

William Booth/Salvation Army & George Williams/YMCA

Historical Theology

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William Booth and the Salvation Army

- *Leviticus 25:23* - "The land is mine and you are but aliens and my tenants."
 - *Deuteronomy 8:18* - "Remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you the ability to produce wealth."
 - *2 Corinthians 9:6* - "Remember this: Whoever sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and whoever sows generously will also reap generously."
 - *Matthew 6:19* – "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and rust destroy, and where thieves break in and steal. But store up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where moth and rust do not destroy, and where thieves do not break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also."
- I. Early Life
- A. Born April 10, 1829 in Nottingham, England
 - B. His father was intent on getting rich and climbing the social ladder
 - C. Had some successes but then lost it all
 - D. William had to stop school (age 13) and work as an apprentice at a pawn shop
 1. Did not like this work
 2. But came across poverty even greater than his family
 - E. His father has a death bed conversion and his mother has to go to work
 - F. A family in the neighborhood befriended William and asked him to go with them to the local Wesleyan chapel.
 1. The preaching of Isaac Marsden introduced him to the Gospel
 2. Also attended a Bible class taught by Henry Carey
 3. The classes were the creation of John Wesley because in small groups "it may be more easily discerned . . . how their souls prosper; to advise, reprove, comfort, or exhort as the occasion may require."
 4. At age 15, William "gave his heart to God"
 5. He immediately made restitution for a sin he had committed against some of the other boys in the class.
 6. He also had been thinking much the same as his father had- "How can become rich?", but now he "would serve God and leave present circumstances and the future in God's hands"
 - G. He became great friends with another young man in the group: Will Sansom
 1. They had seen a homeless woman in their area many times. They found her a place to live and supplied her needs.
 2. They often held services on the streets- singing and preaching
 3. They brought a gang of street boys to church – the leader of this group, eventually, trusted Christ
 - H. William almost was caught up in the Chartist movement—call for the government to be more responsive to the needs of poor people of England. It was political movement that had often called for violence to achieve their goals.
 - I. Booth was strongly influenced by an American Methodist preacher, James Caughey who was preaching and teaching in England.

"Booth was Caughey's heir. Caughey convinced Booth that converting the masses was possible through scientific, calculated means. Revivals which were planned, advertised, and prayed for would succeed. Booth was consumed with the idea of winning souls through mass meetings, house-to-house visitation, and personal witness."

- II. Next Steps
- A. After working at the pawn shop for nearly 7 years, he was fired for refusing to work on Sunday
 - B. With no job prospects, he moved to London where his oldest sister with her husband lived.
 - C. Was hired by a pawn shop and found churches that allowed him to preach
 - D. His resolutions: (1) Disciplined life of self-denial, (2) Daily reading of God's Word, (3) Strive to live closer to God, (4) Seek after holiness of heart, (5) Leave providential events with God.
 - E. Came close to moving to Australia to become a preacher there.
 - F. A boot manufacturer (Edward Rabbits) heard Booth preach and decided to support him financially till full time ministry opportunity came.
 - G. Booth was solidly a Wesleyan Methodist: "I worshipped everything that bore the name of Methodist. To me there was one God, and John Wesley was his prophet. I had devoured the story of his life. No human compositions seemed to me to be comparable to his writings, and to the hymns of his brother, Charles, and all that was wanted, in my estimation, for the salvation of the world was the faithful carrying into practice the letter and the spirit of his instructions."
- III. Catherine Mumford
- A. Same birth year as Booth (1829)
 - B. Father was a difficult man for much of her childhood
 - C. He "fell from Grace" (there Church doctrine said one could lose their salvation)
 - D. So, from their view, he father was saved again
 - E. Catherine's mother was a strong Christian at all times and home schooled her children
 - F. Catherine read through the Bible 8 times by age 12
 - G. She was also strongly in favor of total abstinence from alcohol, not just temperance (only would consider a man for marriage if he was of the same mind)
 - H. Catherine and William met at a dinner hosted by Edward Rabbits
 - I. They married five years after first meeting.
- IV. Full-time Ministry and the new organization
- A. Booth served as an evangelist for about 4 years
 - B. After marriage, he pastored two churches in the towns of Halifax and Gateshead for 6 years
 - C. He resigned from that assignment to go back to being an evangelist
 - D. He started The Christian Mission which was later changed to The Salvation Army
 - E. "We are a salvation people - this is our specialty - getting saved and keeping saved, and then getting somebody else saved."
 - F. The Salvation Army was not only a ministry to evangelize but Booth also developed strategies and techniques for working with the poor. Eventually, the social agenda provided food and housing for the most vulnerable.
 - G. Booth adopted a military style organization therefore, the name of the organization fit well.
 - H. He became known as General Booth and even produced a newspaper called: War Cry.
 - I. Many of the converts were from the disrespected classes such as alcoholics, drug addicts, prostitutes and the most deprived in society.
- V. Salvation Army goes International
- A. The organization spread to the U.S., India, and Australia
 - B. Catherine lost her bout with cancer in 1890
 - C. William turned the main administrative duties to his son
 - D. Booth also published a new book: *In Darkest England and the Way Out*
In this book, Booth called for solutions to the social ills: homes for the homeless, safe houses for prostitutes, legal aid for those in poverty, hostels, support for those battling alcoholism, and employment centers.
 - E. This emphasis changed public opinion of the Salvation Army from opposition to being supported and encouraged.
 - F. He was even invited to the coronation of King Edward VII.
 - G. He was awarded an honorary doctorate by Oxford University

- H. In his last few years, he returned to preaching and left the work of the Salvation Army to his son. He died in 1912.
 - I. His funeral was attended by 35,000 including the king and queen of England.
- VI. Salvation Army Statement of Faith
- A. **We believe** that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments were given by inspiration of God, and that they only constitute the Divine rule of Christian faith and practice.
 - B. **We believe** that there is only one God, who is infinitely perfect, the Creator, Preserver, and Governor of all things, and who is the only proper object of religious worship.
 - C. **We believe** that there are three persons in the Godhead - the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, undivided in essence and co-equal in power and glory.
 - D. **We believe** that in the person of Jesus Christ the Divine and human natures are united, so that He is truly and properly God and truly and properly man.
 - E. **We believe** that our first parents were created in a state of innocence, but by their disobedience, they lost their purity and happiness, and that in consequence of their fall, all men have become sinners, totally depraved, and as such are justly exposed to the wrath of God.
 - F. **We believe** that the Lord Jesus Christ has by His suffering and death made an atonement for the whole world so that whosoever will may be saved.
 - G. **We believe** that repentance toward God, faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and regeneration by the Holy Spirit are necessary to salvation.
 - H. **We believe** that we are justified by grace through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ and that he that believeth hath the witness in himself.
 - I. **We believe** that continuance in a state of salvation depends upon continued obedient faith in Christ.
 - J. **We believe** that it is the privilege of all believers to be wholly sanctified, and that their whole spirit and soul and body may be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - K. **We believe** in the immortality of the soul, the resurrection of the body, in the general judgement at the end of the world, in the eternal happiness of the righteous, and in the endless punishment of the wicked.

George Williams and the YMCA

John 17:21 that they all may be one, as You, Father, *are* in Me, and I in You; that they also may be one in Us, that the world may believe that You sent Me.

- I. Early Years
 - A. Grew up on a farm in Southern England
 - B. At age 15, no more farm work—off to learn textile industry
 - C. The boss wanted the boys to go to church—George was not happy
 - D. Two of the boys though had a totally different outlook on life
 - E. George wanted their outlook... so he asked
 - F. He did not like their answer... they were Christ followers and they invited him to their church
 - G. Finally decided to go and he heard the Gospel for the first time.
 - H. The sermon was not particularly memorable. The preacher was not well known or particularly eloquent, but George came to an understanding that Christianity was not a set of rules, but that Christ had died for him and was offering him salvation.
 - I. When he told his friends that this was new to him, they encouraged him to “confess your sins, accept Christ, trust in Him and yield your heart to the Savior”

- J. George said later, "I knelt on the factory floor, when we returned from church. God helped me to yield myself wholly to Him. I cannot describe to you the joy and peace which flowed into my soul when first I saw that the Lord Jesus had died for my sins and that they were all forgiven."
- II. To London
- A. He moved to London and got a job at a textile factory
 - B. George was moved by the emptiness of life for his fellow workers
 - C. He decided to pray for each of these young men by name and he prayed for that another believer might join him
 - D. Less than a month later, a new employee, Christopher Smith, was assigned to the same dorm. Smith was also a strong believer.
 - E. Word spread that two young men were using some of their free time to get on their knees and pray..... more young men came from other dorm rooms to read the Bible and pray.
 - F. It was said that before Williams came to the factory it was almost impossible for a young man in the house to be a Christian, but three years later, it was almost impossible to be anything else.
 - G. Even the owners, Hitchcock and Rogers joined in the weekly Bible Study and Prayer.
 - H. Hitchcock trusted Christ and talked to other factory owners about what was happening at his factory. Soon four more textile factories were hosting prayer meetings for their young men employees.
- III. The Prayer Meeting becomes something bigger
- A. They began to get requests from others trying to start Bible and prayer groups
 - B. Edward Valentine wrote: Thursday, June 6, 1844. Met in George Williams' room for the purpose of forming a society, the object of which is to influence religious young men to spread the Redeemer's Kingdom amongst those by whom they're surrounded."
 - C. Christopher Smith suggested they call this society: Young Men's Christian Association
 - D. The group decided to send out letters to the groups of London factory workers that had been meeting for Bible study and prayer to call for them to band together.
 - E. They had no money to start an organization, but George Williams said, "If this is of God, the money will come."
 - F. The money came and within a few months they had three times outgrown meeting spaces and finally had to rent a space that would hold over one hundred.
 - G. George and many of his colleagues were only 19 or 20 years old.
- IV. Later in Life
- A. He married, Helen, the daughter of one of the factory owners
 - B. He became a successful businessman
 - C. Late in life he commended for knighthood by the queen of England. He thought he should refuse but was talked into it by the London YMCA leadership. That in accepting, he would be receiving the honor for all of the work of the YMCA.
 - D. These were the goals found in his Bible after his death:
 1. The Lord be pleased to help me form resolutions and then give me the grace to keep them.
 2. That I determine to get and alarm and when it goes off that I am out of bed before it is finished.
 3. That I read and meditate upon a portion of God's Word every morning and spend some time in prayer.
 4. That I strive to gain a better knowledge of the Scriptures and have Bible readings with dear Helen.

V. YMCA through the years

A. 1855 Paris

PARIS BASIS – Adopted 22nd August 1855 in Paris, France at the 1st World YMCA Conference

The continuing basis of the work and witness of the Young Men's Christian Association is expressed in the Paris Basis, as adopted by the delegates of the First World Conference in Paris in 1855, and reaffirmed by the 6th World Council of YMCAs in 1973:

"The Young Men's Christian Associations seek to unite those young men who, regarding Jesus Christ as their God and Saviour, according to the Holy Scriptures, desire to be his disciples in their faith and in their life, and to associate their efforts for the extension of his Kingdom amongst young men.

Any differences of opinion on other subjects, however important in themselves, shall not interfere with the harmonious relations of the constituent members and associates of the World Alliance."

B. 1973 Kampala, Uganda

The Kampala Principles

The 6th World Council meeting in Kampala, Uganda, in July 1973, adopted at the same time the following declaration of principles:

The Paris Basis expresses that Christ is the centre of the Movement, which is conceived as a world-wide fellowship uniting Christians of all confessions. It is consistent with an open membership policy, involving people irrespective of faith as well as age, sex, race and social condition. The Basis is not designed to serve as a condition of individual YMCA membership, which is deliberately left to the discretion of constituent movements of the World Alliance. The Basis makes clear that the constituent movements of the Alliance have full freedom to express their purpose in other terms designed to correspond more directly to the needs and aspirations of those whom they are seeking to serve, provided these are regarded by the World Alliance as being consistent with the Paris Basis. Recognising the character of the YMCAs in the world today, this act of acknowledging the Paris Basis places upon the various associations and their members as fellow workers with God such imperatives as:

1. To work for equal opportunity and justice for all.
2. To work for and maintain an environment in which relationships among people are characterised by love and understanding.
3. To work for and maintain conditions, within the YMCA and in society, its organisations and institutions, which allow for honesty, depth and creativity.
4. To develop and maintain leadership and programme patterns which exemplify the varieties and depth of Christian experience.
5. To work for the development of the whole person.

VI. From the YMCA (USA) website

A. History

When George Williams founded the first YMCA in Industrial Revolution-era London, he sought to create a supportive community to help young men like himself address pressing social challenges. The idea found a home in the U.S. seven years later at the Old South Church in Boston.

B. Mission Statement

1. To put Christian principles into practice through programs that build healthy spirit, mind and body for all.

2. The Y is dedicated to providing comprehensive programs and services that enrich communities — and all of the people who live in them — across the country in fulfillment of our mission.

C. Values

Guided by our core values of caring, honesty, respect and responsibility, the Y is dedicated to giving people of all ages, backgrounds and walks of life the opportunity to reach their full potential with dignity.

Wrap-up

Is the Salvation Army living up to their goals and faith statement?

Would George Williams recognize today's YMCA?

Are there any lessons for us today?



George Williams



Catherine and William Booth