

Living for Jesus
Lt. Colonel Ann Braund

“How we spend our days is, of course, how we spend our lives.”

— **Annie Dillard, *The Writing Life***

This quote reminds me of a song I sang as a teenager, a new Christian, at the age of 16, working at a summer camp, we sang at the evening campfire, “One life to live, Oh may I live for Thee.” I was happy when reminded of this song that I was able to listen to an [online recording](#). The campfire version did not include the verses, we only sang the chorus, which we repeated several times.

*One life to live
Oh may I live for thee
Give me your spirit
And I shall be free
Free from desire
My own way to pursue
Free to obey your will
My whole life through*

Forty years later, the desire to live for Jesus is still my number one goal. Some days I am more keenly aware of Jesus than other days. Living for Jesus involves being aware of His presence and Lordship, being aware that I am in Him and He is in me, being aware of the truth that I can do nothing apart from him, being aware of a constant communion with Jesus.

Recently I had a conversation with a young Salvationist who had just read *Closer Communion* by Clifford Kew. He bemoaned a lack of ‘communion’ in The Salvation Army these days. He was not asking for the institution of sacraments, but for a greater practice of presence. He, a young man, was expressing his desire to see more evidence of the Salvationism expressed in this book. I was pleased to enter into this conversation. I affirmed that our doctrine has not changed and that we are still a people who believe the sacred truths we sing. I began singing the words of Albert Orsborne “My life must be Christ’s broken bread, my love his out poured wine.” I was saddened when He did not recognize the words. “Yes, we do want more evidence that we live a constant communion with Jesus, that every meal and every day and every activity is a lived experience with Jesus, witnessed by and shared with Jesus. The young man pointed to Clifford Kew’s quote to identify his longing, “So shall no part of day nor night from sacredness be free, But all my life, in every step be fellowship with Thee.”

As we enter into a new year I pray that we, The Salvation Army, will become more keenly aware of living with and for Jesus. How will this be accomplished? The answer is found in the Annie Dillard quote, “how we spend our minutes, days, weeks, months, years - is how we spend our lives.” Therefore let us think about and become more intentional about our lived life. Let us make it our goal to live our life with and for Jesus.

Frank Charles Laubach was an Evangelical Christian missionary and mystic known as “The Apostle to the Illiterates.” One of his most widely influential devotional works was a pamphlet entitled “The Game with Minutes.” In it, Laubach urged Christians to attempt keeping God in mind for at least one second of every minute of the day. In this way Christians can attempt the attitude of constant prayer spoken of in the Scriptures. The pamphlet extolled the virtues of a life lived with unceasing focus on Christ.¹

This game of minutes may not be the thing you add to your life this coming year in order to become more aware of living with and for Jesus. There are activities each of us can add to our lives to become aware of a constant communion. Perhaps you need to add to your days a Bible reading plan, perhaps you need to add to your week, participation in a small group with Christians who will hold you accountable, perhaps you need to add to your month a day of solitude – a day with Jesus, perhaps you need to add to your year a vacation that allows you to fully enter into the blessings God has given you (creation, friends, family, food, simple wonderful gifts – every good and perfect gift comes from God).

How will you spend your life? “One life to live, Oh may we live”... with and for Thee Lord Jesus – knowing what it is to be in constant fellowship with Thee.

¹ <https://www.amazon.ca/Game-Minutes-Frank-Charles-Laubach/dp/1614273677>