

Junior Soldiers

Unit 2 : Lesson 10



‘Distinctives’ [Part 1 - Identity]

PURPOSE : For children to understand that there are unique, distinctive elements to the Salvation Army's identity; things that show who we are and who we belong to.

“No one gets a blessing if they have cold feet and nobody ever got saved while they had toothache!”

William Booth

“...be strong through the grace that God gives you in Christ Jesus. You have heard me teach things that have been confirmed by many reliable witnesses.

Now teach these truths to other trustworthy people who will be able to pass them on to others.

Endure suffering along with me, as a good soldier of Christ Jesus’
(2 Timothy 2:1-3)

Consider & Prepare

Read:

1 Corinthians 12: 1-31

The scripture passage from 1 Corinthians talks of the ‘body of Christ’ and the need for the various parts and their functions - the eye, the eye, the ear, the hand, the feet etc. The passage can be interpreted in a number of ways, but is useful as a ‘parable’ of the nature of the Christian Church and its various denominations.

Imagine if the whole Christian Church was monastic and Christians lived in seclusion, studying scripture, meditating on God and faith, praying almost endlessly. Or imagine if the whole Christian Church was high Anglican, with church services steeped in formality, tradition, liturgies and centuries old practices.

The fact is: the many parts of the Christian Church need each other to form a whole and complete 'body of Christ' in the world.

The Salvation Army's distinctive identity makes us the church that acts as God's hands in the world; a church that exemplifies 'Christianity in action' by our wide-ranging acts of service and our Christian activism. One of our best-known slogans is: 'heart to God and hand to man'; it captures our unique role in the universal Christian Church.

William Booth's quote above, shows that his intent is for people to be saved spiritually but, often, someone's physical needs had to be addressed first. As one Army officer has said: 'Deal with the crisis then deal with the cross!'



- Ball (soft ball or ball made out of newspaper)
- Enough coloured bandanas for two teams to play soccer (this will depend on the size of your group)
- Cream of Tartar and other ingredients to make playdough (including red food colouring)
- Large candle, matches and enough tea-light candles for each of the Junior Soldiers
- Large bowl of water, hand towels or paper towels
- A3 sheets of paper
- Sticky foam sheets, felt or coloured card for making their flag
- Textas, crayons, pastels, bright coloured paper, scissors and glue sticks
- Organise cards for the Junior Soldiers with the 'Home & Beyond' information on them or arrange for each of the Junior Soldiers to have a notepad or journal for this purpose each week.

Connecting In

Whose team are you on?

- Organise a game of soccer with your group. Depending on your space you might like to use a soft ball or even a newspaper ball for this activity.
- Divide your group into two teams; don't give them anything to identify which team they're on.
- Play the game for a little while.
- STOP – 'Freeze!'
 - 'Is it hard to know who is on your team?' (This will be harder for larger groups; if you have a small group get the kids to imagine how it would be if they had another 10 players on their side.)
 - Offer the team a set of bandanas each. 'Do you think these bandanas will help with easily being able to identify who is on your side?'
- Play again for a little while, probably until there is a winner of the game.



- **Link:** Was it easier to play the game with the bandanas? Why/Why not?
- It is easier to play a game like soccer if we are clear who is on our side. That is why sporting teams have uniforms. It can even be a little difficult when the uniform of the team that you are playing is similar to yours. There may have been a time when you mistakenly threw or kicked a ball to someone on the other team. Today we are going to look at some things that identify people who belong to The Salvation Army.
 - What do you think some of them might be? (Allow the kids to brainstorm.)

The Main Thing & Tying In

These two sections will be combined for this lesson. There are four activities for the Junior Soldier to participate in, depending on the size of your group you might like to rotate through these activities or move as a whole group from one to the other.



Uniform...

Why wear uniform?

Why do you wear the same uniform on a sporting team?

Why do superheroes have a uniform?

Why do police have a uniform?

What about anyone else that wears a uniform - what reasons do you think they would have for wearing one? Why do Salvos wear a uniform? What is the purpose?

In the 1800s, members of the military and navy were highly-respected in British society, each family could boast of its family member(s) who had served their country on the war front. William Booth thought that one part of winning respect was the wearing of uniform. More so, it made members of the church visible. Booth was saddened by 'anonymous' Christians who attended church on a Sunday but then remained 'invisible' in their community and on the streets through the week. Booth wanted 'his' Christians to be visible and available should someone need help, assistance or prayer. The wearing of uniform achieved this. He said that if uniform couldn't be worn, even the wearing of a badge was to be encouraged - just like the Junior Soldier badge!

Wearing a uniform is an important tool to being 'identified' as belonging to a particular group/movement/job. It means that you will be recognizable and show clearly what you stand for or who you belong to.

- Design a uniform. Something that says something about who you belong to or the things that you stand for. It might look like a superheroes uniform.
- The design elements used in the uniform must be for a specific reason or purpose.
- Explain your uniform design to the rest of the group.

Flag...

Create a flag!

Think about some flags of other countries or that might be used for a particular group or organization. Each part in the flag will usually have a specific meaning or reason that it has been used to make up the image of the flag.

The Salvation Army flag (show the kids a flag at this point) is made up of three key sections, and each of those sections has a particular meaning. We are going to look at each of the parts as we put together our own flag.

- For this activity you can use a number of materials to make a flag. Sticky foam sheets, felt, coloured cardboard etc.

RED: Jesus blood/he died for us.

- Make some playdough with the kids (the best recipe is on the back of the Cream of Tartar box/cylinder and made with boiling water rather than cooking in a pot).
- Do not add the colour yet (i.e. make white playdough)
- Roll into individual balls for each of the children. Get them to flatten their ball of playdough down and then give them a drop of red food colouring to mix into their white dough.
- The red is on the flag to symbolize that Jesus died on the cross for each of us. If we are the white playdough then the red drop is Jesus making a difference to who we are. He did this for each of us. (Isaiah 53:4-6).
- Get the children to start their flag with the red background that symbolizes that Jesus died for us.

YELLOW: The fire of the Holy Spirit.

For this illustration you will need a large candle, some matches and a small tea-light candle for each of the children.

Acts 2:1–4 (New Living Translation) ‘On the day of Pentecost all the believers were meeting together in one place. Suddenly, there was a sound from heaven like the roaring of a mighty windstorm, and it filled the house where they were sitting. Then, what looked like flames or tongues of fire appeared and settled on each of them. And everyone present was filled with the Holy Spirit and began speaking in other languages, as the Holy Spirit gave them this ability.’

- Light the large candle and share the verses about the Holy Spirit.
- **Carefully** – get the children to pass their hand over the candle to feel the warmth.
- ‘We can feel the warmth of the candle but you can’t see the warmth - just like the Holy Spirit - you can see or feel the evidence of Him in your life but you can’t see Him.
- The Holy Spirit was given for each of us so that we can have the joy and power of God with us at all times.
- Encourage each of the children to light their own tea-light candle to represent the Holy Spirit’s.
- The children can add the yellow star (8 pointed star) to their flag and write ‘Blood & Fire’.



BLUE: Purity of God the Father.

- For this illustration you will need a large bowl of water for the children to wash their hands in and some hand towels or paper towel.
- Encourage each of the children to come and wash their hands in the bowl of water.
- While they are doing this talk about how the blue in the flag represents the purity of God - how clean and good and perfect He is.
- ‘Today, washing our hands is just a small way of looking at how God is pure and clean and good.’ (Psalm 34:8, Psalm 107:1)
- The children can now add the blue border to the flag.

‘The Salvation Army flag can tell people so much about who we are and who we belong to from the individual parts.’

Shield...

For this section it would be good to have a variety of symbols or logos that the children have to see if they can name what the logo is for, e.g. McDonalds, Nike, Apple, etc.

You could do this as a whole group or as two teams to see who can guess the most right.

- Show the children the Red Shield.
- What do you think of when you see this logo? (give the children time to share their thoughts and ideas)

The Red Shield is an internationally recognised symbol of Salvation Army service to those in need. It represents the ‘shield’ we provide to people in need of help, whether it be spiritually, physically, financially or emotionally. Metal shields were worn as badges by Salvationists in the early 1880s.

Colonel Walter Peacock, a well-respected Canadian Salvation Army officer, designed and introduced the ‘Red Shield’ into the Canadian-held trenches in France in 1915. It was an easy way to indicate his position to servicemen needing support or counseling. It was adopted worldwide soon after.

Crest...

Design a picture/crest that represents you!

The crest is a meaningful symbol of the Salvationist’s beliefs. Captain William Ebdon designed the crest in 1878 and the only alteration to his original design was the addition of the crown. Its emblems set forth the leading doctrines of The Salvation Army as follows:



- **The crown** speaks of God's reward for His faithful people
 - **The sun** (the surround) represents the light and fire of the Holy Spirit
 - **The 'S'** stands for salvation from sin
 - **The cross of Jesus** stands at the centre of the crest and the Salvationist's faith
 - **The swords** represent the fight against sin
 - **'Blood and Fire'** is the motto of The Salvation Army. This describes the blood of Jesus shed on the cross to save all people, and the fire of the Holy Spirit which purifies believers.
- Find a crest somewhere in your hall: this might be on a wall or in a songbook etc
 - Talk through the parts of the crest and what they stand for.
 - Can you think of some other crests that you have seen? What have they been for? (schools, sporting clubs, countries etc.)
 - You might like to have some examples of other crests or coat of arms available for kids to have a look at.
 - Each part of a crest will have a particular meaning or be included because it says something about that school or that country or that family.
 - Design a picture/crest that represents you. Include some of the things that are important to you or the key things you value e.g. family, sport, God, food, other activities or people etc.
 - You will need some A3 sheets of paper, textas, crayons, pastels or even coloured paper, scissors and glue sticks for the children to design their crest.
 - It would be good if you have done a rough draft of one for yourself to help the children to think of some ideas.
 - When they are finished it would also be good to display these in the church foyer as a representation of some of the children in your church.

Prayer...

Pray together and thank God for how He has distinctively formed The Salvation Army to stand up as followers of God and make a difference for Him.

Home & Beyond

For your 'Home & Beyond' segments you might like to make up a card or letter that you can send home with your Junior Soldiers or you could get the children to use a journal or notebook where they could write or stick the challenges, questions or activities in each week.

How do you show who you belong to? Do you wear your footy team colours or badge? Do you wear Aussie clothes, flags or colours on Australia Day or to the cricket? Do you wear a school uniform? Do you wear a Junior Soldier T-shirt or badge?

Are you willing to show others today that you belong to the Salvation Army?

Some suggestions on how you might like to do that:

- Wear your Junior Soldier T-shirt or badge at some time during the week (not just at Junior Soldiers!)
- Take a *Kidzone* to someone at school
- Tell someone what you have been doing on the weekend or one of the other programs that you attend with The Salvation Army
- Invite someone to come to a program or event with you.
- Pray that God will give you the courage to show that you belong to The Salvation Army and that you belong to God.