The Book
In Truth
The Word of God
Two thousand years ago, when there were no newspapers, televisions, radios, mobile phones or other means of global communication, Jesus said something that may have seemed an unachievable hope or an unrealistic boast to those listening. He said: ‘Heaven and earth will pass away, but my words will never pass away’ (Matthew 24:35). He was utterly confident of the eternal quality of the truth he declared. He knew it would endure because, ultimately, it is the standard by which all other ‘truth’ is measured.

His words – as he promised – are still with us. Through the centuries people have lived by them and looked to them for guidance. They have brought eternal life to countless millions – billions, in fact! They still do. Wherever we are in the world today, we are able to read or hear the essence of what Jesus taught, did and said. His words are available in countless languages and dialects. They are relevant to cultural settings of all kinds. They apply to all situations. We find them in the Bible.

The Bible, made up of Old and New Testaments, provides us with other words too. Its truths are presented in many forms. Its messages have been written by a variety of people from many walks of life. Its pages are filled with the recorded experiences of men and women of faith over many centuries. It enriches our hearts and feeds our souls.

Because God has given humans a part to play in revealing his Word to us, we are given insights into people’s understanding of their faith and the world in which they lived. For instance, when we read the Gospels we see they are presented in Scripture as ‘The Gospel according to’ . . . (Matthew, Mark, Luke and John). Men of God, they each brought their own insights, experience, culture and inspiration to the text they produced, as they shared with others the knowledge of God that had been revealed to them.

In the Bible’s pages we see the development of human understanding of God from early days – when faith in One God, the Living God, was new in concept and definition (Deuteronomy 6:4) for an emerging nation – to a later time when a wider knowledge of the nature and loving purposes of the Creator were revealed supremely in and by Jesus Christ. Had mankind’s concept of God been adequate from the beginning there would have been no need for the greater depth of understanding Jesus was to bring. But, of course, it wasn’t. How could it have been? In what is known as the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew chapters 5-7), Jesus frequently used the phrase ‘You have heard that it has been said’ followed by ‘but I tell you’. By doing so, he corrected misunderstandings and presented (for instance) a God who wants us to love (not hate) our enemies (Matthew 5:43, 44) and to ‘do good’ to them too. The Bible should always be read bearing in mind the supreme teaching of the Master himself – and the grace and love he so fully shared.

In helping us see such progression of understanding, the Bible challenges us not only to apply Jesus’ teaching to our daily living, but also to see how it replaced ill-fitting concepts of God that had found their way into people’s hearts and minds. Sadly, misconceptions still arise – and that is why we need doctrine, to which we will turn shortly.

In Truth

The Bible

In Discussion
1. Consider reasons why the words of Jesus have ‘never passed away’. Matthew 24:35; John 20:31; John 1:1-3
2. In what ways are we helped by the variety of writers used by God to reveal his Word to us? Luke 1:1-4; Mark 1:1-3; Ephesians 1:1, 2; Philippians 1:1, 2; Proverbs 1:1; Nehemiah 1:1
3. Discuss how human understanding of God has developed through Jesus’ teaching. Matthew 5:21-24, 27, 28 and 38, 39; Matthew 7:21-23; Matthew 6:7, 8; John 3:17; John 4:21-24
4. Discuss ways in which your own understanding of God and his will have developed through your life. John 4:39-42; John 16:12, 13; Luke 19:8; John 20:26-28

In Prayer
Ask the Lord to continue to guide you in developing and deepening your understanding of him and his will for your life.

In Truth

Notes
ALTHOUGH much of what Jesus said and did is recorded in Scripture, the Gospels obviously don’t cover every event. At the conclusion of his Gospel, John suggests that if everything Jesus did was written down ‘the whole world’ wouldn’t have room for the books that would be written (John 21:25). This means there is a large amount of what Jesus said and did of which we have no knowledge, but what we do know shows us clearly the heart of a just and loving God – described by John as ‘full of grace and truth’ (John 1:14).

John also described Jesus as the Word. ‘In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning’ (John 1:1, 2). By doing so, he held up Jesus as the ultimate, eternal standard of truth. This is a theme that recurs throughout John’s writings.

Later, he records Jesus as announcing himself as the Truth (John 14:6). These are outstanding claims and some listeners found them too difficult to accept. The Pharisees refused to acknowledge the validity of Jesus’ testimony and wanted evidence from elsewhere (John 8:13). But Jesus knew his own validity. He knew the strength and eternal nature of his words. He knew that what he taught he acted upon. He had no false standards, just as he had no false words. His teaching would stand the test of time, having a completeness and integrity that is unmatched anywhere. It always will, and an unavoidable part of that completeness is his claim to be the Truth. It has to be. There can be no ‘in between’ position.

This has always been and always will be the dilemma for people who are unsure as to whether to embrace Jesus fully or reject him. It is similar to the dilemma Pilate faced when Jesus was brought to him for judgement – crucifixion or release. There was no in between. Unfortunately for Pilate, given questionable unsubstantiated evidence from the chief priests, and feeling pressure from a frenzied crowd, he seemed unable to accept Jesus’ word that he had come into the world to ‘testify to the truth’ (John 18:37). Instead, he asked a dismissive question, ‘What is truth?’ (18:38) – and didn’t wait for an answer. Yet even as he spoke, the Truth was standing right in front of his eyes.

Without an eternal standard of truth, humankind has nowhere to turn to for ratification of what is right or wrong, good or evil. In the sacrificial death of Jesus – who spoke the word with his life – we find good and evil in stark, defining contrast. Whilst it seemed to those around that goodness had been humiliated and vanquished by a corrupt and overpowering evil force, the reverse was the case.

It is possible to deny the truth, to exaggerate it, to ignore, suppress, misrepresent and hide the truth, but we can never destroy the truth. Truth will always be truth. God will always be God. The One who is the Truth is the only one to whom we are ultimately required to answer. To receive him and accept the truth he shares with us about ourselves, is to embrace the grace he offers (John 1:12). It is to discover the meaning behind Jesus’ coming to earth, and the resurrection life he has made possible.

John said his Gospel was written so that we ‘may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God,’ and that by believing we ‘may have life in his name’ (20:31). To discover Jesus is to know the truth that sets us free (8:32) – now and always.

IN DISCUSSION
1. Consider a world without truth.
   Psalm 116:8-11; Romans 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:8-11; 1 John 1:8-10
2. How would you answer Pilate’s question: ‘What is truth?’
   John 18:37, 38.
3. Bearing in mind that Jesus is the Truth, what are the implications of this statement: ‘We can never destroy the truth. Truth will always be truth. God will always be God.’
   John 17:3; 1 John 5:20; Revelation 15:3, 4
4. Jesus said that when we know the truth, as his disciples, the truth will set us free. Discuss what this means for us.
   John 8:31-36

IN PRAYER
Thank God for the eternal standard of truth found in Jesus. Thank him that we are not left without guidance, direction or help as we seek to live in truth.

IN TRUTH
NOTES
WE LIVE in a world spoiled by falsehood. It comes in many ways, causing confusion, mistrust and a great deal of unhappiness. People may tell lies to cover up something they have done wrong or something about which they don’t want others to know. They tell untruths about the goods they are selling – or the real price. They exaggerate the effectiveness of what they want people to buy, and advertisements frequently mislead us into having false expectations of what specific products may do. Some countries have laws to prevent false claims in commerce, but these do not always prevent people from being misled.

Unfortunately, distortions of the truth also occur within Christian circles. Some preachers place emphasis on one part of Scripture while ignoring the balancing message of another part. Some foolishly or unthinkingly exaggerate what God promises, or deliberately misinterpret his Word to mean something different from what was originally intended. The ‘prosperity gospel’ is a case in point. It is preached as if Jesus has promised to make us materially rich. This is not what he taught and is in stark contrast to ‘Go, sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven’ (Matthew 19:21) and ‘Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth’ (Matthew 6:19) – which is what Jesus actually taught.

In a world of varied intellects, mixed motives and different cultural backgrounds, it isn’t surprising that misinterpretations occur, so it is important to provide a means by which members of a church – particularly an international one – can be united in their basic understanding of the faith. In the year when The Salvation Army took its name, 1878, its Eleven Articles of Faith were written and verified. These beliefs can be found on page 04 of the One Army Introductory Unit or in The Song Book of The Salvation Army. We call them ‘The Doctrines’. They are similar to those of the Methodist New Connexion (1838), the church in which William Booth learned his doctrine, and are accepted as being in the mainstream of Christian belief.

The Salvation Army has kept its doctrines comparatively concise. They express the personal faith of Salvationists, whilst sharing a common emphasis with other Christian traditions. They represent the teaching of the Church in general, but are especially at the heart of the witness and fellowship of Salvationist community everywhere.

The earliest Christians simply acknowledged one another in the basic confession: ‘Jesus is Lord’ (1 Corinthians 12:3).7 At the time it seemed to be all that was needed in the way of creed, but as the Church grew and divisions in belief emerged, it became necessary to formulate agreed statements of faith.8 It could be said that doctrine is needed to refute error as much as to state the truth about God and his will. With the multiplicity of languages involved in presenting doctrine, the task of defining or redefining eternal truth in words that can be globally embraced, demands great care. In some ways it is an impossible task because of the unknowable greatness of Almighty God (Romans 11:33-36).9 Yet honest acknowledgement of this can play a significant and liberating part in helping us each develop true faith. It is something to be glad about – to rejoice in – and never forget.

1. Consider the kind of damage that can be caused to people’s lives when God’s word is misrepresented or exaggerated.
   Matthew 16:1-4 and 12; 1 Corinthians 1:10-12; 1 Timothy 1:3-7

2. Why does the prosperity gospel give a wrong impression of what Jesus asks of his disciples?
   Matthew 6:19; Matthew 19:21; John 16:33; Luke 12:15

3. What is the purpose of shared doctrine?
   1 Timothy 4:16; 2 Timothy 3:14-16; Ephesians 4:14

4. Try to express the ‘unknowable greatness of God’ in words, and then thank him for his eternal care for us.
   Romans 11:33-36
THROUGHOUT the years the Church has used various means to convey the truths of God’s word. Hymns, music and drama have played their part, and the introduction of electronic media provides an ever-growing number of ways to share the gospel and strengthen faith. Most churches have consistently made use of visual aids to enhance worship – including symbols – and The Salvation Army is among them. It doesn’t regard any of its symbols as being essential to faith, but their value is found in helping explain – in clear, direct ways – the eternal truths that underpin its beliefs and practices.

The flag (see page 09) is a prime example. Its bright colours – red, yellow and blue – provide a banner under which all Salvationists may – and do – unite. The first flag was presented to Coventry City Corps, UK, in September 1878, by Catherine Booth and has the Cross at its centre. Surrounding the Cross is a sun, representing the light and fire of the Holy Spirit. The large ‘S’ stands for salvation and the two swords, together with seven ‘gospel shots’, depict the Word of God and its truth. The crown of Glory, given to those who are faithful, is found at the top of the crest. The crest’s expression of truth is unsophisticated, providing basic symbolism of a faith that, whilst not lacking in depth, prioritises simplicity and clarity.

Today, in many parts of the world, the red shield (see page 09) has become the preferred logo for identifying Army ministry, though it does not depict the truths of the gospel in the detailed manner of the crest.

The prominence of the Cross at the heart of the crest is the Army’s way of saying that, whatever symbols and practices it may adopt, the sacrifice of Jesus on the cross remains the foundation on which everything else is built. The Cross, with its arms outstretched to the world and its vertical beam uniting Heaven and earth, remains the world’s greatest symbol. It is uncomplicated. It is simple, yet powerful. Its silent, unremitting message is of an all-embracing God whose love for his creation speaks louder than all the words in the world.
APART from the first manuscripts, written in the language of the age and place, every translation of the Bible has been just that – a translation. Scholars have worked tirelessly throughout the centuries to make the Scriptures available to as many people and in as many languages as possible. Their work continues.

When the Revised Standard Version of the Bible was first published in the late 19th century, William Booth welcomed it. ‘If [it] throws any new light upon the Book of books,’ he said, ‘I shall accept it very gratefully.’ He was glad to see the Bible made more accessible and understandable. But he added another comment that took things a step further: ‘I want to see a new translation of the Bible into the hearts and conduct of men and women,’ he said.

What is the point of reading God’s Word if its truths aren’t lived out in our lives! That, of course, is what the Bible is for – to help transform us.

Seeing the godly witness of a Christian life can have far-reaching effects in helping others understand the truth of what God has done and is doing in his world today.

Another way of spreading truth – as mentioned earlier – is through music and song. In many ways, early-day Salvationists learned their faith through the songs they sang. Songs were written especially to convey biblical truths and to ‘translate them to our hearts’. Herbert Booth and Frederick Pearson are among those who did so. Songs also became ‘conversational’ with God. They spoke directly to him, often requesting an answer or pledging new commitment. They played a vital part in ensuring that the truths of the gospel were at the heart of corporate worship.

Ever since it was first introduced, the Army’s Song Book has been used for personal devotional reading. Because of the ‘relationship’ approach of many songs, the book is ideally suited for reflection time with God. It challenges, reassures, strengthens faith and offers true worship of the heart. It is an enriching source for deepening spiritual life on biblical truths.

As then, the Army of today also uses music and songs written by Christians of other denominations. They can play a significant part in ensuring that the Army stays linked to mainstream Christianity. It helps us remember we are an expression of a universal Church – the Body of Christ. The value of writing worship songs for this generation – and writing them in language that can be readily understood by Christians and non-Christians alike – should not be overlooked.

There are ample resources for discovering the truth on which our faith is founded – truth that gives guidance, direction, assurance and promise. Yet, as William Booth said, we will only feel its benefits when we apply those truths to our own lives.

IN DISCUSSION
1. William Booth believed that receiving the word of God should transform the way we live. Discuss the difference ‘God’s word in us’ can make.
   
   John 15:3; Colossians 3:16, 17; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 2:14

2. Discuss how people testifying to God’s presence in their life helps others in their faith.
   

3. Share ways in which you feed on God’s word. What helps you in the feeding of your soul?
   
   Psalm 119:105; Deuteronomy 6:6-8; Luke 4:16-19; 2 Timothy 2:15

4. How careful are you to use words that are understandable to non-Christians when speaking of your faith in your daily life or in corporate worship?
   
   1 Corinthians 14:19; 1 Peter 3:15; 1 Corinthians 2:1-5

IN PRAYER
Pray that the Lord will guide you into sharing his truth in natural, genuine ways.
IN CULTURE

INDIA is a country of diversity. It has hundreds of languages, religions, cultures, castes and political parties. Within this diversity the need for truth is essential and this is shown by a number of symbols.

The colour white is at the centre of the Indian flag and speaks of ‘peace and truth’. Our national motto ‘Satyameva Jayate’ (satyam-eva jayate literal English: truth alone triumphs) was adopted when the country gained independence. The words are inscribed in Devanagari script at the base of the national emblem, and the emblem and words are also inscribed on all Indian currency.

Such prominence reminds Indians to speak the truth and live for truth. In every Indian culture there are many great stories about people who lived for truth, but there are also many who suffered and died for it. In addition there are severe penalties for those who fail to speak the truth or tell lies. In some places people have been tied to trees and denied food until they speak the truth. Some might be excommunicated from their community because of dishonesty, theft, debt, slander and the like. If their children tell lies, parents may give severe punishments, practices which still exist in some families.

Today there are people who stand boldly for truth in many areas, ready to face challenges and pressures. Victims of injustice may find others supporting them in various ways. People are hungry for truth and justice, but they do not always find them. Selfishness, corruption, power and politics, play their part in compromising the truth, and there has been a strong movement against corruption – especially in high places – and the campaign for an anti-corruption bill has been passionate.

Politics plays a major role in influencing society. On taking office each political leader or government officer takes the oath, ‘I tell the truth, live for justice’ – but not everyone does. Unfortunately truth is lost sometimes and even some who say they support truth influence witnesses to lie in order to escape punishment.

In such a large country it is easy for people to be deceived by false statements, promises or words, and as in other countries, misleading adverts result in people losing money.

In such circumstances, Salvationists try to show an exemplary life to others, but it is not easy. In spite of challenges and pressure of caste, tribe, religion or region, there are many stories about the faith of Salvationists who live for Jesus. Ninety-eight per cent of Salvationists (and the majority of Christians) are from low caste or poor families (the Dalit community), so it is important that the Army stands with and for the marginalised. The gospel has given many people dignity and a sense of self-worth.

In many villages the social system results in people’s houses being located according to class or status. The rich have the land and with it the power – to employ or not – along with political influence and finance. If those in power are corrupt, truth and justice can be hard to find.

Here are some of the ways in which the Army seeks to influence society:

1. Promoting truth awareness campaigns.
2. Discouraging the offering and taking of bribes.
3. Running Bible studies and soldiers and cottage meetings to promote Christian ethics.
4. Using Salvation Army periodicals to proclaim the truth as well as promoting understanding of the gospel.
5. Officers visiting people’s homes to provide teaching according to the need and situation.
6. By advocating in Dalit issues – particularly the suppression of women and religious disharmony.

The challenges are huge. We pray that indeed ‘truth will triumph’.

CULTURE IN CONTEXT
• How is truth regarded in your culture? What steps are taken to ensure its prominence?
• Is it acceptable – or even expected – that people will hide the truth to make themselves look better in other people’s eyes?
• In a community of injustice, how well do you think you would manage to uphold the truth?
The introductory discussion points, Bible readings and prayers help put the series into the context of each life and individual understanding. The Leader’s Manual has further suggestions as to how these opportunities for growth may be developed.

**RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR THE SERIES**

**BOOKS FOR THE SERIES**
- The Holy Bible
- The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, Salvation Books, IHQ
- The Salvation Army in the Body of Christ: An Ecclesiological Statement, Salvation Books, IHQ
- The Salvation Army Year Book, Salvation Books, IHQ
- The Song Book of The Salvation Army, IHQ
- Called to be God’s People – based on the Calls of the International Spiritual Life Commission, Salvation Books, IHQ
- Samuel Logan Brengle: Heart for God, edited by Peter Farthing, Australia Eastern Territory
- Holiness Unwrapped, Robert Street, Salvation Books, IHQ and Australia Eastern Territory
- The Life and Ministry of William Booth, Roger J. Green, Abingdon Press, Nashville, TN, USA
- Who are these Salvationists? An Analysis for the 21st Century, Shaw Clifton, Crest Books, The Salvation Army, Alexandria, VA, USA

Some of these books are available in a number of languages.

**DVDs FOR THE SERIES**
- Called to be God’s People – based on the Calls of the International Spiritual Life Commission, Salvation Books, IHQ
- Holiness Unwrapped, Australia Eastern Territory
- Our People – The remarkable story of William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army, Australia Eastern Territory
- Boundless Salvation, four-part series by John Cleary, Australia Southern Territory

**REFERENCED RESOURCES FOR THIS UNIT**

**BOOKS FOR THIS UNIT**
1. To Tell the Truth, Clifford Kew, United Kingdom Territory, page 71, shows how Jesus often predicted what was going to happen to him, in order to help us believe when they occurred.
2. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, Chapter 1, pages 2-3 and 13-15, show how the Canon, literature accepted by the Church as Holy Scripture, was determined.
3. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, Chapter 1, pages 1-3, describe how many writers have contributed to the Bible's pages over a number of centuries.
4. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, Chapter 1, pages 3-4, show how the 'self-revealing of God recorded in the Old Testament is gradual and necessarily partial', as it prepared the way for Christ, God's full and final revelation. What and Why we Believe, Harry Dean, Salvation Books, 'The Bible', page 31, also deals briefly and effectively with this.
5. Mere Christianity, C.S. Lewis. 'The Shocking Alternative' section shows, at its conclusion, that there can be no 'in between' position regarding Jesus.
7. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, page xvii, discusses this earliest Christian creed and explains the importance of a written shared statement of faith.
8. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, 'God made known', page 3, acknowledges the 'mystery' of God.
9. The General Next to God, Crest Books, 'Terrible with Banners'. This chapter tells the story of the flag's introduction to the Army, explaining its meaning.
10. The History of The Salvation Army, Volume II, pages 40-41 record the introduction of the crest into Army life.
12. The Salvation Army Handbook of Doctrine, IHQ, page 10 and Called to be God’s People, IHQ, page 20, give fuller versions of this quote.
13. The History of The Salvation Army, Volume II, pages 3-4, reports this incident.

What resources would you add?
Let us know by emailing OneArmy@salvationarmy.org or visit www.salvationarmy.org/onearmy/resources
IN TRUTH
Note to youth leaders
This material can be delivered in a single session. However, by using the additional resources listed at the end, or those recommended on the website, it can be extended over more sessions. We haven’t included suggested timings because much will depend on the age, understanding and size of each group. For some of the activities in the series, advanced preparation and materials are required.
See also the Leader’s Manual for other ideas that could be adapted.
ICEBREAKER AND DISCUSSION STARTER

JESUS was confident that the truth he declared would last forever. His words – and the truth to be found in them – are still with us in the Bible. In the Old and New Testaments we find not only the truths that Jesus taught, but also that of a variety of people from many walks of life over many centuries. These Bible truths help us to know how to live and give us guidance for every situation (see page 02 of the main book).

FIND A PARTNER IN YOUR GROUP. Share with them three things you have done in your life. Ensure that two of the things are true and one is made-up. See if your partner can guess which of your statements is not true. Now swap partners and try it again with someone else.

THINK ABOUT ONE OR TWO OF THESE QUESTIONS WITH OTHERS IN THE GROUP:

- How did you try to work out which of your partner’s statements was untrue?
- Was it simply guesswork or was there more to it?
- How do you know which truths to base your life upon? Is it simply guesswork or is there more to it?
- What kind of truths do you find in the Bible? How do you apply them to your own life situations?

IN THE BIBLE

Jesus was confident that the truth he declared would last forever. His words – and the truth to be found in them – are still with us in the Bible. In the Old and New Testaments we find not only the truths that Jesus taught, but also that of a variety of people from many walks of life over many centuries. These Bible truths help us to know how to live and give us guidance for every situation (see page 02 of the main book).

Find a partner in your group. Share with them three things you have done in your life. Ensure that two of the things are true and one is made-up. See if your partner can guess which of your statements is not true. Now swap partners and try it again with someone else.

Think about one or two of these questions with others in the group:

- How did you try to work out which of your partner’s statements was untrue?
- Was it simply guesswork or was there more to it?
- How do you know which truths to base your life upon? Is it simply guesswork or is there more to it?
- What kind of truths do you find in the Bible? How do you apply them to your own life situations?
BIBLE DISCUSSION

IN THE Bible Jesus refers to himself as ‘the truth’ (John 14:6). Not only did he speak words of truth but also he was the perfect example of living truth. There was nothing false about him (see page 04 of the main book).

On the right are five statements and five actions that Jesus makes in the Gospels. Look up the Bible verses and see if you can match the statements with the actions. Then ask yourselves the following questions:

- What truths can you find in these verses?
- How important is it not only to know the truth but also to live it?
- Take a look at John 8:31-32. How is Jesus ‘the truth’? How can being his disciple give us the truth that sets us free?

Statements:
- Matthew 6:5, 6
- Matthew 20:25-27
- Matthew 7:1-5
- Matthew 18:21, 22
- Matthew 5:43

Actions:
- John 8:1-11
- John 13:4, 5
- Luke 23:33, 34
- John 4:7-9
- Matthew 14:22, 23

Answers to Quiz:
- Prayer – Matthew 6:5, 6/Matthew 14:22, 23
- Loving enemies – Matthew 5:43/John 4:7-9
WE LIVE in a world spoiled by falsehood. Distortions of the truth regularly occur – this can happen even within Christian circles. To ensure that biblical truth is preserved and clearly set out, over the centuries the Christian Church has developed what are known as ‘doctrines’. These are agreed statements of faith and belief. The Salvation Army has 11 doctrines – or ‘Articles of Faith’ – that unite Salvationists everywhere and link with other Christian traditions (see page 06 of the main book).

TAKE A LOOK AT THE DOCTRINES OF THE SALVATION ARMY – you will find them in any Salvation Army Song Book or on page 04 of the One Army Introductory Unit. An online English spoken version with visuals and background music can be found on the SAY TV (Salvation Army Youth of the USA Western Territory) video site: http://vimeo.com/6367847.

Write the doctrines out on to a piece of paper together, making sure that everybody understands any difficult words. Then cut out the various doctrines, fold them up and put them in a bowl. In groups of two or three, pull out a doctrine (or more than one depending on the size of your group). In your small groups, work out some mimed actions that illustrate the doctrine you have.

When you are ready, take turns to read out the doctrines one at a time and allow each group to perform their mime at the same time. You may like to video the ‘performance’ so that you have a short film of the doctrines that could be shared with the adult members of your corps.
**IN TRUTH – SYMBOLS**

**THE** Salvation Army has various symbols that are helpful in explaining the truths of its beliefs and practices in a clear and visual way. Take a look at the three symbols below – the flag, the crest and the red shield. What do these three symbols tell us about Salvation Army belief and practice? What do the colours, the words and the various elements represent? Share what you already know with one another and then take a look at page 08 of the main book that gives some answers.

**ACTIVITY**

Now, imagine that you were going to design a new symbol for The Salvation Army youth group where you are. What would it look like? What elements would you want to include so that it represented the truths you believe? Make a list together. Now design something based on the list you have made – be as creative as you can! Don't forget to think about colours and what they might represent.

You can share your designs on the youth section of the One Army website. Go to www.salvationarmy.org/onearmy/youth and follow the instructions on how to upload them.

**MATERIALS NEEDED**

PAPER AND COLOURED PENS, LAPTOP OR COMPUTER

**IN TRUTH – SYMBOLS**

- **FLAG**
- **CREST**
- **SHIELD**

**THE** BLOOD AND FIRE

**THE SALVATION ARMY**
William Booth once said: ‘I want to see a new translation of the Bible into the hearts and conduct of men and women.’ He was concerned that the truths of the Bible must be lived out. One way the early Army ensured that this happened was by encouraging Salvationists to share stories in public meetings about how the gospel of Jesus was displayed in their everyday life. This is why many corps have ‘testimony’ times in their meetings (see page 10 of the main book).

Spend some time sharing your testimony with the others in your group by completing this sentence: ‘I sensed God’s presence with me when ...’. Choose one of these ways of sharing your story and give yourselves five or ten minutes to prepare:

- Act out something that happened. Then ask your youth group to tell you what they think your testimony was about.
- Draw your testimony in a picture. Show the picture to everyone and explain what is happening.
- Think of a song that expresses your story. It could be a song from *The Song Book of The Salvation Army*, a Christian worship song or a contemporary song that you like. Sing or listen to the song together and then explain to the others why you have chosen it.
- Simply tell your story as it happened. Make it personal and real.
- Find an object (or a few if you like) that represents something about your story. Show it to the others and explain what it has to do with your testimony.

Finish this time by praying together and thanking God that he not only gives us truth but also enables us to live it out wherever we are.

### HOMEWORK

Set yourself a task to be completed by the time your group meets again. Ask everyone to join in so that when you next meet you can all talk about it and find out how you got on. Decide on one of these two ideas:

1. Do some further research about Salvation Army symbols or doctrines. Have a search on the Internet to see what you can discover about the origins of the symbols and the doctrines and how they were put together. There are also some useful books listed on page 15 of the main book and some extracts in the Leader’s Manual. Write down one or two facts you discovered that can be shared with the rest of your group.

2. Spend some time thinking through your testimony and how you could tell your story to a friend, a classmate or family member who is not a Christian believer. Reflect on questions such as:
   - When did I first realise that Jesus was Lord?
   - When did I first realise that Jesus was Lord?
   - What changed in my life when I accepted Jesus as Saviour?
   - How have I seen God work through me?
   - When did God answer my prayer?

Write down any stories that come to mind that illustrate your answer to these questions.

**Be ready to share them!**
CREATIVE WORSHIP IDEA
The Bible says that the Lord is ‘the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End’ (Revelation 22:13). This verse states an important truth about the nature of God – that he is eternal and ever-present. The Alpha and the Omega are the beginning and end letters in the Greek alphabet. Write down on a piece of paper all the letters of your alphabet. Using those letters, try to think of words that state truths about the character of God by completing the sentence ‘God is....’ Help one another with the letters that are not so easy to find words for and finish by reading out the whole list as a statement of worship to God.

FURTHER BIBLE STUDY
Take a look at these Bible verses that state truths about the character of God. After each verse ask yourself: how does knowing this truth about God affect the way I live my life every day?

Psalm 145:3 – God is infinite; Psalm 147:5 – God understands everything; Psalm 90:2 – God is everlasting; Psalm 139:7-10 – God is everywhere; 1 John 4:8 – God is love; Psalm 33:5 – God is just; Micah 7:18, 19 – God is merciful; 2 Peter 3:9 – God is patient; Romans 11:33 – God is wise.

MATERIALS FOR CREATIVE WORSHIP
PAPER AND PENS

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES FOR THE SERIES
BOOKS
The Bible
The Salvation Army Year Book, Salvation Books, IHQ
What and Why We Believe, Harry Dean, Salvation Books, IHQ
From Generation to Generation, Robert and Janet Street, Salvation Books, IHQ
The Life and Ministry of William Booth, Roger Green, Abingdon Press
Never the Same Again, Shaw Clifton, Crest Books
The Common People’s Gospel, Gunpei Yamamuro, Salvation Books, IHQ
Holiness Unwrapped, Robert Street, Salvation Books, IHQ
Born Again In The Spirit, Kapela Ntoya, Salvation Books, IHQ

DVD
Our People – The Remarkable Story of William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army, Australia Eastern Territory

Check with your own territorial or command headquarters for youth resources to add to this list.

What resources would you add?
Let us know by emailing OneArmy@salvationarmy.org or visit www.salvationarmy.org/onearmy/resources
Don’t forget that more ideas are in the Leader’s Manual.
Some books are available in different languages. Please ask.