



The  
William Booth  
Collection

Chapter XXII

**ABOUT GROWING WEARY**

I

Comrades and Friends, — In the early days of The Army we used to sing a song, with the chorus

Don't get weary,  
Don't get weary,  
Fighting for your Lord.

I do not remember much about the tune, but the advice given by the song was excellent, and it has been brought afresh to my mind by some words of Scripture to which I want to call your attention today. You will find them in Galatians, 6<sup>th</sup> chapter, and the 9<sup>th</sup> verse, and they read, 'Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.'

Now, both the song and the text were very applicable to us at the time of which I speak, for alas! Growing weary was no uncommon experience in those days. Many earnest souls, on whose cooperation I had built fond hopes for the future, drew away from my side, and left me to struggle on as best I could without them; and others, on the strength of whose promises of undying faithfulness I have undertaken large responsibilities, turned to be my enemies, and fought against me.

I say sometimes, that had every Officer and Soldier who has at one time or another vowed to live and fight and die under our Flag remained faithful to their pledges, The Salvation Army would, indeed, have been a mighty force today. It would have been sufficiently powerful to shake the world.

I am not talking now about the open backsliders, who throw up religion altogether, crucify their Lord afresh, and put Him to an open shame. I am speaking of those who simply grow weary in the struggle for the Salvation of their fellows, and withdraw from the contest. Alas! They ever constitute a numerous and heart-wounding crowd.



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Let us look at some of them for a moment. You have not far to travel to discover them. I have little doubt that some listening to this Message will belong to this class. Others are probably taking a little extra rest on their beds, or having a gentle walk to improve their health, or have gone for a 'day in the country.' Others, having discovered that a little more educational teaching in their religion is required by themselves or their families, have removed to some more respectable church or chapel in the neighborhood, where they think there is a reasonable chance of the needed enlightenment being found.

Now, mind, I do not say that these weary souls have given up the idea of serving God altogether. Oh, dear no! They would be shocked at any such charge being brought against them. If they were asked the reason for their absence from the fight, they would reply that they feel led to take things a little easier. The fires are not gone out; they are only damped down. Nor are their energies exhausted; they are simply turned into other channels, being expended upon their families, business, politics, or in contending with the unavoidable anxieties of their everyday lives.

The fact is, they have grown 'superior' to what have become, in their estimation, the vulgar methods of The Salvation Army. Anyway, their zeal has cooled, or is expended in other directions. They now live a quieter life than they did before, and are not taunted in their workshop or by their friends as being fanatical, while the small boys do not shout 'Hallelujah' after them when they pass along the street. They have grown weary.

You do not now hear them testify in the Open-Air, or see them, as in former days, marching with happy satisfied faces in the procession. For a long time, whoever used to be absent from their post, they were always there. They have grown weary.

You do not hear their voices in the singing nowadays. Some one else sings the solo, or starts the tune, or keeps it going when it is started. They have grown weary.

You do not hear them in the Prayer Meeting, as in bygone days, wrestling with God for the Salvation of the people, nor see them pushing their way from seat to seat, until the lights are turned off, begging wanderers to return to the fold. They have grown weary.



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If you seek them in the Public-house Brigade, in which they used to lory, you will find other brave hearts; but those tired souls are not there. They have grown weary.

You will not find these weary souls at the Census Meeting, inventing new plans for the Open-Air, for the Young People's Campaign, for the Self-Denial Effort, or the Harvest Festival, for the Revival Meetings; or on their knees praying for God's blessing on those schemes that have been invented. They have grown weary.

Neither will you find them giving their money, nor begging it from others, for the support of The Army, as they formerly did with such pleasure. They have grown weary.

No, neither in these nor in any other labours of love which used to absorb these weary souls will you find them. They have lost heart for these things. It is true, they come up now and then. But the old energy and joy are gone. They have grown weary.

Now, let me ask one or two questions with respect to these tired people.

1. Are they satisfied with the course they have adopted? Have they found the repose for which they seek?

I do not think so. They may sometimes be happy, after a fashion; but satisfied never! It is opposed to the nature of things that they should be. What little happiness and rest they find in their new life can never compensate for the lost joys, affections, and enthusiasm of those days of faithfulness in well doing.

2. Are there any weary souls here who desire to possess again that zeal and power in which they delighted in those early days, and which carried them forward with resistless, glad, Heaven-born energy?

I believe there are. I am sure that in hours of reflection, in seasons of sorrow, in times of trial, they cry out for these glad experiences to come back again. On such occasions they cannot help feeling that they would give all they possess if only this passionate interest in the prosperity of



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God's work and this burning love for the souls of men could once more be awakened within their hearts.

3. What steps must they take to secure so desirable a restoration?

Ah, you know, my Comrades, and I think many of these weary ones know as well. The path of duty lies plain before them. Let them come back to the life of implicit obedience to which they consecrated themselves in the same hour that God assured them of the forgiveness of their sins, and of acceptance into His family. The same consecration will bring the same satisfaction and the same power they enjoyed before.

Let them make that consecration now, and if they will only do it with all their hearts the response they receive shall make impossible any more disposition to weariness in well-doing.

Your affectionate General,  
William Booth.