



# SERMON GUIDE

How to personalise sermon resources

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EDITION

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# WELCOME...

Sharing the word of God with your congregation is a wonderful part of ministry. However, every now and then you may find yourself running short of time to craft a brand-new message or don't have access to the right research material at hand.

To help you, we've prepared a full message with all the working parts:

Outline,	PowerPoint slides,
Full transcript,	A4 artwork,
Illustrations and prop ideas,	Social media cards,
Scripture reference index,	Discussion questions.

The Benefits of using these resources include,

Saving time in preparation, research, and writing.

Easy to use formats for iPad.

Fully editable text and layouts.

The sermon is crafted for impact.

Compelling Visuals.

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We hope you find these resources useful. If you would like to provide feedback, please email: [Christopher.Trodden@salvationarmy.org.au](mailto:Christopher.Trodden@salvationarmy.org.au)

**Officer Recruitment**

**Eva Burrows College** | The Salvation Army Australia Territory

# FORMATS

Editing a sermon or using sermon notes can be tricky given the different devices, programs, and preferences we have at our disposal: laptop, paper, iPad, Mac, Windows, PowerPoint, Word, and more.

To try and cover most bases, we provide each sermon in a formatted and unformatted version. Chose the one that displays best on your device and the one you find easiest to work with.

*Unformatted: just plain text*

*Formatted: Tables, colour coded, bullet points...*

Therefore, when it comes to a specific calling, one of the most helpful attitudes we can cultivate is being open to how it may unfold.

There is a flow and rhythm to calling.

**Point 3.**  
It's helpful to cultivate an attitude that remains open to how specific calling may unfold in our lives.

**Transition**  
So we all have a place in ministry, there is a general and broad calling we all share in, and there are specific callings. But how does calling occur? Do we need a burning bush or something?

**4. How calling occurs**  
Because calling is something God initiates, one of the other aspects we should touch on is how God communicates to us.

For us, there are many forms of communication we can use: email, text, facetime, letters, phone, in-person, online meetings, sign language, body language...

When it comes to calling, God doesn't just communicate it one standard way. Calling may happen in a time of prayer, or when you're reading the Bible, or through a spiritual experience. It may happen at the mercy seat or a sacred space. It can happen naturally through a conversation.

I've noticed that every leader's story around their sense of calling occurs in a different way: Some had a clear sense that God was asking them to do something. Others had a dramatic experience.

Some simply responded to what they read in the Bible – again, coming back to the Great Commandment and Great Commission. Others had a growing a sense of purpose and passion. For some, Officership is the best way to outwork their calling. Others came from a family whose parents we in ministry. Some had other leaders around them recognise a gift and calling to ministry and encouraged them to pursue it.

There are lots of ways calling can occur. What is common however, is that all of these leaders knew there was something simmering away on the inside, something deep down they felt they should be doing.

I think at this stage we need to remember that calling is not an end in and of itself – it has a purpose, and that purpose is about ministering to others. God has a world that needs to experience the love and person of Jesus.

I like what John Ortberg, a pastor in America writes, "People with strongest and healthiest sense of calling are not obsessed with their calling. They are preoccupied with the Caller."

... we begin broad: The Great Commandment and Commission: Share the gospel with everyone: every tribe, every nation, every age, every gender, every background – everyone.

Then over time, we get an idea of how God has gifted us: our skills and our talents, and we work at developing our specific gifts.

Then we use them to help others, often in various ways and settings.

Then, as we grow in clarity of where God is leading us, we make specific choices to prepare us for the next season: we may go to school, or do a short course, or attend training College. We might join a ministry team, go on roster, serve in corps leadership, or go on a mission trip.

Then, over time, we may end up in another ministry setting, or appointment, or job, or team, and so on and so on...

Therefore, when it comes to a specific calling, one of the most helpful attitudes we can cultivate is being open to how it may unfold.

There is a flow and rhythm to calling.

**Point 3.** It's helpful to cultivate an attitude that remains open to how specific calling may unfold in our lives.

**Transition** So we all have a place in ministry, there is a general and broad calling we all share in, and there are specific callings. But how does calling occur? Do we need a burning bush or something?

**4. How calling occurs** Because calling is something God initiates, one of the other aspects we should touch on is how God communicates to us.

For us, there are many forms of communication we can use: email, text, facetime, letters, phone, in-person, online meetings, sign language, body language...

When it comes to calling, God doesn't just communicate it one standard way. Calling may happen in a time of prayer, or when you're reading the Bible, or through a spiritual experience. It may happen at the mercy seat or a sacred space. It can happen naturally through a conversation.

I've noticed that every leader's story around their sense of calling occurs in a different way:

- Some had a clear sense that God was asking them to do something.
- Others had a dramatic experience.

# OUTLINE

Outlines help identify main points, sections, illustrations, and serve as a quick reference.

The outline is written last and comes directly from the body of the sermon. You may want to use the outline as it is, or change it. You may use it to help trigger new thoughts or create a new section.

Feel free to cut, paste and move sections around, add more detail, or rewrite sections entirely.

Overview: Topic,  
intro paragraph

Section

Point  
Sub-points



Message: *The Shape of Calling, understanding the unfolding rhythm of ministry*  
**Sermon Outline**

## Overview

When we hear the word calling, it's often used in reference to people going into ministry. This can be a helpful word for some but for others the idea of calling can be confusing. This message explores what is calling? Does everyone have a calling? How does calling occur? How do I respond to calling? Do all callings look the same?

### 1. A working definition

- Calling refers to the activity of God, whereby God asks, draws, or invites us to do something or to go somewhere.
- Calling is an invitation offered to us by God.
- The word calling means: to be spoken to, to be invited, or to be summoned by God.
- Calling can also refer to salvation or the invitation to grow Christ-like character.

**Point 1.** Calling is an invitation into a God initiated activity that requires our response.

### 2. Does everyone have a calling

#### 2.a General call

- Scripture informs us that we all share in a general call – that is, our Christian witness.
- We are all called to love God, and to love our neighbours as we love ourselves.
- We are all called to share the gospel with others.
- Everyone has equal opportunity to be involved in ministry.

#### 2.b Specific Call

- In the Old Testament, we see a number of specific callings.
- In the New Testament, we read about the calling to specific ministry roles.

**Point 2.A&B.** Calling is both General and Specific.

### 3. The Shape of Calling

- Specific calling rarely means a specific and predictable unfolding.
- Paul had a "specific calling, but not a specific outworking or predictable ministry.
- There is a flow and rhythm to calling; there is a flow and rhythm to ministry.

**Point 3.** It's helpful to cultivate an attitude that remains open to how specific calling may unfold.

### 4. How calling occurs

- God doesn't just communicate it one standard way.
- Calling is not an end in and of itself – it has a purpose.
- "People with strongest and healthiest sense of calling are not obsessed with their calling but with the caller" – John Ortberg.

**Point 4.** Calling can occur in a number of ways.

### 5. God's what and God's when

- God's what is different from God's when.
- It's always the right time to share the love of Jesus with others.
- Sometimes a specific calling happens straight away, other times, it's a long process.
- There is a need to discern the timing of God.

**Point 5.** God's timing varies from person to person; remain open.

# TRANSCRIPT

Each message is written in the tone and style of how we imagine it would sound when spoken. So, if you see a few words repeated here and there, it's on purpose to add emphasis.

Feel free to cut, paste, edit, move paragraphs around, focus in on one sentence, swap or change points. The aim of the transcript is to help you deliver a great sermon, so feel confident to read directly from this resource, however, it is also there to act as a platform to start from - you don't need to be constrained to or by it.

*Some sermons come with PowerPoint slide references included.*

*Transition statements have been carefully crafted to bring clarity and a flowing message.*

	<p>Refer to this slide</p> 
	<p>The shepherd would lay at the entrance to stop the sheep wandering out and prevent anything harmful from sneaking in.</p> <p>Now this is key: it was very common for lots of shepherds, with different flocks, to share the same sheepfold at night. You could have over 100 sheep, from 3-4 different flocks all mixed in with one another.</p> <p>So in the morning, the shepherds would go and stand on different parts of the field and call out their flock using a unique sound or phrase or tune. The flocks would naturally separate themselves out and go to their shepherd.</p> <p>How do the sheep know which shepherd is theirs? How are they able to discern one shepherd's call from another? It's because they are tuned into the distinct tones and timbers of their shepherd's voice.</p> <p>In the time of Jesus, there was a group of overly religious people called the Pharisees – they thought they knew God's voice better than anyone. They memorized the Bible word for word and practised everything it said to do. But for them, they thought God would reject them if they did the slightest thing wrong. And because of this, for them, the frequency of God's voice was strict, judgemental, conditional, and not very accepting.</p> <p>But Jesus showed us that God's frequency is one of love and forgiveness.</p> <p>For Jesus, and for us, God's voice doesn't carry the harsh tones of judgement and rejection – it is full of life, love and hope.</p> <p>God doesn't speak to us to condemn us, to reject us, to make us feel unworthy. God's voice always draws us close to Him.</p> <p>The first principle about discerning God's voice is this:</p>
<b>Principle 1.</b>	<b>God's speaks in the distinct tones of peace and love.</b>
<b>Transition</b>	<p>Now, who hear likes Jazz music? What about classical? Pop? Dance music? I like listening to (insert style of music). There are so many different styles of music we can listen to.</p> <p>Music is creative, it's varied with different rhythms, sounds, made by different instruments – there are many different sounds we can enjoy. And this leads us to our second principle – God speaks in different ways.</p>

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# ILLUSTRATIONS

They say, “ picture is worth a thousand words”. If you can use a illustrations, stories, images, videos or props to reinforce your message – people may find it easier to connect to what you're saying and remember it longer.

We provide illustration and prop ideas throughout the message transcript.

Space is provided for you to insert your own stories. A sample story is provided to help get you started.

*Prop ideas are included.*

*Illustration ideas are provided to help reinforce your point.*

<b>Illustration</b>	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>This slide / prop</i></p>  <p><b>Illustration...</b> A helpful illustration I once heard about discerning your calling is that it is much like flying a kite.</p> <p>When you fly a kite, it's all about catching the wind. We don't create the wind, we can't force the wind, we don't decide which direction the wind blows, all we can do is catch and harness the wind.</p> <p>When I was trying to catch the wind of God for my life, when I was trying to discern God's call for me, the Spirit would always be blowing towards Officership/church orientated ministries. When I tried to steer my life – my kite as it were – away from church ministry and over towards secular employment, I always feel I am fighting against something. I believe it's the wind of the Holy Spirit, blowing me towards the direction God intends for my life.</p> <p>Now that's just my experience – perhaps for you, you feel God's wind pulling you towards business, or education, or to establish a career – that's fantastic! We want to celebrate that with you.</p> <p>Remember, calling is not about everyone ending up doing the same thing, it's about living a submitted life to God, being fully available to where He will lead us next.</p>
<b>Close</b>	<p>I hope today's message has helped clarify calling a little more for you, and you get a sense of the next steps you need to take.</p> <p>And I hope you have felt stirred and challenged to engage in our general calling to the Christian life – we are all called to live out the Kingdom of God.</p> <p>As we close, can I ask you, do you sense the wind of the Spirit blowing you in a certain direction? Are you trying to catch the wind or are you trying to fight against it?</p> <p>For some us, perhaps this is a holy moment –a moment when the Holy Spirit is blowing over you afresh, drawing you towards a specific ministry. I encourage you to act on that. I invite you to have a conversation with me today, and we can explore where this may lead together.</p>

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# SCRIPTURE LIST

At the end of the message we include a quick index of all the Scriptures referenced for the sermon. This makes it quicker for you to swap out one verse for another or add in another PowerPoint slide when needed.

*All Scriptures are provided in the N.I.V translation unless stated otherwise.*

*Other translations are noted within brackets.*



*Series: Lead the Mission  
Message Title: Discerning God's voice  
Sermon Outline*

**John 16:13**

When the Spirit of truth comes, he will guide you into all the truth, for he will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak

**Col 1:16-7**

For in him all things were created: things in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or powers or rulers or authorities; all things have been created through him and for him. He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.

**Gen 1:3**

And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light.

**Romans 1:20**

For since the creation of the world God's invisible qualities—his eternal power and divine nature—have been clearly seen, being understood from what has been made, so that people are without excuse.

**Gen 3:8**

Then the man and his wife heard the sound of the LORD God as he was walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and they hid from the LORD God among the trees of the garden.

**Psalm 19:1-4 (TPT)**

God's splendour is a tale that is told, His testament is written in the stars. Space itself speaks His story every day. Through the marvels of the heavens. His truth is on tour in the starry-vault of the sky, Showing His skill in creation's craftsmanship. Each day echoes its secret to the next, Night with night sharing its revelation-knowledge. Without a sound, without a word, without a voice being heard, Yet all the world can see its story, Everywhere its gospel Is clearly read so all may know.

**2 Tim 3:16**

All Scripture is God-breathed and is useful for teaching, rebuking, correcting and training in righteousness,

**2 Pet 1:21**

For prophecy never had its origin in the human will, but prophets, though human, spoke from God as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit.

**Acts 13:2**

While they were worshiping the Lord and fasting, the Holy Spirit said, "Set apart for me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them."

**Rom 8:14**

For those who are led by the Spirit of God are the children of God.

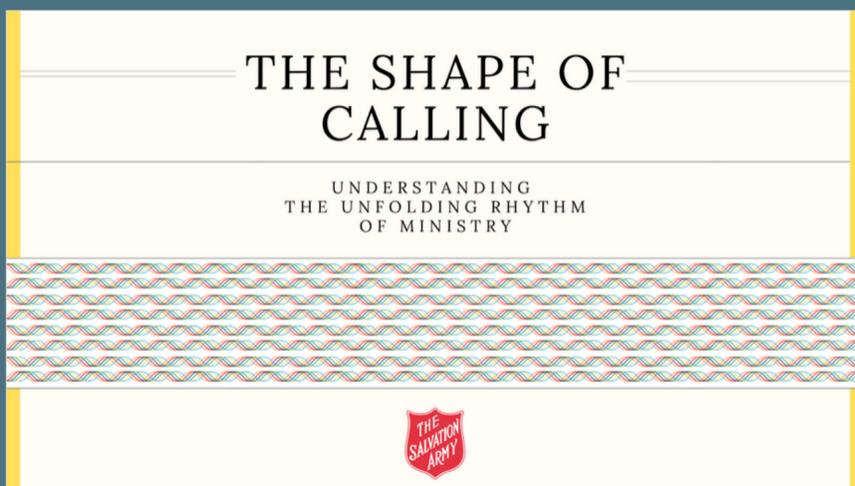
# POWERPOINT SLIDES

PowerPoint slides come in widescreen (16x9) format.

We try and keep the font size as big as possible so it's easier for the congregation to read and follow along.

You can request a square version (4x3) and we will do our best to make them within a reasonable timeframe.

*16x9 widescreen*

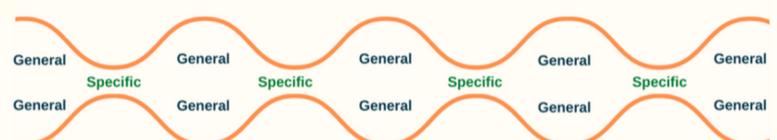


**1 PETER 2:19**

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's special possession, that you may declare the praises of him who called you out of darkness into his wonderful light.



**THE SHAPE OF CALLING**



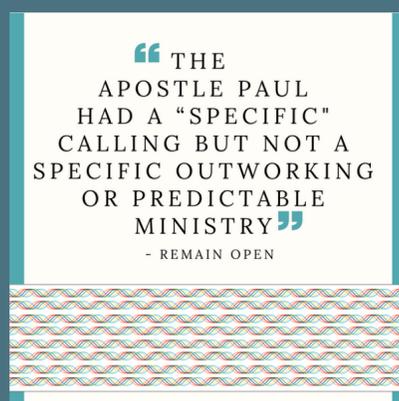
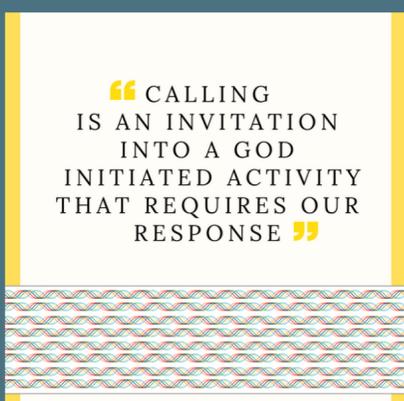
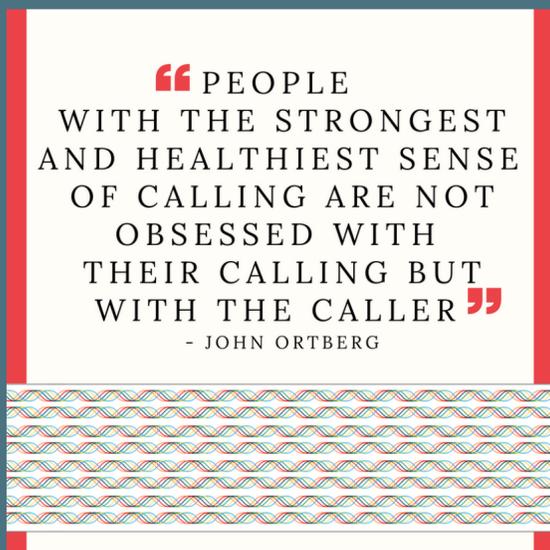
# ARTWORK & SOCIAL

Artwork is provided so you can promote series/sermons in your mission expression. In the past, artwork has been used to build interest and remind the congregation to invite their friends to relevant topics.

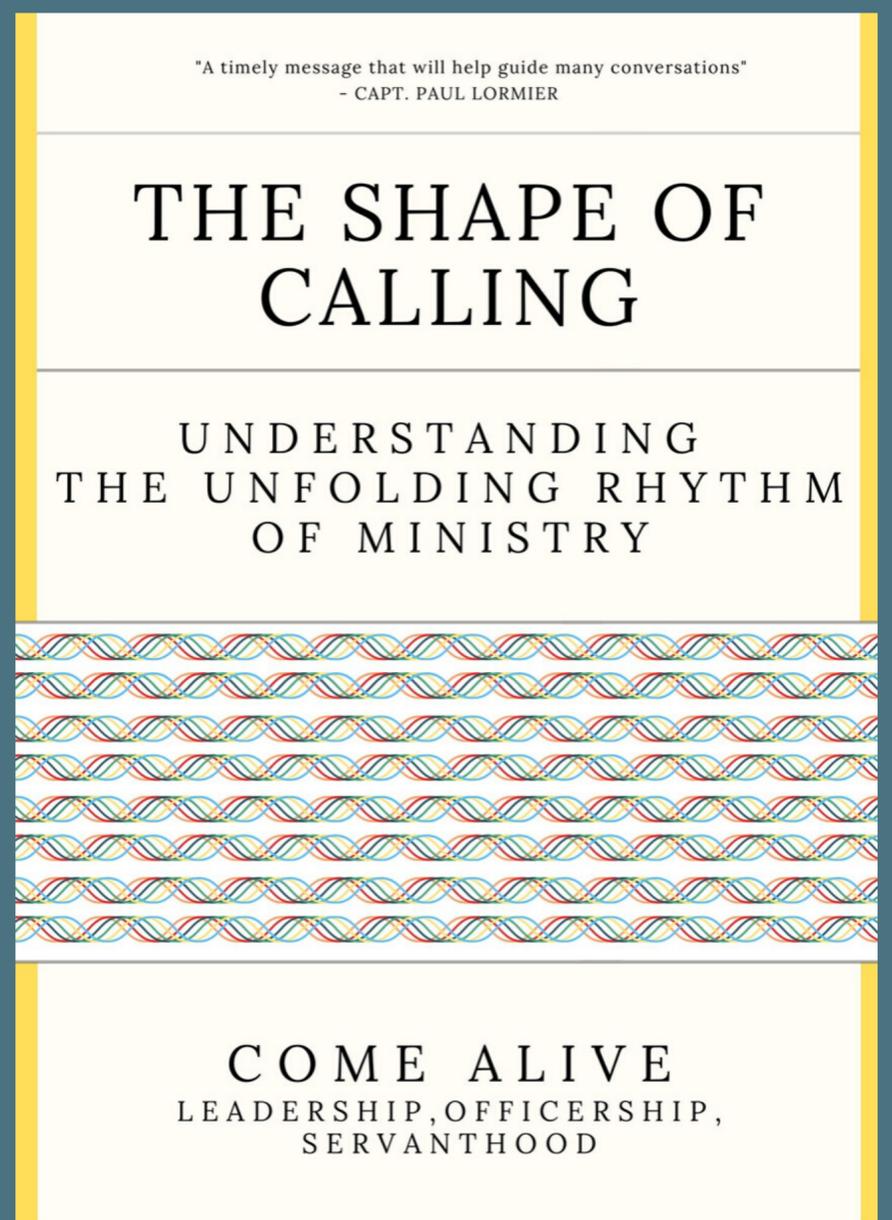
Keep your corps engaged after the service by sharing key points from the message on Facebook or Instagram and asking them to comment.

It's a good idea to ask your corps to like and share these posts. We've found that a simple post might end up starting conversations about the Lord, corps, and local mission. They are a good, non-confrontational way to begin a witnessing conversation online.

*Social media posts*



*Posters*



# DISCUSSION GUIDES

We've provided some guided questions to use in a small group setting. These have been designed specifically to be read off your mobile phone. This is a handy resource you can share with your leaders, use as a devotional, or start conversations with people over a meal.

*Designed for mobile phone screens*



Calling is an invitation into a God initiated activity that requires our response...

**Q.1**

WHAT IS YOUR DEFINITION OF CALLING?

----

WHO DO YOU SEE IN THE BIBLE THAT HAS A CALLING?

Calling is both General and Specific.

General call: the Christian witness i.e the great commandment and great commission.  
Specific call: to a set ministry role or task.

**Q.2**

HOW DO YOU LIVE OUT THE GENERAL CALL?

----

DO YOU SENSE A SPECIFIC CALL OVER YOUR LIFE?

Paul had a "specific calling, but not a specific outworking or predictable ministry.

**Q.3**

HOW CAN WE CULTIVATE AN ATTITUDE THAT IS OPEN TO CALLING UNFOLDING DIFFERENTLY IN OUR LIVES?

"People with strongest and healthiest sense of calling are not obsessed with their calling but with the Caller" - John Ortberg.

**Q.4**

HOW DOES GOD SPEAK TO YOU?

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HAVE YOU SENSED A CALLING TO A SPECIFIC MINISTRY AREA?

God's timing varies from person to person; remain open.

**Q.5**

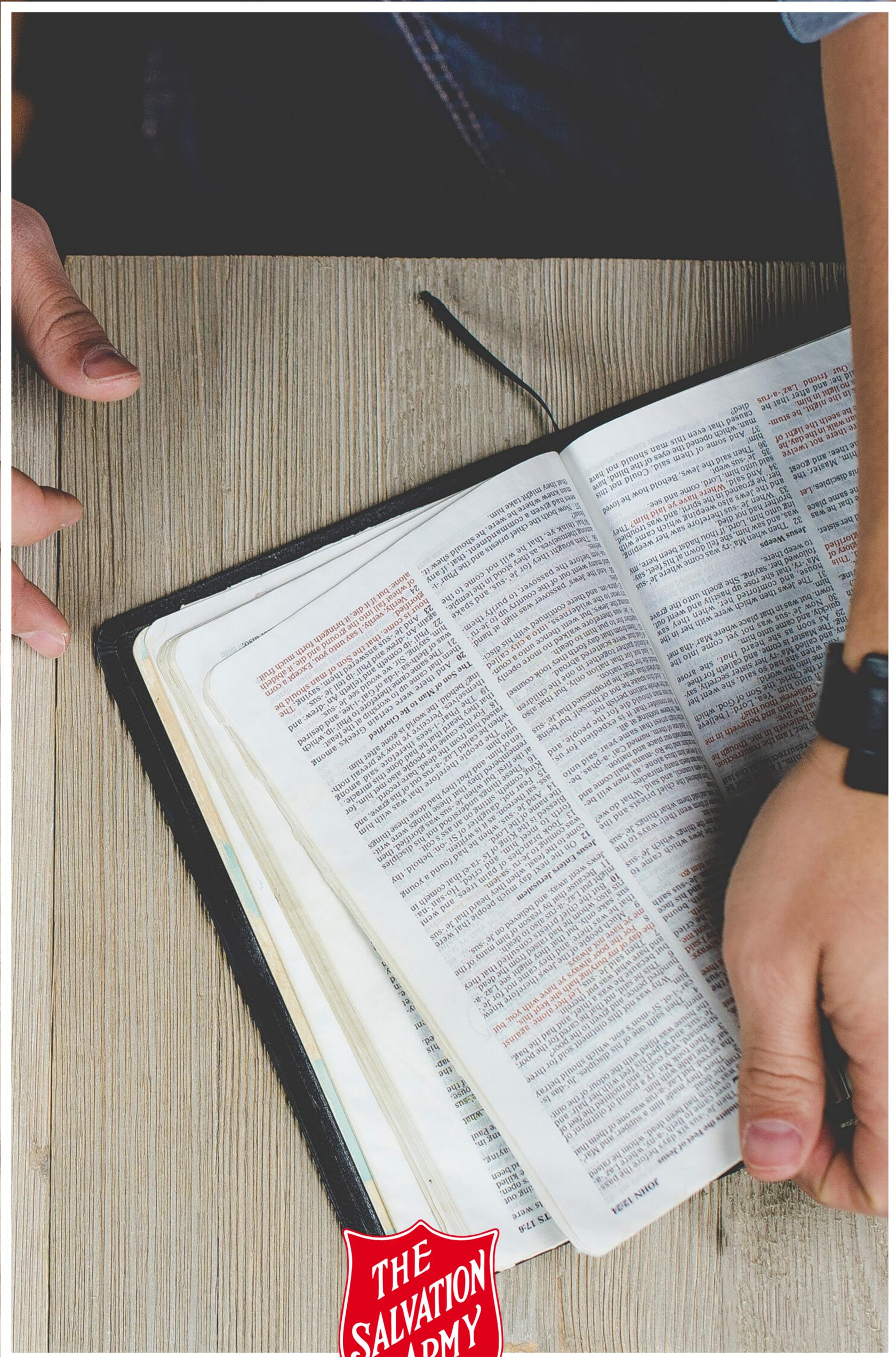
DOES KNOWING THAT GOD'S WHAT CAN BE DIFFERENT FROM GOD'S WHEN IMPACT YOU?

**COME**  
*Alive*

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT OFFICERSHIP AND MINISTRY IN THE SALVATION ARMY VISIT

[WWW.SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU/COMEALIVE](http://WWW.SALVATIONARMY.ORG.AU/COMEALIVE)





JOHN 12:1  
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