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READING ASSIGNMENT FOR STUDENTS TO BE READ BEFORE MEETING FOR LESSON 8

Our reading this week is taken from: *Salvationism 101 / SA 101 Soldier Training "Saved to Save"*, Strickland & Court, The Salvation Army, 4th edition; 2008.

How relevant to begin our reading with The Salvation Army's response to injustice in our world; ...and then to refocus on our own lives, and our need for holiness as we carry the Gospel to others. This is where God begins his work-inside of our spirits, minds, bodies.

The Salvation Army has always had a conviction about the ills of society...Jesus came to destroy the works of the devil. He empowers us to identify and conquer sin- personal, corporate, and societal. We have to remember that this world system is positioned in rebellion against God. We must diligently and righteously resist the prince of this age, Satan. And this we do, confronting evil in whatever form it takes.

William Booth explained, "Salvationism means simply the overcoming and banishing from the earth of wickedness." While The Army does provide official positional statements, it is up to each individual to appropriate them, to actively support corporate action where it is taken, either by the People of God or public groups, and to ruthlessly examine his/her own life.

"Some say The Salvation Army is a welfare agency. That is a mistake. The Salvation Army is a vital spiritual force with an acute social conscience." (Canadian Prime Minister A. Meighen, 1921, 1926)

Having an acute social conscience has frequently led The Army into forms of social action to alleviate the pain and suffering of victims. Although this action is often undertaken by professionals in our social service departments, all Salvationists have a mandate to relieve suffering wherever they possibly can. The Maiden Tribute of Babylon, the conversion of Devil's Island to Salvation Island, Lights in Darkest England, The Cab Horse Charter, and others initiatives all represent successful attacks on societal evil in the cause of justice (you can google each of these for details). They suggest an aggressive approach to bringing righteousness to the face of the earth.

Personal holiness is not a weak and effeminate holiness. It is vigorously moral and ethical. It cannot help but make demands upon the political and social order, and in doing so, be prepared to suffer the consequences of a corrupt political and social order which cannot stand the sight or the sound of holy men and women. We pay for our silence by attrition. We pay for our silence by passing the moral and ethical leadership of nations to deceivers and to evil men... We are a people who claim a dynamic, personal holiness... We must become the moral and ethical leaders of our political and social order. (Roger Green)

It is easy to rely on 'The Army' to do something about the evils of our age. But once you sign up, you are an integral part of 'The Army.' Salvationist Phil Wall has taken this impetus to heart and has been the initiator of a great project to train Africa's 13 million AIDS orphans (see <http://www.generationafrica.co.uk>). Great change has begun through the efforts of one person. Maybe God wants you to be that one person.

In the last several years, various justice groups have sprouted out of the rich soil of Salvationism (among them are Australia's justsalvos at justsalvos.com, New Zealand's social parliamentary unit, the UK's international development dept. and the newly created International Social Justice Commission in New York). In different countries soldiers are bonding together and fighting injustice in the form of mistreatment of refugees, poverty, & the genocide of unborn babies, child slavery, prostituted people, and human trafficking, etc..

You don't have to be a senior leader to make a difference. In fact, you're obliged to try right where you are now. Whether it is prayer-walking to shut down a porn shop, or demonstrating on the corner for Pro-Life, whether it is writing letters to the editor and to your government representatives, or buying only fair-trade products, there are a lot of opportunities to make a difference in our world.

DYNAMIC + DISCIPLINE

Doctrine 10: Sanctification

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

“To say ‘I have not sinned’ is to make God a liar; to say that ‘I must sin’ is to destroy the fundamentals of Christianity. To say that ‘I cannot sin’ is to deceive myself; but to say that ‘I need not sin’ is to acknowledge the divine provision of Calvary.” To say ‘I do not sin’ is the testimony that God expects and enables for us all.

“You need to be holy” (General William Booth). “He was tempted, as we are; He triumphed, as we may” (General Albert Orsborn).

“SANCTIFY” is an Old Testament word meaning “to make holy”. It was used to identify people or objects that were consecrated for sacred service. It also had a geographic connotation: where God is, that is holy ground. Today, we recognize “sanctification” as the work of Holy Spirit in our lives since we are people set apart in consecration to God. Since God desires His people to be holy, we realize that the “privilege” of sanctification does not refer to an option, but an obligation. We cannot have the benefits of salvation without the obligations.

Consecration is a dedicatory act done by individuals; sanctification is the act by which God acknowledges the gift and bestows His holiness on that which is consecrated. Holiness is a perfect love; not just the removal of sin, but the provision of love. It is loving the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, and strength, and loving others as yourself. It is attainable only through Holy Spirit’s power and life in us.

“Sin, Properly So-Called” Sin is intentional transgression of a known law of God

(John Wesley). We believe that God is good. Among other things, that means that what God commands, God enables (otherwise, He’d have to punish us for failing to do the impossible). So, if He commands us to be holy, it follows that He enables us to be holy. If you define sin so broadly as to include unintentional shortcomings (which fits under one of the Biblical meanings) then God would have to make us faultlessly perfect to meet His expectation of holiness. That, He has manifestly not done. “I lose my glasses. It is not my heart that is wrong, but my faulty memory” (Major Allister Smith). “I would rather drink from a faulty cup that is clean than out of an expensive cup that is not clean” (Major Allister Smith). The perfection expected is one of motivation, not of performance.

“The sanctified soul has no enemies within, but has a fierce conflict without” (S.A. HANDBOOK OF DOCTRINE, 1940).

Holiness is living without sinning. That’s the negative side. It is fullness of love. That’s the positive side.

There is a notion abroad of a sort of make-believe religion as though God would count us righteous and deal with us as if we were righteous while He leaves us in our unrighteousness. Christ Jesus came to save us from our sins, not in them. (Catherine Booth)

You can be sanctified at a young age, filled with the Holy Spirit, and still grow in holiness through your life. “Man’s consecration must keep pace with God’s revelation”

(General William Booth). A cup may be filled with water. There is no room for any more water. That doesn’t stop God! He increases the size of the cup, so it can hold as much water as a pitcher! He can keep increasing our capacity. The whole time though, we can stay full.

That is the testimony of William Booth. In the mid-1890s, 30 years after starting The Salvation Army, he declared, “I am determined to be more faithful – more personal than I have been. To this end, I must have more of the power and wisdom of the Holy Spirit.”

Commissioner George Scott Railton agrees: We want the burning love to dying men which feels with a terrible heart-pang every sinner’s misery, and forgets danger and difficulty and discouragement in the deathless agony to pluck brands from the burning. We want to be bigger, grander, holier, more god-like men and women, and we must if we are to do what God expects of us (cited in Rhemick, NEW PEOPLE OF GOD).

John Wesley asks these three questions of you:

- 1) Have you been filled with God’s Spirit since you first believed?
- 2) Will you ever need Him more than you do now?
- 3) Will God ever be more ready to fill you with His Spirit than He is now?

If your answers to these questions are ‘No’, then, as General Booth used to say, “Be ye holy, but be ye holy now.”

Repent of everything that is not in God’s will for you, even those things which may be permissible for someone else, or for you at another time in your life. Consecrate yourself to God. Ask Him to forgive, cleanse, fill, anoint, empower, and take ownership – right now!

Captain Curtis Cartmell talks about pet sins that we coddle and care for. We’ve domesticated them, made them part of our personality, and so somehow acceptable. ‘Oh, him- well, he’s just ornery. That’s him’. ‘Well, yah, I lust, but at least I don’t act on it’. And so on.

These pet sins drain physically and we don’t recognize it. We have to feed them. They suck up our time. They require energy and emotion. The domesticated sins morph inevitably into vermin.

Our credentials as a holiness movement have reached their expiry date. As individuals we need to plunge into the fountain of holiness flowing from Immanuel’s veins. There is room for all. And if enough of us jump in, not only can we reclaim holiness movement status, but we can get back on track in our world-winning mission.

The Anointing

“Sincerely ask the Lord to cleanse and sanctify and anoint you with the Holy Spirit. Let God take full possession of you; let the Divine Power be exerted upon your particular difficulty, and seek to be wholly anointed with that Holy Spirit” (Commissioner T. Henry Howard, STANDARDS OF LIFE AND SERVICE, p.94). “This power is a distinct, and definite, and separate gift of God” (General Catherine Booth, AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY, p.183).

It's not just for you by yourself... (the anointing) “The day of Pentecost (is) just a sample day... God is waiting to give us Pentecosts all around the world when He (can) find people... united in faith and love in earnest prayer for the Spirit” (Commissioner S. L. Brengle, cited in S. Chesham, BRENGLE TREASURY, p.55). And it brings results...

“This is how I account for the want of results – the want of the direct, pungent, enlightening, convicting, restoring, transforming power of the Holy Ghost” (General Catherine Booth, AGGRESSIVE CHRISTIANITY, p.184).

Some of those results may be strange to you... “The Holy Spirit does come, and sometimes He prostrates our bodies” (General Catherine Booth, p.157).

“People have fallen on their faces under the conviction of the Holy Spirit in our meetings” (General Catherine Booth, p.55). “I never did shout in my life, but... I couldn't help it,” admitted one attendee (General Catherine Booth, p.98). “People drop down with joy. People shriek with grief... The manifestation will be according to your nature. One will fall down and weep in quietness, and the other will get up and shout and jump. You cannot help it” (General Catherine Booth, p.99). “Many more of God's people might have (this experience)... but they are not willing to be wrapped in His arms; they are not willing to be pressed to His bosom; they are not willing to know Him in a Scriptural sense; they are not willing to be given up and consumed by God” (General Catherine Booth, p.158).

This is scandalous...Are you willing