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"THE GOOD TIME COMING": THE IMPACT OF WILLIAM BOOTH'S
ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION

A THESIS SUBMITTED FOR PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
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BY
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"THE GOOD TIME COMING": THE IMPACT OF WILLIAM BOOTH'S ESCHATOLOGICAL VISION

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During my time at both Asbury institutions, Dr. Ronald Holz, Dr. David Rightmire, and Dr. Edward McKinley have been sterling examples of what Salvation Army scholarship can be at its best. Their lives and writings have encouraged me to pursue Salvation Army studies with passion and practicality. All three men read this manuscript and offered me many valuable insights.

My partner in life and ministry, Abigail Miller, has been my principal encourager in this thesis process and in my seminary experience as whole. For four months she avoided complaining about the piles of books that became prominent in our small apartment. Instead she supported me in every conceivable fashion.
INTRODUCTION

Today in the United States there is scarcely a person who has not been impacted by the eschatological vision of William Booth. Each person who observes The Salvation Army\(^1\) in its various forms whether spotting a bell-ringer during the Christmas season, admiring its work in the aftermath of a natural disaster, receiving a meal at one its locations, spending a night in one of its shelters, or attending a worship service at one of its corps experiences in some degree the effect of William Booth’s theology and more specifically his eschatology.

Likewise people who are in contact with the Salvation Army’s work in 110 countries around the globe are exposed to its functional, pragmatic theology that was nurtured by a man in the nineteenth century named William Booth. The theology of William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army,\(^2\) finds its nexus in eschatology. That theology has impacted the world and specifically the Army’s ecclesiological, ethical, and doctrinal self-understanding. When speaking implicitly about eschatology, William Booth often referred to it as “the good time coming.” Indeed the nature of this “good time” was, in Booth’s mind, an objective fact and the impetus of William Booth’s ministry and theology.

As the Salvation Army today looks toward the future, it is wise to keep both positive and negative aspects of its past in view. The Salvation Army has benefited from the fresh perspectives flowing from various academic disciplines during the last quarter of the twentieth century and the beginning of the twenty-first century. Academic books, dissertations, and articles have provided valuable insights into Salvation Army studies. These examinations have

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\(^1\) The 1878 act required that the definite article “the” be capitalized when referring to the Army. Here to this paper will refer to the Army within common usage.

\(^2\) For the purpose of this paper William Booth is referred to as the “founder” of the Salvation Army. It is acknowledged that Catherine Booth and William Booth were “co-founders” of the Salvation Army.
included general and particular studies, personal biographies of Salvation Army figures, and sociological inquiries analyzing the way the Army transmitted its evangelical message within popular culture.

Most studies done on issues related to the Salvation Army or its early leaders appropriately give some attention to the theological context. These studies, however, generally have a specific disciplinary focus and implicitly neglect a thorough theological appraisal because it is beyond the scope of a given project. Exceptions are studies in historical theology that have kept the theology of early Army leaders at the forefront. All Salvation Army scholarship, ranging from leadership studies to musicology, finds its connecting point in historical theology.

**Goals of the Study**

The early Salvation Army and its founders were primarily motivated by their personal religious beliefs as well as their faith in God and in the gospel as they understood it. Though their doctrinal understanding lacked explicit systemization, its vitality engaged the world it sought to save with a dynamic practical theology. One of the principal shapers of this theology was of course, William Booth, whose pragmatic theology was prompted by his understanding of

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personal and universal eschatology.\(^4\) This thesis will show the precedence of eschatology in William Booth’s theology and the way that eschatology has impacted Salvation Army ecclesiology, ethics, and doctrine. Chapter one establishes the doctrine of eschatology as the centerpiece of William Booth’s theological praxis. Chapter two places the Army’s eschatological ecclesiology within the context of mission. Chapter three seeks to ascertain a way in which William Booth’s social ethics can be defined and translated into the contemporary context of Salvation Army ministry in light of his eschatological vision. With a view toward promoting clarity in theological discussion, chapter four evaluates the Army’s final eschatological article of faith and its development and how the Army has interpreted it. Each chapter furthers the thesis that William Booth’s theology and ministry is most clearly seen within his concept of eschatology. This new way of looking at William Booth’s theology is the distinctive flavor that this study provides to the landscape of historical theology within the Salvation Army.

**Review of Literature**

Various studies on denominational history, eschatology, ethics, and doctrine have been beneficial to this thesis. A few texts were critical to this discussion and therefore deserve preliminary comment.

**Primary Sources**

The primary sources critical to understanding William Booth’s eschatological perspective are his writings, which primarily appeared in various Salvation Army periodicals during his

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\(^4\) See the distinction between “personal” and “universal” eschatology below.
lifetime. Articles from the Salvation Army's missionary periodical, *All the World*, are particularly clear in delineating Booth's eschatology because of the publication's global focus. The purpose of this periodical was to unite the Salvation Army in its worldwide pursuit of realizing the reign of Christ. William Booth's most clearly stated piece of writing about his universal eschatology is seen in his article from *All the World*, entitled "The Millennium; or, The Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles." In this article Booth speaks of what he understands to be the characteristics of the millennial reign of Christ, beginning with the "Reign of God" where all people will love and worship God. This "good time coming" will also be differentiated by the "Reign of Righteousness" when the social order will be under the "operation of the Holy Spirit" as all "will be entirely sanctified..." The third and fourth features of the millennium for Booth were the "Prevalence of Love" and an abundance of "happiness" which will overflow the earth. Two interesting aspects of this article display William Booth's distinctive understanding of the millennium. First, Booth places the center of this millennial kingdom in his home town, London, England. Second, he sees the Salvation Army's work as indicative of the marks of the millennium, hence the secondary title—"the triumph of Salvation Army principles."

Many other articles and sermons of William Booth clearly show his eschatological perspective. Significant articles are noted throughout this thesis. Three collections of William Booth's writings were beneficial to this study: *The General's Letters, 1885; The Founder Speaks*

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7 William Booth, "The Millennium," 338. This also demonstrates that pneumatology was the foundation for William Booth's proclamation of his universal eschatology. This theme was transmitted to him through the American holiness movement and will be discussed later in the thesis.
Again; The Seven Spirits; and The Founder's Messages to Soldiers: During Years 1907-08.9

Booth's own books are also critical to this study, particularly his In Darkest England: And the Way Out and Salvation Soldiery: A Series of Addresses on the Requirements of Jesus Christ's Service.10

Secondary Resources

Much of the early literature about the life and theology of William Booth was hagiographic in nature. Despite this tendency these texts do provide keen biographical insights and helpful quotations from William Booth. These include the significant studies of Harold Begbie's The Life of General William Booth; St. John Ervine's God's Soldier: General William Booth; and Robert Sandall's The History of The Salvation Army. Of recent scholarship the most clearly articulated statement about William Booth's eschatology is found in Roger Green's War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth.11

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9 William Booth, The General's Letters, 1885 (London: International Headquarters, 1890); The Founder Speaks Again (St. Albans: The Campfield Press, 1960); The Seven Spirits or What I Teach My Officers (St. Albans: Campfield Press, 1907); The Founder's Messages to Soldiers: During the Years 1907-08 (London: The Salvation Army Book Department, 1921).
11 Green, War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth, 60-75.
CHAPTER ONE
WILLIAM BOOTH’S ESCHATOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Standing before a crowd assembled as a “War Conference” in the thirteenth year of the Christian Mission, Founder William Booth passionately proclaimed, “We are sent to war...and to stop short of nothing but the subjugation of the world to the sway of the Lord Jesus.”\(^1\) The aspiration of winning the world and saving the souls therein is an implicit eschatological assertion. These words and others spoken by William Booth reveal the intensity of his eschatological outlook.

Eschatology as the Centerpiece of William Booth’s Theology

Though the theological term “eschatology” itself may have never emerged from William Booth’s pen, the concept of the last things was a primary factor for motivating the action of his life and ministry. Optimism and hope are descriptive words that characterize the theological outlook of William Booth. Because of his hope of eternity he was optimistically moved to win the world for Christ through the redemptive work of the Salvation Army. It is within this context and for this purpose that William Booth’s Army is still “sent to war.”

Personal Eschatology

As a basic orthodox theme of Christianity, eschatology has received varying emphases down through history. The term eschatology is a derivative of the Greek word \textit{eschatos}, meaning “last” or “farthest.”\(^2\) Hence, eschatology is generally understood as the study of last things.


Within Christian orthodoxy it usually conveys the decisive climax at the end of history when Christ returns to institute his eternal reign of righteousness. Eschatology attempts to ascertain the purpose of history as it moves toward the *eschaton*. Thomas C. Oden explains, "The study of its [God's design] consummation is the last, the crowning topic of classical consensual exegesis." This doctrine is, however, more than God's work in the future. The systematic theologies of Jürgen Moltmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg have emphasized how eschatology informs the present. In light of God's eschatological victory, the Christian's life is lived in a hope that reorients the present reality. Eschatology is often restricted in common theological discussion to the end of history and the universe as a whole. This understanding of eschatology is restricting, in that it sometimes neglects to consider individual participation in the *eschaton*. The basic question that comes from personal eschatological study is, "What happens when a person dies?"

This area is summarized in the four topics: resurrection, judgment, heaven, and hell. Roger E. Olson suggests that the greatest point of agreement in all of Christian thought is that "the future resurrection of the dead is the blessed hope of all who are in Christ Jesus by faith."  

If there is one item within William Booth's theology that can never be debated, it is his obvious belief in eternal damnation (hell). Correspondingly the doctrine of eternal joy (heaven) is also close to William Booth's heart. Due to his utilization of revivalist "measures," William Booth was consistently placing the fear of hell and the joy of heaven in front of people, in order to enable them to make a decision to follow Christ. When considering the eternity of individuals, Booth asked, "When shall we realize the magnitude of the contest and the gigantic interests that are at stake...go into the field as earnestly as men do in earthly wars, where the issues are,

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compared with these, of trifling moment?"\(^5\) Angered by the response of Christians who would
dare to say they are “not called” to save sinners, Booth scolds:

> Put your ear down to the Bible, and hear Him bid you go and pull poor sinners out of the fire
> of sin. Put your ear down to the burdened, agonized heart of humanity, and listen to its pitying
> wail for help. Go and stand by the gates of Hell, and hear the damned entreat you to go to their
> father’s house...And then look the Christ in the face, whose mercy you profess to have got
> [sic], and whose words you have promised to obey, and tell Him whether you will join us heart
> soul and body and circumstances in this march to publish his mercy to all the world.\(^6\)

In an article titled “The Passion of My Life,” William Booth directly mentions aspects of
personal eschatology: “How can a man realize the existence of God, the forgiveness of sins, the
value of his soul, the terrors of the Judgment Day, the glories of heaven and the anguish of Hell
without the feelings that correspond with those tremendous truths?”\(^7\) William Booth affirmed the
resurrection of the body: “If you want a happy death-bed, a blessed resurrection, a welcome to
the right hand at the Great White Throne and a good place (robed and crowned) in paradise, there
is no other way by which you can gain such celestial advantages than by going on.”\(^8\)

**Universal Eschatology**

Throughout the course of Christian history, various discussions have taken place
concerning not just the personal end of life but also the end of the world. The consensus
throughout history has been that Christ will indeed return to earth in his *parousia* (i.e. “coming,”
or “advent”). Upon his return he will bring to fulfillment the reign of God, also known as the
Kingdom of God, which is presently an “already” but “not-yet” reality in our world. Roger Olsen
also explains, “In the end God will create a new heaven and a new earth that will endure
forever.”\(^9\) Olsen explains that these beliefs have historically been considered orthodox, and

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William Booth’s theology is clearly congruent with such a consensus. The diversity in Christian belief comes in discussion of the thousand year reign of Christ mentioned in Revelation 20:1-8, also referred to as the millennium. Although many Christians disregard discussion of millennial interpretations because they see such as peripheral, the way this reign of Christ is interpreted carries distinct motivation for the activity of Christians in the world. While this issue does not fall into the distinction of dogma, it is a doctrine that is important for contemporary Christians. It was of extreme importance in the thought of William Booth, though his eschatological inclinations were never dogmatically instituted.

Premillennialism and classical postmillennialism are related in that their adherents generally account for a literal thousand year reign of Christ. Millennialism is also referred to as *chiliasm*, which is an expression of the Greek word *chilias* meaning, “a thousand.” The differences between millennial views arise as to when the return of Christ will occur.

Postmillennialism affirms that Christ will return *after* the thousand year reign of Christ.

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10 Classical postmillennialism holds to a literalistic view of the millennium and a futuristic view of its dawning. This view was championed by the preaching of Jonathan Edwards in the eighteenth century and became the dominant evangelical perspective in the nineteenth century. Because of the fashion in which William Booth was impacted by millennialism, the term “postmillennialism” will refer to classical postmillennialism. I acknowledged that there are legitimate contemporary exponents of postmillennialism whose views are far from classical millennialism. The postmillennialism promoted by Loraine Boettner is one of many exceptions to this classical literalism. He contends that the millennial kingdom will be dominated by a period of peace that is experienced in successive degrees his understanding of the millennium is therefore not literalistic. See The Millennium (Philadelphia: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1957), 14-19, 63-66. Some postmillennialist do not feel that the millennium is a future reality and consider the millennial age to present here and now. There is also a recent shift toward a postmillennial perspective called “theonomic postmillennialism” also called “Christian Reconstructionism” or “dominion theology,” which finds its basis in the dominion given to humanity in the Garden of Eden. They advocate a “Christocracy” where God’s laws are enforced as the rule of the world. The Mosaic laws reemphasized in this view. See Gary North, Millennialism and Social Theory (Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1990); David Chilton, Productive Christians in an Age if Guilt Manipulators, 3rd Edition (Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1985); Kenneth L. Gentry, He Shall Have Dominion: A Postmillennial Eschatology, 2nd edition (Tyler, Texas: Institute for Christian Economics, 1997). For excellent discussions of the tenets and history of postmillennialism see Gregory A. Boyd and Paul R. Eddy, Across the Spectrum: Understanding Issues in Evangelical Theology (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2002), 242-247; Stanley J. Grenz, The Millennium Maze: Sorting Out Evangelical Options (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1992), 65-89; Millard J. Erickson, A Basic Guide to Eschatology: Making Sense of the Millennium (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1998), 55-72. An easy to read guidebook on millennial themes is written by Robert G. Clouse, Robert N. Hosack, and Richard V. Pierard who come to a conclusion that closely resembles a postmillennial eschatology in their book, The New Millennium Manual: A Once and Future Guide (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999).
mentioned in Revelation 20:1-10, and that millennial period will be characterized by peace as all social order submits to the kingship of Jesus Christ while Satan is bound.\textsuperscript{12} Within this position, Christians are compelled to advance and work for the millennial reign through the conversion of the world and all of its structures before the Lord’s physical return to earth.

The evangelical revivals and social reforms of the mid-nineteenth-century walked hand in hand with a millennial spirit of optimism that viewed the Christianization of the entire world as a realistic possibility by God’s grace.\textsuperscript{13} The fact that postmillennialism motivates Christians to be socially active and personally responsible for the world is indeed its strength. When harnessed correctly, this eschatological perspective has defeated social evils such as slavery, male dominance in churches, and the alleviation of poverty. This motivating factor that is the strength of postmillennialism can also be taken to an unhealthy extreme that then becomes its weakness. In some forms this eschatological position tends to overemphasize the role of humanity in bringing about the millennial reign of Christ and eventually Christ’s return.\textsuperscript{14} Christians should indeed strive to realize the kingdom of God on earth, but the ultimate establishment of his millennial kingdom and his return is not entrusted to humanity.

Premillennialism comes in two principal varieties: historic and dispensational.\textsuperscript{15} Both affirm that the \textit{parousia} will occur \textit{before} the millennial reign of Christ. The distinguishing title “historic premillennialism” emerges to distinguish itself from dispensationalism while affirming that it is a view that finds the support of Christian thinkers throughout history. Historic

\textsuperscript{11} W. Bauer, F. W. Danker, W. F. Arndt, and F. W. Gingrich, eds. \textit{A Greek-English Lexicon}, 1084.
\textsuperscript{12} See the postmillennial projection of Boettner, \textit{The Millennium}, 53.
\textsuperscript{13} Donald W. Dayton, \textit{Discovering and Evangelical Heritage} (Hendrickson Publishers, 1976), 121-135.
premillennialists do not posit an extreme distinction between Israel and the church but understands the church to be the ultimate realization of God’s work in the Old Testament.\textsuperscript{16}

Stanley Grenz notes that this view understands the millennium as “the time in which the church reigns with Christ.”\textsuperscript{17} This premillennial perspective sees the Kingdom of God mainly as a future event.\textsuperscript{18}

Dispensational\textsuperscript{19} premillennialism differs from historic premillennialism in its proposal that salvation history is divided into several time periods or dispensations.\textsuperscript{20} This sort of dispensationalism requires a detailed set of beliefs that begins with the “rapture” of the church and a “tribulation” period that will occur before the millennial reign of Christ. This view was promoted by John Nelson Darby (1800-1882) and later made popular by C. I. Scofield’s Reference Bible.\textsuperscript{21} Dispensationalists generally believe that the world and its political structures are continually getting worse as time passes.\textsuperscript{22} In addition to exegetical concerns\textsuperscript{23} dispensational premillennialism displays a lack of sympathy for the physical world in light of

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\textsuperscript{17} See Grenz, The Millennial Maze, 131.
\textsuperscript{18} See the discussions of the position of G. E. Ladd in Grenz, The Millennial Maze, 140-141; Howard A. Snyder, Models of the Kingdom, 35-37.
\textsuperscript{19} Dispensationalism is not restricted to a premillennial viewpoint. This discussion will mainly consider the premillennial understanding expressed by John Nelson Darby that dominates in Christian culture today. Snyder illustrates that throughout history dispensational models separate the work of God in various time periods or dispensations. He highlights Joachim of Fiore’s trinitarian dispensationalism, Jonathan Edwards’ “moderate dispensationalism,” which established the kingdom of God into four time periods and the church father Lactantius’ view, who saw the six days of creation as representing six thousand years of history culminating in the millennium. The mystic projections of Perre Poiret separate history into six “economies.” See Snyder’s discussion of “dispensational models” in Models of the Kingdom, 123-126.
\textsuperscript{20} Clouse, et. al. explain that the most widely accepted structure of dispensations is from C. I. Scofield, consisting of “innocency (Garden of Eden), conscience (Adam and Noah), human government (Noah to Abraham), promise (Abraham to Moses), Law (Moses to Christ), grace of the church age (from Christ’s first to second coming), and the kingdom age or the millennium.” The New Millennium Manual, 59.
\textsuperscript{22} See Grenz, The Millennial Maze, 118-119.
\textsuperscript{23} Outlined by Grenz in The Millennial Maze, 108-117.
heavenly realities. Many dispensationalists adhere to an eschatological perspective that leads to speculative theories about the timing of the rapture and specific dogma about the role of the nation of Israel in the midst of Middle East conflict.

The third approach to understanding the millennial reign of Christ is traditionally titled amillennialism or a realized millennium. Amillennialism interprets the events of Revelation 20:1-8 as representing no specific or identifiable period in history. The reign of Christ is, therefore, understood as the present, not yet fully manifested reign of Christ, and the church lives in the millennium now and is awaiting the return of Christ which will be the end of history.

Though originally holding a belief in a literal millennium, the church father Augustine (354-430) developed the position that is referred to as amillennialism. He declared that the millennium did not represent a literal thousand-year period, but the period “from the first coming of Christ to the end of the world, when he shall come the second time.” Oden explains that in a realized millennial outlook, “There is to be no future literal-political earthly kingdom….rather, the kingdom of God and the kingdoms of this world will continue in a mixed fashion until the Lord’s return.”

The difficulty that most Christians have with the amillennial position is its hermeneutical method, so those who oppose amillennialism see its non-literal interpretation as dangerous for further exegesis. Grenz comments on the positive position set forth in amillennial eschatology, “The hope set forth by amillennialism combines the optimistic tone of postmillennialism and the more pessimistic message found in premillennialism into a realistic worldview.” Thus Christians can and should work toward the world’s transformation.

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24 Thomas C. Oden prefers the latter over the former. Even though it is more descriptive, this term is problematic because it can easily be confused with the “realized eschatology” of C. H. Dodd outlined in his *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Development* (Chicago: Willett and Clark, 1937).


27 For instance a non-literal interpretation of the resurrection would be unorthodox.

work for the world, however, does not usher in Christ's return. On the contrary, the return of Christ will come despite human effort.

William Booth as a Postmillennialist

"The good time coming"\textsuperscript{29} was the way that William Booth often referred to the approaching millennial kingdom, for which the Salvation Army was pragmatically and theologically established. William Booth was what would now be referred to as a postmillennialist. His eschatological views of the kingdom of God were never more clearly stated than in the title of his August 1890 article, "The Millennium; or, The Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles."\textsuperscript{30} In this article Booth asserts that:

A genuine Salvationist is a true reformer of men. He alone is a real socialist; because he is the advocate of the only true principles by which the reformation of society can be effected. His confidence for the future is not based alone on the theories he holds, ...but in that Millennial heaven...to him, the millennium is already in a measure, an accomplished fact.\textsuperscript{31}

William Booth was working to realize the kingdom of God to earth. He was a man motivated for the redemption of the world. This motivation was based in large measure on his understanding of eschatology, which to him was measured on a global scale with a global mandate. When ontologically defining Salvationist self-understanding and its millennial task, he explains, "Salvationism means simply the overcoming and banishing from the earth of wickedness, inward and outward, from the heart and life of man, and the establishment of the principles of purity and goodness instead."\textsuperscript{32} William Booth understood the millennium in terms of global harmony; the means of arriving at such a state was through the agency of soldiers in the great salvation war. Booth commanded, "Soldiers! You are to do this! [fulfill the prophecies that will bring universal

\textsuperscript{29} William Booth, "The Millennium; or, The Ultimate Triumph of Salvation Army Principles." \textit{All The World} 6 (August 1890), 337.
\textsuperscript{31} William Booth, "The Millennium," 343.
peace]....there is but one way to reach this millennium of peace and good will...there is but one way to the world's deliverance, and that is by fighting." Fighting for Booth clearly meant human agents escorting the millennium into reality.

Millennial themes were also emphasized in the writings of John Wesley and his designated successor John Fletcher. These leaders of Methodism were certain that Methodism was a precursor to a global Pentecost and would further be an indication of the millennial reign of Christ. For Wesley and Fletcher entire sanctification was associated with a personalized Pentecost. Laurence Wood particularly shows how William Bramwell (1759-1818), an early Methodist preacher, was a chief proponent of this Pentecostal language. Hence, these Pentecostal themes were transmitted to early Methodism.

William Bramwell was a Wesleyan Methodist minister who attracted the attention of John Wesley; his evangelistic campaigns foreshadowed the revivalist techniques of Finney. He also was a chief supporter of female preachers. In 1820 James Singston wrote a biography of William Bramwell. Though the Booths’ were not alive to have personal interaction with Bramwell, they were obviously influenced by his life and ministry. William Bramwell’s impact upon William and Catherine Booth is most clearly demonstrated in the naming of their first-born child was William Bramwell Booth (hereto referred to as Bramwell), who became William Booth’s successor.

32 William Booth, “Fight!”, 111.
38 See Ervine, God’s Soldier, 1:203-205; Fredrick Booth-Tucker, The Life of Catherine Booth, the Mother of The Salvation Army, 2 volumes (New York: Fleming H. Revel Company, 1892), 1:140. Catherine Booth comments on
The best example of William Booth's Pentecostal eschatology is demonstrated in his hymn, "Thou Christ of Burning, Cleansing Flame." In this hymn Booth elaborates on the mission of the Army: "Thou Christ of burning, cleansing flame, Send the fire! Thy blood bought gift today we claim, Send the fire! Look down and see this waiting host, Give us the promised Holy Ghost, We want another Pentecost, Send the Fire!" The Pentecostal themes displayed in the writings of John Wesley, John Fletcher, and early Methodism are definitive sources when examining William Booth's universal eschatology.

William Booth's postmillennialism may have been influenced by the American holiness revivalists. The earliest discovered reference indicating a postmillennial posture comes from a War Cry article by William Booth, dated Christmas 1881. This date is at least twenty years after the leaders of revivalism influenced the Booths. The American holiness movement experienced a theological shift in emphasis during the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, evidenced by the way in which its proponents presented the doctrine of entire sanctification. This theological shift evolved from a primarily christological to a pneumatological emphasis, thereby highlighting the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of sanctification. Between 1870 and 1885, leading figures in this change—Robert Pearsall Smith and Asa Mahan—traveled to England and

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40 William Booth, "Universal Peace." I acknowledge that my research is limited, but I have found nothing in the secondary scholarship of those who's reading is wider that challenges this concept. One possible answer is that publications in general increased, thus making the postmillennialism of the early Army more explicit.

41 This information considers the Palmers' time in England (1859-1863) and Caughey's second tour of England in the late 1850s.
influenced the Booths. John Kent explains, “the Salvation Army’s public image as a holiness movement belongs to the 1870s, after Pearsall Smith visited, though “the Booths claimed to have been sanctified long before, in 1861.” As a result the Booths possessed a strong pneumatological foundation for their holiness theology. This focus in the theology of William Booth enabled him to view the possibility of structures changing the world through the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit. In his most precise piece of writing on eschatology, “The Millennium,” Booth illustrates this pneumatological emphasis:

The unutterable longings, and hopes and beliefs of many of God’s most faithful people seem to signify the near approach of His universal kingdom. Some say that the general triumph of godliness will be ushered in by the reign of Christ. We Salvationists, however, expect it to be preceded by further and mightier outpourings of the Holy Ghost than any yet known…

Hence, the postmillennialism of William Booth was linked with his pneumatological understanding of sanctification. The later date of these millennial publications is congruently reflected in this matured understanding of the work of the Holy Spirit revealing Jesus Christ to the world. David Rightmire has shown that this pneumatological basis was also the foundation for the Salvation Army’s abandonment of the sacraments in 1883.

**William Booth’s Theological History**

Before William Booth began to work in the East End of London, influences in his life nurtured and accompanied the theology he brought to that ghastly section of town. Booth’s personal theological history gave him the desire to preach to the masses and eventually form

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42 See John Kent, *Holding the Fort*, 295, 298.
44 See Rightmire, *Sacraments and the Salvation Army*, 130-166.
what is today the largest Wesleyan-Holiness denomination in the world. William Booth did not
arrive at this juncture in a moment’s time; rather, his theology was nurtured by various events.

Optimism in Nottingham

Three encounters during his developmental years shone an optimistic light into the
darkened social, economic, and familial beginnings of William Booth.47 Many biographers and
historians have noted that the young William Booth grew up in an impoverished situation in
Nottingham, England,48 a fact which is substantiated by his entrance in the workforce as a
pawnbroker’s assistant at the age of thirteen. William’s father, Samuel Booth, died when he was
thirteen, and therefore William’s earnings became all the more important to the Booth family,
since William supported his mother, his three sisters, and their life in industrialized England. In
light of his own situation, the depressing conditions of the people in Nottingham would have
been obvious to young William Booth. This poverty was specifically evident among
professionals whose skills were no longer required, like the stockingers49 whose handiwork was
replaced by steam-driven machines in Nottingham.50 Paradoxically it is in the destitution of this
situation that optimism arose in William Booth. The Chartist movement, as expressed through
the dazzling rhetoric and political influence of Feargus O’Conner, persuaded William Booth to

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47 This study primarily notes the development of William Booth’s theological praxis. It is not within the scope of
this thesis to devote space to Catherine Booth’s mature theology. I acknowledge that Catherine Booth was the most
theologically influential person in William Booth’s life. I will thus note the ways in which she impacted William’s
theology.

Roger Green, Catherine Booth, 39-42; Norman H. Murdoch, Origins of the Salvation Army (Knoxville: The
University of Tennessee Press, 1994), 21-22; Robert Sandall, The History of The Salvation Army, 7 vols. (London:
by Henry Gariepy), 1:3-4; Pamela J. Walker, Pulling the Devil’s Kingdom Down: The Salvation Army in Victorian
England (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001), 13-14; Ann M. Woodall, What Price the Poor?: William
Booth, Karl Marx and the London Residuum (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2005), 6-41; A different interpretation
comes from one of William Booth’s early biographers who understood him as coming from a middle-class family
that had tragically fallen on difficult times; see Harold Begbie, The Life of General William Booth, 2 vols. (New

49 Because of the industrial revolution, this title is hardly used in the common vernacular today. Stockingers were
simply those who found employment making stockings by hand.
see the Nottingham Ghetto as transformable. O’Conner, the leader of the Physical Force Party of Chartism, was active in Nottingham and was a likely political influence upon William Booth. Though the Chartists’ political legacy was short-lived, its practical assertions about resolving poverty were transmitted to Booth, although his personal action in this area was nonexistent until his religious conversion.

The second encounter that seems to have triggered optimism in William Booth’s young life was his religious conversion in 1844. At age fifteen William’s conversion experience coincided with his involvement in the Broad Street Wesleyan Methodist Chapel in Nottingham. This conversion was the result of his participation in a class meeting. It was the consistent application of Wesley’s method of questioning the state of one’s soul that brought Booth to a conviction of sin and eventually to a moment of commitment to God. Booth later recalled that dramatic moment, “…the instant rolling away from my heart of the guilty burden, the peace that came in its place, and the going forth to serve my God and my generation from that hour [were pivotal].” It was after his conversion that William Booth felt the need to act for the good of others. He began to raise funds for the care of a local widow. He pursued evangelistic efforts with “young lads from the slums.” Ann Woodall points to the causal relationship of Booth’s initial social concern and religious conversion as producing an early vision of Booth’s holistic ministries. Even at this stage of Booth’s life social relief was an expression of his spiritual experience. Booth’s conviction that poverty can be eliminated and that meeting material needs is an expression of Christianity were dual signposts of optimism in the early life of William Booth. Hence, Booth was optimistic because of what God had done in his own life.

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51 For a description of the specific poverty in Nottingham during Booth’s childhood see Woodall, What Price the Poor?, 14-17.
52 See Ervine, 1:34; and Woodall, 27-33. Begbie quotes Booth as to why he was so inclined toward the Chartist movement saying, “The Chartists were for the poor, therefore I am for the Chartists.” Begbie, 1:50
The third area of optimism in Booth’s developmental life was the evangelistic optimism of James Caughey. In 1846, two years after his conversion experience, Booth came under the influence of Irish-American Methodist evangelist James Caughey who dually instilled in him a desire to seek personal holiness and to find preaching opportunities. Historian Norman Murdoch succinctly states, “Thereafter [Booth’s first contact with Caughey], Booth bore Caughey’s stamp.” Caughey’s preaching dramatically brought to England the revivalist fire, which was setting aflame the souls of Americans. He also brought the “scientific new measures” of revivalism to England. Caughey is credited with bringing more than 22,000 people to Christ during his ministry in England. Ten thousand of these are reported as seeking an experience of full salvation. Booth would later have contact with Caughey and other American revivalists who further nurtured his understanding of evangelism. Begbie notes, “Booth caught the fire from the flame of this revivalist’s oratory. He was deeply and pervasively influenced by the uncompromising realism of the American preacher…. He went to all the services he could attend…. he saw in the lives of many of his neighbours the veritable miracle of new birth. Here at last, was religion in action, the real and living religion of his dreams.” The revivalist optimism that Caughey communicated to Booth was an evangelistic passion and a method for converting the masses.

52 Quoted in Begbie, 1:54.
53 Murdoch, Origins of the Salvation Army, 7.
54 Daniel Wise, Earnest Christianity Illustrated (Boston: J. P. Magee, 1855), 18.
56 For more in depth descriptions of the impact of Caughey on Booth see Begbie, 1:61-62 and Murdoch, 7-12. An insightful discussion of Caughey’s impact on British Methodism is also found in Richard Carwardine, Transatlantic Revivalism: Popular Evangelicalism in Britain and America 1790-1865 (Westport: Greenwood Press, 1978), 102-134. Caughey also had a dramatic effect on Catherine Mumford Booth. See Green, Catherine Booth: A Biography of the Co-founder of The Salvation Army, 33-36.
Methodism and Revivalism as Eschatological Influences

Optimism is a chief mark of Booth's eschatological thinking; his optimism, which believed that the world could be changed socially for the good of the masses through the gospel, was ignited by subtle optimism in Nottingham.

The theological way that Methodism and revivalism affected William Booth's eschatology is initially seen in his personal eschatology. The only requirement for those wanting to join a Methodist "society" was to have "a desire to flee from the wrath to come, and to be saved from their sins." Hence the personal eschatological perspective of Booth was influenced in his early days because he was a Methodist. During his Methodist ministry Booth was driven by his passion for souls and their salvation from eternal damnation and felt his public ministry was most effective when preaching to the masses—an influence of revivalism. This desire was a part of his reasoning for leaving full-time ministry with New Connexion Methodism in 1861.

William Booth moved to London in 1849 and eventually became a full-time minister. Though the road to this ministry was not easy, he was enlisted in a type of seminary training with Rev. Dr. William Cooke that challenged his patience because of his desire to save souls, consistent with his personal eschatology. In light of eternity, he apparently viewed such training with skepticism. In a letter to his future wife, Catherine Mumford, one can pick up this revivalist

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58 "Methodist ministry" is used broadly noting Booth's contact with Methodism in Nottingham and his work as an itinerant minister in London and finally as a minister in New Connexion Methodism. For a comprehensive discussion of this aspect of Booth's life see Roger Green's article "William Booth and Methodism" Word and Deed, vol. 6:2 (May, 2004): 23-38.
59 The word "seminary" is not comparable to a modern concept of seminary training. Dr. Cooke, an educated theologian, took in small groups of students for an intensive six-month session in preparation of Methodist ministry. See Ervine, God's Soldier, 1:94-110.
60 Rev. Dr. William Cooke was a significant figure in Methodist New Connexion. He served as Connexion President three separate times see Roy Hattersley, Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army (London: Doubleday, 1999), 63-67. Cooke wrote voluminously as can be seen in the many books and articles recorded in Oliver A. Beckerledge, A Bibliography of the Methodist New Connexion (Essex: Gage
and eschatological tone as he rejoiced in being freed from this didactic environment, “I have written by this post to Dr. Cooke. I tell him that I am in love with no half ‘measures.’... If the tears of Christ [a reference to a sermon of his that produced a meager evangelistic response] will not haul them out of their seats and send them reeling to their knees at the penitent form, then they shall have hell-fire flashed before the eyes!”

Despite his lack of affection for education, he wanted to be in Methodist ministry, and Booth eventually found himself temporarily in the ministry for which he longed. In order to understand the later William Booth, it is essential to understand him as young man nurtured in Methodism. One of his most noted self-disclosures came early in his life as he described his fondness for Wesley and Methodism:

I worshiped everything that bore the name of Methodist. To me there was one God, and John Wesley was his prophet. I had devoured the story of his life. No human compositions seemed to me to be comparable to his writings, and to the hymns of his brother Charles, and all that was wanted in my estimation, for the salvation of the world was the faithful carrying into practice of the letter and the spirit of his instructions.

It is not a surprise then that William Booth found himself ministering in a branch of Methodism, the Methodist New Connexion. However, after four years of exhilarating ministry in Gateshead, Booth left the New Connexion because its itinerant-based leadership was a “thorn in his flesh.” The leadership of the New Connexion conference kept him away from his true desire to be an evangelist. Thus in 1861 William Booth cut his ties with the denomination and furthered his ministry as an independent revivalist.


61 Quoted in Ervine, 1:110. Ervine does not reveal the source of this quote.
62 Quoted in Fredrick Booth-Tucker, The Life of Catherine Booth, the Mother of The Salvation Army, 2 volumes (New York: Fleming H. Revel Company, 1892) 1:74.
63 It should also be noted that Booth considered a few different ministry opportunities, most notable was his flirtation with the idea of being Congregationalist. However, his Wesleyan spirit that saw salvation available for the “whosoever” would not allow him to accept their Calvinistic doctrine of predestination. See Ervine, 61-70.
64 This desire of Booth now was a double-edged sword, for during William Booth’s ministry in Gateshead his wife Catherine began her preaching ministry.
65 This resignation was recognized a year later in 1862. See Ervine, 242-255; Green, Catherine Booth, 103-116.
The salvation of souls was the passion of William Booth, everything else being secondary to this passion. Following what he believed to be the Lord’s leading, he traveled as an evangelist for four years after leaving the Methodist ministry. There is no disagreement about the reason for William Booth’s departure from Methodism—he wanted to be an evangelist.

How does one theologically evaluate such reasoning? A response could be made that the young Booth had a keen sense of God’s calling to evangelistic work. Preaching as an evangelist to the masses was his true vocation. William Booth was quick to say that only the future could tell if he was listening to God’s voice. He once commented, “I am content to await its [the future’s] verdict.”

His universal soteriology demanded that he preach widely, and the Connexion was restricting the scope of the redemptive message. The New Connexion did share in this conviction that the gospel was universally available. William Booth and the Connexion possessed a different understanding of how that gospel was to be proclaimed. These theological possibilities are helpful in understanding Booth’s decision; however, each of these foundations can be more precisely understood within Booth’s concept of personal eschatology. He desired to save as many people as possible from the wrath of hell.

During William Booth’s ministry with the New Connexion (1854-1861), he and his wife had a second experience with American revivalism that quite possibly altered their theology just as much as their revivalist “techniques.” Within this stream of revivalism came a distinct

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66 Quoted in Begbie, 1:318. Begbie does not reveal the source of this quote.
67 That is to say Booth believed that no person was beyond the reach of God’s grace. This view is illustrated clearly in the Army’s sixth doctrinal statement which explains, “We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by His suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.” See Salvation Story (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1998), ix.
68 In 1803 the Connexion formulated five doctrinal statements, the second of which affirmed “Universal redemption by Jesus Christ.” These statements can be found in General Rules for the Government of the New Connexion of Methodists (Leeds: Printed by Edward Baines, 1803), 20.
teaching of universal eschatology, and this became the theological justification for Booth’s
global Salvation Army.69

The revivalism of James Caughey, Charles G. Finney, and Phoebe Palmer were the
particular brands of revivalism that were impressed on William and Catherine Booth. Finney’s
“new measures” were employed by each of these revivalists and later became integral to William
Booth’s own preaching to the masses in London’s East End. It was, however, mainly Finney’s
writings that influenced the Booths’ revivalism, particularly his Revival Lectures.70 Such
“measures” included the use of planned publicity, home visitations, personal calls to the penitent
bench, dramatic preaching, and the use of females in services.71 Phoebe Palmer was the prime
example for Catherine’s own preaching. It was Phoebe Palmer’s example, as an effective
holiness revivalist in England, which gave Catherine the encouragement to preach.

Another way that Palmer influenced both William and Catherine Booth was her particular
brand of holiness teaching known as her “altar theology” or “altar phraseology,” which
emphasized the need to testify to the immediacy of sanctification.72 The holiness theology of
Phoebe Palmer paved the way for later holiness evangelists Robert Pearsall Smith, Hannah
Whitall Smith, Asa Mahan, and William E. Boardmann. As key figures in the American holiness
revival, these revivalists all preached varying forms of the Wesleyan doctrine of entire

69 See discussion on pages 21-22.
70 See Green, Catherine Booth, 77-80.
71 See Carwardine, 3-59.
72 To see the particular way that Phoebe Palmer influenced the Booth’s holiness theology see R. David Rightmire,
Sacraments and the Salvation Army, 130-166. Rightmire understands the relationship of the holiness movement on
the Booths as crucial. He chides, “Salvation Army historiography has failed to recognize the obvious dependence of
the Booths’ holiness theology in the pneumatological emphases of the holiness movement. This has led most Army
historians to miss the vital inter-relationship between the American holiness revivalist and the Booth’s fledging
movement” (162). 150-156. In a later work Rightmire shows how Samuel Logan Brengle brought Salvation Army
holiness theology back to a Wesleyan understanding of waiting on the Spirit for the realization of sanctification. See
Rightmire, Sanctified Sanity, 150-156. For more on these connections see Melvin E. Dieter, The Holiness Revival of
the Nineteenth Century. 2nd Edition (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 1996), 53-54; John Kent, Holding the Fort:
21-42.
sanctification. These holiness evangelists not only proclaimed a theology of the sanctified life, but they all experienced the effects of the 1857-1858 revival.

Caughey, Palmer, and Finney, the trio of American religious influence on the Booths, were also deeply affected by the revival of 1857-1858. This revival began in Hamilton, Ontario, as Phoebe Palmer with her husband led revival services there. It spread throughout the United States and eventually made its way to England through the Palmers’ ministry. Many Christians who believed that the millennial reign of Christ would be ushered in by a second Pentecost saw the events of 1857-58 as this second Pentecost. Noted scholar of the Pentecostal movement, D. William Faupel, proposes that this revival caused a paradigm shift between christological and pneumatological emphases in sanctification and that postmillennialism reached a crescendo in the brief time that followed this revival.73 Charles Finney exhorted in 1835 that such a millennium is possible and could begin within three years if the church would respond accordingly.74 When the revival hit, it is not a surprise that Phoebe Palmer explained the optimistic hope she possessed. She wrote, “Are not these [interdenominational] meetings for holiness…the dawning of millennial glory?”75 With millennial themes at a new height, the Palmers brought the revival and their present eschatological perspective with them to England in 1859. These eschatological themes were not necessarily referred to as “postmillennial” or

73 D. William Faupel, The Everlasting Gospel: The Significance of Eschatology in the Development of Pentecostal Thought (Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, 1996). In this text Faupel shows that this eschatological fervor was short lived because of disillusionment after the American Civil War. This shift eventually led to the birth of Pentecostalism from its mother the holiness movement. It is interesting to note that the Booths never experienced such disillusionment in their own country.
"premillennial" at this time. Much of the transferred excitement was, rather, an enthusiasm about the coming of a general millennium and the "good time" therein.  

Catherine Booth's famous defense of women's preaching was written as a vindication of the beginning of the Palmers' four-year ministry in Britain, beginning in 1859. The apologetic nature of Catherine's book is clear in its title, *Female Ministry: or the Rev. A.A. Rees versus Mrs. Palmer, Being a Reply to a Pamphlet by the Above Named Gentlemen on the Sunderland Revival.* The four-way intersection of Catherine's defense, the transatlantic revival, the optimism of postmillennialism that came with the Americans, and the ministerial success of the Booths in Gateshead brought together an understanding and a reason for the Booths' eventual adoption of a postmillennial universal eschatology. Catherine's defense shows the admiration she and William had for Phoebe Palmer. Palmer's role as a preacher pushed Catherine enough to embrace a similar vocation, one that her husband eventually supported. Finally, the Booths had a reason to connect the positive messages brought by the American revivalists because they were actively involved in a dynamic ministry in Gateshead with the New Connexion, which confirmed their use of revivalist techniques. Postmillennialism is the next logical belief picked up from the revivalists.

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76 Once millennial positions came into clearer articulation at the end of the nineteenth century it was easier to identify Finney's eschatological zeal as the postmillennial sort. See Donald W. Dayton, *Discovering an Evangelical Heritage* (Hendrickson Publishers, 1976), 124-128. Palmer's views are somewhat more ambiguous. Charles Edward White illustrates how Palmer's associations with the Adventism of William Miller impact her caution toward millennial expectations. See Charles Edward White, *The Beauty of Holiness: Phoebe Palmer as Theologian, Revivalist, Feminist, and Humanitarian* (Grand Rapids: Francis Asbury Press, 1986), 154-156. The theology of the holiness movement was deeply impacted by John Fletcher. Laurence W. Wood demonstrates Fletcher's impact on Wesley was felt most clearly in his later sermons, which encouraged believers to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Wood contends that Fletcher and Wesley "believed that Methodism was a forerunner to a global Pentecost that would mark the beginning of the millennium." *The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism: Rediscovering John Fletcher as John Wesley's Vindicator and Designated Successor* (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2002), 145ff.

77 Phoebe Palmer, *Four Years in the Old World* (New York: Foster, Palmer Jr., 1867).

The Making of an Eschatological Army

The evolution of the Salvation Army is more clearly understood in light of William Booth’s eschatology. The most effective treatment of the progressive nature of William Booth’s theology is found in Roger J. Green’s book War on Two Fronts: The Redemptive Theology of William Booth. In this book Green’s central thesis is that Booth’s theology changed at major points in the mission of the Army and in Booth’s own understanding. Green does not try to systemize the thinking of Booth, the pragmatic theologian, into a consistent coherent theology. On the contrary, Green understands the changes in Booth’s theology as critical to comprehending the whole of his ministry. The starting point of this theology is Booth’s understanding of personal redemption, which involved justification and sanctification. This emphasis corresponds with the first thirteen years of the group originally known as the East London Christian Revival Society. This group was motivated to preach the gospel to the poor of London’s East End, a segment of the population that was generally neglected by the Church in the Victorian era.

Within these thirteen years the Christian Mission grew to include 75 preaching stations and 120 evangelists throughout Britain. The eschatological perspective that accompanied this fledging mission was dominated by personal eschatology.

In 1878 the Christian Mission changed its name to the Salvation Army. This change of identity is the first clear indication of a personal shift in William Booth’s theology, which adjusted from personal redemptive categories to institutional redemptive categories. This new

79 See Green, Catherine Booth, 117-150.
80 Roger J. Green, War on Two Fronts, 12-13.
81 Also referred to as The East London Christian Revival Union or East London Christian Mission these names appeared interchangeably in the formative years of the movements. See Rightmire, 28-29n. and John R Rhemick, A New People of God: A Study in Salvationism (Des Plaines, ILL: The Salvation Army, 1993), 17.
82 That is to say that the Salvation Army was institutionally sanctified to bring redemption to the world. Roger Green explains that these “institutional” categories were “sustained by his [Booth’s] belief that The Salvation Army was divinely ordained, and that it was a renewal in the nineteenth century and twentieth century of the Church of the New Testament, the early Church, the Reformation Church, and the Wesleyan revival.” War on Two Fronts, 54-55.
theology is made clear in a popular (and often quoted) article by William Booth entitled “Our New Name—The Salvationist” in *The Salvationist* from January 1, 1879:

We are a salvation people—this is our specialty...Our work is salvation. We believe in salvation and we have salvation....We aim at salvation. We want this and nothing short of this and we want this right off. My brethren, my comrades, soul saving is our avocation, the great purpose and business of our lives. Let us seek first the Kingdom of God, let us be Salvationist indeed.84

The alteration is most obviously seen in the pragmatic shift to transform the structure of the Christian Mission to the military structure of the Salvation Army. When the military metaphor was adopted, every area of Booth’s movement was affected: preaching stations became corps, evangelists became corps officers, members became soldiers, and its leader became the General. An autocratic form of leadership emerged, and like a militant Army, the fingers of the Salvation Army were stretched around the world. Green explains that at this time Booth’s theology began to move from individual categories to institutional categories. Indeed, William Booth saw his Salvation Army as institutionally sanctified to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth.85 It is at this juncture that the universal eschatology of William Booth sharpened into focus. His Salvation Army was, in his mind, the vehicle that would facilitate the coming millennium. Within eight years of the 1878 name change, the Salvation Army exploded to include 1,749 corps, and 4,129 officers.86 Indicative of this time is Booth’s commissioning of a corporate eschatological task: “Go to them all. The whole fourteen hundred millions [sic]. Don’t despair. *It can be done.* It SHALL BE DONE. God has sent The Salvation Army on the task. If

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83 It should be noted that this was written in connection with the change of name of the Army’s journal from *The Christian Mission Magazine* to *The Salvationist.*


85 See William Booth’s article “The Millennium,” 341. In this article Booth paints a picture of the coming millennial kingdom that envisions London as the New Jerusalem.

every saint on earth would do his duty, it could be done effectually in the next ten years. If the Salvation Army will be true to God, it will be done during the next fifty” [emphasis Booth’s].

The second major change in Booth’s theology, which occurred about ten years later and was the most dramatic, was William Booth’s understanding that salvation was both personal and social. This adjustment represents the integration of Booth’s universal and personal eschatological perspective. The most obvious indicators of this theological change was the creation of the Salvation Army’s “Social Wing,” led by Commissioner Frank Smith, and the publication of In Darkest England and the Way Out, both of which occurred in 1890. These events must not be seen as the initiation of social work in the Salvation Army. On the contrary, these events were the culminating articulation of a trend in the Salvation Army since 1884.

The theological shift had come to completion by 1889, and Booth was ready to announce his new understanding of social salvation. Booth’s new platform was most clearly articulated in an article published in January of 1889, entitled “Salvation for Both Worlds.” In this article Booth discloses facets of his own transformation: “Then there is the Social Evil....It interested me at the onset of my religious reforming career, when I had but comparatively little knowledge of it. Still I knew it was there, like a black ocean largely veiled from view, but soon this veil was lifted, and it excited a serious interest in my soul.”

William Booth’s theology accommodated such a shift toward social salvation because his theology was focused on redemption. His change to include social salvation is properly

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87 William Booth, “Go!” All the World (November, 1884) found in The General’s Letters, 1885 (London: International Headquarters, 1890), 7. This demonstrates an amazing parallel between Booth and Finney, particularly Finney’s claim, in 1833, that if the church does its job the millennium could come in three years.

88 See Green, War on Two Fronts, 76-95

89 This claim will developed more fully in the third chapter of this study. K.S. Inglis and Norman H. Murdoch have both contested that William Booth’s move to include social ministries was purely motivated by his failure of not having reached the poorest of poor with the gospel.

understood in theological terms⁹¹ and more specifically in eschatological terms. While Booth’s emphasis on personal redemption from sin never waned, after 1890 William Booth intentionally added the concept of social salvation from evil in this world. This concept was nuanced by his Wesleyan approach toward the availability of salvation for all persons. Booth’s later social convictions, expressed after 1890, began to include an understanding of the universal availability of social redemption as well. In his book *In Darkest England* Booth expounds on this thought:

> The Glad Tidings must be to every creature, not merely to an elect few who are to be saved while the mass of their fellows are predestined to a eternal damnation....It is now time to fling down the false idol, and proclaim a Temporal Salvation as full, free, and universal, and with no other limitation than the ‘Whosever will,’ of the Gospel.⁹²

There was not one person in the world that Booth felt could not be saved from a state of sin or any social evil situation. The maturing of the Salvation Army reflects William Booth’s optimism for the “good time coming.”⁹³ This hopeful optimism was nurtured by William Booth’s personal encounters in the city of Nottingham as a boy, the theology of Methodism nuanced by the American holiness movement, and the methods and eschatological perspective of holiness revivalists. Within these contexts Booth was truly forming his movement into an eschatological Army.

**Contemporary Application**

To what extent should the contemporary Salvation Army be guided by William Booth’s eschatology? Does postmillennialism force a view of the kingdom of God that gives human agents too much participation in bringing the judgment of Christ? The spirit of postmillennialism does not necessarily lead to an extreme understanding of human responsibility

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⁹¹ As opposed to sociological or political terminology.
in bringing about the millennium, but this is a possible side effect of this universal eschatology.

Recognizing that the Army needs now to avoid this extreme side of postmillennialism is an important step in the process in maintaining a theology of mission that is historically informed.

Most arguments against postmillennialism center on the progressive decay of the world. These arguments contend that the world is not getting any better; hence, as time goes by a postmillennial eschatology becomes less of an option. This line of argument is not completely persuasive because the world may indeed become better, and hopefully Christians are making the vision for a better world a reality. The weakness of postmillennialism is that it can lead to an over-emphasis on the contribution/agency of humans in bringing about the millennium. Members in God's kingdom who recognize the holistic value of all creation and the possibility of social and personal/spiritual redemption should not abandon those emphases, even if their historic foundation is in a postmillennial eschatology.

The kingdom of God should be the template from which Christians pattern their world. This view takes away the dangerous perception that human agency is primarily involved in bringing about Christ's millennial reign, while still retaining the role of creational responsibility.

Amillennialism or a realized millennium allows a balance between human participation and active care of the world. William Booth was right to change his theological position to include social as well as personal redemption. He began to actively care for the physical world and made such care an institutional part the Salvation Army with the establishment of the "social

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94 The Salvation Army institutionally declared this view of the world in a focus group statement on globalization at the 2004 Lausanne Forum for World Evangelism, which says, "Christians need to re-ignite the vision that a better world is possible, advocating for dialogue rather than confrontation, policies rather than polemics." Find this statement among others at http://www1.salvationarmy.org/ihq/www_sa.nsf/vw-sublinks/685DF03B3DACEFF480256E55004D0E10?openDocument; Internet; accessed December 1, 2005.

95 "Amillennialism," is somewhat of a misnomer, because Christians who hold such a position do believe in the millennium, they just see that millennium as being something that is metaphorically realized in history.
wing” in 1890. This social modification finds its motivation in Booth’s universal eschatology, which in turn informed his ecclesiology. Today the Army, as a result, is unparalleled as a church in bringing about physical, social, and spiritual redemption for the world. This social activity does not have to find its current foundation in postmillennialism. Amillenialism seems to be exegetically sound while also informing a pragmatic ecclesiology because it sees the kingdom of God as a template for life on earth now.

When evaluating and applying the universal eschatology of William Booth there are two one-sided responses that often surface within the contemporary Salvation Army. These extreme positions are not entirely representative of the Salvation Army as a whole. The first misuse is to discount Booth’s millennial spirit and seek another way to motivate the church. The second misuse is to interpret Booth’s millennialism in an extreme way that is inconsistent with Booth. Such an extreme position places too much emphasis on humanity’s role in bringing about this millennium.

Salvationist scholar Roger Green desires for the Army to move away from “sectarian” millennial characteristics. One aspect that Green feels needs to change to accommodate this shift is the Army’s inherited millennial position:

Even our [Salvationist] present Song Book retains some of the great postmillennial theology that drove us (sometimes frantically) to win the world for Jesus. However, not only are we not postmillennialists (and who could possibly be a postmillennialist in the twentieth century?), but we do not have any particular millennial vision or historical goal that drives and motivates us as William Booth’s postmillennialism drove the early Army. We believe that the world is getting worse and worse and that someday the Lord will return. Beyond that we do not say much.

96 This theme will be developed more fully in chapter 3.
97 This theme is to be developed in chapter 2.
98 Green states, “The only way to come to terms with this is to call an international conference on sect/Church distinctions and on evolution from sect to Church and finally and fully embrace who we have been, who we are now and who we intend to be in the future with the help and grace of God.” See “Facing History: Our Way Ahead for a Salvationist Theology,” Word and Deed 1:2 (May, 1999): 23-40, 30. This effort in and of itself is flawed because it is over dependent on these sociological categories. This theme will be addressed more comprehensively in chapter three “Eschatological Ecclesiology.”
While Green has been successful in identifying Booth as a postmillennialist, his discussion fails to appreciate fully Booth’s form of millennialism or his eschatological spirit. If Booth’s and the early Army’s eschatological hymns drove the Army toward winning the world for Jesus, is it not something that should be retained? Green apparently is not sympathetic to postmillennial theology, but one can affirm Booth’s particular millennialism without falling into the dangers of an extreme postmillennialism that puts undue emphasis on or trust in human action. The discussion above of universal eschatology demonstrates the state of postmillennialism today. This thesis proposes a millennial approach that retains the millennial spirit and heritage of William Booth. Green uses the first person plural pronoun to describe his own eschatological outlook, as if it represented the Salvation Army’s position as a whole. These issues are still very well debated in evangelical theology. The Christian’s motivation on earth should be the manifestation of the Kingdom of God based upon the Bible. Furthermore Green’s claim, on behalf of the Salvation Army, is that Salvationists know the world is getting “worse and worse.” Is this pessimistic view something that we really know? This pessimism is hardly consistent with the missiological history of the Salvation Army. Christians who see the world as getting worse often lack any motivation to see its oppressive structures changed in the name of Christ and therefore undervalue the social implications of the gospel. If this pessimism about the condition of the world and its prospect of getting better is lost, there remains no reason for the Salvation Army to exist.

A polar opposite to this view is an extreme form of postmillennial thought that creeps into practical theological expression in the Salvation Army today. A popular young officer

100 There are evangelical adherents of postmillennialism that do not fall into this trap. See Donald Bloesch, Essentials of Evangelical Theology, vol. 2: Life, Ministry, and Hope (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1979), 199;
recently made a remark that is often heard at Salvation Army events: "The Lord wants to come. He's longing to come. We have to prepare the way, make a straight path to usher in His coming.... The older generation says it is the younger generations who will usher in the Kingdom of God. But that's not true, we will do it together. We are one Army, led by one Spirit, in the same war and on the same side." While the spirit of this comment encourages Salvationists to be active in the world, it wanders toward an extreme view of the role of human agents in bring about Christ's second coming.

Maxwell Ryan and Geoff Ryan in an article in *Word and Deed* discuss the need for an additional article of faith that explicitly mentions social implications of holiness. They have submitted a draft that has been privately circulated. This lengthy draft ends with the following statement: "We believe that holy living, evangelical witness and active caring for the poor and disadvantaged are co-equal signs of the coming kingdom of God and hasten the day when Christ shall make all things new" [emphasis mine]. This proposed statement is functional in that it unites a holistic understanding of social services with the kingdom of God. In light of this noble effort, the four highlighted words require an extreme version of postmillennialism, which finds the actions of humans as too important in bringing about the final judgment and redemption of Jesus Christ.

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101 See Dayton, *Discovering and Evangelical Heritage*, 99-120.
103 That is an addition to the Army's current 11 articles of faith.
104 This concept of an additional article of faith is interesting, but should remain just that. The Salvation Army has a wonderfully concise set of doctrines that have remained in their current state since 1878, with minor modifications in punctuation made as a part of Schedule 1 of The Salvation Army Act, 1980. These statements beautifully cover all major theological ground.
Conclusion

William Booth was a person for whom the means were strongly motivated by the end. The best theological way of understanding this utilitarian spirit is through the doctrine of eschatology. Both personal and universal eschatology drove William Booth to form the Salvation Army. The development of this Army has William Booth’s eschatological vision as its backdrop. The changes in Booth’s Army were also indicative of William Booth evolving passion, which grew to proclaim a universal eschatological perspective about the millennial reign of Christ in addition to the personal eschaton of individuals.

The contemporary Army stands in need of a deep appreciation for William Booth’s global understanding of the kingdom of God, which is the result of his eschatological vision. The spirit of William Booth’s eschatology needs to be embraced once again by the contemporary Army. The contemporary Army should, however, be cautious not to place too much emphasis on personal agency in bringing about the eschaton. The missionary zeal of Booth and the optimism that the world can indeed be won for Christ can be translated to the contemporary Army’s missiological perspective as it continues to go to war for God.
CHAPTER TWO
ESCHATOLOGICAL ECCLESIOLOGY

Today a visitor can walk into a Salvation Army worship service and hear the congregation confidently singing on a given Sunday, to the accompaniment of brass band, one of their battle choruses: “For the world, for the world, Jesus died, Jesus died / For the world, for the world, there is room in Jesus’ side. / All the world to save, to battle we must go, / And we ever will our colors boldly show, / With a trumpet voice we’ll let the millions know / There’s salvation for the world.”1 The content of this song reflects the ecclesiological self-understanding of Salvationists who as members of the universal church are actively involved in the mission of God. Proclaiming this boisterous message is the ecclesiological heritage of the Salvation Army. Such an understanding is primarily and necessarily viewed in the context of mission.

Ecclesiological reflection within the Salvation Army must always consider missional aspects when evaluating its ecclesiology. Jürgen Moltmann dramatically suggests, “What we have to learn from them [missional movements] is not that the church ‘has’ a mission, but the very reverse: that the mission of Christ creates its own church. Mission does not come from the church; it is from mission and in the light of mission that the church has to be understood.”2 It is this missional direction, which unites Booth’s bold “bass drum” ecclesiology with his eschatology because the “salvation of the world” is seen in the context of a holistic and universal mission of God. The influence of eschatology on ecclesiology is pivotal for how we understand the mission of William Booth and how that mission can be interpreted today. How one views the

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end dramatically informs the way one theologically understands the church (ekklēsia) and its missional relationship to that end.

**William Booth’s Eschatological Ecclesiology**

The particular approach toward ecclesiology demonstrated in William Booth’s theological praxis necessarily mingles with his personal and universal eschatology. His desire was for the eternal salvation of souls and the eternal salvation of the world, represented in his millennialism. To say that William Booth had an eschatological ecclesiology is to state that his ecclesiology is formulated on the basis of his desire to redeem individual persons and the world for eternity.

**Ecclesiology**

Ecclesiology is derived from the Greek word *ekklēsia* meaning “church.” Hence, ecclesiology is the sphere of theology that seeks to understand “church.” Ecclesiology as a study aims to ascertain the nature and function of the church within the overall mission of God.

One way of defining and identifying the church is through the marks or notes (*notae*) of the church. The traditional marks established in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Creed (381)³ are unity, holiness, catholicity, and apostolicity. These marks distinguish the church as a community distinct from other social endeavors. The marks are traits of the church and not necessarily a precise definition of all aspects of church life. At a fundamental level, rather, every church of Jesus Christ will display these marks. Thomas Oden describes the practical functioning of these marks:

> Through her catholicity the *ekklesia* reaches out to all the world with the whole truth of the Word. From her apostolicity the *ekklesia* grounds herself in the recollection of the events of God’s own

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³ The Salvation Army’s most recent handbook of doctrine includes this creed. See *Salvation Story* (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 1998), 125-127.
coming. By her holiness the *ekklesia* refracts the holiness of God amid the fallen world. By her unity the *ekklesia* proximately expresses in time the oneness of Christ’s body so as to unite anticipatively all humanity in God’s reconciling activity.4

Oden demonstrates that the traditional marks were condensed by the reformers to “word,” “sacrament,” and “discipline.”5 He explains that these two sets of marks do not stand in contrast to each other. They are complementary when and where “the Word is rightly preached and sacraments rightly administered and discipline rightly ordered [the church] will be one, holy, catholic, and apostolic.”6

Pertinent to this chapter’s discussion about the ecclesiology observed in William Booth’s theology is the question of whether an ecclesiology can exist implicitly. That is to question, whether there can there be a doctrine of the church if there is no explicit and official articulation of the same? If an ecclesiology is unmistakably developed theologically, is it more faithful than an implied ecclesiology? Implicit ecclesiological systems do indeed embody the essential aspects of the traditional marks. Such systems are so active in “being the church” that these movements do not take time to formulate an official ecclesiology.7 Through church history the unarticulated ecclesiological systems have often changed the direction of the church, more than the explicitly classified ecclesiologies.

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5 Though discipline was not emphasized as much in the theology of Martin Luther and John Calvin. Paul D. L. Avis shows that it was later reformers who emphasized the place of discipline as a mark of the church. See Paul D. L. Avis, “True Church in Reformation Theology,” *Scottish Journal of Theology* 30:4 (1977): 319-345.
6 Oden, *Life in the Spirit*, 299. The adequacy of these marks is discussed below.
7 Such ecclesiologies then come close to what Stanley Hauerwas and William H. Willimon urge the church to pursue in their landmark book *Resident Aliens* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1989) where they challenge the church to be an alternative community to the world that embodies what being the church truly means. They challenge the Christian community to “serve the world by showing it something that it is not, namely, a place where God is forming a family out of strangers.” *Resident Aliens*, 83.
Every ecclesiology is at least partially prompted by its eschatology. This statement assumes a teleological model that dictates that the church is living in response to the way it understands the end. The church is the visible sign of the present and coming kingdom of God. When eschatology is connected to ecclesiology, the church sees the future victory of God as a reality impacting the here and now.

William Booth’s Eschatological Ecclesiology

During the formative years of the Salvation Army its ecclesiology was (as most areas of its development) extremely practical. Salvation Army theologian R. David Rightmire explains, “Booth had a functional ecclesiology, conceiving the church as ‘act’ rather than ‘substance.’” The importance of personal eschatology, expressed in Booth’s desire to save souls, was lodged within in the concept of the Army’s universal mission to save the world. This mission was the ‘greatest good’ of Booth’s utilitarian-like ethic. During its development, the leaders of the Salvation Army sought to be free from any divisive assumptions associated with the movement. Booth saw the split of British Methodism after John Wesley’s death as its operational failure. As the Salvation Army grew, so did the need for the institutionalization of its mission and practices. Hence, the Army eventually became its own group, but the core missional direction still reigned in the Army.

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8 This is a debated point for some churches seem to be motivated by nothing but maintaining the status quo. A state church ecclesiology is motivated by an eschatological system that might seek to maintain or justify the status quo this is only seen in a realized eschatology. A realized eschatology views the first coming of Jesus Christ as inaugurating his kingdom. This kingdom is a spiritual or existential reality within the hearts of the believers or the church.


10 When commenting on Wesley’s sectarianism Booth stated, “What will it [the Army] grow to? Who can guess? I cannot. Never, I hope, into a sect. We have taken and shall continue to take every precaution against this. Warned by the failure of John Wesley in maintaining his unsectarian position, we are trying to avoid what we think were his mistakes.” “What is The Salvation Army?” The Contemporary Review 41 (August 1882): 175-182, 181.
Evaluating the Army’s Ecclesiology

Evaluating William Booth’s ecclesiology today is a task that is of great significance for the contemporary Salvation Army as it seeks a historically informed mission. Often Salvationist scholars assume that because Booth’s ecclesiology was conditioned by his eschatology, his ecclesiology was hence insufficient. This study is a call for a revision of the Salvation Army’s historiography. As critics evaluate such claims, it is advantageous to see how the Salvation Army lines up within the greater picture of evangelical ecclesiology. What distinguishes evangelical ecclesiology? Do movements driven by mission have their own ecclesiologies?

Assessing Green’s Evaluation

Contemporary scholars do not always view the impact of William Booth’s eschatology in a positive light. Some assume that Booth’s eschatology, particularly his understanding of the millennium, created a deficient ecclesiology. Such a position is taken by Salvation Army scholar Roger Green who in his article “Facing History: Our Way Ahead for a Salvationist Theology” concludes that the contemporary Salvation Army has inherited a “weak ecclesiology.” He asserts that Booth’s ecclesiology was weak for two reasons: his postmillennialism and the distancing of the Army from the institutional church after the failed merger with the Church of England. The latter claim is not being challenged in this chapter; rather the question is Green’s claim that Booth’s postmillennialism necessitated a weak ecclesiology. Green states, “Postmillennial theology does not comport well with a strong ecclesiology, especially when one’s doctrine of the Church is seen primarily through Army lenses.”

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11 At this point I must explain that the scholarship of Roger Green has been very important to me. Many Salvationist a around the world are the beneficiaries of his research. The discussion that follows does not reduce my admiration for his scholarship.


A definition is needed for the term “weak.” It appears that Green is suggesting that “weak” is a lack of strength. This designation of the early Salvationist ecclesiology as “weak” is itself a derogatory claim. Green’s argument that the contemporary Army has inherited a weak ecclesiology seems to have two points of contention. His first argument is that postmillennialism does not create a lasting ecclesiology because it supposedly did not plan for the future. His second argument is centered on the fact that Booth was ecclesiastically inconsistent in his definitions of the Army’s raison d’être (i.e. “reason for existence”). Green’s second claim demands a distinction between ecclesiastical structures and ecclesiology. William Booth was inconsistent when speaking ecclesiastically. Ecclesiological and ecclesiastical are, however, different terms. Booth’s unpredictable ecclesiastic language refers more to the organization of the movement, whereas, suggesting that Booth possessed a “weak ecclesiology” is proposing that he had a flawed doctrine of the church. Green’s final point of argument is that Booth’s ecclesiology is weak because it de-emphasized ecclesiastical structures. In fact Booth was proposing an alternative structure that was far more effective than the ecclesiastical structures of his day.

The pragmatically-minded William Booth saw a great eschatological goal. That goal was saving the world. Despite Green’s claim that postmillennialism does not comport very well with a sturdy ecclesiology, the opposite can be seen in the denominations that were birthed as a result of the nineteenth century holiness revival.

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14 There are various lexical definitions of “weak”: “1: lacking strength or vigor….2 not able to sustain or resist much weight, pressure, or strain….3 deficient in vigor of mind or character….4 not supported by truth or logic….5 not able to function properly….6 lacking skill or proficiency.” The Merriam-Webster Concise School and Office Dictionary (Springfield, MA: Mirriam-Webster, Inc., 1991), 594.
16 See Dayton, Discovering and Evangelical Heritage.
William Booth was continually defining the early Army, his letters and sermons giving regular emphasis (sometimes overemphasis) to what it meant to be a Salvationist. This provided an ecclesial self-understanding for the young Army. An implicit ecclesiology that lacks classical formulation does not necessarily dictate a “weak” ecclesiology. Booth’s writings are saturated with ecclesiological statements concerning the mission and aims of the Salvation Army. What is implicit is direct theological definition about ecclesiology. His inconsistent ecclesiastical jargon does not negate the content and missional purpose of those statements. Sociologically this creates difficulties in identifying the Salvation Army as a “church” or “sect” along the lines of the typology of Ernst Troeltsch and others. Sociological difficulties do not however necessitate theological deficiency. At the forefront of Roger Green’s argument about Booth’s “weak” ecclesiology is his desire to see the Army move toward church-like categories. Green notes, “I have long been convinced that the only way to approach a correct historical analysis that leads to a truthful institutional self-understanding is to impose the sect/church distinctions developed in the discipline of sociology upon ourselves.” He then encourages Salvationist to accept the “historical fact” that the Army has moved from being a sect to a church and should hence evaluate what sectarian distinctives should be maintained. Missionally-directed movements are not governed by sociology; they are motivated by God’s word, which challenges them to be an active body “preaching the Gospel of Jesus Christ and meeting human needs in his name without

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18 Green, “Facing History,” 29.
19 The chief sectarian distinction Green opposes is postmillennialism. He maintains that the Army should retain wearing the uniform as a symbol of the sacramental life. See Green, “Facing History,” 30-31.
discrimination."\(^{20}\) When mission directs the church, it forms an alternative ecclesiology that is often more in tune with Scripture than the sociologically classified "church" or "denomination."

To criticize William Booth's ecclesiology as "weak" is to force his missionally-directed movement into a box of intellectual abstractions. William Booth's ecclesiology was missional. He was unconcerned with theological abstractions and discussions. Philip Needham's book *Community in Mission* rightly places the context for a Salvationist ecclesiology in the context of mission. Needham's book is a strong statement of a Salvationist ecclesiology. The ecclesiological thesis of this work is that "a Salvationist ecclesiology stands as a reminder to the Church that its mission in the world is primary and that the life of the Church ought largely to be shaped by a basic commitment to mission."\(^{21}\) A missional ecclesiology is exactly where the Army should be if it is to be at all true to its historical and theological heritage. Needham also encourages the Army to live with an "eschatological hope" that informs everyday living in God's Kingdom. While not being postmillennialism, this eschatological motivation can uphold the Army's mission-directed heritage while allowing the postmillennial hymns, like the one above, to be sung with confidence. Salvation Army ecclesiological reflection must always consider missional aspects when evaluating its ecclesiology.

Because Green uses the comparative term "weak," it is difficult to distinguish what ecclesiology he is assuming to be adequate for the contemporary Salvation Army. He maintains that the Salvation Army must embrace a view of history that is different from the Booth's

\(^{20}\) The Salvation Army 2004 Year Book (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2004), iii.

\(^{21}\) Philip Needham, *Community in Mission: A Salvationist Ecclesiology* (Atlanta: The Salvation Army Supplies, 1987), 4-5. Needham's discussion is intentionally inward focused toward the Army. This focus is the book's strength and simultaneously its weakness. *Community in Mission* is a supplemental response to the Army's response to the Lima Document, *Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry*. His argument about the sacraments falls into the category of defense rather than explanation. The Salvation Army can not continue to defend its sacramental position from a spiritualist hermeneutic that tends toward a type of sacramental doceticism, which overemphasizes the spiritual over the physical. See Rightmire, *Sacraments and the Salvation Army*, 242-245.
postmillennialism.\textsuperscript{22} Green's proposal is very positive; that is, he encourages Salvationists to the biblical language of the Kingdom of God when looking at history. This language is indeed something that the contemporary Army should embrace, but the spirit of William Booth's millennialism is not juxtaposed to this language.

\textit{The Marks of the Church Today}

The evangelical movement has become more earnest in entering discussions about how its denominations can articulate a missional ecclesiology. Howard Snyder illustrates this movement in his article, "The Marks of Evangelical Ecclesiology." He notes that throughout church history other marks, which define more precisely particular theological emphases, have emerged. During that process, the traditional marks have been particularly questioned when "issues of revival, renewal, and the institutional failings of the church"\textsuperscript{23} are being considered. He suggests that the reasons these marks have been challenged are their ambiguous nature and "inadequate biblical grounding."\textsuperscript{24} He asserts that a "biblically normative and holistic ecclesiology," which is a true evangelical ecclesiology, "affirms that the true church is always, at one and the same time, one and many, holy and charismatic, apostolic and prophetic, catholic and contextual—and that the church is called always in every context to visibly embody these qualities, even if it does so imperfectly [emphasis mine]."\textsuperscript{25}

Jürgen Moltmann's landmark work on ecclesiology, \textit{The Church in the Power of the Spirit},\textsuperscript{26} insists that ecclesiology must have a basis in the trinitarian history of God's active work with creation. It is in such reflection that the church finds its \textit{raison d'\'etre}. For Moltmann, a

\textsuperscript{22} Green illustrates, "The postmillennial theology of the Booth's simply will not do here [when trying to posit an understanding of the future]." "Facing History," 36.
\textsuperscript{24} Snyder, "The Marks of Evangelical Ecclesiology", 85.
\textsuperscript{25} Snyder, "The Marks of Evangelical Ecclesiology", 91.
pneumatologically-grounded ecclesiology lives and breathes in memory of Christ and in light of eschatological hope. Moltmann also sees the historic church as radically redefining the old “marks” of the church. He explains that this is especially true in four distinctive dimensions of the church today: (1) the Church of Jesus Christ, 27 (2) the missionary church, 28 (3) the ecumenical church, and (4) the political church. Moltmann insists that these groups have expanded on the four traditional marks by displaying: “The church’s unity in freedom. The church’s holiness is its holiness in poverty. The church’s apostolicity [as it] bears the sign of the cross, and [as] its catholicity is linked with its partisan for the oppressed.” 29 Moltmann presents a thorough doctrine of the church that finds its basis in pneumatology and views itself with an eschatological hope.

The Army and the Marks of the Church

Within the explanations provided throughout church history, as illustrated by Oden 30 and expanded upon by Snyder and Moltmann, the early Salvation Army can confidently stand in each area with a functional, biblically-grounded ecclesiology. The Salvation Army did and does identify with the “one” universal church. Illustrative of the sign of “unity” or “oneness” in the early Army is a comment by Bramwell Booth when the Church of England chastised the young movement’s ecclesiology:

The fact is that the Church of England is no more the church than the church at Jerusalem or the church at Rome or the church of the Lutherans and Puritans or the church of the Calvinists and Presbyterians... Of this, the great church of the Living God, we claim, and have ever claimed that we of The Salvation Army are an integral part and element—a living, fruit-bearing branch of the True Vine. 31

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27 Moltmann illustrates this through the Barmen Confession of 1934, explaining that they proclaimed that Jesus was and is the sole Lord and author of the Church, 4 -7.
28 It is this distinction in which the Army seems to be most at home.
29 Moltmann, *The Church in the Power of the Spirit*, 341. It is acknowledged that these themes demand further development than is within the scope of this thesis.
30 See page 2-3.
The Salvation Army did and does identify with the "one" universal church.

The Salvation Army's current mission statement likewise says, "The Salvation Army, an international movement, is an evangelical part of the universal Christian Church." These positions situate the Salvation Army effectively and functionally in the "one" unified church, while simultaneously demonstrating the "one and many" as described by Snyder as a biblical expansion of the basic signs of the church (1 Cor. 12:12). The Army is one distinct (very distinct) expression within that body.

The unity of the Church, as Moltmann expresses, is a "unity in freedom." This means that there is an "evangelical unity, not a legal" unity in the Church. William Booth expressed this unified evangelical freedom: "Hold on, my comrades!... We fight not for one man, not for one garrison. We fight for the deliverance of the whole world" [emphasis Booth's]. Moltmann's expansion of the sign of the church as "one," comports well in an early Salvation Army ecclesiology.

The early Salvation Army did express itself as a "holy" and indeed "charismatic" part of the body of Christ. This understanding has a foundation in Booth's pneumatology, which he describes in 1909:

The Salvation Army has known a great deal of this Divine inspiration. It is itself the creation of the Holy Spirit. All it knows of life and vitality, and all the power it possesses to bless the world, come from the Holy Spirit; and to this day waves of Divine influence, in a lesser or greater measure, are sweeping over it which proceed from Him alone.

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32 The Salvation Army 2004 Year Book (London: The Salvation Army International Headquarters, 2004), iii.
33 Moltmann, 343.
35 That is spirit filled, not functioning as a part of the later "charismatic" movement.
36 William Booth, To My Officers: A Letter from The General on His Eightieth Birthday (St. Albans: Salvation Army Printing works, 1909), 33. Quoted in Green, War on Two Fronts, 59.
The charismatic aspect of the church is demonstrated in the Salvation Army's understanding that it is a movement birthed by the Holy Spirit. The ecclesiological network of the young Salvation Army easily collaborates with Moltmann in that this holiness is expressed in poverty.37

In the same way that the "apostolic" nature of the church adheres to the cross of Jesus as its source, so did the early Army. The Salvation Army is apostolic in that it has been sent into the world with a clear and specific mission. Its soldiers are apostolic as they faithfully witness to Jesus Christ. In an article entitled "The Model Salvation Soldier" William Booth explains that Jesus is the "Model Warrior." Booth illustrates: "His life and teaching, taken together, constitute the pattern and teach the only true method in which our campaign for the deliverance of man from sin and devils is to be carried on."38 Booth then takes a literary step that was commonly employed by Salvationist writers. He calls the apostles of the New Testament first century "soldiers" in the Salvation Army. This task accomplishes two goals. First, through the power of recognition it shows the apostolic connection/succession of the Salvation Army to the first church. Secondly, it insists that the Salvation war extends far beyond the limits of space and time. Booth illustrates: "This [message of deliverance] was declared by Peter, a celebrated General, who fought gloriously in this War....If the Holy Ghost commanded the early Salvationists [the apostles] to fight after the pattern of their Master, surely the same obligation is binding on us."39

As it was apostolic, the early Army was simultaneously a prophetic voice in its time because it directed its mission efforts to the poor, extended its ministry to women, and fought for the rights of the oppressed. This prophetic voice demonstrated that going into the world for

37 A notable example of this is the ministry of the “Slum Sisters” program established in New York in 1890. A brief explanation of this holy ministry to the impoverished is given in Edward H. McKinley, Marching to Glory: The History of The Salvation Army in the United States, 1880-1992 (2nd. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1995), 70.
Booth meant “suffering to Christ: it meant this to the Apostles. They went to the world: this meant going to scorn, poverty, stripes, imprisonment, death—cruel deaths. If you go you will have to suffer there is no way other way of going [sic].” As Moltmann says, the church's apostolicity is understood as it bears the sign of the cross.

The church is catholic as well as contextual; that is to say it is universal as well as local. As Moltmann explains, the church that lives in the power of the Spirit is a universal church that is linked together on behalf of the poor. In identifying with the catholic/universal aspects of the church William Booth declared at the 1904 International Congress in London, “The Army is part of the living Church of God—a great instrument of war in the world, engaged in the deadly conflict with sin and fiends.”

In addition to viewing the Army on a universal scale, Booth often spoke of the contextualization of Salvation Army mission though without using that more recent term. One example of this is when he said, “The Salvationists who are believing for the outpouring of the Spirit upon their neighbourhood, with all its blessed consequences, will use such influence and force as they already possess, or can become possessed of, for the acquisition of such a result (their salvation)” [emphasis mine]. In the discussion of the signs of the church, it seems that The Salvation Army operates seamlessly within these expanded signs of the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church.

40 William Booth, The General's Letters, 5
43 The question that has been left unanswered is how the Salvation Army locates itself within the second protestant sign of the church—the sacraments. The Salvation Army has a non-practicing position on the Sacraments of the Lord's Supper and Baptism. The question inevitably arises: Does this stance eliminate the Salvation Army from being a church? The Salvation Army ceased practicing the sacraments in 1883, based upon its Pneumatological understanding of the holy life. Hence, all of life was sacramental and sacraments were an unnecessary, and at times pragmatic, hindrance to the mission of the Army. Later Salvationists have taken what are almost heretical stands on the sacraments, so as to justify their own belonging to the universal church. These dogmatic defenders have not
Conclusion

William Booth’s functional, biblically based, missional ecclesiology was a dramatic call to the Christian church of the nineteenth century. The pulse of this ecclesiology was William Booth’s eschatology. His impassioned desire to win the world for Jesus produced a missional ecclesiology. William Booth saw the church as necessarily active; he comments on this purpose, “…there can be no question that it is of God that those who are on the Lord’s side should aim at this great and godlike purpose [defeat the devil and delivering souls from hell], and direct and devote all their energies to its accomplishment.” The question is not whether the Army has a “weak” or “strong” ecclesiology, but whether it is faithful to Jesus and the gospel of his kingdom and whether it is functional today? The contemporary Salvation Army has inherited an ecclesiology from William Booth that is faithful in these things—this legacy is worthy of the Army’s time and celebration.

lodged their own arguments in the original pneumatology of the early Army. This theme is developed comprehensively in R. David Rightmire’s, Sacraments and the Salvation Army: Pneumatological Foundations.

CHAPTER THREE
ESCHATOLOGICAL ETHICS: A HOSPITABLE LEGACY

William Booth's eschatological vision informed more than his ecclesiology; it instructed his entire theological praxis particularly the field that the Army is popularly known today—social ethics. Implementing a historically informed social ethic is possibly the greatest challenge facing the contemporary Army. How does the ethical task set before the Army function distinctively within the kingdom of God? Is there a connecting point between the diverse ministries of the Salvation Army? An example of this diversity is the various ministries of the Lexington, KY, corps (Salvation Army unit). This corps is not only a place of worship but also a Boys & Girls Club, day care, food and clothing center, a shelter for women and families, emergency relief center, and provides these services and outreach programs to the Spanish speaking population of the community as well. This specific corps is indicative of the Army's global activity since the development of the "social wing" in 1890. This chapter will seek to understand the origins of this holistic\(^1\) approach to urban ministry with the aim of putting forward a proposal for the contemporary Army's ethical perspective.

**The Holistic Evolution of the Army's Ministry**

In July 1865 an opportunity came for William Booth to preach a series of revival meetings in London's East End. Booth's heart ached for the people of this area. He illustrated this passion for these people:

\(^1\) The term "holistic" is used throughout this chapter to identify an effective balance in mission between personal and cooperate, spiritual and physical aspects if ministry.
In every direction were multitudes totally ignorant of gospel, and given up to all kinds of wickedness. A voice seemed to sound in my ears, ‘Why go...anywhere else, to find souls that need the Gospel? Here they are, tens of thousands at your very door. Preach to them, the unsearchable riches of Christ. I will help you—your need shall be supplied.’

The negative effects of the industrial revolution had disabled this area, much like Booth’s hometown of Nottingham. The industrialized urban areas of England fostered the poverty of the lower classes in what Booth later called the “submerged tenth.” Thus, a great wall gradually appeared between the established Victorian churches and the lower classes of England. Philip Needham notes: “As the lower classes became more and more estranged from the Church, an intense contradiction became apparent—a contradiction between the message of God’s acceptance of all men through Christ and the obvious middle and upper-class self-interest of those who espoused that message.”

With the founding of the East London Christian Revival Society the Booths’ primary motivation was to preach the gospel to the poor of London’s East End, a segment of the population that was generally neglected by the Victorian church. This group would eventually become the Christian Mission, and their purpose was strictly evangelistic. The Army had “Preaching Stations” and not churches, and their converts were supposed to be channeled into the life of the Victorian churches. The initial plan of the Booths did not include starting a separate denomination, but their pragmatism forced them to welcome their converts who were rejected by the established churches. William Booth demonstrates this desire: “My first idea was simply to get people saved, and send them to the churches. This proved at the outset impracticable. 1st. They [the converts] would not go when sent. 2nd. They were not wanted. And

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We wanted some of them at least ourselves, to help us in the business of saving others. We were thus driven to providing for the converts ourselves. It is important to note that William Booth was primarily interested in the spiritual condition of the people to whom he ministered, and he had yet to develop a theology that incorporated the alleviation of social dilemmas.

When within thirteen years the Christian Mission grew to include 75 preaching stations and 120 evangelists and when in 1878 the Christian Mission changed its structure to correspond to the military metaphor, "Salvation Army," Booth's theology began to move from individual categories to institutional categories. Indeed, William Booth saw his Salvation Army as institutionally sanctified to bring about the Kingdom of God on earth. Within eight years of the 1878 name change, the Salvation Army exploded to include 1,749 corps and 4,129 officers.

Though the Salvation Army continued to grow, it was not until 1889 that its social ministry developed an institutional structure. In the early 1870s, William Booth established five food shops that provided cheap food for the poor. These soup kitchens, known by their slogan "Food For the Millions," were under the supervision of William Booth's son and eventual successor, William Bramwell Booth. These shops were a financial disaster and were closed in 1877. Robert Sandall notes that as a result the Salvation Army actually turned people to another group called the Charity Organization Society.

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Due to the extreme poverty that was ravishing the people of their mission field, particularly London’s East End, the eschatologically-focused Salvationist movement was bound to respond to the greater social problems in the world. All the work of the Salvation Army was done in light of the final end (eschaton). In light of the desired end (i.e. the salvation of souls and the imminence of Christ’s millennial reign) the means to produce it had to more dramatically engage its culture. They could not possibly work in the midst of a people who were struggling within poverty and social oppression for long with a singular focus on “souls” without recognizing the necessity that social and physical problems needed relief. The Salvation Army operated more from a functional or pragmatic basis than a theoretical base. The great goal of Salvationist mission is an eschatological aspiration; Booth and the early Army desired to save every person’s soul in the world with the help of God. This primary desire to “save souls” is an eschatological concern.

Foreshadowing later work, the Salvation Army in Australia, on their own initiative, established and sustained a recovering home for released prisoners in December of 1883. Another precursor of Salvation Army social activism came between 1884 and 1885 when, because of insights gained from a new rescue home for prostitutes, the Salvation Army launched an assault on “the world’s oldest profession.” This crusade further highlighted the existence of a white slave trade in England, and with the help of investigative reporter W.T. Stead, the Salvation Army exposed the underground operation. The Salvation Army forced the hand of

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12 This exposure happened through a deliberate plan that resulted in the imprisonment of Stead. Jenty Fairbank gives a detailed account of this event in “Saving a Girl for Seven Pounds” the second chapter of her book, *Booth’s Boots: Social Service Beginnings in The Salvation Army* (London: The Salvation Army, 1983) also Fredrick Coutts details
Parliament to raise the age of consent from thirteen to sixteen.\textsuperscript{13} By establishing a rescue home for prostitutes, in 1884, the Army began a journey toward an institutional embrace of a social mission in 1890.\textsuperscript{14} Pamela J. Walker observes that between 1884 and 1890 "the Army had established rescue work, shelters, food depots, and other programs to relieve distress and to exert a religious influence on those believed to be too burdened to seek it on their own. From 1884, the Salvation Army slowly shaped a dual mission of social services."\textsuperscript{15} In her book \textit{Booth's Boots: Social Service Beginnings in The Salvation Army}, Major Jenty Fairbank discusses several areas of Salvation Army social work: poor relief, the rescuing of prostitutes, maternity work, anti-suicide ministry, reconciliation ministry, ministries to juvenile delinquents, prison ministry, sheltering ministries, ministries to the unemployed, and work with alcoholics. Seven of these ministries found their beginnings before 1890.\textsuperscript{16} The dual mission was a gradual process, and in 1889 this shift was supported by William Booth's own pragmatic theological articulation in his article titled "Salvation for Both Worlds."\textsuperscript{17}

The famous article published in 1889 is the articulation of a conclusion that Booth had reached as the result of his recognition that holistic ministry was necessary. This proclamation was not an overnight decision. It is rather a statement of mature theological expression that understood social and spiritual aspects of the Christian message. This holistic theological

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\textsuperscript{13} Donald W. Dayton also speaks about this event in, \textit{Discovering an Evangelical Heritage} (Hendrickson Publishers, 1976), 117.

\textsuperscript{14} What distinguishes the institutional embrace from these early works is that it was not a necessary part of Salvation Army mission until it was institutionalized with the advent of the social wing in 1890.


\textsuperscript{17} William Booth, "Salvation for Both Worlds" \textit{All The World 6} (January, 1889).
development was articulated in 1890 with the establishment of the “Social Wing,” a division of Salvation Army ministry that sought to implement the “scheme” expressed in In Darkest England and the Way Out. Developing an effectively balanced social wing was no doubt challenging for the pragmatically-minded movement. In Darkest England explicitly supported and institutionally expanded on the Salvation Army’s existing social ministries that had been operating since 1884.

Eschatology and Holistic Ministry in the Army

When William Booth’s universal eschatology came into focus as a result of the transatlantic influences of the American holiness movement between 1870 and 1885 and the American holiness movement experienced a theological shift that placed a new emphasis on pneumatology, William Booth and his Salvation Army also experienced this shift. This transmitted focus enabled William Booth to view the indwelling power of the Holy Spirit as bringing about change in the whole world. The result was a swing toward a universal eschatology that was motivated to bring about the millennial reign of Christ before the second

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19 William Booth In Darkest England and The Way Out (Atlanta: The Salvation Army, 1984). The “scheme” consisted of three proposals. First, the City Colony (102-135) where ragged, poor, hungry men and women from the city could be housed, trained, and helped upwards to honorable and useful lives. The second proposal was the Farm Colony (136-153), a place where those who sought assistance in agricultural work could be provided with appropriate training. The final proposal was the Over-Seas Colony (154-165) that was to be a self-supported group of people working from various countries assisting each other. Other ideas were offered toward social relief (pg. 166-245). Booth concluded by showing how the structure of the Salvation Army is well suited to accomplish this “social scheme” (249-287).
20 This shift does not fall into the heretical traps of Tritheism or Modalism. Booth implicitly advocated an economic view of the trinity that sees each person of the trinity as distinct in their roles and interpersonal relationships while sharing in one divine nature. Hence, each person of the trinity is involved in stages of salvation. The holiness movement of the nineteenth century began to emphasize the role of the Holy Spirit in the process of salvation and sanctification. The source of this emphasis (both the holiness movement and Booth) is undoubtedly John Fletcher and the later writing of John Wesley. See Laurence W. Wood, The Meaning of Pentecost in Early Methodism: Rediscovering John Fletcher as John Wesley’s Vindicator and Designated Successor (Lanham: The Scarecrow Press, 2002),126-134, 313-336.
If the millennial reign of God is seen as waiting for the Christianization of the world and all its social systems, then Christians have a responsibility to act on behalf of that eschatological perspective. Hence, ethical responsibility naturally flows from such a millennial perspective.

Ethics is defined as an attempt to provide principles and appropriate responses for acting rightly in general and specific situations of life. The ethical system that guided William Booth can be broadly seen as teleological in nature. That is an ethical framework that sees the telos or end as conditioning and guiding the ethical process needed to bring about that telos. If William Booth’s theological framework is centered in his eschatological vision, then an ethical background is naturally teleological because eschatology is the study of the “last things.” Just because an ethical system is looking forward to the last things, does not mean that the present situation diminishes in focus. On the contrary, the end breaks into the present as a guide. Jürgen Moltmann expresses this eschatological hope by stating at the beginning of his treatise on eschatology, “In the end is the beginning...” and that “Christian eschatology is the remembered hope of the raising of the crucified Christ, so it talks about beginning afresh...”

William Booth’s embrace of millennialism coincided with his move toward social activity in the early 1880s. The Army became viably active within the sphere of social ethics in 1884. Thus William Booth’s social ethic is directly related to his universal eschatology. How one views God’s kingdom in society affects how one is active in the world. By 1890 these combined

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22 See chapter one, 21-26.
23 For a concise definition of the term “ethics” see Stanley J. Grenz, David Guretzki, and Cherith Fee Nordling, Pocket Dictionary of Theological Terms (Downers Grove: InterVarsity, 1999), 47.
24 A similar process has been observed in the theology of John Wesley by Clarence L. Bence, John Wesley’s Teleological Hermeneutic (Ph. D. diss., Emory University, 1981).
themes (eschatology and social ethics) were fully developed and representative of the holistic mission that the Salvation Army embodied. In the midst of this development, William Booth’s personal eschatology, expressing itself in a concern for souls, was consistently present. In his most explicit eschatological writing, “The Millenium [sic],” Booth illustrates the position of personal eschatology within his universal eschatology: “The most effective methods of advancing the happiness of mankind, and bringing in the Millenial [sic] reign, must be the rule of God in the hearts and lives of men, and the spread of the principles of righteousness and love.”

The particular way that the Salvation Army promoted the “principles of righteousness and love” was the distinctive approach to social ethics. When these principles were blended with millennialism, a dynamic holistic missiology emerged. William Booth’s ethical perspective is, therefore, an expression of his eschatology and is identified in this chapter as an eschatological ethic. This eschatological ethic recognizes that the mission of the kingdom is the mission for God’s people now. In William Booth’s famous article “Salvation for Both Worlds,” he elaborates on the incarnational quality of this eschatological ethic: “Christ is the deliverer for time as truly as for eternity. He is the Joshua who leads men in our own day out of the wilderness into the Promised Land, as His forerunner did the Children of Israel thousands of years ago. He is the messiah who brings glad tidings! He is come to open the prison doors. He is come to set men free from their bonds. He is indeed the Saviour of the world!”

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26 A decision this thesis suggests was pneumatologically influenced by the holiness movement.
Scholarly Disputes

K.S. Inglis and Norman H. Murdoch have contested that William Booth’s move to include social ministries was purely motivated by his failure of not having reached the poorest of poor with the gospel, particularly in London’s East End. These scholars insist that the Salvation Army’s social work beginnings can only be traced to 1890 and the “Darkest England Scheme.”

They explain the reason for social expansion was because William Booth was failing as an evangelist in London’s East End. Indicative of this approach is the following statement by Murdoch:

The 1890 scheme differed in kind, and not just in scope, from the temporary handout aid his mission offered, aid he had called in 1877 when it impeded his revival program. His fixation was on saving souls. Darkest England was a new departure for Booth and for the Army. As its evangelistic program stagnates in the 1880s, social salvation replaced evangelism as the Army’s mission.

One might understand Murdoch’s conclusion if he was responding to the possible divorced nature of social and spiritual ministries in the contemporary Salvation Army. It is admitted by most Salvationists that evangelism needs to find a better-balanced relationship with social work in the contemporary Salvation Army. However, retroactively placing such concerns on William Booth and the early Salvation Army is wrong for at least three major reasons. First, Murdoch ignores the social ministries that existed between 1884 and 1890, which Fairbank has described. Fairbank responds to critics like Murdoch and Inglis by calling their positions “uninitiated” and “still labouring under the popular fallacy that all Salvation Army social work

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28 William Booth, “Salvation for Both Worlds” All The World 6 (January, 1889), 2-3. This quote is parallel the imagery of Fletcher and Wesley as they often referred to “promised land” analogies. This quote also demonstrates that within Booth’s theology there is no dichotomy between the work of the Son and the Spirit.


30 Murdoch, 147.

31 Though at the time of her book she was more likely responding to Inglis.
stemmed from the 1890 scheme..." The other ministries mentioned in her book, *Booth's Boots*, might be ignored because of the social-political activity of the SA in the mid 1880's (i.e. the purity crusade). The early ministries, which began in 1884, prompted William Booth to begin thinking of implementation on an international level.

Second, these theories fail by misinterpreting the later William Booth as only a social reformer. This seems to suggest that William Booth took off his "evangelist hat" and put on a "socio/political reformer hat." William Booth's theology might have changed, but he never lost his eschatological focus, as social salvation was an addition to his already established theology of personal salvation. If Murdoch's logic were followed, one would have to re-explain all of the evangelistic material that flowed from the mouth and pen of William Booth after 1890. Finally, there is not much support for the notion that the Booth's evangelistic work was failing in the 1880s. On the contrary, this was a time of great growth. Between 1878 and 1886 the Army grew to include 233% more corps and 344% more officers.

Murdoch's point is not directly aimed at the growth of the Army as a whole. However, he points his argument toward the lack of growth in London. Murdoch makes psychological assumptions about the way Booth would have felt about his work in London. Murdoch imagines: "Failure in London pained Booth; he now denied it. He feared the day when his army might be another sect perpetuating itself." Murdoch provides no empirical proof as to why Booth might ever feel this way. This claim is indicative of this revisionist work that attempts to maintain a conclusion without a sufficient argument. Ann Woodall concedes that the Army in East London numerically diminished, but she shows that the ministry itself had become more effective and

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33 See page 52 fn. 12.
incarnational, illustrating this point through the work of the “slum sisters,” a group that lived in the streets with the poorest of the poor in order to reach them with the gospel Woodall points to numerous outside sources that applauded the Army at this time in London as being very respected for its ministry to the “slummers.”

William Booth’s theology accommodated such a shift toward social categories of salvation because of his balanced approach toward universal and personal eschatology. When universal eschatology was expressed through millennial language, it never lacked personal urgency that characterized his early ministry. There is not a “break” in Booth’s thinking with the publication of “Salvation for Both Worlds” and Darkest England. These sources are the mature articulations of a theology that progressed in light of its eschatological task. The result of this discussion is a holistic ministry that embraced the spiritual and the physical world in a radical way.

The Army and the Paradigm of “Social Work”

The contemporary Salvation Army’s self-identity is often blurred by an unnecessary dualism between social and spiritual missions. Since 1890 Salvationists have developed a variety of ways for discussing the approach to social and spiritual ministries. The impact of William Booth’s eschatology is observed in its ethical self-understanding.

37 A helpful analysis of this problem is found in Phil Needham, The Schizophrenia of an Army: A Diagnosis and a Proposed Solution (Unpublished Paper from 1966).
William Booth's first way of distinguishing the social wing was to make it an office unto itself with its own officers and commissioner. William Booth himself was seen as the autocratic, connecting link between the various wings of the Salvation Army. Commenting on the development of his own theology he remarked: "I had two gospels of deliverance to preach—one for each world [temporal and eternal], or rather, one gospel which applied alike to both. I saw that when the Bible said, 'He that believeth shall be saved,' it meant not only saved from the miseries of the future world, but from the miseries of this [world] also." This quote demonstrates Booth's desire to find and maintain equilibrium in ministry. His autocratic structures, which he felt were a sign of the millennial kingdom, demanded the delegation and creation of a social wing. Herein lies the problem that has remained with the Salvation Army: in trying to find a "balance," the Salvation Army further dichotomizes social and spiritual ministries. Is it possible that this dichotomy is unduly emphasized as a result of the Salvation Army's insufficient paradigm of "social services?"

The striving to make the paradigm of "social services" fit into a theological system is arduous. This problem is apparent within the title of the important work edited by Commissioner John D. Waldron, Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian Theology of Social Work in The Salvation Army, which compiled a variety of reflections of Salvation Army social ministries. The positive effects of this scholarly reflection are somewhat tainted by the insufficient polarizing paradigm of "social services."

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42 In that volume Philip Needham argues for a "Re-integration of the Salvationist Mission." He suggests that one should consider: biblically mandated social responsibility, the Salvation Army's Wesleyan heritage considering Wesley's own paradigm — "Acts of Piety and Mercy," the Salvationist commitment to holistic ministry, and contemporary theology's emphasis on Koinonia and eschatological hope. He suggests three paradigms for Salvation
The important reflections found in *Creed and Deed* begin with a premise, which is flawed, that “social services” is (or should be) the overarching paradigm of Salvation Army social ministry. The paradigm of “social services” is inadequate in placing the Salvation Army within the meta-narrative of Christian social action. “Social services” automatically creates an impersonal and professional atmosphere. An example of this bifurcation would be soldiers of a corps who faithfully attend Sunday holiness meetings, but when encountering a person in need of “temporal” salvation, they refer the person to the “social worker” of the corps. Such a pattern and paradigm divorces the so-called “spiritual work” from “social work” and generally delegates the “social services” to professional “social workers” that may or may not share the Army’s holistic mission.

**If not “Social Services,” then What?**

The impact and legacy of William Booth’s eschatological ethic is a holistic approach to mission. How can the contemporary Army maintain this legacy? Recent scholarship has rediscovered the paradigm and practice of hospitality as a way of approaching Christian social ethics. Hospitality can serve as a preferable paradigm for social ministries within the Salvation Army

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*Army social work: An overflow of Christian caring, social service as sacrament, and “two arms, and one task,” the one task is redemption while the two arms are evangelism and social services. While each of these paradigms is helpful for the Salvationist, the former two paradigms are secondary ways of understanding the holistic ministries within the Army because they give justification for the work that is being done. The latter paradigm will undoubtedly fall into the trap of bifurcating such ministries. It should be noted that Needham’s argument here is built around finding unity in social work and spiritual ministries. It is the contention of this chapter to illustrate that trying to force these two paradigms together is problematic, and that it leads to an unhealthy self-understanding of Salvation Army ministry. Needham, “Toward a Re-Integration of The Salvationist Mission” *Creed and Dead*, ed. Waldron, 123-158.*

*This is certainly not the case for every person working in the field of “social work.” Social work is not always seen as an essential Christian practice. Social work is a “profession” and a “department” rather than vital to Christian identity.*

Army’s holistic mission. This paradigm is presented as “preferable” because it does not bifurcate spiritual and social ministries. The early Salvation Army presents the contemporary Army and the Christian church in general with a prophetic social ethic that has at its core an implicit form of hospitality. This legacy of hospitality and holistic ministry should be the model by which the contemporary Army looks to the future.

_The Christian Tradition of Hospitality_45

The practice of hospitality finds its apex in the nature of the Triune God who continually welcomes humanity into the eternal fellowship of the Godhead. Such welcome is clearly exhibited through Jesus’ sacrificial welcome in his passion. Receiving the welcome that Jesus offers necessitates participation in the fellowship of God’s trinitarian nature. The tradition of hospitality is more than desserts and prosaic conversation among friends and family. It is not a spiritual gift for those who like to bake. On the contrary, throughout church history hospitality has been concerned with the interaction between “others” and the practice of welcoming “strangers.”

The macrocosmic picture of the Old Testament is of the Israelites’ call to and from a foreign land where they were aliens.46 The Israelites were utterly dependent on God and were commanded to express their understanding of his providence in how they treated others who were in need. They were commanded to show welcome to strangers in light of the welcome of God.47 Specific examples of hospitality that reflect this macro picture in the Old Testament microcosmically are Abraham’s welcome of angels in Genesis 18, Rahab’s welcome of Israelite spies in Joshua 2, and the widow of Zarephath’s hospitality to Elijah in 1 Kings 17.

45 The brief review of the tradition of hospitality is derived from Christine D. Pohl, _Making Room: Recovering Hospitality as a Christian Tradition._
The teachings of Jesus powerfully encouraged people to show welcome toward others. Christine Pohl illustrates that Matthew 25 and Luke 14 are central in the formation and praxis of the tradition of hospitality. Believers are explicitly commanded in various epistles to practice hospitality: Romans 12:13; Hebrews 13:2; 1 Peter 4:9; 1 Timothy 3:2; and Titus 1:8. The concept of loving and welcoming strangers is a pivotal message of the New Testament.

The practice of hospitality was critical to the development of the early church due to the intersection of the house and church. The young church regularly found itself meeting in homes for times of worship. Because of this intersection, the common meal became an important expression of hospitality that flourished in the multiracial society where the early church was submerged. In the fourth and fifth centuries, leaders like Jerome, John Chrysostom, Benedict of Nursia, and Lactantius kept the tradition and language of hospitality vibrant. Through the medieval period hospitality became associated with entertainment and personal advantage from hospitable practices. Hospitality became an expectation, rather than a natural sign of Christian fellowship. Pohl states, "In the diversity of institutions, in the loss of the worshiping community as a significant site for hospitality and the differentiation of care among recipients, the socially transformative potential of hospitality was lost."  

The leaders of the Protestant Reformation reasserted the importance of hospitality. This realization of the importance of welcome was pragmatically significant because the social structures of Europe were stirred during the Reformation. A century later, John Wesley demanded a social understanding of the gospel in 18th century England, and the Methodist movement he led reflected this articulation of social holiness. This social motivation was also

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49 Pohl, Making Room, 51.
prompted an imminent millennial hope. Wesley grasped the theological and moral significance of hospitality without explicitly naming it.

The semantic difficulties of Wesley's day continue to perplex the contemporary church's connection to the tradition of hospitality. The significance of naming the tradition is important to William Booth's connection with the overarching social ethical tradition of Christianity. The language provides the means whereby a Christian can understand his or her social responsibility within the realm of theological, historical, and moral reflection. This understanding is specifically significant for contemporary practitioners of hospitality because hospitality enables their service to move beyond the realm of "duty" or "social services." Hospitality then becomes a way of life for individuals and communities to express welcome and as an outgrowth of their identity as a Christian body. Ethicist Christine Pohl shares, "reclaiming hospitality is an attempt to bring back the relational dimension to social service, and to highlight concerns for empowerment and partnership with those who need assistance." Any Christian movement that takes seriously the exhortation to "welcome one another" can benefit from viewing this welcome through the lenses of hospitality.

A Hospitable Legacy

If hospitality is to be applied to the contemporary Salvation Army, does it line up with the ethical heritage of the life, ministry, and writings of the early Salvation Army? William Booth's famous book, In Darkest England and The Way Out is one such example of this hospitable heritage. In Darkest England, was his effort to transport the theme of social redemption to the forefront of Victorian society. The unique power involved in recognition is a
key theme in the tradition of hospitality. Booth saw within each person the possibility of deliverance from sin and social evil because theologically, he understood that salvation was available for all people. An example of such recognition is Booth’s explanation that the 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 eat its corn.” Booth illustrates that these basic rights, given to horses, were being denied to a tenth of the population. He calls this group the “submerged tenth.” Booth’s proposed solution to this problem (“the Way Out”) is outlined as his “social scheme.” He comments on the ultimate goals of this “social scheme,” which implicitly embody themes of dignity and respect:

To attempt to save the lost, we must accept no limitations to human brotherhood. If the scheme which I set forth in the following pages is not applicable to the thief, the harlot, the drunkard and the sluggard it may as well be dismissed without ceremony. As Christ came to call not the saints but the sinners to repentance, so the message of temporal salvation, of salvation from pinching poverty, from rags and misery, must be offered to all.

Possibly drawing upon the language of Matthew 25:31-36, Booth later in the same book stresses the power of dignity and respect: “But we who call ourselves by the name of Christ are not worthy to profess to be His disciples until we have set an open door before the least and worst of these who are now apparently imprisoned for life in a horrible dungeon of misery and despair. The Booths and Wesley both recognized God’s prevenient grace at work in the lives of people, and as a result their outlook on social ethics was dramatically transformed. Catherine Booth when speaking on the subject of home visitation explained, “They need to be brought into contact with a living Christ...They want to see and handle the words of life in a living form.

Christianity must come to them embodied in men and women, who are not ashamed to ‘eat with

53 See Pohl, Making Room, 61-84.
56 William Booth, In Darkest England, 44.
publicans and sinners.” Wesley’s understanding of social holiness influenced Catherine Booth’s understanding of communion with Christ in entire sanctification.

Catherine also recognized the significance of seeing Jesus in every stranger: “Oh, for grace always to see Him where He is to be seen, for verily, flesh and blood doth not reveal this unto us! Well ... I keep seeing Him risen again in the forms of drunkards and ruffians of all descriptions.”

Similarly Bramwell Booth illustrated:

When I see the poor, shivering creatures gathered in the warmth and comfort of our Shelters, and the famished ones in the Food Depots, and the workless hard at work, and the lost and lonely in the bright hopefulness of the Women’s and Children Homes, and the prisoners—set in happy families in our Harbours of Refuge, my heart sings for joy, and I say, ‘Is not this the Christ come again?’ If He came now to London and Boston and New York and Melbourne and Tokio, as He came to Jerusalem and Nazareth and Caesarea, would He not want to do exactly this? I believe He would!

Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:29-37) redefines the way that humanity looks at “neighbors.” William Booth recognized the importance of this passage for early Salvation Army hospitality ministries as he frames this pericope in sacramental terms, which is somewhat ironic for a non-practicing-sacramental denomination, by urging soldiers “to observe continually the sacrament of the Good Samaritan.”

Bramwell Booth records an interesting conversation with his father in his popular book Echoes and Memories. The conversation took place when the Booths were crossing the Thames River on London Bridge, and William Booth noticed the homeless men sleeping under the arches of the bridge at nightfall. His son Bramwell was obviously aware of their lack of lodging, but

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58 Catherine Booth, quoted in Bramwell Booth, These Fifty Years (London: Cassel, 1929), 45-46.
61 Bramwell Booth, Echoes and Memories (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1925), 1-2.
William was disgusted by the poverty he saw. Bramwell records their conversation (Bramwell’s responses in *Italics*):

‘Go and do something! We must do something.’ ‘What can we do?’ ‘Get them a shelter!’ ‘That will cost money.’ ‘Well that is your affair! Something must be done. Get hold of a warehouse and warm it, and find something to cover them. But mind, Bramwell, no coddling.’

This conversation illustrates how the boundaries of hospitality, in general, are often hard to define. Despite the ambiguous parameters, the imperative nature of hospitable practices can be found in William’s comments.

Frank Smith, the first leader of the “Social Wing” commented about working with the dangerous people who are on the borders of society:

the fact is, deny it who can, the churches are wedded to the wealthy world. Let us of the Salvation Army, from this day forth, wed ourselves to the fate and the fortunes of the so-called dangerous classes. Let us go down to our bride in the Boweries of our cities. God approves of this union.

The way in which people understand the proper balance between that which is social and spiritual is continually an issue in the Salvation Army’s hospitality ministries. The personal secretary to William Booth, Brigadier Fred Cox, recalled at a later date how Booth would often respond to questions about this dilemma:

He believed in keeping religion first. People used to say to him in the early days, ‘You know, General, we can do with your social operations, but we can’t do with your religion; we don’t want it.’ The General would say—‘If you want my Social Work, you have got to have my Religion; they are joined together like Siamese twins; to divide them is to slay them!’

The delicate harmonization of the relationship between these two aspects of Salvation Army ministry is a frequent task for any Salvationist. In 1966 Philip Needham described the Salvation

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64 Fred Cox, “The Founder,” Special lecture to Cadets, by Brigadier Fred Cox, General Booth’s Personal Secretary, on January 4, 1924, 9). Quoted in Green, *War on Two Fronts*, 128n.
Army's identity problem as "schizophrenic." On the other hand, General Fredrick Coutts described the idealized mutual existence of social and spiritual ministries by utilizing a marital metaphor. It is key to the Salvation Army's self-understanding that this relationship be understood in light of the Army's historical theology while remaining relevant to the people it serves.

**Hospitality: A Preferable Paradigm for the Army**

The Biblical/theological tradition of hospitality can serve as a preferable paradigm for Salvation Army ministries. The Christian tradition of hospitality has been buried for three centuries, as the 18th century largely considered it "an antiquated practice, out of step with busy commercial society, a relic from an earlier time." Christine Pohl suggests: "Hospitality is a way of life fundamental to Christian identity." Hospitality is a paradigm that connects theological reflection with everyday concerns. The Salvation Army has arguably had the most consistent social witness in the past 150 years; however, acknowledging and naming and refocusing this social witness as "hospitality" will connect the Salvation Army's work in general with the theological history of the church. Theological reflection has often been a secondary concern for the pragmatic Salvation Army; therefore, it has admittedly lacked an explicit theological foundation for its practices. The theological heritage supplied by the tradition of hospitality can provide a foundation for the existing social ministries of the Army.

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65 Phil Needham, *The Schizophrenia of an Army: A Diagnosis and a Proposed Solution* (Unpublished Paper from 1966)
66 Fredrick Coutts, quoted in Harry Dean, "The Dynamic Centrality," *The Officer* (August 1972), 359.
67 Pohl, *Making Room*, 7. In this book Pohl shows the historical, theological, and biblical tradition of hospitality as the primary justification for contemporary social ethics. She challenges Christians to see the "necessity, difficulty, and blessings of practicing hospitality today."
68 Pohl, *Making Room*, x.
69 This active, pragmatic theology is a strength of the Army.
70 This lack of theological foundation is the basis for Creed and Deed: Toward a Christian theology of social services in The Salvation Army, ed. Waldron.
Hospitality can further connect and unite the progression of William Booth’s theology in a way that does not tend toward Murdochian separatism. First, Booth recognized the importance of offering a neglected group personal redemption, and eventually he saw the need to institutionally welcome the holistic person. Indeed, one begins to see William Booth’s ministry and theology as a journey of hospitality. This journey had significant influences: Catherine Booth and George Scott Railton, who both helped refine his early theological understanding of personal and social holiness, influenced his journey. Then the influences of Bramwell Booth, W. T. Stead, and Frank Smith helped him realize the social dimensions of the theology handed to him from Wesley, Finney, Palmer, and Caughey.

John Wesley was a culminating and reviving figure in the tradition of hospitality, but his use of these themes was implicit, much like Booth’s. A major challenge for Salvation Army mission today is for a historically-informed reappraisal of the Salvation Army’s social ministry. Hospitality can act as a linking paradigm because it was implicitly a part of William Booth’s theology, and it can further function as therapy for the bifurcated soldier therein.

In Salvation Army literature, the first explicit challenge to view social ethics through the lens of hospitality came from Miroslav Volf’s keynote lecture to the Salvation Army’s International Theology and Ethics Symposium in 2001. Volf explains that in pursuing the care for others: “The exclusive pursuit of justice will not do. We need more than justice, not less. We need grace.” He explains that hospitality is a form of grace. Volf illustrates: “Hospitality has at its background some need of the person to whom we are hospitable (food, shelter, human touch, love, etc.)…. If we don’t offer hospitality, we do the person no wrong; if we do offer it, we give

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71 Explicit utilization of hospitality could exist. If it has been alluded to, it was not developed or seen as theological paradigm for social ministry. I found no mention of hospitality in secondary literature until coming upon James Read’s, “Notes on Miroslav Volf’s Keynote Lecture.” Word and Deed, vol. 4:2 (May, 2002), 67-73.

something more than the person had a claim upon." Volf further connects concepts of welcome that are intrinsically involved in the life of the economic Trinity:

We don’t quite know why the world was created, we just know that this divine love sought a place to ‘spill itself over.’ Part and parcel of the economic Trinity is not only creating the world in an incredible act of generosity and sustaining it in an act of hospitality, but also engaging the world in love to restore it to a communion it once had with God, a communion that has now been ravaged by sin and death.

Looking at the church’s practice of hospitality in line with an understanding of the economic Trinity, Volf states: “The church’s mission is situated at this particular point. The church’s identity emerges from God’s estrangement from the world. The church’s mission is a continuation of that love that God has shown toward the world and participation in that love toward the world.”

Within the scheme of the Christian message, hospitality begins with its demonstration in the life of the economic Trinity. This divine life overflows into our own personal redemption as the cross invites humanity into that divine life. This activity on our behalf provides the grounding for the hospitality that Christians personally demonstrate. Communities transpose personal acts of hospitality into a corporate expression of hospitality.

**Conclusion**

William Booth’s goal of working toward the millennial reign of Christ, through the labor of the Salvation Army, was a motivating factor for the Army’s missional addendum of social ministries. Hence, eschatology conditioned the social response of William Booth. His teleological ethic is, therefore, identified as an eschatological ethic. This eschatological ethic produced a prophetic form of holistic ministry that is institutionally present today. The

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75 James Read, “Notes on Miroslav Volf’s Keynote Lecture.” 72.
contemporary Army has inherited the fruits of this eschatological ethic, and if the Army today looks at the coming kingdom of God as the template by which the kingdom of God is now a reality, then an eschatological ethic is advantageous for the Army today.\textsuperscript{76} Dichotomizing this mission into distinct categories of spiritual and social mission often debilitates the Army from recognizing this holistic heritage. “Social Service” as a paradigm has perpetuated this dichotomy.

A shift in paradigms is an answer to this problem. The historical, Biblical, theological, and moral tradition of hospitality can serve as an antidote to a sometimes-bifurcated Salvation Army. The early Army implicitly embraced the themes of hospitality in a prophetic way. The contemporary Army could explicitly embrace this tradition by refocusing its social ethic toward an eschatological ethic that responds as hospitable support rather than a social service.

This paradigm shift can practically happen by refocusing the social ministry language and self-understanding. A wonderful example of a name that already embodies concepts of hospitality is the Salvation Army’s Harbor Light Centers.\textsuperscript{77} Harbor Lights are reclamation centers that are usually located within inner cities. These centers seek to offer hope for men and women suffering from the negative effects of urbanization. Harbor Light centers would be in no need of changing their name, as their mission statement could embrace the paradigm of hospitality so as to renew its focus as a place of welcome and “harbor.” If the Army pursued such a shift, it would need to seek creative ways to describe its ministry. This ministry is not limited to “professionals” but is seen as basic to the identity of every Salvationist who wears on

\textsuperscript{76} The millennialism of Booth has left the Army with a wonderful heritage of the role of personal agency in making the themes of God’s kingdom realized “on earth as it is in heaven.” The Army should be careful not to take this postmillennialism to an extreme form that understands social reasonability as causal in bringing about the millennium and the return of Christ.

\textsuperscript{77} Also known as “harbor homes.”
his or her uniform two S's which represent the eschatological ethical challenge to be "Saved to Serve."
CHAPTER FOUR
SEEKING ESCHATOLOGICAL CLARITY

When commenting on the activities of the Salvationist in heaven, William Booth responded in military-like fashion, "In heaven he [the Salvationist] is doubtless[ly] employed in some service for the King, for which his military training on earth has specially qualified him."¹

Since his view of personal eschatology is crucial to understanding William Booth's theology, his confidence in the reality of heaven, hell, judgment, and resurrection has already been affirmed in chapter one. Despite these explicit affirmations, there remains an elusive tension concerning the Salvation Army's eschatological statement within its "Articles of Faith."² These articles were formulated under its previous name the Christian Revival Society in 1866-6/7³ and later affirmed as The Salvation Army in 1878.⁴

The eleventh article states, "We believe in the immortality of the soul, and the resurrection of the body...." Some scholars suggest that these two confessions are mutually exclusive and that they represent an either-or situation.⁵ Others propose, however, that if immortality of the soul is qualified as merely a belief in personal existence between death and

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¹ *Doctrines and Disciplines of The Salvation Army*, 3rd edition (London: The Salvation Army, 1890), 77.
² Within Salvation Army literature these statements are interchangeably referred to as "doctrines" and "Articles of Faith."
⁴ This same collection of doctrinal statements has remained unchanged since 1878 and has most recently been affirmed by the 1980 Salvation Army Act. These "Articles of Faith" can be found in *Salvation Story* (London: The Salvation Army, 1998), ix-x; *The Song Book of The Salvation Army* (Alexandria, VA: The Salvation Army National Headquarters, 1987), VI.
⁵ See Oscar Cullmann, *Immortality of the Soul or Resurrection of the Body: The Witness of the New Testament* (London: The Epworth Press, 1958); Roger E. Olsen, *The Mosaic of Christian Belief: Twenty Centuries of Unity & Diversity* (Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002), 316-330; I will note below how the Salvation Army has consistently posited the concept of immortal souls as a belief in eternal life. What has not been clear is the Army's attempt to deal with this concept on its own terms.
resurrection, that these statements are not antithetical to one another. Christians who assert a qualified immortality of the soul are indeed within the boundaries of biblical teaching and Christian orthodoxy. This study, however, suggests that such a dual formulation is unclear and possibly misleading concerning the nature of one’s eschatological doctrine.

The Army’s adoption of the immortality of the soul is linked to Booth’s background in New Connexion Methodism and its doctrinal statements. The impact of the early Army’s implementation of this language has been a continued support that has failed to explicitly deal with the possible implications of this expression. This theological affirmation was made without an awareness of the implicit consequences. In order for William Booth’s eschatology to be fully understood and appropriately applied to the present milieu, the Army must reaffirm the orthodox doctrine of the resurrection of the body or at least distinguish it from the blurred doctrine of the immortality of the soul. It is no longer sufficient to fall back on the argument of intentions (either Booth’s or the Army’s), which have never truly affirmed the immortality of souls in the Greek philosophical sense.

The Salvation Army and Immortality of the Soul

At best the immortality of the soul has two meanings. The immortality of the soul is a Greek understanding of ultimate reality that exalts the spiritual over the physical world, and it is also a Christian conviction that affirms personal survival beyond death.

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7 The term “qualified immortality of the soul” in this chapter refers to a doctrine that affirms the soul’s immortality while simultaneously asserting a belief in the resurrection of the body.
8 For a view that affirms “immortal” language within the field of Biblical studies see Murray Harris, *Raised Immortal* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1985), 189-205.
9 The Greek notion also affirms personal survival beyond death.
**Immortality of the Soul**

The notion of the soul's immortality finds its beginning within Socrates' philosophical system which was later interpreted by Plato. This worldview projects that there is a dichotomy between the physical and spiritual worlds. The body then is the "cage of the soul," which prohibits the soul from existence in the eternal world. Death for humanity is the great friend and liberator because it enables the soul to move into eternal reality. Socrates' death, as narrated by Plato in the *Phaedo*, is the prime example of this worldview for he welcomes death as it brings him to a greater understanding of reality through the freedom of his soul. Oscar Cullman contrasts Socrates' death with the death of Jesus. Jesus' distress about his immanent death and ultimately the pain and abandonment he feels on the cross is reflective of the fact that death is not welcomed as a liberating event. Immortality of the soul was the Greek philosophical perspective of life beyond the physical world. This metaphysical understanding was later embraced by Gnostic spirituality. In this discussion immortality is defined as a fact of existence and hence the ability to exist eternally. When combined with the belief in the soul, does this imply a preexistent state of the soul? If so, within a Christian worldview the only being who is truly immortal is the triune God who has no beginning and no end.

If immortality is meant to refer to the reality of survival between death and resurrection, then the New Testament does indeed affirm such a belief. The Greek word *aphthartos* is used as an adjective in the New Testament, and it is specifically used in a subjective genitive relationship.

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with God, theos (see Romans 1:23 and 1 Timothy 1:17).\textsuperscript{14} Its usage as a noun, athanasia, is defined as “the state of not being subject to decay/dissolution/interruption.” Thus it is defined as “incorruptibility or immortality,”\textsuperscript{15} and only refers to God once, illustrating that he alone is immortal in 1 Timothy 6:16.

The other occurrences of athanasia (Romans 2:7, 1 Corinthians 15:53-54, and 2 Timothy 1:10) refer to a quality that is in concert with eternal life. It is in no way referring to an intrinsic quality that humanity possesses before and after human life. Immortality is something that mortals eschatologically “put on” (1 Cor. 15:53). Romans 2:7 specifically refers to immortality as something that people value along with “glory and honor.” People who are pursuing these things will be given “eternal life” as an eschatological reward. The New Testament witness does not signify immortality as a quality intrinsic to fallen humanity, nor does it pertain to a preexistent state of the soul. The New Testament presents immortality as a transformation of human existence. New Testament scholar Gordon Fee says that the imagery used in 1 Corinthians 15:53 “stands in sharp contrast to the Greek view [of immortality of the soul], in which one is naturally endowed with immortality, but not so Paul; immortality is the investure of the resurrection.”\textsuperscript{16} It should be noted, however, that immortality is never attributed as a condition of the soul (psychē) in the New Testament.

In contrast to the Greek approach, which understands one’s soul as a purely spiritual entity existing before and after earthly life and thereby implicitly devaluing the body, the New

\textsuperscript{14} Apitharsia is a closely related to the word translated “imperishable” (1 Corinthians 9:25; 15:42, 50, 52-54; Romans 1:23; 1 Timothy 1:17).
Testament emphasizes a contrasting view to the immortality of the soul—the human person as a union of soul and body, and the resurrection of the body. Being an essential and defining doctrine of Christianity, the resurrection of Jesus Christ endures as the primary theme of New Testament eschatology. Thomas Oden illustrates: “The Christian’s hope risks distortion if stated as if it were essentially a hope for the soul’s escape from the prison of the body into a purely spiritual realm. Christianity hopes for renewal of the whole person, where I will again be myself, will live again in my glorified body.”

This event is the basis for a belief in the resurrection of the body. This alternative belief system is clearly seen in the Apostles’ Creed that mentions nothing of the soul’s immortality, but rather affirms: “I believe in ... the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.”

The New Testament’s discussion of the soul or self (psychē) is not, however, giving the soul an attribute that belongs in other philosophical categories. Psychē is used in three separate ways in the New Testament. First, as “life on earth in its animating aspect making bodily function possible.” An example of this treatment is in Acts 20:10; after a person falls three stories to his presumed death, Paul explains, “Do not be alarmed, for his life [psychē] is in him.”

Secondly it is “the seat of the inner human life in its many and varied aspects.” This usage is illustrated in John 12:27 when Jesus is looking at his imminent death, “My soul [psychē] is troubled...” The third variety of this term refers to personhood; for instance Romans 13:1 explains, “Let every person [psychē] be subject to the governing authorities.”
While biblical anthropology is not the focus of our discussion, there is no doubt that personal eschatology and anthropology converge on issues of the afterlife.\textsuperscript{20} The Old Testament equivalent of \textit{psykhē} is held within two words \textit{nephesh} ("to respire," "to breath," "living") and \textit{ruach} ("spirit"). \textit{Nephesh} is generally reflective of humanity's total nature and concerns the human constitution. The classical text for understanding the role of \textit{nephesh} is found in Genesis 2:7 where God declares man a "living [\textit{nephesh}] being." The Old Testament's anthropological treatment of these words makes no clear distinction between the entities (i.e. body, soul, and spirit) that constitute humanity. Humans are always seen in their totality; body and soul are not separated but are inseparable concepts of body and life.\textsuperscript{21} The biblical witness as a whole understands the constitution of humanity in holistic fashion; body and soul are jointly viewed to establish the basis of personhood.

Within contemporary popular piety it has become fashionable to talk about the eternal state of the soul after death, to the exclusion of the resurrection of the body. This emphasis resurfaced as a popular way of discussing personal eschatology in the 18\textsuperscript{th} century with the teachings of Swedish aristocrat and mystical theologian Emmanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772). His theological emphases drew attention to the correspondence of the physical world with the "true" invisible world.\textsuperscript{22} According to Swedenborg, the invisible world finds its basis in the attributes of God. His legacy breathes today through a group known as the "Swedenborg Society," an assembly that was formed in the early nineteenth century. Johnny "Appleseed" Chapman, the American founder of this group, made his teachings popular in the United States. This Society promoted the immortality of the soul as the transmigration of souls from the


physical world to the spiritual world after death. This system finds no room for the orthodox belief of the resurrection of the body. The Swedenborg tradition persists in part today in the way that popular piety portrays eschatology with songs and choruses that restrict heaven to a "place" to which our souls "fly away."

**The Formation of Salvation Army Doctrine**

The primary search for eschatological clarity is not with William Booth's theology as a whole. The battleground is more implicit, one that is seeking eschatological clarity and a hermeneutical basis for understanding the Salvation Army's eleventh article of faith. If this statement presents the possibility of being internally inconsistent, what were the influences upon it?

The "Articles of Faith" were officially adopted by the first conference of the Christian Mission in 1870. The doctrinal statements are closely related to the doctrines of Methodist New Connexion, the group in which William Booth was ordained and served for a short period of his life (1854-1861). The final set of eleven doctrines were adopted by the Salvation Army in the Deed Poll of 1878 and later confirmed in The Salvation Army Act of 1980. These statements find their source within the Methodist New Connexion. What has been overlooked in past scholarship is the development of doctrines within this source.

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24 It is interesting to note John Wesley response to Swedenborg in his article "Thoughts on the Writings of Baron Swedenborg," which he states, "O my brethren, let none of you that fear God recommend such a writer any more!... True, his tales are often exceedingly lively, and as entertaining as the tales of the fairies: But I dare not give up my Bible for them; and I must give up one or the other." Thomas Jackson, ed., *The Works of John Wesley* 3rd Ed., (London: Methodist Book Room, 1872; reprint, Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1978 ), 18:444.

After John Wesley’s death in 1791, various reform groups were seeking to bring about renewal within Methodism. These efforts prevailed despite Wesley’s intention not to become a schismatic group. Alexander Kilham (1762-1798) was one of the first reformers within Methodism. His desire was for the Wesleyan Methodist movement to adopt a church government that included an adequate representation of the laity. As a result of Killham’s strong views, he was expelled from the Wesleyan Methodist church in 1796 and in 1797 started the Methodist New Connexion with three other leaders. He died soon after founding this splinter of Methodism, leaving the leadership to William Thom and other leaders within this offshoot of Methodism.

During the first three years of its existence the Methodist New Connexion held no doctrinal statements. In a 1862 overview of their doctrinal history, the Connexion claimed that “they were Methodist, and that was supposed to be enough....The writings of Wesley were held by the New Connexion with an unwavering hand....They retained his Hymn Book, [sic] and avowed their unabated attachment to the doctrines he taught.” During its formative years, controversy arose, and the New Connexion was accused of being “Apostate” and “Anti-Methodistic in doctrine.” As a result they initially included five statements that they believed to be “necessary to salvation.”

28 W.A. Baggaly, A Digest of Minutes, Institutions, Polity, Doctrines Ordinances, and Literature of the Methodist New Connexion (London: William Cooke, 1862), 220.
29 These essential statements are “First. The fall of man...Second. Universal redemption by Jesus Christ...Third. Justification by faith...Fourth. Complete or full sanctification by the spirit of God...and the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ...Fifth. The necessity of holding fast faith.” These statements can be found in General Rules for the Government of the New Connexion of Methodists (Leeds: Printed by Edward Baines, 1803), 20.
These statements were expanded in 1816\textsuperscript{30} to make the Connexion’s distinction as a religious body clear. Interestingly the eschatological portion of the 1823 statement\textsuperscript{31} solely included a qualified statement concerning the immortality of the soul, but this statement did not include an article outlining the resurrection of the body.\textsuperscript{32} By 1838 the doctrinal statements of the New Connexion did indeed include a statement on the resurrection of the body (see graph below). Except for an additional statement on the meaning of baptism and the Lord’s Supper\textsuperscript{33} these doctrinal statements remained untouched until New Connexion Methodism united with (mainstream) Methodism in 1907.\textsuperscript{34}

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<th>Changes in the Eschatological Doctrines of Methodist New Connexion</th>
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<td><strong>Eschatological Doctrinal Statements of the</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Methodist New Connexion in 1823</strong></td>
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<td>IX. We believe the soul to be immortal, and that after death it immediately enters upon a state of happiness or misery.</td>
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<td>X. We believe in general judgment at the last day, in the eternal happiness of the righteous and the endless punishment of the wicked.</td>
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The Salvation Army’s doctrine concerning eschatology is derived from Methodist New Connexion’s final two doctrinal statements on eschatology. Compared in the graph below is the Army’s first published doctrinal statement on eschatology when it was named the Christian


\textsuperscript{31} The following information was the only doctrinal statement I could find between 1803 and 1838. Hence, this statement is the closest to the reported 1916 expansion.

\textsuperscript{32} See W. Salt, *A Memorial of the Wesleyan Methodist New Connexion: Containing A Short Account of the Circuit Preachers Who Have Died; and A General Statement of the Leading Transactions of the Connexion From its Formations in 1797 to the Present Time* (Nottingham: Printed and sold by Sutton and Son, 1823), 154; *Salvation Story*, 130-133.


\textsuperscript{34} See “Methodist New Connexion” *The Historical Dictionary of Methodism*, ed. Susan E. Warrick and Charles Yrigoyen, 208.
Revival Society. Also included is the current eschatological doctrine of the Salvation Army that is slightly modified from the Christian Mission statement.

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<th>Methodist New Connexion</th>
<th>Christian Revival Society</th>
<th>The Salvation Army</th>
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<td>11. We believe the soul to be immortal, and that after death it immediately enters upon a state of happiness or misery.</td>
<td>7. We believe in the immortality of the soul—the resurrection of the body—in the general judgment at the end of the world—in the eternal happiness of the righteous—and in the endless punishment of the wicked.</td>
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The differences between these doctrinal statements are the New Connexion's explanation of the immortality of the soul as opposed to the Army's statement of belief in such a doctrine. The second difference is situated in its terminology concerning the end of the world: the New Connexion Methodist statement "general judgment at the last day" and the Army's "general judgment at the end of the world" [emphasis mine].\(^{35}\) Despite these differences, it is clear to deduce that in a confessional sense, the Army adapted its own eschatological statement from New Connexion Methodism.

**The Army's Self-Understanding of Immortality of the Soul**

If the Methodist New Connexion was the source of the Salvation Army's confessional statements, are these statements representative of the early Army's theology? Did William

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\(^{35}\) Philip Needham has expressed how William Booth's theological expression as found in the *Doctrines and Disciplines* lacks a doctrine of creation. This might account for the modified language between the Army and the
Booth ever address "immortality" or "immortality of the soul"? The continued self-understanding of the Army as represented in various handbooks of doctrine reveals the way in which the Army has interpreted these eight words, "We believe in the immortality of the soul."

**William Booth**

Nowhere does Booth clearly outline his understanding of what is meant by the immortality of the soul. William's clearest explanation of Salvation Army doctrine comes in his catechetical instruction booklet, *The Doctrines and Disciplines of The Salvation Army: Prepared for the Use of Cadets in Training for Officership.* The basic resource of *Doctrines and Disciplines* was Rev. Benjamin Field's *The Student's Handbook of Christian Theology.* Field's text is interesting to this discussion because he never once posits a belief in the immortality of the soul. Field specifically cautions against the belief of the "Baron of Swedenborg" which he identifies as one of three "principal heresies ... propagated with regard to the resurrection of the body." In a similar fashion to Field, Booth answers dialogical questions so as to give the reader a quick response to theological questions.

In the section of *Doctrines and Disciplines* entitled, "Death and After," Booth never developed a concept of the immortal soul. Answering a question about the existence of the soul after death, Booth responds, "His [the Salvation Army soldier who experiences death] glorified spirit enters heaven the moment it leaves the body, and is welcomed by God and the angels and..."
the blood-washed soldiers with whom he fought below.”

Booth further emphasizes the importance of the resurrection of the body when answering the question, “But what comes of the body after death? Does that live again?” Booth responds:

Yes; at the morning of the resurrection, the bodies of the saints are raised and made perfect and reunited with the soul, from which they were separated at death, and then perfectly redeemed from all the consequences of sin, the glorious service of God is engaged forever. Even so the bodies of sinners, raised at the same time, and reunited with the spirits that were their companions in sin on earth, will share the punishment from which they would not allow God to save them.

In this small book, Booth does use the word “immortal” to describe human beings. He resists the danger of making immortality ontologically intrinsic to human souls.

In a 1904 address concerning the importance of every human life, Booth does in fact use the word “immortal.” This usage does not, however, align with the classical Greek philosophical system, but with an understanding that something exists for the saint and sinner beyond death.

He clarifies his understanding of personal immortality while challenging his audience:

If you don’t think that people are of any great worth you won’t be likely to face either fire or water to save them. But if you believe—1. That they are immortal, that they will live forever. 2. That their souls are of indescribable worth. 3. That God loves them, and wants to get them into Heaven. 4. That Christ thought them of sufficient value to lay down his life for them. 5. That they are every hour in peril of the wrath of God and the damnation of Hell. If you believe all this, or a reasonable part of it, you will work, and weep, and pray, and fight to save them. Believe! Believe!

Within William Booth’s eschatological outlook was a deep burden for the eternal welfare of persons. This burden for humanity lacked any development of the “immortality of the souls.”

Even in his volume that was intended to expound the doctrines of his movement, William Booth ignores the concept of “immortality” as it relates to the human soul. Booth’s understanding of immortality of the soul remained a qualified notion. He never recognized the need to

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39 The General [William Booth], The Doctrines and Disciplines of The Salvation Army, 77. Notice that Booth does not use the word immortal.

40 The General [William Booth], The Doctrines and Disciplines of The Salvation Army, 77.

41 William Booth, The Seven Spirits or What I Teach My Officers (St. Albans: Campfield Press, 1907), 92.
differentiate his understanding of immortality from the Greek concept. His intention was pure and consistent with his eschatology, but the eschatological language of his movement was imprecise and ambiguous within the landscape of Christian orthodoxy. Should his movement today continue to follow his lead? It seems that the Salvationist who is aware of the ambiguous nature of this language must reinterpret this language, which has already been defined.

*The Heirs of Booth*

William Booth’s son and designated successor, William Bramwell Booth (1856-1929) was also an important figure in the shaping of Salvation Army doctrine. William Booth’s leadership circle consisted of Catherine Booth, Bramwell Booth, and George Scott Railtion, who were the most influential leaders in the Army’s early development. Of these three, Bramwell’s influence would remain constant until William Booth’s death, serving as his father’s “chief of staff.”42 In 1923, eleven years into Bramwell’s Generalship, a *Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine* was published under his “guidance and supervision.”43 The major structural revision that is presented, as compared to William Booth’s *Doctrine and Disciplines* was its expansion, placement, and discussion concerning the Bible. *Doctrine and Disciplines*, places its chapter on the Bible at the end of the work and only relegating to it a few pages. Bramwell’s *Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine* positioned this chapter at the very beginning providing considerably more information. This organizational concern is indicative of the *Handbook* itself and

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42 Catherine’s influence was not as continual as Bramwell because she died 22 years before William. George Scott Railton’s relationship with William Booth suffered toward the end of the nineteenth century because of personal disagreements concerning Salvation Army policy. For more information on Railton see Bernard Watson, *Soldier Saint* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1970).

43 *Handbook of Salvation Army Doctrine* (New York: The Salvation Army Supplies and Purchasing Department, 1923), ix.
Bramwell’s leadership as a whole. His leadership is attested as the organizational genius of the Army.\textsuperscript{44}

Concerning eschatology, Bramwell’s \textit{Handbook} staunchly defends the immortality of the soul with fervor unmatched by the founder. With a simple explanation clause the \textit{Handbook} states with regards to the soul’s immortality, “It will never cease to exist.”\textsuperscript{45} This statement might imply a preexistent soul if were not further explained. This basic definition, however, illustrated the inherent danger of using the term “immortality.”

This \textit{Handbook} equates the immortality of the soul with life everlasting as an inborn longing that “men instinctively feel … this feeling it reflected in nearly all heathen religions.”\textsuperscript{46} Bramwell’s \textit{Handbook} then makes an unparalleled leap in Army literature, explaining that the biblical view of the soul’s immortality is argued from silence. The \textit{Handbook} illustrates, “The Bible confirms it by taking for granted the immortality of the soul.”\textsuperscript{47} The \textit{Handbook} further continues to explain the soul as a necessary part of human anthropology in light of eternity.

The next \textit{Handbook of Doctrine} coming from the authority of the Salvation Army’s General did not appear until 1969, under the leadership of General Frederick Coutts (1899-1986). This handbook made considerable strides in presenting the doctrinal basis of the Salvationist movement.\textsuperscript{48} In 1982 this \textit{Handbook} appeared in an abridged form under the title \textit{The Doctrine We Adorn}.\textsuperscript{49} Both of these volumes ignore any exposition of the clause “We believe in the immortality of the soul…” even though the purpose of such a handbook is to make

\textsuperscript{44} Roy Hattersley, \textit{Blood and Fire: William and Catherine Booth and Their Salvation Army} (London: Doubleday, 1999), 405-414.
\textsuperscript{45} \textit{Handbook}, 148.
\textsuperscript{46} \textit{Handbook}, 148.
\textsuperscript{47} \textit{Handbook}, 148.
\textsuperscript{48} \textit{The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine} (London: The Salvation Army, 1969).
\textsuperscript{49} \textit{The Doctrine We Adorn} (London: International Headquarters, 1982).
finer points of theology clear. These books do contain a one-page summary that present a belief in life after death, but these sections disregard the immortality of the soul. ⁵⁰

Between the publishing of the 1969 *Handbook* and its abridgment in 1982, international headquarters published a “study of the background and meaning of Salvation Army doctrines,” entitled *This We Believe*, in 1976. ⁵¹ General Fredrick Coutts’ theologically educated son, John, ⁵² acknowledges that immortality of the soul is a Greek concept that was “another tradition concerning the after-life.” ⁵³ In contrast to his knowledge of Greek philosophy, John Coutts never articulates what is meant by the Salvation Army’s doctrine of immortality. ⁵⁴

The United States National Headquarters of the Salvation Army published a catechetical instruction book for students seeking to become soldiers (i.e. lay members) in 1968. The study was written by Milton Agnew, and revised in 1978 and 1985 entitled, *The Manual of Salvationism*. ⁵⁵ In the chapter entitled “God’s Future Plans” Agnew suggests that immortality of the soul “means that we believe the soul will never cease to exist. Since man was created in the image and likeness of God (see Genesis 1:26, 27; 9:6), he was created for immortality, that is, for an unending existence.” ⁵⁶ Agnew’s intention seems to point toward personal life beyond death, but the phrase “never cease to exist” and “unending existence” comes very close to an understanding of immortality that similarly has no beginning. Agnew’s statement remains a qualified doctrine, and therefore orthodox, because he affirms that humans were “created for immortality.”

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⁵⁰ See the 1969 *Handbook of Doctrine*, 168; *The Doctrine We Adorn*, 109.
⁵² His biographical information includes, “Major John Coutts, M.A., B.D., Ph.D.” *This We Believe*, 2.
⁵³ John J. Coutts, *This We Believe*, 116.
⁵⁴ See John J. Coutts, *This We Believe*, 114-119.
The latest exposition based upon the Army’s articles of faith is *Salvation Story: Salvationist Handbook of Doctrine*. The international doctrine council prepared this handbook. When the group that came into existence in 1992, it was charged with the task of producing a new Handbook with a “fresh approach.”* Salvation Story approaches the doctrine of eschatology within the theme of the “Kingdom of the risen Lord.” The discussion of immortality begins by affirming that immortality is the way that “Christians have often expressed belief in life after death.” The authors then underline the difficulties of this language by saying “this phrase needs to be clearly understood.” *Salvation Story* avoids the trap of referring to the immortal soul as something that has a persistent quality stating, “apart from God’s action there is no part of us that naturally survives beyond death. Our eternal existence is based on God.” This handbook then seemingly contrasts this viewpoint with others by distinguishing: “What the Christian doctrine of immortality says...” If there is a non-Christian doctrine of immortality, it is probably based in Greek metaphysics. This is not, however, mentioned in this explanation of the immortality of the soul. The statement further concludes with a basic anthropological outline, “What the Christian doctrine of immortality says is that we are whole persons, originally brought to life by God, and because of God’s action there is no loss of integrated, embodied personality in the life beyond present existence. God brings us all into eternity to participate in the general resurrection and submit to the final judgment of Christ.”*58

Each doctrinal area within *Salvation Story* concludes with a summary that affirms the essentials of each doctrine in contemporary language. The summary of the chapter on

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*57 Salvation Story: Salvationist Handbook of Doctrine*, xii.

*58 Salvation Story*, 117-118.
eschatology does not mention the immortality of the soul.\textsuperscript{59} This statement and the extreme qualification of the phrase immortality of the soul, demonstrate that the international doctrine council responsible for writing \textit{Salvation Story} was well aware of the possible ambiguities of this language. This handbook, however, never established the fact that this statement can be identified with the Greek metaphysical system. Instead, it continues the tradition set by other official explanations, in that it is forced to defend a statement that is problematic. It would be more helpful for the Army at least to admit such language can have two meanings. It might be time for the Salvation Army to pursue further clarity in doctrinal language. Such language could be consistent with the Army’s heritage, which has never in spirit affirmed the negative side of the immortality of the soul. Considering the fact that the origins of this phrase are with New Connexion Methodism and not with William Booth or the early Army, it might be (or it is) time for the contemporary Army to refine rather than defend this statement.

\textit{Luther Lee and the Wesleyan Church}

The Wesleyan Church, originally known as the Wesleyan Methodist Church, began at a similar point in history as the Army. Its principal early leaders, Orange Scott and Luther Lee, were deeply moved in 1843, to separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church as a protest to its stance on slavery.\textsuperscript{60} Luther Lee wrote a thorough study entitled \textit{The Immortality of the Soul}.\textsuperscript{61} His basic affirmation is very similar to William Booth’s and is a fair representation of how immortality can be qualified with the resurrection to affirm life between death and resurrection.

\textsuperscript{59} This summary statement affirms that “We believe in Christ’s return in glory, the completion of God’s Kingdom, the resurrection of the body, the final accountability of all persons to God, Heaven and Hell, the endless despair of those who reject salvation and the eternal happiness of those who are righteous through faith.” \textit{Salvation Story}, 121.


\textsuperscript{61} Luther Lee, \textit{The Immortality of the Soul} (Syracuse: Wesleyan Methodist Publishing, 1879). It is interesting that Lee’s main argument battles with people who seek to affirm that the afterlife or “immortality” was only for Christians. He bases his discussion on the immateriality of the mind as the first premise to his logical conclusion that all shall inherit some form of immortality.
If Luther Lee was a strong defender of the applicability of this phrase in the mid-to-late-nineteenth century, it is interesting to note how the denomination he led followed suit. Interestingly *The Discipline of the Wesleyan Church* published in 1968 has no reference to immortality of the soul. 62

**Conclusion**

William Booth’s personal eschatology demonstrates that he was thoroughly convinced that there is more to human existence than life and death. This belief was rarely expressed with the phrase “immortality of the soul” in his personal eschatology. His movement shortened the doctrinal statements that it inherited from New Connexion Methodism to include this phrase. The impact of this phrase on the Salvation Army has steadily been a posture of defense rather than explanation or redefinition. Though the intention of the Salvation Army and William Booth was also within the framework of orthodoxy, it is possible that the actual phrase itself can be confused for a concept that is unrelated to the New Testament’s eschatological witness. In light of the possible confusion that can result from a belief in an immortal soul, the contemporary Army would profit theologically by clarifying its eschatological doctrine. Two suggestions are possibilities: 1. Change the phrase “immortality of the soul” to “continued existence of the soul after death.” 2. Take out the phrase altogether, so the Salvation Army doctrinal statement would follow: “We believe in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgment at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.” It

62 The Wesleyan Church statement affirms, “The Scripture clearly teach that there is a conscious, personal experience after the death of the body. The eternal destiny of a man is determined by God’s grace and man’s response, evidenced inevitably by his moral character which results from his personal and volitional choices and not from any arbitrary decree of God. Heaven with its eternal glory and blessedness of Christ’s presence is the final abode of those who choose salvation which God provides through Jesus Christ. Hell with its eternal misery and separation from God is the final abode of those who neglect this great salvation.” *The Discipline of the Wesleyan Church* (Marion, IN: The Wesleyan Publishing House, 1968), 34.
might be better to drop the word “soul” and use another term like “self” or “life.” Letting go of
the phrase “soul” would not dictate a monistic position for the tenth doctrinal statement explicitly
mentions the soul.
GENERAL CONCLUSION

William Booth’s rich eschatological theology is like a cup that is overflowing; it “spills over” to impact his ecclesiology, ethics, and doctrine. This cup has been overrunning since William Booth’s death as the Salvation Army continues to transmit his eschatological passion in particular contexts around the world.

William Booth formed an eschatological Army that set out to bring salvation to the world in the late-nineteenth century. Eschatology which involves both personal and corporate dimensions is the impetus for this eschatological Army. William Booth’s personal eschatology was always at the forefront of his ministry. This passion for souls necessitated a holistic understanding of the world and “temporal” conditions therein. Hence Booth’s millennialism is indicative of his universal eschatology.

Booth’s eschatological spirit produced a dynamic missional ecclesiology that dramatically proclaimed the gospel of Jesus Christ in a relevant way. This missional ecclesiology was a prophetic statement to its own age of what it meant to “be the church.” Today that same prophetic message challenges the contemporary Army to not understand itself merely sociologically but primarily missionally. William Booth’s millennial spirit is a heritage that is not antiquated or out of touch with the contemporary milieu.

This eschatological ecclesiology that focused on mission took on a variety of forms that demanded William Booth’s ethical response. The evolution of social ministries, originating in the 1880s, found its apex in Booth’s article “Salvation for Both Worlds” and his book In Darkest England: And the Way Out. Holistic ministry has marked the work of the Salvation Army since that time. This ethical response was rooted in William Booth’s universal eschatology as he felt
these ministries were reflective of God's coming millennial kingdom. His futuristic vision enabled him to implement and make principles of God's future reign a reality.

The way in which William Booth spoke of the veracity of eternity was never ambiguous. The doctrinal statement that the Salvation Army adopted regarding eschatology is, however, misleading. This study has demonstrated the approach that William Booth took toward the eternal destiny of individuals. The doctrinal statements that Booth adapted from New Connexion Methodism possibly reflect a problematic understanding of the immortality of the soul. This understanding when unqualified leaves the door open to misunderstanding today. The contemporary Army has never "officially" addressed this conceivably misleading concept. The Army should reconsider its word usage in the eleventh doctrinal statement or should present an explicit clarification that distinguishes it from the Greek philosophical concept of the immortality of the soul. An acknowledgement of ambiguity would further a biblical understanding of the resurrection of the body.

William Booth's eschatology produced a passionate care for individuals, a dynamic millennial spirit, a missional ecclesiology, a powerful social ethic, and a clear doctrinal basis for these beliefs. The impact of this ecclesiology is felt today in the way the Salvation Army lives out its mission in particular social and spiritual contexts. The driving force of William Booth's theology—his eschatological vision—is a fitting example and reminder to the Christian church and the contemporary Army of its eschatological task—that is to work with God to redeem the world. One of William Booth's hymns, known in the Salvation Army as the "founder's song,"
embodies this eschatological task: "O boundless salvation! deep ocean of love,... the whole
world redeeming, so rich and so free,/ Now flowing for all men, come, roll over me!"¹

¹ William Booth, "O Boundless Salvation!" The Song Book of The Salvation Army (London: The Salvation Army
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