

# William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army



**Slide 1** William and Catherine Booth and The Salvation Army

**Slide 2** William Booth was born on 10 April 1829 in Nottingham. He had three sisters and they all lived in a village close to the city. They had a fine smart house, and William's father paid for him to be sent to school. Then William's father lost all his money and William had to leave school and work to help his mother and his sisters. It got worse when his father died. Suddenly he knew how it felt to be really poor.

*How did William feel when he had to leave his smart house and good school and go out to work?*

*How could William help his mother and sisters when his father died?*

**Slide 3** The job that William got was in a pawnbroker's shop. This was where poor people brought their best things into the shop to leave them there and get a little money instead. When they wanted to get them out again they would have to pay extra money to get them back. William hated his job because he saw how poor some of the people were. Sometimes he saw how they wasted their money on drink and gambling.

*How can poor people get money for food and clothes when they have none?*

**Slide 4** England was a rich country at this time. New inventions and new factories were making some people very rich. Many people had moved from the countryside into the cities to find work. In Nottingham there were factories making socks and lace, but the people who worked there were not paid much money. Children worked in the factories as well as men and women. There were not enough houses and the city was very crowded. William wanted to do something to help the poor people.

*What was it like for children to work in factories?*

*Was it fair that some people were very rich and others were very poor?*

**Slide 5** William listened to some leaders who wanted the Government to change things, but he knew that the people themselves needed to change. He believed that the message of Jesus was the way for people to be changed and he wanted to tell the poor people about this. So he and his friends held meetings in the streets and encouraged the people to go to church. He led a crowd of boys through the front door of a big church in Nottingham. He and his friends also tried to find ways of getting practical help to the poor people.

*How do governments make things better for poor people?*

*Can churches help poor people?*

**Slide 6** When he finished his apprenticeship there was no job for William at the shop. He could not find another job in his home town, so he set off for London. He hoped he could be a full-time preacher there, but at first he had to work in another pawnbroker's shop. It was even worse than Nottingham and he had no family in London where he could stay. He made some friends at the church. They were impressed with William's preaching. One of these friends said he would pay him to be a full-time preacher. William was very glad to leave the pawnbroker's shop. The same friend introduced him to a young woman at the church. Her name was Catherine Mumford.

*Would William feel lonely in a big city away from his family and friends?*

*How did the church people in London help William?*



Schools and  
Colleges  
Unit

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**Slide 7** Catherine Mumford was born in the same year as William. When she was a young girl she had very strong ideas about what was fair. She went to help a drunk man who was being laughed at by some boys. She wanted to help people who were bullied. She was angry about people selling drink to the poor people. When she was a teenager she was very ill and had to spend a whole year lying on her back in bed. She did not waste this time but spent it reading many books. She loved reading the Bible and was a Christian. When she was introduced to William it was not long before she realised that this was the man she would marry. She and William got engaged, but it was a long time before they could be married.

*Is it hard to go to help someone who is being bullied?*

*How would you feel if you had to spend a whole year in bed?*

*Did Catherine use this time well?*

**Slide 8** William was already a wonderful speaker. Crowds of people listened to him when he told them about Jesus. Catherine encouraged him to study and become accepted as a minister in the church. When he qualified and was made a minister, the church allowed him to travel all round the country conducting special services. After they were married Catherine went with William wherever he travelled, even when she had babies to care for.

*What is it like to keep travelling to different towns instead of having your own home?*

*Should Catherine have stayed at home with her babies instead of travelling with William?*

**Slide 9** Catherine had always believed that women could be just as good at preaching and leading as men were. The church leaders did not think that this was possible. No churches had women leaders in those days. William agreed with his wife, but it was a long time before she had the courage to stand up and speak herself. When she did so everyone realised what a wonderful speaker she was and invitations came for her to preach in many churches. When William started The Salvation Army he made sure that women could be leaders just as well as men.

*Can girls be just as good at leading and talking as boys?*

**Slide 10** William and Catherine moved to London with their family of eight children. William went to see the East End of London. This was the part of the city where many poor people lived. The houses were dirty and crowded and people from other poor parts of the world came to live there. Most of the people never went to church, but William believed he had some good news for them. He saw a group of Christians holding a meeting outside a public house and went and joined them. They could not understand the way that church people spoke, so he talked to them very simply and got them to tell their stories.

*Why did William go to the poorest part of the city to work?*

**Slide 11** The poor people did not feel comfortable in church but they came to the meetings which William and Catherine held. They sang Christian words to the noisy tunes they knew, and they listened to the speakers. Some of them decided to be Christians. William saw that many were hungry, so he gave them a breakfast that cost only a farthing (the smallest coin - much less than a penny today). He made the halls warm and comfortable for the people who came. Mumford.

*What would make you feel at home in church?*



Schools and  
Colleges  
Unit

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**Slide 12** One day William saw that some men were sleeping under the bridges in London because they had no other home. He was so shocked by this that he wanted to do something to make life better for them. He bought some old buildings and put beds in them so that those without a home could have somewhere to stay. Soon these hostels for men and women were to be found in most big towns and cities.

*Have you ever been on a camping holiday?*

*What would it feel like to have to sleep on the street in winter?*

**Slide 13** Many people joined the mission and it spread out to other towns in England, Scotland and Wales. They wanted a strong leader and they knew that William was the right person. They called him 'General', and soon the idea grew that they were a new kind of 'army'. They were an army without guns, but fighting for God and the people. So they changed the name to 'The Salvation Army' and soon were wearing uniforms, starting brass bands and waving a new flag which Catherine designed for them.

*Do you like wearing a uniform like your school clothes?*

*Why do you think members liked wearing a uniform?*

**Slide 14** Not everybody was pleased to see the new Salvation Army. In some places people thought that their street meetings were too noisy. The people who sold beer were angry because the Army people told their friends that it was bad to drink beer. So they attacked the Army marches and even put some of the Army people in prison. In the end most people saw that what The Salvation Army was doing was good and the opposition stopped.

*Was it right to try to stop the Army holding meetings in the street?*

**Slide 15** A family that had joined the Army in England went to live in America. They decided to start The Salvation Army there. Two men who had gone to live in Australia found that they both had belonged to the Army and decided to start the Army in that country. William asked his eldest daughter to begin the Army in France. They even sent some Army people to India to speak to the poorest people in that country. Today The Salvation Army is working in most of the countries of the world.

*Can you find on the map a country where the Army is working?*

**Slide 16** William saw that there was much more that needed to be done for poor people in Britain. They needed to be rescued from a miserable and unhappy life. Many could not find work. They needed to be taught how to make things for themselves. He wanted to buy a farm to teach them new skills and to find new places for them to work. He said that every person should have at least as much as a working horse. They must have food to eat, a place to sleep and some work to do. In many ways England was a darker place than the parts of Africa that were being discovered. He asked people to give him money so that he could make these dreams come true. He wrote a famous book in which he showed how this could all be done. It was a very popular book. Many people agreed with his ideas, but some thought it would be too hard to make them work.

*What do you dream about that could make people happy?*



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**Slide 17** William got some of the money he needed. He opened homes for homeless people. He started offices where they could look for work. He bought a farm and taught them how to keep animals. He found places at home and abroad where they could start a new life. He opened homes for girls who had run away from home. He even started a factory to make matches safely to show the other makers how it could be done.

*What was the best thing William started to help poor people?*

**Slide 18** Catherine had been working beside William all through the years. She was called ‘the Army Mother’ because she had given her life to help people. They loved her very much and were very sad when they learned that she was very ill. While William was working on his big scheme to help the poor, Catherine was dying. When she died many thousands of people came to her memorial service. Although William was very sad, he promised to go on with his work in The Salvation Army.

*Why do you think William promised to go on with his work?*

**Slide 19** After Catherine died William decided to visit the countries where the Army was working. He travelled to many of them by ship, even though by now he was an old man. When he came back to England, he used the newly invented motorcar to visit many of the towns where the Army was working. Wherever he went crowds of people came to see him and he encouraged the people who belonged to the Army.

*What was it like for William to travel around the world?*

**Slide 20** William kept working for The Salvation Army even though he was very old. He would never retire. He became famous. At the age of 83 he went to a huge meeting at the Royal Albert Hall in London. By now he was blind and had to be led to the platform. He spoke to the thousands there. He said that he needed to go into hospital. It was like a ship going to be repaired. But soon after that William died. The streets of London were full of people when he was taken to the cemetery. Thousands went to his funeral service.

*Why did so many people remember William when he died?*

**Slide 21** Some people thought that The Salvation Army would come to an end when William and Catherine died. Instead it has grown and grown until it works in most of the countries of the world. Today the Army has the largest number of its members in Africa. It has most of its social work in America. You can find it in remote villages in Papua New Guinea and in the middle of New York. Everywhere it is there to tell people about the love of Jesus and to give help to those who need it.

*Can you find out what the Army is doing today?*

