



Sunday 7th February 2021

Sunday worship on is on  YouTube

The easiest way to find the link to the YouTube meeting each Sunday is to find the link on the Corps web page. Type.....

www.salvationarmy.org.uk/ramsgate and select **Church on YouTube**

You can also find us by searching on YouTube and on the Ramsgate Facebook page.

But we want to still “meet together” and share our thoughts and prayers and testimonies. It will give a chance to share how God has spoken to us during the meeting – and allow us to encourage each other.

Sunday 7 th 10 am	Ramsgate Church at Home (YouTube)
Sunday 7 th 11.15 am	ZOOM fellowship
Sunday 7 th 12 noon	ZOOM Youth Group
Sunday 7 th 4.30 pm	ZOOM Children’s Church Kids Club (up to 11 years)
Tuesday 9 th 7pm	ZOOM Bible study
Wednesday 10 th 7pm	ZOOM Corps Council

Ramsgate ZOOM 8651865167

If you have no internet we are providing each week's service on a DVD which we will deliver to you.



Please let us know if you **do not want** a DVD each week.

Also tell us if you **need help** watching the DVDs we are sending.



There is a full day of activities on Fortress Radio.

<https://www.fortressradio.online/listen-now.html>

Songs of Praise Sunday 7th February 13.15pm

Gospel Singer of the Year - Final

Mark De-Lisser hosts the final of our Gospel Singer of the Year competition.



Maggie is available with the constant prayer line where you can call or text for prayer. You can contact her on 07840 753 603

Daily Hope offers music, prayers and reflections as well as full worship services from the Church of England at the end of a telephone line.



Birthdays – Today it is Charles Dickens



“Remember!--It is Christianity to do good always--even to those who do evil to us. It is Christianity to love our neighbours as ourself, and to do to all men as we would have them do to us. It is Christianity to be gentle, merciful and forgiving, and to keep those qualities quiet in our own hearts, and never make a boast of them or of our prayers or of our love of God, but always to show that

we love Him by humbly trying to do right in everything. If we do this, and remember the life and lessons of Our Lord Jesus Christ, and try to act up to them, we may confidently hope that God will forgive us our sins and mistakes, and enable us to live and die in peace.”

Prayers please for

Helen who had a fall this week and is a lot of pain, for **Mo’s dad** who is still in hospital but able to breath on his own again.

We continue to pray for **Muriel** recovering at home, for **Grant** and **Al** and **David** all waiting for medical treatment. For **Joyce Hill** as she returns to health For full recovery for **Kate**. Continued prayers for **Paul**, son of Hazel and for **Archie**, Lisa and Scott.

Kate has made us aware of two situations, the first concerning **Steven**, the grandson of her friend Madeleine

Steven saw his consultant at Kings College Hospital yesterday.

Steven is going into hospital within the next couple of weeks for a 10 day chemo trial and possibly a second one. If this works he will then have a bone marrow transplant. The bad news is that if it doesn't work they will not be able to give him any more treatment. I beg you all to pray for him and the family as a whole. We have been on this journey for so long now.

And also for **Victoria**. She was transferred to the Royal Marsden today as it has been identified that she has a sarcoma. This is a trying time for the family and a particularly frightening time for Vicky as she having to go through all this alone. We know that the Lord is with her. Please pray that she will have a sense of His Presence too and through this may come to know Him.

O Lord hear our prayers for these two young people.

AMEN!

The weekly message from our TCs is available on YouTube.

Here is the link for this week, and a short extract. <https://youtu.be/k9-DTGpoEHY>



In the last few weeks, I've been talking to you about our tunnel experiences, following an advertisement that Gill and I came across in Rotherhithe, not that long-ago advertising, asking for help for money for the Brunel Thames Tunnel Museum. For those of you who weren't around when I shared this a couple of weeks ago, the very first tunnel beneath a body of water was just about a mile or so from where Gill and I live. And there's a museum now which marks the tunnel, which is still an operative tunnel, now owned by the London Underground.

We were stopped in our tracks when we saw the sign which said, 'Be the light at the end of the tunnel'. And I was challenged to think, well actually we need to be light, not only at the end of the tunnel, but to be the light in the tunnel, as we go through waters and as we go through the fire of these days.

And then last week I referenced the prayer of Jabez which is found in 1 Chronicles chapter 4. This great prayer and his desire that he would see his territory enlarge his sphere of influence for God, extended.

'What will it mean for us as we re-vision, who we are and what we are going to be as we go forward?'

And there was a challenge to us all as to what that might mean for us individually, for you personally, but also for us corporately as Salvation Army Corps, and as churches, and certainly for The Salvation Army in its larger form as we continue to navigate the waters of the pandemic. What will it mean for us as we re-vision, who we are and what we are going to be as we go forward? What will we be able to deliver and offer in the name of Jesus, as eventually we come out of the pandemic? It's a great challenging thought for us.

Thoughts from Major John

We want to see Jesus lifted high.

A few weeks ago I used the song above in my thoughts on revival and in this weeks Salvationist I see that our Territorial Commander makes reference to the song in his message.(P4)

We want to see Jesus lifted high,
A banner that flies across this land,
That all men may see the truth and know
He is the way to heaven.
(401 SASB Doug Horley)

If we are serious about revival we need an army of intercessors who are committed to pray for it. In revivals of the past, people prayed earnestly, for many years sometimes, before the revival came.

I have been helped in praying for revival by using several songs as prayers, a number of which I have mentioned and quoted previously....

SASB 818

'O breath of life, come sweeping through us'

'Come love of Christ, afresh to win us, revive thy church in every part.'

SASB 220

'Great is the darkness that covers the earth', making the chorus a real prayer...

Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus,

Pour out your Spirit we pray.

Come, Lord Jesus, come, Lord Jesus,

Pour out your Spirit on us today.

SASB 272 'Revive thy work, O Lord'.

SASB 326

William Booth's inspiring call...

'Thou Christ of burning cleansing flame, send the fire! We want another Pentecost, send the fire!'

'To burn up every trace of sin, to bring the light and glory in, the revolution now begin, send the fire!'

You may be able to find other songs and hymns that inspire prayer.

I have been using Psalm 85 and selected verses in my prayer time...

V4 Restore us again, O God our Saviour.

V6 Will you not revive us again, that your people may rejoice in you? Show us your unfailing love, O Lord, and grant us your salvation.

V9 Surely his salvation is near to those who fear him, that his glory may dwell in our Land.

How we need to pray that 'his glory may dwell in our land!'

Charlie Cleverly, recently retired Rector of St. Aldates, Oxford, wrote in his book 'Epiphanies of the Ordinary'....

'I have a dream that one day in the UK (and mainland Europe, for that matter) revival will come to our land and that a new reformation will come from heaven. I believe we can pray like Moses: 'Lord, remember this nation.' This will require us to be students of what God has done in our country, as well as knowing his ways with nations. For example, into the very floor of the central lobby of the Houses of Parliament is inscribed the text: 'Unless the Lord builds the house, its builders labour in vain.' We can pray: 'Remember this nation is your people'. We are called in prayer to unblock wells of the past wherever we are, I believe this is part of how to do so.'

Finally in my prayer time this week the words of a song written by Graham Kendrick and Chris Robinson 40 years ago came into my mind. The words are again a powerful prayer for revival and restoration.

Restore, O Lord,

The honour the honour of Your name,
In works of sovereign power
Come shake the earth again;
That men may see
And come with reverent fear
To the living God,
Whose kingdom shall outlast the years.

Restore, O Lord'
In all the earth your fame,
And in our time revive
The church that bears Your name.
And in Your anger,
Lord, remember mercy.
O living God,
Whose mercy shall outlast the years.

Bend us, O Lord,
Where we are hard and cold,
In your refiners fire
Come purify the gold.
Though suffering comes
And evil crouches near,
Still our loving God
Is reigning, He is reigning here.

Time to Smile

A group of pensioners at a coffee morning were exchanging complaints about their ailments.

One said: 'My arms are so weak I can hardly hold up my cup.'

Another said: 'My cataracts are so bad I can hardly see to pour my coffee.'

Another said: 'I can't turn my head because of arthritis in my neck.'

Another said: 'My blood pressure tablets make me feel dizzy all the time.'

Another said: 'That's the price we pay for getting old.'

Finally another said: 'It's not all bad, we should be grateful, at least we can all still drive.'

Sign in shop window: 'For sale. Pedigree bulldog. House trained. Eats anything. Very fond of children.'

What's the best advice you can give to a witch on a broomstick?

'Don't fly off the handle!'

Knock, knock. Who's there? Dishes. Dishes who? Dishes the way I talk now I've got false teeth.

Quiz

- 1.What did MGM stand for?
- 2.Who was the first presenter of the TV programme 'Tomorrow's World'?
- 3.Which terrier is the largest of the terrier breed?
- 4.In the film 'The Great Escape' which actor played the forger?
- 5.What is mineral water mixed with quinine called?

England

- 1.Barrow-in-Furness is on which county's coast?
- 2.Which city of South West England was known to the Romans as Aqua Sulis?
- 3.In which London borough is the National Maritime Museum?
- 4.Which Cross is at the west end of The Strand?

5.The National Motor Museum is near which stately home?

Anagrams. Books of the bible.

1.MOODYTENSURE 2.HOBAIDA 3.HEMPLION 4.SOCIALSONS 5.SHIPINIPAL

1.DEUTERONOMY 2.OBADIAH 3.PHILEMON 4.COLOSSIANS 5.PHILIPPIANS

Anagrams

1.Cumbria 2.Bath 3.Greenwich 4.Charing Cross 5.Beaulieu

England

5.Tonic Water

1.Metro Goldwyn Mayer 2.Raymond Baxter 3.Airedale 4.Donald Pleasence

Quiz

You know how full
of **LOVE** and kindness
our LORD Jesus
Christ was.

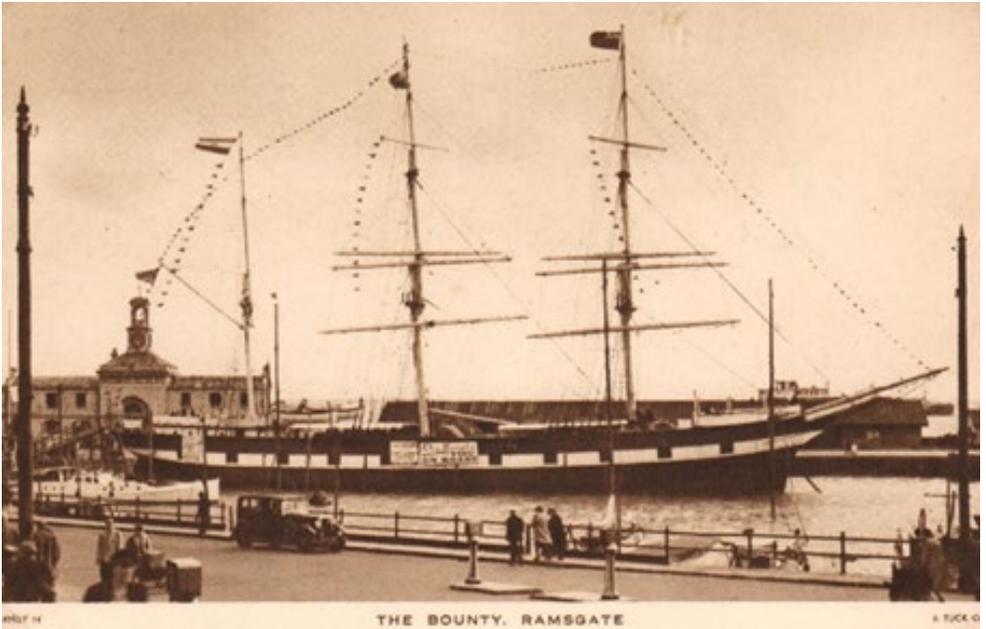
Though he was
\$ **VERY** \$
RICH \$

for your sakes
he became
POOR
so that by his
poverty
he could make you
RICH. 2 Corinthians 8:9

Kevin Spear

The "Bounty"

David Richards writes; The name of the vessel was the "Alastor" not the Aleston. She was built and launched at Sunderland in 1875, 200 feet in length, and of 800 tons. She was known to have sailed under the Finnish and Norwegian flags. She arrived in Ramsgate in early June, 1946, with a crew of ex-wrens. I believe she was to be used in conjunction with the "Festival of Britain" site on the south bank of the Thames in 1951. But this was not to be, she was scrapped the same year.



Church at Home – 7th February

From the comfort of our homes we gather to worship.
Whether through printed word, or through the gift of technology
we are a community.
Here we seek connection with God – Father, Spirit, Son
Come, let us worship God,
shown to us through the risen Christ
indwelt in us as the Holy Spirit.

Join in with the ancient praise of Psalm 136

- ¹ Give thanks to the LORD, for he is good.
His love endures forever.
- ² Give thanks to the God of gods.
His love endures forever.
- ³ Give thanks to the Lord of lords:
His love endures forever.
- ⁴ to him who alone does great wonders,
His love endures forever.
- ⁵ who by his understanding made the heavens,
His love endures forever.
- ⁶ who spread out the earth upon the waters,
His love endures forever.
- ⁷ who made the great lights —
His love endures forever.
- ⁸ the sun to govern the day,
His love endures forever.
- ⁹ the moon and stars to govern the night;
His love endures forever.
- ²³ He remembered us in our low estate
His love endures forever.
His love endures forever.

Psalms 136

Martin Rinkart wrote this hymn in 1636-1637, during an outbreak of plague and the 30 Years War. Rinkart, a Lutheran Clergyman in Germany, was the only clergyman to survive the plague. 8000 people died in Eilenburg, including his wife. He took 40-50 funerals a day at the height of the epidemic. And during this time, he wrote these words.

- 1 Now thank we all our God
 with hearts and hands and voices;
 such wonders he has done!
 in him the world rejoices.
 He, from our mother's arms,
 has blessed us on our way
 with countless gifts of love,
 and still is ours today.

- 2 So may this generous God
 through all our life be near us;
 to fill our hearts with joy,
 and with his peace to cheer us:
 to keep us in his grace,
 and guide us when perplexed;
 to free us from all ills
 in this world and the next.

Nun danket alle Gott Martin Rinkart (1586-1649) translated by Catherine Winkworth (1827-1878)

A time of prayer of gratitude

Thank you God for this incredible world full of so much beauty, so much goodness, so many blessings.

Think about the things you are thankful for. Hold your hands in front of you in a fist and count off on your fingers 10 things that come to mind that you are thankful for. Hold your hands open in gratitude at the end.

What are the things that you deeply appreciate?

Who are the people who you love and who love you?

What are your talents – gifts – natural abilities – supernatural gifts?

What has happened in the last few days that you are especially grateful for?

As you think of the things that you are thankful for, where in your life have you been tempted to focus on how life isn't good enough. Where have you been tempted to slip into discontent? Where have you been tempted to complain? Is there anything in those situations that you can be thankful for?

Holy Spirit:

With astonishment,

we see that you renew our strength
constantly.

Allow us not to forget

your presence,

Even in adversity.

And,

in our turn,

we will renew our gratefulness

and we will sing

for your love.

Amen

Give thanks with a grateful heart.

Give thanks to the Holy One.

Give thanks because He's given

Jesus Christ, His Son.

And now let the weak say 'I am strong,'

Let the poor say 'I am rich,'

Because of what the Lord has done for us.

Give thanks.

Henry Smith (born 1952)

Give thanks to the Lord, our God and King
His love endures forever
For He is good, He is above all things
His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise
With a mighty hand and outstretched arm
His love endures forever
For the life that's been reborn
His love endures forever
Sing praise, sing praise
Sing praise, sing praise
Forever, God is faithful
Forever, God is strong
Forever, God is with us
Forever
From the rising to the setting sun
His love endures forever
And by the grace of God, we will carry on
His love endures forever
Chris Tomlin (born 1972)

Well those of you who were able to join the ZOOM social on Wednesday seemed to enjoy the game Humdinger the best.

So for those who could join I'll quickly demonstrate.

(Hum.....ABBA's 'Money, money, money')

Ok I can hear you all shouting at your lap tops, tablets and TVs Don't give up the day job.

Yes it was ABBA reminding us all that money is everything because it's "the rich man's world".

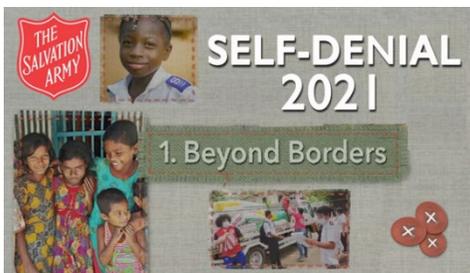
Today is the beginning of Self Denial – that annual period when we in the Salvation Army – and in other churches as Lent approaches – we choose to give something up in order that we can financially support the work of the church.

We normally tell the story of Major Carleton from Penge Corps in South London and how in August, 1886, William Booth delivered a challenge at London’s Exeter Hall, encouraging support so that the Salvation Army could expand its ministries around the world.

Carleton could not match the pledges of the wealthy people in the audiences. He pledged to give up pudding instead, he wrote, “By going without pudding every day for a year, I calculate I can save 50 shillings. This I will do and will remit the amount named as quickly as possible.

William Booth read Carleton’s pledge to the congregation, “There is an idea here,” he remarked. “While we ought not to ask our people to do without pudding for a whole year, I see no reason why we should not ask them to unite in going without something every day for a week and to give the proceeds to help the work.”

So we launch the appeal today and we will share some powerful films made about the work of the Salvation Army overseas. We will start today by looking at the impact that was made from last year’s appeal



Hello and welcome to the first of our films, for this year’s Self-Denial Appeal.

My name is Ben Cotterill and as we live through the various lockdown measures in place across our

territory, I’m going to be looking beyond our borders. For this year’s Self-Denial Appeal I’m going to focus on some of the places we’ve featured in previous appeals and catch up with people we’ve met along the way to find out how they’ve been coping during the pandemic. But first, let’s look at last year’s appeal.

Last year, we travelled to the city of Ouagadougou in Burkina Faso. We met Andre and Nana Togo and saw some of the amazing things that they're doing there. We saw a thriving corps full of enthusiastic new soldiers and we saw how The Salvation Army is supporting people in the local community.

You gave generously once again, thank you so much. Your Self-Denial money is already being put to good use.

And as a little reminder about how Self-Denial works here's Ashley Bowles, who presented our films a couple of years ago.

The money you gave through Self-Denial is used to support the mission of The Salvation Army around the world including our mission partners. The idea of Self-Denial was first introduced in London by William Booth in 1886. He said 'Go without something and give what you would have spent, to The Salvation Army's work'. That was over a 130 years ago. Now nearly every Salvation Army corps, the world over plays its part. So, if you are giving in London, Llanelli, Larne or Lockerbie you are joining with Salvationists in Oslo, Ohio or Ouagadougou which is the capital city of Burkina Faso.

The money is redistributed by International Headquarters to the places that need it most. It funds the background things, the not so exciting but essential things. So that Salvation army staff and volunteers can get on and do what they are good at like the work in Burkina Faso.

Well, as Ashley has reminded us, some of the Self-Denial money you raised goes to our mission partners, but quite a lot goes to other mission support work all over the globe.

Mission support was crucial in enabling the work in Burkina Faso. As the seedling Salvation Army took root and began to flourish. For over a year, I've had the privilege of working for the International Development team at Territorial Headquarters. It's given me a further insight into the international work of The

Salvation Army. And I've been involved in some of the projects which have been funded by Self-Denial.

I live here at William Booth College with my wife Rebecca, and our two children. In a few weeks' time, we'll be moving to a corps in East London. But this time last year, we were waiting for visas to go and work in Pakistan. Like so many other people around the world, our plans were disrupted by the global pandemic.

Of course, lots of people have faced real hardship and while it's been frustrating for us, we are well and healthy so, we are grateful for that. As we adjust to this change for us, and as we think about Self-Denial, I want to find out about how The Salvation Army around the world has adapted. So, for the next five weeks, we'll be revisiting some of the places we've been to before. I'll be asking people how they're coping and what life is like where they are?

I'll be talking to Fozia Columbus in Pakistan, she featured in 2016 when Kerry Coke visited The Salvation Army's Territorial Headquarters in Lahore. I'll be talking to Merlinda Boone from the Philippines. Merlinda features in The Salvation Army's Helping Hand Appeal films from last year, she works in anti-human trafficking. I'll be talking to Richard Bradbury, Richard and his wife Heidi have been serving in Bangladesh for the last two and a half years. They're there with their two children and work at headquarters in Dhaka, the country's capital. But next week, we'll pick up where we left off last year. I'll be talking to Nana Togo, who we saw in Burkina Faso. I'll look forward to seeing you then.

2 Corinthians 8:1-8, 9:6-15

The Collection for the Lord's People

1 And now, brothers and sisters, we want you to know about the grace that God has given the Macedonian churches. 2 In the midst of a very severe trial, their overflowing joy and their extreme poverty welled up in rich generosity. 3 For I testify that they gave as much as they were able, and even beyond their ability. Entirely on their own, 4 they urgently pleaded with us for the privilege of sharing in this service to the Lord's people. 5 And they exceeded our expectations: They gave themselves first of all to the Lord, and then by the will of God also to us. 6

So we urged Titus, just as he had earlier made a beginning, to bring also to completion this act of grace on your part. 7 But since you excel in everything—in faith, in speech, in knowledge, in complete earnestness and in the love we have kindled in you—see that you also excel in this grace of giving.

8 I am not commanding you, but I want to test the sincerity of your love by comparing it with the earnestness of others. 9 For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.

6 Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously. 7 Each of you should give what you have decided in your heart to give, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver. 8 And God is able to bless you abundantly, so that in all things at all times, having all that you need, you will abound in every good work. 12 This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of the Lord’s people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God. 13 Because of the service by which you have proved yourselves, others will praise God for the obedience that accompanies your confession of the gospel of Christ, and for your generosity in sharing with them and with everyone else. 14 And in their prayers for you their hearts will go out to you, because of the surpassing grace God has given you. 15 Thanks be to God for his indescribable gift!

Have you ever been struck with the urge to know more about yourself? You know, underneath the smile you wear, the mask you put on, the clothes you choose – who is the real “you” underneath?

Well if you do, you are certainly not alone. If you look at the number of books, and magazines and entries on the internet – everyone wants to know the same.

Well, here is a very bold claim



In the next 40 minutes together we are going to learn something that will surpass any book or course or programme you could use. We will see that your attitude to giving will tell you everything you need to know about who you are.

Ready



Rank	First name	Surname	Country	Territory	Zone
Lt. Colonels	Nigel and Judith	Schultz	Ghana	Ghana Territory	Africa Zone
Lt. Colonels	Ken & Ann	Hawkins	Kenya	Kenya East	Africa Zone
Majors	David and Janet	Howarth	Nigeria	Nigeria Territory	Africa Zone
Major	Philippa	Chagas	Brazil	Brazil Territory	Americas and Caribbean Zone
Lt. Colonels	Richard and Ann	Borrett	Moldova	Eastern Europe Territory	Europe Zone
Majors	Michael & Ruth	Stannett	Belgium	France and Belgium Territory	Europe Zone
Captain	Mark	Cotterill	Sweden	Sweden & Latvia Territory	Europe Zone
Captain	Rebecca	ZÜnd	Switzerland	Switzerland, Austria and Hungary Territory	Europe Zone
Majors	Geoff and Liz	Chape	Bangladesh	Bangladesh Command	South Asia Zone
Major	Tracey	Palmer	Sri Lanka	Sri Lanka Territory	South Asia Zone
Captains	Richard & Heidie	Bradbury	Bangladesh	Bangladesh Command	South Asia Zone
Majors	Kevin and Pam	Pitt	Australia	Australia Territory	South Pacific and East Asia
Captain	Janine	Skinner	Australia	Australia Territory	South Pacific and East Asia
Envoys	Kevin and Jane	Sandford	Indonesia	Indonesia Territory	South Pacific and East Asia
Majors	David & Diane	Kinsey	Taiwan	Taiwan Region	South Pacific and East Asia
Lt. Colonels	Ced and Lyn	Hills	Indonesia	Indonesia Territory	South Pacific and East Asia

PRAY FOR THE INTERNATIONAL SALVATION ARMY

Pray for those who are suffering in the world through conflict, violence, poverty, natural disasters and who lack basic necessities such as clean water, food and shelter.

Pray for those who struggle to find acceptance in their own communities due to prejudice or ignorance.

Pray for Christian brothers and sisters enduring civil conflict, persecution, poverty and injustice as they seek to serve and use their gifts to build community and care for others.

Pray that we can support our family of God in regular prayer and financial support.

Pray for officers, leaders and missionaries around the world, particularly those ministering to people in remote areas, that they will be devoted to the Gospel and sharing the Good News of Jesus.

=====

There's a story about a mother who wanted to teach her daughter a lesson about giving. She gave the little girl a five pound note and 50 pence piece for the Salvation Army collection.

"Put whichever one you want in the collection plate and keep the other for yourself," she told the girl.

When they were coming out of the hall, the mother asked her daughter which amount she had given. "Well," said the little girl, "I was going to give the five pound note, but just before the collection the officer said that we should all be cheerful givers. I knew I'd be a lot more cheerful if I gave the 50 pence so I did."

So lets go back to the reading. What is it all about.

On the surface it's about supporting a church in trouble – and how their generosity made a difference.

The church is in Jerusalem and it's the second time that Paul has written for help. It may seem strange that the place where Christianity began – the mother church

– was in need,. But two things were happening – firstly there was a famine – the second famine – and secondly the church was being severely persecuted – its members were poor and may well have been facing persecution. Its quite possible that by this time Jewish converts to Christianity could face unemployment, maybe loss of property, we know from the book of Acts that they were selling possessions to look after the poor. Life was hard.

For me, my Jerusalem is Bristol Citadel, what I mean by that is that it was at Bristol Citadel that I gave my life to Jesus. My life changed from being in that place – with God’s p[people – and it has a very powerful place in my heart. If I heard that Bristol citadel was in trouble I would want to do all I could to help. So it was for the new Christians across the world. The Christians in Corinth who Paul was writing to realised their spiritual home was Jerusalem – they realised that if it had not been for the Christians in Jerusalem they would never had heard about Jesus – their lives would never have been transformed - and they wanted to help.

You can see why this verse has such resonance for self-denial – Each week we will hear stories of the struggles other Christians are having across the world – and we will want to help.

But there is so much more to it. If we can understand what Paul is saying it may revolutionise who we are and how we think.

Let me tell you something that happens from time to time to Salvation Army officers that we dread.

Its not unusual when there is a quiz to have a bible question round and the quiz master – someone cruel like Grant - will ask some random, obscure question with the purpose of puzzling people in the group.

And when that happens, the officer knows what will happen next. Everyone in the room is going to turn and look at you and say Lieutenant Carl you are the resident expert, – tell everyone the answer.”

And if you do not know the answer, people look at you with a look that says, “How disappointing. Our officer is not a proper officer. A proper office would know that.

Let me turn the tables – finish this verse.

I will start the verse and when I stop, you say the next words.

Here we go.

“For God so loved the world that He....”.

See how easy that was! Each of you will be receiving a prize with next week’s news letter.

In one of the most important passages in the entire Bible, we come to the easy conclusion that one of the attributes of God is that God is a generous God.

If we want to model the character of God, generous giving must be central in our lives.

So how often do we teach about giving.

Some of you might think we never stop asking for money – I know because I’ve heard you say it.

But just compare ourselves with other churches

In one church I heard of, the minister got into the pulpit and decided to teach on giving. In order to illustrate that there was a problem in the church he asked everyone in the congregation to stand up. He then asked all of those who tithe to sit down and those who did not to remain standing.

Just for clarity – the tithe is a proportion of income. The requirement to give 1/10 of your money to the Lord became clear with Moses at Sinai. But actually, the tithe predates the law of Moses. Abraham (Abram), the great-grandfather of the nation of Israel, offered a tithe after he rescued his nephew Lot and his family, who were taken captive by foreign kings. When Abraham returns with Lot, he meets with the priest – is blessed by the priest Abraham gives him “a tenth of everything”

So the tithe, one tenth, what does that mean? Well if you are on a state pension its about £1000 per year or £75 per month.

And if you are a typical worker doing 38 hours per week it will be £35 per week or just short of £1800 per year

And there are of course some in the corps who have more income than this

Would I get you to stand up if you didn’t pay a 10% tithe?

I would never dream of doing that. I know there would be some angry and some embarrassed faces. Because most people who come to the corps only give 2% or 3% of their income. And some give nothing.

Here is another example. This happens in one of the large churches in Thanet. The pastor - when visiting someone who wants to become a member - asks how much they earn – their salary or income. He will already have a good idea because he knows what job they do, the car they are driving, the clothes they wear and the quality of the biscuits they are feeding him. He then makes it clear that, as a member, they will be expected to give a certain sum of money – calculated by the pastor from the wages.

How does that make you feel?

Is it wrong? I can show you many verses in the scripture that says it is very right. Leviticus 27:30 “A tithe of everything from the land, whether grain from the soil or fruit from the trees, belongs to the LORD; it is holy to the LORD.

Deuteronomy 14:22 Be sure to set aside a tenth of all that your fields produce each year.

Augustine of Hippo, wrote, “Tithes are required as a matter of debt, and he who has been unwilling to give them has been guilty of robbery.

Whosoever, therefore, desires to secure a reward for himself, let him render tithes.”

In other words, we all owe tithes to God, and to not give a tithe is robbing God. Notice how Augustine talks about ten parts, one of which is the tithe. Tithe means “a tenth part (10%).” Anything less than 10% (1%, 2%, 5% 7%) is not a tithe. Anything over is an additional offering.

Well some of you might say that the tithe was only referred to in the Old Testament – and of course you are right.

Jesus never spoke about a tithe.

Instead, he said

Luke 3:11 John answered, “Anyone who has two shirts should share with the one who has none, and anyone who has food should do the same.” = 50%

Luke 19:8a But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, = 50%

Luke 14:33 In the same way, those of you who do not give up everything you have cannot be my disciples. = 100%

Matthew 19:21 Jesus answered, "If you want to be perfect, go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me." = 100%

So why don't we often preach about this at the Salvation Army

Why don't I come round to your houses (or phone you up) and say – you are robbing God because you did not give enough last year in the offering.

Well simply because I have no right to do that – and this is the centre of what Paul is aiming to do.

What you give is who you are and it is only your relationship with God that can change it.

Your giving can never be because you feel pressured – or duty bound – or indeed proud – but only because of your understanding of God

Tim Keller explains it this way. He says we all have surface idols:

What are your idols?

OK, what is an idol. It's anything that we worship, that we love, that we admire, and to go back to the beginning – it is the things that gives our life meaning.

What could they be?

Food, clothes, cars, holidays. It could be another person – maybe your husband or wife or your children. For many it is their work or their hobby.

Tim Keller calls them surface idols because we can see them.

But these surface idols are symptoms of deep idols. He explains:

Some people want lots of money as a way to control their world and life. Such people usually don't spend much money and live very modestly. They keep it all safely saved and invested, so they can feel completely secure in the world.

Others want money for access to the right groups of people – to be friends with the right crowd - social circles and to make themselves beautiful and attractive.

These people do spend their money on themselves in lavish ways. Being noticed by others is such a powerful driving force. I cannot feel loved unless other people approve of me.

Other people want money because it gives them so much power over others. I am powerful because other people will do things for me. And don't think that this is only for people rich enough to employ a cleaner. When you are in a café or restaurant and you expect the waitress to pile up the dirty plates because you are paying the bill – well your hidden idol is a desire to control others.

In every case, money functions as an idol and yet, because of various deep idols, it results in very different patterns of behaviour. (Counterfeit Gods)

Is it wrong to have a nice house, is it wrong to like certain foods, is it wrong to look forward to a holiday?

Of course not – unless getting them and keeping them means that God is not first in our lives.

This is what it all comes down to. In your heart what matters most.

Paul doesn't want to just change our behaviour. He wants to free us from our idols. He's using 'giving' to do a deeper work. He doesn't just want our behaviour to change; he wants our hearts to change.

So in this passage, Paul gives us two guidelines and explains the benefits of giving.

Give Generously

Paul is clear in this passage. We need to give generously. In verse 6 he says, "The point is this: whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows bountifully will also reap bountifully." He uses a farming metaphor.

You can sow in a tight-fisted way. This doesn't make sense, though, when you think about it. If you sow sparingly, you won't get much of a result. It doesn't make sense to try to save on seeds when each seed could produce anywhere from 30 to 100 times the amount of seed that you sow.

The alternative Paul gives is to "sow bountifully." Paul wants them and us to give in a generous, open-handed way that will lead to a bountiful harvest.

We're all on the spectrum between an emerging giver and an extravagant giver. I don't know where you are on this spectrum, but what Paul tells us is simple: keep moving to the right. Make it your aim to become a more generous giver.



Jesus stood aside and watched the people give in the temple -- I think He still does that. The rich came in and gave large gifts, but the poor widow came and put in her two mites. The Lord said she had cast in more than they all.

She gave of her poverty and she gave all that she had.

If you measured the value of those little coppers against the riches of that temple or the gifts from the rich, they were nothing.

(Luke 21:3-4).

But this is not the point – it is what it cost the giver. The widow gave – and it would have hurt her. She would have gone without.

Giving generously must mean that we notice it. It will affect what we have this week.

The story is told of a church that was attempting to raise money for a restoration. One member of the church was a rich man who had at least £50 000 of savings. He was also known to be mean.

The minister came to see him and asked, "Brother, how much are you going to give for the new church?" The man replied, "Oh, I guess I'll be able to put in the widow's mite." The minister called out in the next meeting, "Brothers and sisters, we have all the money we need. This brother is going to give fifty thousand pounds." The man was amazed. "I didn't say I would give fifty thousand pounds; I said I would give the widow's mite." The deacon replied, "Well, she gave her all, and I thought that is what you meant to give!"

CS Lewis in Mere Christianity wrote

"I do not believe one can settle how much we ought to give. I am afraid the only safe rule is to give more than we can spare. In other words, if our expenditure on comforts, luxuries, amusements, etc, is up to the standard common among those

with the same income as our own, we are probably giving away too little. If our offerings (for us our cartridge) does not at all pinch or hamper us, I should say they are too small. There ought to be things we should like to do and cannot do because our giving to God excludes them.”

But here’s the second guideline that Paul gives us.

Give Cheerfully

“Each one must give as he has decided in his heart, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver” (2 Corinthians 9:7)

You would think that it’s enough to give generously, but it’s not. Paul also wants us to give cheerfully as well. Everyone should give the amount they’ve decided in their own heart.

What you give is something you need to work out with the Holy Spirit. It’s not to be a public decision, it is not because you feel pressure from the Salvation Army and it definitely not to allow you to show others how generous you are.

However much you decide to give, two things should not be true about your motives:

It shouldn’t be motivated by sad feelings. The word “reluctantly” refers to sad or distressed giving, in contrast to happy giving. Whatever you give should not be motivated by negative feelings.

It shouldn’t be motivated by external pressure. We’ve been there: we know what it’s like to have someone put pressure on us to give.

God doesn’t want you to give out of guilt or pressure. How should we give then? Deuteronomy 15:10 says,

“You shall give to him freely, and your heart shall not be grudging when you give to him, because for this the LORD your God will bless you in all your work and in all that you undertake.” Here, Paul says, “God loves a cheerful giver.”

Paul teaches us that there are two ways to fail at giving.

If you give generously but not joyfully, you’ve given the wrong way.

If you’re joyful but not generous, you’ve failed.

God wants us to give at the intersection of generosity and joy. He wants your generosity, and he wants your joy. He wants you to be cheerful and he wants you to be obedient.

Have you discovered this? If you haven't, you're missing out. Giving at the crossroads of generosity and cheerfulness is one of the greatest privileges of life, and it comes with some amazing benefits.

Our entire lives should be lived in sacrificial obedience, including our giving because we are operating out of the deep conviction that whatever we give pales in comparison to what we are receiving in Christ.

Is this a call to live in total poverty? Of course not.

Is this a call to feel guilty about having nice things to enjoy? No.

Is this a call to feel guilty if our nice things cause the people of God not to support the work of God – absolutely.

This is the very reason why it's called self denial

The idea of denying ourselves something is that it causes us to give up things in order to give away things. That is true of time and money but we have a much harder time doing that when it comes to money, don't we?

Richard J. Foster says

Giving with glad and generous hearts has a way of routing out the tough old miser within us. Just the very act of letting go of money, or some other treasure, does something within us. It destroys the demon greed.

It's interesting how Paul concludes this section. "Thanks be to God for his inexpressible gift!" (2 Corinthians 9:15)

So what are the gifts Paul is talking about

Well certainly it is the gift of generosity

And its also the gift of cheerfulness

Both will come when we allow God to be the only and proper object of our worship.

But underlying that gift is an even greater gift: the gift of a generous Saviour who gave his life for us.

Paul doesn't end with our generosity. He ends with the generosity of Jesus. His generosity transforms us so that we become a generous people.

I want you to experience this! I want you to become a generous, cheerful giver so that you're blessed and so that you're a blessing to others. I want you to experience the exhilaration of cheerful generosity.

If you have Jesus, you don't need anything more to start. When Hudson Taylor opened a bank account for the China Inland Mission, the application form asked for an asset list. Taylor wrote the following as the sum total of his assets: "Ten pounds and all the promises of God."

You have everything you need to be a generous, cheerful giver. So let's get started.

A final song

- 1 When I survey the wondrous cross
 On which the Prince of Glory died,
 My richest gain I count but loss,
 And pour contempt on all my pride.

- 2 See from His head, His hands, His feet,
 Sorrow and love flow mingled down;
 Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
 Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

 Oh, the wonderful cross,
 Oh, the wonderful cross
 Bids me come and die and find
 That I may truly live.
 Oh, the wonderful cross,
 Oh, the wonderful cross,
 All who gather here by grace
 Draw near and bless Your name.

3 Were the whole realm of nature mine,
 That were an offering far too small.
 Love so amazing, so divine
 Demands my soul, my life, my all.

Verses: Isaac Watts (1674-1748)

Refrain: Chris Tomlin (born 1972)

Benediction

(To the tune of Edelweiss)

1 May the Lord, mighty God,
bless and keep you forever;
grant you peace, perfect peace,
courage in every endeavour.

2 Lift up your eyes and see God's face,
full of grace forever;
may the Lord, mighty God,
bless and keep you forever.

Go to the outcast and the grieving,
and speak the word of life and hope.
Do not fear, but trust in God's word.
Watch for the Lord with eager expectation,
and be generous with all God has given you.

And may God respond to your every cry with mercy;
May Christ Jesus take you by the hand and lift you to life;
and may the Holy Spirit build you up in faith, in speech,
.....in knowledge, in passion and in love.

We go in peace to love and serve the Lord,
.....In the name of Christ. Amen.

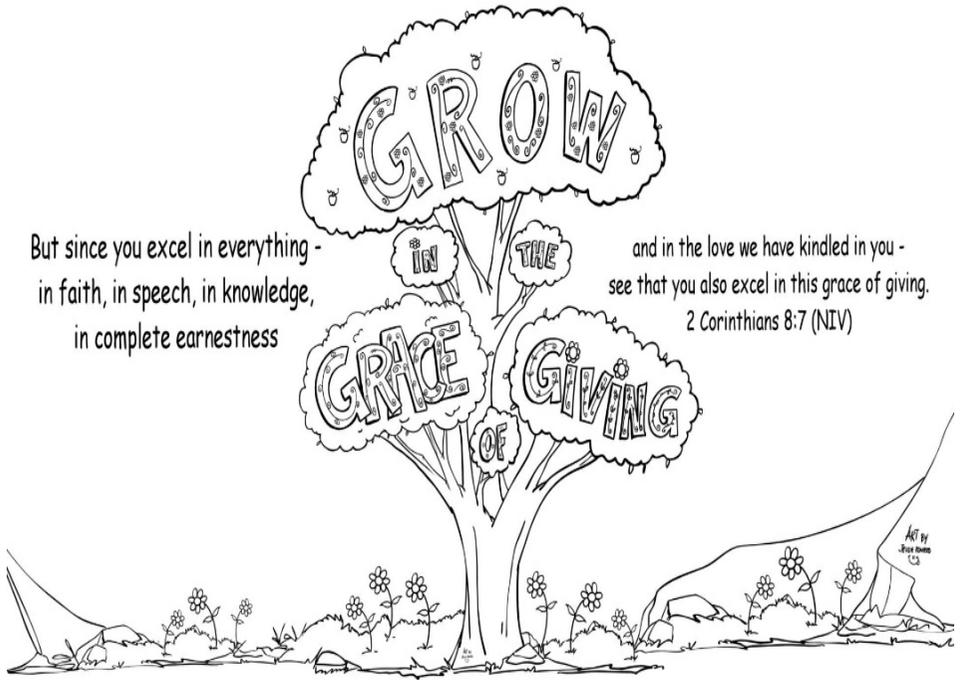
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ABUNDANT
BEYOND ABILITY
CHEERFUL
CONFIDENCE
DESIRE
EAGER
ENRICHED
ENTHUSIASTIC
EXCEEDED
EXPECTATION

GAVE FIRST TO THE
LORD
GAVE MUCH
GOD'S BLESSING
GRACE
GRACE OF GIVING.
HEARTFELT
HONOUR TO CHRIST
INDESCRIBABLE GIFT
OVERFLOWING JOY

PLENTY
PRAISING GOD
PRIVILEGE
RICH GENEROSITY
SCATTERED
SHARING
SINCERE LOVE.
THANKSGIVING
WILLING
ZEALOUS



THE SALVATION ARMY

OUR SELF-DENIAL 2021
IS REBUILDING HOPE AND RESILIENCE TOGETHER

'For I know the plans I have for you, "declares the Lord," plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future.' Jeremiah 29:11 (NIV)

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You will receive your envelopes next week.
The Self Denial Altar Service is Sunday 7th March