

# DISCOVERY

**Discipling Programme for Young People**

**Course B**



**INTERNATIONAL HEADQUARTERS  
101 QUEEN VICTORIA STREET, LONDON EC4P 4EP**

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**This course covers biblical study of the Gospels, studies in Christian living and biographies of heroes of the faith. It has been prepared for the International Literature Programme by Colonel Derek Elvin**

**Artwork by Berni Georges  
Typeset by THQ Print and Design Unit**

## INTRODUCTION

Those of you who have completed the first year of this course will know that we have had four strands to our studies. We have been looking at the life and teaching of Jesus in the Gospels, thinking about Christian living through a book called *Never the Same Again*, learning about great Salvationists in a book called *Heroes of the Faith* and undertaking some local practical work.

We want to welcome those who are beginning their studies with this book. At the start of this year we shall continue the pattern exactly as in the first year but gradually some new work will be introduced. When we have completed our study of the Gospels we shall look at the exciting stories of the growth of the Church in *Acts of the Apostles*. Later we shall study the main messages of some of the letters in the New Testament. Our 'Christian Living' series will move on to concentrate on evangelism using a book called *Nothing Without Love*. Our series on Salvationism will look at some of the special characteristics of our Movement. There will be more opportunities for local practical work which we hope you will enjoy.

All this is intended to help you grow as a young Christian. It is about learning new truths and ideas but if this is all that happens we will not have achieved our full purpose. We want you to come to know Jesus better and to be determined to live as a follower of Christ. When your mind is informed and your emotions are stirred then you will be ready to make a clear decision about your life as a Christian in the 21st century.



Each week's programme has a suggested subject for your prayers. This is indicated by this symbol.



There is also a subject for discussion provided each week. This will allow you to share your ideas with your leader and friends. This is indicated by this symbol.



The passages from the Bible or the textbooks are shown by this symbol. You should make sure you read the passages carefully, and that you understand them.



There are two suggested questions for each lesson. The Standard grade is indicated by this symbol.



For those who would like to try a more demanding question, you will find this marked by this symbol. You should seek the advice of your leader about which set of questions to answer.



Luke 20:1–40, 21:1–38



Pray that God will give you the wisdom to answer wisely when other people try to trap you and challenge your faith.



It has been said that the Church remains pure when it is persecuted but becomes corrupt when it is popular. How should we react when we face opposition?

**Month 1  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**‘Teaching in  
Jerusalem’**

### **Trying to trap Jesus (Luke 20:1–8, 19–40)**

The welcome that Jesus received from the great crowds of people when he entered Jerusalem on Palm Sunday posed a serious threat to the Jewish leaders. They did not like his teaching and were concerned because the people believed in him. But they did not want trouble at the Passover festival so they tried to find a way to trap Jesus. They wanted to make him say something that would either disappoint the crowds or get him into trouble with the Jewish courts and the Roman rulers. They came up with a series of clever questions designed to cause trouble for Jesus.

### **Where does your authority come from? (Luke 20:1–8)**

The Jewish leaders knew that Jesus had great power over people. His words and his actions proved that. He had shown great authority when he threw the dishonest traders out of the Temple. They had seen him heal diseases by a word of command. His teaching was direct and powerful. It did not depend on quotations from older teachers. Where did this power come from? If this had been a sincere question then Jesus might have answered them.

It was a trap. If Jesus publicly claimed to be the Messiah – the Christ – then the Jewish leaders would accuse him of blasphemy. To deny it would be untruthful. This was not the moment for Jesus to declare his Messiahship so he responded by asking about the authority of John the Baptist. Many of the people believed that John was God’s messenger so the authorities dared not deny that his authority was divine. Their unwillingness to commit themselves gave Jesus a reason to wait until later before revealing the source of his authority.

**Caesar or God? (Luke 20:19–26)**

Many of the Jews protested about paying a tax to the Roman Caesar. ‘We have no king but God,’ they said. This trick question to Jesus could have got him into trouble with the Romans if he agreed with the protestors and told them not to pay their taxes. On the other hand some of the Jewish leaders would oppose him if he supported the tax.

Jesus’ answer was exactly right. He asked for a coin to be brought. It had Caesar’s head imprinted on it. It belonged to the Roman emperor. If we belong to and benefit from a nation then we owe a loyalty and have responsibilities to it. Christians should be good citizens and pay their taxes. Jesus said we have to give Caesar what belongs to him. But a Christian’s first loyalty is to God. We must be loyal to God before we are loyal to any king. We must give to God what belongs to him. That really is everything that we possess. Sometimes, like the early Christians (Acts 4:19), we have to obey God rather than man. This is where our ultimate loyalty lies.

**Is there a Heaven? (Luke 20:27–40)**

This question was an attempt to make Jesus take sides either with the Pharisees who believed in an afterlife or with the Sadducees (the Jewish ruling class) who did not. The silly riddle about a woman who had been married seven times was an attempt to make Jesus look foolish.

His answer showed that he was sure of Heaven but that he knew it would be a very different place to this earth and that human relationships would be changed in the light of the presence of Almighty God. Arguments like those posed by the Sadducees simply would not matter. Jesus would not be trapped into these trivial disputes.

**The greatest gift (Luke 21:1–4)**

When the trick questions had been answered Jesus went to the Temple. In contrast to the clever but dishonest critics he saw real religion in the generous giving of a poor woman who put all the money she had into the offering plates. It was the spirit of her gift that made it great. Just as she had given her all, Jesus would in a few days give everything – even his life – for the salvation of the world.

**Wicked tenants (Luke 20:9–19)**

This story is so plain that it made Jesus’ enemies furious. He said that the Jewish leaders were like the tenants in the story. They had rejected the prophets (the servants in the story) and they were about to reject the son (Jesus himself). For this reason God would throw them out and offer the vineyard (his Kingdom) to

others (those who believed in Jesus). Within a few days they would fulfil their part of the story and have Jesus crucified. What a tragedy that they reacted with anger to this story and not with repentance!

### **Signs of the times (Luke 21:5–38)**

This teaching, given to the disciples, puzzled some early-day Christians. They speculated that the ‘signs’ given here meant that Jesus was returning on a date in their lifetime. Then they were disappointed when it did not happen. So what does this passage mean?

Jesus knew that his followers would experience great persecution and he wanted them to understand that, even in times of great trouble, God was still in control. When life for them was hardest this would be a sign that God was still at work and that he would finally win the victory. The early Christians actually experienced a great upheaval when Jerusalem was destroyed in AD 70. This was at about the time when this Gospel was written and these verses accurately describe what happened then. Perhaps this made Luke think that Jesus was coming back soon. Jesus himself taught that, although we might read from the signs that the coming of the Kingdom of God is near (verse 31), no one actually knows when this will happen (Acts 1:6–7). We should not follow those who say, ‘The time is near’ (verse 8). Jesus taught that Christians must always be watching and praying for the final coming of God’s Kingdom (verse 36). His promise is that he will return in God’s good time.



What were the three trick questions asked by the Jewish leaders? How did Jesus avoid the traps they set for him?



Why should Christians be unafraid of persecution?



Luke 22:1–34, John 13:1–35



This may be a good time to share a time of fellowship – a ‘love feast’ – remembering the sacrifice of Jesus for us.



Jesus said, ‘I am among you as one who serves’ (Luke 22:27). How should Christians serve each other and the wider world around them?

**Month 1  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**‘The farewell  
meeting’**

### **A last meal together (Luke 22:7–16)**

The Jews remembered their escape from slavery in Egypt every year at Passover time. They shared a family meal and dressed as if they were ready to leave in a hurry, as their ancestors did before them. You can read the original story in Exodus 12. Jesus wanted to share this special meal with his disciples before he was arrested. He made what seem like secret arrangements and sent Peter and John ahead to prepare for the Passover meal. When they sat down to eat Jesus told them that this would be their last meal together. The next time they shared it would be when the new Kingdom of God had come.

### **New signs (Luke 22:17–20, John 13:1–17)**

The disciples remembered two things that Jesus did at this special meal. He taught them to be humble by taking the place of a servant and washing their feet. This task would normally be done by the least important person in the room. None of the disciples wanted that job. Jesus said that they must always be ready to serve each other humbly and should be willing to wash each other’s feet (John 13:1–17).

He also shared bread and wine with them, saying that these represented his body and blood which he was giving for them and for all the world. They should always remember this when they shared a meal (Luke 22:17–20).

Some Christian churches have made the washing of feet a ceremony, and most churches have always had a ceremony which remembers the sharing of the bread and wine. How it is done and what it means has often been disputed within the Christian Church. The most important thing to remember is that Jesus gave his

life in love for us. When we accept this gift we should learn to love and serve each other. These truths are more important than the ceremonies which grew up around them.

### **Trouble in the group (Luke 22:1–6, 21–34)**

Even before this final meal Judas had made arrangements to betray Jesus to the Jewish leaders. We have already seen how they hated and feared the message of Jesus. Because he was so popular they could not just arrest him in front of the crowds. They needed someone who could help them to do this secretly. Judas agreed to be their guide. He left the meal table and went about his dreadful work.

### **Why did Judas do it?**

We do not know why Judas did this. He may have been greedy for money. Perhaps he was disappointed that Jesus did not want to be a military leader and believed he could force him to take action on behalf of the nation of Israel. There is no doubt that he bitterly regretted his betrayal later (Matthew 27:3–10). However, even though he had spent three years in close company with Jesus he still betrayed him.

### **What about the other disciples?**

Jesus knew that one of his friends would betray him. When he told the other disciples they found this hard to believe and began to argue about who it would be. Soon they were talking about which of them was the greatest. This must have made Jesus both sad and angry.

Peter was one of those who had a lot to say. Jesus told him that Satan was causing the trouble and that this would be a testing time for all of them. Jesus promised to pray for Peter that his faith would not fail. Even though Peter, the strong man, protested that he was willing to go to prison or to die with Jesus, his impetuous nature soon led him into trouble. Before the night was over he would deny his Lord and all the others would run away.



Imagine you were one of the disciples at the last supper. How did you feel when Jesus came to wash your feet?



Compare the reactions of Judas, Peter and the other disciples at the last supper. How did Jesus respond?



*Never the Same Again* pages 109–117



Pray for that ‘holy discontent’ (page 111) which makes you dissatisfied with your own spiritual experience and helps you to seek for holiness.



Why do we need statements of doctrine? Discuss the sentence on page 112: ‘Doctrinal formulas are not fences to keep truth locked in, but boundary lines to mark the divide between truth and heresy.’

**Month 1  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living**

**‘Will I ever be  
a saint?’**

### **Introduction**

This week’s study is the first of two introducing the idea of holiness. This doctrine has always been an important part of Salvation Army teaching but many young people have found it hard to understand. As you read the notes we hope that the simple basis of living a life that pleases our Heavenly Father will seem attractive and desirable. This could be a very important lesson. It might even change your life. Now turn to *Never the Same Again* page 109.



Find and record at least 10 of the 55 times that Christians are called ‘saints’ in the New Testament (see page 113). Does this mean that all Christians are saints?



Consider the paragraphs on page 116. Why do you think that many Christians need to make a definite start to the process of becoming holy in their living after they are saved?



*Heroes of the Faith* Page 35



Make Bramwell's song, 'Come in, my Lord, come in', the subject of your prayers.



Why did William tell his son that the people in wicked drinking places were those he should bring to Christ? Should Christians work to save 'the worst'?

### Introduction

Bramwell Booth was the oldest son of William and Catherine, whose stories we have already read. He began to work with his parents at a very young age and eventually succeeded his father as the second General of The Salvation Army. His story is one of taking risks with his reputation for the sake of the people who needed his help. His courage when still a young man can inspire us to do great things for Christ. Read his story in *Heroes of the Faith* page 35.



In your own words tell the story of Bramwell's campaign to raise the 'age of consent' and his appearance in court.



'Every land is my fatherland because every land is my Father's,' wrote Bramwell Booth. Discuss how far Christians should be patriotic.

**Month 1  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Studies**

**'Bramwell  
Booth -  
Campaigner  
for Truth and  
Justice'**



John 14–17



Pray for the promised presence of the Holy Spirit with you (John 14:26).  
Pray that he will teach you all that you need to know about being a follower of Jesus.



Is it still true that ‘the world’ hates people who try to live true Christian lives (John 15:18)?

**Month 2  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**‘Comfort and  
challenge’**

### **Jesus speaks to his friends**

These wonderful chapters of John’s Gospel record the final conversation between Jesus and his disciples before the world-changing events of the crucifixion and resurrection. They were a time of calm before the storm. The first conversation took place in the room where they had shared the farewell meal. Then it seems that they left the room and walked in the quietness of the evening towards Gethsemane. Jesus continued to talk to them as they walked together. No wonder that John remembered these words so clearly many years after the event. There are many great truths in these chapters that have been studied by Christians over the centuries. We can consider only a few basic points in this lesson.

#### **‘Trust me’ (John 14:1–14)**

The first great lesson that Jesus taught was the need to believe in him even in the most difficult circumstances. They could follow him without fear for he was the Way. They could believe him for he was Truth. They need not fear death because he was Life and had promised them a place in Heaven. They did not need any more miraculous signs because they had seen God at work through Jesus. They would need to regain their trust in Jesus after they all ran away in Gethsemane.

#### **‘I will send the Holy Spirit’ (John 14:15–30, 16:5–16)**

The great promise to the disciples was that when Jesus was no longer with them in human form, God would send the Holy Spirit to be with them always. He would teach them all that they needed to know, strengthen them when they felt weak and come alongside them when they needed guidance and direction. The

presence of the Holy Spirit would give them a sense of peace and would take away their fear. The Holy Spirit would be at work in the hearts of people that they met to prepare them for the message of the gospel. He would bring glory to Jesus and use them to be witnesses.

**‘You must keep close to me’ (John 15:1–17)**

Jesus used the story of a vine and its branches to teach the importance of the relationship between the disciples and himself. If they were separated from him they would wither and die but if they stayed united with him they would be fruitful. Sometimes it would be necessary for there to be some painful pruning but this would be done to ensure greater fruitfulness. The disciples had to learn to stay in the love of Jesus by being obedient to him. They would then learn to love each other. This would be the way to joyful living.

**‘You must expect trouble’ (John 15:18–16:4)**

Soon they would see Jesus arrested, beaten and killed. Jesus told the disciples that wicked people would also attack them. If they did this to the Master they would also do it to the servants. This would happen because Jesus’ disciples did not share the values and principles of the world around them. Jesus had chosen them to be separate from the world. When trouble happened they were to continue to speak for Jesus whatever it cost them.

**‘Your sadness will turn to joy’ (John 16:17–33)**

Jesus knew that his friends would be sad when he was killed but he promised them that this grief would soon turn to joy. Just like a mother forgets the pain of childbirth because she is so pleased to see her baby so the disciples would forget their sorrow when they saw the risen Jesus. They might continue to have trouble but they could rejoice because they knew that Jesus had overcome all the powers of evil in the world.

**The great prayer (John 17)**

This long period of teaching concluded with a most wonderful prayer. Jesus first prayed for himself, then for his disciples and then for all the people who would believe through them. He asked that God would protect them from all the evil forces that would attack them. He did not ask God to take them out of the world but that they would be saved from evil while they remained in it. Jesus also prayed for the unity of those who would come to believe in him. This prayer means that Jesus prayed for every one of us! Because the prayer concentrates so much on the needs of other people it has been called ‘Jesus’ high priestly prayer’. He intercedes for all of us to his Father God.



How did Jesus help his disciples to be prepared for his arrest and crucifixion?



What does it mean for a Christian to 'be fruitful' (15:2, 5, 8)? Compare with Galatians 5:22–23.



Matthew 26:26–27:31



Was it for sins that I have done  
He suffered on the tree?  
Amazing pity, grace unknown,  
And love beyond degree!

Dear Saviour, I can ne'er repay  
The debt of love I owe!  
Here, Lord, I give myself away;  
'Tis all that I can do.

*Isaac Watts*

**Month 2  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**'Failing  
followers and  
unjust judges'**



Why did so many people work together to ensure that Jesus was crucified? Do we still try to silence what is true and good?

**Agony in the garden (Matthew 26:36–46)**

The walk through the quiet night ended at Gethsemane, a garden where Jesus loved to pray. He knew exactly what was going to happen and this was the point when he had to make up his mind to go through with the terrible ordeal that faced him. It was the critical moment and Jesus was in agony over this decision. He asked his Father in prayer if there was any other way to accomplish the divine purpose of his coming to earth. The crucial decision was made when Jesus was able to say to his Heavenly Father, 'Not my will, but yours be done' (Luke 22:42). We can glimpse what this meant to him by the sweat that fell like great drops of blood from him. From this point on, the way led inevitably to Calvary.

**Sleeping disciples**

Despite all that Jesus had said to them the disciples did not understand the significance of the moment. While Jesus prayed in agony they fell asleep. They could not watch with him for even this short period of time. Jesus must have been disappointed with his friends for their lack of care.

**Judas betrays Jesus (Matthew 26:47–56)**

Now came the moment of Jesus' arrest. The soldiers of the High Priest led by Judas found Jesus in the garden and arrested him. At first there was a fight and

some of the disciples tried to defend Jesus with swords but he would not let them fight and healed a soldier who had been wounded. The signal that Judas gave was a kiss that he offered Jesus. This was the moment of betrayal. Nothing that Judas could do after this would put it right.

### **Peter disowns Jesus (Matthew 26:69–75)**

Then it seems that all the disciples ran away as Jesus was taken to the house of the High Priest. The only one who followed was Peter. When he was challenged, first by a servant girl and then twice more by others, he denied that he had ever known Jesus. He was so afraid that the confident boast that he would never deny Jesus was soon forgotten. Then he heard the cock give its morning call. Jesus looked at Peter and he remembered what he had said to him: 'Before the cock crows, you will disown me three times.' His failure made him cry tears of regret. At this moment he was little better than Judas but at least he had followed Jesus to the court and now he repented of his failure.

### **The soldiers mock Jesus (Luke 22:63–65, Matthew 27:27–31)**

Jesus was an easy target for the men who were guarding him. They could have fun at his expense and insults and brutality quickly followed. During the next hours Jesus experienced the cruelty of both Jewish and Roman leaders and soldiers but never retaliated or complained. He asked God to forgive those who mistreated him because they did not understand what they were doing.

### **The illegal trials**

There were five attempts to put Jesus on trial but none of them was legal.

First he was questioned by a former High Priest called Annas in the middle of the night (John 18:12–14, 19–24). No trials were legal at this hour.

Then he was taken before a meeting of the Jewish council led by Caiaphas, the current High Priest (Matthew 26:57–67). When they tried to find witnesses to accuse Jesus of breaking the Jewish law they could not find any testimonies that would condemn him. So the High Priest asked Jesus himself if he was the Christ. This was the moment to declare it to the world and Jesus did so. Caiaphas accused Jesus of blasphemy but, of course, the claim that Jesus made was true.

The third trial was before Pilate, the Roman governor (Luke 23:15). Blasphemy was not an offence which the Romans recognised, so the Jews had to try to persuade Pilate that Jesus claimed to be a king who would threaten the Roman empire. It does not seem that Pilate ever thought that Jesus was guilty of any charge but, because he was weak, he gave in to the demands of the Jewish leaders.

Luke 23:6–12 says that Pilate sent Jesus to Herod because he came from Galilee but Herod only tried to make Jesus perform a miracle for him and then abused him and sent him back to Pilate.

Finally (Matthew 27:11–26), Pilate literally washed his hands of the whole business, released the criminal Barabbas and handed Jesus over to be crucified.

### **Who was to blame?**

These detailed accounts are written to show us that everyone involved in the killing of Jesus had a share of the blame. Judas betrayed him. The disciples fell asleep and then ran away. Peter denied him. The priests falsely accused him. Pilate was too weak to act with justice. Herod only played with him. The crowd called for Barabbas and demanded that Jesus was crucified. All were guilty of the killing of Jesus. It was ordinary people who did it. What would we have done if we had been there? It was for the sins of all the world, and ours, that Jesus died.



Why did Peter say he didn't know Jesus when the girl in the courtyard asked him?



Why was the killing of Jesus an illegal act?



*Never the Same again* Pages 117–123



Use the section called *Asking God to Make you Holy* (pages 122–123) as your prayer.



‘So many people have a mistaken notion of what holiness involves’ (page 121). What do you think is involved in being holy?

### **Introduction**

We continue our studies on the subject of holiness. It is defined as ‘Christ in you’. This is a practical study using the many Bible references to show how we can make holiness work out in our lives. Please read pages 117 to 123 of *Never the Same Again* very carefully and look up the references given.



Choose one of the Bible verses on pages 118–119 and say how this would encourage you to live a holy life.



‘Holiness is Christ in you’ (page 118). Many Christian young people wear a wristband with the letters WWJD on it. It stands for ‘What Would Jesus Do?’ Describe a day in your life where this question needed to be answered.

**Month 2  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living**

**‘Will I ever be  
a saint?’**



*Heroes of the Faith* Page 125



Pray for the schools, clinics and children's homes which The Salvation Army has in many countries of the world.



What special qualities are needed to work in a different culture to your own?

### Introduction

This story is more modern than the other 'Hero' stories in the book. Leah Davids is still alive and living in retirement in Australia. She was one of a number of dedicated people who brought the ministry of The Salvation Army to the poorest country in the Americas. It shows how someone from quite a difficult background found Jesus for herself and then used her life to serve others. Her exciting story is found in *Heroes of the Faith* pages 125–136.



In your own words tell the story of how Leah Davids became a Salvationist.



Leah Davids's work in Haiti was as a 'servant leader'. What examples of this kind of work can you find in the story?

**Month 2  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Studies**

**'Leah Davids –  
An Australian  
in Haiti'**



Luke 23:26-56



‘Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
Oh! Sometimes it causes me to tremble,  
tremble, tremble.

Were you there when they crucified my Lord?  
This old ‘spiritual’ helps us to identify with  
Jesus’ suffering and to thank him for what he  
accomplished on the Cross for us.



Why is ‘Good Friday’ the right name for this  
important day?

**Month 3  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**‘Crucified,  
dead and  
buried’**

(This title is taken from the  
Apostles’ Creed – one of  
the earliest statements of  
the Christian Faith)

**Good Friday?**

We call this day ‘Good Friday’ but to the people who were there at the time it must have seemed to be a dreadful day. We can see that the death of Jesus was followed by his resurrection and victory over death and that this victory made our salvation possible. That turned a dreadful day into ‘Good Friday’.

**The road to Calvary (Luke 23:26)**

It began with a long march to Calvary. When a criminal was to be crucified the Romans would march him by the longest route to the place of execution. This was to warn any others not to commit the same offence. The criminal had to carry the cross-piece on which he would be hung. Jesus was so weak from the beatings he had suffered that before the march had gone far he collapsed under the weight of his burden. So the soldiers compelled a stranger to carry the cross.

The stranger’s name was Simon and he came from a place in North Africa. No doubt he had saved for many years to attend the Passover in Jerusalem and now he was compelled to carry a cross for someone about to be executed. He may have resented the task but Mark’s Gospel (15:21) describes him as the father of Alexander and Rufus, who were obviously known to the early Christians. It seems as though Simon may have become a Christian himself after carrying Jesus’ cross. What was a burden became a blessing.

**‘Don’t cry for me’ (Luke 23:27–31)**

Among the crowd were women who were weeping and wailing. Some may have been genuinely sorry for Jesus but others were professional mourners.

Jesus himself had wept over Jerusalem but he did not want insincere tears for his own situation. They should weep for themselves and their children, Jesus said. In a few years their city would be destroyed and the prophecies of Hosea would be fulfilled.

**Calvary**

The place where Jesus was to be killed was called ‘Golgotha’ in Aramaic and ‘Calvary’ in Latin. Both names mean ‘the place of a skull’ and it was probably a hill shaped like a human head. Here, in this prominent place, with crowds of people watching, Jesus was fastened to the cross and then the cross was raised to a vertical position. The pain was intense and the position of the body meant that the sufferer could not find any comfort. It was a most cruel way for anyone to die. The jeers of the crowd only made the suffering worse.

**‘Save yourself’ (Luke 23:35–37)**

Jesus had often performed miracles to help other people. He had even raised some from death. No doubt many people did not believe in his miraculous powers and so the crowds and the soldiers taunted Jesus with the idea that he could save himself. Jesus could have saved himself at Gethsemane, or defended himself before Pilate. He chose not to do so because he was willing to pay the full price for human sins. It was not that he was unable to save himself, it was that he was unwilling to do so. William Booth once said that the crowds would have believed Jesus if he had come down from the cross but we believe him because he stayed there.

**Two thieves (Luke 23:32, 39–43)**

There is a contrast between the attitudes of the two thieves who were being crucified with Jesus. One mocked Jesus just like the crowds but the other seemed to have realised that Jesus was the Messiah. He knew that they deserved to die but that it was different for Jesus. His request to be remembered when Jesus came as King produced the wonderful promise that he would be in paradise, the place of true and lasting happiness, with Jesus that very day. If such a promise could be given to a dying criminal then there is hope for all people.

**‘Father Forgive’ (Luke 23:34)**

The four Gospels record seven sayings of Jesus from the Cross. Each of them has an important meaning. This ‘word’ showed the unchanging love of Jesus for even the worst of people. Instead of cursing those who were torturing him, Jesus asked

God to forgive them. They did not realise that they were doing this to the Son of God. This saying shows us that God is willing to forgive all who sin if they will only turn to him.

#### **A cry of despair? (Matthew 27:46)**

Matthew and Mark's Gospels record Jesus as crying out, 'My God, why have you forsaken me?' This verse from Psalm 22 may have expressed the loneliness of Jesus as he carried the weight of all the sins of the world. But it may well have been that Jesus recited the whole psalm. Although it begins with this note of despair it ends with a note of victory. Luke says that Jesus prayed, 'Into your hands I commit my spirit' – a bedtime prayer of trust – and John says that Jesus cried out, 'It is finished' (accomplished), a note of triumph.

#### **The soldier's verdict (Luke 23:47)**

Experienced Roman soldiers had seen many executions. They had become hardened to this cruel punishment and even gambled for the clothes of the dying men. But when the soldier in charge of the event saw how Jesus had behaved he was truly moved. Although we may not think that he understood who Jesus truly was, he recognised that here was someone very special – a true son of God.

#### **Signs and wonders (Luke 23:44–45)**

From noon on that day until three in the afternoon there was a period of darkness. Jesus died at three o'clock and Matthew says that there were earth tremors and that the curtain in the Temple, which prevented the people from seeing the Holy of Holies, was ripped from top to bottom. This suggested that the way to God was now open for everyone. These signs showed the importance that God attached to this day which changed the history of the whole world.

#### **The burial (Luke 23:49–56)**

The Romans would often leave the bodies of crucified people hanging for several days. However, they were willing for a wealthy secret follower of Jesus to bury him. It had to be done hurriedly because it was almost time for the Passover Sabbath day. Joseph of Arimathea was a member of the Jewish Sanhedrin and he placed the body of Jesus in a newly created rock tomb. There was no time to undertake the anointing rituals and the women who followed Jesus agreed to return on the Sunday morning to perform this last loving duty for Jesus.



Imagine you were Simon of Cyrene and describe how carrying the Cross of Jesus altered your life.



Find all seven 'words from the Cross' from the various Gospels and consider what Jesus meant when he used them.



Luke 24, John 20–21



‘Jesus, stand among us  
In thy risen power;  
Let this time of worship  
Be a hallowed hour.’



If you had been one of the disciples on the first Easter Day would you have believed it when the women told you that Jesus was alive? What would you have needed to convince you?

**Month 3  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
The Gospels**

**‘Hallelujah!  
Christ arose’**

### **It is true!**

On the first Easter Day Jesus Christ rose from the dead. He had been crucified on the Friday. Without any doubt he was dead by that evening. His body was laid in a sealed grave and guarded by soldiers. But he was alive again on Sunday morning. No one saw it happen but there can be no mistake. His friends first thought that his body had been stolen but a dead body was never found. Gradually, in many different places and at different times these friends met the living Jesus again. All of them became convinced of his living power. He told them that his death and resurrection was the heart of God’s plan to save the world. The accounts of the resurrection are very simple and honest. This makes it easy for us to accept them as true.

### **The empty tomb (Luke 24:1–12)**

All the Gospels say that a group of women went to the tomb where Jesus had been placed very early on the Sunday morning. They went to anoint his dead body. When they got there they found the great stone which acted as a seal had been rolled away. Inside the grave was empty but the grave clothes were still there so it was not a robbery. The Gospels have slightly different accounts of their meeting with men in shining clothes. They told them that Jesus was alive and reminded them of what he had said about his resurrection. In their panic the women ran to tell Peter and the other disciples who, at first, did not believe their story. Peter and John then ran to the tomb and found that what the women had said was true.

**Surprising appearances (Matthew 28:8; Mark 16:9–11; Luke 24:13–49; John 20:10–31)**

All the Gospels say that it was Mary Magdalene who first met the risen Jesus in the garden near the tomb. At first she did not recognise him but when he spoke to her she knew his voice. Later in the day Jesus appeared to a group of his disciples unexpectedly, coming into a locked room. Their despair immediately changed to great joy. Then he met two of them on a journey to a nearby village. At first they did not recognise him but later they realised who it was and ran back to Jerusalem to tell the rest of the disciples.

**Convincing the doubters (John 20:24–29)**

Some of the friends of Jesus found it hard to believe that Jesus was alive and was not some kind of ghost. So when he met the disciples again one week after the resurrection he invited Thomas to touch him. He could feel the places where the nails had pierced his hands. Jesus also deliberately shared a meal with them to show he was not a ghost.

**Transforming lives (Acts 2: 22–24)**

The real evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead can be seen in the changed lives of his followers. For instance, Peter had been so afraid that he denied that he knew Jesus on Good Friday but a few weeks later he was able to shout to great crowds in Jerusalem that the person the Jewish leaders had crucified was alive again. In the end he and all the disciples were willing to be killed themselves for the sake of the risen Jesus. The whole of the Christian Church came into being because these men were convinced that Jesus was not dead but was alive.

**The heart of the faith**

The belief that Jesus conquered death is at the very heart of our faith. The first sermons recorded in the Acts of the Apostles are all about Jesus being alive. Paul said that if Jesus had not risen from the dead our faith would be futile and we would all still be in our sins (1 Corinthians 15:17). It is important to notice that the risen Jesus did not appear to people who did not believe in him. He would not force people to believe. It had to be an act of faith. When Thomas asked to touch his wounds Jesus said to him, 'Blessed are those who have *not* seen and yet have believed.' The first leaders of the Church were those who had seen Jesus. In our generation we do not see him face to face but we can know the power of his resurrection in our lives.



Describe the feelings of Cleopas and his friend when they met Jesus on the road to Emmaus (Luke 24:13–35).



The resurrection body of Jesus was in some ways different from his former appearance. What differences do the Gospels show us? What were the qualities which helped them to recognise him?



*Never the Same Again* Pages 125–139



Pray for the many people in the world who have too little money or resources to live on. Pray also for those who have too much, that they may learn to share what they have with those who have nothing.



Take one or more of the nine biblical points made on pages 125–6 and make these a subject for discussion.

**Month 3  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living**

**‘What about  
my money?’**

### Introduction

This week’s lesson was originally written for a young man who enjoyed the prosperity of a western nation. He had some money and needed to learn how to use it well. The lesson deals with the important matter of giving to God. Whether we have a lot of money or very little money the same principle applies. All that we have belongs to God and we need to learn how to be generous in giving to him. Follow the arguments in *Never the Same Again* starting on page 125.



Take one of the episodes in the ‘six stimulating chapters’ of Luke’s Gospel mentioned on pages 131 to 134. Explain what Jesus meant about the use of money.



Should Christians practise ‘tithing’ (giving one tenth of their income to the Lord’s work)? What would happen in your corps if everyone tithed?

**Your leader will arrange for some practical work to be done this week. We hope that you enjoy the experience and find it challenging and satisfying.**

**Month 3  
Week 4**

**Locally  
arranged  
practical work**



Acts 1, 2:1–43



Remember that the Holy Spirit came when the disciples met together for constant prayer. Let us pray like that.



In one of his songs, William Booth wrote: ‘We want another Pentecost, send the fire!’ What would happen in our corps if we accepted the power of the Holy Spirit in the same way as happened at Pentecost?

**Month 4  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
The Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘The Holy  
Spirit Comes’**

### **The Holy Spirit in action**

The name for the Bible book which we are now studying is *Acts of the Apostles*. It might be better to call it ‘The Holy Spirit in Action’. It is the story of the wonderful change made in the lives of the followers of Jesus when the Holy Spirit came into their lives. The book was written by Luke as a sequel to his Gospel. You can see in the first verse that he addresses it to the same person mentioned at the beginning of the Gospel.

It is the story of how the good news of the gospel spread around the Roman world from its small beginnings in the hearts of the followers of Jesus in Jerusalem. It is an exciting adventure story full of danger and troubles. Yet the characters in the story are always brave and never sad. It tells us what God can do through ordinary people when they allow the Holy Spirit to control their lives.

### **Jesus – alive in the world – returned to Heaven (Acts 1:1–11)**

After the wonderful event of his resurrection Jesus spent 40 days appearing to his disciples. He was not the same as before his crucifixion and he spent the time preparing them for what was to come. He would return to Heaven but, instead of his physical presence, they would find that the Spirit he had promised (John 14:15–17) would come to them. He would always be with them wherever they were. They would receive the power to be witnesses to Jesus starting in Jerusalem and eventually reaching the whole world. Then, while they watched, Jesus was taken from them to be with his Father God in Heaven. Christians celebrate this event as the Ascension.

**What next? (Acts 1:12–26)**

Jesus told the disciples to wait in Jerusalem for the gift he had spoken to them about. They knew they were waiting for something important to happen because they could not manage without the power of Jesus. They spent the time in constant prayer and used the opportunity to find the right person to replace Judas Iscariot, who had committed suicide after the death of Jesus. For 10 days they waited. What was going to happen?

**The Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:1–3)**

There was a special celebration held 50 days after the Passover time. It was called Pentecost which means 50. It was a harvest celebration. On that day, early in the morning, the incredible event for which the disciples had been waiting suddenly happened. It was very hard to describe. Those present thought it was like a hurricane with flames of fire dancing on the heads of the disciples. Whatever the physical experience was like, there was no doubt about its effect upon the people there. They were suddenly filled with a confidence and power that they had never known before. Instead of a fear of speaking about Jesus, they now found themselves able to share their faith with everyone around. They were filled with the Holy Spirit.

**Sharing the truth (Acts 2:4–13)**

Soon this new power burst out of the room in which they had been meeting. Among the crowds who had come to Jerusalem for the Pentecost celebration were people from all over the known world. The first evidence of the power of the Holy Spirit was that the disciples, who probably knew only their own language, were able to share the good news with people of different language groups. On this special occasion they needed no interpreters. Everyone heard the story and was amazed. No doubt the disciples were very excited. Some people thought they were drunk. But this was more than mere excitement. This was the power of God, promised by Jesus and given through the Holy Spirit. They were to continue the work of Jesus and had been given the power to do it.

**The first message (Acts 2:14–41)**

Peter had the task of speaking to the great crowd who had gathered. The message was simple. He told them about Jesus. He said that what had happened had been foretold by the Jewish prophets. God would pour out his Spirit. He told them that Jesus, who was greater than the revered King David, had shown them that he was the promised Messiah. Jesus had lived a wonderful life healing and teaching the people. Despite this the people had been responsible for killing him but he had conquered death by rising from the dead. Now the crowds of people should

repent, believe in Jesus and have their sins forgiven. The sign of this repentance would be baptism.

**What a response! (Acts 2:41–47)**

Three thousand people from the crowd responded and became the first Christian converts. This was the first Christian church. They had no buildings but they gathered together in their homes for worship and fellowship. They saw wonderful signs and miracles performed by the apostles. There was a great spirit of sharing among them. They were joyful, praising God all the time and gaining respect from the rest of the people. The Day of Pentecost was the birthday of the Christian Church.



Describe the scene as Peter gave the first Christian sermon on the day of Pentecost. What happened?



Compare the story of Pentecost with story of Babel in Genesis 11:1–9. What contrasts can you see?



Acts 3, 4



Make the prayer of the Christians in Acts 4:23–31 your own. Don't pray for a comfortable life but for boldness to witness for Christ.



Why is it hard to repeat the success of the first church in our generation?

**Month 4  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
The Acts of the  
Apostles**

**'The church  
grows'**

#### **How to grow a church (Acts 2:42–47)**

The first Christian church was a model for us to follow. They concentrated on teaching, praying and sharing. Ordinary people, many of them poor, found a great sense of fellowship together. At the beginning they got on well with the crowds around them and simply shared their knowledge of Jesus with all who would listen. The power of the Holy Spirit was so much in evidence that they were able to continue the work of healing that they had seen Jesus doing. Although they were amazed at what was accomplished they were not surprised that many people were getting saved and joining the church. They recognised that this was the work of God himself and not because of their own efforts.

#### **How to help a beggar (Acts 3:1–10)**

The believers continued to worship in the Jewish Temple. At this point they still thought of themselves as good Jews who had recognised the Jewish Messiah. Peter and John must have often seen the crippled man begging at the gate of the Temple. They knew he needed help but they had little money to give him. When they saw him this time they realised that the power of Jesus could give him what he really wanted. It was a great act of faith for Peter to command the man to stand on his feet. It was an even greater act of faith for the beggar to respond. He had not been able to walk for years.

Now he was on his feet, not only walking but running and jumping, praising God as he went into the Temple to give thanks.

**How to speak about Jesus (Acts 3:11–26)**

The crowds in the Temple were amazed at what had happened to the crippled man. Once again Peter had to explain what had happened. He pointed out that it was not because of his own power that the man had been healed but that it was because of Jesus. Even though the people of Jerusalem had handed over Jesus to be killed, God had raised him from the dead. The healing of the man had been done in the name of Jesus. It is the power of Jesus' resurrection that is the theme of this speech. It was so effective that many more people became convinced and the number of the believers rose to 5,000.

**How to face the authorities (Acts 4:1–21)**

The ordinary people were clearly impressed by what was happening but the Jewish leaders were very worried. They had thought that killing Jesus would put an end to his ideas but now they saw that his friends who were once so frightened were now carrying on his work. They decided to arrest Peter and John and to try and frighten them. After a night in jail Peter and John were brought before the highest leaders of the nation. What authority did they have for their words and actions?

Peter's reply was wonderfully courageous. He blamed the Jewish leaders for killing Jesus and said that it was the power of Jesus that had healed the crippled man. Their authority was the authority of Jesus. This straight talking made an impact on the council. They saw that Peter's words came not from an educated man but from someone who had spent much time with Jesus. They could not deny the miracle that had happened so there was no way that they could punish the apostles. Instead, rather weakly, they asked them not to speak again in Jesus' name.

Peter's response to this is a fundamental truth for Christians. When it comes to a conflict of loyalties we must obey God rather than man, for we cannot help but speak about what God has done for us.

**How to pray when in trouble (Acts 4:23–31)**

When Peter and John went back to the church people gathered together they held a prayer meeting. They might have prayed for an easy life. Instead they prayed for power to be bold and fearless when they were threatened. They did not ask that their circumstances would be changed. They prayed that God would be with them in the situation they faced. They prayed for grace to overcome the problems. Evidence that this was the right prayer came when the Pentecost experience was repeated. They were able to speak with boldness just as they had prayed.



Imagine you are the beggar at the gate of the Temple. What do you expect to receive from two poor men who come past you? How do you react when one of them tells you to get up and walk? What do you feel when you find you can walk?



Peter said that he healed the beggar ‘in the *name* of Jesus’. Compare Acts 4:12 with Philippians 2:9,10. What does the Bible mean by speaking of the ‘power of the *name*’?



*Never the Same Again* Pages 141–150



Make a list of people you know whom you would like to introduce to Jesus. Start praying for them in the class. Remember the story of the lady in Bulawayo told on page 147.



How can a shy or nervous person be a good witness for Jesus?

**Month 4  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living**

**‘Can I  
witness?’**

### **Introduction**

This week’s lesson follows on very well from last week’s Bible study. When Peter was told never to speak again about Jesus he replied to the High Priest, ‘We cannot help speaking of what we have seen and heard.’ He had to be a witness. He could not help it! When you read *Never the Same Again* from page 140 you will find out just how you can be a witness, even though you may not feel that evangelism is your special gift.



Why is Andrew a good example of a witness?



‘The most telling witness of all is your life lived in holiness and purity by the grace and power of God.’ What examples of this can you see in your corps?



*Heroes of the Faith* page 93



Pray for the grace to be obedient, even when God calls you to do something difficult.



How do you react when someone asks you to do something that you would rather not do?

### Introduction

This month's 'hero' story is about a reluctant hero. Mary Styles really did not want to go to the remote place where she was needed. But she went and spent many years helping the people there. Her story is one of practical service and simple obedience. She is still remembered with affection and respect because of her willingness to work hard and to go 'the extra mile'.

We hope you will enjoy the story told in *Heroes of the Faith* starting on page 93.



Why did Mary return from Vendaland to train as a nurse? Do you think this was a good plan?



Part of Mary Styles's success was due to the respect she showed for the customs of the Ba Venda people. How should those serving in a different culture from their own make their faith relevant to the people?

**Month 4  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Studies**

**'Mary Styles –  
Vendaland  
Nurse'**



Acts 5:1–42



Pray for Christians who face persecution for their faith. Pray that they may have the same spirit of acceptance and determination as the apostles.



Why was the sin of Ananias and Sapphira so serious? How should the Church deal with deceit today?

**Month 5  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
The Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘Challenges’**

### **Challenges – internal and external**

It should not surprise us that the first church was soon presented with serious challenges. Christians should expect that spiritual progress will be followed by difficult experiences. The evil one is not content seeing the Church prosper. This week we look at an internal problem that had to be dealt with and also how the first church began to deal with persecution from outside. We need to note that Luke is willing to tell us about these unpleasant events.

### **The problem of dishonesty (Acts 5:1–11)**

The story of Ananias and Sapphira is recorded to show that not all of the first followers of the Way of Christ had pure motives. The idea of sharing all your possessions was wonderful but it had within it some difficulties. It demanded that all the believers were completely truthful about what they had and what they could contribute to the pool of shared resources. This story shows us that the new followers of Christ were not compelled to give everything up but that they had to be honest about what they were doing. The young church in Jerusalem could not allow dishonesty among its members. The sin of Ananias was not that he deceived the other Christians but that he tried to deceive the Holy Spirit. We should not think that Peter ordered their death but that the shock of the discovery of their deception killed them. This shock also discouraged other half-hearted people from joining the church (see verse 13) but could not stop true believers from coming in even greater numbers (see verse 14).

**Growing success (Acts 5:12–16)**

The Holy Spirit was continuing to use the disciples in wonderful ways. Healing power, which had marked out the ministry of Jesus, was being demonstrated in many remarkable ways. Even Peter's shadow was a means of healing. The regular gatherings of the thousands of believers in one of the porches of the Temple were attracting more and more people. Verse 16 tells us that people were coming from outside Jerusalem. It is hardly surprising that the authorities began to be jealous of the success of the church.

**A great escape (Acts 5:17–26)**

This part of the story seems to be almost farcical as the apostles played 'cat and mouse' with the Temple authorities. The authorities were trying to stop the believers preaching in the Temple and so they locked the apostles up in the jail to await a trial the next day. Mysteriously the doors of the jail were opened 'by the angel of the Lord' and the apostles were told to tell the people 'the full message of this new life' (Acts 5:20). In the morning the jailers went looking for their captives but they were out of jail and back in the Temple preaching again. It almost seemed that they were making fun of the authorities and this made the members of the Sanhedrin (the council of the Jewish leaders, composed of both Pharisees and Sadducees) very angry indeed.

**A higher authority than the High Priest (Acts 5:27–33)**

The religious leader of the Jewish nation accused the apostles of deliberately ignoring the instructions that they had been given. They had been told not to speak about Jesus but they were filling Jerusalem with their teaching and blaming the Jewish leaders for the death of Jesus. Why had they done this?

Peter repeated what he had said to the leaders before. While they recognised the authority of the Jewish leaders there was a higher authority. It was the duty of the apostles to obey God rather than man. The angel had told them to preach about Jesus. Peter then told the members of the Sanhedrin the same truth about what they had done to Jesus and what God had done in raising him from the dead. This message was very similar to his previous sermons. It contains the basic truths of the gospel.

**How do you punish those who tell the truth? (Acts 5:33–40)**

The first reaction of the Sanhedrin to Peter's defiance was to call for all the apostles to be put to death. It was a reaction of anger but there was something in Peter's honest and fearless words that made them think again. The wisest and oldest Jewish scholar, a Pharisee named Gamaliel, spoke up for the apostles. He reminded the Sanhedrin that there had been previous times when upstart teachers

had led people astray. Sooner or later their false teaching had come to nothing. If what the apostles had said was untrue then their teaching would soon disappear. But if it was from God, then to punish them would be to fight against God himself. In the end the Sanhedrin found a compromise. They flogged the apostles, repeated the warning not to speak about Jesus, and let them go free.

**How to respond to persecution (Acts 5:41–42)**

The apostles did not complain about their treatment. They did not blame the authorities or cry over their wounds. They rejoiced that they had been seen to be worthy of suffering for Jesus' sake. And they went on telling the people about Jesus. They never stopped. Trouble and difficulty only made them more determined. They knew the truth and they had to share it. Whenever they obeyed the voice of God they found that God never let them down.



How did Gamaliel persuade the Sanhedrin not to kill the apostles?



Compare the speeches of Peter in Acts 2:14–36, Acts 3:12–26, Acts 4:8–12 and Acts 5:29–32. What are the themes common to all these speeches?



Acts 6 – 8



The Church (including The Salvation Army) always needs people who will help in the practical work to be done. Pray that God will send people to do this work in your corps.



Was it a good idea to encourage the first Christians to share their possessions? Would the idea work today?

**Month 5  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
The Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘Seven helpers’**

#### **Problem solved! (Acts 6:1–6)**

As the number of believers grew, the beautiful idea of sharing everything once again began to produce problems. Some of the Greek-speaking believers felt that the distribution of goods was not fair. After this episode we do not hear of the believers sharing their goods again and it was probably seen to be unworkable as the church grew more and more. Instead the principle of giving to help others soon became established in the church (see 1 Corinthians 16:1–2). The apostles realised that they would be wasting their time trying to sort out the problem of distributing gifts equally. A meeting of the whole church was called to resolve the difficulty. They did so by appointing seven people to look after the practical business of the church. They needed to be spiritually mature and wise in handling people. So, very early in its history, the Church realised the need for wisdom and honesty in handling its business.

#### **Reaching out beyond Judaism (Acts 6:5)**

The people who were chosen were all Greek-speaking men. It was the beginning of the Church reaching out beyond the boundaries of the Jewish nation to present the gospel to the whole world. Two of the people who were chosen to be deacons, Stephen and Philip, went on to be powerful influences in the Church.

#### **The attack on Stephen (Acts 6:7–15)**

Stephen quickly became one of the great leaders of the Church, speaking powerfully and performing healing miracles. His vision of the gospel for the

whole world soon attracted opposition from some Jewish groups, who falsely accused him of speaking against the Jewish law and the Temple. They dragged him in front of the Sanhedrin, which was dedicated to preserving the traditions of their faith. It is said that his face shone like that of an angel. It probably means that he remained calm and composed as he faced the fury of his opponents.

### **Stephen's defence (Acts 7:1–53)**

Chapter seven contains the lengthy record of Stephen's speech to the Sanhedrin. It is a history of God's dealing with the Jewish people. Stephen pointed out that the people who were really important in this history were those who heard God say, 'Get out from your comfortable place into a new challenge,' and who were willing to obey. They were the great adventurers of faith.

He contrasted the faith of Abraham, Moses and David with the spirit of the Jewish leaders of his own day who were only interested in preserving old ways. They were just like those who had persecuted and killed the prophets of the Old Testament. When the Jewish leaders called for Jesus to be killed they were behaving in the same bad way as so many of their ancestors.

### **The first Christian martyr (Acts 7:54–60)**

These hard truths were too much for the Sanhedrin to bear. They were so furious that they immediately set out to kill Stephen. This was not a proper trial and sentence of death but an angry mob attacking a helpless man. Stephen did not see their angry faces but looked up to Heaven where he saw Jesus at the right hand of God. They took Stephen to the brow of a hill, threw him over and then pelted him with rocks until he died. Just like Jesus, his Master, Stephen prayed for those who were stoning him. So Stephen became the first Christian to be killed for his faith. We use the word 'martyr', which means a witness, to describe him. He gave his life willingly, not seeking to hurt any others, as a witness to his faith in Christ.

### **The first witness to Gentiles (Acts 8:1–8, 14–17)**

Stephen's death was the signal for a serious persecution of the Church. Many of the believers had to escape from Jerusalem. In many ways this was part of God's plan, for wherever they went they spoke about Jesus. One of those who had to leave Jerusalem was the deacon Philip, who made his way to Samaria. Although the Samaritans were related to the Jews they were not recognised as members of the Jewish faith. Philip told them about Jesus and many of them believed. Peter and John came down from Jerusalem and saw that their faith was genuine. They prayed that the Holy Spirit would come to them. Their prayer was answered and the new Samaritan believers were welcomed into the fellowship of the Church.

### **The gospel reaches Africa (Acts 8:26–40)**

From Samaria Philip found himself on the road south going towards Egypt. There he met a senior political leader from Ethiopia. Although he was not a Jew he had been to Jerusalem and been fascinated by the worship and impressed with the message of the Old Testament prophets. Philip spoke to him about Jesus and soon the man was converted, baptised and on his way back home to share the good news with his people. So the gospel reached beyond Jerusalem and Judea to Samaria and Africa just as Jesus had promised (Acts 1:8).



Tell the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian leader from his point of view.



What can we learn from the account of Philip's work in Samaria and on the Gaza road about the Church crossing barriers of race and language?



*Never the Same Again* pages 153–163



Pray that God will show you how your life can best be used for his glory and to help others.



What should be the priorities for young Christians choosing a career?

### Introduction

This week's lesson asks the question: 'What are you going to do with your life?' It is a question that all young people have to ask themselves. The answer for you may be affected by the culture in which you live and the opportunities that are open to you. Nevertheless, you will still have to make some decisions for yourself. I hope that the wise words of this chapter in *Never the Same Again* will help you to think clearly and make sound decisions.



Which of the seven ways of guidance mentioned on pages 155–157 are the most helpful to you in discovering God's will for your life?



Why is it necessary for a sense of calling to full-time Christian ministry to be 'tested' as page 159 suggests?

**Month 5**  
**Week 3**  
**Christian Living**  
**'What about my job, my studies'**



*Heroes of the Faith* Page 115



Pray for prisoners and their families everywhere, especially for those unjustly punished.



How should we balance the needs of victims of crime with a concern for the redemption of those who cause crime?

### **Introduction**

The final 'hero' story that we shall consider tells the story of a man who made a great difference to the lives of many criminals who were punished by being sent to a prison many thousands of miles from their home. Charles Péan not only offered practical help to the prisoners but also campaigned to change the law of his homeland. He was successful in bringing this dreadful punishment to an end.



How do you think Charles Péan felt when he discovered that the man he had hired to be his cook was a convicted poisoner?



What was more important, Charles's work to help the prisoners on Devil's Island, or his campaigning work to get the prison settlement abolished?

**Month 5  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Studies**

**'Charles Péan  
– God's man  
on Devil's  
Island'**



Acts 9:1–31



Pray for a friend of yours, who does not yet know Jesus, that he or she might meet Jesus for himself or herself.



Can you welcome former enemies into your Christian fellowship as simply as Saul was welcomed at Damascus?

**Month 6  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘A Light on  
the Road’**

### **Introducing Saul (Acts 9:1–2)**

This lesson introduces us to a man who was to become very important in the growth of the early Church. Saul came from Tarsus, a city in modern-day Turkey. He was a very well educated Jew, who had studied at the university in his own city and in Jerusalem, where he had been taught by Gamaliel, a leader of the Pharisees. All his traditional background and teaching made him opposed to the teaching of Jesus and the young Church. He joined with the mob that had killed Stephen (Acts 7:58). He was determined to break the young Church and used torture and the threat of murder to make it happen. When some of Christians escaped to Damascus he was determined to find them there and bring them back to Jerusalem for trial.

### **An incredible change (Acts 9:3–9)**

What happened to Saul on the road to Damascus has been described as the most famous conversion in history. Although it seems like a sudden change of direction there were signs that Saul had been having doubts about what he was doing for some time. The courage and serenity of Stephen affected him deeply. The simple faith of the Christians also made an impact on him. Perhaps he was running away from his own doubts by increasing his efforts to persecute the followers of ‘The Way’. So when he met Jesus on the Damascus Road, Saul was ready to acknowledge his Saviour and to surrender to God’s will for his life. Instead of arriving in Damascus like a conquering soldier he was led in as a blind man going where he was told.

**A wonderful welcome (Acts 10–19)**

The Christians in Damascus had heard all about Saul who was coming to trouble them. They had every right to be afraid. So when the Lord spoke to Ananias and told him to go and greet Saul, his reaction was naturally one of fear. It is a wonderful thing that he still obeyed the Lord and still more wonderful that his first words were 'Brother Saul'. Ananias was the second Christian to make a marked impact on the life of Saul. By restoring his sight, welcoming him into the Church, offering hospitality and giving him the opportunity to testify to his new-found faith, the Christians at Damascus are a great example to all believers.

**A fearless witness (Acts 9:19–25)**

Saul's change of heart led to a powerful witness. After a short period of reflection in Arabia (Galatians 1:17) he returned to Damascus. His natural ability and training made him an effective presenter of the gospel and for three years (Galatians 1:17–18) Saul spoke in the synagogues of Damascus about Jesus. So strong was the witness Saul made that it roused the opposition of the Jewish people, who tried to kill him. Saul's narrow escape over the city wall in a basket was only the first of many adventures for Christ that were to be part of his life. From the start he was quite fearless.

**Accepted in Jerusalem (Acts 9:26–31)**

When Saul finally arrived back in Jerusalem the church must have had serious doubts about him. After all, he had organised the persecution against them and had been involved in Stephen's death. They must have thought that the stories from Damascus were not true and that Saul was only pretending to support the Christian way. It took Barnabas, the third great Christian influence on Saul, to persuade the church that the convert was genuine. Barnabas always believed the best about other people. He spoke for Saul and got him welcomed into the fellowship.

**The story told three times (Acts 22:3–16, Acts 26:9–18)**

This story of his conversion was so important to Saul that he took every opportunity to tell how he met Jesus. We have the record in two other places in the Bible. Each telling is very similar. He believed that his only claim to be an Apostle was that he had met the living Jesus for himself (1 Corinthians 9:1).



Who were the three Christians whose lives made a great impact on Saul during the time of his conversion and acceptance into the Church? Which do you think was the most important in winning Saul for Christ?



‘The Lord said to Ananias, “Go! This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles.”’ God was talking about Saul. How important in the history of Christianity was the conversion of this man?



Acts 10–11



Pray that God will help you to explain your faith to a non-Christian friend as clearly as Peter did to Cornelius. Pray that your friend may be able and willing to respond as Cornelius did.



Are there still some people who feel excluded from the Christian faith? Do we need to learn the lesson of Cornelius's conversion again?

**Month 6  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
Acts of the  
Apostles**

**'No Barriers'**

### **A new Jewish sect?**

We must not forget that Jesus was born into a Jewish home and brought up as a Jew. His disciples were all Jewish and the beginnings of the Christian Church occurred in the Jewish capital of Jerusalem. The first place of worship for the Christians was the Jewish Temple and they used the Hebrew Scriptures as their holy book. We Christians owe a great deal to the Jewish faith. It would not have been surprising if the first Christians had inherited the attitude of many Jews of that time to those of other faiths. Jews had no dealings with Samaritans, would not enter a Gentile house or eat with a Gentile. They believed that God only really cared for them. Would Christianity simply become another Jewish sect?

### **Breaking Out (Acts 10:34–35)**

We have already seen how Philip's Samaritan converts had been welcomed into the faith (Acts 8:5–17) and how he had baptised the African leader (Acts 8: 26–38). This week's lesson shows how the Church moved decisively out of its narrow Jewish background to become a worldwide faith. The key verses are spoken by Peter to a Roman (that is a Gentile) convert in his own house. 'I now realise how true it is that God does not show favouritism but accepts men from every nation who fear him and do what is right' (Acts 10:34–35). For this to happen Peter had to learn a difficult lesson and it was the Holy Spirit who had to teach him.

**A seeking soldier (Acts 10:1–7)**

First the Holy Spirit warmed the heart of a Roman soldier named Cornelius. He was a leader among his own men and his appointment to Palestine had made him sympathetic to the religion of the Jews. It was God's messenger who invited him to send a message to Peter. This good soldier had an open heart to hear the word of God. Despite his doubts that he could be accepted, he still sent his messengers to Peter.

**A strange dream (Acts 10:9–18)**

Now the Holy Spirit had to work on Peter's prejudices. He did so by means of a dream. Peter was praying in the hot sunshine on the roof of the house where he was staying. He fell into a kind of trance as he prayed. As he looked out to sea he could see the sails of the ships in the distance and one of the sails seemed to be let down in front of him like a great sheet. In the sail were all manner of animals that Jews were forbidden to eat. He was instructed to kill and eat them but he objected. Surely God would not want him to disobey the Jewish rules about food that he had always kept. The vision was repeated three times to make sure that Peter got the message.

**Visitors (Acts 10:19–24)**

As Peter awoke from his trance it was to learn that the messengers from Cornelius had arrived to see him. Contrary to Jewish tradition he welcomed them into the house and heard the story of what the messenger of God had said to the Roman soldier. Without delay, and breaking all the Jewish rules, Peter welcomed the visitors as his guests and, next day, set out to visit Cornelius.

**Gentile converts (Acts 10:24–48)**

There can be no doubt about the enthusiastic welcome that Peter received from Cornelius. He was almost ready to worship Peter and had gathered a great crowd of his friends. Peter put him at his ease and explained the message of salvation through Jesus' death and resurrection in simple terms.

All who believed in Jesus could have their sins forgiven. The crowning moment was when the Holy Spirit came to these Gentile people, to the astonishment of the Jewish Christians who had gone with Peter. The Holy Spirit had accepted them and they had to be welcomed as full members of the Church.

**Revolutionary thinking (Acts 11:1–18)**

This was such a dramatic change that Peter had to explain himself to the other leaders of the church when he returned to Jerusalem. This was so important that Luke tells the whole story again. Peter's final argument was quite simple. If God

had given to the Gentiles the same gifts he had earlier given to the Jewish Christians, then how could Peter, or any one else, oppose God and refuse to recognise these new converts? So the Christian Church moved out from its Jewish base to reach out to the whole world with the forgiving love of God. The new truth was slow to dawn and it would be some time before all the Christians accepted it. Nevertheless, this incident was a vital step for the Church. It is the reason why we are Christians today.



Why was the conversion of Cornelius so important in the development of the Christian faith?



'God has no favourites.' Why do you think it took such a long time for this to be accepted in the Church? Compare Acts 10 with Galatians 2.



*Never the Same Again* chapter 12 pages  
165–17



Ask God to give you confidence that he will  
always be with you and will never forsake you.



Discuss Martin Luther King's phrase 'a sense  
of cosmic companionship'. Is this how you feel  
about the friendship of Jesus?

**Month 6**  
**Week 3**  
**Christian**  
**Living**  
**'Can I really**  
**rely on God?'**

### **Introduction**

This is the final time that we shall study *Never the Same Again*. This concluding chapter is full of encouragement and challenge. It promises us that God will never let us down and it asks us to respond to this unchanging love by being ready for action, by being obedient to God's voice and by living a holy life. We can all be members of Christ's university, for we may all be 'born again' (BA) and 'marvellously altered' (MA).



Write out for yourselves the promises on page 166. What other promises  
of God's presence with you can you find in Scripture?



Consider the testimony of the young Christian leader on pages 170 and  
171.

Write your own testimony to the reality of God in your life.

**Once again you have the opportunity to  
turn your studies into practical action  
this week. Enjoy the experience!**

**Month 6  
Week 4**

**Locally  
arranged  
practical work**



Acts 11:19–30; 13:1–14:28



Pray for those Christians who are called to take the gospel to new places. Pray that they may have courage when they are in trouble and the gift to explain the faith to people who have never heard of Jesus.



Paul and Barnabas found that preaching the gospel was divisive with some people accepting and others opposing the truth. Is this always the case? Why should it be so?

**Month 7  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
Acts of the  
Aspostles**

**'Missionaries'**

### **A great new church (Acts 11:19–30)**

The church at Jerusalem was in trouble in the period following the stoning of Stephen. Many of the believers were threatened with imprisonment or death. They had to find a way to escape. But this persecution had a positive result. Those who had to leave the city took the gospel with them to many new places. One of these places was the city of Antioch in Syria. The church that grew up there was a wonderful expression of the new faith. This church could see the need to take the gospel to all the world. This 'world view' made them very generous in sharing both their money and giving their best people. Antioch was the place where the believers were first given the nickname of 'Christian'. This has remained the proud name of followers of Jesus ever since.

### **Send them out! (Acts 13:1–3)**

Among the leaders of the church at Antioch were Saul and Barnabas. They were valuable teachers of the new converts (Acts 11:26). No doubt the local church needed them to stay with them. However, the Holy Spirit wanted them for an even bigger job. With the blessing of the whole church they were sent away to become travelling evangelists so that the good news of Jesus could be shared in new areas. How generous of the Christians of Antioch! This was the beginning of a great 'missionary' adventure.

### **First stop, Cyprus (Acts 13:4–12)**

They began by visiting the island where Barnabas had been brought up. With young John Mark to help them they preached about Jesus to the Jewish

community and later to the Roman governor of the island. This important man kept a personal fortune-teller as part of his team. The fortune-teller realised that his job would come to an end if the governor became a Christian. He tried to persuade the governor not to listen to Barnabas and Saul, but Saul soon dealt with him. So a Roman governor became a Christian.

### **Change of name and change of leader (Acts 13:9, 13)**

When Saul, Barnabas and John Mark left for Cyprus, Barnabas (the older and more experienced Christian) was the leader. It was soon clear that Saul, who now began to use his Latin name of Paul, was the real leader. Graciously Barnabas allowed the younger man to take charge and became Paul's loyal assistant.

### **To the cities of Asia Minor (Acts 13:13–15)**

The next stories cover a period of about two years as Paul and Barnabas set out on a dangerous journey. We can read of great victories even though they are often in trouble. The missionaries travelled by ship from Cyprus to the port of Perga in Asia Minor (present-day Turkey) and then set out to climb the steep and dangerous road to the mountain cities of Pisidia. It was too much for young John Mark, who left them to go home but Paul and Barnabas courageously travelled on.

### **Preaching to Jews and Gentiles (Acts 13:16–52)**

When they arrived at Pisidian Antioch (a quite different place to Antioch in Syria) they made their way first of all to the Jewish synagogue. We have a full record of Paul's speech there. He spoke of the life, death and resurrection of Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish prophecy. This was the same message we have read Peter preached before. At first the Jews seemed interested in what he said. On the next Sabbath the whole town turned out to hear Paul. Then the Jews became jealous of his power and his message. They rejected the good news. So Paul turned to the Gentiles and told them about Jesus. Many of them believed and became Christians. This angered the Jews even more and they stirred up trouble for the missionaries. They threw them out of the city. Paul and Barnabas simply went on to the next place with their message about Jesus.

### **Iconium, Lystra and Derbe (Acts 14:1–20)**

In these three cities the reception was similar. Going first to the Jewish communities, and then to the Gentiles, they made converts but also made enemies. The gospel message became divisive. The missionaries were threatened by their opponents. At Lystra, a healing miracle was performed and the crowds thought that Paul and Barnabas were gods. It was only with difficulty that the missionaries prevented the crowds from worshipping them. Soon this admiration

turned to fury as the Jews provoked more trouble. Paul was stoned and only just escaped with his life.

**Strengthening the new Christians (Acts 14:21–28)**

Even though they had been threatened in all these cities Paul and Barnabas returned to visit them all. They found that the people who believed in Jesus had remained faithful and were living the Christian life. They set up a church in each city, encouraged the Christians and appointed leaders. What a welcome home they received back in Antioch in Syria when they told their fellow Christians what the Lord had done!



Draw a map of this first missionary journey marking the cities mentioned in the Bible readings.



Look up all the references to Barnabas in Acts of the Apostles. From them describe the character of this Christian leader.



Acts 15–20 (read sections of these chapters as suggested)



While we cannot all expect to be great missionaries like Paul we can ask God to help us be a witness just where we are.



Do you have to find a new way of speaking about Jesus when you are in a different culture?

**Month 7  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘Crossing  
Continents’**

#### **A great adventurer (Acts 15:36–39)**

Paul was not a person who could stay in one place for long. The chapters of this week’s reading cover a period of about five years when he was almost continuously travelling with the gospel. His own natural restlessness was combined with a commitment to tell as many people as possible about Jesus. Paul was not always a patient man. He was so disappointed with John Mark, who had left the team on the first journey. He would not allow him a second chance even though Barnabas still believed in John Mark. This sad disagreement which split up the partnership of Paul and Barnabas had the happy result of producing two teams of missionaries instead of one. It is good to know that Paul was reconciled with John Mark later in his life (see 2 Timothy 4:11).

#### **Encouraging the converts (Acts 15:40–16:5)**

Paul and his new companion, Silas, first returned to the churches which had been started on Paul’s first journey. They found them to be healthy and growing. This was a great encouragement.

#### **Where next? (Acts 16:6–10)**

There were a number of directions that Paul and Silas might have taken. Each one they considered seemed to be closed to them. It was in a vision that Paul saw a man from Europe calling for them to come and help. The new faith was to cross the continents from Asia to Europe. It was becoming a faith for the whole world. (Verse 10 is interesting because the writer, Luke, starts telling the story as

though he was present. Doctor Luke joined the team at this point and travelled with them for the rest of the journey.)

### **Adventures in Philippi (Acts 16:11–40)**

The first city in the new continent to be visited was a Roman fortress called Philippi. There was no Jewish place of worship there but a small number of Jews met by the riverside to pray. Paul spoke to them and a businesswoman called Lydia was soundly converted. Then Paul cured a slave-girl who had an evil spirit and was being used as a fortune-teller. This annoyed those who were exploiting her so much that they had Paul and Silas arrested, flogged and put in prison. Despite being in a dirty cell and threatened with punishment, the missionaries were singing praises to God at midnight when an earthquake broke down the prison walls. Paul's calmness under pressure convinced the frightened jailer of his need for God and he was immediately converted. The jailer's question and Paul's answer are the simplest explanation of conversion in the Bible. Next day Paul used his Roman citizenship to gain release. As a result of all these adventures the first church in Europe was established.

### **Through the cities of Greece (Acts 17:1–28; 18:1–11)**

This long reading tells of the visit of Paul and Silas to Thessalonica, where they were chased out by the Jews, but established a church. Then they went to Berea, which was better until the trouble-makers from Thessalonica caught up with them. Then they moved to Athens, the capital of Greece and the centre of world thought. Here Paul spoke to the educated people. He described Jesus as the god whom they did not know but wanted to worship. Despite a few converts being made, no church was started in the capital city. Instead Paul and Silas moved to Corinth, the main seaport and a very wicked place. Here Paul spent nearly two years working as a tentmaker and speaking mainly to the Gentiles after the Jews had rejected his message. In this wicked city a new church was begun.

### **Ephesus (Acts 19:1–22; 20:13–24)**

After a brief visit to Jerusalem and a short rest in Antioch, Paul set out again on his travels. Most of this third journey was spent in Ephesus. Here Paul challenged the moneymaking cult that surrounded the pagan worship of the goddess Diana. Many converts were made and some followers of John the Baptist became baptised as Christians. After a visit to the churches in Greece Paul returned to Ephesus for a brief call on his way to Jerusalem. He knew that he would never go back again and gave a wonderfully encouraging farewell message to the church leaders.

### **The great missionary**

These three journeys of Paul took the gospel from Jerusalem to the world. He faced thousands of miles of travel either on foot or in dangerous voyages by ship. He was often beaten, imprisoned and threatened with death.

He was always in trouble from those who would not believe but in many places he left behind a church that would survive and grow, winning many people for Jesus. Even at the end of this time he wanted to do more. We shall see how his wish to present the gospel in Rome, the capital of the empire, was fulfilled.



Imagine you were the jailer at Philippi. Tell the story of the earthquake and your conversion.



Why did Paul try a new explanation of the Christian faith at Athens? Was it unsuccessful? If so, why?



*Nothing Without Love* Introduction and Chapter 1



Pray for someone you know who is not yet a Christian. Pray that God will make a way for you to share your faith with that person.



What is evangelism? Do you have to be special to become involved?

**Introduction**

Now we begin a study in sharing our faith, using a book entitled *Nothing Without Love*. Many young people feel that it is hard to tell other people about their faith. This book helps us to see that we do not have to be afraid.

Evangelism is not like a rich man giving some small gift to a poor man. It is not like a clever man persuading a simple man. It is like a poor man who has been given a great gift sharing it with his friend. He does so out of love for his friend. That is why the book is given its title. If we love our neighbours we will want to share the good news of Jesus with them.

Our Bible studies have been showing us how Paul and his friends risked everything to share the truth about Jesus. These studies will begin to help us do the same, to be bold enough to try sharing our faith with our friends.



How did the early day Salvationists share their faith?



How would you go about building a 'friendship bridge', as suggested on pages 2 and 3?

**Month 7  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living -  
Evangelism**

**'What is  
evangelism?'**



Pray that the love of God will make you want to praise him with all the joy that you have in your heart.



Can worship be both joyful and dignified?  
What is the most important quality in worship?

**Month 7  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Characteristics**

**'Joyful  
Worship'**

**Notes**

**Introduction**

The Salvation Army is a part of the universal Christian Church. We Salvationists share many gifts and qualities with other churches but there are some aspects of our Movement which mark us out as distinct. These qualities do not make us better than other churches but they are gifts which we can offer to the Church as a whole.

The first of these special characteristics that we shall consider is joyful worship. When the leader of the Church of England spoke at the Army's celebration of 100 years' work, he said Salvationists had a special gift of joy. He said he had seen many peculiar things but he had never seen a gloomy Salvationist. Perhaps you know one or two!

**The beginnings of Army worship**

When the Army began its mission it worked among people who never went to a church service. Army meetings were often held in secular buildings, such as theatres where there was much laughter and noise. In order to make the people who were attracted to our meetings feel at ease the early Salvationists conducted worship that was also full of laughter and noise. They used popular music of the day, writing Christian words to secular tunes. Sometimes Army leaders would appear in the middle of a secular show to challenge the people who were there with the message of the gospel.

**Joyful but serious**

This happy approach to worship encouraged many people who never went to worship to go to Army meetings. The meetings were bright spots in what were sometimes very sad and uninteresting lives. The meetings gave the leaders an opportunity to present the message of God's salvation to those who were there. At the end of a meeting many came to the mercy seat to claim forgiveness and to begin a new life with Jesus. This was the very serious part of the meeting. Then, after people had claimed salvation, the meeting would once again become very noisy and joyful as all those present gave thanks to God for the victories that had been won. An early-day Salvation Army song set to a cheerful secular tune had this verse:

*Come, shout and sing, make Heaven ring with praises to our King,  
Who bled and died, was crucified, that he might pardon bring.  
His blood doth save the soul, doth cleanse and make it whole,  
The blood of Jesus cleanses white as snow . . .  
I bless the happy day, when he washed my sins away,  
The blood of Jesus cleanses white as snow.*

James Bateman

**'Laughing his way into salvation'**

Colonel Edward Joy told a story about the old corps at Folkestone, England. In one meeting a man who was well known for his sense of fun went to the mercy seat with a happy smile on his face. The officer rebuked him saying that salvation was a vitally important and serious matter. The man replied, 'Surely a man can laugh when he is getting his sins forgiven.'

**Joyful worship today**

Today the Army seeks to retain a sense of worship which is full of joy. The love of God shown to us in Jesus makes us rejoice. In many cultures dancing to happy music forms part of the way we worship; in some places the act of bringing the collection to the front is an opportunity for a dance. In some parts of the world bands provide marches full of happy tunes. Congregational singing is loud and enthusiastic. Timbrels and hand-clapping accompany the singing of many songs. We often enjoy it when the leader of the meeting puts us at ease by making us smile. Spontaneous testimonies often tell of the wonder of God's love in very happy ways.

**A gift to be shared**

Many churches now have adopted worship songs which are more like contemporary popular music. 'Worship bands' are to be found in numerous

churches and some fine new songs have been written. While we cannot claim to have invented this style of worship we are glad that others now share a gift which the Army has had for some time. Perhaps our friends in other churches have reminded us of the need to hold on to this special characteristic.

**Both joyful and intended for worship**

The Army needs to retain its joyful worship but Salvationists need to make sure that it is not simply noise, musical or otherwise, for its own sake. We must always ensure that we are truly worshipping God, in the name of our Saviour Jesus. All the glory must go to him and not be diverted to those who participate in the worship. We offer our joy to Jesus who is the only reason we have to be joyful.



What parts of Army worship do you most enjoy, and why?



To what extent are styles of worship influenced by the secular world in which the Church exists?



Sections from Acts 15, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26 as indicated in the notes



Make this week's prayers a thanksgiving for people who risk their lives for Jesus and the gospel.



Jesus remained silent when he was on trial before Pilate but Paul gave his testimony as a defence. What are the reasons for the difference?

## Month 8 Week 1

### Bible Study Acts of the Apostles

### 'Return to Jerusalem'

#### Back to headquarters (Acts 15:1–20)

The work that Paul and his friends had done in Asia and Europe meant that the Church had been changed forever. We are told of two visits he made to Jerusalem, the home of the Church. The first visit came after his first missionary journey. On this occasion he showed the Church leaders that Gentiles had been welcomed into the fellowship and had received the Holy Spirit without the ritual of becoming Jews. The Church leaders agreed that only a few sensible restrictions should be put on non-Jewish people who had become Christians. Jewish Christians could continue to observe the Jewish laws but this would not be expected from others.

#### Stepping into trouble (Acts 21:17, 27–36)

Paul's second visit to Jerusalem came after the second and third missionary journeys. There were now thousands of Gentile converts and many from the Jewish community saw Paul as their chief enemy. The prophet Agabus had warned Paul that he would be arrested if he went to Jerusalem. Paul wanted to prove that he was still a good Jew who had become a Christian. He went to the Temple as a kind of purification. While he was there a violent mob tried to kill him. They wrongly thought that he had brought some Gentiles into the part of the Temple reserved for Jews alone. Paul was rescued by Roman soldiers who arrested him in order to save his life. It is possible that Paul was never again completely free from some kind of imprisonment.

#### Telling the truth (Acts 22:1–23:11)

The only way Paul knew how to defend himself was to tell the truth. He told his story, gave his testimony, first to the crowd at the Temple who had tried to kill

him. They listened quietly until Paul told them that he had been sent to the Gentiles. Then the trouble started again and the soldiers stepped in once more. Paul might have been flogged to death by the soldiers but his Roman citizenship saved him.

Next Paul had the opportunity to speak to the Sanhedrin, the court of the High Priest. Here he reminded them that he was originally a Pharisee and spoke of resurrection from the dead. This caused yet another argument and once again the Roman soldiers had to rescue Paul by taking him back to prison.

What a courageous man! Paul never flinched from speaking honestly and passionately about Jesus even when it seemed he must die for his faith. The final verse of our reading shows how he was comforted by a vision of Jesus. He would need to keep his courage high.

### **Witnessing to kings and rulers (Acts 24:10–25; 25:6–12; 26:19–32)**

Now Paul found himself on trial before a number of Roman rulers at their base in Caesarea. Each time he defended himself by talking about Jesus. It seemed that Felix, the first of these rulers, knew something about the new Christian faith. He and his wife were partly convinced by Paul's words. However, he did nothing to free Paul and kept him in prison for two years.

When Felix was succeeded by Festus, Paul once again left his prison cell to share his faith. Festus would have liked to return Paul to the Jewish authorities, but Paul knew he would never have a fair hearing and might have been ambushed on the journey. So he used his Roman citizenship to appeal to the court of Caesar in Rome.

Before he could be sent to Rome Paul again told the story of his conversion. The occasion was the visit of King Agrippa to Festus. Paul's words were so powerful that Festus thought Paul had gone mad and Agrippa thought Paul was trying to make him a Christian. Paul would have been glad if either of them was persuaded to accept Jesus as Saviour.



Describe the scene when Paul was arrested in Jerusalem (see Acts 21:27–40). How did he react to the trouble?



Read Paul's speech to King Agrippa (Acts 26) and rewrite it in your own words.



Acts 27–28 and Romans 1:8–13



There are still many people who are in prison simply because of their faith. Remember them in your prayers. Ask God that they may be given courage and that in the darkest days they will not despair.



What qualities of leadership did Paul need to demonstrate when he took virtual command of the sinking ship off Malta? How did he manage to do this from his place as a prisoner?

**Month 8  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
Acts of the  
Apostles**

**‘Faithful to the  
end’**

### **To Rome (Romans 1:8–13)**

Paul had asked that his case be heard before the court of Caesar. That meant he had to journey to Rome. So Paul, the prisoner, was put on board a ship for the long journey. He had always wanted to visit Rome, which was the capital city of the empire. He knew that there were Christians there. He wanted to encourage them and make sure that they were being faithful to the gospel.

But now he travelled as a prisoner.

### **A stormy voyage (Acts 27:1–42)**

Getting to Rome was difficult. Although there were many ships which made the journey it was the beginning of winter, the season of storms. The ship had to shelter at the island of Crete and Paul warned the captain not to go further until the weather was better.

The ship’s captain did not take Paul’s advice. But soon they were caught up in a terrible storm and thought they would all be drowned. It was Paul who took the lead. He seemed to be the only person who believed that all would be well. He assured the sailors that God intended him to arrive safely at Rome. So for two weeks they battled through the storm. Paul would not let the crew leave in a lifeboat and eventually all the people, 276 of them, were saved as the ship ran aground at Malta. Even then Paul might have been killed by his prison guards, but his courage was recognised by their leader and all the prisoners were allowed to go on to the island.

**Conquering superstition (Acts 28: 1–10)**

The people of Malta, where Paul and the others had been shipwrecked, were simple people. They were very kind to the crew and the prisoners. An incident with a poisonous snake made the people think that Paul was cursed. When he survived they thought he was a god. Paul cured the father of the island chief and doubtless was able to speak about the Lord who gave him the power to heal. Old superstitions gave way in the presence of the Holy Spirit's power in Paul.

**Rome at last (Acts 28:11–30)**

The last part of the journey by ship and by land was simple. Paul met some Christians on the way and then was warmly welcomed by the Christians at Rome. They had been expecting him and soon he was speaking both to the Jews and to the Christians about Jesus. It seemed that his guards allowed him the freedom to meet and speak to anyone. He lived in his own rented house and spoke boldly for Jesus.

**A strange ending?**

In this way the story of the birth and growth of the Christian Church as told in this Bible book comes to an end. We don't know for sure what happened next. Some say that Paul's case never did come to Caesar's court. Some think Paul was able to make more journeys, even going as far as Spain (see Romans 15:24). We are sure that Paul, along with Peter, was amongst those Christians who were killed when the Roman emperor blamed the Christians for the great fire that destroyed Rome. He was one of many who died for his faith. But the message of Acts of the Apostles is that the command of Jesus to begin at Jerusalem and to take the gospel to Judaea, Samaria, and then to the ends of the earth was being fulfilled. There were Christians in Rome, the centre of the world, even in the palaces of Caesar (see Philippians 4:22). One day the Roman Empire would fall but the Church of Jesus Christ would last forever.



Tell the story of Paul's voyage from Caesarea to Rome in your own words.



Review all the lessons on *Acts of the Apostles*. What do they teach you about the work of the Holy Spirit in establishing the Church?

*Nothing Without Love* Chapter 2 pages 5–8

Pray that God will help you to say ‘Yes’ as a free and obedient response to him (see the final paragraph of page 6).



Use one of the discussion points on page 8.

**Introduction**

This week’s lesson looks at what is needed by anyone who wants to share the Christian faith. It deals with the need to know Jesus personally and to sustain our relationship with him. You will read how God promises that he will enrich your life when you respond to his guidance and that you will not be asked to do what is impossible for you. That should be a great encouragement as you begin to witness. The chapter also shows the importance of belonging to a loving Christian community instead of trying to be an evangelist on your own. Please think about these important matters as you prepare to speak for Jesus.



What is needed to develop a good Christian experience (see the second paragraph of page 6)? How would these spiritual disciplines help an evangelist?



Why is it important to have ‘confidence in Christ’ (see the first paragraph of page 6) rather than self-confidence? What impression is created by the would-be evangelist who thinks he/she knows all the answers?

**Month 8**  
**Week 3**  
**Christian**  
**Living –**  
**Evangelism**  
**‘Resources for**  
**evangelism’**



Pray for your officers and others who are involved in practical caring in your community. Do your prayers prompt you to share in this ministry?



Consider James 2:14–17. Does this simple statement apply in today's world? Should governments take over this responsibility?

## Month 8 Week 4

### Salvation Army Characteristics

### 'Practical Service'

#### Notes

A slogan that has been used to describe the Army says, 'Heart to God and Hand to Man'. This illustrates the combination of worship and practical work that is characteristic of our Army.

#### William Booth and Social Work

When the Army's Founder started his work in the poorest parts of London, he simply wanted to point people to Jesus as their saviour. But he soon found that many of those to whom he spoke found it hard to accept the gospel when they were hungry or homeless. So alongside his preaching he found a way to provide food and shelter for them. He was appalled by the conditions in which some people had to live. Later he wrote a book called *In Darkest England and the Way Out*. This described the problems, proposed some practical solutions and asked for money to make the scheme work. From then on the Army has developed an extensive and expert practical caring ministry alongside its evangelical work.

#### Social Work Today

Around the world the Army runs schools, hospitals, clinics and homes for children, the homeless and the elderly. Our corps and community centres also have a wide variety of programmes to help people in need. In times of emergency the Army always seeks to help those affected. The programmes that are operated vary according to the needs of the community where they are based but they all come from a desire to help people in the name of Jesus.

**Why do we do this work?**

It is very important that we do not see this practical work as separate and different from our worship and evangelism. It is a part of our response to the love that God has shown us in Jesus. In Matthew 25:31–46 we read a story Jesus told about two groups of people. One group was welcomed into the Kingdom of God and the other was rejected. The difference between them was that the first group offered practical care to those in need and the other group did not. Jesus said that when the poor were helped, the help was being offered to him.

**Who can do this kind of work?**

Some of the Army's social work requires great skill and knowledge. We have to use professional doctors, teachers and social workers. But it is important that we do not leave this responsibility only with those who have these special abilities. We are all called to care for others as part of our faith. We need to 'own' this work, to give it our support in prayer and to offer our help in whatever ways we can. This should include our financial support. If we have a willing, compassionate spirit God will direct us in ways that will offer valuable help to those in need.



Why did William Booth become involved in practical social work?



Discover and describe what kinds of social and community work The Salvation Army operates in your area.



Passages from Galatians as indicated in the notes.



Pray for new Christians who are struggling to understand the meaning of their new faith.



Do we really accept Paul's clear word that there are no differences between people because of their race, status or gender? How is this seen in your community?

**Month 9  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'Freedom in  
Christ'**

### **Letters to the churches**

We have in the Bible a collection of letters that were written by the earliest Christian leaders to some of the new churches. Most of the letters were written by Paul, whose adventures we have been following in Acts of the Apostles. They were written to encourage, teach and warn the groups of new believers. Often they dealt with particular circumstances and problems that had developed. They correct errors and teach the true faith.

Most of the letters were written in a hurry, for Paul and the other apostles were busy people. This sometimes makes them hard for us to follow. But they contain some very important lessons for us. We can look at only a few main themes in this short series. We hope this will encourage you to a deeper study of these letters.

### **The letter to the Galatians (Galatians 1:1–9)**

We have seen how Paul and Barnabas started churches in Iconium, Lystra, Derbe and Antioch in Pisidia. When he got back home to Syrian Antioch he heard some very disturbing news. Some other visitors to these Galatian cities had told the new Christians they must observe all the Jewish laws and that this was the only way to be saved. Paul was very angry and wrote to the new churches. Their visitors were twisting the gospel of Christ.

### **Paul's authority (Galatians 1:11–17; 2:6–10)**

Paul claimed that the message of salvation for the Gentiles had come to him directly as a revelation from God. When he met the other apostles he was

welcomed. It was seen that his work among the Gentiles was blessed by God in just the same way as the work of Peter and the others among the Jews.

**How are we saved? (Galatians 2:15–16)**

Keeping every detail of the Jewish law all the time was quite impossible. Even the most careful Jew could not earn his salvation in this way. Jesus lived, died and rose again to give the gift of salvation to everyone who had faith in him. It is believing in Jesus and not fulfilling every detail of the law that saves us.

**New life in Christ (Galatians 2:20)**

Accepting salvation through faith in Jesus Christ is like dying to an old way of life. Our new life is like Jesus living in us. It is a life of faith in Jesus who loved us so much that he died in order to save us.

**Living by faith unites everyone (Galatians 3:6–9; 26–29)**

Paul then gives an old example of someone who was saved by faith. Abraham, the father of the Jewish faith, believed in God long before the laws were given. God accepted his faith and he was saved. So all the Gentiles who believe in Jesus are also spiritual descendants of Abraham. All are the sons (and daughters) of God for everyone who believes in Jesus is accepted by him. There are no differences of race, colour, status or gender. We are all one in Christ Jesus.

**From slavery to freedom (Galatians 4:17)**

The Galatians were used to seeing slaves in Roman households. Even though some slaves were well treated they could never inherit the family's treasure. But the children of the family, even though they were taught by the slaves, would inherit everything one day. Paul used this as a parable for Christians. The Jewish law was a teacher for the Jews as though they were children. Now that Jesus has come the need for the old law has gone. They have grown up. The children are now the heirs of God's promise. This includes the Gentiles as well as the Jews.

**Freedom in Christ (Galatians 5:1,16–25)**

Paul urges the Galatians to accept their freedom in Christ. They are no longer bound by the Jewish laws but they must allow the Holy Spirit to direct their lives. Instead of producing wicked and sinful actions, they will be led by the Holy Spirit into ways of goodness. This will produce a harvest of good deeds. Living by the guidance of the Holy Spirit is the true freedom that all Christians may enjoy.



Why did Paul write such an angry letter to the Galatians?



'The life of faith is a life of freedom.' Discuss this idea.



Passages from 1 and 2 Corinthians as indicated in the notes.



Pray that you may find the very best of God's gifts – the gift of love.



How can a Christian live a holy life in a wicked city?

**Month 9  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'Problems  
solved'**

### **Corinth – the wicked city**

What a place to start a Christian church! Corinth was a very large city that stood at a crossroads for both land and sea travel. It was a busy port and a great trading centre. It had a bad reputation for immorality and crime. Many religions were found there among the crowds who came to the city. Paul spent 18 months in Corinth on his first visit. This allowed him to start a growing church, with both Jewish and Gentile members. But it soon proved to be a church with problems. Paul wrote several letters to help them sort out their problems. We have them gathered in two Bible books.

### **Quarrelsome Christians (1 Corinthians 1:10–13; 3:1–23)**

The young church at Corinth had become divided into groups who were quarrelling with each other. They called themselves after those who had been their leaders – Paul, Apollos and Peter. They even used the name of Christ for one of these groups. These divisions were destroying the church. Paul reminded them that all the leaders are simply servants of Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who saved them, not Paul or Apollos or Peter. So it is Jesus who is the heart of their faith. All Christians belong to Jesus.

### **Chosen by Jesus (1 Corinthians 1:26–31)**

The people who belonged to the church were not rich, powerful or clever. Jesus chose them to show that human wisdom, wealth and power was not needed in the Kingdom of God. They were intended to demonstrate the power of God that was available through Jesus. This meant that they should not boast in their own

strength and goodness but realise that all they had came from the love of God for them.

### **Living a holy life (1 Corinthians 5:9–13; 6:7–11,18–19)**

It was difficult for a Christian in Corinth to live a good life in a wicked city. Some of them had failed and there was immorality in the church. Paul told them to expel those who continued to practise wicked behaviour. They were to remember that their bodies were ‘temples’ in which the Holy Spirit lived. So they must keep their bodies pure. They should not take legal quarrels to a magistrate but settle their differences in the spirit of Jesus.

### **Spiritual Gifts (1 Corinthians 12:1–11, 27–31)**

Despite their problems the Corinthian Christians had received many wonderful gifts from God (see 1 Corinthians 1:5). Paul described some of these special gifts. It was the Holy Spirit who decided which member should have a particular gift. He would make sure that everyone had at least one gift. When they were all used together the Church became the Body of Christ – the living Christ in the community. Just like a body the Church needs all its various parts to work together if it is to do its work well. In chapter 14 Paul says that some of the more spectacular gifts, like speaking in ‘tongues’, must not be given too much prominence.

### **Love is the best gift (1 Corinthians 12:13–13:13)**

In the middle of this long section about gifts Paul speaks about the very best way of all. Without the love of God flowing through the heart of the Christian, nothing that he or she does or says will be of any value. No gift is of any value unless it is used in love. Even if a Christian is prepared to die for his or her faith, it will be of no value without the compassion of Jesus being shown. Verses four to seven of chapter 13 sum up the qualities of Christian love. They are the way that all Christians are called to live. This beautiful poem shows us the secret of Christian living.

### **What happens when Christians die? (1 Corinthians 15:12–27, 50–54)**

Many early Christians believed that Jesus would return to the world in their lifetime. They knew Jesus had been raised from the dead and were waiting for him to come back. That is why Paul advised them not to worry about changing from a single to a married state (see 1 Corinthians 7). But some of the Christians were reaching the end of their human lives. What would happen to them when they died? Paul set out the answer in this chapter. Just as Jesus had been raised from the dead so all Christians would be raised from death at the last day. Our

old, worn out bodies will be replaced with everlasting bodies and we will share in the victory that Jesus has won over death.

**Preaching about Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:1–17; 5:16–20)**

Paul knew how privileged he was to be entrusted with the Good News about Jesus. He did not need to promote himself as a wonderful preacher. Instead he simply had to talk about Jesus Christ as Lord. He knew that anyone who was saved by Jesus Christ was a new person. No longer was he at war with God but peace with God had come. This message of friendship with God had been given to Paul. He described himself as an old clay pot but one that was filled with the most wonderful treasure. That treasure was Jesus. So even though he had to suffer great hardship and trouble he would never give up speaking about his Lord. In the end all his troubles would be forgotten when he met Jesus in Heaven.



Rewrite 1 Corinthians 13 in your own words.



Paul set the highest standards for Christian behaviour in a wicked city. Why was this necessary and appropriate?



*Nothing Without Love* chapter 3 pages 9–12



Pray for an honest understanding of the gifts and skills that God has given you.



Use the discussion time to share your thoughts about how you relate to other people. Get other members of the group to confirm your strengths.

**Month 9  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living –  
Evangelism**

**‘Think before  
you act’**

### **Introduction**

This chapter encourages you to do some homework on your community and on yourself. You will need to be honest, modest and truthful about what gifts you have as an evangelist. The first main paragraph, ‘Surveying society’, relates mainly to a European situation. You may not feel that the examples given relate to your world. If this is so you will need to think about your own community. If you cannot find statistical information you can still think about the best way to approach people where you live.



Write a paragraph which explains your answers to the 10 questions on page 11.



Read Ephesians 4:3-7 and 11-16. Extend Paul’s list of gifts by adding those that you and the members of your group possess.

**Here is your opportunity to make your  
witness for your Saviour!**

**Month 9  
Week 4**

**Locally  
arranged  
practical work**



Passages from the Letter to the Philippians as indicated in the notes.



Pray for everyone in your group the prayer that Paul made in Philippians 1:9–10.



Paul said (in Philippians 1:22–24) that he did not know what was best – to go on living for Christ in this world, or to be with Christ in Heaven. Why do you think he decided that it was better to go on living for Christ in this world?

**Month 10  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'To live is  
Christ'**

### **Full of joy (Philippians 1:1–5)**

The letter that Paul wrote to the first church that he started in Europe (see Acts 16:12) is full of joy. This is surprising. Paul wrote the letter when he was in prison (Philippians 1:13). He wrote it to a church that was suffering because of enemies in the community (Philippians 1:28). He also knew about a quarrel in the church (Philippians 4:2). But all through the letter Paul encourages his Christian friends. He tells them that he is happy to be suffering for Jesus and that they, too, should rejoice (Philippians 4:4).

### **How to live for Christ (Philippians 1:12–26; 2:14–16)**

Paul was able to see that everything that had happened to him, including beatings, imprisonment and shipwreck, had helped him to share the good news about Jesus. Now he simply wanted to live, or die, for Jesus. He wasn't afraid of anyone or anything. His life belonged to Jesus Christ. Paul told the Philippians that they, too, must live for Jesus. They would shine like bright stars on a dark night in the world of wickedness that was around them.

### **A hymn to Jesus (Philippians 2:5–11)**

These verses are a poem, or perhaps a very early hymn, that was sung in the churches. The first verse of the hymn speaks about Jesus, who was God, giving up everything to become a poor man. He was so humble that he was prepared to die, like a criminal, on the cross. The second verse of the hymn says that God will lift Jesus up to the highest place in Heaven. Then the whole world will

recognise that Jesus Christ is the Lord. This hymn is a summary of all that we believe about Jesus and the four words, 'Jesus Christ is Lord', are the first simple creed of the Church.

### **Sending a good friend home (Philippians 2:19–30)**

Paul hoped that his young assistant, Timothy, would be able to go to Philippi soon but in the meantime he was sending the letter with Ephaphroditus. This man came from Philippi and had been helping Paul, but now he wanted to return to his home city. Paul praised him for his good work and hoped that he would recover from a serious illness when he got back to his home.

### **Profit and loss (Philippians 3:1–10)**

Paul had to warn the Christians at Philippi about relying on outward ceremonies like circumcision, which was the way a Jewish man became accepted in his faith. True Christians worship God through the Holy Spirit, said Paul, and trust in Jesus Christ alone. They cannot rely on any human ceremony to save them. Paul reminded them that this is an important truth. He had once trusted in the Jewish ceremonies but he now saw this as useless waste – rubbish that needed to be thrown away. He was prepared to lose all these advantages so that he could win Jesus Christ. To know Jesus, crucified and raised from the dead, was far more important than anything he had lost.

### **Keep on running! (Philippians 3:12–14)**

Paul was familiar with the original Olympic Games. He saw the Christian life as a long-distance race. It is not the person who runs fastest at the start who always wins, but the one who can keep on running until he crosses the finishing line. Paul did not think he had already won but he was still running! He hoped to win the prize – a place in Heaven with Jesus.

### **Think good thoughts (Philippians 4: 4–9)**

Paul knew that life was often very difficult for the Christians at Philippi. He tells them not to worry, to ask God for what they need and to be thankful for all that God provides. They should centre their thoughts on true, noble, pure and lovely things. Then they would know a sense of peace that comes from God alone. This is far greater than anything the world could know.

### **A beautiful letter**

Many people think the Letter to the Philippians is the most beautiful letter in the New Testament. It shows us the real love that Paul had for the Christians in that city. He was very grateful for their help and this showed in the way that he wrote.

Most of all it shows us how deep was the simple faith that Paul had in Jesus: 'I want to know Christ . . . For me to live is Christ . . . Rejoice in Christ'.



Philippians 4:8–9 encourages us to think good thoughts and put them into practice. What good things in your life should you thank God for?



Philippians 2:7 speaks of Jesus giving up his God-like qualities when he became a man. What were those qualities that Jesus gave up? Are there some that he retained during his earthly life?



Passages from Colossians and Ephesians as indicated in the notes.



Use Paul's prayer for the Ephesians (3:14–21) as your prayers this week.



It seems as though false teaching entered the Church quite quickly. What should we do to prevent false teaching coming into our church today?

**Month 10  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'God's great  
plan'**

### **Two cities – one message!**

The letters that Paul wrote to the churches at Colossae and Ephesus are very similar. They share many of the same ideas and were delivered by the same messenger, Tychicus, probably at the same time. The two places were different in many ways. Ephesus was a great city and Colossae was only a small town. Paul had spent a great deal of time in Ephesus (Acts 18:19–21; 19:1–20:1) but it does not seem that he had ever been to Colossae. But the churches in the two cities had similar problems. Some clever thinkers were at work altering the simple truths of the gospel. This was confusing the Christians there and Paul needed to spell out the message of the gospel clearly.

### **Jesus Christ is one with God (Colossians 1:15–22 Ephesians 1:17–23)**

The gospel message is that Jesus was not just a man, and not just an angel. He was God himself in a human form. He was exactly like God. He was there with God creating the world. He is here with us in the Church as its head and founder. Through his death on the Cross he has made us at one with God. Through him we can know peace with God. Once we were at war with God but now there is a 'peace treaty' through the suffering of Jesus.

### **Jesus Christ makes us all one (Ephesians 2:11–22)**

Through his death and resurrection Jesus has brought together all those who believe in him. The old differences between the Jewish people and the rest of the world have been broken down. The Jews had been specially chosen by God in

Old Testament days but now anyone can come to God through Jesus. The barriers are broken down. Those who used to think of themselves as outsiders are now members of God's family. Strangers are welcomed in. All together we are the Church headed up by Jesus himself.

### **God's Secret (Colossians 1:24–29; Ephesians 3:2–13)**

Paul says that God has taught him a secret he must share with his friends. It is a kind of 'open secret' that God wants us all to know. The secret is that Christ lives in our hearts when we give ourselves to him. This can be true for all of us whatever our race or our human family. Writing to the Galatians (2:20) Paul had already said, 'I no longer live, but Christ lives in me.'

This 'mystery' could not be understood by those who were making the faith complicated but it was a simple secret that all who believed could know for certain.

### **Keep on living with Christ (Colossians 2:6–10; 3:1–10; Ephesians 4:1–5, 25–32)**

Paul now shows his friends at Colossae and Ephesus just what it means to live with Jesus Christ in their heart.

- It means that you are strong because Jesus is alive in you (Colossians 2:6–7).
- It means that you are not taken in by false ideas (Colossians 2:8).
- It means that you put off sinful thoughts and actions like getting rid of dirty clothes (Colossians 3:5, 8–10).
- It means that you live an honest life (Ephesians 4:25–29).
- It means that you are gentle and patient with other people (Ephesians 4:2).
- It means that you feel at one with other Christians because they are your brothers and sisters in Christ (Ephesians 4:3).

### **Battling for the Lord (Ephesians 6:10–18)**

Paul's final message to the Ephesians is to say that the Christian life is a fight against evil powers. There are forces opposed to God. Christians, with Jesus Christ living in their heart, have to fight this battle. They will need armour that protects them against evil and will allow them to win the fight. Faith will be their shield, salvation their helmet. The word of God will be their sword. They will be protected by goodness. More than everything else prayer will keep them alert and safe.



Describe the armour which Paul says can help Christians in their fight with evil. Which piece of this armour helps you most in your Christian battle?



Why was it important for Paul to insist that God's 'secret' was now open to everyone who believes? Why do you think that some people want to keep special 'secrets' away from ordinary people?



*Nothing Without Love* chapter 4 pages 13–15



Pray that the way you live will influence your non-Christians friends so much that they will want to know what motivates you.



Are there areas of life at school, at work or in your community where Christians do not speak up? How can we make a Christian voice heard in these places?

**Month 10  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living –  
Evangelism**

**‘Where can I  
start?’**

### **Introduction**

This chapter shows us that we have to demonstrate our Christian faith wherever we are. Whenever we meet people who have not accepted Jesus as their saviour we can show by our actions as well as by what we say that Jesus has made a difference in our lives. We have to begin with how we behave. We should be good students or good workers, doing our studies or jobs well. We should be kind neighbours, generous and helpful. When the way we live commends itself to our friends, opportunities will come to say why we live like this. Then we will be able to point to our faith as the source of our strength and point other people to Jesus. Remember what we learned last week in the paragraph headed *Keep on living with Christ*. Paul’s advice to the Ephesians and Colossians is good advice for Christian evangelists today.



Do your friends at school know that you are a Christian? How can you show them that Jesus is your saviour?



Is it possible for Christians to be too aggressive in promoting their faith? If this is a danger, how can it be avoided while still making a clear witness?



Pray for the General and his leadership of the Army.



Would your group consider writing regularly to another group of Salvation Army young people in a different part of the world? What would such a correspondence teach you?

**Month 10**  
**Week 4**

**Salvation Army**  
**Characteristics**

**‘International**  
**Fellowship’**

**Notes**

As these notes are written The Salvation Army is at work in 110 countries around the world. They include some of the wealthiest and some of the poorest. In some countries the Army is strong with tens or even hundreds of thousands of soldiers. In other places Salvationists are a tiny minority of people. In some countries the Army is well respected but in other places Salvationists are in danger. The style of worship is different in different places and the uniform is changed to reflect custom and climate. What are the important principles that unite this huge Army of different people?

**We share the same faith**

All Salvation Army soldiers have the same beliefs. We worship God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We accept Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord. We affirm our belief in the Bible as the word of God. We accept the same articles of faith. Our soldiership in the Army is our way of fulfilling our membership of Christ’s Church.

**We recognise each other as brothers and sisters in Christ**

There are no barriers of race, colour, language or gender between Salvationists. Whatever their loyalty is to their nation or tribe, we recognise another loyalty to those who share our commitment to Christ in the Army. Stories have been told of Salvationists in opposing military units who have recognised each other and given support across the lines of battle. In times of difficulty Salvationists who

have had to move from their homeland have found a warm welcome from those who share their faith in their new land. When international meetings are held, the friendship that develops between delegates from different nations often lasts for a lifetime. Salvation Army officers sometimes serve in countries other than their own. They are accepted as spiritual leaders wherever they serve.

### **We live a disciplined Christian life**

Across the world Salvation Army soldiers accept the need to adopt the same Christian lifestyle. We are expected to be honest in our business, pure in our relationships, wise and generous in the way we use our money. We do not use anything which would make us addicted. These same standards of conduct and behaviour are expected of all Salvationists even if they seem to differ from local customs. Within the caring fellowship of Salvationists there is understanding and support for any who fail to live up to these standards. Any who fall are helped to try again but the standards are maintained.

### **We share resources**

The Army is often strongest in the numbers of its soldiers and the extent of its work in those parts of the world where it is hardest to raise or give money. In places where we have fewer soldiers sometimes we have more money. The principle of 'self denial' means that we share both our money and our people so that help can be given to our brothers and sisters where it is most needed. Every part of the Army world contributes what it can to the Self-Denial Appeal each year and the money that is given in this way is used to support the work of the Army wherever it is urgently required.

### **We accept international leadership**

The one position that unites The Salvation Army around the world is the office of the General. He or she is an experienced officer who is chosen by fellow leaders from every part of the world. It is the General's task to guide and direct the Army's work in the way that God wants it to be done. The General visits as many parts of the Army as possible so that he or she can understand the needs and hopes of the people. The General is a spiritual leader, teaching and encouraging Salvationists through a written ministry as well as through these visits. Any Salvation Army officer with the appropriate qualities of spiritual leadership may be considered for the office of General, who is accepted as leader by all Salvationists.



Find out some information about the work of The Salvation Army in a different country from your own. Write a paragraph about this work.



What are the most important international elements in The Salvation Army?  
Why do you consider them important?



Passages from 1 and 2 Timothy as indicated in the notes.



Paul said that he remembered Timothy constantly in his prayers (2 Timothy 1:3). Why not begin a prayer list in class so that you can remember the same people in your prayers when you meet?



'The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil' (1 Timothy 6:10). Is this still true? If so, how should a Christian avoid falling into this trap?

## Month 11 Week 1

### Bible Study New Testament Letters

### 'Advice to a young friend'

#### 'My true son in the faith' (1 Timothy 1:1-2)

Timothy was a young man from Lystra who joined Paul and Silas on their second missionary journey (Acts 16:1-5). He may have been shy (2 Timothy 1:8) but he was to become one of the second generation of leaders in the growing Church. So Paul, writing from a Roman prison, needed to encourage and teach him as he took responsibility for God's work. You can see how much Paul loved the younger man by the way he writes. It is just like a father teaching his son.

#### False teachers (1 Timothy 1: 3-11, 18-20)

One of the hard tasks of a church leader was to make sure that all the teaching was good. When Paul wrote to Timothy a number of controversial ideas had begun to be taught by some people. Paul warned Timothy not to allow these ideas to act like poison in the church. He named two people who needed to be put out of the fellowship for this reason.

#### How to conduct worship (1 Timothy 2:1-15)

By the time these letters were written the Church had established a way to worship regularly. Worship styles have changed over the centuries but what Paul taught in verse 1 still remains the basis for our worship. Prayers making requests for ourselves, intercession for others and thanksgiving to God for his mercy always find a place in Christian worship. What Paul said about women's place in worship was right for the time and conditions when he wrote. It does not really apply in most of the world today. We should notice that Paul recognised a number of women who were church leaders. Phoebe, Priscilla, Mary, Tryphena,

Tryphosa, Persis and Junias, who is called an apostle, are all mentioned in Romans 16.

### **Who should be a leader (1 Timothy 3:1–12)**

It is important that anyone who leads in the church should be of good character. Paul told Timothy that a leader's family and social life must be of the highest standards. The leader should have a good reputation in the town. New converts should not be made leaders until they have some experience in the faith. But Timothy should not let his youth hold him back (1 Timothy 4:12). All leaders should be tested. Most of all it was important that they keep hold of the deep truths of the Christian faith.

### **How to lead in difficult times (1 Timothy 4:1–4; 2 Timothy 4:1–5)**

Paul knew there were hard times ahead for the young Church. He was in prison. The Christians were blamed by the Romans for disasters that occurred. Persecution was coming and the wicked lifestyle of the Roman Empire would make it hard to be a Christian. So Paul gave Timothy a clear picture of what he should do: 'Preach the Word; always be prepared; correct, rebuke and encourage; be patient and teach carefully; keep your head; endure hardship; do the work of an evangelist; fulfil all your responsibilities.'

### **Pictures of a Christian leader (2 Timothy 2:3–6; 15)**

Paul gave his young assistant four word pictures of a good Christian leader.

- A Christian leader is like a soldier whose only aim is to be obedient to his commanding officer.
- A Christian leader is like an athlete who trains hard, keeps the rules and keeps going to the end, so that he can win the race.
- A Christian leader is like a farmer who can expect to receive a reward if he has worked hard and produced good crops.
- A Christian leader is like a workman who uses his tools properly and is not ashamed of his work.

This is the kind of leader that Timothy should become.

### **'Follow "Father's" example' (1 Timothy 1:12–14; 2 Timothy 2:1–2; 4:6–8)**

Paul gave his testimony several times in these letters. He was so grateful to God who had entrusted him with a ministry. It was God himself who had helped him to be faithful through all the experiences of a long and demanding life. At the end he was willing to give to God all that he had done. His life had been poured out

like an offering and he knew he would be rewarded in Heaven. These tender words are perhaps the last words that Paul ever wrote. What a wonderful life of witness and service he lived!



Which of the four pictures of a Christian leader in 2 Timothy 2:3–6 and 15 are most helpful to you? Show how the one you choose would help you to become a good leader.



There are four places in the Letters to Timothy where Paul quotes a 'trustworthy saying'. Because the New Testament was not written at this time they form an early basis for sound Christian teaching. Find the four 'trustworthy sayings'. What do they teach you about Christian truth?



Passages from 1 John as indicated in the notes.



'If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness' (1 John 1:9). Make your prayers private ones of confession, claiming the forgiveness that Christ offers.



How do you think this letter from an old man would have been received by the young Christians to whom it was written? Would they have accepted the wisdom of an elder or thought he was 'out of touch' with their world?

**Month 11  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'Love one  
another'**

#### **A letter from grandfather! (1 John 2:1–6)**

This letter does not say who sent it or who it was sent to. However, from very soon after it was written the Church believed that it was sent by John who was one of the first disciples of Jesus. He lived to be a very old man and moved from Jerusalem to Ephesus where he was thought of as the 'grandfather' of the church. We can imagine that younger Christians would want to hear stories of his youth when Jesus lived in Galilee. Remembering the life of Jesus and thinking about what it meant helped John to write the Gospel that has his name. He also wrote three letters which we have in the Bible. In the first of these he writes as an old man to his 'dear children'.

#### **Seen with my own eyes (1 John 1:1–4)**

John says that he has seen, heard and touched the one who is the Word of Life. Jesus, who was with God before the world was made, came down to be a man and John knew him, walked beside him, talked with him. John wants to share that wonderful knowledge with his friends.

#### **Light and darkness (1 John 1:5–10, 2:1–11)**

The first great idea about God which John saw in Jesus was like the contrast between light and darkness. Jesus shone a great light into a world of darkness. This meant that all could walk safely in the light of Jesus. Walking in the light of Jesus means choosing to obey God and living as God wants us to live. Of course, we can choose to live and walk in the dark but then our bad thoughts and actions

separate us from God. If we want to be God's friends then we will choose to walk in the light. The good news is that, even if we fail and walk in the dark, Jesus is willing to forgive our sin when we confess it and restore us to his friendship.

### **Children of God (1 John 3:1–3)**

The idea that God is the head of a family and that we are all his children is found in John's Gospel (John 1:12–13) as well as in this letter. We cannot claim membership of this family by right. It is God's gift to us, made possible by the sacrifice of Jesus. Paul says that we have been 'adopted' into God's family (Galatians 4:4–7).

In these verses John reminds us of the wonderful privilege of being the children of God. It is true that in some ways every human being is 'God's child' because all are made 'in his image' (Genesis 1:26) but if we accept Jesus as our saviour we become children of God and members of his family in a new and privileged way.

### **God is love (1 John 4:16–21)**

This is the main theme of John's letter to his 'dear children'. There may be many ways of describing God but the true nature of God can be known in these three simple words. We can see God's love in the life of Jesus (1 John 4:9) and in his sacrifice on the cross (1 John 3:16). As John wrote in his Gospel, this is the final proof of the extent of God's love (John 3:16). The love of God can be shown in the lives of those who follow Jesus. They share with people in need (1 John 3:17), they love each other (1 John 3:23) and they are not afraid (1 John 4:18). When this love is shown in our lives it makes God's purpose complete (1 John 4:12).

### **Test the spirits (1 John 4:1–6)**

'Grandfather' John has to warn his dear children about false ideas that are creeping into the Church. He urges his friends to test every idea against one simple truth. If any new idea says that Jesus came from God and was a real man here on earth, then it can be accepted. If there is any doubt about the humanity and divinity of Jesus then it must be rejected. It is still true that ideas can creep into the minds of Christians which deny the truth of our faith and we have to test them always against the truth of Jesus our saviour.

### **Faith that overcomes the world (1 John 5:1–5)**

Finally John wants to encourage his readers. Loving God and obeying his commands will strengthen our faith. It is this faith that will give us victory over

all the forces of evil in the world. When we are filled with the love of God we have no fear of anyone who can hurt us.



Many Christian songs speak of walking in the light (1 John 1:7). Find those in your songbook and write out the relevant verses and choruses.



'I write to you, young men, because you are strong, and the word of God lives in you, and you have overcome the evil one' (1 John 2:14). Why do you think John was so confident about the young men? Is it right to have similar confidence today?



*Nothing Without Love* pages 16-21



Pray for the people who you plan to talk to about your faith. Pray that God will open their hearts so that the witness you give will help them to find Jesus.



Discuss the question at the foot of page 18: 'Why should I get involved in the Church, you can be a good Christian without all that, can't you?'

**Month 11  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living –  
Evangelism**

**'What do I  
need'**

### Notes

This lesson concentrates on the simple things which you need if you are to be a good witness for Jesus:

- You need a good testimony. Your story about what God has done for you is the most important tool of all. People may question your ideas but they will find it hard to challenge what has happened to you.
- You need to have answers to questions. The lesson offers some books which can help you to answer some basic questions about the Christian faith. It also advises that you do not have to know all the answers! You can always seek help from a more experienced evangelist.
- You need patience. Very often people will not be convinced by a first encounter with a Christian. The evangelist needs to persist patiently and sincerely.

Here is good advice which will help you to begin your work as a true witness to Jesus so that other people may come to know him as their saviour.



Write your own testimony about what God has done for you and how you came to know Jesus as Friend and Saviour.



Prepare an answer to one of the 'standard' questions posed at the bottom of page 18.



Spend some time thinking about the ceremonies you have taken part in. Pray that the spiritual reality behind the outward sign will become clear to you.



Why is the wearing of a Salvation Army uniform an important witness to your faith?

**Month 11  
Week 4**

**Salvation Army  
Characteristics**

**‘Signs and  
Symbols’**

### Notes

When The Christian Mission became The Salvation Army (see *Heroes of the Faith* page 9) it quickly adopted many words and signs used by military organisations. Members became ‘soldiers’. Their leaders became ‘captains’. They wanted a flag and a uniform. They called their prayer meetings ‘knee drills’. They marched to their open-air meetings. The use of these and many other military terms has remained a distinctive part of the Army. More important are the symbols associated with our Christian faith which have become part of the way we worship and serve God.

### Outward signs

Every nation and army has a flag. The Salvation Army flag has three colours. The red main area is to remind us of the death of Jesus. His death – the blood of Jesus – saves us. The blue border reminds us of the purity and holiness of God. The yellow star reminds us of the fire of the Holy Spirit. The words on the yellow star are ‘Blood and Fire’. These are a very brief way of thinking about the sacrifice of Jesus for us and the fire of the Holy Spirit which came at Pentecost. So the colours of the flag are a sign of our faith.

Salvation Army soldiers wear a uniform. This is to remind them that they are on duty for God. The uniform has the first letter of the word ‘salvation’ in the local language clearly shown and the hat has the words ‘The Salvation Army’ on a red band. The uniform says to other people that we are available to help them. It says that we can be trusted. It says to everyone we meet that we are Christians and that we are not afraid to witness to our faith.

Our uniforms, printing and buildings are usually marked by a crest. This very complicated design has at the centre the cross of Jesus with a letter ‘S’ for

salvation around it. The round sun represents the light and fire of the Holy Spirit. The swords remind us that we are fighting for God against evil. The crown represents the reward that God will give to those who are faithful to the end. The motto – Blood and Fire – appears here and the shots (or ‘bullets’) remind us of the truths of the gospel which we are to proclaim.

### **Symbols**

All Christians have symbols – practical signs of spiritual truths. A number have found a special place in the Army.

The mercy seat is a wooden form (sometimes a collection of ordinary chairs or even a drum!). It is a place where people can come to say that they are responding to God in a special way and that they want to take time to pray. There is nothing special about the form or chairs. It is coming to pray there publicly that makes this a holy place for many Salvationists. It is not the only way you can find forgiveness for your sins and claim Jesus as Saviour, but many have found it to be helpful for them.

The articles of war (also called ‘A Soldier’s Covenant’) is a document which sets out Salvation Army beliefs and the promises that Salvationists make about their lifestyle. It starts by saying that the person signing it has asked Jesus to be his saviour. It is signed by everyone who wishes to be a soldier in The Salvation Army. The signed paper is then accepted by the leaders of the corps and the new soldier is enrolled under the flag in a public meeting. This whole process takes the place of the baptism ceremony used in many other churches.

When a new baby is born into a Salvationist family, the parents want to thank God for the safe arrival of the child. They also want to make promises about how they will care for the baby and what principles they will use in training their child. They bring the child to their corps where a dedication service is held. This means that the soldiers and friends can offer their support to the family and witness the promises that the parents make. Dedication does not mean that the child automatically becomes a Christian. That is a choice that only the child itself can make when he or she is old enough to do so. It does mean that the child will be brought up in a Christian home and in a Christian fellowship.



Why are the colours of the Army flag important as a sign of the Christian faith?



‘The mercy seat is a place of grace, not a place of disgrace’. Why should Salvationists use the mercy seat?



Passages from Hebrews as suggested in the notes.



Use this old gospel chorus which picks up the theme of Hebrews 12:2.

*Turn your eyes upon Jesus,  
Look full in his wonderful face,  
And the things of earth will grow strangely  
dim  
In the light of his glory and grace.*



Why was it hard for Jews to accept the Christian faith?

**Month 12  
Week 1**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**'The better  
way'**

### **A letter or a sermon?**

In older translations of the Bible this book was called 'The Epistle of Paul to the Hebrews' but today most Bible scholars think it was written by someone else in the early Church and that it was a sermon or a lecture given to Christians of Jewish origin who lived in Rome. They had been thinking about giving up the Christian faith and returning to their old Jewish religion. Jews in Rome were safe but Christians were being persecuted. It must have been a temptation to forget about Jesus. They had already suffered (see 10:32–34) and might have been afraid of what could happen to them. The sermon shows them that Jesus is the better way. He shows what God is truly like and he is the one who bridges the gap between them and God. If they trust Jesus he will never leave them.

### **Jesus is better than the angels (Hebrews 1:1–4; 2:8–9)**

Angels were important as God's messengers. They often told the great people of the Old Testament what God wanted them to do. But Jesus was God himself, who had come from Heaven to demonstrate God's message by his life, death and resurrection. Now he had gone back to Heaven to take his place far above that of any angel. The Old Testament scriptures had foretold this plan.

### **Jesus is better than Moses (Hebrews 3:1–6)**

Christians and Jews alike honour Moses, who led his people from the slavery of Egypt and received God's law on Mount Sinai. But Moses, great man though he

was, was only a servant of God. Jesus is God's Son. He was the author of the laws that were given to Moses and so was greater than the man who received them.

### **Jesus is the great High Priest (Hebrews 4:14–16)**

As we have seen in the story of Jesus' trial, the Jewish High Priest was not always a good man. Despite his position of great honour and power, he could use it for unworthy purposes. Jesus knew all the human temptations but he never used his power for selfish purposes. He understands our human weaknesses and we can approach God through him, knowing that he will sympathise with our needs.

### **Jesus brings in the New Covenant (Hebrews 8:6–12)**

The Old Testament teaches that God made a number of agreements with people, especially with the Jewish people. But the great prophet Jeremiah showed that the people had always broken their side of the agreement with God. He looked forward to the day when God would make a new agreement (the word 'Covenant' or 'Testament' is used) with everyone. He would write his laws in our hearts and not just in books or on stone tablets. Jesus is the one who brings in this new Covenant by the sacrifice of his death and by his resurrection.

### **Jesus is the greatest 'hero of the faith' (Hebrews 11:1–10, 32–40; 12:1–3)**

The 11th chapter of Hebrews is the story of all the great heroes of the Old Testament. It is a thrilling account of all that they did. The link in all their stories is that they were people of faith. In the first verses of chapter 12 we are encouraged to be people of faith and to keep going whatever the difficulty. We do not need to look only to the great heroes of the past but, rather, to focus on Jesus, who is the greatest hero of the faith. Even the thought of the cross did not put Jesus off. He is the beginning and end of our faith.

### **What shall we do?**

All through this book the writer breaks off from his account to urge his readers to hear the message. They should not give up their faith but boldly go forward, trusting in Jesus. He is the one who can help them through every problem. You can find some of these great words in 3:12–14; 4:12; 5:11–14; 9:13–14; 10:19–22. Perhaps the greatest statement in the book is found in chapter 13 verse 8: 'Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and for ever.'



Why were some of the Jewish Christians thinking about forgetting about Jesus? Why was following Jesus the better way?



Moses is described as a great hero of faith (11:24–29) but Jesus is described as greater than Moses (3:1–6). What do these statements tell us about the relationship between the old faith and the new one?



Passages from Romans as indicated in the notes.



Make Romans 15:5–6 your prayer this week. Pray for unity as you speak and live for Jesus.



Why was Paul so determined to preach in Rome (Romans 1:15)? Do you think he was disappointed to be a prisoner when he arrived there (Acts 28:16)?

**Month 12  
Week 2**

**Bible Study  
New Testament  
Letters**

**‘Paul’s gospel’**

### **The way of salvation (Romans 15:22–33)**

We have left until last the greatest of all the New Testament letters. The Apostle Paul had never been to Rome but he really wanted to bring the news of Jesus to the city that was the capital of the whole world at that time. There was a Christian church in the city and Paul decided to set out the whole of the Christian gospel to them in a letter as an introduction to his own ministry. The letter deals with all the great truths about God’s plan for the world.

### **The gospel (Romans 1:1–6)**

Paul begins by telling the people who he is and what his message is going to be. It is all about Jesus, who was promised in the Old Testament writings. He is the Son of God, risen from the dead. Jesus is calling the people of Rome and all the world to be his followers.

### **What Jesus Christ has done for us (Romans 1:18–20; 2:1; 3:9–12,23–25)**

The early chapters of Romans tell a sad story. It is the story of human failure. God made himself known to us all and we have rejected him. The Jews have not kept the law God gave in the Bible and the rest of us have not responded to our understanding of God. We are all the same. We have fallen short of God’s plan for us because of our sin. We deserve God’s punishment. But the sad story has a happy ending. Jesus took the sins of all the world on his shoulders when he was crucified and has paid the price for our sins. If we believe in Jesus we no longer receive punishment from God and the barriers between us and God have been

broken down. Our sin has been forgiven and we are accepted into God's family. We no longer have to depend on our poor attempts at being good. We can put our trust in Jesus and he saves us.

**What Jesus Christ does within us (Romans 5:1–8; 6:5–11; 8:1–2, 31–39)**

In these wonderful chapters Paul shows us the changes in our lives that come when we accept the gift of salvation from Jesus. Just like the death and resurrection of Jesus, we end an old life of sin and start a new life. This new life is one of peace with God and hope for the future. Old, bad habits go away and new, good ways of living come alive. The battle between good and evil in our lives is won by Jesus. We are no longer slaves to sin but have become free to serve God. Now that we know that we are on God's side in this battle we can be sure of his care for us. Nothing that can happen to us will disturb us. No evil powers can frighten us. We can be more than conquerors through Jesus.

**What Jesus Christ will do for the Jewish people (Romans 9:2–5; 10:1; 11:1, 25–26)**

Paul, who was Jewish, like Jesus, had been given a special ministry to Gentiles. But he still was concerned for his own people. They had been chosen by God to receive his message and God still had a special place for them in his plan. Paul longed for his people to accept the message from Jesus and he believed that one day they would come to believe in Jesus for themselves. In the meantime he did not blame the Jews but always prayed for them. There were some Jewish Christians at Rome and Paul wanted to encourage them and to remind the others that they should not think of themselves as better than others because they had accepted Jesus. They should not be proud but grateful for God's mercy to them.

**What Jesus Christ wants to do through us (Romans 12:1–21)**

The final section of this letter gives clear guidance about the way Christians should live their lives. Because we have to live in a world that does not always share our faith, we have to show our faith in our lives. The way we behave will be different from those who have no faith in Jesus. Our actions will be a kind of worship offered to God. We must use our gifts in the Church. We must return love and blessing for hatred. We must live in harmony with those around us. We must be good citizens, respecting authority. We must overcome evil with good. All these qualities and many others mentioned will show to the world that Jesus is alive in our hearts.

**What a wonderful message!**

This brief lesson can be only a summary of the great truths in this book. It is not always easy to read but it will be worth studying in detail. It contains the essential truths of Christianity. We hope that by this brief introduction you will be encouraged to study it in greater depth.



Jesus told Nicodemus, ‘You must be born again’ (John 3:7). Paul says that a Christian is united with Jesus in his death and resurrection (Romans 6:5–11). What does it mean to have a new life in Christ?



Consider what Romans 5:1–2 means to you.



*Nothing Without Love* pages 21-29



Ask God to turn the ideas you have been studying in this book into action in your own lives.



Should evangelism be spectacular in its attempts to reach people or should we use ordinary situations of daily life to witness?

### Introduction

This is the point where the book becomes a practical manual for those who want to tell others about Jesus. A number of useful ways of beginning to be an evangelist are suggested. You are invited to discover the ways that best suit your personality and that can be effective. Whatever method you decide will be best for you it is important to make a start. You can talk about the theory of sharing the gospel for a long time without actually doing it. Beginning is always hard but you will find doors will be opened for you and that God will use you as his witness.



Which of the ways of sharing the gospel suggested in this chapter would be the most suitable for your situation and for your personality? Make a plan of how you are going to begin your witnessing for Jesus.



Consider the methods suggested in this chapter and the more traditional approaches in chapter 7. Which are most effective in your culture? Should we change our ways of sharing the gospel if the existing models are no longer working? What methods of evangelism will you try?

**Month 12  
Week 3**

**Christian  
Living -  
Evangelism**

**'Making a  
Start'**

**Take this opportunity to try out your studies in evangelism in a practical way.**

**Month 12  
Week 4**

**Locally  
arranged  
practical work**