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BE
STRONG
AND DON'T GIVE UP

2 Chronicles 15:7





ROOTED IN FAITH

As we enter the month of February, we remember that a new beginning is only the first step in our journey with God. January helps us start fresh, but February invites us to grow deeper in our faith. The Bible teaches us that faith is not only about starting well but about continuing every day. In Colossians 2:6-7, we are told to live in Christ, "rooted and built up in Him." This means our faith should be strong and steady.

Today, we live in a time of rapid technological growth, endless information, social media pressure, and constant noise. Our phones, screens, and news updates are always calling for our attention, leaving very little time for quiet and reflection. Many people are anxious about the future—about finances, health, family, work, children's education, and the condition of the world. Conflicts, natural disasters, economic problems, and moral confusion are reported every day, and this often fills our hearts with fear and worry. In such an environment, it is easy for our hearts and minds to become tired, troubled, and distracted. We can slowly lose our peace and hope if we are not careful. If our faith is shallow, we will be easily shaken by problems and bad news. But when our lives are deeply rooted in Christ, we remain firm, calm, and hopeful, even when everything around us seems unstable and uncertain.

To be rooted in Christ means to build our life on Him. A tree with deep roots does not fall when strong winds come. In the same way, when our faith is deep, we can stand strong in trouble. For The Salvation Army, this is very important. Our service to people, our care for the poor, and our daily work should come from our love for Christ, not just from duty.

Spiritual growth does not happen by itself. We must take time for God in our daily life. Our faith grows when we pray, read the Bible, and think about God's Word. Prayer helps us talk to God and trust Him. The Bible shows us the right path when the world gives many wrong ideas. Even a little time with God every day can slowly make our faith strong.

Faith also grows when we help others. The Salvation Army believes in showing God's love through action. When we help the needy, visit the sick, or encourage someone who is sad, we are serving Christ. These small acts of love not only bless others but also make our own faith stronger and our hearts kinder.

Growing in Christ is a lifelong journey. Just like a plant grows slowly, our faith also grows little by little. Sometimes life is hard, and we feel tired or discouraged. But God uses these times to make us stronger. Even when we do not see changes quickly, God is working in our lives.

As we go through this month, let us think about where our faith is rooted. Are we trusting Christ every day, or only sometimes? Let us thank God for His goodness and remain rooted in faith in Christ.

May this February help us grow deeper in Christ. As a believer may we remain rooted in faith, strong in God's Word, and ready to serve others. When our life is rooted in Christ, we can be a light and hope to this world.



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A CALL TO GROW INTO HOPE-FILLED COMMUNITIES: NEW YEAR LETTER FROM COMMISSIONER BRONWYN BUCKINGHAM

Commissioner Bronwyn Buckingham celebrates the power of the love and encouragement we give each other enabling us to belong to something greater than ourselves.



Dear Friends,

Several years ago, not long after moving to London, Lyndon and I set out for our local corps (church) one Sunday morning only to find that our route was blocked and there were hundreds of people lining the streets. We soon realised that the London Marathon's halfway point was a short walk from our home and so, following a number of failed attempts to break away from the crowd, we decided to join them.

Thousands of runners came past – strong athletes and dedicated fundraisers who had trained for something exceptional – and were cheered on by roars of encouragement from the roadside. We were witnessing something special. Within minutes, I heard my own voice among the calls of



the supporters, saying, 'Keep going! You can do this!'

All of us long to be affirmed and encouraged by those around us. After all, we have been created to belong to something greater than ourselves. All churches are designed for community, both with those who sit beside us every Sunday and those who are yet to know that they have a place among us. It is where we are known and loved. We are welcome to share the highs, lows and in-betweens of life, and receive support to face it all. On reflection, we didn't miss church that morning – we experienced church on the street!

As we welcome a new year, I turn my mind to women serving in ministries of love and care, transforming lives all around the world. I thank God for each

of you, your faithful efforts and the untold Kingdom impact you make.

Your impact could be felt in the weekly coffee served with a smile, a text message to a struggling friend, the monthly portion set aside for overseas donation, or in prayerful conversation over Bible study. However you live out your faith, your contribution is felt and valued in our mission to see women mutually enriched through local and global connections and support.

Paul's words in Colossians 3:9-17 call us to live as those raised with Christ. We must cast off behaviours that don't serve us or others well, and instead clothe ourselves in compassion, humility, patience and love. This is more than a personal choice or a kind gesture; this is the hard work of becoming a Jesus-centred community.

We are chosen, holy and dearly loved. We belong to the Lord, and we have been given to one another as salt and light, to serve as many parts of one body. We are called to grow into hope-filled communities, where the peace of Christ rules and his Word dwells richly among us.

Let us hold firmly to a faith that builds others up. Let our fellowships be marked by grace and loving support. Like the shouts of encouragement that carried the marathon runners to the finish line, may our actions be bold and our words be life-giving. May we continue to cheer one another on in love, believing that we will see lives transformed in the name of Jesus.

Blessings, Bronwyn



THE THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SALVATION ARMY

The Salvation Army stands as a global Christian movement whose theology is rooted deeply in the Wesleyan-Holiness tradition and expressed through its distinctive mission to “*save souls, grow saints, and serve suffering humanity.*” While widely recognised for its humanitarian work, its spiritual foundation is equally profound. The theological principles of The Salvation Army are articulated largely through its eleven Articles of Faith and the lived-out practice of what it calls “*sacramental life.*” Together, these shape a movement that unites evangelism, discipleship, and social action into a single, integrated expression of the gospel.

Scriptures are the Divine Source: At the heart of Salvationist belief is the conviction that Scripture is the inspired Word of God, given by the Holy Spirit and serving as the final authority for faith and conduct. This commitment to the Bible grounds the Army's teaching and safeguards its doctrines in continuity with historic Christianity.

Trinity: Flowing from Scripture is the classical Christian affirmation that God is one Being in three Persons-Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This Trinitarian framework shapes Salvationist worship, spirituality, and mission, placing the life of God at the centre of every act of compassion and every call to holiness.

Fallen State of Humanity: A central theological principle is the Army's understanding of humanity and sin. People were created in the image of God but have

fallen from grace through disobedience. As a result, every person is born with a sinful nature and commits actual sins. This view does not diminish human worth; rather, it underscores the urgency of redemption and the boundless love of God that seeks to restore every individual.

Restoration through Jesus Christ: This restoration is made possible through the person and work of Jesus Christ, who is fully God and fully human. Salvationists affirm that Christ's sacrificial death on the cross provides atonement for the sins of the whole world, making forgiveness and new life available to all. His bodily resurrection and ascension into heaven confirm the victory of God over sin and death, pointing believers toward the hope of eternal life.

Gift of Grace: Salvation itself is understood as both a gift and a transformation. It is granted by grace through faith and received in a personal encounter with Christ. This moment of conversion brings forgiveness, inner renewal, and assurance through the indwelling Holy Spirit.

The work of Sanctification: Army theology goes further, emphasising the ongoing work of sanctification. Influenced strongly by John Wesley, the Army teaches that believers are called to holiness of heart and life. The Holy Spirit cleanses, empowers, and enables Christians to reflect the likeness of Christ in every aspect of their daily living. Holiness, therefore, is not merely an inward experience but an outward expression of love, justice, and purity.



Commissioner John Kumar Dasari
International Secretary
South Asia, IHQ-London

Sacramental living: One of the most distinctive theological features of The Salvation Army is its view of sacramental living. While it does not practise the traditional sacraments of baptism and Holy Communion, it does not reject their spiritual significance. Instead, the Army affirms that the grace symbolised in these rituals can be experienced directly through a life wholly devoted to God. Every act of obedience, compassion, and worship becomes sacramental an outward sign of inward grace.

Commitment to mission and social justice: This theological vision flows naturally into the Army's commitment to mission and social justice. Salvationists believe that spiritual redemption and social transformation are inseparable. Following the example of Jesus, they are called to serve the poor, fight injustice, and challenge the structures that diminish human dignity. The Army's integrated mission often summarised as “*Heart to God and hand to man*” is a living expression of its theological principles.

Return of Christ: Finally, The Salvation Army maintains a hopeful view of the future. It affirms the return of Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment, encouraging believers to live faithfully and expectantly.

Together, these theological principles shape a movement that proclaims Christ, pursues holiness, and serves humanity embodying a gospel that transforms both lives and communities.





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