Junior Soldiers

Unit 1 : Lesson 10

Evangelical Vision

PURPOSE : For the children to come away with an understanding of the history of The Salvation Army's beginnings through the evangelical vision of William and Catherine Booth.

'While women weep, as they do now, I'll fight; while little children go hungry,
as they do now, I'll fight;
while men go to prison, in and out, in and out,
as they do now, I'll fight;
while there is a drunkard left, while there is a poor lost girl upon the streets,
while there remains one dark soul without the light of God,
I'll fight. I'll fight to the very end!

William Booth

The king will answer, "Whenever you did it For any of my people,
no matter how unimportant they seemed, you did it For me."

Matthew 25:40

Consider & Prepare

Read:

Matthew 25:31-40

William and Catherine Booth had a vision for a church that accepted all, without discrimination, and where members 'walked the walk' rather than just 'talking the talk' of Christianity. If a single word became the catchcry of the early Army, it was the word 'whosoever' - it captured the notion that Christianity was for all people regardless of their status in life or what social class they belonged to.

William was an activist who liked to be busy and to get things done and had a heart for seeing people come to Christ. Catherine was a well-read theologian who knew the biblical and doctrinal imperatives that demanded Christians represent Christ to all people. Together...they formed a formidable, evangelistic team.

If you have not done any reading before on the history of the Salvation Army it would be important for you to have a look at the DVD *Our People* or the DVD set *Boundless Salvation* (both available from Salvation Army Supplies) or read the book *Insane* from Salvo Publishing. You can also Google 'history of The Salvation Army' for some good summary documents.

What you will need:

For 'Connecting In'

- A2 Sheets of card for each child
- Coloured sticky-notes
- Pens, pencils and textas

For 'The Main Thing'

- Create or bring a strong box to stand on
- Items for 'make a bridge challenge'
- Smarties, bowls and chopsticks
- Uniform items and two glasses of water

For 'Tying In'

- Butchers paper and textas

For 'Home & Beyond'

- Print off a Home & Beyond card for each child.

Connecting In

Key people, places & things …

- Kids can create a timeline of their life – important things that have happened, e.g. starting school, special birthdays, special people, special items etc.
- Draw a line across an A2 sheet of card – then draw lines (from that one line) going either up or down and then add a bright coloured sticky note – use certain colours for specific things, e.g. pink for people, orange for family, blue for things, purple for events etc.

- **Link:** Have a look at the key people, places and experiences that you have had so far. There are always certain things that will stand out for us along the way, things that will make a difference. William and Catherine Booth were two key people who made a difference. Today we are going to have a look at some of the things that stood out when they were being inspired by God to start the Salvation Army.

1860's brainstorm …

- Start this brainstorm with a dozen items that the children have to guess if there was something like this in the 1860's. For example – a cricket ball (yes), an electric can opener (no), a laptop or computer (no), a telephone or mobile (no), matches (yes), a mix master (no), a hand egg-beater (yes), a toaster (no), a jaffle iron (yes) etc.
- As you are going through these items I am sure you will get lots of questions, e.g. If they didn't have can openers then how did they open their cans? Did they have cans?

- Life was very, very different in 1865 from what we experience today – let's do a little bit more brainstorming of what it might have been like.
- The following lists can be done in small groups or as a whole on some large butcher's paper.
- What would you have in your kitchen?
- What would you have and do at school?
- What would you do at night time?
- What sorts of toys would you have?
- What type of food would you eat?
- If you have broken up into groups, come back together and briefly go through the lists.

- **Link:** *(It is important to give kids a bit of a glimpse of what life would have been like in the 1860's so they can try to understand where William and Catherine were coming from when they began The Salvation Army and what people were experiencing in everyday life.)*

→ How do you think you would have liked living in the 1860's?
→ What would you miss from today?
→ What would have made it hard? Why?

- 1865 is when William Booth began leading The Christian Mission which (in 1878) was renamed The Salvation Army. Life was not like it is today and there were many people who had very little. There was a big gap between the rich and the poor and they didn't really mix together at all. Lack of acceptance and understanding of what people were going through was one of the key reasons William and Catherine wanted to share the gospel message with those who were 'on the outer' edges of society.
- Today we are going to explore a few of the key reasons why William and Catherine started The Salvation Army and how they went about it.

The Main Thing

Read Matthew 25:31-40 together as a group.

Going outside …

- Take your group outside and stand in a circle. It would be great if you had some sort of crate to stand on or a secure box. Stand on this and then talk to the kids. It would be good to sing a song together and possibly even play a short game that you would play in a circle depending on your time constraints. (This activity will obviously be dependent on the weather. If it is rainy you might like to still go outside and have umbrellas or you might like to replicate the outdoors inside but in a different room.)
- Talk to the kids about the reason why church was taken outside.
- *William and Catherine observed churches where poor people were not made welcome or were made to sit in the back rows of the church. This resulted in the homeless and destitute choosing not to attend church rather than face the embarrassment. The Booths decided that if these folks wouldn't come to church, the church would go to them. One of William Booth's heroes was Methodist preacher John Wesley; Wesley would often preach in public places and on street corners. The Salvation Army went a step further and commenced holding whole church services outdoors! These 'open-air' meetings had no limits on who could attend and participate.*
- Go back inside.

Everyone In …

- Today we are going to play a game of 'ZAP'
- Explain the rules - To play 'ZAP' you must know everyone's name and stand in a circle. The leader will stand in the middle of the circle and call someone's name. That person needs to quickly bob down and the two people either side of that person need to turn towards each other and, with hands

together pointed at the other person, say 'ZAP'. The first person to say 'ZAP' wins and the other person is out and sits in the middle. The circle gets smaller until there are only two people left and they stand back to back. The leader then says names of people who are in the room and then when a name is called that is not in the room they get to turn and try to be the first person to say 'ZAP'.

- Once you have explained the rules, say that those who are wearing (choose a colour that a number of the children are wearing today) are going to be going over to the other side of the room and sitting out today.
- Play the game.
- Bring everyone back together.
- 'How did you feel not being included today?'
- 'Why do you think we might have done that activity today?'
- *The Booths, as hinted at earlier, had a soft spot for 'social inclusion'. William Booth said that 'whosoever will may come' and hear the gospel message. To this day, The Salvation Army's mission statement says that we welcome all people 'without discrimination'.*

Make a bridge challenge …

- For this challenge you will need to divide your children into small groups, even pairs would work.
- They will need some supplies to make a replica of the bridge that you will show them (either on a PowerPoint, computer or printed out)
- Supplies below are listed in pairs. Give each group a pair selected from below.
    - → Matchsticks and plasticine/paper magiclay or playdough
    - → Icy pole sticks and blu-tak
    - → Sticky tape and straws
    - → Paperclips and A4 sheets of paper
    - → Pipecleaners and bulldog clips
- Judge the competition for the best likeness to the London Bridge.
- Does anyone know why we would be looking at the London Bridge today?
- *In 1878, William Booth was traveling home from a speaking engagement one evening when, out of his carriage, he spied men sleeping rough under the London Bridge on the banks of the Thames. He had a sleepless night and, the following morning, asked if Bramwell (his son) was aware of this. Bramwell replied that he was. William asked him why he hadn't done anything about housing the men in better conditions. Bramwell started to tell his father of the logistics of finding suitable buildings, arranging bedding, feeding large numbers of men, staffing the building, etc. William, ever the activist, cut Bramwell off with a yell: 'Then fix it all, Bramwell! I don't care what you do but do something! Do something!' These words, 'Do something!', could have been William Booth's life motto. Bramwell procured a former working house (factory) and put accommodation plans into place.*

Girls are good …

- For this activity you need to have a challenge of boys against girls. This might be difficult depending on the make-up of your group, however, if you have a few extra girls that would be beneficial. The outcome that you are hoping for is that the girls will win (so you have something to hook the teaching point to).
- You could have a tug of war – if the girls are not winning then the leaders could jump in and give them a hand.
- You could also have a challenge where you have just one boy and one girl out the front. This could be a 'Smartie' eating competition and they need to eat them with chopsticks. Again, if the girls is not winning then ask another girl to come and join them.

- The boys will think it is unfair but hopefully you can have a bit of fun with it as you make your point.
- *One of the distinctive traits of The Salvation Army from its first days has been the service of female officers (ministers). Catherine Booth was a very strong-willed woman and knew her Bible thoroughly; she knew that women had the same spiritual gifts as men…and that included preaching and ministry! William Booth was challenged on the matter one day – by a leader from another church – who said that preaching was a man's job. William replied, 'Some of my best men are women!'*

Para-military …

- For this activity you will need to divide into two teams.
- Each team will need to have 3 – 5 uniform items (it would be good if these could be Salvation Army uniform but it is not essential) that they will need to be able to put on, and a glass of water that is three-quarters full.
- This is a relay race. Each person needs to put all the items on and then carry the glass of water down to the end of the room, around a chair and back getting ready for the next person to have their go.
- At the end of the race show the children a number of people that are dressed in uniforms, e.g. police, fire fighter, nurse, soldier, chef, sailor or others where the uniform is recognizable.
    - → Who are these people?
    - → What do they do?
    - → How do you know that?
- *William Booth didn't want members of his church to be 'anonymous' between church services. He wanted members of The Salvation Army to wear something during the week that made them visible and available to those who needed help or spiritual comfort. The idea of a uniform tied in nicely with the thinking that Christians are in a spiritual 'war' with Satan and all that is evil in the world. To this day, Salvation Army uniform and especially the symbol of the 'red shield' (when on a T-short or jumper) are well-known around the world. The Salvation Army is not one of the biggest churches in the world but it is the most visible.*

William and Catherine Booth were passionate about holistic Christianity. That is, they wanted to save people's souls for Christ but they also recognized the need to help people experience a healthy and purposeful life. William Booth said: 'You can't convert someone when they have a toothache!' He knew that the most urgent need was to fix the toothache (the physical pain/distraction) so that someone could then focus on their need for spiritual 'healing' and wholeness.

Tying In

Booth was really strong that we should not just talk about things (i.e. like helping others) but that we need to do something. Some things may seem like a really big problem but we can make a difference a bit at a time and encourage others to join us on the journey.

- Divide into small groups with a sheet of butchers paper and some textas (depending on the size of your group)
- Think about the people that William and Catherine wanted to include… those that they wanted to help and to share the message of Jesus with.
- There are people in our communities that need help like that today.
- I wonder how we might be able to help them?
- Brainstorm in these groups about how we, as a group of Junior Soldiers, might be able to make a difference.
- Write down all suggestions.
- Come back together as a whole group and share the top three ideas from your group.
- Now as a whole group, decide on one project that you want to do together. This would be a great

opportunity to get the whole church involved, Big Buds, Junior Soldiers' families etc.

- Some suggestions if you are a little stuck on getting started:
- As a group you could go and do some jobs for the local primary school, or older folk in your corps or community, e.g. gardening, shopping, painting.
- Cook some cakes or special treats that can be delivered to those who are needy in your community – they might be able to be handed out at welfare with a special hand written note from the kids.
- Raise some money as a church community, e.g. everyone collect five-cent pieces for the next month and then bring them in. The money can then be used for supporting those overseas or buying some groceries that could be used in handing out at welfare.
- I am sure the kids will come up with some great suggestions on how they might be able to make a difference.
- This might be something that will take a little while to organize and finish up but is important to communicate to the rest of the church community so that they can encourage and support the kids.
- Pray together about making a difference not only through the project but in all that they say, think and do.

Home & Beyond

Print off the 'Home & Beyond' cards attached. The Home & Beyond card has been left blank this time, allowing the children to record the details of the groups project focus. It would be great for the kids to include the family and their Big Bud in their project or at least talk about it with them so that they can support and pray for them.



Home & Beyond

Use this card to record the details of the project you and/or your group has decided to focus on. It would be great to involve your family and your Big Bud in this project or at least talk about it with them so that they can support and pray for you and your group.

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