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| Covenant Renewal Sunday 2016 |
| Resource Pack |
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| Supporting TSMP Goal 2: Increase soldiers and Goal 1: Make Disciples |
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| TSA Logo 40x48 tsmp_2013_logo |
| **The Salvation Army** New Zealand, Fiji and Tonga Territory |
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| We trust you find this resource useful. We are always keen to receive feedback so that we can improve our service to you. If you have feedback, please send it to tsmp@nzf.salvationarmy.org. | | |
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| Content: Alastair Kendrew | | |
| 2016 | | |

# Introduction

## Founders Day / Covenant Renewal / Candidates Sunday

The first Sunday in July is traditionally Founders Day and Candidates Sunday – a day to remember our history, commit to the future, and call people to officership. At the same time, to support our TSMP Goals of making disciples and increase soldiers, we want provide covenant renewal resources each year to promote soldiership and offer everyone (soldier or not) the chance to re-affirm their commitment to God.

These two aims seem to fit well together, so we have developed this resource pack to help you prepare for a combined Founders Day, Covenant Renewal and Candidates Sunday.

This pack contains a theme, introduction, children’s slot, sermon outline, and meeting lead ideas, plus renewal cards are being sent to you via your divisional headquarters.

The theme for the service is based on William Booth’s declaration at 15 that “God shall have all there is of William Booth”. The Bible passage covers four areas of commitment – our connection with God, personal transformation, unity and service within the church, and impact on those around us. We’re also using some ideas from Kyle Idleman’s excellent ‘Not a Fan’ series and using the Soldier’s Covenant throughout as a deliberate attempt to inspire people to consider soldiership. Since the service doubles as Candidates Sunday, please also include a challenge about officership.

The Children’s Story is the Unbaptised Arm – a story about the first Tsar of Russia, Ivan the Great, and how his soldiers were allegedly baptised but with their fighting arms out of the water so that they might continue to kill.

We recognise that this date may not suit everyone, and you may feel the combined focus will make this a busy day. You are of course welcome to adapt everything in the pack to suit your local context, e.g. to change the date, or have separate Founders Day and Covenant Renewal days. We just hope you find these resources useful and if you use them, please personalise the sermon to reflect your own style and experiences.

## Resources Available

With this booklet, you should expect to receive a set of *Covenant Renewal Cards* distributed by your divisional headquarters.

The intranet contains the electronic resources to support this day. Head to <https://intranet.sarmy.net.nz/>, hover your mouse over the Strategic Mission Plan menu, and choose TSMP Resources Goal Two. Resources available include:

* Electronic copy of the sermon for editing (this document)
* Themed PowerPoint with Bible message
* Background images for advertising or as a themed background for lyrics.

# Supporting Resources

## Meeting Outline

To assist with your meeting planning, we are suggesting a meeting in sections, interspersed with songs, prayer, offering, etc. as you choose.

Potential scripts for each section follow.

| Section | Suggested Content |
| --- | --- |
| 1. Introduction | Introduction (script below) |
| 1. Children’s story | The Unbaptised Arm (script below) |
| 1. The Salvation Army now | If you did not show the video last year of what service we provide in NZ, Fiji and Tonga, we’ve included it in the pack again.  Video 3: Overview of our current services (provided 2:53), or  Arrange for someone to tell a story from your corps history, or  Arrange for someone in your corps to give their testimony |
| 1. Sermon | Potential script below |
| 1. Response | Potential script below. Follow with appropriate response music |
| 1. Benediction | Idea below |

## Preparation

1. Read through this document
2. If you are using the ‘Overview of our current services’ video, download it from the Intranet or check that it is on your media machine
3. Choose someone to tell the children’s story
4. If desired, choose someone to provide some local history, or to give their testimony
5. Gather your response cards and provide pens
6. Personalise the sermon.

## Ideas for Songs

### Founder’s Songs

* + SASB 203 Send the Fire (perhaps to the alternative tune by Lex Loizides)
  + SASB 298 O Boundless Salvation

### Songs about Soldiers

* + SASB 687 I’ll Stand for Christ
  + SASB 696 Soldiers of our God arise (Storm the forts of darkness)
  + SASB 707 Who is on the Lord’s side?

### Contemporary Songs about Battles

* + Be thou my vision (*Be thou my breastplate, my sword for the fight, thou my whole armour …)*
  + Hosanna (Brooke Fraser)
  + The battle belongs to the Lord (Jamie Owens-Collins)
  + Holy Ghost (Bjorn Aslaksen) *(Holy Ghost, you’re wonderful, … As soldiers in his army, we fight with heart and soul)*

### Response Songs

* + SASB C53 Spirit of the living God
  + SASB 474 All to Jesus, I surrender
  + SASB 487 Have thine own way Lord
  + SASB 525 Take my life and let it be
  + The Potter’s Hand (Darlene Zschech)
  + Lord I give you my heart (Reuben Morgan)
  + Arms open wide (Hillsong United) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/arms-open-wide>)
  + Oceans (Where Feet May Fall) (Hillsong) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/oceans-where-feet-may-fail/>)
  + With all I am (Into your hands, I commit again …) (Reuben Morgan) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/with-all-i-am>)

### Finish Songs

* + Send me Out (sung at Congress) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/send-me-out>)
  + God of this City (Chris Tomlin) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/god-of-this-city>)
  + Christ is Enough (Hillsong) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/christ-is-enough>)
  + SASB 734 I’ll go in the strength of the Lord

### Newer Songs (you could introduce or listen to)

* + At the Cross (Love Ran Red) (Chris Tomlin) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/at-the-cross-love-ran-red>)
  + Surrender (Lincoln Brewster) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YB9avoFdYrU>)
  + You’re a Good, Good Father (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/good-good-father-tomlin/>
  + In God we Trust (Hillsong) (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/in-god-we-trust-hillsong-worship>)
  + My heart is Yours (Passion) – includes All to Jesus I Surrender (<http://www.worshiptogether.com/songs/my-heart-is-yours>)
  + Break every Chain – There is Power in the Name of Jesus (Jesus Culture) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rOyjD5Zw2ew>)   
    [Would be great to play while people are responding]

## The Soldier’s Covenant

Having accepted Jesus Christ as my Saviour and Lord, and desiring to fulfil my membership of His Church on earth as a soldier of The Salvation Army, I now by God's grace enter into a sacred covenant.

I believe and will live by the truths of the word of God expressed in The Salvation Army's eleven articles of faith …

I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible. I will make the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life.

I will uphold Christian integrity in every area of my life, allowing nothing in thought, word or deed that is unworthy, unclean, untrue, profane, dishonest or immoral.

I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.

I will uphold the sanctity of marriage and of family life. I will be a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God.

I will abstain from alcoholic drink, tobacco, the non-medical use of addictive drugs, gambling, pornography, the occult and all else that could enslave the body or spirit.

I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.

I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.

I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

I now call upon all present to witness that I enter into this covenant and sign these articles of war of my own free will, convinced that the love of Christ, who died and now lives to save me, requires from me this devotion of my life to His service for the salvation of the whole world; and therefore do here declare my full determination, by God's help, to be a true soldier of The Salvation Army.

## Bible Reading: Romans 11:33-12:13

### Doxology

***33****Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*  *How unsearchable his judgments,* *and his paths beyond tracing out!* ***34****‘Who has known the mind of the Lord?* *Or who has been his counsellor?’* ***35****‘Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?’* ***36****For from him and through him and for him are all things.*  *To him be the glory for ever! Amen.*

### A living sacrifice

*12 Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God – this is your true and proper worship.****2****Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.*

### Humble service in the body of Christ

***3****For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.****4****For just as each of us has one body with many members, and these members do not all have the same function,****5****so in Christ we, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.****6****We have different gifts, according to the grace given to each of us. If your gift is prophesying, then prophesy in accordance with yourfaith;****7****if it is serving, then serve; if it is teaching, then teach;****8****if it is to encourage, then give encouragement; if it is giving, then give generously; if it is to lead, do it diligently; if it is to show mercy, do it cheerfully.*

### Love in action

***9****Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good.****10****Be devoted to one another in love. Honour one another above yourselves.****11****Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervour, serving the Lord.****12****Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer.****13****Share with the Lord’s people who are in need. Practise hospitality.*

# Meeting Content

Scripture: Romans 11:33-12:13

Subject: God shall have all there is of …

Aim: To have the congregation choose to (re)commit to following Jesus wholeheartedly

## 1. Meeting Introduction

Today is a special day in The Salvation Army calendar. Called Founders’ Day, it’s a day to celebrate our history, and in particular the lives of our founders, William and Catherine Booth.

It’s also our Covenant Renewal Day – a day where we each have the chance to consider the various commitments we’ve made to God. For some of us, this is in the form of a covenant that we signed when we became an officer or soldier in The Salvation Army. For others, it may be a commitment you’ve made in another church, or when you were in a desperate situation and you cried out to God promising that you’d change the world if He saved you. And for some of you, you’re simply here today because you’re wondering what this Christian thing is all about.

George Whitfield conducted outdoor evangelistic campaigns in the 1700’s throughout the American colonies, in a period of revival called the “Great Awakening” in America. Although thousands responded to his Gospel message, when asked how many were converted after one of his sermons he replied, “We’ll know in five years.” The point Whitfield was making was that the passing of time should reveal which decisions were superficial and which were genuine, lasting commitments to Christ.

So let’s think of today as your five-year test. How are you getting on?

No matter your situation, we pray that you will feel very welcome and that you will encounter God during this service, as we look at our commitment to follow Him.

## 2. Children’s Segment – The Unbaptised Arm

Who knows where Russia is?

About 500 years ago, Russia was ruled by a man known as Ivan the Great. He had built Russia up into a powerful nation, by having the best soldiers and conquering the people around him.

Some of the leaders in Europe were a little worried that he might come and start taking over their countries, so the leader of the Catholic Church – the Pope – came up with a plan. His idea was to get Ivan to marry someone from the Greek Byzantine royal family. You see, if you’re married to someone, their family becomes your family, and so you’re less likely to try to conquer them.

So, a great royal wedding was planned.

No-one is sure if this really happened, but the story goes that the Greek Church would not allow the marriage unless Ivan was baptised. Who knows what baptism means?

Ivan agreed willingly to be baptised and arrived dressed in his best military uniform, with 500 of his personal soldiers ready for a mass baptism and then a wedding.

But apparently there was a problem. The Church would not allow professional soldiers to become members; because they could not be killers and church members too.

After thinking through the problem, a solution was reached. The men marched into the river along with the priests and as the priests lowered the soldiers into the water, each man grasped his sword and lifted it high in the air. Ivan’s soldiers were completely baptised with the exception of their swords and their fighting arms.

We might say – that’s pretty bad – imagine saying that you want to follow Jesus, but only if you can keep doing what you want to do. That doesn’t sound like you’re following Jesus wholeheartedly. But when you think about it, we kind of do the same. Can you think of any ways that we say we want to follow Jesus, but then do what we want to do, not what we know God wants us to do?

*[Do we act differently at school than we do at church? Do we use bad language? Do we see people in need and choose to not help them? Do we want more and more stuff, instead of being happy with what we’ve got?]*

The Salvation Army was started by William and Catherine Booth when they preached their first meeting in 1865. They had a desperate desire to help people in need and see them come to follow Jesus, and such was the impact of their lives, when William Booth died, 150,000 people came to pay their respects to him! The Salvation Army was in 58 countries, and it’s been estimated that he preached more than 60,000 sermons – that’s around three every day!

But do you know that The Salvation Army really started a long time before that? When William Booth was 15 years old, he decided to give his whole life to Jesus. He promised that “God shall have all there is of William Booth”. Not some, or everything except my arm – he gave “all”, and the result was incredible.

How much are you giving God? Like William Booth, are you prepared to promise “all of you”? I want you to think about that during the message today, because at the end of our meeting, we’d like to give you the chance, if you want to, to sign a card and promise that “God shall have all there is of [you]”.

## 3. The Salvation Army Today

[If you didn’t show this last year …]

When William Booth was informed by his son of the large numbers of homeless people sleeping on the banks of the River Thames, his response was simple: ‘Go and do something’.

Since our pioneer days, The Salvation Army has provided food for the hungry, warmth and shelter for the homeless, and care for those who fall on hard times. We have been among the first at many scenes of disaster and distress. And we have been a voice for those trapped in poverty.

Today, we remain committed to both evangelism and care. Here’s a quick overview of the wide range of services we provide.

[Show video clip 3 – TSA Services Today]

## 4. Sermon

### Introduction

*[If you use the DTR or Not a Fan ideas, please acknowledge that they come from Kyle Idleman. We’ve added the symbol*  *for where you should change slides if using the PowerPoint]*

Who knows what a DTR is? Sooner or later, every couple who is romantically interested in each other has to have a DTR.

DTR stands for “Define the Relationship”. This is the official talk that happens at some point in the relationship to define the level of commitment. Are we just friends or is this something more?

I think Jesus wants to have a DTR with us. Imagine sitting in a coffee shop and Jesus comes in. He sits down and says, “It’s time we defined this relationship. Is the relationship exclusive? Is it just a casual Sunday morning thing, or has it moved beyond that? Are you following me?”

I want you to sit with that question for a moment: are you a follower of Jesus?

Many of us automatically think, “Of course I am.” And we think of all the obvious indicators:

* I go to church.
* I raised my hand once at the end of a sermon.
* Under “religious views” on my Facebook page, it says “Christian.”
* I’m enrolled as a soldier.

Am I a follower of Jesus? Well…yeah!

Actually, all those things show is that you belong to the Christian subculture. But you can belong to that and still be just a fan of Jesus, not a follower.

In his series “Not a Fan”, Kyle Idleman defines fans as being enthusiastic admirers – close enough to get the benefits, but not so close to require sacrifice.

There’s a simple test to know if you’re a fan or a follower – ask yourself “who’s it for”? If your relationship with Jesus is about making sure you get into heaven, or that He keeps you safe and stops bad things from happening to you – that sounds like it’s about you. And if it’s all about you—that’s a fan. But if it’s all about God—that’s a follower.

To show that following Jesus is costly, The Salvation Army uses the concept of a soldier. This concept comes straight from the Bible, where the Apostle Paul spoke often about our being in a spiritual war, our need to put on the armour of God, and to join him as a soldier of Jesus Christ.

You become a soldier in The Salvation Army by signing a document known as the Soldier’s Covenant – containing our eleven doctrines and a series of statements relating to the role of a soldier.

You can be a part of The Salvation Army without ever becoming a soldier, but the decision to become a soldier is our preferred next step in your discipleship journey. A soldier is first and foremost a convinced and committed follower of Jesus. Secondly, they are committed to serving God in The Salvation Army, but this is much more than simply becoming a member. The covenant clauses cover almost every aspect of life. The expectation is that a soldier will see being a follower of Jesus as the pre-eminent passion of life.

Our Bible reading today comes from the book of Romans, a letter written by the Apostle Paul to the Christians in Rome. If you know a little of your Bible history, you’ll know that after Jesus rose from the dead, he appeared to his disciples on numerous occasions before ascending to heaven. The disciples were told to wait in Jerusalem for the Holy Spirit to come on them. When this happened, Peter preached a sermon on the streets of Jerusalem and 3000 people came to believe in Jesus. We call this event Pentecost. Some of those 3000 headed back to Rome and started the church there, so as you can imagine, they hadn’t had much discipleship training!

The Apostle Paul had heard of these Christians in Rome, so decided to write them this letter. For the first ten chapters, he takes great care in explaining the gospel message. Now, where we pick up the reading, Paul is explaining what it means to be a wholehearted follower of Jesus.

### Whole Hearted Followers are growing in Four Areas

Fortunately for us, the Bible breaks the passage up into four sections, and they’re pretty easy to remember – God, Me, We and World *[you could go He, Me, We and Be if you wanted them all to rhyme*. *To help the congregation remember the four points, if you feel comfortable, introduce the four points up front with actions and get the congregation to do them with you: God (point up), Me (point to self), We (give yourself a hug) and World (open the palms of your hands to point out). Then reinforce the actions during each point.]*

Since it is Founders Day and Covenant Renewal Day, we’ll also link these four sections to the Soldier’s Covenant and some quotes from our founders.

#### 1. God

 First, God *[point up]*.

Our Bible Reading started with a doxology – a liturgical formula of praise to God. These verses basically say that God is God and we are not. He is the source of all wisdom and knowledge, and He owes us nothing.

What’s incredible is that this same God wants to have a relationship with us. Christianity is fundamentally relational. You don’t just know about God, you know God, and you live with Him every day. A wholehearted follower has an authentic relationship with God.

The Soldier’s Covenant puts it this way: *“I will be responsive to the Holy Spirit's work and obedient to His leading in my life, growing in grace through worship, prayer, service and the reading of the Bible.”*



Many Christians neglect to worship, pray or read their Bible, then wonder why they feel tired or experience so little of the power of God in their lives.

A young missionary, Herbert Jackson, was given a car to help him in his work. The car was a major asset, but it had one difficulty—it would not start without a push or a jump-start. Jackson devised a system to cope. When he was ready to leave his home, some children from a nearby school would come out of class to help him push-start his car. Then, throughout the day, he would park on a hill or leave his engine running when he stopped for short visits. For two years the young missionary used what he believed was an ingenious method to enable him to use the car.

When poor health forced the Jackson family to leave the field, a new missionary arrived to lead the mission. When Jackson explained to the new missionary his methods for starting the car, the young man opened the hood and began inspecting. “Why, Dr Jackson,” he interrupted, “I believe the only trouble is this loose cable.” He gave the cable a twist, pushed the switch, and the engine roared to life.

For two years, Dr Jackson had used his own devices and endured needless trouble. The power to start the car was there all the time—it only needed to be connected.

As we heard earlier, The Salvation Army was started by William and Catherine Booth, and enjoyed explosive growth. Just before William Booth’s death, he was asked why The Salvation Army had been so successful. He said, “If there is anything of power in The Salvation Army today, it is because God has had all the adoration of my heart, all the power of my will, and all the influence of my life.”

Being a wholehearted follower starts by being connected to God *[point up]*. So how are you doing – are you connected to God? Is He your power source?

#### 2. Me: I am becoming more like Jesus.

The next section of our Bible reading is entitled ‘A living sacrifice’, and refers to ‘Me’ *[reinforce by pointing to self]*.



Paul is urging us to offer ourselves completely to God as a living sacrifice, prepared to become more and more the person Jesus wants you to be.

The problem is that many of us don’t want to change, or at least not completely.

Kyle Idleman puts it this way.

*“A lot of us don’t mind Jesus once a week on Sunday. We don’t mind making some minor change in our lives but Jesus wants to turn our lives upside down – we want him to do a little touch up work, but Jesus wants complete renovation – we come thinking tune-up but Jesus is thinking overhaul.”*

William Booth believed that *“The greatness of a man's power is the measure of his surrender."*

As we surrender our lives to Jesus, we are transformed.

 The Soldier’s Covenant contains a range of promises about this change. For example:

* Making the values of the Kingdom of God and not the values of the world the standard for my life
* Upholding Christian integrity in every area of my life
* Upholding the sanctity of marriage and of family life
* Being a faithful steward of my time and gifts, my money and possessions, my body, my mind and my spirit, knowing that I am accountable to God, and
* Abstaining from anything that could enslave my body or spirit.

So how about you? What is the measure of your surrender? Are people around you noticing any transformation?

#### 3. We: Humble service in the body of Christ.

 The next section of our Bible reading is titled ‘Humble service in the body of Christ’ and refers to us, or ‘We’ *[reinforce by a self hug]*. If we’re connected to God and are being transformed by Him, this will affect how we relate to each other in our church.

In this section, Paul is saying that Christians are in this together. He writes “in Christ, we though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.”

 The Soldier’s Covenant contains a number of promises about ‘we’:

* I will maintain Christian ideals in all my relationships with others; my family and neighbours, my colleagues and fellow salvationists, those to whom and for whom I am responsible, and the wider community.
* I will be actively involved, as I am able, in the life, work, worship and witness of the corps, giving as large a proportion of my income as possible to support its ministries and the worldwide work of the Army.
* I will be true to the principles and practices of The Salvation Army, loyal to its leaders, and I will show the spirit of Salvationism whether in times of popularity or persecution.

There’s at least two important points in this.

Firstly, we’re on the same side! People in our neighbourhoods are searching for authentic community. The best place to find this should surely be in a church. We should be known for the way we treat each other, our hospitality, our authenticity, and for our loyalty to our leaders and the wider Salvation Army.

Secondly, in a body, there is a range of many parts, but all the parts are needed. God has given us all different strengths and passions, not to sit and consume, but to serve and contribute.

*[This would be a good time to explain any particular ministries that you need help with].*

So how about you? Are you a loyal and positive member of our body (and not a ‘pain in the neck’)? Are you actively involved, as you are able in the life, work, worship and witness of our corps? Are you contributing financially to support our ministries?

#### 4. World: Love in action.

We’ve talked about how wholehearted followers of Jesus connect with God [point up], surrender their life to be transformed by Him [me], and serve humbly and loyally within the church [we].

 But there’s one more very important role – how we should live in the world [hands out]. Paul defines this as “love in action” and this is summarised perfectly in the Living Bible translation of verse 9 which simply says “Don’t just pretend that you love others: really love them.” That means caring for them both now and for their eternity.

 The Soldier’s Covenant puts it this way “I will be faithful to the purposes for which God raised up The Salvation Army, sharing the good news of Jesus Christ, endeavouring to win others to Him, and in His name caring for the needy and the disadvantaged.” Or as William Booth would put it “go for souls and go for the worst.”

When you are connected to God and are being transformed by Him, you’ll see the world differently. You’ll see people as He sees them, and will want to genuinely care for others. But you’ll also care about their eternity and the change you’ll be experiencing in your life will make you want to share this with others.

Unfortunately, this doesn’t seem to be the reality for many of us. According to a recent study by LifeWay research, 60% of regular church attending Christians will not have shared their faith in the last six months. While this is a USA study, the statistics are likely to be similar here. It seems that we either aren’t connected to God enough to really believe His power can change lives, we aren’t experiencing much transformation ourselves to have something to tell others, we’re not convinced about hell, or perhaps we’ve just become too comfortable.

Certainly this should not define The Salvation Army. Listen to this quote from Catherine Booth: *“A barracks is meant to be a place where real soldiers were to be fed and equipped for war, not a place to settle down in or as a comfortable snuggery in which to enjoy ourselves. I hope that if ever they, our soldiers, do settle down, God will burn their barracks over their heads!”*

### Summary

#### Ripple Effect

 We’ve looked at four characteristics of a wholehearted follower of Jesus, and these should really create a ripple effect. God, to Me, to We and then our World.

1.  God *[point up]*: it all starts by being connected to God
2.  Me *[point to self]*: As we surrender to Jesus, we allow Him to transform us
3.  We *[self hug]*: As people being transformed by Jesus and sharing life together, we build authentic community and use our gifts to serve each other, and
4.  World *[hands out]*: We genuinely love those around us and willingly tell them the good news about Jesus based on the difference He is making in our lives.

Imagine the difference this church could make filled with people who are connected to God as their power source?

Imagine the quality of our relationships both inside and outside our church if we were all being transformed by that relationship with God?

Imagine the difference our corps could make in our community if we all committed to use our gifts to serve others?

And imagine how much we would want to tell our friends about the difference Jesus is making in our lives, when he was making a difference.

That’s why Jesus wants wholehearted followers. Fans are OK, but they won’t change their world.

## 5. Response

So, let’s do that DTR.

Is your relationship with Jesus just a casual thing – perhaps a just on Sunday thing – or is it something more? Are you just after benefits, like a ticket to heaven, or like William Booth, are you prepared to declare that God shall have all there is of you?

Are you a fan of Jesus, or a wholehearted follower?

I want to give you the opportunity today to respond to God. The music team is going to play some music, and while they do, I’d like you to pause and define your relationship.

* Perhaps you’ve never before understood that Jesus wants to have a relationship with you. Following Jesus starts with a choice, and if you’d like to choose to follow Him today, please come forward and someone will pray with you.
* For others of you, Jesus might be saying “I want more”. I want to be your number one. I want you to have my power. I have plans for you – let me transform you.
* What is your contribution to the corps? Are you promoting unity and loyalty, or do you need to ask for forgiveness for not doing so? Is Jesus calling you to serve in a new way?
* The Salvation Army needs leaders, and especially people who will give their lives in service as officers. Is this something Jesus is talking to you about?
* Is Jesus challenging you to be bolder in sharing your faith?

 Today, we have some covenant renewal cards available. The cards simply say that “God shall have all there is of …” [space for your name], and include the picture of the ripple effect to remind you of the four different commitments of wholehearted followers.

If you would like to respond, we invite you to come forward, and sign the card. And if you’d like someone to pray with you, please kneel at the Mercy Seat.

## 6. Benediction

From our Bible Reading.

### Doxology

***33****Oh, the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*

*How unsearchable his judgments,* *and his paths beyond tracing out!*

***34****‘Who has known the mind of the Lord?* *Or who has been his counsellor?’*

***35****‘Who has ever given to God, that God should repay them?’*

***36****For from him and through him and for him are all things.*

*To him be the glory for ever! Amen. (Romans 11:33-36)*