
The Salvation Army

New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory

Mission Matters



Leader's Notes

Thank you for agreeing to lead this course of study. You will be helping people strengthen their sense of belonging to The Salvation Army and their support for God's work. The investment of time and interest in others that you are making will help the ministry of your corps and is likely to result in more people coming to know and follow Jesus.

Soldiership preparation

Mission Matters gives an insight into Salvation Army history, beliefs and practices. It is presented as a workbook that participants can retain as a lasting reference. Many corps will use this course as soldiership (membership) preparation material.

The Salvation Army promotes senior soldiership as a way for people to understand and live out their Christian discipleship. Those who do not want to become soldiers are just as valued by The Salvation Army, but we want to be open about our desire for covenanted soldiers. We also want to help people understand the expectations The Salvation Army has of its soldiers so they are not surprised by 'new information' later on.

Mission Matters is likely to be led by a corps' Recruiting Sergeant or someone else who helps with the discipleship and pastoral care of converts. The Salvation Army's 'Orders and Regulations for Local Officers' says the importance of such work 'cannot be over estimated' and makes the following observation: *The [Recruiting Sergeant] needs to be a lover of souls, an out-and-out Salvationist, and thoroughly sound in doctrine. He [or she] should be willing to spare no efforts to help seekers, both at the penitent form and afterward, no matter how tedious, discouraging or unnoticed such work may be. His [or her] helpers should possess a reasonable measure of the same qualifications.*

The Salvation Army promotes senior soldiership to support people in a lifestyle of total devotion to the service of Christ and for the salvation of souls.

Leading a Mission Matters group

This course gives you an opportunity to explain the rich nature of our Salvation Army faith and life. Thoroughly pre-read the material and plan your approach. God already knows the circumstances and needs of everyone who will be in your group, so ask for His guidance.

Be sensitive to your group members' needs and encourage them to celebrate the reality of God's work in their lives. Give people an opportunity to accept God's gift of salvation if they haven't already done so. Establish whether they need further support in any area.

Approach

You will want to be guided by the makeup, size and background of your group as you plan each session. In preparing, the first question you should ask is 'how much are the participants likely to know about this topic?' as this determines how much content you bring other than extract from the participants. If you choose to tell people (or ask them to read) about a topic they already know about, they will quickly become bored and disengaged.

We recommend lots of interaction, using questions to draw out experiences and knowledge from the participants, supplemented by short inputs of content if needed.

When you need to read content from the book, pause and ask questions such as: 'What do you think about this?', 'Do you agree with what we've just read?', 'Is this your experience, or were things different for you? Tell us about that.' Look for non-threatening ways to include those who may be nervous about speaking. Someone who seems reluctant to voice an opinion to a question may still be happy to read something out loud, for instance.

Watch for clues in body language to indicate if you need to clarify something. If someone's body language indicates that they are confused by or in disagreement with what is being taught or discussed, don't ignore these signals. By noticing and acting upon them, you can give people a chance to explore what they're thinking or how they're feeling, and clarify any uncertainty. Always aim to do this in an open and non-judgemental way. For example, you might say, 'You raised your eyebrows at that comment. Did it surprise you to hear that The Salvation Army believes this?'

The Appendix contains other tips and suggestions for facilitating group discussions.

Look for opportunities to personalise and localise the course material. *Perhaps you could start each session by having someone from your corps share their testimony, or invite someone from a nearby Salvation Army social centre to speak about their work?*

The Next Step is a DVD-based soldiership preparation course targeting a youth audience. While designed as a separate course, many of the DVD clips slot well into *Mission Matters* such as the sessions on our history, doctrines and symbols. References to the relevant clips are included throughout these leader notes. We encourage you to use these DVD clips to add multi-media interest. Similarly, when talking about your local corps history, consider compiling a series of photos with background music, perhaps with a final slide saying something like 'to be continued ...'

Mission Matters is designed so that you work through the course content entirely in a group setting. To save time, some leaders may decide to distribute the course book in advance and ask people to read the study in their own time, so that coming together is about reflecting on what they've already read. And some leaders will prefer a mix of these two approaches.

Format

There are five main studies in this course:

1. **A Place to Belong:** explains that The Salvation Army is part of the universal Christian Church and gives an introduction to what it means to be 'a Salvationist'
2. **Mission DNA:** gives an overview of early Salvation Army history, profiling the boldness and strong faith of our early pioneers
3. **We Believe:** explains The Salvation Army's doctrines to ensure participants understand the foundations of the Christian faith
4. **Radical Discipleship:** discusses spiritual growth, the Soldier's Covenant and The Salvation Army's view on the sacraments
5. **Called to Mission:** asks people to consider senior soldiership, with an invitation for all to serve in some way in their local corps

The studies naturally fall into three sessions by combining studies one and two (who we are), leaving study three on its own (what we believe), and combining studies four and five (join the mission). These lend themselves to either weekly sessions or perhaps a weekend retreat. Whichever approach you take, consider concluding the course with a fellowship meal.

Each study follows the same format, starting with a quote and general questions to open up discussion (Getting Started), moving into the main content (Explore and Further Study) and concluding with a time to Reflect, Apply what has been learnt and Pray. Getting Started and Explore questions are only in the Leader's Notes.

These Leader's Notes contain a session overview, followed by suggested questions. You do not have to follow this exactly. Feel free to adapt the material to suit your personal style.

Workbook

Each participant should be provided with a copy of the course book: **Mission Matters**

Key features of this workbook that you will need to be aware of as you prepare:

- Bible references are included throughout the text. Read these in advance so that you can decide which ones to highlight to your group. There are also sections throughout 'Further Study' that you should encourage participants to look up later on (particularly those in the 'We Believe' section) to strengthen their understanding
- Information on Salvation Army theology, practices, symbols and structure is scattered throughout the book. This information has been given a slightly different visual appearance. *You can choose to:*
 - watch *The Next Step* DVD clip on symbols or read & discuss these sections at the start of session 4
 - read and discuss these sections individually as they appear in the book;

- OR save time by pointing them out for people to read in their own time.
- All Bible passages are from *Today's New International Version* unless otherwise stated. This is a contemporary Bible version that uses gender-inclusive language

As you lead this course, remember that you are involved in a privileged work of eternal significance, so 'work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord' (Colossians 3:23).

Preparation checklist

- Logistics—session dates, venue, leaders, catering
- Course books for all participants
- Data projector & DVD player/laptop
- The Next Step* (Youth Soldiership Preparation Course) DVD
- Video—*Overview of Current Services* (downloaded from intranet)
- Testimonies / guest from local social service centre
- Study two—local corps history and vision
- Study four—up-to-date alcohol use statistics

A Place to Belong

Session Overview

By the end of this session, participants should:

- **Know:**
 - *The Salvation Army is a denomination of the universal Christian Church*
 - *When you become a Christian, you become part of the family of God—a brother or sister of all other believers*
 - *It's important for all Christians to be part of a church family*
 - *We desire to see people saved, stay saved and help others be saved—this is mission that matters*
 - *We want you to join our church family*
- **Feel:** welcome and that it is important to be part of a church family
- **Do:** have a desire to join this church family

Extra preparation: someone to share their testimony

Make sure that everyone feels welcome. Introduce yourself, sharing a little of your journey and tell why you're excited to be leading this course. Ask all participants to introduce themselves briefly, perhaps saying how they came to be on the course.

Some other instructions we suggest you cover include:

- Health and safety requirements
- The general format of the course—number of sessions, style, etc.
- The course books are for participants to keep. There is writing space, plus additional note space at the end of the book.
- Advise that you won't be following the book word for word. Point out that there are various sections on such things as theology, practices and symbols scattered throughout the book that they are encouraged to read, along with Bible references for ongoing personal study

Getting started

- Can you think of a time when you had a strong feeling of ‘belonging’? When and where did you experience this?
- What helps us feel that we belong somewhere? What can make us feel like we don’t belong?

Explore

The Salvation Army is a denomination of the universal Christian Church. When you become a Christian, you become a brother or sister of all who belong to Him, no matter which Christian church they attend—you have joined God’s family on earth.

- As a member of God’s family, how important is it to belong to a church? What are some benefits to you as an individual?
Teaching (learn from people with experience), shared learning (e.g. discussion), accountability, support in times of worry, loss, confusion and loneliness—care and prayers help carry us through hard times
- What are some benefits of belonging to a church?
The Bible teaches that God expects us to serve within the family. We are given gifts to use so that the body of Christ is built up (Romans 12:5-8; Ephesians 4:11-13). The best antidote for individualism and consumerism is serving others. The benefits for you as an individual are only possible if others are serving you.
- Why might a Christian choose to not be part of any church?
Bad relationship(s) with others in the church, disappointing experiences in the past, disillusionment, unmet expectations, fear that church might make them too busy, family don’t attend, etc.
- It has been suggested that if the Church is a family, then a Christian without a church family is an orphan. What do you think? What do ‘spiritual orphans’ miss out on? Are there any risks to ‘going it alone’?
Just as a coal taken out of a fire quickly loses its heat, isolated Christians face a similar risk of their fire going out.
- What do you think about attending a church but never committing?
Less engaged, others miss out on your gifts and contribution. It may be appropriate for a season, but not long term.

We are Salvationists

Consider reading the full text on the bottom of page nine in the course book.

Is there someone in your corps who you could invite to tell their story about the difference Jesus makes in their life, and the benefits of belonging to your corps?

Alternatively, ask participants to read through the various testimonies on pages six and seven asking if there are any particular stories that they can relate to specifically.

Read Acts 2:44-47 and Ephesians 4:12-16.

In the New Testament, there is no concept of Christians 'going it alone'. Instead, they met together regularly, worshipped together, shared their resources, helped those in need and used their gifts to build up the family of God. We strongly encourage you to commit to a church (hopefully this church) and work with others to build up the Kingdom of God.

The greatest hunger in our world is for a community that people feel comfortable about belonging to—one that also brings **meaning and purpose** to their life. As Clarence Wiseman, a past Salvation Army General, noted: 'The Salvation Army exists for those who do not belong to it as much as for those who do.' We believe this is **mission that matters**.

Around the globe, all sorts of people have made The Salvation Army their church home. We hope our corps is the type of church community you can belong to, and hope that you choose to worship and serve with us!

Take a few minutes to help people understand that the church is not 'perfect' – sometimes we will be misunderstood, even hurt. And sometimes we will perhaps 'fail' others. The Further Study section is included to help participants recognise this to be the case, and to help them understand the need for their own attitude to be one of grace and forgiveness. You may choose to complete the Further Study section within the course, or encourage participants to complete this in their own time.

Reflect and Apply

Check that you have covered the key messages before asking participants to turn to the Reflect section of this session and respond to the questions. Now ask participants to prayerfully respond to the questions in the Apply section.

Pray

Lord, I want to help people join your family. Increase my awareness of their needs. Help me to work together in love with others so that your will is done in my community and the world. Amen.

Mission DNA

Session Overview

By the end of this session, participants should:

- **Know:** a brief history of The Salvation Army, how it started, the distinct purpose of winning souls, the explosive international growth and the Army's focus on social services
- **Feel:** a sense of pride in The Salvation Army and a desire to be just as bold as our early pioneers (we are looking for people to sign up to mission, not an organisation)
- **Do:** be bold and passionate about saving souls through The Salvation Army

Extra preparation:

- *The Next Step* (Youth Soldiership Preparation Course) DVD to show Salvation Army history
- *Video Overview of Current Services* downloaded from the intranet (under Soldiership resources)
- presenting your corps history and vision (e.g. prepare a photo show with a final slide that has the words 'to be continued ...' to demonstrate that they are now part of the history; interview an elderly member of your corps; ask a member of the leadership team to speak)
- invite someone from a local social service centre to talk about their work

Getting started

I can imagine some holy being just arrived from another world asking, 'What is The Salvation Army?' and being answered in terms according to his own understanding, 'The Salvation Army is love for souls.'

BRAMWELL BOOTH (General, 1912-29)

- How would you answer that same question: 'What is The Salvation Army?'
- Briefly share how you first became involved with The Salvation Army? What were some of your early expectations and/or impressions?

- What most excites you about The Salvation Army at the moment? Is there anything that you'd like to understand better? (Leaders, take note of these comments—if some of these areas are not covered in the course, follow up one on one)

Explore

Salvation Army overview

- What do you know about the Salvation Army?
General discussion around terms like corps, social services, the breadth of services we provide, corps structures, ranks, Salvationist, etc. Refer people to the Glossary of Terms to read in their own time.

Salvation Army history

If you are using the DVD: *Watch The Next Step DVD, SECTION 1: THINK IT—PART 1 HISTORY THEN (2:38)*

If you are not using the DVD, you will need participants to read through the 'Getting Started' and 'Born on the Streets' sections in the course book, concluding with a general discussion about what they've read.

My first idea was simply to get the people saved, and send them to the churches. This proved at the outset impracticable.

1st—they would not go when sent.

2nd—they were not wanted.

3rd—we wanted some of them to help us in the business of saving others.

GENERAL WILLIAM BOOTH (Salvation Army Founder)

- What do you see as the most important stage in our development? Why?
- Think about our name change from 'A Volunteer Army' to 'The Salvation Army'. What do you think this says about us?

Read Matthew 11:5

- Did you realise that the Christian Church has a mandate to preach the 'Gospel' (the good news of salvation through Jesus Christ) to the poor? What are some examples of poverty (not only financial) in the world today?

Watch *The Next Step DVD, SECTION 1: THINK IT—PART 2 HISTORY THEN 'Structure' (2:15)*

If you are not using the DVD, refer to the Mission Stations section on page 16. Provide a brief overview of our structure (corps / centres administered in divisions that are in turn grouped into territories that form part of our international movement in 120 countries).

- What are some of the advantages we enjoy being part of an international movement, rather than just a localised church that's not part of something bigger.

Going Global

Watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 1: THINK IT—PART 3 HISTORY THEN “NZ, Fiji, Tonga” (3:12)

If you are not using the DVD, read and discuss Going Global.

Our mission today

One feature of our Salvation Army today, is our Territorial Mission Plan. Because the Mission Plan is time bound, information about this is not included in the course book. Please use the information below to ensure your group is familiar with the plan.

Some people may be familiar with early mission plans. For others, this will be completely new. You should gloss over our previous mission plans but spend a little bit of time helping the group unpack both our values and current We Commit statements.

Our territory's mission statement is *caring for people, transforming lives, reforming society, by God's power*. It's simple, easy to remember and compelling.

- What do you think The Salvation Army needs most to achieve more of its mission (i.e. if we could just improve this thing, we would care for more people, transform more lives and reform more of society)?

In 2005, senior leaders asked that same question. Four main areas of priority were identified and the Territorial Strategic Mission Plan, or TSMP as it became known, was born.

TSMP proved extremely helpful in providing focus for Salvationists and so was extended in both 2010 and 2013, however the sense of senior leaders in 2016 was that TSMP had reached the end of its life, and so a new Mission Plan was launched at Congress that year.

Senior leadership had become more concerned about our culture, so, in 2016, we took a different approach and developed a new plan focused more on our 'why' and 'who we are'.

What was most significant about this new plan is that it reintroduced to the territory the Māori translation of our name—Te Ope Whakaora—The Army that Brings Life.

Values

It also introduced seven values that we believe reflect who we are, how we strive to act and how we make decisions. They're aspirational—we can't say we always achieve these, but they are what we strive for.

A good way to think of these is in reverse—these are things we'll never change, so if you don't agree, you should consider whether The Salvation Army is right for you, because you won't get The Salvation Army to change.

For example, our first value is that we **Put Jesus First**. Fundamentally, we are a Christian movement whose ministry is motivated by the love of God. In reverse, if you think the Salvation Army should stop its focus on Jesus, then you've probably joined the wrong movement. It's a fundamental value of ours.

Putting Jesus First in turn compels us to **care for others**—especially the most vulnerable; and to **walk the talk**—authentic Christianity, which could also be stated as no hypocrites. So again, if you have no interest in caring for others, or don't think integrity is important, The Salvation Army is probably the wrong place for you.

We **think holistically** to provide a ministry that addresses the whole person—their spiritual, physical, mental/emotional and social needs; and in supporting this, we **offer a place to belong**—authentic faith communities where anyone is welcomed, and where those who profess to follow Jesus contribute as they are able.

We look to **do the right thing** with our resources, recognising we are accountable to God.

And we are proud to be a part of God's international Salvation Army, willingly **supporting our Army** and fellow Salvationists, both locally and around the world.

To help clarify these values, and make them more inspirational, phrases were added in 2019. For example, for Care for Others, we added 'we go out of our way to be love in action'.

- Which of these values stick out to you the most and why? Are there any that you question?

We Commits

During 2019, with the existing Territorial Mission Plan timed to end, senior leaders met to decide what to do next.

With an upcoming change of leadership and future plans to develop a new territorial strategy, it was decided to not launch a full mission plan. Instead, we would identify some key issues facing the organisation, and then commit as a territory to address these.

Five 'commitments' were identified and shared with the territory at Congress in October 2019.

Believing any significant change must come from the front-line, senior leadership have intentionally not provided plans for how these commitments will be achieved. Instead, all Salvationists are asked personally to commit to help address each issue in their context.

- Why do you think each statement is needed? What is the issue it is trying to address and what can we do locally to help this?

We Commit:

- To sharpening our focus and doing mission together
[we're doing too much and aren't always intentional about what we're doing; and we can have a bigger impact by working together—the public see us as one Army]
- To intentionally making passionate disciples of Jesus
[sometimes disciple-making gets lost in the busyness of helping people. We will be more effective if we are more intentional]
- To prioritising the next generations, cultural diversity, and in New Zealand, our Tiriti partnership (Treaty of Waitangi) *[across all four countries, we're losing young adults; in New Zealand and Fiji we don't reflect the cultural diversity of our communities; and in New Zealand, we believe it is the right*

thing to honour our founding partnership, and becoming more culturally intelligent will help us as we work with the 50% of our clients who are Māori (reflecting our values of caring for others and offering a place to belong)]

- To re-imagining mission centres to be effective and sustainable [*as our society becomes increasingly secular, we need to find new ways to ensure our corps and centres are effective missionally, and that they have the finances and people to keep them effective in the long term]*
- To processes that are user-friendly, nimble and able to adapt to changing circumstances [*we want to free up people for mission, by investing in new technologies and addressing unnecessary bureaucracy].*

*Information about the We Commit statements and Our Values is available on the intranet (sarmy.net.nz >> **Strategic Mission Plan** >> **Mission Resources**).*

Local setting

Watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 1: THINK IT—PART 4 HISTORY NOW (4:32), or watch the video *Overview of Current Services*, or replace this with a testimony from a local soldier.

Discuss your local setting. Share something of the history of your corps. Who are your leaders? What is your current vision?

Reflect and Apply

Check that you have covered the key messages before asking participants to turn to the Reflect section of this session and respond to the questions. Now ask participants to prayerfully respond to the questions in the Apply section.

Pray

Lord, I want to be faithful in your service. I realise that my success in the salvation war depends on my willingness to respond to your Holy Spirit. Give me the same boldness, confidence in you and love for souls that the early Salvationists had. Amen.

We believe

Session Overview

By the end of this session, participants should:

- **Know:** what we believe—a clear understanding of our 11 doctrines and their purpose—a confession of our faith and a defence of sound teaching by clearly defining agreed truth
- **Feel:** beliefs are important, influencing our attitudes and actions
- **Do:** commit to a life long relationship with Jesus, being transformed into His likeness

Extra preparation:

- *The Next Step* (Youth Soldiership Preparation Course) DVD to show Salvation Army doctrines
- you need to be very familiar with the doctrines and the content of the course book. You may also want to have other books on hand to recommend to those who want to go deeper.

As leader, we hope you will adapt the teaching of the doctrines to the knowledge of your group. The detail in this section is included as a relatively concise reference of the Army's core beliefs. Many people today have not grown up with a background of Christian teaching; we therefore should not presume that those doing this course will understand or believe our doctrines without some explanation.

On the other hand, reading through the notes on each doctrine in turn as a group is unlikely to be either interesting or memorable. We suggest you use *The Next Step* DVD to present each doctrine (if you do not have access to the DVD, simply read the doctrine), pausing after each one to ask the questions below and open up discussion. You then only need refer to the explanations in the course book for any doctrines you sense the group doesn't fully understand.

Please refer the participants to the Personal Study sections under each doctrine for those who wish to complete further study.

Getting started

When you're waiting to go somewhere with a friend and they don't arrive, how do you feel? It depends on what you believe about your friend doesn't it? If you think he or she is usually reliable, you might feel anxious, but you're likely to easily forgive them. If, however, you believe your friend is 'always letting people down', you may feel angry that they're being so inconsiderate.

Our feelings and actions are driven by what we believe. The beliefs that Salvationists hold about God and His work in the world lead us to dedicate ourselves to the Army's mission.

- Can you think of other times when a particular belief has led you think or act in a certain way (either good or bad)?

For example, the belief that it's important to look after the environment, so I recycle; the belief that I am a success if I can buy the best things, therefore I work hard; the belief that my best friend can be trusted leads me to share my honest fears with him/her.

- Describe a time when what you know to be true about God has influenced the way you've felt or the actions you've taken.

For example, because God forgives me, I give people another chance.

- In considering joining The Salvation Army, why is it important to understand what The Salvation Army believes?
- What are some things you already know about what The Salvation Army believes?

Explore

It was important to the Army's founders that people of different religions or no religious background at all could unite in a common faith. The Salvation Army's 11 doctrines (also known as our 'Articles of Faith') explain the essential truths of our **Christian faith**. The word 'doctrine' refers to the teaching of the Church.

Salvation Army doctrines express the personal faith and shared vision of Salvationists. Senior soldiers sign a Soldier's Covenant that signals their acceptance of The Salvation Army's doctrine.

Founder William Booth was an ordained Methodist minister, so Methodism, and the teachings of John Wesley in particular, have influenced our faith tradition. Salvation Army doctrines serve two purposes: **a confession of our faith and a defence of sound teaching.**

There are 11 doctrines in all. They cover our beliefs about:

- God (doctrines 1-4)
- Sin and sacrifice (5-6)
- Grace and response (7-11)

Lead a general discussion on each doctrine individually. Either ask someone to read the next doctrine, or

Watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 2: TALK IT—PART 1: DOCTRINE (8:58), pausing after each one.

God

Doctrine 1 | The Bible helps us know and follow God

We believe that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.

- What does it mean to believe that the Bible is God-inspired?
- What relevance is the Bible to Christians today in light of all the other teaching that is available?

Doctrine 2 | One supreme God, worthy of worship

We believe that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.

- The Bible is very clear that we are to worship God only and nothing else. What sorts of things might compete for our worship? (money, success, busyness, pride, sin, relationships, etc.)

Doctrine 3 | One God in three persons

We believe that there are three persons in the Godhead—the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.

- What is your understanding of the Trinity?
- What is your view of the Holy Spirit?

Doctrine 4 | Jesus is God and man

We believe that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.

- What is the significance of Jesus being both God and man?

Sin and sacrifice

Doctrine 5 | Our sinful human condition

We believe that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.

- What is your understanding of sin?
- If God is all-loving, why would we face his wrath if we sin?

Doctrine 6 | God's solution for sin

We believe that the Lord Jesus Christ has by His suffering and death made atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.

- What are some ways that people try to 'earn' a passage into heaven?
- What is God's solution for sin?

Grace and response

Doctrine 7 | Repentance, faith and regeneration

We believe that repentance towards God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, and regeneration by the Holy Spirit, are necessary to salvation.

- If you sin, what is the only way you can be reconciled with God?
- What is 'regeneration by the Holy Spirit'?

Doctrine 8 | Our new standing before God

We believe that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.

- How do we know that we are saved?

Doctrine 9 | Maintaining our salvation

We believe that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.

- Once you are 'saved', are you saved forever? (Even if you turn from God and actively return to a life of sin?)

This question is not intended to create anxiety about the security of our salvation; it is to help people understand that it is possible to 'backslide', or fall from salvation back into sin. Wesley rejected the Calvinism doctrine of 'once saved, always saved' (also called 'the perseverance of the saints'). The Bible clearly teaches that salvation can be lost; just as we can use our free will to choose salvation, so we are free to choose to reject that salvation in the future.

- What is most helpful in encouraging people to remain true to their commitment to God?

Christians need encouragement to remain true to God and to grow strong in their faith so that they will not be persuaded to 'slide away' from God. This is where small groups, involvement in mission with other Christians, regular worship attendance, and spiritual disciplines of prayer and Bible reading are so important.

Doctrine 10 | Full salvation

Salvation *begins* with repentance, faith and regeneration (doctrine seven). It is *sustained* by obedient faith (doctrine nine). But the *implication* of our new life 'in Christ' (2 Corinthians 5:17) is found in our tenth doctrine: **holiness**.

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

While this doctrine describes holiness as a 'privilege', that doesn't mean it is an optional extra or an experience God gives to just a special few.

- In 1 Peter 1:16, we are commanded to ‘be holy, because I am holy’. What does it mean to be holy?
- This doctrine uses the phrase ‘wholly sanctified’. What does this mean?

People are put off following Jesus when someone who says they are a Christian is revealed as a hypocrite. The opposite is also true: when we reflect God’s image by living holy lives, others are more likely to look to God and seek salvation for themselves.

To be like Jesus! This hope possesses me,
 In every thought and deed,
 This is my aim, my creed:
 To be like Jesus! This hope possesses me,
 His Spirit helping me, like Him I’ll be.

JOHN GOWANS

Doctrine 11 | The life to come

We believe in the immortality of the soul; in the resurrection of the body; in the general judgement at the end of the world; in the eternal happiness of the righteous; and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

- What is your understanding of what will happen at the end of the world? Is this something that makes you live in fear, or that gives you a great hope?
- How would you respond to the question what is the meaning of life?

Reflect and Apply

Check that you have covered the key messages before asking participants to turn to the Reflect section of this session and respond to the questions. Now ask participants to prayerfully respond to the questions in the Apply section.

Pray

Lord, I want to help people to know your truth—the truth that can set them free. May my trusting belief in you and daily obedience to your Holy Spirit help others come to know you as their Lord and Saviour too. Amen.

Radical discipleship

Session Overview

By the end of this session, participants should:

- **Know:**
 - *The content of the Soldier's Covenant—what you promise when becoming a soldier*
 - *The difference between soldiership and adherency*
 - *The reasons for our stance on abstinence and the sacraments*
 - **Feel:** a call to mission and total commitment to following God
 - **Do:** choose soldiership as your discipleship pathway
- Extra preparation:*
- *The Next Step (Youth Soldiership Preparation Course) DVD to show Salvation Army symbols, a day in the life and montages*
 - *you may find it useful to gather some up to date statistics on alcohol usage and issues (e.g. <http://www.alac.org.nz/NZStatistics.aspx>)*

Getting started

The Next Step DVD contains a very helpful overview of many Salvation Army symbols. As the DVD refers to following on from the doctrines and it introduces the next topic, it fits logically as a sidebar to this session. We suggest you start the session with the DVD clip before continuing with *Getting Started*.

Watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 2: TALK IT—PART 2: SYMBOLS (2:59)

Alternatively, lead a general discussion about the the Red Shield (p8), Our Flag (p30), Our Crest (p33) and the Mercy Seat (p61).

The needs of the world are vast. God in His love longs to reach out to all those who, inwardly or outwardly, are crying out for help—but He has chosen to work primarily through the disciples of Jesus. If we are taken up with our own personal needs first and foremost, or if we are looking for position

and status in the church, we shall be of no use to God. We are called to serve—and a servant must go where his master sends him and do what his master commands.

DAVID WATSON (Discipleship)

Being a disciple of Jesus is about grasping the amazing, life-changing truth that from the moment we accept Jesus as Lord, we can live the rest of our lives 'in Him' (Colossians 2:6-7).

- How might a close friend describe the difference that following Jesus is making to how you live? Would they highlight any particular changes?
- Has your faith in Jesus caused any of your friends to think about Jesus in a new way?
- What do you think Jesus requires of his followers?

For example, the Great Commission, the Great Commandment, transformation, spiritual growth, evidence of the fruit of the spirit

Explore

Holy habits

Optional: You may find it useful to watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 3: LIVE IT—PART 2: A DAY IN THE LIFE (5:43) as a way of reinforcing how we can connect with God throughout our day. Then continue with the questions below.

Spiritual disciplines allow God's work to happen naturally in our lives. Because farmers want to see a successful crop on their farms, they establish the right conditions for such growth to occur. If we want to see God's fruit flourish in our lives, we need to provide the right conditions for that to happen. Spiritual disciplines are life patterns that direct us to God and disciple us more fully into the likeness of Jesus Christ. They help us become more available to God.

These disciplines include Bible reading, prayer, meditation, confession, worship, celebration, fellowship, simplicity, fasting, solitude, silence and service. We engage in some of these privately, while others happen in community.

- What do you do to stay strong and grow as a Christian? When you neglect these things, what do you notice in your life?
- Do any other spiritual disciplines appeal to you?

Supporting discipleship through soldiership

In our first session, we looked at the importance of being with other Christians. Not only does this benefit us personally, but by committing to a local church, we can work with others and make a difference for Him in the world. We are usually stronger and more effective when we combine forces than as individuals working alone.

The Salvation Army promotes the membership commitment of senior soldiership as a way to help people understand and live out their Christian discipleship. This is a 'counter-cultural' lifestyle because some of its stands go against prevailing societal norms.

- What do you know about soldiership? Who can become a soldier? How does one become a soldier? What is an adherent member?

Some key points to cover include:

- **Senior soldiers** are members 14 years and older who choose to fulfil their membership of the wider Christian Church within The Salvation Army. They are enrolled during a public worship meeting and sign the *Soldier's Covenant*.
- The Salvation Army's International Spiritual Life Commission describes soldiership as '**militant, costly discipleship**'. Soldiership is never a formality. It should not be entered into lightly or taken for granted. All soldiers are encouraged to periodically review the promises they made when enrolled.
- **Adherent members** are Christians 14 years and older who also want to fulfil their membership of the Christian Church within The Salvation Army but without entering into the *Soldier's Covenant*.
- **Junior soldiers** are aged eight years and over. They sign the Junior Soldier Promise and may also take part in a discipleship programme for children that covers biblical knowledge, Salvation Army history, church life and service.

A counter-cultural lifestyle

- What do you know of the promises in the Soldier's Covenant?

Refer to the *Soldier's Covenant* in Appendix III. The document is split into two halves—acceptance of the 11 articles of faith (doctrines) and the 'I wills ...', a series of statements reflecting the positive lifestyle expected of a soldier.

One approach is to read through each statement asking why people think the statement is included (referring back to the main section of the course book as needed).

Two aspects that are particularly important to discuss are the lifestyle choices and stance on sacraments (we don't want people to become enrolled as a soldier and then to state they didn't understand these distinctives).

Optional: Watch *The Next Step* DVD, SECTION 3: LIVE IT—PART 1: MONTAGES (8:50)

The DVD clip introduces a range of key issues that anyone considering soldiership should be aware of, including that soldiership is a lifestyle covenant rather than membership, uniforms, sacraments, sex and our lifestyle choice of abstinence. Please note that the DVD is targeting youth so you may wish to explain that to your guests prior to watching this session.

Regardless of whether you watch the DVD clip, ask the questions below to promote discussion and reinforce the key points.

Uniforms

Uniforms have been a visible feature of The Salvation Army throughout its history. They came into fashion at the suggestion of an early convert, Elijah Cadman, who told founder William Booth at a 'War Congress' in 1878, 'I would like to wear a suit of clothes that would let everyone know I meant war to the teeth and salvation for the world.'

- What do you know about Salvation Army uniforms? Why do Salvationists wear them? What are some of the advantages of wearing a uniform? Who may wear a uniform? Do you have to wear one?

Some key points to cover include:

- Senior soldiers are encouraged to wear Salvation Army uniform and identify themselves as Salvationists
- Uniform wearing is only compulsory for officers and corps/centre leaders
- Non-soldiers are not permitted to wear uniform, but everyone is welcome to wear Salvation Army-branded casual clothing, sometimes called 'witness wear'

Lifestyle choices

Senior soldiers make specific, voluntary **lifestyle choices**: to 'abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult, and all else that could enslave the body or spirit'. Junior soldiers make similar (age-appropriate) promises.

- Why do you think soldiers choose this lifestyle choice?
- Why would a soldier choose to abstain from non-medical addictive drugs, tobacco, gambling, pornography, excessive debt?
- How about alcohol? The Bible does not prohibit Christians from drinking alcohol so why would a soldier choose to abstain? How might abstaining from alcohol be helpful or beneficial to you? How might your abstaining from alcohol be helpful to others?
- What do you know about how this stance came about?

You might find it useful to gather some up-to-date statistics on alcohol usage (e.g. for New Zealand statistics, try <http://www.alac.org.nz/NZStatistics.aspx>).

A sacramental lifestyle

- What are sacraments?
- What do you know about The Salvation Army's stance on sacraments? How did this stance come about?

Some key points to cover include:

- The Salvation Army is 'non-sacramental', not 'anti-sacramental'—we don't observe sacraments but are not against other churches choosing to do so

- Salvationists are welcome to take communion when they attend another church if they wish to do so (however, we believe Jesus is present and can be remembered and celebrated at every meal)
- The Salvation Army's enrolment ceremony for senior soldiers is likened to baptism or confirmation in other churches (but this ceremony does not involve water and is not sacramental). The Salvation Army does not prohibit Salvationists from being baptised if they wish to do so

The Salvation Army teaches that **all of life is sacramental** because every day we can encounter Jesus Christ, the one true Sacrament of God. Salvationists connect their lives with the life and presence of Jesus, and look with expectation for the presence of Christ whenever they come together in worship and fellowship.

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

ALBERT ORSBORN (The Song Book of The Salvation Army)

Reflect and Apply

Check that you have covered the key messages before asking participants to turn to the Reflect section of this session and respond to the questions. Now ask participants to prayerfully respond to the questions in the Apply section.

Pray

Lord, I want to follow you no matter what. Teach me, guide me—and rebuke me when I need it. I choose to live as your disciple and hand control of my life over to you. Use me in your service and for your glory. Amen.

Called to mission

Session Overview

By the end of this session, participants should:

- **Know:**
 - *We want you to sign up for mission as a soldier in The Salvation Army*
 - *The benefits to you as an individual of becoming a soldier*
 - *The benefits to The Salvation Army of having people sign up as soldiers*
- **Feel:** a desire to become a soldier
- **Do:** choose soldiership as your discipleship pathway

Extra preparation:

- **Optional:** *The Next Step* (Youth Soldiership Preparation Course) DVD to show Conclusion and This Is it
- you will need a clear idea of what will happen at the end of the course (see notes below).
- if the Corps Officers have not taken part in this course, you may like to invite him/her/them to attend to encourage participants.

This is a short session. It is recommended that a fellowship meal (or similar) conclude this session.

Getting started

The Salvation Army is composed of people who, having experienced forgiveness of sins and conversion by divine power, are enlisted under its banner as soldiers fighting for God and souls.

ORDERS & REGULATIONS FOR OFFICERS

- Do you think that 'salvation warfare' is still needed in our world today?

Explore

This course aims to help people understand the history, beliefs and practices of The Salvation Army. But it's also written to ask people to sign up for Salvation Army mission. You can do that by getting involved in Salvation Army church services and activities, or perhaps by working with The Salvation Army as an employee or volunteer. But we especially want people to consider becoming senior soldiers.

- Why does The Salvation Army need soldiers?
- Why might someone choose to become a Salvation Army soldier?
- How might entering into a covenant with God help a person's discipleship journey?

Those who sign the Soldier's Covenant do more than say they're a believer in Jesus Christ; they make some radical commitments to a lifestyle that is marked by Christian integrity in every area of life. It's a high calling to live the values of the Kingdom of God. It's a call to holy living.

It's also '**a call to arms**' through its 'I will' statements. It is a call to active—not passive—participation in that part of Christ's Church known as 'The Salvation Army'.

And while the local corps is the place where faith is nurtured and some aspects of mission are undertaken, living life as a soldier is not limited to that arena. A Salvation Army soldier should make a qualitative difference in the boardrooms of business and the classrooms or lecture halls of educational institutions. In neighbourhoods, workplaces, community groups, schools and sports clubs, Salvationists will uphold the values and standards needed by every community and every nation.

Newspaper headlines shout to us that **the people of New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga need a Saviour**. The run-away power of sin is consuming lives, and shared standards of ethics and morality no longer provide an effective safety net against suffering. We who claim to follow Jesus Christ are called to *live for God* in the face of other options. Soldiership invites us to *covenant with God to work with Him* to bring the world under His influence.

You can help carry on The Salvation Army's mission DNA. The prayer we make at the conclusion of this course is that you would see The Salvation Army as your long-term spiritual home and become part of our ongoing work.

We also ask you to consider signing up as a senior soldier. God will guide you in this—and in His time—if it is His will for your life. Signal your intention to the person leading this course or speak to your corps officer about this.

- The Salvation Army needs godly, faithful, innovative, servant-hearted people of all ages and backgrounds in its ranks. Will you sign up to Salvation Army mission?

Optional: You may find it useful to watch *The Next Step DVD, SECTION 4: WALK IT—CONCLUSION (5:43)* or *THIS IS IT* to close the course and help people understand the next steps.

Reflect and Apply

Check that you have covered the key messages before asking participants to turn to the Reflect section of this session and respond to the questions. Now ask participants to prayerfully respond to the questions in the Apply section.

Pray

Lord, thank you for The Salvation Army's rich Christian heritage. Help me to see how I can be part of the Army's future. I want to fight in your strength and invest my life in a mission that matters. Amen.

What happens next?

Make sure you thank each participant for attending and ensure they have a clear idea of what will happen next before they leave.

- When is your enrolment Sunday?
- Will you be meeting with them one on one prior to this?
- What do they do if they have further questions?
- What happens if they decide not to become a soldier (for example, will they choose to become an adherent)?

Conclude by taking time to pray specifically over each participant.

Appendix

Facilitating an Effective Group Session

People tend to learn best when they have plenty of opportunity to share, question and discuss, so in a course setting, we want lots of interaction. But not just between the leader and each participant – in really effective groups, participants interact with each other, with the leader simply guiding the conversation.

Such a group doesn't happen by chance—it requires careful consideration of seating arrangements, good questions and silence.

Below are some tips for encouraging interaction and some common mistakes that prevent it. Depending on the size and style of your group, some of the tips may not apply (e.g. it will be difficult to sit 70 people in a circle). We trust they are helpful.

How do you encourage interaction?

1. Set up the room as a circle so that everyone including the leader is facing each other
2. Gather information by asking open questions that encourage people to expand and cannot be answered with yes or no
3. Be careful with 'why' questions as they can sound aggressive and may make people feel defensive. Rather than 'Why did you do that?', try 'What were your reasons for doing that?'
4. Use 'rebound' and 'boomerang' questions to have other group members answer questions before you do (e.g. 'What do others think?'; 'Does anyone have a different idea we could consider?')
5. Use closed questions only to check information or to end someone's contribution when you need to regain control (e.g. 'So you had a good time then?')
6. Watch for those who would like to participate, and ask for their contribution. Read faces and body language
7. See that everyone is involved in the discussion and has a chance to share
8. Guide the discussion by switching from one person to another. Interject your viewpoint and experience occasionally

Common mistakes that prevent interaction?

1. Set up the room so that the leader is clearly separated from the other group members, and have the group members sitting in rows so that they can't easily see each other
2. Ask lots of questions that can be answered 'yes' or 'no'
3. Ask complex questions that no-one knows the answer to
4. Answer all questions asked of you – and a few you ask of others as well
5. Be afraid of silence. Don't give people time to think
6. Pick on people and keep asking them questions. Pressure people to pray, read or speak
7. Ask rhetorical questions. Anticipate when people want to answer a question then move on quickly
8. Try to maintain control. Prevent all tangents as soon as you notice the conversation taking off
9. Ensure the group knows that you know all the answers
10. Criticise people and allow people in the group to criticise others as well
11. Be more interested in getting through the material than in the people who are present
12. Share your viewpoint first



The Salvation Army
New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga and Samoa Territory

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