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SEEING SALVATION:
THE EFFECTIVENESS OF PREACHING ON THE SACRAMENTAL LIFE IN A
SALVATION ARMY CONTEXT

by
STEVEN MARK CAMERON

A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of
Luther Seminary
In Partial Fulfillment of
The Requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF MINISTRY

ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

2018

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ABSTRACT

*Seeing Salvation: The Effectiveness of Preaching on the Sacramental Life
in a Salvation Army Context*

by

Steven Mark Cameron

This thesis begins by acknowledging that The Salvation Army is a non-practicing sacramental church. The Army abandoned the practice of the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper officially in 1883 and its focus since then has been on developing holiness through sacramental living. The sacraments have been a topic of theological conversation in Army since the 1883 decision. In recent years, in Canada, this conversation has become increasingly divisive with questions being raised as to the soundness of the Army's position. To bring opposing positions into a place of dialogue this thesis project engages in a five part biblical preaching series on sacramental living. Quantifiable surveys were administered before and after the series to determine if this biblical preaching series impacted the worshipping congregation. A further goal is that both practicing and non-practicing sacramentalists will view sacramental living as "seeing salvation." It is from this foundation that productive dialogue between the differing perspectives can take place.

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To God alone is all the glory.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

NIVUK All Scripture is taken from the New International Version United Kingdom Edition unless stated otherwise

CHAPTER 1

BIBLICAL PREACHING AND SACRAMENTAL LIVING

Introduction

Sacramental living is the active presence of God in the life of a believer through the immediacy of God's grace. A believer embodies God's grace through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus and this is made possible through the power of the Holy Spirit living in and through a believer. Sacramental living is the heart of The Salvation Army's holiness teaching. As a non-practicing sacramental church, The Salvation Army focuses upon the sacramental life in which the believer's life is seen as a means of grace. The definition of sacraments for this thesis is a visible outward sign of an inward spiritual grace.¹ Therefore, the sacramental life flows through the incarnation of Jesus, God in the physical realm.

The focus on sacramental living in the Army² was developed when the practice of administering the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper³ in their worship settings was discontinued in 1883. This decision was made for both practical and theological reasons. General William Booth, the co-founder of the Army, published this decision in

¹ Oxford Reference, "Sacrament," in *The concise Oxford dictionary of the Christian Church*, ed. Elizabeth A. Livingstone (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 452.

² From this point on The Salvation Army will alternatively be referred to as "the Army" and "The Salvation Army."

³ N.B. from this point forward all references to Baptism and the Lord's Supper will simply be stated as sacraments.

an 1883 New Year's address to officers.⁴ In this pronouncement Booth proffered four personally held opinions that influenced his decision. First, sacraments were not necessary to salvation. Second, the different sacramental practices of the churches caused division. Third, the Army was not a church but a mission, and therefore did not need to provide sacramental practice.⁵ Finally, Booth suggested that the issue of the non-sacramental practice of the Army might be revisited at a future date when there would be greater light or understanding on the issue. Booth did not prohibit the members of the Army from participating in the sacraments outside of Army settings, in fact they were encouraged (if dictated by consciences) to participate in personal sacramental practice in non-Army churches around them.⁶ From this address, the seeds of living a sacramental life began to grow.

The Problem the Thesis Will Address

In contemporary Canadian Salvation Army congregations there is division over Booth's decision. Some argue strongly to reinstate the two sacraments on biblical grounds stating that the Army needs to be an active part of the larger church. Others believe there is no biblical condition for their observance and the Army can be a part of the larger church without changing its position. Still there are many who simply never consider this issue. Nevertheless, in recent years this issue has begun to cause major divisions in Canadian Army congregations, even pitting officers (pastors) against their congregations.

⁴ William Booth, "General's New Year Address to Officers," *The War Cry* (January 17th, 1883): 4.

⁵ The Army during its early years self-identified as a mission and not a church. With membership in the World Council of Churches in 1948 the Army self-identified as a church.

⁶ Ibid.

With the presence of these divisions it is important to focus on what we as Christians in the Army and in the church universal agree upon: sacramental living and embodying the gospel. This includes living and being transformed by the gospel in the power of the Holy Spirit and bringing the gospel to others. In our postmodern world, where experience is often viewed as being of utmost importance, this thesis writer wants to examine whether biblical preaching helps bring about transformation in the life of the hearer.

In addition to these divisions, there is the problem of inadequate understanding by salvationists⁷ on the historical position of Booth for discontinuing the practice of the sacraments. R.G. Moyles, a Canadian Army historian, says “[f]or . . . modern salvationists the absence of sacramentalism is not of great concern, and since most are totally unfamiliar with the tradition, the question of restoration hardly ever occurs.”⁸

This thesis will endeavour to address these issues of division and unfamiliarity by presenting a local Canadian Salvation Army congregation with a series of biblical sermons centred on texts from the Gospel of John. The goal of these sermons is to provide the congregation with an historical and biblical understanding of Booth’s decision, while providing a strong foundation of sacramental living in the presence of God mediated by the Holy Spirit. This Doctor of Ministry project will seek to establish the value of biblical preaching on the topic of sacramental life in a Salvation Army context.

⁷ Salvationist is another name for members of The Salvation Army.

⁸ R.G. Moyles, *The Blood and Fire in Canada* (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1977), 237.

History of Salvation Army Sacramental Understanding

To understand the sacramental life in a Salvation Army context, it is imperative to have an historical summary of the role of sacraments in the Army.⁹ Thus we will seek to gain a basic understanding of how General Booth arrived at this decision on the sacraments and, also, how this decision has been understood by subsequent Army interpreters.¹⁰ Christopher Button, speaking about the Army's non-observant stance says:

. . . [p]erhaps no other decision has affected the path the Army has taken as much as this one. It has affected the relationship of the Army to the rest of the Church and continues to divide its own followers, as the issue has for the rest of the Church more generally.¹¹

Before William Booth's New Year's address of 1883 the Army did practise the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. In this address Booth did not speak directly about the sacramental life; however, he laid this foundation by instructing salvationists to remember Christ's love every hour of their lives and to do everything to the glory of God.¹² This address provided foundational reasons for abandoning the sacraments, while setting the stage for a lively discussion regarding the sacraments and sacramental living that has enriched the theological life of the Army for over one hundred years.

⁹ Please note this is different than the Literature Review which will deal with academic writings that impact sacramental living.

¹⁰ David Rightmire, an academic scholar on Army sacramental practice states that Booth's decision is interpreted in secondary literature in diverse ways because there is little primary source evidence from William Booth himself. Cf. R. David Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army: A Study of Holiness Foundations* (Alexandria: Crest Books, 2016), 31.

¹¹ Christopher Jonathon Button, "A Sacramental Army: The Implications of N.T. Wright for The Salvation Army's Sacramental Theology" (MA Thesis, King's College London, 2014), 28.

¹² Booth, "General's New Year Address to Officers," 4.

Brian Reid Armstrong, in his D.Min. thesis “The Lord’s Supper in Contemporary Salvation Army Worship,”¹³ demonstrates that much of the Army’s literature on the sacraments is apologetic, defending the Army’s position and even providing new symbols that could take their place (such as soldier enrolment and uniform wearing).¹⁴ However, Armstrong states that this position changed during 1960’s and 1970’s as the Army moved from defending its position on the sacraments to promoting the Army’s particular view of the sacraments.¹⁵

Harold Begbie, one of the first biographers of William Booth, notes Booth did not come to his decision single-handedly. Rather, he was influenced by his son Bramwell and by George Scott Railton.¹⁶ The importance of this collaboration within Booth’s inner circle of leadership was confirmed by Railton himself.¹⁷ Railton described this inner circle as Mrs. Booth (Catherine), Booth’s eldest son (Bramwell) and Railton. Begbie affirms the sacramental position of Booth and explains that Booth was additionally concerned over ceremonies, stating that Jesus never intended to create lasting ceremonies.¹⁸ Booth believed there should be no baptismal service that assured entrance

¹³ Brian Reid Armstrong, “The Lord’s Supper in Contemporary Salvation Army Worship,” (D.Min. thesis project, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School, Deerfield, Illinois, 2003).

¹⁴ Ibid., 13, 68.

¹⁵ Ibid., 70.

¹⁶ Harold Begbie, *Life of William Booth: The Founder of The Salvation Army*, Vol. 1 (London: MacMillan & Co., 1920), 451.

¹⁷ George Scott Railton, “General William Booth,” in *I Knew William Booth*, ed. R.G. Moyles (Alexander: Crest Books, 2007), 19.

¹⁸ Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, 469-470. See also Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, 1925), 202 and George Scott Railton, “General William Booth,” in *I Knew William Booth*, ed. R.G. Moyles (Alexander: Crest Books, 2007), 247.

to heaven without a changed heart and no communion service if there was anything like priestly authority among the communicants.¹⁹

Booth was concerned with changed lives, believing that salvation was evidenced in a life of holiness. This was Booth's mission. Booth did not want the Army to be called a church, however, he wanted the Army to provide people with everything that a church would provide except the sacraments, because utmost in his mind was the salvation of souls.²⁰

We begin to recognize that Booth's understanding of holiness was essential to his sacramental understanding. Referring in 1881 to the importance of holiness, Booth said, "A man who says 'I am made holy,' does not proclaim *his own* moral perfection, but the moral perfection of God."²¹ Booth declared further, "Children of God, sons of glory, shall we do less in these our days of shame, than live a holy life? But what does holiness imply? The sacrifice of self to God."²² Speaking of the Holy Spirit's baptism to a group of Army members Booth said, "[w]e are met this morning to get a baptism of fire to fit us for all this, to qualify us for the accomplishment of the great business before us."²³

Catherine Booth was also concerned that people would rely on ceremonies and not the power of the Holy Spirit for holiness.²⁴ Catherine was a major thinker of the early

¹⁹ Ibid., 462.

²⁰ Harold Begbie, *The Life of General William Booth the Founder of The Salvation Army*, Vol. 2 (New York: MacMillan, 1920), 30ff.

²¹ William Booth, "Can Anybody Live a Holy Life?" First published in *The War Cry*, 24 March 1881, in *I'll Stand for Christ*, ed. Mal Davis (Melbourne: Salvo Publishing, 2012), 90.

²² Ibid., 100.

²³ William Booth, *Salvation Soldierly* (London: International Headquarters, 1889), 140.

²⁴ Bramwell Booth, *Echoes and Memories* (Toronto: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), 202.

Army and her ideas influenced Booth. Her literature also engaged with those inside and outside the Army. For Catherine, being filled with the Spirit (spiritual baptism) was not for just an individual believer:

Heat cleanses, purges away dross, destroys noxious vapours. So the burning fire of the Holy Ghost purifies the soul which is filled, permeated with it, hence hot saints are pure. . . . They improve the moral atmosphere wherever they go.²⁵

In this statement it can be seen that Catherine equated being filled with the Spirit with being in the very presence of God. In an 1880 sermon she said:

Oh! It is the most precious gift He has to give in earth or in Heaven—to be filled with the Spirit, filled with Himself (as we said last Sunday), taken possession of by God; moved, inspired, energized, empowered by God, by the great indwelling Spirit moving through all our faculties, and energizing our whole being for Him.²⁶

The end goal of holiness, spiritual baptism and being in the very presence of God answered her question “. . . how much like God we can be?”²⁷ This holiness of life, she declared, leads to sacramental life. “Just so the soul, when it is born again, is introduced into a new life, into new relations with God and man, new duties, new obligations, new responsibilities, a new world!”²⁸ In her writings, Catherine declared how holiness progressed from an individual to the community, the holiness of one affected others. She also stated her belief that there was no experience of holiness without there being a change in moral character that was evidence of the indwelling of the Spirit.

²⁵ Catherine Booth, “Hot Saints,” Originally published by S.W. Partridge and Co. for The Salvation Army, 1878, in *I’ll Stand for Christ*, ed. Mal Davis (Melbourne: Salvo Publishing, 2012), 150.

²⁶ Catherine Booth, “Filled with the Spirit [1880]” in *The Writings of Catherine Booth Volume 1 Papers on Aggressive Christianity*, ed. Andrew S. Miller (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Department, 1986), 151.

²⁷ Catherine Booth, “Addresses on Holiness,” Originally Published by Salvation Army Book Depot 1881 as “Godliness,” in *I’ll Stand for Christ*, ed. Mal Davis (Melbourne: Salvo Publishing, 2012), 135.

²⁸ Catherine Booth, “New Life” First published in *The War Cry*, 14 and 28 June 1884, in *I’ll Stand for Christ*, ed. Mal Davis, (Melbourne: Salvo Publishing, 2012), 42.

As I walk about the world, and as I look at professing Christians, my soul cries: O God, make haste to help us to raise up a holy people, in order to show the world what salvation really means, for they do not know.²⁹

The life of the believer, filled by the Holy Spirit, was a verbal and nonverbal testimony and was a means of grace. This was sacramental living.

It is not written that “it pleased God to save by the distribution of Testaments, those who believe,” but it pleased God to save by the foolishness of preaching—by the living testimony of living men—by those who embody the word in their experience and lives, and then go and speak it in the power of the Spirit to others.³⁰

This visible, moral change for Catherine became the evidence of the internal spiritual change. Without this change there was no regeneration, thus she stated that by empirical data there were thousands who, by the way they lived their lives, demonstrated that they were not regenerated.³¹ Thus, her understanding of sacramental living as living life in the Spirit and her distrust of religious ceremonies brought critical support to her husband’s non-practicing sacramental position.

. . . even if Jesus Christ intended them to be permanent institutions . . . Paul would say Baptism is nothing, and the ceremony of the Lord’s Supper is nothing, apart from keeping the commandments of God, especially that great and all comprehensive commandment, “Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, and thy neighbor as thyself.”³²

Another major figure in the early Army’s understanding of the sacraments was Booth’s daughter Evangeline (writing in the 1930’s). She envisioned a sacramental understanding that calls for a response. She equated the sacraments with the means of

²⁹ Catherine Booth, “A Mock Salvation and a Real Deliverance from Sin [1887]” in *The Writings of Catherine Booth Volume IV Popular Christianity*, ed. Andrew S. Miller (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Department, 1986), 34.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 37.

³¹ *Ibid.*, 42.

³² *Ibid.*, 44.

grace found in the Army's Penitent Form. In the Army a "mercy seat" (Penitent Form or Mourners Bench) is a place to respond to God's call of salvation during any part of the worship service. Nigel Bovey in *The Mercy Seat Revisited* quotes Evangeline saying that the mercy seat is our altar, our baptismal font, our communion rail, the foot of the cross and our factory for ammunitions.³³

Progressing to the 1940's we encounter Minnie Carpenter, who demonstrated that the Army was beginning to find its place as part of the church universal.³⁴ Carpenter acknowledged that the sacraments held an important place in the faith and practice of the majority of Christian bodies but believed that William Booth made the right decision.³⁵ She also spoke of signs the Army used instead of the sacraments: child dedication instead of infant baptism and enrolment as a soldier signifying communion with God.³⁶

Carpenter stated that Paul's one baptism was spiritual baptism in the Holy Spirit and real communion with God was spiritual.³⁷ Carpenter argued that the Army could rightfully take its place beside sacramental churches. The Army does not deny the worth of sacramental practices but also does not feel the need to apologise for the Army's non-practice. Carpenter's writings also highlighted the growing movement of the Army away from a mission to a church and from apologetics to promoting its sacramental position.

³³ Nigel Bovey, *The Mercy Seat Revisited* (London: United Kingdom Territory, 2011), 186-187.

³⁴ Minnie L. Carpenter, *Salvationists and the Sacraments* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies, LTD., 1946), 3.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, 3-4.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 14.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, 10, 14.

In 1960 the Army published a small primer on its sacramental position.³⁸ This primer called for the Army to be a prophetic voice in the sacramental discourse by using Hosea 6:6 and Matthew 9:13 as biblical references.³⁹ “For I desire mercy, not sacrifice, and acknowledgment of God rather than burnt offerings.” The author stated, “. . . although we believe in the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and the possibility of real and continuous fellowship with Christ and so set aside the symbols of these realities, it should never be imagined that we stand opposed to Christian friends whose thoughts and practices differ from ours.”⁴⁰ This book advanced the argument that the Army was an authentic church even without the physical practice of the sacraments.

William Metcalf also argued in the 1960’s that there was new life given to believers by God’s grace and Christ living within them.⁴¹ This new life constituted the foundation of sacramental living. Metcalf contended that it was possible to meet God outside the sacraments and that Christian character was a positive identifier of a believer’s intimate fellowship and abiding with God.⁴²

General John Coutts, writing in the 1970’s, spoke very clearly on the sacramental life, saying all of life should be hallowed by the Spirit of God.⁴³ In explaining the

³⁸ The Salvation Army, *The Sacraments: The Salvationist’s Viewpoint* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd, 1960).

³⁹ Ibid., 75.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 18-19.

⁴¹ William Metcalf, *The Salvationist and the Sacraments* (Great Britain: Challenge Books, 1965), 23.

⁴² Ibid., 49.

⁴³ John Coutts, *This We Believe: A Study of the Background and Meaning of Salvation Army Doctrine* (Great Britain: Challenge Books, 1976), 131.

sacramental life he quoted a song by General Albert Orsborn written just after World War

II. The first verse eloquently conveyed sacramental life:

My life must be Christ's broken bread,
My love his outpoured wine,
A cup o'erfilled, a table spread
Beneath his name and sign.
That other souls, refreshed and fed,
May share his life through mine.⁴⁴

In a book written about the meaning of the song, Orsborn spoke about being in post-World War II Berlin and lamenting its devastation: “. . . God revealed to me that not only that day, but always, we have no hope of being a blessing to other souls unless our lives become a part of the Saviour's sacramental consecration. . . .”⁴⁵

This song has become a cornerstone of the Army's sacramental understanding. However, Rob Birk advises that, “It would be a sin at worst and a shame at best if we only used this classic as a kind of proof text for our position on the sacraments.”⁴⁶ He continues by saying,

The real power of this song is the location in which the songwriter places himself beneath the name and sign of Jesus, sharing the life of Jesus, in the hands of Jesus, sharing the grace of Jesus, dying, raising and living again with Jesus.

The song does have sacramental meaning and is more about sacramental living rather than being a denial of sacramental practice.

The 1980's produced a number of Army writers on the position of the sacraments. They were apologetic in nature, stressing that the Army was not acting contrary to

⁴⁴ The Salvation Army, *The Song Book of The Salvation Army: North American Edition* (Alexandria: The Salvation Army, 2015), 610.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Rob Birk, *ORSBORNAGAIN: A New Look at Old Songs of New Life* (United States of America: Frontier Press, 2013), 6.

biblical guidelines. One of these writers was Clifford Kew, who wrote a book entitled *Closer Communion: The Sacraments in Scripture and History*.⁴⁷ Kew did not argue with those who held to the essential importance of the sacraments, but instead provided well-reasoned arguments for the Army's traditional position. He also selectively used scripture to make his points:

Again and again the most important things in Christian faith and practice are listed, and again and again there is no mention of the sacraments (e.g. Romans 12:6-12; 2 Timothy 4:1,2,5; Titus 1:5-9; 1 Peter 4:7-11).⁴⁸

However, Kew did not state why these passages should be taken as the "most important" or why scriptures mentioning the sacraments were less important, even though the sacraments have held a significant place in the history of the church. Kew states:

The Army's position, then is: (a) that none of these ways of receiving grace or blessing from God (including those used by [T]he Salvation Army) is *essential* to salvation or to Christian living; (b) that these are only outward signs of an inward experience which is the really important thing; (c) that the full measure of Christian experience may (d) received by other means; and (e) that there are disadvantages to the use of the traditional sacraments which have caused The Salvation Army to cease to use them in its form of worship . . .⁴⁹

In the early 1980's The World Council of Churches published a document on *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*.⁵⁰ This document intended to provide a unifying feature of sacramental ministry for Christian Churches. The Army was given space along with

⁴⁷ Clifford Kew, *Closer Communion: The Sacraments in Scripture and Tradition* (London: Salvationist Publishing and Supplies Ltd., 1980).

⁴⁸ Ibid., 10.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 3.

⁵⁰ World Council of Churches, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: Faith and Order Paper No. 111* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1982).

the Society of Friends for stating their differences.⁵¹ The Army upheld the sacred place of the sacraments in the hearts of the majority of Christians, while not wavering from its non-practicing sacramental position.

Nor is the teaching of Holiness, the seeking of that blessing and the subsequent living a life that is wholly sacramental, any less significant to the Salvationist than participating in a communion service and its subsequent relation to daily living.⁵²

In a further reaction to BEM the Army strengthened its sacramental living stance by saying that its non-sacramental worship was biblically based and was a “. . . witness to the experience granted by the Holy Spirit to salvationists of succeeding generations in vastly differing locations regarding the direct mediation of the grace of God.”⁵³

Phil Needham writes specifically about the sacramental life in his book *Community in Mission*.⁵⁴ He argues that The Salvation Army is a church even though it does not practise the sacraments. Needham starts with the foundation of the immediacy of grace, stating it is non-biblical to say that grace needs to be mediated by a rite or practice.⁵⁵ Needham is clear that symbols and rituals point to divine reality but they are not the reality themselves.⁵⁶ For Needham, the Spirit gives power to live life in the reality of the Kingdom and this is called sacramental living, living in God’s immediate

⁵¹ Max Thurian, “The Friends United Meetings, The Salvation Army and the documents on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry,” in *Ecumenical Perspectives on Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry: Faith and Order Paper 116*, ed. Max Thurian (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1983).

⁵² *Ibid.*, 162.

⁵³ The Salvation Army, *One Faith, One Church: An Insight into The Salvation Army’s Response to the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Paper No. 111 Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry* (London: International Headquarters of The Salvation Army, 1990), 3.

⁵⁴ Phil Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies, 1987).

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, 8.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 12.

presence.⁵⁷ Needham's Kingdom presence of God reflects this thesis' definition of sacramental life which is mindfully living in the presence of God.

The 1990's marked a critical era in Salvation Army writing on the sacraments. Henry Gariepy affirms that the Army is uniquely nonsacramentarian but explains that this does not mean it is antisacramental.⁵⁸ An external article, written by Carolyn Ochettree, comments on Booth's non-practicing position⁵⁹ and suggests that Booth was pragmatic and was influenced by the nineteenth century holiness movement. "For the founder the sacraments become superfluous when he conceived his business with 'suffering and sinful humanity' as the 'stern and difficult business of *redemption*.'"⁶⁰

In 1992 an official publication outlined several influences on Booth's decision. According to this publication they were the example of the Quakers, the historical divisive nature of sacramental practice, the link of the sacraments to a separate priesthood and not the priesthood of all believes, the Victorian concern of having women administer the sacraments, the tendency to trust outward forms rather than inward grace, the alcohol used in the Eucharist (for alcoholics), the Founder's conviction that the Bible does not demand participation in the sacraments for salvation and that God requires worshippers to

⁵⁷ Ibid., 18.

⁵⁸ Henry Gariepy, *Christianity in Action: The Salvation Army in the USA Today* (USA: Victor Books, 1990), 25/26.

⁵⁹ Carolyn Ochettree, "Wesleyan Methodist Perceptions of William Booth," *Methodist History* 28:4 (July 1990): 265-270.

⁶⁰ Ibid., 279.

worship in Spirit and truth.⁶¹ These became the official response when salvationists were asked about their non-sacramental practice.

In the late twentieth century, General Paul Rader convened an International Spiritual Life Commission to “. . . identify aspects of the Army’s life which are essential or integral to the spiritual growth of individual salvationists and the Movement itself.”⁶² The Army understood that there were challenges from persons within the Army who were questioning its sacramental stance and used this situation as an opportunity to revisit the sacramental question that Booth left open in his 1883 letter. While confronting these challenges, the Commission upheld the non-practicing stance of the Army stating, “[t]he New Testament does not offer a mediation of grace through things but through persons. ‘Christ in you’ speaks of a radical immediacy of grace, mediated through the person of the Son of God and the Spirit of God to the Church and to the believer.”⁶³ The Commission also came to five conclusions that upheld the importance of the sacramental life: sacramentalism was not rejected; the thought that the practices of the sacraments were essential was rejected; the Army was a witness to the universal church of direct access to God; this was a prophetic calling, and, there was a connection between sacraments and the call to a holy life.⁶⁴

⁶¹ The Salvation Army, *The Sacraments: A Biblical-Historical Perspective* (Toronto: Canada and Bermuda Territory, 1992), 6.

⁶² Robert Street, *Called to be God People: The International Spiritual Life Commission, Its Report, Implications and Challenges* (London: International Headquarters, 1999), 1.

⁶³ Ibid., 93.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 98.

General Clifton, writing at the same time, agreed with the Army's stance and reaffirmed the centrality of the sacramental life.⁶⁵ Clifton outlined the thrust of Army writing on the sacraments as follows: sacramental ceremonies were not to be derided; sacramental ceremonies were not essential to salvation; sacramental ceremonies were not essential to an obedient life in Christ's grace; sacramental ceremonies could be discarded, but not the grace behind the ceremony; the Army's witness to the fact that grace was available outside the ceremonies; people do not understand Army witness and think the Army is not a church; and, in the Army's doctrine of the holy life, life itself becomes a sacrament to bring God's grace to others.⁶⁶

According to Rightmire, the International Spiritual Life Commission report ". . . stirred others within the Army world to reflect on the issue of sacramental observance."⁶⁷ In the new millennium a book by Ian Satterlee entitled *Turning Points: How The Salvation Army Found a Different Path*⁶⁸ also touched on Booth's decision, confirming the influence of Catherine and Railton to cast aside reliance on ceremonies. In affirming the Army's position he says, ". . . it is naïve for The Salvation Army to suppose that adding the sacraments will necessarily add to the quality of its spiritual life."⁶⁹

⁶⁵ Shaw Clifton, *Who Are These Salvationists?: An Analysis for the 21st Century* (Alexandria: Crest Books, 1999), 63.

⁶⁶ Ibid. 63-64.

⁶⁷ Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*, 216.

⁶⁸ Allen Satterlee, *Turning Points: How The Salvation Army Found a Different Path* (Virginia: Crest Books, 2004).

⁶⁹ Ibid., 55.

In a modern biography of William Booth, Roger J. Green affirms that the decision to abandon the sacraments was not William Booth's alone,⁷⁰ stating that Booth wavered on his decision and never considered it to be a closed matter.

[Booth's] statement [on the sacraments] is remarkable for three reasons, the first being that it is highly unusual for Booth not to give a final and definitive answer on any topic and every decision affecting the Army . . . Second, Booth did not bring closure to the matter, but postponed the settlement of the question to some future day. It is impossible to know precisely what he meant by this . . . Finally, Booth did not prohibit Salvationists from taking the sacraments . . .⁷¹

During the first part of this twenty-first century it was similar musings to these that were fostering a deeper look at the sacramental position of the Army and calling for a re-examination of its sacramental position. Speaking on Booth's understanding of holiness Green states Methodist holiness was central to Booth's theology. In the work of Jesus Christ a sinner was redeemed and made holy. The regeneration of the believer by Jesus had a key role to play in salvation, ". . . Booth was equally convinced that God's people on earth were the agencies of that redemption."⁷² Green argues that Booth's understanding of redemption demonstrated that God's people were a means of God's grace in this world, again fostering sacramental living.

Philip Layton in *The Sacraments and the Bible*⁷³ provides biblical support to the Army's position on the sacraments. Layton stresses that he approaches the Bible from a

⁷⁰ The final decision while being Booth's alone and being presented in the "General's New Year Address to Officers," in 1883 was heavily influenced by his leadership team of the time. These leaders of the early Army included Catherine Booth, George Scott Railton and Bramwell Booth. See Begbie, *Life of William Booth*, 451 and Railton, "General William Booth," 19.

⁷¹ Roger J. Green, *The Life & Ministry of William Booth* (Abingdon Press: Nashville, 2005), 147.

⁷² *Ibid.*, 36.

⁷³ Philip Layton, *The Sacraments and the Bible: Measuring the Salvationist Viewpoint alongside Scripture* (London: Shield Books, 2007).

fresh perspective and without presuppositions advocating either for or against the practice of the sacraments. However, he still ends his book holding a traditional Army position that both Baptism and Communion are meaningful expressions in the Church. Layton asserts that nowhere in the Bible does it state that all Christians should be baptized, that the baptism spoken of in the New Testament is spiritual baptism and the one baptism in Ephesians 4:4-6 is the baptism of the Holy Spirit.⁷⁴ When writing about communion he makes reference to the Last Supper and says “[o]bviously there is much in a communion service which is helpful. . . . Communion might well be regarded as another word for fellowship.”⁷⁵

A salvationist scholar, Andrew Eason, brings the sacramental debate in the Army back to its initial conception by Booth. During the early 1880’s there were serious discussions between Booth and Church of England leaders to merge The Salvation Army with the Church of England. Eason suggests that it was the conflict with the Church of England which finally led Booth to abandon sacramental practice.⁷⁶

. . . [I]t was only when Anglicans started to question the orthodoxy of the sacraments within the Salvation Army, and began to complain about the unconfirmed Salvationist partaking of Holy Communion in parishes across England, that the sacraments became a pressing problem for Salvationist leaders.⁷⁷

⁷⁴ Ibid., 33.

⁷⁵ Ibid., 50.

⁷⁶ Andrew M. Eason, “The Salvation Army and the Sacraments in Victorian Britain: Retracing the Steps to Non-Observance” *Fides et Historia* 41:2 (Summer/Fall 2009): 51-71.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 51.

Green agrees with this assessment and states that the negotiations with the Church of England hinged on three areas: a place for Booth, the ministry of women officers and the position of the Army on sacraments.⁷⁸ These discussions did not result in a merger.

Recent years have also witnessed a resurgence in holiness discussions. Richard Munn, a contemporary Army theologian writes, “Holy living is revolutionary indeed. It transforms the world as we know it. The prayer of young William Booth, ‘God shall have all there is of me,’ demonstrates the power of God’s holiness. For such consecration The Salvation Army was born.”⁷⁹ Philip Cairns⁸⁰ is another contemporary theologian who links sacraments and sacramental living to holiness.

The heart of holiness and the sacramental life is a relationship with Jesus Christ that results in our wanting to be like him in every way—in our actions, in our thinking, in our living. Holiness is our relationship with Jesus that is sealed through the indwelling of the Spirit of Jesus, the Holy Spirit, and is then evident to all around us. Can there be a more powerful sacrament?⁸¹

John Read (a biographer of Catherine Booth)⁸² agrees that in the debate over the sacraments an understanding of the concept by the early Army leaders will be essential. He affirms that Catherine was at the centre of theological teaching in the Army. Her influence on Booth’s thoughts eventually led to the ending of sacramental practice. Read states, “[t]he main thrust of Catherine Booth’s argument was that the sacraments are a delusional substitute for the true ground of salvation which is a heart delivered from sin

⁷⁸ Green, *The Life & Ministry Of William Booth*, 143.

⁷⁹ Richard Munn, “An Army of Salvation: Salvationists Should Understand and Celebrate Their Unique Identity and Distinctiveness,” *Salvationist* (May 2009): 19.

⁸⁰ Philip Cairns, “The Real Sacrament: Holiness is the Outward Sign of an Inward Grace,” *Salvationist* (August 2012).

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 20.

⁸² John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2013).

by the redeeming work of Christ confirmed by the indwelling Holy Spirit.”⁸³ Later in his book he continues: “[Catherine Booth’s] experiences within the Holiness Movement confirmed to her that the presence of God within the experience of the believer was consequent upon a Pentecostal baptism of the Holy Spirit rather than the mediating effect of the sacraments.”⁸⁴ Holiness was foundational to Catherine’s theology and holiness teaching was a major influence in Army teaching. This teaching is foundational to Army sacramental thinking. It is interesting, notes Read, “[t]he Army finds itself today as a broadly conservative part of the church paradoxically cleaving to a radical stance on what a majority of Christians today believe to be an essential characteristic of the church.”⁸⁵

This summary of the history of the sacraments and sacramental living in The Salvation Army demonstrates that the Army has given (and continues to give) deep thought about the role of sacraments. It begins with the conviction of William Booth that the sacraments were not essential to salvation and progresses to establish the means of grace available in sacramental living. Those within the Army must not only note but dialogue with the opinions of those who feel a reintroduction of the sacraments is called for and they must intentionally teach salvationists (many of whom are unaware) the history and significance of the Army’s sacramental understanding. By hearing biblical preaching on the sacramental life, it is this thesis writer’s belief that congregations will be educated as to the Army’s understanding of this practice and will discover biblical precedence and spiritual power for living a life that embodies the Gospel.

⁸³ Ibid., 180.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 194.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 203.

Outline of Thesis Project

This thesis will utilize the Action/Reflection model. A preliminary survey was administered to a local Salvation Army congregation on January 29th, 2017, to gauge the understanding of the sacramental life. This survey assessed the awareness of the sacramental issue in the Army and its commitment to sacramental living. The data helped to establish correlations on these answers with membership engagement and commitment to Christian living. The first survey was followed by a four part sermon series emphasizing the embodiment of the gospel (seeing salvation) that is displayed in John's Gospel, based on four themes identified in John: the creative activity of God, abiding, witness and abundance.⁸⁶ The goal of the sermon series was not to engage in an either/or argument, rather it was to teach sacramental living as an outworking of God's grace. The reflection in this model occurred with a follow-up survey administered on February 26, 2017. Posed questions were such as: has the sermon series created awareness of the issues (sacramental life, holiness and Christian living) and is biblical preaching an effective means to teach this Salvation Army doctrine?

These surveys were designed with the help of George Gallup Jr.'s book *The Gallup Guide*⁸⁷ and were pre-tested by active and retired officers of The Salvation Army. It utilized Dr. Gallup's Quintamensional Approach:⁸⁸ the respondents' awareness and general knowledge about the topic; the respondents' overall opinions; the reasons respondents holds these views; the respondents' views on specific aspects of the problem;

⁸⁶ Karoline M. Lewis, *John*: Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 9.

⁸⁷ George Gallup Jr. and Michael D. Lindsay, *The Gallup Guide: Reality Check for 21st Century Churches* (Colorado: Group, 2002).

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 58.

and the intensity with which the respondent holds these opinions. The goal of this action/reflection model was to foster dialogue between those who want to practise the two traditional sacraments and those who view sacramental living as a sufficient expression of God's grace in us.

Thesis Definition of the Sacramental Life

For this thesis project to proceed we must be clear with our definition of the sacramental life. Sacramental living is mindfully living in the presence of God and being empowered to live a holy life.⁸⁹ The traditional understanding of the sacraments is that they are an outward sign of an inward grace that strengthens the believer to live a life of holiness dedicated to God. This experience of the sacraments was not the experience of the early Army leaders who witnessed the mass moral degradation of the East End of London. Ray Harris says that, "William Booth's agitation with what he witnessed reflects the conviction that the streets of London did not embody the Kingdom of God."⁹⁰ Demonstrating a regenerated life was not found simply in those who faithfully participated in the sacraments of Baptism and Communion.

There is no evidence that Booth advocated for the ecumenical church to discontinue its use of sacraments, but that he simply felt they were not necessary for the

⁸⁹ This represents the core definition of sacramental living in this thesis and the other definitions (including these listed) are all sub-divisions of this core definition: Sacramental living is the active presence of God in the life of a believer through the immediacy of God's grace; Sacramental living is an outworking of God's grace; The threads of sacramental living that this thesis will bring together are the immediacy of the presence of God empowering the believer to live an evidential and witnessing life of holiness; Sacramental living is therefore not just about spiritually living in the presence of God's immediate grace but bringing and finding that grace in our relationships with other people and the physical world around us; Sacramental living is living a life of holiness and holiness is a doctrine of the Church; Sacramental living is the embodiment of the Gospel and this leads to the development of the Army's concept of the mercy seat.

⁹⁰ Ray Harris, *Convictions Matter: The Function of Salvation Army Doctrines* (Canada: The Salvation Army, 2014), 165.

mission of the Army that focused on salvation and regeneration. The Army has interpreted Booth's abandonment of the sacraments to place the stress on sacramental "evidential living," demonstrated in the frequent use of General Albert Orsborn's song, *My Life Must Be Christ's Broken Bread*. The threads of sacramental living that this thesis will bring together are the immediacy of the presence of God empowering the believer to live an evidential and witnessing life of holiness.

Susan Ross, writing from a Catholic perspective in her article "God's Embodiment and Women: Sacraments," suggests "[t]he first systematic writing on sacramental theology came from Augustine of Hippo (354-430), who described sacraments as signs of God's grace, as opposed to a crude physicalist understanding of divine presence."⁹¹ According to Ross, Augustine located the sacraments inside of the church community and the sacraments were realised as church acts and not the acts of individuals.

Thomas Aquinas's (1225-1274) use of the Aristotelian categories of causality and substance to understand sacraments was to have a deep and lasting effect on sacramental theology and practice.⁹²

Her reasoning is that Aquinas defined the sacraments instrumentally and that the substance of the sacrament was what it represented. Ross states, "[t]hat is to say, the philosophical categories used in this theology were *abstract* and thus taken out of their context within Christian life."⁹³ A major change in sacramental theology happened with twentieth century catholic theologian Edward Schillebeeckx. "At the heart of

⁹¹ Susan B. Ross, "God's Embodiment and Women: Sacraments," in *Freeing Theology: The Essentials of Theology in Feminist Perspective*, ed. Catherine Mowry LaCugna (New York: Harper San Francisco, 1993), 188.

⁹² Ibid.

⁹³ Ibid., 189.

Schillebeeckx's sacramental theology is the insight that the sacraments provide a point where we encounter God in and through interpersonal experiences."⁹⁴ This moves sacramental theology from an instrumental symbol to a living symbol where sacramental life is possible.

Kathleen Hughes in her book *Becoming the Sign*, also from a Catholic foundation, envisions the sacramental life as an encounter with God that transforms behaviour.

Hughes says,

I believe that the liturgical life of the church has the unique potential for transformation of our attitudes and values, our relationships and responsibilities, if we recognize that it is—or should be—*radically continuous* with our everyday lives, hallowing and celebrating everyday experience, inviting deeper participation in the mystery of God with us, and committing us to live faithfully that which we have expressed in word and ritual action each time we gather for worship.⁹⁵

Hughes progresses to say that this encounter with God's presence was possible because Jesus himself was the sacrament of God's presence "[a]nd the church is the sacramental embodiment of Christ's continued presence and activity in the world."⁹⁶ Whereas Booth moved away from the ritual of sacramental practice Hughes would not wish to do so as the "... ritual celebration of a sacrament that happens in the midst of the process of sacramental living; the sacramental rite continuous with the sacramentality of the day-to-day."⁹⁷ Even though Hughes does not envision an abandonment of sacramental practice, sacramental living and involvement in created reality naturally flow from her understanding of the sacraments.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 191.

⁹⁵ Kathleen Hughes, *Becoming the Sign: Sacramental Living in a Post-Conciliar Church* (New York: Paulist Press, 2013), 6.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 26-27. See also Ross, "God's Embodiment and Women: Sacraments," 191.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 40.

For the purpose of this thesis we will share the views outlined by Hughes and Ross that sacramental living is an encounter with God that is truly seen in the incarnation of Jesus Christ bringing the presence of God into our physical realm. Sacramental living is the immediacy of the presence of God that is embodied by the believer through the life, death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus, which empowers the believer for an evidential and witnessing life of holiness.

Justification and Rationale of Thesis Project

I grew up in a Salvation Army church setting. During my young adulthood it did not even cross my mind that The Salvation Army was fundamentally different from any other church. In seminary I was exposed to viewpoints of other denominations regarding the sacraments. I saw the two sacraments as beautiful expressions of Christian faith and practice.

I have always appreciated the Army's position that Christ's grace is available to us without the use of outward sacraments and that regeneration is affected by the Holy Spirit without the need of other aids. When I entered Wycliffe College (Toronto School of Theology), I was asked in a pre-registration interview the date of my baptism. Before I could answer, one of the interviewers commented that I was baptized by the Holy Spirit. It was encouraging to be affirmed in this way. While the sacramental matter is settled in my mind, I have witnessed, and still do, the division it is causing in the Canadian Army and the deep hurt resulting from this division.

My theological position is that while the sacraments are good and helpful to so many Christians, they are not necessary for salvation nor required to be a member of a Christian denomination or the universal Christian Church. The sacramental issue that is

personally important to me as a minister, and officer of The Salvation Army, is the sacramental life of each individual believer.

This project is not designed to demonstrate that the Army's current position is right and other positions are wrong, rather it is to better inform Christians that sacramental living is a valid interpretation of biblical Christianity that lives out the gospel.

CHAPTER 2

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTION

This thesis addresses the problem of the sacraments in the Canadian Salvation Army. There is division and unfamiliarity over its current non-practicing stance. The understanding of and preaching on living a sacramental life is one response to this tension. This response must have a biblical and theological foundation and it is upon this foundation the next chapter will reflect.

Biblical and Theological Reflection on the Thesis Problem

For many individuals and churches, the non-practice of the sacraments by The Salvation Army is troubling. In Matthew 28:18-19 we read,

¹⁸ Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. ¹⁹ Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit”

These verses pose a problem for the Army’s self-identification as a conservative evangelical Christian Church as some could use the passage to question the Army’s fidelity to scripture by not following the sacraments laid out in the scripture. The typical Army response is, “[t]he overriding biblical emphasis is the one baptism: ‘One Lord, one faith, one baptism’ (Ephesians 4:5), which is spiritual [matter] and refers to the baptism by the Holy Spirit.”¹ This causes some to question the nature of the Army’s spiritual

¹ The Salvation Army, *The Sacraments: a Biblical-Historical Perspective* (Toronto: Canada and Bermuda Territory, 1992), 7.

sacramental theology that could be seen as leading to Docetism² by emphasising the spiritual and disregarding the physical. Read attempts to address this by referring to the Army's social ministry that,

. . . evidently derives from the passionate heart of the Army's theology. It is logically incoherent to ignore the Army's highly materialistic response to the needs of the world in a thesis that argues that the Army's gospel is over-spiritualized.³

Read demonstrates that the Army's servant theology is neither over spiritualized nor over materialized; instead it is a balance of both.

Devaluing the physical is not only perceived by some to be a problem in the Army but also in the evangelical church. Salvationist author Dean Smith states that we live in a sacramental universe and this is confirmed in Genesis chapter one which says, "In the beginning when God created . . . And God saw that it was good."⁴ God's creative goodness is part of creation and that makes it sacramental. Creation displays the grace of God as Smith further states, "[t]o speak of the world as a sacrament counters all the views that, at worst, treat the world as evil and, at best, treat it as an encumbrance to all things spiritual."⁵ Sacramental living is therefore not just about spiritually living in the presence of God's immediate grace but bringing and finding that grace in our relationships with other people and the physical world around us.

² R. David Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations* (Metuchen: The Scarecrow Press Inc., 1990), 174.

³ John Read, *Catherine Booth: Laying the Theological Foundations of a Radical Movement* (Eugene: Pickwick Publications, 2013), 199.

⁴ Dean Smith, "The Sacramental Life: Towards an Integrated Salvationist Vision," *Word & Deed* 14:1 (November 2011): 38.

⁵ Ibid.

The challenge for this thesis is to overcome the biblical/theological divide that is currently found between those who practise and those who do not practise the sacraments in the Army. This thesis will respect the viewpoints of the differing opinions and will work towards a greater understanding, if not acceptance, of the other viewpoint. The goal is to foster unity in Army worshipping communities. This will also enable salvationists to be informed by the sacramental practices of others, while holding their non-practicing position. Additionally, it will inform other denominations on the Army's non-practicing position.

Richard Hays states that, "Christian preaching proclaims the bodily resurrection of the crucified Jesus as the act of God that has defeated the power of death and transformed the world."⁶ The Salvation Army believes that the preacher witnesses to this transforming reality and encourages the congregation to give witness to this reality outside the church. Hays employs a helpful phrase from Wendell Berry; namely, "practice resurrection:"⁷

. . . we are called to order our practices in such a way that the church's life embodies a foretaste of the resurrection life of the world to come, a world of new creation in which there is 'neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female (Gal 3:28 RSV).⁸

"Practice resurrection" is sacramental living. Preaching on sacramental living calls the congregation to recognize that resurrection living needs to be lived out in the world after the worship service and for those who practise the sacraments, after the sacraments of

⁶ Richard B. Hays, "Resurrection," in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 106.

⁷ Ibid., 109.

⁸ Ibid.

Baptism and the Lord's Supper. Christians gather to be blessed by God's grace and to be sent out to embody the gospel.

This theology of embodiment is grasped in the writings of N.T. Wright when he speaks about God's plan of restoration for the people of Israel after the exile.

Central to the Old Testament picture of God's justice in an unjust world, then, is the picture of God's faithfulness to unfaithful Israel. And central to that picture is the picture of YHWH's Servant, an individual who stands over against Israel and takes Israel's fate upon himself so that Israel may be rescued from exile, allowing the human race at last to proceed, as in Isaiah 55, toward the new creation, in which thorns and thistles will be replaced by cypress and myrtle, dust and death by fresh water and new life.⁹

Wright's image of YHWH's servant from Isaiah is interpreted by many evangelicals as Jesus Christ. Not only has God brought back the people of Israel from exile; this has been achieved so that the people of Israel can now be the people that God called them to be, a people that will bring blessing to the world.¹⁰ Jesus articulates and models the call of Israel to be Israel, as Wright says, "Israel is to be at last the light of the world, the city on a hill. Israel is to show the world what it means to be God's people, God's servant people for the world"¹¹

This function of the people of Israel has fallen to all who have found faith and salvation in Jesus Christ. This is sacramental living. Not only have Christians been saved and restored into a right relationship with God through Jesus' life, death, resurrection and ascension, but they have been saved to be a blessing, thus fitting the Army's motto "saved to serve." Catherine Booth states that we are called to be God's witnesses in the

⁹ N.T. Wright, *Evil and the Justice of God* (Illinois: IVP Books, 2006), 65-66.

¹⁰ Genesis 12:1ff.

¹¹ Wright, *Evil and the Justice of God*, 85.

world and that when Jesus ascended “. . . He commissioned His disciples to take His place, and to be God’s witnesses on earth.”¹²

To understand the church as being sent to embody God’s good news of new restored life in the world helps to move this thesis from being a negative discussion of the Army’s non-practice of the sacraments to a positive expression of being called to live a sacramental life. This understanding helps clarify the Army’s position on the sacraments and sacramental life in light of the perceived scant understanding both inside and outside of Army settings.

The sacraments of Baptism and Communion in traditional church settings are outward signs of an inward grace. Thus the Army must demonstrate that sacramental living is an outward sign of inward grace. Through living a Christian life, the workings of God in a believer will be seen through the Holy Spirit.¹³ John the Baptizer refers to this baptism when he predicts that there will be another baptism after his baptism of repentance. Matthew 3:11 states, “I baptise you with water for repentance. But after me comes one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire.” In speaking of this baptism Caldwell says,

. . . the baptism of the Holy Ghost is not an emotional high or a special gift but a true inward cleansing, a true inward purifying of the soul. No, not a magical change, but ‘burning away’ proud selfishness and leaving only humble willingness and submission to the daily leading of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴

Spiritual baptism that is displayed in the lives of those who are sanctified is not exclusively for those who do not partake of the sacraments. The spiritual blessing of a

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Anita Caldwell, *Holiness Alive!* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2015).

¹⁴ Ibid.,13.

changed life is available to all who daily walk in submission to the Spirit. Lyell Rader expresses the sentiment of the International Spiritual Life Commission stating, “[t]he Salvation Army rejoices in the truth that all who are in Christ are baptized into the one body by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:13).”¹⁵ Sacramental living as an expression of spiritual baptism does not divide the body of the Church, rather it provides unity.

It is the presence of Jesus through the power of the Holy Spirit that makes sacramental life possible. Daniel Vestal in his book *Being the Presence of Christ* expresses the inner growth in the Spirit by quoting Ephesians 3:16ff,

I pray that, according to the riches of his glory, he may grant that you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit, and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love . . .¹⁶

Vestal sees this outworking as “*Christ’s presence compels and creates love, reorients and renews the human spirit toward compassion and kindness. That presence creates a whole new capacity to love God, neighbor, and self.*” (Italics Vestal)¹⁷

To summarize this section, there is a biblical/theological divide between Christians who practise the sacraments and those who do not. This divide is problematic but is able to be crossed when we concentrate on what unites Christians; namely, the sacramental life that is founded upon spiritual baptism of the Holy Spirit. This baptism occurs when Christ takes up residence in a believer’s life and daily guides him/her to

¹⁵ Lyell M. Rader, “The International Spiritual Life Commission: A Case Study in Discernment,” *Word & Deed* 3:1 (November 2000): 47. And see The Salvation Army, “The International Spiritual Life Commission Report,” *Word & Deed* 3:1 (November 2000): 53. And also Chapter One of this thesis.

¹⁶ Daniel Vestal, *Being the Presence of Christ: A Vision for Transformation* (Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2008), 29.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 61.

physically and incarnationally demonstrate the restorative grace that God offers humanity.

Biblical and Theological Reflection on Biblical Preaching

Biblical preaching reveals sacramental living through God's revealed word. This is because preaching is one of the fundamental ways of transmitting the Gospel to others. 1 Corinthians 1:21 says, "For since, in the wisdom of God, the world did not know God through wisdom, God decided, through the foolishness of our proclamation, to save those who believe." God ordains that the church utilize the gift of preaching to spread God's Gospel which includes living sacramentally. Biblical preaching engages God's revealed word and provides a creative lens through which Army tradition will be examined.

We begin with the value of preaching in a congregation. Ronald J. Allen in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching* speaks of the importance of congregations hearing the word. He says, "... the preacher is called to prepare the sermons so that the congregation members have opportunities to encounter important theological realities through it."¹⁸ This helps us envision preaching as an opportunity for encounter, not only with "theological realities" but with the God behind those realities. The sermon must also be tied to the living word, Jesus and, the word that is found in scripture. St. Augustine says that if one

... fully understands that "the end of the commandment is charity, out of a pure heart, and of a good conscience, and of faith unfeigned." And is bent upon making all his understanding of Scripture to bear upon these three graces, he may come to the interpretation of these books with an easy mind.¹⁹

¹⁸ Ronald J. Allen, "Part 10 Sermon. Introduction: Seeking to be Heard." in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 369.

¹⁹ Augustine, *On Christian Doctrine*, trans. Rev. Professor J.F. Shaw (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 2009), 28-29.

Theologian Karl Barth also provides a very precise two part definition of biblical preaching, when he states,

. . . Preaching is the Word of God which he himself speaks, claiming for the purpose the exposition of a biblical text in free human words that are relevant to contemporaries by those who are called to do this in the church that is obedient to its commission. . . . Preaching is the attempt enjoined upon the church to serve God's own Word, through one who is called thereto, by expounding a biblical text in human words and making it relevant to contemporaries in intimation of what they have to hear from God himself.²⁰

This definition of biblical preaching is relevant to preaching sacramental living because sacramental living is rooted in God's grace that has been incarnated among all people and is active in the life of believers by the Spirit of Jesus who lives in God's own children. Therefore, Barth says that in preaching we must ". . . start out from the fact that the church is the place where the Bible is opened. Here God has spoken. Here he has given us a commission, a command."²¹ A theological assumption of this thesis is that sacramental living is a command of God and that this awareness will be conveyed to congregations through biblical preaching.

Leander E. Keck, writing in 1978, addresses the importance of biblical preaching by stating that the lack of biblical preaching is one of deep concerns in the church today.²² Keck provides four key components of biblical preaching saying this preaching comes from hearing the text, the preacher listens as part of his or her office in the church, the preacher needs to react in sermons to questions the congregation may have about the

²⁰ Karl Barth, *Homiletics*, trans. Geoffrey W. Bromiley and Donald E. Daniels (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 1991), 44.

²¹ *Ibid.*, 62.

²² Leander E. Keck, *The Bible in the Pulpit: The Renewal of Biblical Preaching* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1978), 36.

text; and, the sermon is to be a prophetic witness of the preacher on behalf of the text.²³ It is when these components are realized that biblical preaching will be renewed in the Church. To preach prophetically on God's command of sacramental living, the preacher must wrestle with the text of scripture so that the sermon does not become simply an opinion of the preacher but is seen as an integral part God's self-disclosure.

Biblical preaching is the method that conveys the message of sacramental living to the congregation and it is therefore relevant that preaching must communicate in a fashion that will not only be heard but understood by the congregation. This hearing and understanding is possible with the preacher's grasp of the social location of a congregation. Mary S. Hulst demonstrates this truth when she states, "[c]ommunication theorists have long known that the best communication takes place when the sender is as aware of the beliefs and biases of the receiver as he or she can be."²⁴ Therefore, in preaching on the sacramental life one must exegete not only the text of scripture correctly but also the congregation. With this double exegesis method there is a better chance that the congregation will receive God's message through the preacher. Mark Allan Powell also writes about the value of social location.

The basic idea that Scripture is meaningful to the extent that it affects those who encounter it is compatible with the biblical concept of "the Word of God" as an active force that does things to people. When we preach the Word of God, we craft and perform sermons that have the capacity to do what the biblical text would do, to affect people in ways that the text would affect them.²⁵

²³ Ibid., 54ff.

²⁴ Mary S. Hulst, "Social Location. Introduction: Identity and Communication," in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 253.

²⁵ Mark Allan Powell, *What Do They Hear? Bridging the Gap between Pulpit & Pew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2007), 107.

In light of the discussion immediately above, the outcomes sought from the sermon series are: one, the concept that God wants to speak to Christians about the command of sacramental living; two, that the preacher is God's chosen instrument for achieving this aim; and three, that this will affect the congregation so they more fully embrace the Holy Spirit's leading in their lives.

Biblical preaching on sacramental living also addresses an issue presented by Fleming Rutledge in her book *And God Spoke to Abraham*.²⁶ Rutledge ponders if the church reflects how many times God speaks to the world.²⁷ The aim of the sacramental life sermon series is to have God's word speak again, this time to the congregation, demonstrating the grace of God to the world by people living sacramentally.

In an article entitled "Doctrines and Biblical Texts," James M. Childs Jr. states that biblical preaching and doctrinal preaching are closely bound to each other.²⁸ Another author Duncan Macpherson says "[a]ll authentic Christian preaching is doctrinal in that it either includes or presupposes fundamental Christian teachings."²⁹ The sacraments are fundamental to Christian teachings and I suggest that sacramental living should also be included. Sacramental living is living a life of holiness and holiness is a doctrine of the Church. Booth abandoned the practice of the sacraments because he truly believed in the

²⁶ Fleming Rutledge, *And God Spoke to Abraham: Preaching from the Old Testament* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2011).

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 27.

²⁸ James M. Childs Jr., "Doctrines and Biblical Texts," in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 448.

²⁹ Duncan Macpherson, "Doctrinal," in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 337.

immediacy of grace available to Christians through Spirit Baptism and through a life of holiness that embodies the gospel.

In summary, it is an assumption of this thesis that preaching a biblically based sacramental life sermon series will aid in engaging the congregation with the biblical word. This sermon series also fosters a nexus between God, the Bible, the preacher, the congregation and flow through the congregation to the community. This makes it possible not only for God's word of sacramental living to be heard in the congregation, but it will also demonstrate how this word affects and transforms individuals (both preacher and congregation) and the community with whom they come into contact.

Biblical and Theological Reflection on Intended Goals and Outcomes

The biblical/theological assumption is that the Army's non-practicing position on the sacraments is a faithful interpretation and understanding of scripture. For those worshiping in Army centers, the non-practicing position of the Army is no less faithful to scriptures than the sacramental practice of other denominations. Another sought outcome of this thesis is to foster mutual understanding of the differing positions on the sacraments. This understanding will help those who would like to have sacraments in the Army appreciate the reasons behind its non-practicing position.

The Gospel of John provides the foundation for the preaching series (the main project for this thesis) because the Fourth Gospel focuses on the incarnate word and the embodiment of the gospel. Both of these themes in the Fourth Gospel speak directly to the sacramental life. By using the Gospel of John for preaching, it is this thesis writer's conviction that the outcome of mutual understanding on differing positions regarding the sacraments will be achieved.

Sacramental life is equated with embodying the Gospel. The Gospel is embodied when the good news is incarnated among us in the person of Jesus Christ. This incarnation does not end with Jesus, for in the preaching process the Gospel is incarnated in the life and message of the preacher. This incarnation will then move to the listener who has the opportunity to hear, appropriate and embody the good news that is preached. Karoline Lewis develops this in her biblical preaching commentary on the Gospel of John.³⁰ She states, “. . . the intent of this commentary is to invite the reader into an encounter with the Jesus of John’s Gospel that might result in seeking out ways to witness to how an experience of the Jesus of John actually matters.”³¹ The Army’s concept of the sacramental life is very similar to this statement of Lewis in that one’s life is seen to be the testimony of a life-changing encounter with God. This is the same grace that is available to others and the believer becomes a means of that grace.

The concept of embodying the Gospel unfolds with an understanding of the role of the prologue of John’s Gospel. The first eighteen verses of John’s Gospel are the prologue. Lewis states that, “[t]he Prologue sets out eight major theological themes that are then revisited and unpacked throughout the course of the narrative.”³² These themes are as follows: the connection of Jesus to the creative activity of God; the origin of Jesus; the role of Jesus to reveal God; God revealed in Jesus is holding the human and divine together; the images of light and darkness, belief and unbelief; discipleship which demands being a witness; children of God abide in Jesus and the theme of abundance,

³⁰ Karoline M. Lewis, *John*: Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014).

³¹ *Ibid.*, xiii.

³² *Ibid.*, 9.

where in Jesus we receive grace upon grace. It is a particular feature of John, says Lewis that “. . . the rest of the Gospel story, rather than tell the reader *about* grace shows the reader what grace looks like, tastes like, smells like, sounds like, and feels like.”³³

The sermon series preached for this thesis project focuses on four of the above stated theological themes from John’s Gospel that particularly relate to the concept of the sacramental life: creative activity of God in Jesus, children of God abiding in Jesus, abundance that is found in grace after grace and discipleship as witnessing. Sacramental life is grounded in constant fellowship and abiding with God. One aspect of Holy Communion is the remembrance of the transforming grace that is rooted in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. Sacramental living means bearing witness to this reality at all times so that the believer will experience the abundance of grace upon grace. This grace upon grace becomes a means of grace for others, for a believer’s life is a testimony of the grace of God acting within and is an expression of the fullness of that grace.

Lewis speaks about the unique features of John’s Gospel that tell the story of Jesus differently from the other three Gospels. Some have said that John’s Gospel is a spiritual gospel and is more concerned about the spiritual Jesus than the earthly Jesus. Lewis wants to refute that argument. “. . . The fourth Gospel actually offers an opposite view of Jesus, a very human Jesus. John’s Jesus is not a faraway, barely graspable Messiah, but a relational, deeply intimate Christ.”³⁴ The Jesus in John’s Gospel is the incarnate Son of God and through Jesus God becomes involved with God’s creation. Jesus comes down, lives, eats and acts within creation.

³³ Ibid., 11.

³⁴ Ibid., 2.

This understanding is important for the concept of the sacramental life. Why? Because this life is much more than a spiritual understanding of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. While people in the Army may say they are baptised in the Spirit, this declaration and this awareness does not end there. The Army has a wonderful tradition of social services that are an expression of the sacramental life. One of the reasons that members of the Army become deeply involved and engaged with God's creation is because of Spirit Baptism. The sacramental life, instead of leading the believer away to a spiritual realm, grounds them in God's creation, much as John's Gospel grounds Jesus in this same reality.

Lewis also explains that the purpose of John's Gospel is found in the Gospel itself. It is important when preaching biblically to ground the message not just in specific texts, but also in the wider Gospel. The author of the Gospel of John states, "...these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."³⁵ The Gospel of John is more than just the sum of its parts. In the Gospel we find more than just a biography of Jesus, more than a series of signs and actions. It is a Gospel that is meant to move the hearer. Lewis states "[w]hile the Gospel is clearly written for a Jewish community that has chosen to identify itself as believing in Jesus it invites those who have yet to believe into an encounter with God that might result in belief."³⁶ Lewis continues to emphasize that "... John imagines, anticipates, and expects that by hearing this story of Jesus, the reader will be affected in

³⁵ John 20:31.

³⁶ Lewis, *John*, 12.

some way. The preacher should imagine, anticipate and expect that every sermon on John would do the same.”³⁷

The sacramental life will have the same effect when it is preached to the congregation for the sacramental life is more than a concept. It will be seen as a real embodiment of the Gospel that calls believers to continually abide in Jesus and witness to the abundant grace that God has brought forth in their lives.

One outcome of this sermon series is to show that it is not an either/or position of the sacraments or sacramental living. Hoped-for outcomes of this thesis are to demonstrate that sacramental living is a proper expression of God’s words from the Gospel of John and also that those worshipping in Army centres are no less faithful to scriptures than their counterparts in practicing denominations. Another goal is to foster mutual understanding of differing positions on the sacraments. This understanding will help those who would like to have sacraments in the Army appreciate the reasons behind its non-practicing position.

³⁷ Ibid.

CHAPTER 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This thesis will contribute to The Salvation Army's self-understanding of the role of sacramental life in its very DNA. In Chapter One we traced the history of the Army's sacramental thought from Booth's decision to abandon the practice of the sacraments through to the progression of Army thought over the decades since this decision. In the literature review we will first examine contemporary scholarship on the Army's position which calls for the Army to reinstitute the practices of the sacraments.¹ Second, we will examine an article by Christopher Johnathon Button who dialogues with the writings of N.T. Wright.² Third, we will examine further writings that affirm embodying the gospel as displayed through Christian holiness. Fourth, we will progress to the development of the mercy seat in Salvation Army worship settings to discover Christians are living mercy seats. Finally, we will examine writings that demonstrate that sacramental living works itself out in testimony and modern confession.

¹ It is reasoned in this thesis that calls to reinstitute the sacraments however do not provide justice to unique expression of the Army's spiritual life that finds its expression in the practice and emphasis on the sacramental life.

² Button suggests that the way forward in the development of sacramental living in the Army is expressed in the progressive unfolding of the presence of God in the embodiment of that presence in the lives of Christians.'

Section One: Contemporary Salvation Army Scholars

We begin with three contemporary Army scholars who call on the Army to reinstitute or reconsider the Army's abandonment of sacramental practice. Rightmire has two books that directly address this issue.³ He conceives that the Army's sacramental practice is a product of its time, being founded in Victorian England and under the influence of the American holiness movement.⁴ Rightmire posits that 19th century holiness teaching contributed to Booth's understanding of sanctification, an understanding that entailed that real communion with Christ does not need to be mediated by the Lord's Supper or Baptism but instead by Spiritual Baptism. This understanding, coupled with the ambivalence of the working classes to the established church, called Booth to take the ministry of the gospel message out of traditional settings. Speaking of the Army's unorthodox practices Rightmire states,

The movement's doctrines of salvation and sanctification, when clothed in the dramatic and sensational garb of militaristic worldwide conquest and spiritual warfare, impressed the gospel on the impoverished masses by means of vivid imagery.⁵

For Rightmire this allowed the mission of the Army (the salvation of souls) to proceed without the impediments of church practices that at the time were having little effect on the poor.

³ R. David Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations* (London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1990) and R. David Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army: A Study of Holiness Foundations* (Alexandria: Crest Books, 2016).

⁴ Rightmire, *Sacraments and The Salvation Army*, 1ff, and 135ff.

⁵ Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*, 20.

Holiness evidenced in the life of the believer, “. . . purifying and equipping Christians for greater usefulness . . .”⁶ was of utmost importance to Booth. The perception of Rightmire is that the contemporary Army’s understanding of holiness has changed from that of Booth. There has been a movement from understanding sanctification as the complete removal of sin to one of progressive regeneration. Rightmire writes,

As the experience of entire sanctification came to be understood more as progressive growth in co-operant grace (‘process’), rather than the instantaneous work of God’s free grace (‘crisis’) the connection between the Founder’s pneumatology and sacramental theology became less clear.⁷

For Rightmire the shift in the Army’s conception of holiness theology should bring it to re-evaluate its sacramental position.

Rightmire’s questioning of the Army’s position in response to its changing theology has merit. However, holiness and sanctification are still prominent in the Army, as is the immediacy of grace without the mediation of formal sacraments. The Army still maintains Booth’s position that the sacraments are not necessary for salvation.⁸ Thus Rightmire’s questioning does not necessitate a reintroduction of the sacraments.

Brian Reid Armstrong in his D.Min. thesis also supports the Army reintroducing the sacraments.⁹ Armstrong thoroughly explains the history of the Army’s sacramental practice. His thesis states that many people in the Army cannot articulate the reasons for Salvation Army non-practice of the sacraments and that its position on the sacraments is

⁶ Ibid., 130.

⁷ Ibid., 251.

⁸ William Booth, “General’s New Year Address to Officers,” *The War Cry* (January 17th, 1883): 4.

⁹ Brian Reid Armstrong, “The Lord’s Supper in Contemporary Salvation Army Worship” (D.Min. thesis project, Trinity Evangelical Divinity School Deerfield, Illinois, 2003).

unbiblical. The problems his thesis addresses are that there is inconsistency within the Army's history in relationship to the Lord's Supper; there is a lack of systematic theological study and there are a growing number of salvationists in Canada practising sacraments in their Army worship services.¹⁰

In Armstrong's non-probability survey of Army members throughout Canada he confirmed that only 10 of 68 (15%) could explain how the Army defends its non-practice of the sacraments.¹¹ Armstrong also discovered in his survey that the majority of respondents would like to participate in the sacraments leading him to call for a reintroduction of the sacraments in Army settings.

While I am in agreement with much in Armstrong's thesis, my thesis perceives that there is a need to teach Army members and congregations about the historical and spiritual reasons behind the Army's non-observance of the sacraments. Sacramental life teachings of the Army need to encompass more than not practising the sacraments but on living out the experience expressed by the sacraments. With a deeper appreciation of the Army's position a call for the reintroduction of the sacraments in the Army may not be needed. This proposed thesis centres on biblical preaching of the sacramental life which discovers the means of grace as found in living a sacramental life.

David Taylor (an active officer/pastor in the Army) has recently published a monograph that examines the steps that have led the Army to its present position on the sacraments and suggests, that as a church, the Army needs to re-examine its position and

¹⁰ Ibid., 4.

¹¹ Ibid., 91.

reinstitute the practice of the sacraments.¹² Taylor is critical of the Army's understanding of the sacramental life which stands in opposition to sacramental observance. Taylor states,

It is clear that Salvationists, in their explanation of the sacramental life, without reference to the biblical concept of *koinonia*, and in maintaining the non-sacramental absence of baptism and the Lord's Supper, disregard key visible testimonies to God's grace that should properly stand alongside the sacramental life as its visible symbol and sign, identifying its communal nature.¹³

While Taylor's statement is forceful it does not necessarily lead to a call for the reintroduction of the sacraments in The Salvation Army. Army writers before Taylor have acknowledged the central place of the sacraments in other churches and even of their helpfulness in the Christian walk.¹⁴ Also, William Booth did not prohibit salvationists from taking sacraments in churches outside of The Salvation Army. According to General Shaw Clifton, the Army wants to display another view of sacramentalism. He writes, "[o]ur calling is to demonstrate that the help and nourishment others derive from the sacrament is ours directly and immediately by faith."¹⁵

These three authors (Rightmire, Armstrong and Taylor) demonstrate the need for biblical preaching on the sacramental life in a Salvation Army context. Through preaching the sacramental life, congregations will be educated as to the Army's non-

¹² David Taylor, *Like a Mighty Army? The Salvation Army, the Church, and the Churches* (Oregon: Pickwick Publications, 2015.) Cf. Armstrong, "The Lord's Supper in Contemporary Salvation Army Worship," 130.

¹³ Ibid., 129.

¹⁴ Carpenter, *Salvationists and the Sacraments*, 3.

¹⁵ Shaw Clifton, *Who are these Salvationists? An Analysis for the 21st Century* (Alexandria: Crest Books, 1999), 80.

practice and discover biblical precedence and spiritual power for living a life that embodies the Gospel.

Section Two: A Dialogue with N.T. Wright

Christopher Jonathon Button, in an academic thesis, states that there is room to develop the Army's concept of the sacramental life without returning to the practice of the sacraments.¹⁶ He suggests that this can be achieved in dialogue with the writings of N.T. Wright. Button states that the Army's position on the sacraments comes from its concept of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit which leads to holiness. N.T. Wright, according to Button, develops this sacramental theology. The points of intersection between the Army and Wright are: incarnation, pneumatology and eschatology.¹⁷ N.T. Wright, in his writings, argues that history has a grand trajectory and at the centre is God's relationship with humanity. God began a relationship with humanity at creation, in which God's presence with humanity is foundational for this relationship.

The indwelling of the Holy Spirit, in the life of believers, has direct connection to how God's presence is progressively manifested throughout history. Wright unfolds God's presence with humanity in *The Day the Revolution Began*.¹⁸ A summary of this revelation of God's presence is as follows: at creation God is present with humanity and this is displayed by God walking with Adam and Eve in the garden (Gen 3:8); after the fall God reveals God's presence to Abram and appears many times with him after

¹⁶ Christopher Jonathon Button, "A Sacramental Army: The Implications of N.T. Wright for The Salvation Army's Sacramental Theology" (M.A. Thesis, King's College London, 2014).

¹⁷ Ibid., 2.

¹⁸ N.T. Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2016), 107ff.

Abram's call in Genesis 12; God is present with the people of Exodus by dwelling with them in the tabernacle. Wright says, ". . . the tabernacle was designed as a miniature heaven-and-earth, a 'little world' in which God and his people would meet."¹⁹ A feature of the tabernacle was the ark and the mercy seat on top of the ark. This was the place where God was to meet with God's people (Exodus 25:17ff.). The Temple became in Israel a larger and permanent version of the wilderness Tabernacle and the Temple in Jerusalem became the meeting place where heaven and earth were present. For the people of Israel this became a visible representation of God's presence with God's people.

According to Wright there is movement in theology from the location of God's presence when the Ark migrates to the Promised Land. King David wants to build God a house and God replies in 2 Samuel 7 that God will instead build a house for David and his family. Wright states,

If there is to be a place where the living God will dwell forever among [God's] people, it will not be in a building of bricks and mortar; it will be in and as a human being, the ultimate son of David.²⁰

This makes it possible in Ezekiel for the Temple to be destroyed because God's presence has left the Temple. When the exiles returned to Jerusalem and rebuilt the Temple they hungered for God's presence among God's people, but according to Wright, ". . . they do not suppose that the divine Glory, which later rabbis referred to as the Shekinah, the 'tabernacling Presence' of God, is there in the same way as in Exodus 40 . . ."²¹ In the interim Wright expresses that Torah observance became a location for the presence of

¹⁹ Ibid., 108.

²⁰ Ibid., 110.

²¹ Ibid., 112. Cf. N.T. Wright, *Justification: God's Plan & Paul's Vision* (Illinois: IVP Academic, 2009), 60.

God. Wright says that, “[God] revealed himself and his will through Torah; for some rabbis at least when one studied Torah it was as though one was in the Temple itself.”²²

The theological movement from place to people is ultimately realized in Jesus Christ who is the son of David. Wright states that the glory of God is envisioned in Jesus the Son.²³ In John’s Gospel 1:14 we read “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.” Wright then says,

. . . instead of the Temple, the geographical and theological centre of Judaism, the early Christians spoke of Jesus as the one who had embodied the living presence of the creator god, and of his own spirit as the one who continued to make that god present in the lives and assemblies of the early church.²⁴

In the coming of Jesus the presence of God is restored in relationship with God’s people. It is in this relationship that the people who are loyal and faithful to Jesus are also a part of the new temple, the place where God dwells with God’s people. Wright says, “I think that Jesus saw himself, and perhaps his followers with him, as the new Temple.”²⁵ It is when this concept of the new temple is developed in the lives of believers that they begin to realize the sacramental life which is God’s presence with God’s people.

God’s presence is fully realized in the full life of Jesus: birth, life, death, resurrection and ascension. It is the ascension that has significance for Button. He states,

²² Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 629.

²³ Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began*, 112.

²⁴ N.T. Wright, *The New Testament and the People of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 368.

²⁵ N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), 426.

As the newly redefined symbol-objects the people of God not only gather the stories previously associated with the Jerusalem Temple around themselves, they take on the role of the Temple within the narrative. The indwelling Spirit mediates the ascended Christ to his people so that to come into contact with one of the people of God is to come into contact with where God dwells and acts.²⁶

Button shows how the redefined people of God who are ‘in Christ’ become pneumatological temples through the incarnation of the Holy Spirit. This allows them to become points where the *Shekinah* is found and grace is mediated.²⁷

We find in Button and his dialogue with Wright a deeper and more meaningful expression of the sacramental life in the Army. A life that is vibrant and imbued with the presence of God and points towards an embodiment of the gospel. This viewpoint does justice to the reasons that Booth abandoned the practice of the sacraments and allows a forward momentum in sacramental understanding in the Army that would not be possible if the sacraments were reinstated.

Section Three: Embodying the Gospel

In this third section of the literature review there is an examination of both Army and non-Army literature on the aspect of embodying the gospel that leads to a life of holiness. A starting point is with Rowan Williams and his book entitled *Being Christian: Baptism, Eucharist, Prayer*.²⁸ This book, for the Church of England, provides a background to the sacraments. God, through Jesus, was on a rescue mission to save humanity so that they could be all that God created them to be. For Williams, baptism helps humanity not only to remember but to live out this reality. Williams sees baptism as

²⁶ Button, “A Sacramental Army,” 21.

²⁷ Ibid., 49.

²⁸ Rowan Williams, *Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2014).

embodying the gospel because it involves “putting on Christ” and bringing Christ into our everyday world. Williams states, “So baptism means being with Jesus ‘in the depths’: the depths of human need, including the depths of our own selves in their need – but also in the depths of God’s love.”²⁹ This for Williams is a welcome into the new community that is recreated by God’s life giving Spirit.

This new community is centred on the life giving presence of Jesus who calls us forth as “. . . Christians, to share in the Eucharist, the Holy Communion . . . to live as people who know that they are always *guests*—that they have been welcomed and that they are wanted.”³⁰ We become the welcomed and we welcome others into this new community.

In this rudimentary understanding of baptism and communion we ascertain that the sacraments and sacramental living are not contrary to each other, but are in fact complementary. This does not mean that the Army needs to reintroduce the sacraments in its worship, but it does mean that Army members need to be given instruction about the traditional sacraments of the church to help and encourage them to see how they can sacramentally live out the sacraments in their lives.

This emphasis is also seen in Catholic writers. The views of two authors, Hughes and Ross, were addressed in Chapter One. Here there is an examination of the writing of Father Dominic Grassi and Joe Paprocki in *Living the Mass*.³¹ In their book they look at the way that God is present to the community of believers through the Catholic Mass.

²⁹ Ibid., 5 and 6.

³⁰ Ibid., 41.

³¹ Fr. Dominic Grassi and Joe Paprocki, *Living the Mass* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2011).

They state in the introduction of their book that the Mass is not just a ceremony or ritual to attend, but something that matters and gives meaning to one's life.³² They write,

In our daily lives, living the Mass means to awaken each day to this realization, to honestly accept our sinfulness ask for forgiveness for it, and open ourselves up to God's mercy so that we in turn can share that mercy with others.³³

Living the Mass, calls its readers to sacramental awareness that God is present all around us. It is because God is present that this presence goes with people into our world, shaping it for God's redemptive purposes. The writing of Grassi and Paprocki on the Mass, demonstrates that familiarity with the sacraments deepens sacramental understanding that contributes meaning to the sacramental life.

Embodiment and holiness are significant concepts in the Army and two contemporary salvationists who develop this concept are Lars Lydholm and Ray Harris. Lydholm discusses the importance of holiness. He states, "The Salvation Army's emphasis on holiness and a life in service for Christ and our neighbor has given life to the thought of our life in holiness as a visible sign of the grace of God, our life in God's service as sacramental"³⁴ In his article Lydholm makes a strong connection between the life of holiness and the sacramental life. Lydholm also refers to the Army's difficulty with any rite or ceremony being needed for God's salvation.³⁵ He says, "There is a very strong sense that this is an important message to bring to the world. God's grace meets

³² Ibid., xii.

³³ Ibid., 34.

³⁴ Lars Lydholm, "A Salvation Army Perspective on the Doctrine of the Church and the Sacraments," *Word & Deed* 8:2 (May 2006): 53.

³⁵ The Salvation Army, *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* (London: The Salvation Army, 1960), 160 and The Salvation Army, *The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine* (London: The Salvation Army, 1969), 182 and Robert Street, *In The Master's Hands: Each Life Sacramental* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2016), 34.

people in a number of ways and can be received also outside the traditional sacraments.”³⁶ This understanding brings hope to the Army’s early mission which was to proclaim the gospel message in word and deed to those outside of traditional churches.

Another author who holds Salvation Army holiness teaching as foundational is Ray Harris. In his book Harris wrestles with the eleven doctrines of the Army and interprets them in light of holiness of life. With many other salvationists, Harris holds Jesus Christ as the one true sacrament and also the source of holiness. Harris states, “Jesus makes holiness visible, and through the Holy Spirit’s presence creates in us the capacity to make holiness visible in our times.”³⁷ There is a strong link in Harris’ work between holy living and embodiment. Harris likens holiness to the restoration of a great painting where, “Christians are privileged to undergo the triune God’s transforming grace in such a way that we reflect its embodiment in Jesus of Nazareth.”³⁸ Sacramental living is holy living and it is embodiment not only of Jesus Christ, but an embodiment of the Gospel. Harris says, “. . . we learn to practice holiness as biblical spirituality as we *perform the Scriptures*.”³⁹ Salvation is God’s creative redemptive presence that is living and active in the world. Sacramental living is the embodiment of the Gospel and this leads to the development of the Army’s concept of the mercy seat.

³⁶ Lydholm, “A Salvation Army Perspective,” 56.

³⁷ Ray Harris, *Convictions Matter: The Function of Salvation Army Doctrines* (Canada: The Salvation Army, 2014), 65.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 80.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, 12.

Section Four: Living Mercy Seats

The seminal work on the mercy seat in the Army is provided by Nigel Bovey. Bovey traces the use of the mercy seat from its early use in holiness revivals to its present place in Army worship. The mercy seat has traditionally been a place where someone comes to make a decision (about any of several vital matters as listed below). In the Victorian Army the mercy seat took the form of a bench, line of chairs or an overturned bass drum at the front of an Army worship setting that “. . . gives us an opportunity to make a special journey, to a special place for a special reason—to meet with God.”⁴⁰ At any time during an Army worship service anyone can come and kneel at the mercy seat. Rightmire speaks of the mercy seat and says,

. . . the penitent was encouraged to seek not only instantaneous conversion, but also the indwelling of the divine presence. Hence the mercy seat was more than a place to make a mere rational decision, but was the place where communion with God was experienced.⁴¹

Over the years, in the Army the mercy seat has held many functions. It has been a place of encounter with God, of prayer, of confession, of salvation and where sanctification is sought and won.

Bovey notes that the Army mercy seat is portable like the mercy seat over the ark in the Old Testament.⁴² In Victorian England it was the poor who often did not participate in church, therefore the Army took the church to the street with their open air meetings and brass bands. The mercy seat came as a bass drum that would be laid sideways on the

⁴⁰ Bovey, *The Mercy Seat Revisited*, 4.

⁴¹ Rightmire, *The Sacramental Journey of The Salvation Army*, 78.

⁴² Bovey, *The Mercy Seat Revisited*, 56 and 60.

ground so people could kneel and pray. Any object could be a mercy seat and Needham states that the real mercy seat is that of the heart.⁴³

Jesus is a living breathing sacrament and a visible sign that God is present in the world. We have seen from the dialogue between Wright and Button that at all times a visible sign of God's presence has been available. This sign has migrated from the intimacy of God with Adam and Eve to the newly constituted temple in Jesus and his followers. In this thesis the mercy seat continues to be a sign of God's presence. As the mercy seat is not fixed to a specific object it is therefore possible to see individual salvationists and Christians as living, embodied, mercy seats, bringing an encounter with God from the worship setting to everyday life. Living sacramentally means being a living mercy seat, a place where God can be encountered in the lives of Christians, lives of testimony and confession.

Section Five: Modern Confession

We now progress to examine testimony and modern confession. David Lose provides the church, which is duly concerned with the significant fall in active participants in the twenty-first century, with hope. This hope is centred on the preaching ministry that he believes will interact with the huge changes of our time and he encourages Christian faith that is relevant to our daily lives. He advances three dominant ways to explain the change taking place in our age.⁴⁴ They are postmodernism, secularism and pluralism. Lose says that, "Postmodernists seek to move beyond what

⁴³ Philip Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies, 1987), 10.

⁴⁴ David J. Lose, *Preaching at the Crossroads: How the World—and our Preaching—is Changing*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 7.

they believe was the naïve, self-serving, and ultimately destructive optimism of modernity.”⁴⁵ The role of the preacher is not to provide abject truth, but to bear witness to the truth as we preachers know it. Lose further says that in a postmodern pulpit doctrine is to be used to make sense of a person’s experience.⁴⁶

This above understanding speaks, in some ways, to the Army’s non-sacramental stance as it is founded in the late nineteenth century with skepticism of the value of the sacraments. The Army thus stressed the meaning behind the symbol of the sacraments. Over time this led the Army to a concept called “the sacramental life.” The believers’ lives must bear the reality of the sacraments and those lives were to be a means of grace without outward rituals.

The second cultural change that Lose speaks about is secularism. He defines this as a loss of confidence in the divine which questions the relevance of Christianity to daily life. Lose states that there is a fundamental disconnect between immanence and transcendence. Preaching, according to Lose, is uniquely positioned to address these issues. He says,

Preaching designed to equip people not merely to survive but to flourish amid the crisis of immanence of the secular world begins with the bold confession we articulated in the previous chapter that the God who created the world out of nothing and raised Jesus from the dead is still alive and active in our world.⁴⁷

As believers live the sacrament there is a visible bond between their lives and their relationship with God. For Lose this is demonstrated by how God provides meaningful service in the world.

⁴⁵ Ibid.

⁴⁶ Ibid., 27.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 77.

The final cultural shift discussed by Lose is pluralism. In this age there is a plethora of options open to provide meaning in life and Christianity is just one option among many others. In a pluralistic society we need to demonstrate that Christianity will make sense of people's lives. Preaching and the church will offer solutions to this question by telling the biblical story and demonstrating how that story brings relevance in daily life.⁴⁸ This type of preaching encourages testimony. Preaching and teaching the sacramental life will also be part of the solution. They present a great opportunity to Salvation Army believers to biblically inspire them to demonstrate sacramentally that Jesus can make a difference in their lives.

This importance of testimony is developed by Anna Carter Florence in her book *Preaching as Testimony*.⁴⁹ While she focuses on preaching, her discussions give insight into the sacramental life. Florence states that in the post-modern world "...more and more people, are crying out for a deeper rootedness in the biblical text, a deeper embodiment—which is to say, a *living out, in full view*—of theological questions."⁵⁰ It is in engagement and internalizing the text that the preacher speaks to this generation. When the preacher has been shaped by the text, s/he conveys God's message to the congregation who in turn become shaped by the text. "Testimony insists that we change the subject of preaching from ourselves and our words to God's Word as it moves through life and text."⁵¹ Preaching as testimony moves from God through God's word, to the preacher, the congregation and then the communities in which the congregation lives. Testimony is an

⁴⁸ Ibid.

⁴⁹ Anna Carter Florence, *Preaching as Testimony* (London: Westminster John Knox Press, 2007).

⁵⁰ Ibid., xviii.

⁵¹ Ibid., 170.

important aspect of this thesis as sacramental living is living our lives as living testimonies.

Barbara Brown Taylor has a conviction that God should not be limited to the sacraments of the Church. In her book *The Preaching Life* she says,

To draw the line around the seven sacraments for which the church has rites is to underestimate the grace of God and the holiness of creation. According to the catechism, “God does not limit himself to these rites; they are patterns of countless ways by which God uses material things to reach out to us.”⁵²

Taylor is not speaking about testimony in this quote, but one could envision that the testimony of sacramental living is one of the ways God uses to reach out to us and to others. This understanding becomes clearer when she says, “The ministries of word and sacrament may begin in church, but they never end there. They are borne into the world by all baptized Christians, who exercise them in more ways and places than the ordained alone ever could.”⁵³ Preaching on the sacramental life encourages the congregation to carry with them their own encounter with God’s presence which not only impacts them but becomes a testimony in their subsequent engagements in this world.

Unique Thesis Focus

Having completed the five outlined sections of this thesis literature review, it is now critical to state how this thesis is unique to prior investigations. To begin, this thesis is not seeking to persuade others to follow the Army’s position on the traditional sacraments or call for their reintroduction. However, this thesis seeks to encourage Army members to examine the meaning behind the sacraments, which will then provide a richer

⁵² Barbara Brown Taylor, *The Preaching Life* (London: A Cowley Publication Book, 1993), 34.

⁵³ Ibid., 35.

understanding of the sacramental life. Examination of the meaning of the sacraments does not lead to their reintroduction. Next, this thesis is seeking to establish biblical foundations for sacramental living that are found in themes from the gospel of John and in the process refutes the opinions of Armstrong and Taylor that the Army's position is not biblical. It is also different from the theses of Rightmire, Armstrong and Taylor in that it is not seeking to have the sacraments reintroduced in the Army.

This thesis further seeks to explore in a congregational setting the dialogue between Button and Wright. The project of this thesis seeks to preach the sacramental life to a congregation founded on an understanding of the primacy of the presence of God. The thesis identifies that the presence of God moves from a localized position in the Jewish Temple of the Old Testament to the person of Jesus Christ and His followers. This movement of God's presence will be coupled with Bovey's research on the Army's mercy seat. The unique development, arising from this is the identification of the believer as a living mercy seat bringing the presence of God to all with whom they have contact, becomes a vital aspect of the Army's testimony of sacramental holiness and living.

Preaching the Sacramental Life

The main difference from previous works is that this action/reflection model is seeking to better inform a local congregation, through biblical preaching, of the traditional and biblical roots of the Army's unconventional position on the sacraments. The thesis will demonstrate the Army's essential position in the wider Christian Church as a witness in its response to the sacraments. This literature review has demonstrated that this thesis will utilize both Army and non-Army published material to demonstrate that sacramental living is a viable position in this postmodern experiential world.

The hoped for outcome of this thesis is to reduce the conflict that occurs in local Army congregations because of the Army's traditional position on the sacraments by biblically preaching on the positive aspects of the sacramental life.

CHAPTER 4

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Introduction

This thesis commenced by outlining the decision of General William Booth to depart from traditional church custom and abandon the practice of the sacraments communicated in a letter to officers in 1883. Since that time the Army has wrestled with this decision and has produced a vast amount of literature on the subject. Much of this literature is apologetic in its position and has defended Booth's decision while hypothesizing about the reasons behind the decision. Booth did not make his decision about the sacraments definitive. Recently in Canada and internationally there have been calls to re-examine the Army's position, especially since there is no definitive decision from William Booth about the sacraments. The historical, theological and literature review provided a solid foundation for this thesis project.

This thesis takes a different direction than that suggested by Christopher Jonathon Button in his 2014 thesis.¹ It concentrates on sacramental living, specifically on the immediacy of the presence of God in the life of a believer. The project for this thesis practically conveys sacramental living to a local Canadian Salvation Army congregation in the form of a sermon series titled "Embodying the Gospel." The sermon series consists of five biblical sermons preached directly before Lent 2017. The goal of the sermon

¹ Christopher Jonathon Button, "A Sacramental Army: The Implications of N.T. Wright for The Salvation Army's Sacramental Theology" (M.A. Thesis, King's College London, 2014).

series was fivefold: inform the congregation of the Army's position regarding the sacraments; provide a biblical foundation for sacramental living from the gospel of John; develop the Army's understanding of sacramental living; draw Christians together in agreement on sacramental living and embodying the gospel; and finally, to help the congregation appreciate that sacramental living is a valid expression of biblical Christianity.

Congregational Context

The subject population of this sermon series is those who participate in the worship services of The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church.² This congregation has a rich history in Kitchener and The Salvation Army. It is endeavouring to reach the community with love and compassion in the name of Jesus.

The congregation is approximately one hundred and thirty-two years old (opening in 1886).³ Early writings about its beginning say “[i]n September 1886 Lieutenant Emma Hatcher officially opened fire in Berlin. Throughout the next eighteen years severe persecution inhibited the work and growth of the Army in the community.”

The congregation grew steadily in the years while it worshipped downtown in different locations: the Button Factory (early 1800s), the Barracks on Foundry St. (1888), Gaukel St. (1927) and Duke St. (1967). The Salvation Army corps building moved to a new building in the not yet developed suburb of Williamsburg in Kitchener in 2001 and

² 75 Tillsley Dr., Kitchener, ON, Canada, N2E 3T1

³ The Salvation Army Kitchener Citadel, *100th Anniversary Souvenir Booklet*, (Kitchener: The Salvation Army, 1986).

its name was changed to The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church. At this point the worshipping congregation began to shrink.

Throughout its history the church has been a worshipping, evangelistic and socially conscious congregation. The members of the church have been active in worship and the various ministries that the Army has developed in the city. At present the church is very community minded and offers a number of programs that engage community participation, which far surpass member participation. These ministries include: Senior Autumn Fellowship, Community Prayer Time, Community Music Lessons, Ladies Bible Study, Discipleship Bible Study, Kung Fu for Christ, Downtown Friday Night Street Feeding Program, Parent Child Resource Centre (PCRC) and the largest Community Garden in Kitchener. However, there is little cross over from these outreach/community programs to Sunday attendance. Many people who participate in these programs are involved in their own churches while others consider program attendance to be their church attendance.

The yearly average number of worshippers on Sunday's in 2007 was 174. The yearly average number of worshippers on Sunday's in 2016 was 129. The majority of the worshippers are in the retirement age bracket and many have been members of The Salvation Army for over thirty years. However, there are a good number of young working families with children in worship and there is an active College and Careers group. The children's Sunday school program has an average attendance of twenty-eight. The congregation is not ethnically diverse. This reflects the community as it was when they first moved in (seventeen years ago). This fact is changing with immigration and

refugees entering into the community. While the Sunday congregation does not reflect this, our church outreach programs do.

The Salvation Army does not have a defined liturgy. However, the Kitchener congregation follows an order of service that includes items such as prayers, singing and a focus on the word including the reading of scripture and the sermon. The congregations' theology is Wesleyan Holiness and Armenian.

The congregation seeks to bring God's presence into contemporary social situations for instance, Home Missions (Jesus' mission in our communities), Self-Denial (Jesus' mission in the world), addressing missing and murdered aboriginal women (also other Canadian aboriginal issues), mental health, refugees, anti-human trafficking, youth issues, global politics, meeting human needs (spiritually and physically in the community).

There is a small paid staff at the church which includes a church secretary, two pastors, custodian, director of the PCRC, a PCRC program director and four PCRC workers. The leadership of the church is based on a Mission Board model with nine members including the pastors, two chief elders and committee directors. This board meets monthly and sets the direction that members believe God is leading the church. The congregation has been led to live out this mission: *The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church exists to share the love of Jesus Christ, meet human needs and be a transforming influence in the community.* The motto of the congregation is: *Embracing our community with God's amazing love.*

The City of Kitchener is part of the Region of Waterloo which comprises the cities of: Waterloo, Cambridge and Kitchener and smaller rural communities. The

population of Kitchener is just over 200,000 and the Region is just over 500,000.

Kitchener is located in the southwestern region of Ontario, the largest province in Canada. It is approximately 100 km west of Toronto (the largest city in Canada) on North America's busiest highway.

Waterloo Region is a technological hub (the home of Blackberry and other tech. companies), situated in the midst of farmland and related industries. There are a mix of single dwelling homes, apartments, subsidized housing and there is a boom in new housing developments. Kitchener is not home to any major sporting teams but it does have a community major junior hockey team and a semi-pro basketball team. The region is also home to two large universities (University of Waterloo and Wilfrid Laurier University) and a community college (Conestoga College).

The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church is located in proximity to three neighborhoods in Southwest Kitchener and these neighborhoods are distinct in the region for having high:

- population of young children 0-6 (10% of neighbourhood population)
- population of recent immigrants (3%)
- population not speaking either official language (under 2%)
- unemployment rate (over 9%)
- low income individuals (11%)
- number of individuals without a high school diploma (12%)
- number spending more than 30% on housing (29%)
- number of residents reporting no disposable income (42%)⁴

These are all higher than the region's averages. While many in the Kitchener community are doing well economically there are certain neighbourhoods, as seen above, that are not benefiting from this economy.

⁴ Christine Holliday, *A Community Fit for Children: A Focus on Young Children in Waterloo Region 3rd Edition* (Waterloo: Ontario Early Years, Waterloo Region, 2016).

Kitchener Community Church has a good outreach into the community and it is the congregation's belief that if the church was to close tomorrow, the congregation would be missed by our neighborhood. The members of the church are reaching their neighborhood by helping both spiritually and physically. The people that the congregation would like to reach for our worshipping community are especially those who access our community programs.

The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church is well situated to have a solid transforming Christian influence on our community. Many from the community access the community programs of the church and we would envision ourselves making the next step and growing our worshipping community with those who have already had some contact with Kitchener Community Church. The implications for preaching are to pay attention to the tradition of The Salvation Army as we equip our worshipping community to embody God's rule in the communities in which they live.

Method of Investigation

The method for this thesis is the action/reflection model. This research project is to test the effectiveness of preaching on the sacramental life in a Salvation Army context. The data collected and analyzed to test this hypothesis comes from quantitative survey data. Quantitative survey data has been chosen for this action/reflection model because it ensures that all members of the congregation that choose to participate in this research will be given an opportunity to complete the surveys. Two paper surveys will be administered, one before and one after a sermon series entitled "Embodying the Gospel."

The survey is administered to those in attendance age sixteen and older who choose to participate. With the implementation of this thesis project, I cannot control who

completes the surveys. A person may complete the first survey and not the second, and vice versa. The first survey was administered January 29th, 2017, the Sunday in which the sermon series began and the second survey was administered February 26th, 2017, after the last sermon in the series.

There were no names associated with the surveys and the surveys were placed in a closed box after the survey was completed. Hartley Goldenthal of The Salvation Army's head office in Canada (THQ) entered the data into a computer in order that it could be more easily correlated. He had no information about the people completing the surveys and he turned over all electronic data to the researcher. None of the data was kept at The Salvation Army's head office. Data will not be used to single out small groups in anyway.

On January 22nd, 2017, one week before the first of the surveys was administered a letter was handed to worship participants before morning worship informing them about the upcoming sermon series and inviting them to participate in my thesis research by completing the two surveys to be handed out.⁵ It stated clearly that participation in the research is voluntary and a decision whether or not to participate would in no way prejudice their future relationships with The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church. The letter also confirmed that if a member decides to participate, they are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice against them.

The first survey was handed out to worship participants on January 29th, 2017, as they arrived for worship. It was accompanied by an implied consent letter.⁶ When the survey was completed and submitted to the researcher, implied consent was understood.

⁵ This letter can be found in Appendix A

⁶ This letter can be found in Appendix A

Those who chose to participate were given time after the morning worship service to complete the survey. The subjects were deemed to understand what they had been asked to do when they completed the surveys and place them in the completed survey box.

The survey was prepared with the help of George Gallup's book, *The Gallup Guide*⁷ (a blank copy of the survey can be found in Appendix B below). The survey was made up of three sections. The first section asked questions about Christian foundations and church commitment. This section was to help understand the Christian background and commitment of the respondents to The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church. This background may have an impact on how the respondents understood the sacraments and sacramental living.

The second section of the survey gathered information about the respondent's sacramental understanding. These questions sought to gain information about the individual's sacramental background. There were questions on sacramental participation (within or outside the Army), their understanding of the Army's long time position on sacramental practice and if they believe that embodiment of the gospel is a significant expression of biblical Christianity? There were also questions regarding understanding of terms like holiness, sacramental living, ritual and embodiment.

The third and final section of the survey called for the respondents to provide demographic information. This provided background information such as age, gender, level of education and their membership status in the church. The last question of the survey provided space for the respondents to write down any comments that they would like to add to this survey regarding sacramental living and the embodied gospel.

⁷ George Gallup Jr. and Michael D. Lindsay, *The Gallup Guide*.

On the Sundays in between the first survey and the second survey worship participants heard the “Embodying the Gospel” sermon series. The sermon series was based on four of eight themes in John’s gospel outlined by Karoline M. Lewis.⁸ John’s Gospel was chosen to be the foundation of this series because the themes of the gospel compared favourably with the sacramental life and established a biblical basis for sacramental living.⁹ The outline of these five sermons is examined here.¹⁰

The first sermon¹¹ is an introductory sermon based on John 1:1-18 and is entitled “God with Us.” This sermon is all about origins. It starts with an illustration of the beginnings of The Salvation Army, which brings foundational knowledge and understanding about the Army and links it to the Gospel of John. The first eighteen verses of John’s Gospel are about another beginning, which draw images from Israel’s history about creation and relationship with God. The eight theological themes outlined by Lewis are presented in the sermon. In addition, the selected four themes that will be explored in subsequent sermons in the series are outlined: called into the creative activity of God; called to abide; called into abundance and called to witness.

The next four sermons in the series encourage the congregation to have an encounter with Jesus. The sermons look to Jesus who embodies God to humanity and also demonstrates how people are called to embody God’s message to the world by living sacramentally. The first sermon in the series also introduces listeners to the purpose of

⁸ Lewis, *John*, 9ff.

⁹ Many scholars suggest John 6 is a Eucharistic moment. However, as this is a barrier to the discussion of sacramental living (focusing more on the physical Eucharist rather than on holiness) within the Salvation Army at this time, I chose not to use or preach from this text.

¹⁰ The complete manuscripts for the five individual sermons can be found in Appendix C.

¹¹ January 29th, 2017 (See Appendix C).

John's Gospel. In John 20:31 the writer states, "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." This verse not only points to the purpose of John's Gospel, but it becomes the scripture that links this sermon series, on the sacramental life, together. There was movement in this sermon series from believing that Jesus is the Messiah, from what is written in John, to pointing out how sermon listeners can consider believing that Jesus is the Messiah by observing the lives of people who live sacramentally in Jesus' name.

Sermon two¹² is based on John 9:1-12ff., the account of Jesus healing a man born blind. The sermon is entitled, "An Invitation into God's Creative Activity." The sermon returns to the purpose of John's Gospel found in John 20:31 and states that this life is possible by living intentionally in the revealed presence of God. This gives people purpose, guidance, direction and meaning. Jesus gives the blind man hope and an opportunity to know God's presence. The illustration for this sermon is found in the tangible presence of God among God's people and how this unfolds throughout history.¹³ The sermon paints the picture of God walking with Adam and Eve in Genesis and, walking with God's people through the presence of God's witnesses all the way to showing Jesus to be the tangible expression of God's presence among God's people today.

The sermon unfolds in a "Four Pages of the Sermon"¹⁴ structure. The trouble in the text and in the world is darkness and lack of hope. The grace in the text is the

¹² February 5th, 2017 (See Appendix C).

¹³ See Button, "A Sacramental Army" and N.T. Wright, *The Day the Revolution Began: Reconsidering the Meaning of Jesus's Crucifixion* (San Francisco: HarperOne, 2016).

¹⁴ John M. Rottman, "Four Pages of the Sermon," in *The New Interpreter's Handbook of Preaching*, ed. Paul Scott Wilson (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2008), 384.

opportunity to know God's presence, and the grace in the world is the opportunity we have to experience God's grace through the lives and witness of God's people. The blind man confesses the grace of God when he says in 9:38, "Lord, I believe." Jesus is involved in God's creative works by restoring sight to the blind man. The congregation is reminded that God's people are involved in the life-giving works of the Father when they are being in the way Jesus was being in the world. Sharing in the creative action of God is living the sacramental life. The invitation at the end of the sermon was a call to know Jesus and to bring Jesus to others (sacramentally).

The third sermon¹⁵ speaks on John 14:15-31 and is entitled "Called to Abide." The worship participants are again reminded of the unifying purpose of John 20:31 and the important role of the Holy Spirit is unfolded in this sermon. The text of John 14 is located in the farewell discourse just after the foot washing and the betrayal is put into motion. The relationship of supreme love for God and others is associated and made possible with the intimate presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.

This supreme love for God and others in turn is linked with Booth's decision on the abandonment of the sacraments in Salvation Army worship settings. The congregation is informed of Booth's 1883 decision that held that sacraments are not necessary for salvation and their use can cause division (by differing opinions of how they are to be administered). The importance of sacramental living is stressed (living continually in God's presence) through abiding with Jesus in the power of Spirit. Abiding is possible because of three important features of the Spirit pointed out by Lewis who

¹⁵ February 12th, 2017 (See Appendix C).

says the Spirit (1) is the Spirit of truth, (2) is the one who abides with us, and, (3) is the one who reminds us that as children of God we are not abandoned.¹⁶

The congregation is encouraged, through the Spirit's power, to live in this abiding relationship which transforms us into persons empowered to embody the message and life of Jesus, allowing us to enliven the purpose of John 20:31 and make it personable.

Sacramental living is when the Spirit abides in us so that others who see our lives “. . . may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing [they] may have life in his name.”

The fourth sermon¹⁷ speaks on John 4:5-15ff. and is entitled “Called to Abundance.” The scripture passage centres on the woman at the well and her encounter with Jesus. This encounter is unique because Jesus crosses many social boundaries to meet with this woman. She, in turn, is transformed because of the encounter. The abundant living water that Jesus speaks about is likened in the sermon to spiritual transformation. In the Army being baptised occurs not in water but in the Spirit. The Army believes that it is the Spirit who effects the actual transformation.

Gail R. O'Day says of this transformation, “[i]n response to her conversation with Jesus, the woman goes into town and bears witness to what she has heard.”¹⁸ The woman embodies Jesus' life giving message. O'Day states that this woman provides a threefold witness to those she encounters.¹⁹ The witness begins by calling the people of town to

¹⁶ Lewis, *John*, 193ff.

¹⁷ February 19th, 2017 (Appendix C).

¹⁸ Gail R. O'Day, “The Gospel of John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections,” in *The New Interpreter's Bible In Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck et al. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 569.

¹⁹ Ibid.

“Come and see . . .” (v.29). Her witness continues because she shares her own experience with others. She then gives her witness before she is completely certain about Jesus’ identity, “Could this be the Messiah?”

The abundance spoken of in the living water continues because the woman’s witness has an effect on others. We read in verse 42, “[w]e no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.” The sermon makes the link between this woman’s effectual witness and being a living mercy seat as discussed in the literature review of this thesis (chapter three). Sacramental living is becoming a living mercy seat. The woman, as a living mercy seat, brings the presence of Jesus and God to the people of the town. In like manner the congregation members are encouraged to be living mercy seats by bringing the presence of God into every situation, because of the Spirit living in them.

The fifth sermon²⁰ of the series speaks on John 20:1-18 and recounts Mary Magdalene’s encounter with the risen Lord at the tomb. Mary goes to the tomb in sombre realization of the death of her Lord. After an encounter with the living Jesus she is empowered to be a witness. In the sermon Mary’s witness is linked with General Albert Orsborn and his song *My Life Must be Christ’s Broken Bread*.²¹ This song speaks of Christ’s transforming presence and the ability to bless others in the name of Jesus. Orsborn was searching for a way to be a blessing for those in impoverished conditions in post-war Germany and he found it when he realized that he could be a blessing in the name of Jesus. This is the foundation of the social ministry of the Army through the ages.

²⁰ February 26th, 2017 (See Appendix A).

²¹ The Salvation Army, *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*: North American Edition (Alexandria: The Salvation Army, 2015), 610.

Living sacramentally in the service of others brings the creative love of Jesus to those in need.

As Mary is transformed by her encounter with Jesus she finds her vocation as a disciple and witness of Jesus. She fulfills the commission to be a witness to others when she goes and finds them, and then tells them in verse 18 “I have seen the Lord!” The sermon invites the congregation to become witnesses as Mary becomes a witness, and also to be a good news people. N.T. Wright says “[t]he good news of Jesus is there not only to remind us of it but to transform us with it so that we in turn may become transformative people.”²² The final exhortation of the sermon asks the whole worshipping community to say out loud by living sacramental lives, “We have seen the Lord.”

The second survey, which was identical to the first survey, was administered after the final sermon in the series. Like the first survey it was handed to worship participants as they entered the church building. Again, on the survey there was a letter stating what participation in this research would entail. Once all of the completed surveys had been handed in²³ the data was uploaded to a computer program administered by Hartley Goldenthal so the information could more easily be correlated.²⁴

Goals and Outcomes

The thesis project seeks to assess the Army’s current emphasis on sacramental living (which is expected to be achieved through the initial survey). It also strives to

²² Wright, N.T. *Simply Good News: Why the Gospel is News and What Makes it Good* (New York: HarperOne, 2015), 140.

²³ A special completed survey box will be designated for this purpose on January 29th and February 26th.

²⁴ The information of both surveys and the electronic data collection will be kept in confidence, with no names being associated with them.

provide the congregation with a biblical understanding of sacramental living espoused by the Army through a biblical sermon series. This thesis project will also help reduce the conflict that is witnessed by the Army's unconventional position with regards to practising the sacraments. This thesis writer anticipates this project will foster an understanding between those who practise and those who do not practise the sacraments. The survey data that is received will be correlated and analyzed to determine if the sermon series has had the effect of broadening the understanding of the sacraments and sacramental living in the lives of the participants.

The criteria which, if achieved, will establish that the project is successful

Ideally the project will be successful if there is a movement seen in the survey data from less to more understanding of the Army's sacramental position regarding the sacramental life. If the data does not back up this conclusion, the project will still be successful because this data will help the Army leadership comprehend the feelings of a local congregation on matters of sacramental living and the Army's non-practising position. Also, the study may be replicated in other Salvation Army settings to seek similar information that will then be extrapolated to a general picture of the opinions of a number of congregations regarding the sacraments.

The means of assessment used to see if the goals have been met are the two non-random surveys administered to worshippers of The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church. These surveys are similar in the data that will be collected. Thus the surveys will be able to note changes over the period of the two surveys, determining if the goals and the hoped for outcomes of the project have been met.

CHAPTER 5

ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Introduction

The thesis project was conducted on five Sundays from January 29th to February 26th, 2017, as outlined in the previous chapter. There had been much anticipation in the congregation for these surveys and the sermon series. The announcements made during Sunday morning worship in January had given short descriptions of the sermon series and helped to raise expectations. The first survey (January 29) was completed by eighty-five people and the second survey (February 26) was completed by sixty people. This is a significant number of respondents because in 2016 the average weekly attendance at Kitchener Community Church was 129.

The significance in response rate is first, the congregation's size during the sermon series was considerably smaller than the average because of adverse weather conditions. Second, the average number of people recorded in worship for 2016 included both adults and youth and these surveys were only completed by those in the congregation who were over the age of sixteen. This left out a portion of the congregation and significantly lowered the number of respondents. The thesis project did attempt to enlist those between eleven and fifteen to complete the survey but many of them were not present because they were involved in church programs that ran at the same time as the worship service. The number of respondents was smaller in the second survey by approximately 25% and the possible reason could be either the voluntary nature of the

survey or its direct similarity to the first survey. The results of the two separate surveys as well as the written comments from the survey respondents are located in Appendix D.

To provide analysis and interpretation of the results from the survey we will examine the data from both surveys and provide a hypothesis about the change found in responses from the first survey to the second survey. The hypothesis that will be tested is that the response rates have changed because of the information that was provided in the sermon series on the embodied gospel. The information gleaned from the surveys is necessary to ascertain if the five outcomes¹ of the sermon series have been successful.

Analysis and Interpretation

In section one, the data from both surveys is quite similar. In this section we wanted to assess the relative commitment of respondents in worship to Christianity, the church and, by extension, to The Salvation Army. Over 90% of respondents in both surveys would say that they are committed and engaged in church life, either a great deal or somewhat, with 35% of respondents holding a leadership role in the church. This is helpful to the research in that the Army's non-practicing position of the sacraments would most likely have a greater effect on those who are committed and hold a leadership role in the church, as they would feel the out-workings of this policy.

Questions four and five of the survey seek to explore the evangelical nature of the respondents. As the Army is an evangelical branch of the Christian church, it was assumed that the respondents would score high in these areas. This is exactly what has been found. In question four, over 90% of respondents from both surveys believe that Jesus is the embodied active presence of God within and through us. In question five,

¹ Found in the introduction of chapter four.

over 90% of the respondents' record that they are mindful of their relationship to God; their living of a worthwhile life developing their faith; and consider the meaning and value of life.

It has been assumed by this thesis writer that the respondents of the surveys would be committed to the church in such a way that this would be reflected by their attendance at weekly church services. Both surveys bore this out, showing that over 90% of respondents attend worship services three or more times in a month.² The surveys also found that the commitment to this congregation has deep roots for the respondents. Over 75% of the respondents from both surveys have been part of the congregation for over sixteen years, and over 50% of the respondents have been part of the congregation for more than thirty years.³

Questions nine and ten of the survey provided further information about the respondents and their church background. Approximately half of the respondents from both surveys have been members of congregations outside the Army, most of them in other protestant churches. This is interesting because the majority, if not all, of these non-Army congregations would have a tradition which support the practice of the sacraments; therefore, the respondents should have at least some familiarity with the sacraments, even if they have been part of an Army congregation for many years.

To provide demographic information about the respondents, there will now be an examination of section three of the survey, which specifically addresses these questions. The gender of the respondents was assessed in question one of section three. We find that

² See survey section one, question seven.

³ See survey section one, question eight.

approximately 60% of the respondents of both surveys were female and 40% were male. This is a typical response as it is assumed by a good number of my colleagues that in many congregations there are a higher proportion of females to males. In question two of section three, the respondents are shown to be in older age ranges. In both surveys over 50% of the respondents are over the age of sixty-five, with a dramatic reduction in participation in the surveys as the age categories become younger. For instance, in the second survey over 53% of the respondents are over age sixty, 30% of the respondents are between the ages of fifty and sixty-four, 9% of the respondents are between ages thirty and forty-nine, 7% of the respondents are between ages twenty and twenty-nine and 1% of the respondents are between sixteen and nineteen. The results of the first survey are similar and portray a congregation that is aging and has a majority of members over the age of fifty. These age ranges are reflected in the overall congregation and demonstrate that the survey has recorded a good sample of the age groups represented in Kitchener Community Church.

An examination of question three of this section reveals that the education levels recorded in both surveys are similar. The most significant recorded level of education listed by the participants is the university bachelor's degree, with the most respondents at just over 40%. According to this question, in both surveys over 50% of the respondents have post-secondary education. This would suggest the presence of ability for critical thinking as well as the willingness to contemplate some research topics in the future.

In question four the respondents' the level of church commitment is revealed. In section one, we asked about their commitment to Christianity, the church and, by extension, The Salvation Army. This survey stated that commitment was also reflected in

worship service attendance. In section three respondents were asked their level of commitment in terms of their membership in Kitchener Community Church. In both surveys approximately 80% of respondents are seen to be full members (senior soldiers) or partial members (adherents). With this level of commitment in terms of membership, it might be expected that the respondents to the surveys would know the reasons behind Booth's abandonment of the sacraments.

The picture of the respondents that is gleaned from both surveys in section one is of evangelically committed Christians. This would demonstrate their commitment through worship attendance and official Salvation Army membership. These people would thus be mindful of their relationship to Christianity and their faith. The majority of these people have been worshipping in the Army for over sixteen years and many for well over thirty years, with the majority of respondents being over the age of fifty. Some of the respondents are life-long salvationists while approximately half have been involved in congregations outside the Army. The picture shown from the surveys regarding the educational level of the members of this Army congregation would help them to grasp the sacramental understanding (section two of the survey) and its implications for their lives.

Sacramental Understanding

Section two of the survey research sought to ascertain if the sacramental understanding of the respondents had been increased by the sacramental life sermon series. The results from question one in this section suggest that the majority of respondents have participated in the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper. It is interesting to note that in the second survey there is a higher percentage (approximately

10%) of people who have participated in the sacraments than in the first survey. This difference demonstrates there may be different response rates from the first to the second survey. The possible meaning could be that a slightly higher percentage of people who have participated in the sacraments took the second survey than those who did not. Or it could be that the second survey captures responses from individuals who did not take the first survey. As the surveys stand it is not possible to track if individuals completed both surveys or just one of them. In future research on this topic it would be good to include a question in the second survey that would identify if the respondent had also taken the first survey.

Question two of the second section asks respondents if The Salvation Army has administered the sacraments. It was clearly stated in the sermon series that prior to William Booth's 1883 decision that the Army regularly practised the sacraments. The responses to this question show a 26% increase in this understanding, and this difference demonstrates the positive effect of the sermon regarding this particular question. The surveys show that the sermon series is a beginning, an attempt in relaying information on the Army's practice of the sacraments. Even though there was an increase of understanding over the first survey, still only approximately 52% understood that the Army did at one time participate in the practice of the sacraments. This question did not ascertain if the respondents knew that the sacraments were practised in the Army before 1883 or if they were responding to the unofficial practice of the sacraments in a few contemporary Canadian Salvation Army corps. Knowing this information would have been useful in combating the conflict that sacramental practice is having on the contemporary Canadian Army.

The third question reveals a dramatic difference between surveys one and two. In this question the survey wanted to gauge the understanding of the respondents regarding their awareness of why the Army does not practise the sacraments. In the first survey, approximately 40% of respondents could not list why the Army did not practise the sacraments. After the sermon series, the second survey gauged that there had been new understanding gained about Booth's reasons for abandoning the practice of the sacraments since only approximately 12% of respondents listed that they did not know why the Army did not practise the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion. From this quantitative difference it is fair to hypothesise that the difference in response is, in fact, due to the sermon series informing the respondents of the foundation of the Army's non-practice of the sacraments.

An understanding of the doctrine of holiness as taught by the Army is important for appreciating the Army's sacramental foundations. Question four demonstrates that in both the first and second surveys over 90% of the respondents are somewhat familiar or very familiar with the doctrine and practice of holiness in the Army. The sermon series did not concentrate on expanding the understanding of this doctrine. Nevertheless the respondents perceive in themselves that they understand this doctrine.

One of the main goals of the sermon series was to better inform the congregation on the concept and practice of sacramental living. This is because one of the results of the Army's position on the abandonment of sacramental practice has been to put emphasis on sacramental living. Question five demonstrates that the sermon series was effective in teaching on sacramental living. By comparing the surveys, respondents of the second survey were 20% more likely to say they are very familiar with the concept of

sacramental living than those responding in the first survey. Also, the respondents in the second survey are approximately 10% more likely to be somewhat familiar and very familiar with the concept and practice of sacramental living than those who responded in the first survey. This difference is relatively small. This may be because the first survey showed that many respondents already had an understanding of sacramental living and thus the room to gain more understanding of this concept was relatively small.⁴

Question six in this section asked about the familiarity of the respondents with the relationship of holiness resulting in sacramental living. With the respondents high understanding of holiness (question four responses) a consequence would be that they would appreciate the complementary nature of holiness and sacramental living. The responses to both surveys bear this out, with slightly more in the second survey saying that they are somewhat familiar or very familiar with this relationship.

In this specific Army context, the majority of respondents think that sacramental living is a valid replacement of the practice of sacraments as a ritual.⁵ Approximately 60% of respondents in the first survey listed that they definitely or probably hold sacramental living as a valid replacement of the practice of sacraments. This increases to 78% of respondents in the second survey. Again, this demonstrates that the sermon series has been effective since there was a significant increase in this survey category. However, this congregation is a fairly conservative Army congregation. Further, my intuition is that the results regarding this question would be different if these surveys and

⁴ In the demographic portion of the survey it can be demonstrated that many respondents have a historical background in The Salvation Army. These Salvationists possibly would have encountered teaching on holiness.

⁵ See survey section two, question seven.

sermon series were to take place in an Army congregation that was unofficially practising the sacraments. Also, the goal of the sermon series was not to pit the practice of the sacraments against sacramental living, but to demonstrate that an awareness of the sacraments could also deepen the understanding and practice of sacramental living in an Army context.

The sermon series sought to link holiness with sacramental living and also to link sacramental living with embodying the gospel. The next three questions in the survey,⁶ sought to gauge an understanding of embodying the gospel and its relationship with sacramental living. In each case, the majority of respondents in both surveys state that they are very familiar or somewhat familiar with the practice of embodying the gospel, and that they are very familiar or somewhat familiar with the relationship of holiness, sacramental living, and the embodiment of the gospel; finally, that they are definitely seeing embodiment of the gospel as a significant expression of biblical Christianity. Each of these survey categories exhibits a slight increase in positive responses in the second survey as compared to the first survey.

This congregation (through the survey results) shows a clear understanding of the embodiment of the gospel that works its way out through sacramental living. Again, this can be seen as a reflection of their history as long time evangelical members of the Army that does not practise sacraments. Yet there is a perceivable positive movement from the first survey to the second survey in terms of their understanding of sacramental living. In future research it would be informative to engage this sermon series in Salvation Army

⁶ See survey section two, questions eight, nine and ten.

congregations which are less homogeneous, and which contain many members with a non-traditional Army background.

The written remarks on both surveys provide useful information however, not all who filled in surveys wrote additional comments.⁷ In the first survey, the written comments, although varied, pointed to one major theme of teaching and information on the sacraments and sacramental living. One respondent records it this way, “I think a ‘lesson’ in The Salvation Army’s stance on these topics would be very helpful to anyone, not just those looking into being members . . .” Another responds “I’m not certain of the Army’s specific concept and practice of sacramental living . . .” Still another says “[s]acraments [are] not taught so we know little of their significance.”

There are also comments by two respondents from the first survey who view the sacraments as not competing, but as necessary and complementary. One respondent writes, “. . . sacramental living cannot replace sacraments . . . Jesus commanded do this [in] remembrance of me . . .” The other respondent said “I feel there is a place for both sacramental living and the practice of the sacraments.” It is the position of this thesis writer that the sacraments and sacramental living complement each other. However, while they are complementary, the position of this thesis writer plus what has been gleaned from this research project deem it is not necessary for the Army to reintroduce the sacraments in the worship fabric of the Army.

The comments on the second survey of February 26th⁸ bear out the teaching of sacramental living that was expounded in the biblical preaching series on the themes of

⁷ All the written comments from the surveys can be found in Appendix D.

⁸ See Appendix D.

John. One person writes, “I do believe sacramental living is important . . . The series was wonderful, and I enjoyed learning about the Salvation Army history . . . Heart to God, Hand to [humanity] . . .” Another states “I believe all Christians should live the sacraments—it should not be just a Sunday experience . . . We have to take our Christian walk seriously, Monday to Saturday too!”

There are persons who added written comments that indicate they would appreciate the Army reintroducing the sacraments. One said it plainly “[t]here is merit in taking communion” and another “. . . I also feel that though Baptism in water is not necessary for salvation it again is a beautiful symbol of new life in Christ (Rom 6).” These comments, if shared in a discussion group, could lead towards a healthy debate about the place of sacramental practice in the Army without being antagonistic. The sermon series was not presented to end questions about sacramental practice, but to place the sacramental life within a biblical foundation in the Gospel of John, and, also to anticipate future sacramental debate which will enrich the practice of sacramental life in the Army.

Not captured in the survey was the final, tangible, response to the sermon series on embodying the gospel. In The Salvation Army there is traditionally a time of reflection (altar call) after the sermon. I really wanted to make the connection between sacramental living, encountering the Lord and becoming living mercy seats (bringing the presence of God to others) in our contemporary world. The final sermon of the series (February 26th), was on Mary’s encounter with Jesus at the tomb, recorded in John 20. Mary encounters Jesus and is commissioned by Jesus to go and tell the disciples. On seeing the disciples, Mary bears witness to the risen Lord by saying, “I have seen the

Lord.” I called on the congregation, like Mary, to bring their transforming encounter with Jesus and God to the people with whom they come in contact. During the reflection I stated that if that were their desire, they could come to the front of the sanctuary and light a candle on the holiness table⁹ as a visible expression of that desire.

As the reflection music played the church’s local officers¹⁰ came to the front of the sanctuary to aid in this call for witness. It was an incredible sight. Every person in the worship gathering came forward and lit a candle, indicating their commitment to strive to be a witness, to live sacramentally, and to embody the gospel. In this Army worship setting¹¹ every week after the sermon there is a call for reflection and commitment, but it is rare for this call to be accepted by all the members of the congregation (quite often only one or two, if any come forward). This was a tangible sign that God’s word was preached and God called the worship participants to a life of sacramental living.

Goals and Outcomes

From the two completed surveys, plus the written comments on the surveys and the active participation of the congregation in the sermon series it shall be shown that the criteria have been met and that the sermon series on the embodied sacramental life has been a success.¹²

⁹ This is a form of altar directly in front of the mercy seat, where people go to seek an experience of holiness.

¹⁰ Elders.

¹¹ Kitchener Community Church.

¹² The criteria for this project to be deemed successful, is that there is a movement seen in the survey data from less to more understanding of the Army’s sacramental position regarding the sacramental life.

First, the completed surveys demonstrated that after the sermon series had been preached the congregation was more informed about the Army's position regarding the sacraments. Second, after the sermon series had been preached, survey results indicated the congregation received biblical understanding from the Gospel of John about sacramental living. The tenth question in the second section of the second survey shows that 78% of people believe that embodiment of the gospel is a significant expression of biblical Christianity.

Third, the surveys also illustrate the heightened understanding that was gained about why the Army stopped the practice of the sacraments, and instead followed the way of sacramental living. It was also made very clear in the sermon series (according to the survey) that the topic of sacramental living in the sermons was not just about information, rather, it was mainly about actual living. In addition, the congregation members were encouraged to become living mercy seats. This concept (of the mercy seat) was a development of sacramental living expressed by Button's understanding of God's presence with God's people (as Button unpacked N.T. Wright's idea of the presence of God). Fourth, a goal for the series was to draw Christians together in agreement on sacramental living and the embodied gospel. This goal was only partially achieved, as the survey did not specifically measure this variable. However, in the written comments it has been noted that the practice of the sacraments, and sacramental living, can be seen as complementary, and people are able to hold either position without there being antagonism.

Finally, this sermon series has been successful in establishing in the congregation that sacramental living is a valid expression of biblical Christianity. The achievement of

these goals is a good foundation for entering into the debate that is occurring in The Salvation Army about the place of the sacraments in worship. It is through the biblical teaching in a sermon series (like the one I preached) that a pastor may begin to heal the hostility between those who hold different perspectives on the sacraments in the Army.¹³ The goal being not that of conformity to any position, but the ability to express differing opinions without rancour while defending what can be agreed on by both positions, namely the sacramental nature of the Christian life.

¹³ Those who wish to reintroduce them and those hold the Army's traditional non-practising position.

CHAPTER 6

EVALUATION AND ANALYSIS

Introduction

The problem to be addressed in this thesis project is the conflict over the non-sacramental practice of the Canadian Salvation Army. The Army's non-practicing position in regards to the sacraments is perceived principally in three ways by local Army congregations. Some are passionate to adhere to the traditions of the Army and persistently follow the direction that was laid out by General William Booth. Others see the practice of the sacraments as a positive step in the evolution of the Army to becoming a complete member of the greater church body, which almost unanimously participates in the sacraments. These two positions are, at times, followed with a fervour that causes deep divides in congregations. The third position is essentially a non-position that does not give thought to the sacraments, seeing them as not relevant to their Christian walk.

It is in this atmosphere that this thesis project has attempted to suggest a way toward healing these divisions between the non-practicing members of the Army and those who would like to have sacramental practices reintroduced in Army worship. By speaking on the foundational nature of sacramental living in Christian life, this project is seeking to engage people in a positive discussion about sacramental practice with the aid of Christian teaching and practice. This chapter evaluates the strengths and weaknesses of this project and suggests modification and improvements to this action/reflection thesis.

The strengths, weaknesses and suggestions for modifications will be organized by referring to the first five chapters of this thesis.

Strengths

The strengths that are found in chapter one deal with the importance of laying a foundation for what this thesis will address. It is essential at the outset of the thesis to describe the reasons that Booth put forward in 1883 for the abandonment of sacramental practice in the Army.¹ The first chapter of this thesis outlines the position of contemporary Canadian salvationists (another name for members of the Army) on the issue of reintroducing the practice of celebrating the sacraments, and the division that this current position causes. It is also necessary to place this decision in its historical context by examining the subsequent awareness and interpretations that this position has undergone in Army literature right up until the present. The presence of an extensive amount of sources on the issue demonstrates that it is a major source of reflection by salvationists. This history is placed at the beginning of the thesis to provide a background for salvationist and non-salvationist readers to facilitate a possible movement from the practice of the sacraments to sacramental living.

A further strength of chapter one is that it provides a ready definition of the sacramental life. Sacramental living is defined as mindfully living in the presence of God and being empowered by the Holy Spirit to live a holy life. As has been recorded in chapter one, there was a concern over the effectual nature of sacramental practice based on the empirical evidence noted by Booth and others of his generation, that people who had participated in the sacraments were not living regenerated lives. Sacramental living is

¹ See Chapter One of this thesis.

not only the thought of living in the presence of God, but being empowered to live a holy life and tangibly demonstrating that life. This definition of sacramental living brings together the significance of the presence of God and the difference that this makes to the life of a believer. This also speaks to the immediacy of grace that is available to believers and is in line with the Army's understanding of the baptism of the Holy Spirit which makes this immediacy of grace possible in the life of a believer.

The strengths of the second chapter of this thesis are found in laying a strong biblical and theological foundation for how the thesis project will proceed. The biblical and theological reflection of the thesis problem leads to defining how sacramental living is to be evaluated. There is a further development in the definition of the spiritual baptism of the Holy Spirit, which perceives this baptism as occurring when Christ takes up residence in a believer's life and daily guides him/her to physically and incarnationally demonstrate the restorative grace that God offers humanity. This leads to an embodiment of the gospel that is demonstrated to everyone with whom the person comes into contact.

The further strengths of chapter two are found in laying the foundation of the project. Those foundations are firstly, biblically preaching from the themes of John outlined by Karoline Lewis² and secondly, examining literature written on the sacramental life by members or authors within The Salvation Army³ that has been presented to or appropriated by members of the Army. By grounding this thesis in a biblical sermon series this information has the opportunity to inform at least one local worshipping congregation in a biblically relevant way. This could serve as a model for

² See Chapter Two, section three of this thesis.

³ This discussion is found in chapter one.

other congregations to consider. This theological underpinning makes it possible for the sermons to provide a situation where there is a nexus with God, the Bible, the preacher, the congregation and the community. In such a place there is a real strength given to the practice of sacramental living that will cross over the theological divide between those in the Army who want to reintroduce the practice of the sacraments and those who do not.

By rooting the sermon series in John's Gospel, this thesis project avoids the problem of proof texting in an attempt to biblically justify the long-standing position of the Army. The gospel of John was chosen for this sermon series because its themes lend to an emphasis on sacramental living, such as: the creative activity of God and Jesus; the nature of a child of God to abide; the abundant nature of God and the aspect of disciples as witnesses.

The strengths of this thesis found in the third chapter are discovered on two fronts. The first strength is the interaction with a contemporary thesis and recently published books by salvationists Armstrong, Rightmire and Taylor, dealing with what is seen as the controversial nature of Salvation Army non-practice of the sacraments. All three of these authors call the Army to reinstitute the practice of the sacraments.

Armstrong comes to this conclusion by research and the opinions offered by a non-scientific survey of members of the Army in Canada. Rightmire perceives that a change has taken place in Army teaching of holiness since the time of William Booth. There has been a theological movement from a crisis experience of holiness to one of holiness as experienced as a process. Taylor notes complete understanding of sacramental living that pits it against the sacraments, which in Taylor's assessment, is a false dichotomy.

The project was strengthened by raising an awareness of these opinions. There is also a movement in this thesis from presenting sacramental living, as an opposite response to the sacraments, to a perspective where sacramental living can more deeply be understood in reference to the practice of the sacraments. However, the focus of this thesis is on the view that The Salvation Army, by emphasizing sacramental living, does not need to reintroduce the sacraments. And with this view is very much able to be a productive member of the wider church body.

The second strength of the literature review of the third chapter is found in the development of the sacramental life by engaging the writings of N.T. Wright and how some of that writing lends credence to the expansion of the Army's use of the mercy seat. N.T. Wright clearly sets forth the movement of the tangible presence of God from God's interactions with Adam and Eve in the Garden to God's presence being viewed in and through Jesus Christ. The immediacy of the grace of God's presence is passed on to believers through the power of the Holy Spirit and this empowers the Army to develop its understanding of its mercy seat. The mercy seat, present in all Army worship settings, is a place of encounter with God. It is also a place where a seeker comes to seek forgiveness, to ask for strength for the Christian walk and to pray for others.

In chapter three we discover that the Army mercy seat is moveable and does not need to be confined to any particular object. The chapter argues that people can be perceived as living mercy seats as there is an immediacy of God's grace in the life of a believer that comes from God's presence that is available through the power of the Holy Spirit. People then, in turn, become a place where the gospel is embodied and their lives testify to the living transforming presence of God. This leads to a unique understanding

of the sacramental life in the Army and allows the sacramental life, in a sense, to be “seeing salvation.”

Chapter four outlines the project and the full process for the development of the survey and for the sermon series all the way to its implementation. Chapter four’s strength clearly outlines the goals and outcomes of this project. Without measurable goals we cannot be confident that the sermon series accomplished what it set out to do. The project seeks to assess the current understanding of the sacramental practice of the Army in a local Army congregation in Canada. The project also seeks to provide biblical understanding for this congregation regarding the sacramental life. The thesis project further fosters respect between those who hold to the Army’s abandonment of sacramental practice and those who would like to see it reintroduced in worship. The two identical surveys administered before and after the sermon series provide the data necessary to evaluate whether the outcomes were actually achieved. The movement in the data from less to more understanding provides an indication of the success of the project.

The strength of chapter five, which analyzed the data, is that a good representation of the congregation filled out the surveys. Over eighty people completed the first survey and sixty people completed the second survey. This provided good quantitative information to ascertain if the sermon series was a success.

The strengths of these chapters demonstrate that the project is quite well formulated, and it effectively ascertained the impact of biblical teaching on the sacraments and sacramental living in the Army.

Weaknesses

Here listed are the perceived weaknesses of the project. A weakness of chapter one relates to the quantity of historical information that is provided for the history of Salvation Army sacramental understanding. This information is necessary not only to provide a foundation for the Army's sacramental practice that stems from Booth's pronouncement of 1883, but also to bring understanding to the subsequent writers of the Army for the interpretation and meaning of Booth's abandonment of sacramental practice throughout the decades since that decision. However, this historical information could shift the focus of this thesis away from sacramental living and embodying the gospel and get the reader distracted by the lengthy discussion of the Army's position. The information is, nevertheless, needed to provide an avenue to explore the meaning of the sacramental life in the Army. The sacramental life requires that it is more than just a tangent that springs from a discussion of the sacraments.

A weakness discerned from chapter two deals with the size limitation of the project. It was decided in the early planning stages of this thesis that the project would be limited to a four part biblical preaching sermon series, with the addition of an introductory sermon. The reason behind this decision was first that a four part series would easily work into the rhythm of preaching in the church. Second, a four part series would be able to provide pertinent material on sacramental living from the perspective of themes from John's Gospel, the Army's historical teachings and the development of sacramental living that views believers as living mercy seats. Third, a four part series allows the hearers to ingest the information and develop new opinions and/or strengthen previously held opinions. Fourth, for the sermon series to impact the hearers, consistency

in attendance for the duration of the series was needed. A sermon series longer than four parts would mean the percentage of people present for all the sermons would inevitably decrease. Fifth, a sermon series longer than four parts would affect the length of this thesis project and make it difficult to manage the size of the project.

Regardless of the reasons behind the decision to create a four part sermon series, the thesis would have been more fully explored by utilizing all eight of the themes outlined by Karoline Lewis.⁴ These themes could all have been preached in reference to the sacramental life and would strongly tie the sermon series and sacramental living to the gospel of John and biblical preaching.⁵

Weaknesses of this thesis project from chapter three are also determined by the limitations placed on the thesis project. With the sermon series covering only four sermons it was not possible to deeply develop the themes of holiness and of embodying the Gospel. Rightmire correctly ascertained through historical research that the understanding of holiness by Booth led to his abandonment of the sacraments 1883. The scope of this project was specifically developed to provide information and direction on sacramental living for an Army congregation and this therefore limited the time for teaching on the Army's doctrine of holiness. Sacramental living and the life of holiness were linked in this project. However, the development of the doctrine of holiness over the decades of the Army was not addressed or the effect this would have on the Army's understanding of the sacraments or sacramental living.

⁴ Lewis, *John*, 9.

⁵ The themes listed by Lewis are: the connection of Jesus to the creative activity of God; the origin of Jesus; the role of Jesus to reveal God; God revealed in Jesus as holding the human and divine together; the image of light and darkness, belief and unbelief; discipleship which demands being a witness; children of God abide in Jesus and the theme of abundance, where in Jesus we receive grace upon grace.

In this thesis project, sacramental living as embodying the Gospel is explored in the writings of Williams and Vestal and, in retrospect; this does make a significant contribution to the project. However, the writings of Richard F. Ward and Thomas E. Boomersshine⁶ and performance theory were also consulted. It was felt, due to time constraints, the understanding of embodiment to be gained from these writers would not profit the thesis as it stood. The weakness of not including these writers and performance theory could be addressed in the future after completing this project.

Chapter four's weakness is found in the type of questions that were asked. In the statement in chapter one of the problems to be addressed in this thesis, it was disclosed that there is a passionate theological divide between those who want to hold to the Army's traditional non-practicing position on the sacraments and those who would like to see the Army reintroduce the sacraments. One of the outcomes of this project was to provide ways to bridge this divide and provide the forum for meaningful dialogue between the two positions. While this divide has been observed, the project fell short in asking questions that dealt with the respondent's opinions on the Army's non-practising sacramental position. Therefore, there is no empirical way to identify these two polar positions.

A weakness in this action/reflection project (chapter five) was encountered in those who had chosen to complete the surveys. There were provisions early in the thesis project to include the participation of children between the ages of ten and fifteen. A survey was

⁶ Thomas E. Boomersshine, *Story Journey: An Invitation to the Gospel as Storytelling* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1988), Richard F. Ward and David J. Trobisch, *Bringing The Word To Life: Engaging the New Testament through Performing it* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2013) and Richard F. Ward, *Speaking Of The Holy: The Art of Communication in Preaching* (St. Louis: Chalice Press, 2001).

composed⁷ that was similar to the adult survey, with simplified language, to collect data on the sacramental life from those of an age who would be participating in the sacraments in non-Army churches. However, only a small number of children in this age range completed the survey.⁸ Therefore the data collected from the few surveys were not used as it could not accurately reflect the opinions of children in this age category. In the future, it would be useful to have parents/guardians involved in helping the children complete the surveys.

Suggestions for Modification

After assessing the strengths and weaknesses of this thesis project there are two suggestions that would lead to a stronger thesis. The first suggestion is to expand the sermon series from four to eight and include all of the themes that Karoline Lewis outlined for the Gospel of John. These above stated themes are highly appropriate for expounding biblically on the sacramental life.

Second, a needed modification of this thesis project would be to re-develop the questions and implementation of the surveys. The adult surveys were completed by a majority of worship participants on the Sundays they were employed (January 29th and February 26th) and it would have been an asset to have a greater number of children completing the children's survey. By voluntarily having the parents and guardians help the children complete the survey, more of these surveys would be completed. Also, including questions that directly elicit opinions on the Army's sacramental position

⁷ See Appendix E.

⁸ Three completed the first survey, January 29th and no child completed the second survey February 26th.

would help determine the extent of the theological divide between those who would like to reintroduce the sacraments in the Army and those who are content with the Army's sacramental stance. These two modifications would certainly enhance this thesis project.

CHAPTER 7

THESIS REFLECTION

Understanding and living the sacramental life demonstrate an outworking of the Jesus' grace in a Christian's life and empower the Christian to mediate that grace to others. The Salvation Army, by placing emphasis on sacramental living rather than participating in traditional church sacraments, encourages Christians to become living mercy seats. The Army values the meaning behind the sacraments but acknowledges that partaking in them does not guarantee salvation or Christian living. In this post-modern world, what draws Christian people together is confession of Jesus as Lord and living in obedience to God. This thesis, while emphasizing the embodied sacramental life aspect of Christian living, does not want in any way to be understood as diminishing the value of the sacraments as practised in the majority of Christian Churches. However, the Army's expression of sacramental living is one that may be embraced by all Christians, bringing them into a deeper and richer understanding of their faith.

The value of this project for a congregation is that it demonstrates that a biblical sermon series on sacramental living will very likely have a positive effect on a congregation. First, the sermon series informs a congregation regarding the Army's sacramental position. Second, the sermon series provides a biblical foundation for sacramental living. Third, it develops the Army's understanding of sacramental living and weds it to a new understanding of sacramental living as becoming living mercy seats.

Fourth, it encourages the congregation to view sacramental living as a valid expression of biblical Christianity.

This project had the added benefit of diminishing the animosity between those who would like to see the sacraments reintroduced in an Army worship setting and those who would like to retain the traditional Army non-practicing position. This is seen in the written comments from surveys one and two in (Appendix D) as those who advocate for the practice of the sacraments were able to do so and not be threatened by harsh reactions. The sermon series also made dialogue possible, before and after the worship service that facilitated discussion on the sacraments, holiness and embodying the gospel.

The value of this project for the practice of ministry in The Salvation Army is twofold. First, a biblical sermon series is more accessible to Army congregations than published books. In the history of the Army many books have been published and continue to be published on sacramental living and the Army's abandonment of sacramental practice.¹ However, the Army's position on the sacraments continues to be little known by the Army's membership. This has been quantified by responses to the first survey of this thesis project.² The sermon series demonstrates that biblical preaching is an appropriate means to biblically provide teaching on Christian living. This is substantiated by the quantitative data gleaned from the surveys.

A second aspect of this project that is valuable in an Army ministry setting is that it speaks to a subject that is of current interest to members of the Army. The published Army literature on the sacraments throughout the decades of its history gives credence to

¹ See Chapter One of this thesis.

² See Appendix D.

the fact that the practice or non-practice continues to be of interest to Army members.

This thesis project speaks of the matter in a non-confrontational manner and demonstrates the compatibility of sacramental practice with sacramental living without advocating the need to adopt sacramental practice in order to be considered as a legitimate member of the wider church.

This project is of value to the wider Christian Church because it provides information about the intricacies of the Army's sacramental position. It will also engage those from the larger Christian Church in understanding the sacramental life as being consistent with the mindfulness of the immediacy of God's presence which challenges believers to become living mercy seats and to live in accordance with citizenship in the Kingdom of God. The immediacy of grace does not envision a perfect conformity to God's will for the life of a believer, but the longer the believer dwells in the immediacy of God's presence, the more pronounced godly living becomes evident and effectual.

A review of this thesis project suggests that it could be expanded so that its research regarding sacramental living would include other Salvation Army congregations. The information already gained from one local congregation in this thesis project has been very helpful in assessing the usefulness of biblical preaching on the sacramental life. However, it would be beneficial to Army leadership if this sermon series was replicated in other Army worship centres according to their context. Kitchener Community Church, in the overall Army theological spectrum, is conservative and follows traditional Army practices. This means that the theological divide between those who wish to see the practice of the sacraments reintroduced and those who do not is relatively small. In other Army congregations this theological divide is larger and it would be appropriate to enlist

this sermon series project to breach this divide. The sermon series would help lay the foundation to create safe places where differing positions can coexist while seeking common ground in a mutually inclusive discussion of sacramental living.

A value of this project for me personally is worth noting. Throughout this project there has been growth in my own understanding of the Army's position on the sacraments and sacramental living. When I began this project I envisioned a polarity between sacramental living and the sacraments. I believed that if one was committed to sacramental living in an Army context, one would be opposed to the practice of the sacraments. I still hold that, to be fully Christian and a member of the larger Christian church, it is not necessary to practice the sacraments. However I have come to understand that the sacraments are beautiful expressions of the Christian life that complement sacramental living. This makes it possible, for me personally, to have a meaningful discussion with those who passionately hold that the practice of the sacraments is necessary for the Christian life.

This thesis project concludes with a song written by Major Brindley Boon, an English Salvation Army Officer who served for a time in Canada. This song gives expression to my understanding of the sacramental life.³

I would be Thy holy temple,
Sacred and indwelt by Thee;
Naught then could stain my commission,
'Tis Thy divine charge to me.

³ The Salvation Army, *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*, Song 591.

*Take Thou my life, Lord,
In deep submission I pray,
My all to Thee dedicating,
Accept my offering today.*

Seeking to mirror Thy glory,
Living to answer Thy call,
Each faithful vow now renewing,
Gladly I yield Thee my all.

Time health and talents presenting,
All that I have shall be Thine;
Heart, mind and will consecrating,
No longer shall they be mine.

O for a heart of compassion,
Moved at the impulse of love,
Lost ones to bring to Thy footstool,
Thy gracious riches to prove!

In the context of many Christian Churches we sing our theology. This song expresses the sacramental theology of The Salvation Army that has been expressed in this thesis project. This theology represents the immediacy of God's presence in the lives of believers who seek to be an expression of God's presence in tangible ways in their daily sacramental interactions. In this way we may begin to "see salvation" through the living mercy seats of Christ's followers.

APPENDIX A

Church Introduction Letter

January 22nd, 2017

The Salvation Army
Kitchener Community Church
Worship Service Participant

Dear Worship Service Participant:

On two specific upcoming dates: January 29th and February 26th I will invite you to play a vital role as this church seeks to understand our teaching on the sacramental life. I want to find out your opinions and attitudes in these areas to help our congregation come to an understanding of the historical position of The Salvation Army and encourage our spiritual journey collectively as a community.

I am writing in advance to say that two similar confidential surveys will be given to the congregation to complete after the worship service on January 29th and on February 26th. The surveys will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete and I anticipate the worship service to end at 11:45am on those days and the survey should be completed no later than 12 noon on those Sundays. The coffee will be on and I will be available for any questions.

My ongoing studies for my Doctor of Ministry degree at Luther Seminary in St. Paul Minnesota require a research project. The results of these two surveys (January 29th and February 26th) on the impact of Biblical Preaching and the subject of sacramental living will be summarized and cross-tabulated into charts that will be available to the congregation before June 2017.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you have any immediate questions, please ask. If you have additional questions later, contact me by phone at 519-616-2591 or by email at steven_cameron@can.salvationarmy.org. You may also like to contact my advisor Dr. Richard Rehfeldt at rrehfeldt001@luthersem.edu.

Thank you and God bless, Steven M. Cameron (*Major*) Kitchener Community Church

Implied Consent Letter, January 29th, 2017

January 29th, 2017

Dear Worship Service Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study of the effectiveness of preaching on the sacramental life. I hope to learn if a sermon series increases the awareness of the historical reasons that The Salvation Army emphasizes the sacramental life and if this sermon series encourages the hearers of the sermons to live sacramentally. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you participate in the worship services at The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church.

If you decide to participate, please complete the attached survey. Your return of this survey is implied consent. The survey is designed to obtain an understanding of a Salvation Army congregation's opinion on the sacraments and sacramental living. It will take about fifteen minutes to complete this survey. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to better understand the current knowledge of sacramental living in a local Salvation Army congregation. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the survey.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with Luther Seminary or The Salvation Army. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have additional questions later, contact:
Researcher: Major Steven Cameron
86 Glen Park Cres. Kitchener, ON N2N 1G2
Phone: (519) 616-2591, Email: steven_cameron@can.salvationarmy.org

Advisor: Doctor Richard Rehfeldt
Email: rrehfeldt001@luthersem.edu

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Major Steven Cameron

Implied Letter of Consent, February 26th 2017

February 26th, 2017

Dear Worship Service Participant,

You are invited to participate in a study of the effectiveness of preaching on the sacramental life. I hope to learn if a sermon series increases the awareness of the historical reasons that The Salvation Army emphasizes the sacramental life and encourages the hearers of the sermons to live sacramentally. You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you participate in the worship services at The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church.

If you decide to participate, please complete the attached survey. Your return of this survey is implied consent. The survey is designed to ascertain if there has been any change of opinion concerning the sacraments and sacramental living after the sacramental living sermon series has been preached. It will take about fifteen minutes to complete this survey. No benefits accrue to you for answering the survey, but your responses will be used to better understand the current knowledge of sacramental living in a local Salvation Army congregation. Any discomfort or inconvenience to you derives only from the amount of time taken to complete the survey.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will not be disclosed.

Your decision whether or not to participate will not prejudice your future relationships with Luther Seminary or The Salvation Army. If you decide to participate, you are free to discontinue participation at any time without prejudice.

If you have any questions, please ask. If you have additional questions later, contact:
Researcher: Major Steven Cameron
86 Glen Park Cres. Kitchener, ON N2N 1G2
Phone: (519) 616-2591, Email: steven_cameron@can.salvationarmy.org

Advisor: Doctor Richard Rehfeldt
Email: rrehfeldt001@luthersem.edu

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Major Steven Cameron

APPENDIX B

Blank Survey – Used January 29th and February 26th, 2017

Survey: Understanding the Embodied Gospel

(Please note that every aspect of this survey will be kept confidential)

I. Christian Foundations and Church Commitment

The following section is to help understand your Christian background and commitment to The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church.

1. In your own opinion how committed and actively engaged are you in our church?

- ☐ A great deal
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Hardly at all

2. Do you presently hold a leadership role in one or more of the various activities in our church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is Lord and Saviour of your life?

- ☐ Believe completely
- ☐ Believe for the most part
- ☐ Do not believe

4. Do you believe that Jesus is the embodied (active) presence of God within and through us?

- ☐ Believe completely
- ☐ Believe for the most part
- ☐ Do not believe

5. How much have you thought about each of the following during the past year?

A. Your relationship to God

- ☐ **Daily**
- ☐ **Weekly**
- ☐ **Monthly**
- ☐ **Rarely**

B. Living a worthwhile life

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

C. Developing your faith

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

D. The basic meaning and value of your life

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

6. How important would you say your Christian faith is in your life?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Fairly important
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not important

7. Approximately how many times did you attend worship services on average at this church in the last twelve months?

- ☐ Less than once a month
- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Twice a month
- ☐ Three times a month
- ☐ Rarely miss

8. Approximately how many years have you attended a Salvation Army Church as a member of the congregation?

- ☐ 0-5 years
- ☐ 6-15 years
- ☐ 16-30 years
- ☐ Over 30 years

9. Have you ever been a member of a church (or faith) other than The Salvation Army at some point in your life?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. If you answered yes to the above question, were you raised or a member of any of the following faiths (If you answered no please go to section II)

- ☐ Protestant
- ☐ Roman Catholic
- ☐ Orthodox (Greek, Russian etc.)
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Baha'i
- ☐ Other (please specify including non-faith)

☐ Prefer not to disclose

11. If Protestant, which church? _____

II. Sacramental Understanding

The following section is to help us understand your relationship to and understanding of Christian Living.

1. Have you ever participated in the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper / Communion?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. In your understanding, has The Salvation Army administered the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper (Communion)?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. In your opinion why does the Army not practise Baptism or Communion? Check all that apply.

☐ Distrust of rituals

☐ Divisions caused by different practice of sacraments

☐ Questions on who could administer the sacraments

☐ Questions about who could partake of the sacraments

☐ Other: _____

☐ I don't know

These next questions are based upon our belief in the importance of holiness (living like Jesus), how intentionally we think about this, and how intentional we are in modeling our lives upon the example that Jesus gave when he came and dwelt among us (embodied God's presence with us).

4. How familiar are you with the doctrine and practice of holiness in The Salvation Army?

☐ Very familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

5. How familiar are you with the concept and practice of sacramental living in The Salvation Army?

- ☐ Very familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Not familiar

6. How familiar are you with the relationship of holiness resulting in sacramental living?

- ☐ Very familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Not familiar

7. Do you think sacramental living is a valid replacement of the practice of sacraments as ritual?

- ☐ Definitely yes
- ☐ Probably yes
- ☐ Possibly yes
- ☐ Probably no
- ☐ Definitely no

8. How familiar are you with the practice: 'embodiment of the gospel' (active presence of God within and through us)?

- ☐ Very familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Not familiar

9. How familiar are you with the relationship of holiness, sacramental living and embodiment of the gospel?

- ☐ Very familiar
- ☐ Somewhat familiar
- ☐ Not familiar

10. Is embodiment of the gospel a significant expression of biblical Christianity?

- ☐ Definitely yes
- ☐ Probably yes
- ☐ Possibly yes
- ☐ Probably no
- ☐ Definitely no

11. Would it be helpful to have more information about The Salvation Army's position on the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper (Communion)?

- ☐ Definitely yes
- ☐ Probably yes
- ☐ Possibly yes
- ☐ Probably no
- ☐ Definitely no

III. Demographic Information

The following section is for comparison purposes only. This will help us understand shifts that may have occurred in teaching over the years in your lifetime...

1. Are you...

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. What is your age?

- ☐ 16-19
- ☐ 20-29
- ☐ 30-49
- ☐ 50-64
- ☐ 65 and over

3. What is your level of education?

- ☐ Elementary school
- ☐ High school
- ☐ Technical / Trade school
- ☐ College / University
- ☐ Master's/professional degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree

4. How are you a member of our church?

- ☐ Senior Soldier
- ☐ Junior Soldier
- ☐ Adherent
- ☐ Friend
- ☐ Don't Know

5. Are there anymore comments that you would like to add to this survey regarding sacramental living and the embodied gospel? Please write your response below.

Thank you for your time. The results of these two surveys (conducted January 29th and February 26th) will help assess the impact of Biblical Preaching on the subject of the embodied gospel. A summary of the results with cross-tabulated charts will be available before June 2017.

APPENDIX C

Sermon Series Manuscript (1) - Preached January 29th, 2017

God With Us-John 1:1-18

Preached at: The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church

Preached by Steven Mark Cameron

Introduction

In 1865 William and Catherine Booth found their destiny in the East End of London, England. It was among the physically and spiritually poor. They brought the life transforming Gospel of Jesus Christ to the common people. They encouraged an encounter with Jesus that affected one's whole of life and this led to holy living. From these beginnings God has raised up a Salvation Army that has spread throughout the world and is now in 127 Countries. We often turn back to our beginnings to help us understand the present. The Army looks and acts differently today than it did, but by understanding our origins in light of today, we begin to comprehend what it means to be a Christian in The Salvation Army.

The Gospel of John helps its readers understand the newness of life that comes from Jesus, just as we look to our past to realize what it means to be a salvationist today. The Gospel begins by drawing images from Israel's history to demonstrate that God is doing a new and life changing thing. This image speaks to God's role in creation and God's intimate relationship with God's people. The purpose of the whole Gospel, including its introduction, is found in John 20:31: "But these are written that you may

believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.”

John’s Gospel is not about information, it is about an encounter. Karoline Lewis puts it this way, “John does not claim that these words are to give you information about Jesus. Something is supposed to happen to you.”¹ In Jesus we are faced with the presence of God and our decision to believe makes all the difference.

Eight Theological Themes

In the first phrase of John we are brought right back to the creative activity of God in Genesis. This is done with purpose because the advent of Jesus means a new creation with a new understanding of our origins and the foundations of who we are.

Central to this new creation is the word - *logos*. A biblical commentator Gail R. O’Day suggests that “The most fertile place to look for the background of *logos* is within Judaism.”² To the Greeks the word/*logos* would be a logical term but for Jewish readers word/*logos* would be based in relationship with God. By God’s word there was creation. God spoke to and through the prophets. In Isaiah 55:11, “...so is my word that goes out from my mouth: it will not return empty, but will accomplish what I desire and achieve the purpose for which I sent it.” The incarnation of the word, Jesus, means that God’s creative activity is breaking into the world with a restoration of God’s presence being with God’s creation and humanity.

¹ Karoline M. Lewis, *John: Fortress Biblical Preaching Commentaries* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2014), 12.

² Gail R. O’Day, “The Gospel of John: Introduction, Commentary, and Reflections,” in *The New Interpreter’s Bible In Twelve Volumes*, ed. Leander E. Keck et al. (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1995), 519.

This brings us to the underlying function of the first eighteen verses of John's Gospel. In these verses we are introduced to eight key theological themes about Jesus that are unfolded in the rest of the Gospel. These themes have been highlighted by Karoline Lewis in her commentary on John.³ We are going to examine these themes individually and they will help unfold the encounter with Jesus that John has in store for us. The first theme is the connection of Jesus to the creative activity of God. This is linked to what we have already said about Jesus. The Word was with God in the beginning and was actively involved in creation. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel is connected to God's creative activity.

The second theme deals with the origin of Jesus. Jesus' origin is from God. God is among us with Jesus. With Jesus we do not just hear about God, Jesus is God made flesh among us. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel is God among us.

The third theme is the primary role of the Word made flesh and that is to reveal God. In verse eighteen we read that "No one has ever seen God, but the one and only Son, who is himself God and is in the closest relationship with the Father." In Jesus God is revealed. Karoline Lewis says of this, "For John, God in becoming flesh in Jesus has committed God's self not only to revealing what God's grace looks like, but that God wants to know it and feel it as well."⁴ Through Jesus God is a participant. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel reveals God

The fourth theme is that the God in John is holding the human and divine together in the Jesus. In our Salvation Army doctrine we would say that Jesus is truly and properly

³ Lewis, *John*, 9ff.

⁴ Ibid., 19.

God and truly and properly human. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel is the incarnation of God's own self.

The fifth theological theme is that of light and darkness (of belief and unbelief). In John we hear words that are important in Genesis⁵. Jesus is described as life and light. Jesus is also contrasted with darkness. "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." (v. 5) Belief in Jesus and being in relationship with Jesus is light while darkness can be seen as unbelief. The hard reality that this Gospel announces right in these first eighteen verses is that some will reject the light. "He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him." (v. 11) The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel calls us to make a decision (light or darkness).

The sixth theme is the reality that being a disciple means being a witness. In John's Gospel John the Baptist is called John the witness. Christians who receive the light are called on to witness about that light to others. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel calls us into discipleship to witness.

The seventh theme is that the newly constituted children of God are called to abide with God. Believers in these verses are given '... the right to become children of God' (verse 12). A defining characteristic of those in God's family is to abide with God. The Jesus we encounter in John's Gospel wants us to abide.

The last theological theme uncovered in these first verses is that of abundance. In verse sixteen we read that 'Out of his fullness we have all received grace in place of grace already given.' In Jesus we come into contact with the living grace of God that will provide for God's followers. One commentator suggests that "... grace is always an

⁵ Leon Morris, *The Gospel According to John: Revised Edition* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 64 & 65.

adventure. No one can say where grace will lead, what blessing it will bring, or what challenge it will make.”⁶ The Jesus we encounter in John’s Gospel will supply all our needs.

Four Themes To Be Used In The Sermon Series

During the next four Sundays we will examine our specific encounter with Jesus according to one of the theological themes in John’s Gospel. We will be looking to Jesus who embodies God to humanity and also how we are called to embody God’s message to the world. We will then see quite concretely that Christians are called to live sacramentally. Just as John turned to creation to describe the new things that were happening in Jesus Christ, we will turn to the beginnings of the Salvation Army to see what it means to live sacramentally as a Christian in the Army.

The four themes from John will call us to be an embodiment of the Gospel and to live sacramentally and these themes are: I. Called into the creative activity of God, II. Called to abide, III. Called into abundance and IV. Called to witness. These themes will help us to comprehend what it means to encounter Jesus and to live for him

Invitation

In today’s scripture we have understood that the Gospel is not presenting information about Jesus. It wants to bring people into an encounter with Jesus. John 20:31, “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John’s Gospel calls us this morning for a commitment (for or against Jesus). We are called to begin, renew, continue

⁶ Ibid., 98.

our relationship with Jesus today. Publically make that commitment today by coming to this place of prayer, this mercy seat. Come as we sing...

Sermon Series Manuscript (2) - Preached February 5th, 2017

**An Invitation into God's Creative Activity-John 9:1-12ff.
Preached at: The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church
Preached by Steven Mark Cameron**

Introduction

When speaking about John's Gospel we are reminded of the purpose of the Gospel found in John 20:31 "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name."

Illustration of God's Presence

This life in Jesus is possible because of the presence of God, giving people purpose, guidance, direction and meaning. Living sacramentally is living our lives intentionally in God's revealed presence. The presence of God unfolds in scripture in tangible ways⁷ beginning with creation where Adam and Eve walk with God. God's presence is seen later in scripture in the cloud and pillar of fire in the wilderness, and then God's presence is specifically seen in the Tabernacle. In Exodus 25:22 God says, "There, above the cover between the two cherubim that are over the Ark of the Covenant law, I will meet with you..." We then move to the Temple which becomes the resting place of the ark and thus the location God's presence (a specific meeting place of heaven in earth).

During the Exile, with the Temple no longer accessible, the Jewish people needed another visible sign of God's presence. Attention and obedience to the Torah became the place where God's presence was realized. In the New Testament, and for Christians,

⁷ See N.T. Wright, *Jesus and the Victory of God* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996), Chapter 13 and Christopher Jonathon Button, "A Sacramental Army: The Implications of N.T. Wright for The Salvation Army's Sacramental Theology," (MA Thesis, King's College London, 2014).

Jesus becomes the tangible expression of God's presence. In John's Gospel we hear that Jesus made his dwelling among us and that Jesus is God's presence among us.

Preliminary Comments

In chapter nine of John we encounter a blind man who receives sight and gains knowledge of who Jesus really is. This story is not just about healing; it is about recognizing who Jesus is and realizing that with Jesus the presence of God has come among us.

Trouble in the Text: Darkness and lack of hope

The scripture begins with Jesus finding this man blind from birth and performing a miracle. Miracles in John's Gospel are called signs. John has a particular way and pattern of telling a miracle story. A commentator says that the "signs story" of the blind man progresses this way: the miracle, a dialogue about the miracle by those involved and a discourse about the miracle.⁸ This full story covers two chapters (9 and 10) and includes only a few verses about the actual miracle.

The overall trouble in this scripture is darkness and lack of hope. The darkness in the scripture is found in many places: the sickness of the blind man and the disciples' inference that sin is the cause of this man's blindness. Jesus tells them that causality is never straight forward and, in fact, in this story no one sinned. The trouble is also seen in the fact that things are not as they have been created. This has caused the man to direct energies towards survival (begging) and away from healing, wholeness and hope.

⁸ Gail R. O'Day, *The Gospel of John*, 651.

The darkness in chapter 9 is also lack of knowledge. At the start of the story no one really knows that Jesus is connected to the creative activity of God. These people include: the disciples, the man, his neighbours, his parents, and the Pharisees. In the darkness they cannot see the hope that Jesus is the life giving presence of God.

Trouble in World: Darkness and Lack of Hope

There are many joys in life (family, friends and new relationships) but even they cannot take our attention away from the real darkness that is in our world. The darkness of: broken relationships, fear of outsiders, and policies that are oppressive and life taking. There are loud voices in this world seeking their own way and disregarding the rights and lives of those who get in their way. There is sickness, poverty, violence and death. This darkness is encompassed by a lack of hope for the future. At times this lack of hope has even affected the church (it is a day of small things and not of great things).

We do not ask for light because we do not believe that it is possible to bring life and light into these situations. This darkness has led to depression and the depths of despair. We ask the questions, where is the hope we so desperately need, where is God when we need God?

Grace in text: Opportunity to know God's presence

The grace that we find in this scripture speaks right into this situation. By this grace we are called into the creative activity of God. This grace is seen in Jesus proclaiming that he is the light of the world, the healing of the man born blind, and continues with the recognition that Jesus is the life giving presence of God.

In chapter 8:12 Jesus first speaks about himself being the light of the world. In this chapter Jesus embodies the light of the world.⁹ The connection of light to God's presence can be found in the fact that God's presence was seen in the pillar of fire (of light) that guided the people of Israel in the desert.¹⁰ This is that first connection of Jesus to the creative activity of God in the way that he restores the sight of the man born blind.

This connection carries over to the actual healing. Karoline Lewis states, "[t]he making of mud recalls how this Gospel begins, in the recollection of creation. While not the same word, "dust" in Genesis, "mud" in John 9, the allusion to the creative act of God is unquestionably at work."¹¹

In the text, the grace that connects the hearers to the creative action of God moves from the healing to the man progressively realizing that in Jesus we find the presence of God. This is seen in the man's progressive understanding of Jesus. To his neighbours the man says in verse 11 "[t]he man they call Jesus . . ." Later to the Pharisees in verse 17 the man says of Jesus, "He is a prophet." Again to the Pharisees in verse 33 he says of Jesus, "If this man were not from God he could do nothing." The final progression is found in verse 38 when the man confesses "Lord, I believe." The man confesses that Jesus is Lord and he worships Jesus as God. This story brings hope not only because the man received his sight, but in the recognition of the creative activity of God in Jesus and the man's commitment to Jesus.

⁹ Rolf Jacobson, Craig R. Koester, and Kathryn M. Schifferdecker, "Narrative Lectionary John 9:1-41," *I Love to Tell the Story*, WorkingPreacher.org from Luther Seminary, podcast audio, 118: Light of the World, February 23, 2014., https://www.workingpreacher.org/narrative_podcast.aspx?podcast_id=482 (accessed January 24th, 2017).

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Lewis, *John*, 127.

Grace in the World: the opportunity to spread the life giving presence of Jesus

When we believe in Jesus we are involved in the life giving creative works of the Father. The man who received his sight is not named. He is therefore a representation of everyone. I do believe that Jesus healed this specific man but the story of healing does not end with him; it is transferred to us. We are healed of our own blindness to the claims of Jesus and are also called to participate in Jesus' creative action.

We hear this when Jesus speaks in verse 4 that "[a]s long as it is day, we must do the works of him who sent me." One commentator has said "[b]oth 'we' and 'must' are important. Jesus is not speaking only of what he must do; his followers share with him the responsibility of doing what God directs . . ."¹² Sharing in the creative action of God is living the sacramental life.

This means living as a means of light and grace in this dark world. We are not ourselves the presence of God but the presence of God can be seen in those who believe. As the blind man, when we have been touched by Jesus we are compelled to tell others, to embody this life giving message. We have the choice just like the characters in this story. The man who was formally blind recognized in the end the presence of God in Jesus, but others chose not to see. Because the man saw the light, he witnessed about Jesus to his friends and the Pharisees. If we have received the light we also have the God given commission to bear witness to God's grace to others. An example of this is found in General William Booth's famous address, "I'll Fight."

"While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry, I'll fight; while men go to prison, in and out, in and out, as they do now, I'll fight—while there is a

¹² Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 426.

drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets, where there remains one dark soul without the light of God—I'll fight! I'll fight to the very end!" Are there people in our lives that need the light of Jesus?

Invitation

From hearing this scripture we are confronted with an encounter with Jesus. The scripture calls us to know Jesus. If you don't know Jesus, make your choice to start a relationship with Jesus today. If you do know Jesus, with God's grace live your life sacramentally to bring Jesus to others. If God is calling you today come (to the mercy seat) as we sing.

Sermon Series Manuscript (3) - Preached February 12th, 2017

Called To Abide-John 14:15-31

Preached at: The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church

Preached by Steven Mark Cameron

Introduction

To begin we need to be reminded of the purpose of John's Gospel. It is found in John 20:31 "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." The words of John's Gospel lead us to an encounter with Jesus. The Salvation Army's understanding of sacramental living is all about an encounter with Jesus

Illustration:

William Booth grew up with the sacraments, and the sacraments of Baptism and the Lords Supper were actively practised in the early Salvation Army. As The Salvation Army grew in influence in Victorian England, Booth began to question these practices.¹³ He felt strongly that the sacraments were not necessary for salvation and that they were causing strong divisions among Christians in England by their differing use in various denominations. He was concerned that some people were depending on the Lord's Supper and Baptism for salvation and he also sensed that many individuals who partook in the sacraments did not live transformed lives; in fact, many lived their lives visibly against God. Booth began to ruminate that there must be another way to express the grace and communion that these sacraments signified.

Booth developed a theology which has led the Army over the last 100 years to develop a practice of sacramental living which emphasises living continually in the

¹³ Booth, William. "General's New Year Address to Officers," in *The War Cry*, 4. London: The Salvation Army, January 17th, 1883.

presence of God and abiding with Jesus in the power of the Spirit. We hear of such abiding in this chapter of John

Loving the Lord

This passage from John is part of the farewell discourse. Jesus has already washed the disciples' feet; Judas has set in motion his betrayal of Jesus; a new command has been given to "love one another" (13:34); Peter's denial has been predicted at the beginning of chapter 14, Jesus proclaims he is the truth and who enjoys an intimate relationship with God.

This passage can be heard as Jesus providing comfort and security for those who believe in him, in light of the chaos that is going to take place in the next few days. An example of these words of comfort comes in v.27 "Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid." This comfort comes in the form of the third person of the Godhead (the Trinity) the Holy Spirit.

There are three important preliminary aspects of this passage. The first is that of loving obedience. Many times in this passage the word love is used. Jesus speaks of love as keeping his commands and obeying his teachings. He speaks of love that comes from God and the love that he has for God. In chapter 13 of John, Jesus gives the disciples the command to love one another and in chapter 15 Jesus says, "This is my command: love each other." (v.17) We understand that the foundational character of God, Jesus and the disciple is love and we are called to love God and to love others.

The second important aspect is that the Holy Spirit is an Advocate. Loving God and others is very difficult. There are so many examples where even with our best intentions complete love for God is difficult (we need only look to Peter and Judas to see

where love for Jesus and God did not reach the mark). This is where the Spirit comes in. The Spirit is given by God to help us, to teach us all things and to remind us of everything that Jesus said.

The Spirit, the advocate, the one who comes alongside the disciples is the one who will give them the power to love even when it is difficult. The Spirit is not replacing the earthly Jesus. The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of Jesus and God.

The third important aspect of the Holy Spirit is the intimate relationship with God and believers that is forged in these verses. Verse 23 says “[m]y Father will love them, and we will come to them and make our home with them.” These verses are also very revealing of the intimate relationship between the three persons of the Godhead as we name them in The Salvation Army: God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.

Jesus speaks about being *in* the Father and the disciples being *in* him and Jesus being *in* the disciples. Jesus and the Father will come and make their home with those who love and obey his teachings. This is also expressed as the Spirit who is with the disciples and will be in the disciples.

Role of the Spirit

The Spirit who is *with* and *in* the disciples, is the Spirit who equips all of us for sacramental living. One of my teachers, Karoline Lewis, has suggested that there are three very important features of the Spirit demonstrated in these verses.¹⁴

Firstly, the Spirit is the advocate of truth (v.17). Earlier in chapter 14 we hear that Jesus is the truth. The Spirit shares this quality of truth and is therefore in the same close

¹⁴ Lewis, *John*, 193ff.

relationship with Jesus as Jesus is with the Father. We hear also of the Spirit as another advocate, one who comes alongside. In a few more days Jesus, who came alongside the disciples to teach and embody God's message of truth and love to the disciples, will no longer be physically present. The Holy Spirit is another advocate like Jesus and will teach the disciples all things and remind them of everything that Jesus has spoken to the disciples. The Spirit revealed in John to the disciples and the hearers of this Gospel is the Spirit of Jesus, the Spirit of truth.

Second, the Spirit abides in us and with us. This is a very important aspect of discipleship. The Spirit embodies the presence of Jesus in the lives of believers. In verse 17 we hear that the Spirit is with us and will be in us. We realize the great gift that God has given us through his Son, Jesus. This is an abiding relationship in the Spirit and this makes it possible to live and embody the commands of Jesus.

With the disciples, we are called to be in relationship with God, to love God and love others through Jesus and the power of the Spirit. Chapter 13:34 says, "[b]y this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you love one another."

Third, as children of God we are not abandoned even though Jesus is going away. Chapter 14 begins with Jesus telling the disciples "[d]o not let your hearts be troubled." At this time of crisis, at this time of chaos when just around the corner Jesus will be taken from the disciples, it is a natural time to feel fear and concern. The same Spirit reminds them that in Jesus we are children of God. The Spirit will teach the disciples, the Spirit will teach us. The Spirit will remind the disciples of Jesus, the Spirit will remind us of Jesus. The Spirit will be with us and in us if we choose the love which God, the Son and the Holy Spirit have promised us.

God and Jesus will come and make their home with us, to dwell with us. We are not alone. There will be times of crisis, chaos and trial, but we do not have to go through them alone. God has given us another advocate, comforter, one to come along side. We will not be abandoned

Invitation

These verses offer us an encounter with God, the Spirit and Jesus. The encounter calls us to constantly abide in an intimate relationship with God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit. By the Spirit's power we can live in this abiding relationship and it transforms us to embody Jesus' command, message and life.

The purpose of John is "[b]ut these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." (John 20:31)

When we abide in relationship with Jesus we embody this message and we can say "[b]ut our lives are lived that others may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing they may have life in his name." This is sacramental living. Not that we reject the sacraments but that we attempt with the Spirit's power to live them at all times.

Come and make this decision to abide with Jesus today, in the power of the Spirit. Come and embody his love in our lives. Come as we sing, *Send the Fire*.

Sermon Series Manuscript (4) - Preached February 19th, 2017

Called To Abundance-John 4:5-15ff.

Preached at: The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church

Preached by Steven Mark Cameron

Introduction

A unique feature of Salvation Army worship is the mercy seat. It is a place where people come to meet with the presence of God. Right from the beginning of the Army it was the place people came to respond to God's call, usually after the sermon or message.

At times it was termed a "penitent form" or "mourner's bench" where people came to confess sins and to be forgiven. At other times it was called the mercy seat, a place to receive God's mercy, grace and strength to carry us on in the challenges of life.

Every Army church has a mercy seat at the front of the sanctuary. The mercy seat is a visible representation of God's presence and it reminds us of the mercy seat above the Ark of the Covenant in the Old Testament. In Exodus 25:22 we hear, "There, above the cover between the two cherubim . . . I will meet with you."

In the Army the mercy seat can take any physical form. A communion rail at the front of a hall, a bench, an over turned bass drum on the streets. God's presence is everywhere and any object can represent this presence. In fact, we also may represent God's presence to others. Colonel Phil Needham, "In actuality the mercy seat itself is symbolic of any place where a seeker after God comes in prayer."¹⁵ When we leave this church hall, we are living mercy seats bringing the presence of God to all with whom we come into contact.

¹⁵ Phil Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1987), 11.

As we hear about the woman at the well, we see that she has been changed by an encounter with Jesus. She now lives to introduce others to Jesus and she becomes a living mercy seat.

This encounter with the woman at the well reminds us that this scripture story in John is written for a purpose, “But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.” John 20:31 NIVUK

The Encounter with Jesus

In John, chapter 4 verse 4 we hear that Jesus had to go through Samaria. This was an interesting journey. Many Jewish people of Jesus’ day would do everything possible on their trips not to go through Samaria. They felt that the land and the people would defile them. If they needed to travel North or South, they would make a longer journey by going around Samaria. That Jesus “had” to go through Samaria perhaps speaks more about Jesus’ mission not only to the Jewish people, but to the world, Samaria here representing the non-Jewish world.

There are three interesting features about Jesus’ contact with the woman at the well that I believe need to be explored. The **first** interesting feature is that the encounter is with a woman. In Jesus’ day a man did not speak directly with a woman unless she was his wife. This situation is even more peculiar, because they are alone together at the well. By speaking to this woman Jesus was breaking a very strictly held social convention.

The **second** interesting feature about this encounter is that she is a Samaritan. Jewish people were not to associate with Samaritans. Back during the Jewish exile in the Old Testament the Samaritans emerged from a mix of the Jewish people left behind and

the people from the other nations who were resettled in Northern Israel. They followed the Jewish religion with certain major differences. They only held to the first five books of the Torah and they had their own Temple on Mt. Gerizim (that was destroyed over one hundred years before Jesus).

Because they did not strictly follow the Jewish way of obedience to God they were seen as a people that missed the mark of true Judaism and so Jewish people considered them not worthy.

The woman reminds Jesus of this fact in verse 9, “You are a Jew and I am a Samaritan woman. How can you ask me for a drink?” By speaking to this Samaritan woman Jesus was breaking cultural conventions.

The **third** interesting feature in this encounter is the woman’s circumstances. In verse 18 we hear Jesus tell the woman that he knows of her background. My teacher Karoline Lewis says, “To have been married five times in ancient Palestine would be evidence of circumstances completely beyond the control of any woman at that time.”¹⁶ This woman was lonely and isolated through no fault of her own. Jesus by speaking to her was breaking this cycle. This encounter and message is recorded to show that Jesus is for “the whosoever.”

Jesus’ mission in Samaria was all about the beginning of bringing the good news of God’s presence to the entire world. No one was to be excluded.

The Gift of Abundance

Jesus speaks to this unnamed woman about a gift of abundance. In verse 14 we hear “[i]ndeed the water I give them will become in them a spring of water welling up to

¹⁶ Lewis, *John*, 60.

eternal life.” Leon Morris says “[t]he living water that flows from within the believer is later explained in terms of the Holy Spirit (7:38-39).”¹⁷ He continues by saying that the living Spirit that is inside a believer bears evidence to their abundant life.

By hearing of this living water, we can think of baptism and spiritual transformation by the Spirit. In the Army we call this being baptised in the Spirit, recognizing that it is the Spirit who effects the actual transformation. This transformation is the life giving abundant life that is available to us through the Spirit. The woman encountered Jesus and she was changed. Gail O’Day says, “[i]n response to her conversation with Jesus, the woman goes into town and bears witness to what she has heard.”¹⁸ O’Day continues to say that there is a threefold witness of the woman.

The **first** aspect of the witness is the call to come and see. In verse 29 we hear the woman say, “[c]ome, see a man who told me everything ...” This call by the woman reminds us of Jesus’ call to the first disciples and Philip’s call to Nathanael to encounter Jesus recorded in John chapter 2. The woman invites the people of the town to encounter Jesus for themselves.

The **second** aspect of the witness is her own experience. Again in verse 29 we hear, “. . . a man who told me everything I’ve ever done.” This is a personal testimony; she speaks of what she knows, of what Jesus has done for her

The **third** aspect of the witness is the woman’s uncertainty. We hear her say in verse 29, “Could this be the Messiah?” Even at this point when she is not totally certain of her understanding of who Jesus is, God utilizes her.

¹⁷ Morris, *The Gospel According to John*, 230.

¹⁸ O’Day, *The Gospel of John*, 569.

The Fruit of Abundance

The fruit of the abundance that Jesus offers the woman are the people who hear her testimony. We hear in verse 42 of chapter 4, “[w]e no longer believe just because of what you said; now we have heard for ourselves, and we know that this man really is the Saviour of the world.” Jesus encounters a woman at the well in Samaria and her life is changed, so the testimony of Jesus’ good news begins to be heard in the entire world.

Invitation

We are invited by Jesus to be baptised by the Spirit, to receive “a spring of water welling up to eternal life . . .” to be transformed to embody the life giving message of Jesus to others. Karoline Lewis says, “[the woman at the well] is not only an example of what it means to be a witness. She embodies fully the transition from darkness to light, from outsider to insider. She is reborn.”¹⁹ Jesus’ gift of abundance makes her a living mercy seat embodying the message to the world. As we sing in reflection, let us consider the difference the baptism of the Spirit makes in our lives. If God is calling you to respond, come to the place of prayer, this mercy seat at the front of the hall, as we sing.

¹⁹ Lewis, *John*, 64.

Sermon Series Manuscript (5) - Preached February 26th, 2017

Called To Witness-John 20:1-18

Preached at: The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church

Preached by Steven Mark Cameron

Introduction

General Albert Orsborn was the sixth international leader of The Salvation Army. He lived through the devastation of World War II in England: the air raids, the shelters, the bombings, the death and destruction. In 1947 General Orsborn held meetings during the Easter Weekend in Berlin, Germany. He saw the devastation that the war had brought that city and he was overwhelmed with emotion. Only two years earlier these German people were seen as the enemy. They caused such destruction in England, but now his heart was broken by their plight and he called out to God for a way to respond to their desperate situation.

Orsborn says, “. . . I cried to God to help me, in my own spirit and to let His Spirit work within us all, to bring us together, to bridge what seemed to be, in all reason, an impassable gulf between our respective conditions of living . . . God revealed to me that not only that day, but always, we have no hope of being a blessing to other souls unless our lives become a part of the Saviour’s sacramental consecration . . .”²⁰ Orsborn then wrote the song we sang earlier in our worship service, *My life must be Christ’s broken bread, my love his outpoured wine*. This song is the loving expression of sacramental living in the service of others. Living this way brings witnesses into the creative love of Jesus for those in need.

²⁰ Gordon Taylor, *Companion to the Song Book of The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1988), 118.

Orsborn's revelation occurred seventy years ago, but we are still called to sacramental service. We are called to witness and live the life transforming Gospel embodied by Jesus.

John's stated purpose of his Gospel is witness, "[b]ut these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name." John 20:31

One example of a life that is lived in Jesus' name is Mary Magdalene, who encountered the risen Lord and was the first to share that message with others. We begin by finding ourselves on the first day of the week after the crucifixion. It is early in the morning and John tells us that it is still dark.

Visitors to the Empty Tomb

A biblical commentator has shown us that in John's Gospel three people went to the empty tomb and had three differing reactions to the evidence.²¹ The **first** visitor to the empty tomb was Mary. We are not told of the others who went with her to the tomb. John's Gospel wants us to focus on Mary and upon her reactions to the empty tomb.

When she arrives at the tomb she discovers that the stone has been rolled away from the tomb. It does not say that she looked inside. Mary knew that something was wrong and so she ran to tell the disciples (Peter and the beloved disciple). Her words to the disciples tell us that Mary did not believe that anything supernatural had occurred. Mary said, "They have taken the Lord out of the tomb, and we don't know where they have put him." Mary was distressed that Jesus' dead body had been moved.

²¹ Barbara Lundblad, "Commentary on John 20:1-18," *Working Preacher Commentary*, WorkingPreacher.org from Luther Seminary, RCL Alt. Gospel Reading, March 27th, 2016, https://www.workingpreacher.org/preaching.aspx?commentary_id=2807 (accessed February 14th, 2017).

The darkness narrated at this point in John's Gospel represents unbelief. At this dark time in the morning, Mary does not believe that Jesus has been raised. For Mary the evidence of the empty tomb does not lead to belief.

The **second** person to encounter the empty tomb is Peter. Simon Peter and the other disciple run to the tomb. We are not told what slows Peter down, but he comes along behind the other disciple. Peter does not stay outside the tomb like the other disciple, he goes barreling right into the tomb. Peter looks around and sees the linen and the separate head cloth that had been around Jesus head.

What happens next is so unlike Peter, the spokesperson for the disciples. The one who always rushes in with something to say, at the empty tomb Peter is silent. We cannot be sure why Peter is silent, but he is. Peter goes to the empty tomb and then goes back to the place where he was staying. It seems that for Peter that the evidence of the empty tomb does not lead to belief in the resurrection of Jesus.

The **third** person to encounter the empty tomb is the disciple that Jesus loved. He waits and lets Peter enter the tomb first. Only after does this other disciple enter the tomb. The evidence of the empty tomb does have an effect on this disciple.

It is said of the beloved disciple that, "He saw and believed." (John 20:8) We are not exactly sure what he believed, however. There must have been some belief that Jesus was raised from the dead, but at this point there is no overt change in this disciple. Like Peter he returns to the place he had been staying. It is not recorded that he spoke to anyone about what he had seen. For the beloved disciple the evidence of the empty tomb does lead to belief, but not to action.

We are presented with three different reactions to the information that the tomb was empty. This empirical information about the empty tomb did not change any of the visitors. Information about the tomb or about Jesus does not change a person. What is important in John's Gospel is not information but an encounter.

Encountering Jesus

As we listen to the Gospel account we again find ourselves with Mary Magdalene outside the tomb and she is crying. Mary **first** encounters the angels and she repeats the story she has told the disciples. "They have taken my Lord away...and I don't know where they have put him." After this appearance the angels leave the story not to return. Mary does not seem to be affected by them; it is almost as if it is a natural occurrence.

Mary **next** encounters Jesus, and at first she does not recognize him. She believes that Jesus must be the gardener. That this encounter takes place in a garden is significant. Gardens are a place of new life and beauty. This garden reminds us of another garden, the Garden of Eden, a place where God was present with his creation. Mary's encounter with Jesus will bring new life and a new vocation to Mary.

Mary responds to Jesus the gardener when he asks about her crying, by pleading to find out where the body of Jesus has been taken. However, it is when she is called by name that Mary finally recognizes Jesus. Jesus calling her name reminds us of the good shepherd in John 10, "...he goes out ahead of them, and his sheep follow him because they know his voice." (v.5) Mary receives a personal encounter and she believes.

Called To Witness

In Mary's own response are the words of her vocation. Mary calls out to Jesus in Aramaic, "Rabboni!" Mary calls Jesus teacher, Jesus is her teacher and she is the student

and therefore disciple of Jesus.²² In John's Gospel to be a disciple is to be a witness. Jesus asks Mary not to hold on to him because he has a commission for her, the commission to be a witness to others.

Jesus exhorts Mary to go and be a witness. Mary goes to the disciples, who are no longer disciples but brothers. Her witness has everything to do with them being part of the family of God. The witness begins with Mary saying, "I have seen the Lord" and continues with Jesus speaking through Mary, "I am ascending to my Father and your Father, to my God and your God." The Good News is that we are called to be part of the life giving, abundantly loving family of God. Nothing will ever be the same again.

Invitation

We are called to be Good News people. According to NT Wright, we are called not to give good advice, but Good News.²³ "The good news of Jesus is there not only to remind us of it but to transform us with it so that we in turn may become transformative people."²⁴ We are to give more than information about Jesus to others we want to bring our encounter with Jesus to others. By living sacramentally through the power of the Spirit we display the transformative love and new life that we have in Jesus and by doing this we offer an opportunity for others to have a similar life changing grace filled encounter.

For Orsborn it was living sacramentally for the War torn people of post-World War II Berlin. For us it may be living sacramentally for: our families, our neighbours,

²² Lewis, *John*, 241.

²³ Wright, N.T. *Simply Good News: Why the Gospel is News and What Makes it Good* (New York: HarperOne, 2015).

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 140.

refugees, the poor, the disposed and the unloved. It is more than helping them, it is witnessing to them of the life giving relationship that can be found in Jesus

Let us all say out loud by our sacramentally lives, “We have seen the Lord.”

APPENDIX D

Survey Comparison Report: February 26 (survey 2) vs. January 29 (survey 1)

<u>Response</u> <u>Survey 2</u>	<u>Response</u> <u>Survey 1</u>	<u>%Change</u>
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I. Christian Foundations

Q1. In your opinion how committed and actively engaged are you in our church?

A great deal
Somewhat
Hardly at all

55.7%	48.8%	7.0%
39.3%	41.5%	-2.1%
4.9%	9.8%	-4.8%

Q2. Do you presently hold a leadership role in one or more of the various activities in our church?

Yes
No

37.3%	34.6%	2.7%
62.7%	65.4%	-2.7%

Q4. Do you believe that Jesus is the embodied (active) presence of God within and through us?

Believe completely
Believe for the most part
Do not believe

95.1%	91.4%	3.7%
4.9%	7.4%	-2.5%
0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%

Q5a. Your relationship to God

Daily
Weekly
Monthly
Rarely

88.3%	86.6%	1.7%
11.7%	11.0%	0.7%
0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%
0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%

Q5b. Living a worthwhile life

Daily
Weekly
Monthly
Rarely

94.7%	88.6%	6.1%
3.5%	11.4%	-7.9%
1.8%	0.0%	1.8%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Q5c. Developing your faith

Daily
Weekly
Monthly
Rarely

84.5%	79.7%	4.7%
15.5%	12.7%	2.9%
0.0%	5.1%	-5.1%
0.0%	2.5%	-2.5%

Q5d. The basic meaning and value of your life

Daily
Weekly
Monthly
Rarely

84.5%	85.7%	-1.2%
10.3%	13.0%	-2.6%
3.4%	1.3%	2.1%
1.7%	0.0%	1.7%

Q6. How important would you say your Christian Faith is in your life?

Very important
Somewhat important
Not very important
Not important

93.1%	90.0%	3.1%
6.9%	10.0%	-3.1%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

Q7. Approximately how many times did you attend worship services on average at this church in the past 12 months?

Less than once a month
Once a month
Twice a month
Three times a month
Rarely miss

0.0%	1.3%	-1.3%
0.0%	2.5%	-2.5%
3.5%	2.5%	1.0%
17.5%	16.5%	1.1%
78.9%	77.2%	1.7%

Q8. Approximately how many years have you attended a Salvation Army church as a member of the congregation?

0-5 years
6-15 years
16-30 years
More than 30 years

8.9%	8.3%	0.6%
12.5%	10.7%	1.8%
26.8%	22.6%	4.2%
51.8%	58.3%	-6.5%

Q9. Have you ever been a member of a church (or faith) other than The Salvation Army at some point in your life?

Yes
No

53.6%	47.0%	6.6%
46.4%	53.0%	-6.6%

Q10. Were you a member of a different Protestant church?

Yes
No

100.0%	84.6%	15.4%
0.0%	15.4%	-15.4%

Q11. Please indicate which other faiths you were a member of (click all that apply)

Roman Catholic
Orthodox (Greek, Russian etc.)
Jewish
Muslim
Hindu
Buddhist
Baha'i
None
Prefer not to disclose
Other (please specify)

100.0%	100.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

II. Sacramental Understanding

Q1. Have you ever participated in the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper/Communion?

Yes
No

84.2%	74.4%	9.8%
15.8%	25.6%	-9.8%

Q2. In your understanding, has The Salvation Army administered the sacraments of Baptism or the Lord's Supper (Communion)?

Yes
No

51.9%	25.9%	26.0%
48.1%	74.1%	-26.0%

Q3. In your opinion why does the Army not practice Baptism or Communion (select all that apply)?

Distrust of the rituals
Divisions caused by different practice of sacraments
Questions on who could administer the sacraments
Questions about who could partake of the sacraments
I don't know

10.6%	18.3%	-7.7%
26.0%	19.7%	6.2%
17.3%	11.3%	6.0%
22.1%	9.9%	12.3%
11.5%	40.8%	-29.3%

Q4. How familiar are you with the doctrine and practice of holiness in The Salvation Army?

Very familiar
Somewhat familiar
Not familiar

64.9%	55.4%	9.5%
33.3%	38.6%	-5.2%
1.8%	6.0%	-4.3%

Q5. How familiar are you with the concept and Practice of sacramental living in The Salvation Army?

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not familiar

52.6%	32.9%	19.7%
43.9%	51.9%	-8.0%
3.5%	15.2%	-11.7%

Q6. How familiar are you with the relationship of holiness resulting in sacramental living?

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not familiar

51.8%	38.3%	13.5%
44.6%	49.4%	-4.7%
3.6%	12.3%	-8.8%

Q7. Do you think sacramental living is a valid replacement of the practice of sacraments as a ritual?

Definitely

Probably

Possibly

Probably not

Definitely not

51.8%	39.0%	12.8%
26.8%	20.8%	6.0%
14.3%	23.4%	-9.1%
5.4%	13.0%	-7.6%
1.8%	3.9%	-2.1%

Q8. How familiar are you with the practice "embodiment of the gospel" (active presence of God within and through us)?

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not familiar

63.2%	48.1%	15.0%
33.3%	43.2%	-9.9%
3.5%	8.6%	-5.1%

Q9. How familiar are you with the relationship of holiness, sacramental living and embodiment of the Gospel?

Very familiar

Somewhat familiar

Not familiar

55.4%	43.4%	12.0%
41.1%	45.8%	-4.7%
3.6%	10.8%	-7.3%

Q10. In your opinion, is embodiment of the gospel a significant expression of biblical Christianity?

Definitely

Probably

Possibly

Probably not

Definitely not

77.8%	70.5%	7.3%
14.8%	21.8%	-7.0%
7.4%	5.1%	2.3%
0.0%	1.3%	-1.3%
0.0%	1.3%	-1.3%

Q11. In your opinion, would it be helpful to have more information about The Salvation Army's position on the sacraments?

Definitely

Probably

46.4%	51.3%	-4.8%
30.4%	31.3%	-0.9%

Possibly
Probably not
Definitely not

17.9%	11.3%	6.6%
3.6%	5.0%	-1.4%
1.8%	1.3%	0.5%

III. Demographic Information

Q1. What is your gender?

Male
Female

38.6%	40.0%	-1.4%
61.4%	60.0%	1.4%

Q2. What age group do you belong to?

16-19
20-29
30-49
50-64
65 and older

1.7%	1.3%	0.4%
6.9%	10.3%	-3.4%
8.6%	14.1%	-5.5%
29.3%	24.4%	5.0%
53.4%	50.0%	3.4%

Q3. What is your highest level of education?

Elementary school
High school
Technical/Trade School/Community College
University bachelor's degree
University masters/professional degree
Doctoral degree

5.4%	7.3%	-2.0%
23.2%	24.4%	-1.2%
12.5%	15.9%	-3.4%
46.4%	42.7%	3.7%
12.5%	8.5%	4.0%
0.0%	1.2%	-1.2%

Q4. What is your membership status at Kitchener CC?

Answer

Junior Soldier
Senior Soldier
Adherent
Friend
Don't know

percentage(%)		
0.0%	7.9%	-7.9%
57.9%	56.6%	1.3%
31.6%	22.4%	9.2%
8.8%	11.8%	-3.1%
1.8%	1.3%	0.4%

Written Comments Survey 1

Survey Results

Survey 1: January 29th

Section III, Question Five: Are there anymore comments that you would like to add to this survey regarding sacramental living and the embodied gospel? Please write your response below.

- 26741089 The decision was made by the founder to stop practising the sacraments

- 26741083 At this time no- Catholic followed rituals did not understand them

- 26741072 I see the sacraments as not necessary, but I believe we should practise them as a part of our spiritual experience

- 26741052 Unclear about Baptism. They baptise babies but no water.
More information on sacramental living our church did communion but it is not done here - why is that

- 26741034 New to this church

- 26741023 I think a “lesson” in The Salvation Army's stance on these topics would be very helpful to anyone not just those looking into being members (Senior Soldiers)
Alcohol factor in communion therefore not picking and choosing which to do and not to do

- 26741020 The Salvation Army does not agree with drinking or baptising with water

- 26739857 We need to live a life belonging to God. Not the Salvation Army or any other denomination

- 26739836 I'm not certain of the Army's specific concept and practice of sacramental living but will view it at the front of the song book.
I believe in living of the gospel in our everyday life. It is one thing to have a knowledge of such things and a belief, but more important to walk them out so people consistently see Jesus in our everyday lives.
I have received sacraments in the army only occasionally but not in the full act. I.E. break bread with loaf at the front only 2x since we've been here
The army does not practise the sacraments because they are not necessary to salvation

- 26739724 Education should not be relevant

- 26739672 To much ritual. Time better spent explaining the gospels.

- 26739658 Lord's Supper-Every Meal

Baptism - Soldier Uniform

sacramental living cannot replace sacraments, Jesus commanded do this is remembrance of me

-26739638 Army does not do sacraments because they did not want to serve wine

-26739561 The Army believes that it does but I believe there is something that truly happens to ones spirit when there is a public expression of Baptism & Communion.

-26739532 Need for understanding

-26739230 I totally agree that our church needs to understand the reasons for and against the sacraments better

-We were told that the sacraments were not necessary for salvation

-26739186 They do not mention abstaining as a reason for ending the sacraments

-26739174 Living sacramentally is a concept I need to understand better

-26739147 I look forward to more clarity with sacramental living and the embodied gospel I believe that William Booth decided they were not necessary for Salvation

-26739070 Though I am a life-long salvationist and totally familiar with and secure within The SA's views of Sacramental living, though my more recent years (perhaps 2 decades) I have found the "remembrance of Jesus life, death and resurrection" based particularly on Luke 22 and 1 Corinthians 11 through the symbols of bread and juice representing Christ's Body and blood to be very meaningful for myself and others. Not as a meaningless ritual, but as a meaningful symbolic act t special times of the year or when Christ's death/resurrection are focused upon. The practice in my way of thinking shall be totally optional for all and not mandatory. I feel there is a place for both sacramental living and the practice of the sacraments

-26735574 We are his hands and his feet. May the Lord Jesus give us the words to speak the strength to work, the joy to share. To further His kingdom. I think the Army was trying to be different from other churches and was concentrating on the relationship with the living God

-26735561 Army's stance on abstinence from alcohol has an influence in the sacraments. But could this have a broader negative impact or barrier to worship for people?

-26735540 Sacraments is not taught so we know little of their significances. I would like to have it expressed that sacraments can be participated in if we wish and that they are still valued and respected by the Salvation Army. It would be great to see them come into practice by the Salvation Army especially baptism. We perceive practicing sacraments in a different form and they are not conditional upon salvation.

-26720347 Question re why the SA does not participate in Sacraments is not broad enough. Need more teaching on Holiness or at least inclusion of the terminology.

Written Comments Survey 2

Survey Results

Survey 2: February 26

Section III, Question Five: Are there anymore comments that you would like to add to this survey regarding sacramental living and the embodied gospel? Please write your response below.

-26777158 One is never too old to learn. Preaching is teaching. More time should be given during the service to teaching and not so much on other things such as singing by the worship team and kid's korner.

-26771639 I do believe sacramental living is important. Following the sacraments such as baptism and communion can be a very special time spent reflecting on your relationship with the Lord. My baptism in the Jordan River was an eye opening experience and it self refreshing just as wonderful as being cleansed by the Holy Spirit. The series was wonderful, and I enjoyed learning about the Salvation Army history. God bless the Salvation Army! Heart to God, Hand to Man! Some Salvation Army churches do practice this, but only a few

-26771630 I believe all Christians should live the sacraments-it should not be just a Sunday experience. If everyone walked out sacramental living and embodied the gospel our churches would be filled-people would be drawn to what we have in Christ. However sadly only 7% of all Christians walk the talk. We have to take our Christian walk seriously, Monday to Saturday too! People are attracted to honey not vinegar (gossip, slander, hypocrisy etc.) No one is perfect but we should strive to be Christ-like everyday. There is merit in taking communion.

-26771625 For me sacramental living embodies following Christ. As Christ participated in the sacraments so I long for that. It enriches my walk with Christ.

-26771615 I am a life-long salvationist I am totally committed to living the sacramental life. However, as I read Luke 22 and 1 Cor. 11. I feel there is still place for "remembering" Christ's life death, resurrection and return through the symbolic sacramental meal of the bread and juice: Christ is our Passover. He has become our Passover lamb (Ex 12) Beautiful symbolism. I also feel that through Baptism in water is not necessary for salvation it again is a beautiful symbol of new life in Christ (Rom 6)

-26771611 very little teaching has been done

-26771608 Do this in remembrance of me

-26771604 I love Jesus. My light I need to go boldly to my family and say. I have seen the Lord. Thank you Corinne and Steven.

-26771599 We should have a love feast once a year or 2x. We should keep up with uplifting music during the services. PLEASE lets have a mix of older hymns and newer ones so the seniors can enjoy some of songs instead of just sitting there not participating (that includes the worship team)

-26770177 I think terminology can be confusing--to my understanding it is all holiness. We are a holiness movement--perhaps the term "sacramental living is easier to understand for new people used to another church. It all boils down to abiding in Christ through His Spirit and living that life on a daily basis

-26770144 I have enjoyed the lessons about the practices of dedication etc. and not baptism

-26770130 I go to the Army, I don't belong to the Army. I belong to God

-26769593 Would value us practicing the Lord's Supper and Baptism as a personal opportunity if not in general worship. Also encourage our people to participate in other churches if they truly find it important to their faith walk.

-26769389 When I sing 'I would be Thy Holy Temple' I am reminded of my original vows. Am I perfect? No. Who is- God loves and forgives.

-26769360 More teaching on the SA's position on the sacraments may be helpful

APPENDIX E

Children's Survey

Children's Survey (age 10-15): Living as Christians

(Please note that every aspect of this survey will be kept confidential)

I. Christian living and Church interest

The following section is to help understand your Christian background and commitment to The Salvation Army Kitchener Community Church.

1. In your own opinion how interested are you in our church?

- ☐ A great deal
- ☐ Somewhat
- ☐ Hardly at all

2. Are you a leader in a program in our church?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

3. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is your Saviour?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ No

4. Do you believe that Jesus shows God's presence in our lives?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ Sometimes
- ☐ No

5. In the last year how much have you thought about?

A. Your relationship to God

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

B. Living a useful life

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

C. Becoming a better Christian

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

D. The meaning of life

- ☐ Daily
- ☐ Weekly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Rarely

6. How important would you say your Christian faith is in your life?

- ☐ Very important
- ☐ Fairly important
- ☐ Not very important
- ☐ Not important

7. Approximately how many times did you attend worship services on average at this church in the last twelve months?

- ☐ Once a month
- ☐ Twice a month
- ☐ Three times a month
- ☐ Rarely miss

8. Approximately how many years have you attended a Salvation Army Church as a member of the congregation?

- ☐ 0-5 years
- ☐ 6-15 years

9. Do you have a church background other than The Salvation Army?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

10. If you answered yes to the above question, was it? (If you answered no please go to section II)

- ☐ Protestant
- ☐ Roman Catholic
- ☐ Orthodox (Greek, Russian etc.)
- ☐ Jewish
- ☐ Muslim
- ☐ Hindu
- ☐ Buddhist
- ☐ Baha'i
- ☐ Other (please specify including non-faith)

☐ Prefer not to disclose

11. If Protestant, which church? _____

II. Understanding God's Presence

The following section is to help us understand what you think about the Church.

1. Have you ever been baptized or taken communion?

☐ Yes

☐ No

2. In your opinion does the Army offer Baptism or Communion?

☐ Yes

☐ No

3. What are some of the concerns the Army has about baptism and communion? Check all that apply

☐ Distrust of rituals

☐ Divisions caused by different practice of sacraments

☐ Questions on who could administer the sacraments

☐ Questions about who could partake of the sacraments

☐ Other: _____

4. Are you familiar with living like Jesus?

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

5. Are you familiar with being taught to live like Jesus in Church?

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

6. Are you familiar with the relationship of living like Jesus and what you are taught in church?

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

7. Can living like Jesus replace baptism and communion?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Are you familiar with others seeing Jesus in the way we live?

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

9. Are you familiar with others learning about the Bible by the way we live?

☐ Familiar

☐ Somewhat familiar

☐ Not familiar

10. Is living like Jesus a sign of biblical Christianity?

☐ Yes

☐ No

11. Would it be helpful to have more information about The Salvation Army's position on the sacraments?

☐ Yes

☐ No

III. Statistic Information

The following section is for comparison purposes only.

1. Are you...

☐ Male

☐ Female

2. What is your age? _____

3. What is your level of education?

☐ Elementary school

☐ High school

4. Are there anymore comments that you would like to add to this survey regarding sacramental living and the embodied gospel? Please write your response below.

Thank you for your time. The results of these two surveys (conducted January 29th and February 26th) will help assess the impact of Biblical Preaching on the subject of the embodied gospel. A summary of the results with cross-tabulated charts will be available before June 2017.

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