

# Chapter Fifteen

## **JESUS, JUSTICE AND THE SALVATION ARMY**

*Andrew Walton*

This essay explores the theme of *justice* in the Gospel of Mark, William Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* and the contemporary Salvation Army, imagining what the future may hold for a Salvation Army that understands and lives *justice* in creative, committed and Christlike ways.

### **INTRODUCTION**

The theme of justice has always held a central place within The Salvation Army, yet increasingly it seems this is not the experience of many Salvationists. While there remain many wonderful expressions of justice within the contemporary Army, for some Salvationists it sadly appears that working for justice is seen as an optional extra at best, and a distraction from the main task of 'saving souls' at worst.

Booth's *In Darkest England and the Way Out* indicates that such a dualistic understanding of body and soul was not so sharply defined for him. The Booths' ability to contextualise Jesus' holistic teaching and example resulted in a distinct movement, The Salvation Army, that—like Jesus—understood righteousness and justice to be intrinsically linked.

In more recent times, however, it appears The Salvation Army has been infected by strains of privatised pre-millennial fundamentalism and its priorities, an increasingly inward focus, confusion about its roots and uncertainty about its future.<sup>1,2</sup>

As our missional focus drifted, our historic connection with the poor was undermined and our commitment to justice was weakened or lost.<sup>3</sup>

A Salvationist's life of righteousness and justice is born of a love for God and others.<sup>4</sup> It results in a passion for the poor and a fight for justice that has been the heart and soul of Salvationism since its founding. However, the inability of The Salvation Army to adequately and uniformly ensure this understanding and experience for all Salvationists is evidenced in our present predicament.

If The Salvation Army is to fully recapture and fulfil its understanding of Christlike justice, such a limited understanding of *justice* must be challenged.<sup>5</sup> A systematic exploration of the theme of justice and its place within The Salvation Army is needed.

### **SECTION I**

#### **JUSTICE AND ME**

##### **PART 1: A RICH MAN**

My quest for justice has a rather personal beginning, where the Gospel of Mark records Jesus being approached by a wealthy man and asked, 'What must I do to inherit eternal life?'.<sup>6</sup> Amidst the poor, oppressed, ostracised multitudes among whom Jesus moves, in this context in the presence of the poor, it recently struck me just how out of place and how socially awkward this question actually is.

Jesus' message and ministry are not unconcerned with such things as eternal life, yet it is not difficult to see how they typically address the everyday concerns of the poor, for it is in this temporal reality that the majority of his audience live and die, in an Israel occupied by the Roman Empire.

The Gospel of Mark is filled with stories of Jesus healing and helping people in their poverty and hunger, their disability and exclusion. Clearly, these are not the concerns of the wealthy, who are generally shielded from such suffering, at least to some degree, by that which they have stored up for themselves.<sup>7</sup>

There is a certain level of disconnect, and perhaps even distaste, in asking this other-worldly question in the presence of those who have nothing.<sup>8</sup> It is a question that underscores the massive socio-economic

divide between those who stand in need of the distributive justice that Jesus' *Kingdom of God* promises and those who withhold it.

Yet, as I hear this rich man's question it dawns on me that it is, in fact, my question! I can see myself in the rich man as clearly as I see myself in a mirror. And I realise that I have heard this question asked so many times before. It is the question of the church I was raised in; it is the question of the denomination I serve in; it is my question.

I have heard it prayed and preached; discussed and debated; asked and answered; explored and explored and explored, ad nauseum. I have been part of the conversation, often driving it myself if I'm honest, for as long as I have been a part of the church.

Like the rich man, I feel self-assured and socially powerful, and am not afraid to approach Jesus with confidence.<sup>9</sup> Perhaps I too assume I can *inherit* eternal life, as if it is my religious 'by grace, through faith' right, with no strings attached.<sup>10</sup>

I can see myself so clearly in this man, asking my tactless question to Jesus in my comfort and wealth, in the midst of so much preventable suffering, and I feel ashamed. Like the rich man, I sense Jesus' gentle grace and love, while at the same time being inescapably confronted by his call to follow him and concerned about what that could mean and where it might take me.<sup>11</sup>

I am the rich man and I am scared.

Ched Myers suggests that the idea we may not be able to enter the Kingdom of God with our wealth intact is so shocking to many of us that we have 'concocted a hundred ingenuous reasons why [this passage] cannot mean what it says'.<sup>12</sup> As the wealthy usually inherit their wealth, often as property from parents as an entitlement, so this man having 'kept all [the commandments] since [his] youth' feels his righteousness should entitle him to enter the Kingdom of God.<sup>13</sup>

But Jesus then tells the rich man, 'You lack one thing.' Poverty! In a society where most rich men acquired wealth 'through the debt-default of the poor'<sup>14</sup> the most natural way this injustice could be reversed is if the wealthy 'sell what [they] own, and give the money [back] to the poor'.<sup>15</sup>

The idea that the 'righteous' wealthy class could not be saved was so inconceivable and shocking for Jesus' audience that his disciples, on hearing Jesus explain how hard it was for the rich to enter the Kingdom of God exclaim, 'Then who can be saved?'.<sup>16</sup> Jesus' answer clearly 'dismiss[es] the worldview that equates wealth and power with divine blessing or human meritocracy'.<sup>17</sup> This upside-down kingdom Jesus speaks of does more than challenge the wealthy to be careful about how they think about their wealth in relation to God—it challenges the very system that made that wealth possible. Myers concludes:

The story of the man abruptly finishes, as if the point is obvious. As far as Mark is concerned, the man's wealth has been gained by 'defrauding' the poor—he was not 'blameless' at all—for which he must make restitution. For Mark, the law is kept only through concrete acts of justice, not the facade of piety.<sup>18</sup>

Indeed, 'There can be no righteousness without justice!'<sup>19</sup>

It is, of course, well known how Jesus adds that 'for God, all things are possible', giving hope to the rich, but it would be wrong to assume this means the rich can enter the Kingdom of God without concerning themselves with justice for the poor. Francis Moloney concurs: 'This statement means what it says: it is impossible'.<sup>20</sup> The passage is an inconvenient truth for many Christians today, and needs to be understood as it was meant and taken seriously. Myers explains:

Jesus is not inviting this man to change his attitude toward his wealth, not to treat his servants better, nor to reform his personal life. He is asserting the precondition for discipleship: economic justice.<sup>21</sup>

We should not miss the obvious humour of Jesus' metaphor of the rich person inheriting eternal life and the camel passing through the eye of a needle. Crossan suggests, for Jesus, and/or Mark, 'The idea of the rich in the kingdom is not only quite impossible, it is rather hilarious...'.<sup>22</sup> Could a starker contrast between the Kingdom of God and every other kingdom be made? Could a more confronting statement on the eternal destiny of the rich be made?

Like the rich man, have we been quick to ask Jesus our question, yet not so quick to hear Jesus' answer, or what Jesus asks of us? Or having heard the answer, and not liked it, have we too walked away to perhaps quietly ponder our question all over again or even done our best to try to forget this troubling matter entirely?<sup>25</sup> The small comfort we may find in claiming that this question is addressed to a rich man some 2,000 years ago, and not to us, is undermined by the vast body of Jesus' teaching and his example of bringing socio-economic justice to the poor. The truth is we are tied to our wealth—concerned that retaining it may be wrong and terrified at the thought we might be called to part with it.

## **PART 2: A RICH SALVATION ARMY**

We ask our question from within a Christian denomination that is well known for its work among the poor. Many Salvationists sense the need to be meaningfully involved in the Army's mission of justice for the poor, marginalised and oppressed, and feel bad that they are not. How did it come to this? When did we settle, to such a large degree, for a sacrament; a spirituality; a salvation so unconcerned with the poor? How did we allow our vision of justice to become so small?

I will return to these questions later when we look more closely at our present predicament. Before that, however, a systematic exploration of the theme of *justice* in the Gospel of Mark will be provided, followed by a survey of the theme of *justice* in William Booth's *In Darkest England*. As this essay is primarily concerned with the theme of *justice*, firstly, a clear definition of exactly what is meant here by justice will be necessary.

## **SECTION II**

### **DEFINING JUSTICE**

A supporter of liberation theology, Archbishop Dom Hélder Câmara is noted for saying, 'When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why they are poor, they call me a communist.'<sup>24</sup> Câmara's comment highlights how an holistic understanding of justice needs to be concerned with both of these aspects of justice, and how this is not always popular. It is not enough to just pray for the poor, nor to merely assist the poor in their poverty—we must also reform the unjust systems that cause and perpetuate poverty. There are many aspects to justice, and it is to these we now turn.

#### **PART 1: DEFINING JUSTICE**

Justice is concerned with fairness, as enacted in our just conduct.<sup>25</sup> John Rawls actually defines justice as fairness, suggesting that inequalities are acceptable only if they leave all people better off.<sup>26</sup> In an unjust world, it is equity, not equality, that is needed to restore balance and justice.

Justice is related to righteousness, holiness, peace, health and wellbeing, in both an individual and corporate sense. In the same way that Hans Kung insists, 'There is no global peace without global justice' the same can be claimed for all these related aspects of justice.<sup>27</sup> Craig Campbell tells us:

Justice has been described as structural love, fairness embedded in the structures of society. Lasting peace is established on justice. An image of mission as hospitality, if it is to be truly good news, necessarily includes justice, expressed well as sanctuary.<sup>28 29</sup>

Justice is more than the absence of injustice, and is only achieved through its active pursuit. It requires the ongoing investment of time and energy to create and sustain it if it is to be more than just an unrealised theory or ideology. Justice is about the protection of rights, as well as the fulfilling of responsibilities.<sup>30</sup>

We may rejoice that justice has been secured in principle for all, through the Declaration of Human Rights and other such declarations, treaties and laws, but for many, justice still remains an unrealised dream. To borrow and humanise George Orwell's phrase, 'All [people] are equal, but some [people] are more equal than others'.<sup>31</sup> There is a heartbreaking divide between what is a potential reality and what actually is. We are, of course, familiar with some wonderful stories of the poor escaping their poverty, and how the rich relish and use any such story to illustrate how these anomalies affirm the propaganda that the poor are responsible for their poverty. Such wonderful exceptions to the norm are used to justify and maintain oppressive structures and systems, providing comfort to the rich that they need not feel responsible for the 'self-inflicted suffering of the lazy poor'.

The resulting mindset sees charitable giving as wasting money, claiming the provision of welfare assistance perpetuates laziness in the poor. Yet the crux of Jesus' teaching in the story of the rich man indicates, in the words of Nelson Mandela, that 'Overcoming poverty is not a gesture of charity. It is an act of justice.'<sup>32</sup> Justice rights that which was accomplished through wrongful, unjust means.

It is important to challenge any stereotypical views of the poor, views that fail to see the connection between their suffering and the systemic injustice that creates and perpetuates poverty. Our concept of justice must extend beyond commutative or legal justice—dimensions of justice that, while reasonably expected of all and enforced by civil and criminal law, require little if anything of us.<sup>33</sup> A deeper understanding of contributive, restorative and distributive justice will serve us well. A brief survey of these terms is provided below to further outline The Salvation Army's valuing of justice, and provide greater insight in how we might live such values.<sup>34</sup>

*Contributive justice*, concerned with 'what individuals owe to society for the common good', is a self-giving form of justice, born of a genuine and active love for others.<sup>35</sup> It speaks of how a responsible citizen contributes something of worth to the community.

*Restorative justice* can be defined as justice,

Which considers the whole in relation to its parts, focuses on the community's distribution of benefits, such as honours and wealth, and burdens, such as taxation, to individuals and groups.<sup>36</sup>

Restorative justice considers how inequity between individuals and groups has occurred and what needs to happen to reinstitute and maintain a fair balance of benefits and resources for everyone.

Distributive justice proactively seeks to ensure that all have enough, always. Where *retributive justice* is limited to righting specific occurrences of wrong, distributive justice is concerned with structural and systemic injustice, of which the cause is usually above and beyond the limits of any individual to pursue through the judicial system.

The reactionary and punitive nature of legal<sup>37</sup> or *retributive justice*<sup>38</sup>, which can seldom be satisfied, 'is most simply summed up in the principle of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth''.<sup>39</sup> It seeks to right what is wrong through 'the deliberate infliction of harm upon someone, or the withdrawal of some good for them...' and may be better defined as punishment.<sup>40</sup>

It is contributive, restorative and distributive justice that I see as being specifically Christian; or if not Christian then at least Christ-like, as far as they are modelled and taught by Jesus, as we will see in our exploration of the Gospel of Mark.

## PART 2: JUSTICE IN MARK

The Gospel of Mark was written by, to and about an oppressed people awaiting salvation from their situation. Jesus' good news responds to this temporal injustice with dynamic justice and salvation. The socio-political nature of Mark still speaks into unjust scenarios today and challenges us as Christians to find Christ in our context and ourselves in its text.<sup>41</sup>

The Greek word, *dikaiosuné* (δικαιοσύνη), holds the English meanings of both justice and righteousness. It is quite unfortunate that English translations of the Bible have almost always translated *dikaiosuné* as simply *righteousness*, with no attempt to capture its original dimension of *justice*.<sup>42</sup>

Driving the originally symbiotic meaning of these two words even further apart, Protestant theology has typically seen the meaning of *righteousness* as a quality of being and *justice* as an act of doing.<sup>43</sup> Therefore, any call to *dikaiosuné* has understandably been heard by English-language ears as a call to *being* rather than *doing*. This poor translation and subsequent tradition has been very misleading considering *dikaiosuné* 'is almost always used in the New Testament for the right conduct of [humanity] which follows the will of God and is pleasing to [God]'.<sup>44</sup>

This misunderstanding will be further compounded if our discussion is centred only on *God's* righteousness, and its atoning value for humanity, resulting in the belief *in* God's atoning righteousness being of sole importance. It then becomes of only secondary importance, at best, to *be righteous*. We can

therefore appreciate how some Salvationists may understand the need to *do justice* as appearing fairly low on the agenda, if at all.

Interestingly, the word *dikaiosuné* does not appear in the Gospel of Mark and on only two occasions do we find the Greek word for *just-righteous*, *dikaios*, (δίκαιος); once used by Mark of John the Baptist; on the other occasion used by Jesus of those who merely consider themselves so:

Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick; I have come to call not the righteous [dikaios] but sinners.<sup>45</sup>

What is significant for the theme of justice in the Gospel of Mark, however, is not the use of the word, or relative lack thereof, but how *injustice* saturates the context of the book and how Jesus responds with justice to it.<sup>46</sup>

## SECTION III

### JESUS

#### PART 1: JESUS IN MARK

Each Gospel portrays Jesus uniquely to its original audience, through the style, context, knowledge and theology of its author, while seeking to remain true to the *Sitz im Leben* (situation in life) of the Christian community and core message of Jesus.<sup>47</sup>

I have chosen to explore the theme of justice in Mark's Gospel for its chronological priority, its often neglected nature and its relative simplicity. I must also confess a decade-long love of this Gospel, since reading it from beginning to end one Easter Sunday by a river with some friends, where I found myself strangely transfixed and transformed by its message.

It has increasingly become something of a missional and ministerial manifesto for me ever since, and the subject of much study. I never feel so close to Jesus of Nazareth as I do when reading the Gospel of Mark.

Although the *Quest for the Historical Jesus*, in all its iterations, has its limitations there is certainly a sense in Mark that we are closer than ever to Jesus as an historical figure.<sup>48</sup> It is still necessary to discern the voice of Mark's community from Jesus' historical existence, yet I find the relatively uncomplicated and straightforward manner in which this Gospel presents Jesus as the Christ continually refreshing.

Frank J. Matera explains, 'The Christology of Mark's Gospel is in the story it tells.'<sup>49</sup> The distinct earthiness of Jesus in Mark's Gospel, where Jesus' humanness is clearly visible, while the understated nature of his divinity is progressively revealed, is simply captivating.

#### PART 2: JESUS, THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS

To understand Jesus' example and teachings on justice in context, a brief word needs to first be said about the connection between Jesus, the law and the prophets,

The content of Jesus' message, 'The Kingdom of God, reflects the nature of God'. Justice is God's way.<sup>50</sup> This is the resounding message of the Marcan Jesus. Jesus was not introducing a new idea by recalling and insisting that God is a God of Justice; we find this God of justice all throughout the law and prophets. Jesus was evidently aware of the 'ethical commandments',<sup>51</sup> and inspired by the prophets who 'insisted Yahweh took the side of the poor'.<sup>52</sup>

Hans Kung explains, 'Whenever [Jesus] speaks of God's Kingdom and God's will, he does so in the light of the Old Testament understanding of God'.<sup>53</sup> Justice runs deep in the Jewish tradition, and is never an 'optional extra'.

If we truly desire to understand Jesus and his priorities, we ignore the law and prophets at our peril. And if we are serious about our discipleship we must respond to the law, prophets and Jesus' testimony of this God of justice.

We not only do violence to Jesus' proclamation and revelation of God when we devalue the role that justice is to play in the Christian life, but we also deny something of the nature of God as found in the law and prophets also.

### PART 3: JESUS, JUSTICE AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

Drawing from the long history of 'justice that is [at] the core of Israel's biblical tradition',<sup>54</sup> in Jesus' first appearance in Mark we find he comes proclaiming the Kingdom of God.<sup>55</sup>

Marcus Borg suggests that, 'All of the Gospel writers use the first words of Jesus' public activity to indicate what his message is most centrally about'.<sup>56</sup> In Mark, Borg explains, this is the declaration that, 'The time is fulfilled, and the Kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the good news.' It is not insignificant that Jesus begins proclaiming the good news of the Kingdom of God in the region Galilee, immediately 'after John was arrested'.<sup>57</sup>

This shows how the injustice of John's arrest and execution could not silence the good news of God! Here Mark has Herod, the ultimate traitor, effectively acknowledge this when he says, 'John, whom I beheaded, has been raised'.<sup>58</sup> What's more, the fact that 'Jesus came to Galilee' where the poor and marginalised are, as opposed to Jerusalem where the rich and powerful were, provide further clues to whom Jesus was most intentional in reaching.

Mark's placement of Jesus arriving in Galilee is very pastoral and very political. With the destruction of the Temple (which Herod had rebuilt) in 70 AD, those in Jerusalem had been made both literally and spiritually homeless, and were dispersed into such disdainful regions as Galilee. Mark's Gospel is a wonderful decentralised new story of hope; the desert (John the Baptist) and backwaters (Jesus) are the new locus of God's future with Israel.<sup>59</sup>

Mark's telling of Jesus' cleansing the temple,<sup>60</sup> prophecy of its future demise,<sup>61</sup> instruction to abandon it, come the time,<sup>62</sup> and tearing of the temple curtain,<sup>63</sup> as well as the resurrection promise to see Jesus again in Galilee,<sup>64</sup> are ample evidence that the future of the movement is not with the temple.<sup>65</sup>

Jesus' repeatedly negative experiences in the synagogue<sup>66</sup> and the tale of 'one of the leaders of the synagogue named Jairus' encountering Jesus outside of the synagogue, when Jesus never encountered God in the synagogue,<sup>67</sup> provide further clues that he did not see Israel's future with God in the synagogue either.

The Kingdom of God was unfolding in an unimaginably new way and location, among the poor and marginalised. A non-violent confrontation of the illegitimate powers of oppression and injustice had been reborn in Jesus and his disciples; a kingdom to be preached and practised, whose good news was challenging and changing the world.

Myers notes how Mark places Jesus' teaching about the upside down nature of the Kingdom of God in the very middle of his Gospel,<sup>68</sup> bookending it between two accounts of blind people receiving sight<sup>69</sup>, 'function[ing] as a symbolic reproduction and resolution of the disciples' struggle to believe'.<sup>70</sup> Blindness is 'a crisis not only of plot but also of reading. Are we also blind?'.<sup>71</sup> Have we fully understood Jesus and his way? Where is *dikaiosuné*, justice-righteousness, found in our lives? Is the Kingdom of God within and amongst us?<sup>72</sup>

In stark contrast to the unjust *modus operandi* of the other kingdoms of Jesus' age, the Kingdom of God is a truly just kingdom.<sup>73</sup> The Justice of God is seen most clearly in the God of Justice, and God is seen most clearly in Jesus Christ.

So the disciples are left with a difficult choice, for *being* the people of God is about *doing* justice, mercy and grace, fulfilling the *missio dei*, the *mission of God*, and leaving vengeance in God's hands.<sup>74</sup> Jesus has outlined the *way* of this kingdom as leading to the cross. The phrase *Kingdom of God* beckons us to imagine a world where God's kingship is exercised; where God is king, and failure to see the *Kingdom of God* is failure to find God's way.

Loving God and 'the other', extending to our enemies—those whom we suffer under—is difficult, however Jesus was clear that discipleship was not to be easy.<sup>75</sup> Readers are directed to take up their crosses and follow Jesus to his (and their) death.<sup>76</sup>

In fact, for Mark, it is clear that discipleship is something to be continually revisited and renewed, as evidenced by the book's cyclic nature. At the end of each reading of the Gospel the disciples, and by implication the reader, are directed back to Galilee (Mark 16:7), where we find Jesus again (Mark 1:9), forever renewing our discipleship journey; forever called to pay closer attention to those Jesus payed attention to;<sup>77</sup> forever drawn deeper toward the heart of God. This is the call of *the Kingdom of God*.

Mark's Gospel talks about the Kingdom of God in very dynamic, organic terms, as something that 'has come near';<sup>78</sup> grows;<sup>79</sup> provides;<sup>80</sup> is to 'come with power';<sup>81</sup> be entered;<sup>82</sup> belongs to little children;<sup>83</sup> is received;<sup>84</sup> is hard for the rich to enter;<sup>85</sup> something we can be 'not far from'<sup>86</sup> and is expectantly waited for.<sup>87</sup> *The Kingdom of God* is God's kingdom, not ours,<sup>88</sup> and there is 'no suggestion that [we] can achieve it, or even hasten its coming.'<sup>89</sup> The *Kingdom of God* is a kingdom where justice reigns. It is already here, but not yet fully,<sup>90</sup> and this tension and ambiguity result in a kingdom that is difficult to conclusively define. For a deeper understanding of *the Kingdom of God*, we require a deeper understanding of the person of Jesus and the character of God.

#### **PART 4: JESUS AND JUSTICE**

Of course, it is not merely Jesus' teaching on justice, found primarily in his teaching of a just Kingdom of God, that we are concerned with here. We must also consider how Jesus' actions should be interpreted as signs or acts of justice, and how we should emulate them.

##### **Miracles**

If Jesus' disciples are to show no concern for people whose lives are diminished and overcome by injustice, then Jesus most certainly set a confusing example. Through his teaching, healings, exorcisms and other miraculous and restorative acts, Jesus inaugurates the Kingdom of God. Jesus' miracles were far from pointless party tricks aimed at convincing people he was special—they radically transformed and restored people to themselves and their community.

It is noted in Mark that Jesus (and his disciples) cured and exorcised many.<sup>91</sup> In addition to this faceless and nameless 'many' whose lives were forever transformed, there are a good number of accounts reported in varying detail in Mark, of Jesus' miraculous acts of restorative justice: a man with an unclean spirit;<sup>92</sup> a leper;<sup>93</sup> a paralytic;<sup>94</sup> a man with a withered hand;<sup>95</sup> the demon-possessed man at the country of the Gerasenes;<sup>96</sup> a girl restored to life and a woman healed;<sup>97</sup> the feeding of five thousand;<sup>98</sup> the Syrophenician woman's demon-possessed daughter;<sup>99</sup> a deaf man;<sup>100</sup> the feeding of four thousand;<sup>101</sup> a blind man at Bethsaida;<sup>102</sup> a boy with an unclean spirit;<sup>103</sup> and the healing of blind Bartimaeus.<sup>104</sup>

Many of the conditions these people suffered under were exacerbated further by how they were excluded and despised by society, including exclusion from participating in temple worship. While it is easy to be swept along with the story, we do well to remember those lives Jesus touched—named and unnamed—and how they were forever changed.

Even the story of the rich man holds allusions to healing, where Jesus tells the rich man to 'go'. The Greek word here, *hupagó* (πάγε), is the same word used in most of Jesus' healings. Perhaps the (refused) healing here is accumulation; greed; injustice.<sup>105</sup>

##### **Other Acts of Justice**

Jesus' teaching and acts of justice in Mark are not restricted to the above categories. The Sabbath is repeatedly mentioned, where the equal provision of rest *for all*, regardless of social class, is recalled and piety is not placed above justice.<sup>106</sup> Jesus' teaching on paying taxes and how this highlighted the hypocrisy of Jewish leadership and discredited their unjust collusion with Rome will be remembered, whilst revealing a just way of life under the Roman Empire. We also have Jesus' table fellowship with the outcast and despised, thereby touching the 'untouchable' and restoring them to themselves, their community and God. And the cursing of the fig tree, cleansing of the temple and foretelling of the temple's destruction as symbolic acts of condemnation of the injustice of Israel's leadership against the people of Israel all add to this understanding of Jesus and the radical justice he lived.

Indeed, everything about Jesus in Mark is 'right-ifying' and 'just-ifying' people with each other and God.

##### **The Atonement**

We have seen how through his actions and teaching, Jesus “does atonement” before he “dies atonement”.<sup>107</sup> And when he does die, the Gospel of Mark presents this as the ultimate injustice.

Where Jesus’ first entrance in the Gospel has ‘the heavens torn apart and the Spirit descending like a dove on him’,<sup>108</sup> symbolising God’s presence with Jesus, his exit has ‘the curtain of the temple torn in two, from top to bottom’ symbolising God’s absence from the temple.

With God’s presence no longer confined to the temple,<sup>109</sup> coupled with the darkness that came over (or overcame!?) the land, we find the execution of Jesus, in Mark, powerfully condemned by God.

Jesus, on the cross, has become sin, has become dirty; defecating (as the dead do), yet, and here lies the greatest of paradoxes, here hangs the righteous, justified One.<sup>110</sup> This is the offence and the wonder of the cross and resurrection.

For Salvationists, the dominant understanding of atonement with God is that it’s been made possible solely through Jesus’ suffering and death.<sup>111</sup> This highly focused belief is unfortunately prone to missing other dimensions of salvation, and can lead to the erroneous idea that Jesus’ life and teaching are of little or no relevance.<sup>112</sup> Nothing could be further from the truth!

Here again, we sense the agenda of the rich in a concern for cheap, individualistic atonement with God, and a lack of concern for the poor and costly discipleship—‘justification’ for ourselves, without justice for the poor. Christians simply cannot afford to overlook the life and teaching of Christ. It is precisely because of the justice that Jesus lived and taught that he was killed. Ignoring or devaluing the teachings and actions of Jesus Christ leads to an inadequate Christology. The One who dwelt among us and who was at-one with us reveals, in both word and deed, how we are to be at-one with God. And central to this at-one-ment with God is at-one-ment with others—indeed, Jesus teaches us that we cannot have one without the other. I am not espousing a tepid ‘moral influence theory of atonement’ that ignores the atoning value of Jesus’ suffering, death or resurrection, but presenting a theological perspective on the atonement that seeks to fully appreciate how the actions and words of Jesus enable us to be at-one with God.<sup>113</sup>

### **The Risen King**

Jesus’ resurrection is presented, in Mark, as God’s restorative justice. The justice of God is powerfully found as the God of justice declares Jesus Christ *just* through his resurrection and conquest of his unjust crucifixion and death. The resurrection proves the inefficacy of the domination system, violent crucifixion, to conquer non-violent resistance. As it would be attested many decades later, ‘The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.’<sup>114</sup>

God’s justification of Jesus, and ultimately God’s justification of us all, is an eternal triumph over the injustice of sin that all humanity has been subjected to. The kingdom way that leads to the cross inexorably leads to new life. In God’s resurrection of Jesus, Jesus is ‘dramatically proven to be in the right.’<sup>115</sup> This is God’s great act of ‘justice’!<sup>116</sup> In the triumph of justice over the greatest of injustices, Jesus’ resurrection powerfully affirms *the way* of Jesus to be the right way and the God of Jesus to be the true God.

Mark leaves us hanging, to decide for ourselves what to do with it all. Justice is promised, announced, but yet-to-be fully found. We are beckoned to go and find him and in so doing find and walk his path of justice.

### **PART 5: JESUS, YOU AND ME**

A small view of justice can reduce justice to a moralistic notion of *not doing* bad things. While *not doing* bad things may capture, in part, what justice is about, it misses the richer understanding of justice as investment in a life spent *doing* good.

Privileged Salvationists can do much better than ‘not doing bad things’. We can, and do, work towards contributive and restorative forms of justice, and are ever called to deeper engagement in matters of social justice. Feelings of guilt at doing too little in the past or despair at the enormity of the problem must not prevent us from considering what we can do now in serving the lost, last and least.

As Salvationists, we celebrate the atoning work of Jesus Christ in our lives and community, but need not limit this atoning work to Jesus' suffering, death and resurrection. In Jesus' life and teaching also, we find ourselves being made 'at-one' with God—'at one with an active, involved, justifying, justice-making God.'<sup>117</sup>

We are not passengers in God's atoning work. While we should not overstate the importance of our role in God's redeeming work, nor should its importance be overlooked nor undervalued. Captain Jason Davies-Kildea suggests, 'Rather than sit back and wait for God to change situations of injustice, people are called to work with God towards a holistic salvation, which reflects the spectrum of human need.'<sup>118</sup>

This is how we see God at work throughout all scripture, partnering with humanity to fulfil the will of God. The Salvation Army defines itself as an organisation that does this, in a multitude of ways. Yet somehow, the denomination that had so effectively called Christians to revisit how they understood themselves as identifying with the poor, marginalised and oppressed and their concerns, has become, in large part, that which it once provided an alternative to.

The Salvation Army's history of moving among the poor is, all too often, a history with little connection to the present. Salvationists would do well to better understand these historic foundations, and seek to discover what this proud past can teach us about how we can connect Christ to our contemporary Christian experience.

The eschatological focus of most contemporary Salvationists that centres on "going to heaven" in the future, but with a taste of 'heaven' already in the present', completely misses or ignores too much of the social, political and economic dimensions of the context the New Testament was written in. It leads to an imbalanced focus on 'saving souls' at the expense of 'loving others' in action for 'the others' sake, simply because they *are*!

A Christian life unconcerned with the plight of the poor would have been as unacceptable to Booth as it was to Jesus, yet this is a large part of our present predicament.

There is no greater Salvation Army resource to draw upon, in such a worthwhile endeavour of challenging this great disconnect between our understanding of justice and righteousness in the Army, than William Booth's masterful work, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*.

## SECTION IV

### BOOTH AND IN DARKEST ENGLAND

Since its founding days, The Salvation Army has sought, in the most holistic sense, to bring salvation to the whole person. A key component of this has been the long and rich history of working towards justice for the poor.

The immense gap between rich and poor, in the time in which Booth lived, has grown exponentially since then, and is set to grow greater still.<sup>119</sup> Further exploitation, in place of reparation; free trade in place of fair trade; debt accrual in place of jubilee, all compound and perpetuate the status quo, seeing the rich become richer and the poor die poor.

#### PART 1: BOOTH AND JUSTICE

It is as difficult to accurately measure the distribution of income and wealth in any age, as it is to limit the powers that see this gap between the rich and poor ever increasing.<sup>120</sup> Booth expressed his awareness of how millionaires 'would never have amassed their fortunes but by the assistance of the masses'.<sup>121</sup> He was concerned that avarice had come to be regarded as a virtue rather than a sin,<sup>122</sup> and insisted that 'society, which, by its habits, its customs, and its laws, has greased the slope down which the poor... slide'.<sup>123</sup>

As further evidence of the insidious nature of oppressive social systems, and of special interest to us in Australia, Booth records:

It is rather strange to hear of distress reaching starvation point in a city like Melbourne, the capital of a great new country which teems with natural wealth of every kind. But Melbourne, too, has its

unemployed, and in no city in the Empire have we been more successful in dealing with the social problem than in the capital of Victoria.<sup>124</sup>

It is horrible to think that the distress and disregard for the welfare of fellow human beings Booth mentioned is a deliberate part of Western society, but difficult to explain why such accounts are globally universal and how such widespread suffering could be possible otherwise.

Booth never absolved the individual of primary responsibility for their actions,<sup>125</sup> yet notes how, for many, entry into 'this dismal life can in no way be attributed to any act of their own will'.<sup>126</sup> Booth somehow seemed to understand the nature of the poor's suffering and the limited options to change their circumstances. His grace in refusing to judge the poor must surely be attributed in large part to his proximity to those he sought to save.

The Booths did not allow their empathy for the poor to overwhelm them, as they set out to enact a scheme that would tip the scales of justice favourably towards the poor. The rapid growth of The Salvation Army and subsequent successes are ample evidence that they had managed to harness something much bigger than themselves.

William Booth's recognition that 'if you wait until you get an ideally perfect plan you will have to wait until the millennium, and then you will not need it' no doubt gave him courage to cast it, and the boldness to enact it.<sup>127</sup>

## **PART 2: BOOTH'S VISION, MISSION AND VALUES**

Booth's vision was large in scope, spanning the globe in an effort to accommodate as many of the marginalised as possible. It contained sufficient detail to proceed with such plans and not so much that they got bogged down in intricate details. His task required he find new and specific ways to implement his plans, never knowing how successful they would be.

One well-known way Booth engaged the hearts and minds of England was to highlight how 'every Cab Horse in London has three things; a shelter for the night, food for its stomach, and work allotted to it by which it can earn its corn'.<sup>128</sup> Booth lamented these three things were 'absolutely unattainable by millions—literally by millions—of our fellow-men and women in this country'.<sup>129</sup>

This was no small vision, but Booth believed it was achievable.<sup>130</sup> For the countless men, women and children living 'in darkest England' there was indeed a 'way out'!

Confident of the support he would receive, Booth believed he was 'not without warrant for [his] confidence in the possibility of doing great things':<sup>131</sup>

Every Officer and Soldier...will be ever on the watch-tower looking out for homes and employment where these rescued men and women can be fixed up to advantage, nursed into moral vigour, picked up again on stumbling, and watched over generally until able to travel the rough and slippery paths of life alone.<sup>132</sup>

If he could see the Army now, I dread to think what he would make of it and have to say to us.<sup>133</sup> Justice for the poor would be possible, thought Booth, because every Salvationist would be meaningfully involved in making it happen. In an age where the Church was interested in loving and worshipping God, yet sadly disinterested in the practice of love of others, Booth could see how deliberate acts of restorative and distributive justice would be necessary. The great modern hope that if we all truly love and worship God, justice will be done had proved false. A society not doing bad things would not be enough; good must be done.

## **PART 3: BOOTH'S PRIORITIES**

The organisation's understanding of holistic salvation and the place of justice within it has changed over the years, as it did for Booth too.<sup>134</sup> For Booth, this appears to be a growing understanding of the value of justice in the life of the Army, while the organisation's understanding seems to have sadly diminished.

Quoting or misquoting Booth to effectively have him say whatever you want is not difficult. Many of his well-known one liners make it clear that the eternal destiny of people was central to his thinking, yet knowing he orchestrated and enacted a scheme to assist the poor *in this life* makes it abundantly clear that

this was a high priority also. The important thing to take from Booth's theology of salvation and justice is that he was more interested in *doing right* than *thinking right*, as displayed in the fact that he lived what he believed.

It has not been such a linear journey for the organisation, however, with different periods and places holding vastly different understandings and expressing incredibly different ecclesiastical models, sometimes centred on and sometimes completely devoid of expressions of social justice.

Booth clearly cared for the poor, was concerned with their plight and, as is the case for many who live among the poor, increasingly empathised with them in their suffering and saw 'the correlation between "spiritual salvation" and "physical salvation".'<sup>135</sup> I am afraid that where there is a lack of such understanding in social justice endeavours, as there indeed is in The Salvation Army today, there is a lack of involvement.

Christians who see salvation as encompassing both the temporal and eternal dimensions of life can expect to be viewed by other Christians with suspicion, be called *secular humanists*, supporters of a 'social gospel', heretics or worse. Such Salvos will take comfort in knowing Booth himself was called a socialist<sup>136</sup> and recall Jesus suffered worse still for acts of love and justice.<sup>137</sup>

I can identify with Bishop Desmond Tutu's statement on the 'social gospel':

I don't preach a social gospel; I preach the Gospel, period. The gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ is concerned for the whole person. When people were hungry, Jesus didn't say, 'Now is that political or social?' He said, 'I feed you.' Because the good news to a hungry person is bread.<sup>138</sup>

The reality is the Gospel is intrinsically social, political and economical, and Booth himself even spoke of his own scheme as 'the working out of social salvation'.<sup>139</sup> Salvationists should not feel nervous about their involvement in social justice issues. On the contrary, they should understand that through their actions they are participating in the mission of God, and know they are being true to the heart of our movement, faith and founder.<sup>140</sup>

As we consider how history has brought us to this moment in time, we might ask, 'How will history remember us?' What areas of continuity and divergence exist between Jesus' vision of the Kingdom of God, Booth's Scheme, and the contemporary expressions of The Salvation Army today?

Having laid out his plans for his Scheme, Booth laid down a challenge. This challenge is as relevant for Salvationists today as it ever was:

If it be that you have some plan that promises more directly to accomplish the deliverance of these multitudes than mine, I implore you at once to bring it out. Let it be seen in the light of day. Let us not only hear your theory, but see the evidences which prove its practical character and assure its success. If your plan will bear investigation, I shall then consider you to be relieved from the obligation to assist me—nay, if after full consideration of your plan I find it better than mine, I will give up mine, turn to, and help you with all my might. But if you have nothing to offer, I demand your help in the name of those whose cause I plead.<sup>141</sup>

Our world may be different in many ways to the world of William Booth. The specifics of who we help, and how, have shifted; scientific knowledge has challenged us in how we go about helping people. The Salvation Army is in three times as many countries as when Booth wrote down his Scheme.<sup>142</sup> This calls for a greater consideration of context in seeking sound missional and ministry engagement.

These differences notwithstanding, are the poor not still poor; the hungry still hungry; the homeless still homeless? Is there a vehicle so immeasurably better that we should abandon The Salvation Army and use it instead?

If I understand Booth correctly; if there is a better way, we should add to such a movement's numbers and invest ourselves there instead. *But* if we believe that God is not yet finished with The Salvation Army, that there is still scope to serve suffering humanity within its ranks, then we must hear Booth's demand, 'put our shoulder to the wheel', and serve.

We have seen, in Mark, how Jesus' life and teaching opposed the great injustices perpetrated against the poor in his day. We have seen how Booth contextualised Jesus' passion for the poor in his scheme, as

explained in *In Darkest England*. We understand the centrality of *dikaiosuné*, righteousness-justice, for the Christian life.

A life oriented towards justice as modelled by Jesus, and emulated by William Booth, has been a tremendous source of inspiration for many. We now must ask ourselves, 'How well does The Salvation Army understand and express the theme of *justice* today?'

## SECTION V

### THE SALVATION ARMY TODAY

The darkness our social mission seeks to overcome requires an Army of light, willing to march into the darkness with the light of Christ's love and illuminate and confront the injustices of our day. Seeing and loving people as they are, for who they are—instead of a proselytic opportunity—is an important first step in beginning to fully recapture our founding purpose.<sup>143</sup>

Booth spoke directly to the relationship between our concern for the poor's eternal destiny and their temporal suffering, when he said:

I am quite satisfied that these multitudes will not be saved in their present circumstances. All the Clergymen, Home Missionaries, Tract Distributors, Sick Visitors, and everyone else who care about the Salvation of the poor, may make up their minds as to that. If these people are to believe in Jesus Christ, become the Servants of God, and escape the miseries of the wrath to come, they must be helped out of their present social miseries. They must be put into a position in which they can work and eat, and have a decent room to live and sleep in, and see something before them besides a long, weary, monotonous, grinding round of toil, and anxious care to keep themselves and those they love barely alive, with nothing at the further end but the Hospital, the Union, or the Madhouse. If Christian Workers and Philanthropists will join hands to effect this change it will be accomplished, and the people will rise up and bless them, and be saved; if they will not, the people will curse them and perish.<sup>144</sup>

Booth clearly understood how the ignorance and insensitivity expressed in any attempt to proselytise to the poor in their present suffering was bound to be ineffective and offensive. How aware are we of this today?

Booth spoke of the religious and social dimensions of The Salvation Army as being 'joined together like Siamese twins; to divide them is to slay them'.<sup>145</sup> Such clarity and passion reveals why the early Salvation Army held a much deeper and broader understanding of the connection between *serving* and *saving* people than is reflected in most contemporary Salvationist theology and ecclesiology. May God help us to recapture this passion and clarity for our generation!

The decline of religious interest in Australian society and the subsequent decline in membership and leadership ranks has compounded the challenge faced by The Salvation Army in sustaining a mission of justice to the poor.<sup>146</sup> Sociologist James Henslin notes:

As social movements lose momentum, their leaders often turn inward, focusing their energies more on keeping the organisation going than on working toward the solution of the problem that's the reason for the movement's existence.<sup>147</sup>

Is this true of The Salvation Army today? Are we so focused on ensuring there is a future for the Salvation Army that we are failing to fulfil its mission?

I must here qualify my criticism, however. As a Salvationist and officer, I cannot grant myself the luxury of standing from outside and looking in with criticism—I am as much part of the problem as I am part of the solution. Only as we become increasingly honest with ourselves and transparent about the issues we face can we hope to solve them.

It is also important to pause and acknowledge the wonderful work of Salvationists through the world; many work tirelessly for the spiritual and social salvation of their communities. In no way do I wish to diminish or devalue their commitment and contribution. Indeed, such people are a inspiration and example to us all.

We have already acknowledged, though, that many Salvationists are not, and have never been, involved in any missional expression of The Salvation Army. Judging from my observations and experience as an officer of more than eight years, and as a soldier for more than six years before that, seldom are many Salvationists encouraged or challenged to take up such opportunities.

Craig Campbell suggests, ‘Army pulpits and classrooms need to find the language and the passion to reconnect all elements of mission justice as well as love.’<sup>148</sup> It should be admitted that many Officers do little if anything to drive and facilitate missional engagement for Salvation Army Soldiers or their community, and it should be acknowledged that the drive for justice within The Salvation Army frequently comes from the most unexpected places and people.<sup>149</sup>

We can no longer think of justice as something apart from righteousness. Acts of justice are *not* ‘optional extras’ but something that affect our righteousness before God. For Jesus, as for Booth, ‘holy hands are dirty hands’.<sup>150</sup> We have seen how, for Jesus, righteousness is intrinsically linked with justice, as the word *dikaiosuné* reveals, and this belief dictated how he lived. Such an understanding of justice has the capacity to influence the Salvationist agenda, and the organisation has a duty to teach such truths.

If we return to the story of the rich man, and consider its low rate of exchange and impact upon the contemporary Salvation Army, such wilful ignorance makes sense. Myers insists:

In capitalism, redistributive justice is high heresy—but Mark’s Jesus has clearly equated it with the Kingdom of God. Those who are structurally advantaged within a given socio-economic system, therefore, by definition cannot be a part of it. Conversely, to practice redistributive justice is not to be saved by works but to celebrate the new ‘economy of grace’.<sup>151</sup>

The majority of Salvationists in Australia today are, at least in a global sense, wealthy. The challenge of this story is a challenge to our way of life; our possessions; our amassed wealth. In many ways, albeit indirect ways, we have been born into a global system of exploitation, as beneficiaries. This has allowed us to become wealthy and/or maintain wealth beyond the wildest hopes of the poor majority.

I suspect it would have been difficult for Booth to imagine a wealthy Salvation Army, with vast pockets disconnected from the poor. Echoing Jesus’ admonition to the rich on the danger of allowing their riches to prevent their entry into the Kingdom of God, Booth comments:

How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of Heaven! It is easier to make a hundred poor men sacrifice their lives than it is to induce one rich man to sacrifice his fortune, or even a portion of it, to a cause in which, in his half-hearted fashion, he seems to believe.<sup>152</sup>

That many within the contemporary Army should feel challenged by such words is rather remarkable, but echoes what we know about our present circumstances and financial giving within The Salvation Army today.

Booth’s thoughts are again helpful:

From those to whom much is given much is expected; but alas, alas, how little is realised! It is still the widow who casts her all into the Lord’s treasury—the wealthy deem it a preposterous suggestion when we allude to the Lord’s tithe...<sup>153</sup>

The relative imbalance of giving to the work of The Salvation Army, between rich and poor, remains the same today, for the most part, and significantly hampers the mission of our organisation and opportunities to bring about justice for the poor.

While a detailed mapping of the many opportunities for Salvationists to be involved in just causes is well beyond the scope of this essay, suffice it to say the vast plethora of literature and online resources now available has brought such opportunities within the reach of any Salvationist committed to involvement in such a cause.<sup>154</sup>

‘Famous for our adventures in missing the point, for straining at legal gnats and swallowing camels of injustice...’<sup>155</sup> a new level of openness and humility will serve a postmodern Army well, as we become increasingly willing to relinquish that which no longer serve its purpose, in order to make room for that which does. To borrow the well-known Nike exhortation, what we need more than anything is Salvos to live what they believe and ‘Just do it’!

### **In the light of Jesus in the Gospel of Mark and Booth's *In Darkest England***

While Booth's vision of and work towards justice remains an important and inspiring example for Salvationists, ultimately any meaningfully foundational understanding of justice will be drawn from the life and teaching of Jesus.

We have seen in our brief survey of justice in the Gospel of Mark how deeply foundational justice was for Jesus, yet we have been forced to ask, 'How many Salvationists have ever seen or heard this?' For those who earnestly seek to *be righteous*, like Jesus, *doing justice*, like Jesus, is the obvious way forward.

The Salvation Army needs leaders who understand the centrality of justice to the organisation; leaders who know how to speak in a way that values this understanding and inspires people to action; leaders who are willing to teach, resource, champion and practice *justice*.

We need to make greater efforts towards courageous teaching and sacrificial living, so there is greater congruence between the Jesus we proclaim and the Jesus who lived justice. A future where those who bear Jesus' name emulate his justice is needed and it is to this future engagement we now turn.

## **SECTION VI**

### **IMAGINING THE FUTURE**

We live in such a fast-paced age. No sooner does a silhouette of the future form than it fades again, in a sea of uncertain shadows. What hope is there for a future with Jesus, justice and The Salvation Army?

#### **PART 1: THE FUTURE OF THE SALVATION ARMY**

Facing the challenges created by complex and far-reaching paradigm shifts is not unique to The Salvation Army;<sup>156</sup> all Christian denominations, as well as other faiths and worldviews, are struggling to adapt.<sup>157</sup> These challenges need to be acknowledged and confronted with courage and honesty. We will need to be ready, expect the unexpected and to accept that which we do not want to accept, ready to embrace a future for the church that's radically different to what we have yet seen, while remaining true to who we are.

The spirit of the early Army was to embrace the culture as far as that was possible, and was incredibly effective in doing so. Unfortunately, we are largely still holding onto a subculture that was formed last century and therefore not in touch with our own. Recapturing that spirit of openness will stand us in good stead for embracing the future.

#### **PART 2: THE FUTURE OF JUSTICE**

A Salvation Army that lives what it proclaims will have the courage and integrity necessary to speak with authority on matters of importance, such as justice, and expect to be heard.

A congruent story of justice for all humanity, animals and earth, embracing people of all belief systems, is needed.<sup>158</sup> The Salvation Army has typically done quite well in accepting all people, without discrimination, while retaining its distinctly Christian nature, and is well positioned to bravely embrace a new future of inclusivity in such holistic ways as outlined above.

In the face of such immense global suffering it is important we remain hopeful that such a dream of distributive and restorative justice is attainable, and recognise The Salvation Army's capacity to play a leading role in such a dream.

Importantly, we will need to continue to listen to the poor.<sup>159</sup> We will partner with individuals and organisations that seek the same ends, equip and actively include our soldiership in the mission, educate and re-educate our leadership about how to live and lead in the cause of justice for the poor.<sup>160</sup>

If we want the future of justice to include the future of The Salvation Army, we will need to leave behind some of our narrow thinking and ways, including small visions of justice, as we retain and regain those elements of Salvationism that we are known and loved for—our love for others, fuelled by our love for God.

## CONCLUSION

Booth concluded *In Darkest England* with an appeal that I expect will still touch the hearts and minds of Salvationists today. He wrote:

To you who believe in the remedy here proposed, and the soundness of these plans, and have the ability to assist me, I now confidently appeal for practical evidence of the faith that is in you. The responsibility is no longer mine alone. It is yours as much as mine. It is yours even more than mine if you withhold the means by which I may carry out the Scheme. I give what I have. If you give what you have the work will be done. If it is not done, and the dark river of wretchedness rolls on, as wide and deep as ever, the consequences will lie at the door of him who holds back.

I am only one man among my fellows, the same as you. The obligation to care for these lost and perishing multitudes does not rest on me any more than it does on you. To me has been given the idea, but to you the means by which it may be realised. The Plan has now been published to the world; it is for you to say whether it is to remain barren, or whether it is to bear fruit in unnumbered blessings to all [of humanity].<sup>161</sup>

Booth provided a strong sense of direction whilst giving the reader ample freedom to find their own path to justice or join him in his. Mark left us with instructions to find and journey with Jesus again and again, and to discover Jesus' path of justice for ourselves.

In both instances, treading the path of justice was not seen as negotiable, however exactly where one is to place their feet on that path is. Ultimately, of course, it is our own path of justice we do (or don't) walk. I pray The Salvation Army may better learn from Booth's example and ultimately find, on its path toward justice, that it is the footprints of Jesus it is following.

As I conclude, allow me to recall for you the moment of the rich man parting ways with Jesus, as Jesus called the rich man to part with his riches. Social and economic justice remains the precondition for discipleship, and Jesus' call remains clear—like the rich man, we are invited to part with our wealth, follow Jesus and enter the Kingdom of God.

It is an unwelcome invitation for many of us; one that will likely trouble us until answered. We are challenged to a leap of faith that has both immediate—here and now—as well as eternal ramifications. Are we willing to pay the entry price to the Kingdom of God? Poverty! Justice! Complete investment!

Will you follow Jesus and journey toward the cross?

Not sure? Go back to Galilee, 'there you will see him'; there you will journey with him again. Pay close attention to those who Jesus pays attention to; pay the entry price; take up your cross and follow Jesus to into the Kingdom of God.

Will you die doing so? Maybe!

Will you live? Definitely!

## REFERENCES

1. For a description of privatisation in the socio-religious domain, see Louise Kretzschmar, *Privatization of the Christian Faith: Mission, Social Ethics and the South African Baptists* (Lagon, Lagon Theological Studies Series, 1998), pp. 12–28
2. For an understanding of the cancerous effects of premillennial fundamentalism upon expressions of justice within The Salvation Army, see See Craig Campbell doctoral thesis, *Emerging Images of Salvationist Mission*, p.59–63, and Philip W. Davisson, *Sweeping Through the Land: Postmillennialism and the Early Salvation Army*, [http://hebrews412.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/WD\\_2003\\_May\\_3\\_Sweeping\\_Through\\_the\\_Land.pdf](http://hebrews412.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/07/WD_2003_May_3_Sweeping_Through_the_Land.pdf), 2003, Accessed: 4 November 2013
3. For an enlightening explanation of how The Salvation Army allowed its social mission to slip away and be forgotten, see John Cleary, *Boundless Salvation*, <http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/Global/State%20pages/Victoria/Brunswick%20Corps/boundlesssalvationdraftv6.doc>, pp. 100–112
4. Mark 12:30–31, Matthew 22:37–39, Luke 10:27
5. For a thorough dealing of the theme of salvation within The Salvation Army today, see Jason Davies-Kildea's thesis, *What does salvation mean in The Salvation Army today?: Exploring a Theology of Social Service and Holistic Mission*, [http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/Global/State%20pages/Victoria/Brunswick%20Corps/salvationthesis\\_jdk.pdf](http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/Global/State%20pages/Victoria/Brunswick%20Corps/salvationthesis_jdk.pdf), accessed: 10 October 2013.
6. Mark 11:17, The Holy Bible, *New Revised Standard Version* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995)
7. Matthew 6:19–20
8. Mark 11:28
9. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics* (Washington; Tell the Word, 2007), p. 32
10. The Salvation Army: *The Doctrines of The Salvation Army, No. 8*, [http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Resources/powerpoints/salvo/doctrines/Doctrines\\_Powerpoint.jpg](http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Resources/powerpoints/salvo/doctrines/Doctrines_Powerpoint.jpg), Accessed: 15 October 2013
11. Mark 10:21
12. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, p. 32
13. Mark 10:20
14. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, p. 33
15. Mark 10:21. In *Binding the Strong Man; A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006) p. 272, Ched Myers notes that it is not insignificant that Jesus adds 'You shall not defraud', which is *not* one of the Ten Commandments (where the other two synoptic Gospels drop this). As this story is all about economic justice, this 'commandment', along with the social commandments listed, underscores the importance to Jesus of justice among people.
16. Mark 10:26b
17. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, p. 34
18. Ibid. p. 274
19. Steve Bradbury, *Micah Challenge*, Class Notes, 3 July 2013
20. Francis Moloney, *The Gospel of Mark: A Commentary* (Peabody: Hendrickson Publishers, 2002), p. 201
21. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, p. 32
22. John Dominic Crossan, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* (San Francisco: Harper Collins Publishers, 1992), p. 275
23. Mark 11:22
24. Dom Helder Camara, *The Gift: A Life that Marked the Course of the Church in Brazil* (Editora Vozes: Indiana University, 2000) p. 53
25. Judy Pearsall and Bill Trumble (ed.), *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 768
26. David Jary and Julia Jary (ed.), *Unwin Hyman Dictionary of Sociology*, (Enderby: Harper Collins Publishers, 1999), p. 345

27. Hans Kung (ed.), *Yes to a Global Ethic: Voices from Religion and Politics* (New York: The Continuum Publishing Company, 1996), p. 20

28. Craig Campbell, *Emerging Images of Salvationist Mission*, p. 152

29. On global injustice, Captain Malkanthi Walton (*Personal conversation*, Moe, 8 November 2013), a Sri Lankan-Australian officer, notes the vast difference in resources between the Australian Southern Territory and other Salvation Army territories, identifying an important inequity that exists *within* the organisation.

30. For an excellent attempt at universal and global systems of justice see Hans Kung (ed.), *Yes to a Global Ethic*

1A *Global Ethic for Global Politics and Economics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 91–113

31. George Orwell, *Animal Farm*, <http://www.gutenberg.net.au/ebooks01/0100011h.html>, Project Gutenberg, 1945, Chapter 10, accessed: 28 October 2013

32. Nelson Mandela, *Twitter Tweet*, <https://mobile.twitter.com/nelsonmandela/status/390718488936845312>, 17 October 2013, accessed: 18 October 2013

33. Fairness between individuals or social groups

34. Defining and categorising justice is challenging. Chapter five of The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory, *Just: Imagine* (Melbourne: The Salvation Army: Australia Southern Territory Salvo Publishing, 2008), pp. 69–82 notes an alternative framework for understanding justice, ‘The Emetsystem’, using the typologies of *egalitarian*, *distributive* and *legislative* justice

35. USLegal.com, *Definitions: Commutative justice*, <http://definitions.uslegal.com/c/commutative-justice/>, Accessed 2 September 2013

36. John Macquarrie and James Childress (ed.), *A New Dictionary of Christian Ethics* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1986), p. 330

37. Also known as *corrective justice*

38. Also known as *rectificatory justice*

39. Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), p. 203.  
Exodus 21:24, Leviticus 24:20, Deuteronomy 19:21

40. Simon Blackburn, *Oxford Dictionary of Philosophy*, p. 310. Frank Rees notes, ‘Interestingly, in earlier centuries it was argued (by Christians) that we *owe it* to the convicted to punish them, without which they have been denied justice.’ *Personal communication*, 15th November 2013

41. For a brilliant explanation of how Jesus navigated the extreme socio-religious response to injustice, forging his own unique response, see: Hans Kung, *On Being A Christian* (London: Collins, 1977) pp.175–410

42. See David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2007), pp. 70–73 for further explanation of how the dual meaning of *dikaiosuné* must be held together if we are not to misrepresent the original Greek in our English translations

43. Alan Richardson and John Bowden, *A New Dictionary of Christian Theology* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 2002), p. 507

44. Gerhard Kittel (ed.), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* (Vol. 2) (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), p. 198

45. Mark 2:17

46. For a thorough dealing of the socio-political and economic oppression of Israel in Jesus’ age, including Jesus’ response to it, see Walter Wink, *The Powers That Be: Theology for a New Millennium* (Sydney: Galilee Doubleday, 1998)

47. German: situation or setting in life

48. See John Dominic Crossan’s seminal work, *The Historical Jesus: The Life of a Mediterranean Jewish Peasant* for a fascinating and detailed account of Jesus life and teaching in its context

49. Frank J. Matera, found in: Veli-Matti Karkkainen’s, *Christology, A Global Introduction: An Ecumenical, International and Contextual Perspective* (eBook) (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), Chapter 2, Section 1

50. Frank Rees, *Personal Communication*, 15th November 2013

51. Mark 10:19, Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, p. 33

52. Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man; A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006), p. 445

53. Hans Kung, *On Being A Christian*, p. 300

54. John Dominic Crossan, *The Greatest Prayer: Rediscovering the Revolutionary Message of the Lord's Prayer* (Pymble: Harper Collins e-books, 2010), Prologue (p.2)

55. Mark 1:15

56. Marcus Borg, *Conversations with Scripture: The Gospel of Mark*,  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yNh0z36LsA0>, 2011, 1 minute, 32 seconds, Accessed: 22 September 2013.

57. Mark 1:14

58. Mark 6:16; Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 25th September 2013

59. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 25th September 2013

60. Mark 11:15–17

61. Mark 13:2

62. Mark 13:14

63. Mark 15:38

64. Mark 16:7

65. Wes Howard-Brook, *Come Out, My People: God's Call out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2012), p. 399

66. Mark 1:21–27, 3:1–6, 6:2–6a

67. Wes Howard-Brook, *Come Out, My People: God's Call out of Empire in the Bible and Beyond*, p. 401

68. Mark 8:22, 10:52

69. Mark 8:22–26, 10:46–52

70. Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man; A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, pp. 236–238

71. Ibid. p.239

72. Luke 17:21

73. Latin: mode or method of operation.

74. Leviticus 19:18

75. Mark 12:30–31, Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:27

76. Mark 8:34

77. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 25 September 2013

78. Mark 1:15

79. Mark 4:26–29, 30–32

80. Mark 4:32

81. Mark 9:1

82. Mark 9:47

83. Mark 10:14

84. Mark 10:15

85. Mark 10:23–27

86. Mark 12:34

87. Mark 15:43

88. See David J. Bosch. *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, p.389–393 for a similar understanding of *missio dei*

89. R.T. France, in: *Divine Government: God's Kingship in the Gospel of Mark* (London: SPCK, 1990). p. 14

90. Ibid. pp. 23–25

91. Mark 1:34,39, 3:10, 6:5, 56

92. Mark 1:23–27

93. Mark 1:40–45

94. Mark 2:3–12

95. Mark 3:1–5

96. Mark 5:1–20

97. Mark 5:22–3

98. Mark 6:31–44

99. Mark 7:24–30

100. Mark 7:31–37

101. Mark 8:1–9

102. Mark 8:22–26

103. Mark 9:14–29

104. Mark 10:46–52

105. Ched Myers, *Binding the Strong Man; A Political Reading of Mark's Story of Jesus*, p. 273

106. Mark 1:21–27, 2:23–28, 3:1–5, 6:2–5

107. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 14 August 2013

108. Mark 1:10

109. Mark 15:38; Ben Witherington III, *The Gospel of Mark: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2001), p. 400

110. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 14 August 2013

111. The Salvation Army: *The Doctrines of The Salvation Army, No. 6*,  
[http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Resources/powerpoints/salvo/doctrines/Doctrines\\_Powerpoint.j](http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Resources/powerpoints/salvo/doctrines/Doctrines_Powerpoint.j)  
 pg, Accessed: 15 October 2013.

112. Frank Rees, *Personal communication*, 15th November 2013

113. Wikipedia, *Moral influence theory of atonement*,  
[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral\\_influence\\_theory\\_of\\_atonement](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_influence_theory_of_atonement), Accessed 2 December. 2013.

114. John 1:5

115. N.T. Wright, *How God Became King: The Forgotten Story of the Gospels* (New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2012) p. 143

116. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 14 August 2013

117. Frank Rees, *Personal communication*, 15 November 2013

118. Jason Davies-Kildea, *What Does Salvation Mean in The Salvation Army Today?: Exploring a Theology of Social Service and Holistic Mission*, p. 115.

119. For information about the growing gap between rich and poor, see: Boundless.com, *The growing gap between rich and poor*, <https://www.boundless.com/sociology/understanding-stratification-inequality-and-social-class-in-the-u-s/social-mobility/growing-gap-between-rich-and-poor/>, accessed: 6 November 2013. For an outline of how this issue perpetuates injustice and a brief sketch of an ethical way forward, see: Hans Kung (Ed.), *Yes to a Global Ethic: Voices from Religion and Politics*, pp. 19–21.

120. Nicholas Abercrombie, Stephen Hill and Bryan S. Turner, *The Penguin Dictionary of Sociology* (Bungay: Allen Lane, 1986), pp. 70–72

121. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, (London: Charles Knight & Co. Ltd, 1970), p. 240

122. Ibid, p. 46

123. Ibid. p. 48

124. Ibid. p. 275

125. Ibid. p. 48

126. Ibid. p. 51

127. Ibid. p. 270

128. Ibid. p. 20

129. Ibid.

130. Ibid.

131. Ibid. p. 245

132. Ibid.

133. The professionalisation of ministry, primarily in the form of ordained ministers and employees within The Salvation Army, is largely responsible for the laity not being involved. [See also Harold Hill, *Leadership*

in *The Salvation Army, A Case Study in Clericalisation* (Milton Keynes: Paternoster, 2007)]. See David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, pp. 467–474 for an ecumenical, but still relevant, treatment of this issue and some ideas going forward

134. Jason Davies Kildea, *What Does Salvation Mean in The Salvation Army Today?: Exploring a Theology of Social Service and Holistic Mission*, pp. 70–73
135. Ibid. p. 72
136. Roy Hattersley, found in: Jason Davies-Kildea, *What Does Salvation Mean in The Salvation Army Today?: Exploring a Theology of Social Service and Holistic Mission*, p. 71
137. Mark 3:22
138. Desmond Tutu, *Facebook Post*,  
<https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=565199533542708&set=a.158708244191841.39365.151830564879609&type=1>, 2013. Accessed 16 October 2013
139. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, p. 271
140. See Walter Rauschenbusch, *A Theology for the Social Gospel*,  
<https://ia600300.us.archive.org/16/items/theologyforsoc00raus/theologyforsoc00raus.pdf>, 1917. Accessed: 2 November 2013 for one account of the ‘social gospel’—a theology defined by the author as ‘the old message of salvation, but enlarged and intensified (p.9)
141. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, appendix p. 281
142. Ibid. p. v; The Salvation Army, *Australia Southern Territory Website: About Us*,  
<http://www.salvationarmy.org.au/Who-We-Are/About-Us/> Accessed: 18 October 2013
143. See Craig Campbell doctoral thesis, *Emerging Images of Salvationist Mission*, pp. 39–40, to guard against unfair claims that the Booths ever saw justice for the poor and a second or lesser option to sole evangelical efforts, as has sometimes been claimed.
144. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, appendix p. 257
145. A recollection by Brigadier Fred Fox, lecture to cadets, 4 January 1924, quotation taken from Phil Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (St Albans: Campfield Press, 1987) p.63, found in: Jason Davies-Kildea, *Unwrapping Our Bounded Salvation: Soul Salvation, Whole Salvation*, (<http://www.sarmy.org.au/Global/SArmy/Social/justsalvos/Documents/Theology/Thought%20Matters%20Paper%20-%20JDK.doc>), p. 3. Accessed: 4 November 2013
146. See chapter three of Michael Frost and Alan Hirsch’s *The Shaping of Things to Come* (Erina: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), pp. 34–59 for an overview of non-Christian attitudes to the institutionalised church
147. James M. Henslin, *Sociology: A Down to Earth Approach, Tenth Edition Audiobook* (Newark: Audible, 2010), Chapter 21, 1:18:38 mins
148. Craig Campbell, *Emerging Images of Salvationist Mission*, p. 91
149. On The National Council of Churches in Australia brochure, *Social Justice Matters: What Does the Lord Require of You?*, 2013. Unlike more than 25 other faith-based organisations, The Salvation Army is not even listed as a resource, perhaps revealing our troubled ecumenical history and demonstrating the current lack of opportunities for the Christian Community to join with us in acts of social justice.
150. Frank Rees, *Personal conversation*, 25 September 2013
151. Ched Myers, *The Biblical Vision of Sabbath Economics*, pp. 34–35
152. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, p. 279
153. Ibid. p. 271
154. For an inspiring review of and call to Salvationist involvement in social justice, see *Just: Imagine* (Melbourne: The Salvation Army: Australia Southern Territory Salvo Publishing, 2008). For a helpful list of ways to get involved, The Salvation Army Australia Southern Territory has produced a small book: The Salvation Army Justice Unit, *50 Ways to do Justice: Volume 1* (Sydney South: Carpenter Media, 2010).
155. Brian McLaren, in Brian McLaren, Elisa Padilla, and Ashley Bunting Seeber (ed.), *The Justice Project*, (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 2009), p. 20
156. A detailed survey of the challenges post-modernity and post-modernism pose to the future of The Salvation Army is beyond the scope of this essay. For some excellent resources regarding this see: Michael Frost

and Alan Hirsch, *The Shaping of Things to Come*, (Erina: Hendrickson Publishers, 2003), Brent Lyons-Lee and Ray Simpson, *Emerging Down Under* (Adelaide: ATF Press, 2008), and Stuart Murray's *Post Christendom: Church and Mission in a Strange New World* (Waynesboro: Paternoster Press, 2005) and *Church After Christendom* (Waynesboro: Paternoster Press, 2004)

157. For an excellent survey of Christianity's attempt to adapt to these challenges, and some considerations for the other major religions, see Hans Kung's *Christianity: The Religious Situation of Our Time* (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1995). For an Atheist account, see Alain de Botton's *Religion for Atheists: A Non-believer's Guide to the Uses of Religion* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2012)
158. This has been a key theme across many of Hans Kung's books
159. See David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, pp. 435–438 to greater appreciate how if The Salvation Army is to be the 'church of the poor' it is vital that 'God's preferential option for the poor' is maintained
160. Paul Moulds, found in: The Salvation Army *Justice Unit, 50 Ways to do Justice: Volume 1*, (Sydney South: Carpenter Media, 2010), pp. 21–23
161. William Booth, *In Darkest England and the Way Out*, p. 285