallelujah Choruses No. 17-189
Great is Thy Faithfulness	0026	Tune book (2015) no. 641
This is the day	0398	Tune book (2015) No. 890
For the Beauty of the Earth	0014	John Rutter
How Deep the Fathers Love for us	N/A	Tune book (2015) No. 663 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 11-127
God of Wonder	N/A	Steve Hindalong & Marc Byrd
God of This City	N/A	Bluetree
Lord Reign in Me	N/A	Hallelujah Choruses No. 16-177
How Great Thou Art	0049	Tune book (2015) No. 488 or Hallelujah Choruses No. 26-274

All Things Bright and Beautiful	0003	Tune book (2015) No. 550
Standing on the Promises	0522	Tune book (2015) No. 840
This is my Father's World		Hallelujah Choruses No. 24.257

Children's Moment

[Invite children in the congregation to join you at the front of the sanctuary]

Narrator: When I was a kid, I was given a very special present for _____ (fill in the blank. Ex. Christmas, Birthday, Finishing cleaning your room etc.) It was a _____ (fill in the blank). Put your hand up if you have ever been given a special present. Maybe a Christmas or birthday present or an award for doing something well.

I bet those gifts were very special to you. Now imagine you let your sister or brother, or friend borrow your present. What if they accidentally broke it? How would you feel?

[Invite a couple of children to respond]

When you lend your toys or belongings to someone else you don't want them to come back broken right? Especially after you are letting them use such a special gift.

Did you know the Bible tells us that the whole earth and everything and everyone in it belongs to God? So, its kind of like we are just borrowing all the things we have from God. And God wants us to take care of our things, just like we would want our friend to take care of our special gift we lent them.

What are some ways we can take care of the things we have been given?

[Invite a couple of children to respond]

Those are great ideas! When you are at home this week try to remember some of these ideas to help you take care of everything you have.

Let's pray together. Dear God, thank you for blessing us with so much. Help us remember to take care of the gifts we have been given. Amen.

Responsive Reading

LEADER: In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.

Genesis 1:1

RESPONSE: O bright eternal One, thy voice commanded light and from the shapeless void called order and delight! Through thunder, fire and calm thy secret thoughts have stirred the hearts of humble men who waited on thy word.

Catherine Baird (1895-1984)

LEADER: 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.

John 1:1-3

RESPONSE: God's love is as wide as creation, God's love is as boundless and free, God's love brought his Son down from Heaven, God's love is sufficient for me.

Anon

LEADER: God blessed them and said to them, "Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground."

Genesis 1:28

RESPONSE: To God be the glory, great things he hath done! So loved he the world that he gave us his Son; Who yielded his life an atonement for sin, And opened the life gate that all may go in.

Fanny Crosby (1820-1915)

LEADER: The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it; for he founded it on the seas and established it on the waters.

Psalm 24:1-2

ALL: AMEN

Resource found at: <http://samistryhelps.ca/Toolkit/category/resource-type/responsive-readings/>

Sermon Resource

Outline by Captain Laura Van Schaick

Scripture: Genesis 2:4-15

I. Introduction

Share a personal story of when you were supposed to be responsible for something but didn't follow through.

- An example from childhood might be appropriate here, like a time when you were supposed to be responsible for your bicycle but you forgot to lock it up and it got stolen or when you were supposed to be responsible with your lunch money but used it to buy candy instead leaving with you with a tummy ache.

OR

Paraphrase *The Pigsty* by Mark Teague.

- Children's author Mark Teague tells the story in his book *The Pigsty* of a young boy named Wendell who was a bit of a slob. One day, his mom sends Wendell off to clean his room. "It's turning into a pigsty", she exclaims. Wendell makes his way to his room, only to discover that a pig has taken up residence in his pigsty of a room! He decides the pig isn't so bad, and neither is the mess, so he leaves his things just as they are. When his mom discovers that he hasn't cleaned, she declares, "It's your room. You can live in a pigsty if you want to." Wendell could hardly believe his luck – now he could live however he wanted, he figured. Over time, the pigs multiplied, and the mess grew and grew! Before he knew it, his toys were broken, and he couldn't find his things. He told his mom about his problem, but she reminded Wendell that his room and his things were his responsibility. Finally, Wendell cleaned his room and the pigs went back to their home at the farm, but not after learning an important lesson about stewardship.

II. Exposition of the Text

A. In Genesis 2 starting at verse 4 we read the second telling of the story of creation, "when the Lord God made the earth and the heavens."

- a. We see God putting great care and consideration into the forming of the earth. In the middle of this description of creation we find the phrase (in verse

5), “and there was no one to work the ground.” This prepares us for what God creates next; ideally, it will be someone to work the ground

B. After the surface of the earth appeared and water had sprung up, God “formed a man from the dust of the ground and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and the man became a living being.” (verse 7).

- a. There is beautiful imagery painted here as God breathes into man’s nostrils the breath of life.
- b. The original Hebrew word for “being” is *nephesh*, a word that is often translated as “soul” and means the whole of a person’s physical and spiritual dimensions.

C. After reading verse 5, it should come as no surprise when we read verse 15 to find that, “the Lord God took the man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.”

- a. One could assume this to be why God creates people. God has created the earth in such a way that much of it flourishes only when it is cultivated and tended. So he creates a species of “living beings”—humanity—that God then entrusts to do the work.

D. Illustrations

- a. Just as I was responsible for my bicycle/lunch money etc. OR just as Wendell was responsible for keeping his room clean, we see how God “put [man] in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.” (Gen 2:15) There is a giving of responsibility from God to man to care for the Garden of Eden.
- b. Merriam-Webster’s definition of stewardship: “the careful and responsible management of something entrusted to one’s care.”
- c. We can expand upon this and note that humanity (man and woman) is responsible for all of creation and that God has created for us and entrusted to us many resources to care for. (Entrusted is defined as assigned responsibility.) One could call this stewardship.

III. Conclusion and Application

God has entrusted us with many resources. How we manage those resources affects our efforts to build God’s kingdom.

Stewardship is a core value of The Salvation Army Canada & Bermuda Territory. It states, “we responsibly manage the resources entrusted to us.”

What are the resources God has entrusted to The Salvation Army?

A. People

- a. People's time (Are we making good use of the time volunteers give to us? of the time church members give to programs? of the time clients/guests give to attending classes?)
- b. People's talents (Are we making good use of the talents of our volunteers? our friends/adherents/soldiers? our community members? our employees and officers? Are we allowing our clients/guests to use their own talents to provide hope for themselves and their families?)

B. Money and goods

- a. Money in the kettle/donations (Individuals and companies have entrusted their money to us to do good with. Are we responsible with our finances?)
- b. Food/clothing/toy donations (Individuals and companies have entrusted these items to us to distribute responsibly. Are we being responsible with our practical needs assistance?)

C. The environment

- a. Are we making creation care a priority?
- b. Do our actions and programs reflect a focus on creation care? (Are we reducing our dependence on single-use consumables? Are we buying fair trade when possible?)

What are the resources God has entrusted you with personally?

A. Your time, talents, money, home, family, the natural environment

- a. Have you been a good steward of these? How have you responsibly managed these? How have you used them to build God's kingdom?

B. Prayer

- a. God, forgive us for the times when we have not been good stewards of the resources you have entrusted to us.
- b. Help us become aware of those things you have entrusted to us.
- c. Teach us to be better stewards of the resources of The Salvation Army and of those things which have personally entrusted to our care.

Benediction

Go now into the world, inspired by the radiant love of God. Live generously, with open hands, loving one another as if your lives depended on it.

Be good stewards of the gifts you have received, so that God may be glorified in all that you say and do.

And may the abundant love of God surround you, may the extravagant grace of Jesus Christ sustain you, and may the constant presence of the Holy Spirit inspire and encourage you in every good deed and word.

From *With Open Hands*, found at: <https://foodgrainsbank.ca/product/world-food-day-with-open-hands/>



The Salvation Army Ethics Centre
Email: ethics@salvationarmy.ca