

**THE SERMONS, LECTURES, AND SONGS OF
SIDNEY EDWARD COX**

The Salvation Army Southern Bible Conference – Summer 1968
Shamrock Village. Ft. Pierce, Florida

Special Guests:
Dr. John Sutherland Logan¹
Reverend Sidney Cox
Colonel and Mrs. Albert Pepper²

Highlights

Congregational Singing – Cox Chorus, *Just Sing Me a Song About Jesus*
Youth Music Program
Special Music: Colonel and Mrs. Albert G. Pepper.

Editorial Note: What follows are excerpts from the meetings conducted during the week long Salvation Army Bible Conference of 1968. Officers from throughout the Southern Territory all congregate for this annual camp-style conference which is a Salvation Army institution.

Following the death in August, 1967 of his beloved wife, Violet, who had been a near invalid for many years, Sidney Cox was once again able to travel. Although he was 81 years of age, he was much in demand as a speaker and teacher, and resumed his extensive travel schedule. On this occasion, he had been invited to participate as a special guest speaker for the duration of the conference.

Sidney and Violet Cox voluntarily left the work of The Salvation Army in 1944, and in the summer of 1968, he had been a former officer for over 20 years; yet, he remained extremely close friends with the Southern Salvationists and in popular demand as a speaker, preacher and musician at their meetings. Many of the officers at the conference had been closely associated with him or had even been trained by him at the Army's College for Officers Training during his Salvation Army tenure in Atlanta from 1928 – 1944.

This occasion was an emotional reunion for him and the officers in attendance at this conference.

John Douglas Cox, grandson of Sidney Cox. August, 2009.

¹ Dr. Southerland was a Scottish evangelist who was president of Vennard College, a Wesleyan-Holiness college in University Park, Iowa. He was a popular speaker at Salvation Army events such as Bible Conferences, Officers' Councils and at the Army training colleges in the late 1950s and 1960s.

² Colonel and Mrs. Pepper were well-known Salvation Army officers. Of note, Colonel Pepper became the first principal of the Brengle Holiness Institute, named for another Army icon, Colonel Samuel Logan Brengle. Like Brengle, Pepper became a noted teacher of the doctrine of holiness and was a personal witness to holy living.

Congregational singing in progress...

[Just sing me a song about Jesus,
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.
Others may sing of birds on a wing,
Of flowers that bloom in the brightness of spring,
But if to my heart you would comfort bring,
Just sing me a song about Jesus.
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.

[Editorial Note: Sidney Cox had composed this chorus especially for this conference, a practice that he used on many occasions. Later in 1968, during an address to the cadets at The Salvation Army College for Officers Training in Atlanta, he told the story of his writing this chorus. On that occasion, this is what he said:

“I want you to sing that new chorus of mine so I can carry the memory of it. You know the one; *Just Sing Me A Song About Jesus*. Do you know that? Everybody know it? Have you got the music for it there? Fine.

I want you to sing it there. I wrote it in a hospital room in Detroit a couple of years ago or just a little less than that under rather unusual circumstances. I only have to mention that, and some of you will understand what I mean.

But I wrote it in a hospital room there in the city of Detroit a year and a half or more ago, and it came to my heart there. Because there comes a time, my dear, when the only name you want to hear is the name of Jesus. Did you hear it? And it will come to you too.³

The only name that you want to hear is His name. You don’t want to hear about other things. You don’t want to hear about, “Birds on the wing.” You don’t want to hear about something else. You don’t want to hear about a, “Beautiful Isle of Somewhere” or something of the kind.

And, by the way, if you’re going to a, “Beautiful Isle of Somewhere,” don’t look for me. I’m not going there at all. I know where I’m going, and it isn’t a, “Beautiful Isle of Somewhere.” I’m going to a city that has foundations; that’s builder and maker is God, of course. I know where it is and I know the size of it. I know what it’s made of.

³ Sidney Cox is referring here to the death of his beloved wife, Violet in August, 1967. He loved her in a most remarkable way and often professed his love for her publicly. Upon her death, his family, friends and comrades naturally tried to console him. In his grief, this theme and these thoughts came to his mind, “Just sing me a song about Jesus.”

I know what the paving stones are made of. I know what the gates are made of. I'm not going to any "Beautiful Isle of Somewhere." You can go if you want to. But don't look for me when you get there. You won't find me there at all; not at all. Now, sing this little chorus for me; will you? Sing it loud. Come on, let's sing it loud together."

This story sheds light on the real meaning behind the chorus.]

COLONEL HARRY WARD, PRESIDING:

Now, I remember in the old days when we were youngsters, and "Uncle Sid"⁴ was leading us in these songs, in order to help us to learn it more quickly and help us to concentrate on it, he would say, "Now, this side sing it." Remember that old system he used to have, and then they'd keep quiet and then he would say, "Now, this side.....Now, all together." And that's the way it goes. Now, just this side this time. You folks listen and give Sid an appreciation, will you? All right, and we're ready back there maestro?

Just sing me a song about Jesus,
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.
Others may sing of birds on a wing,
Of flowers that bloom in the brightness of spring,
But if to my heart you would comfort bring,
Just sing me a song about Jesus.
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.

Now, before this side sings, let's make the announcements But, listen to the sweetness. All right, maestro.

Just sing me a song about Jesus,
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.
Others may sing of birds on a wing,
Of flowers that bloom in the brightness of spring,
But if to my heart you would comfort bring,
Just sing me a song about Jesus.
My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.

Now, let's put both sides together, shall we? And this time, let's sing it not pianissimo, but at least double piano. Hold it down, until we come to the end. [Turning to Sidney Cox]...Can I take this liberty with it?

Inaudible response from Sidney Cox.

Too many people have learned some of our wonderful brother's choruses the wrong way. We go around and we hear them sung differently, and it's because we learned them

⁴ During the tenure of Sidney Cox as Principal of The Salvation Army College for Officers Training in Atlanta from 1936 – 1942, many of the cadets affectionately referred to him as "Uncle Sid" which reflected the degree to which he personally endeared himself to them during their training.

incorrectly and it does an injustice to their meaning and their depth. So, let's sing it softly this time, he's given us this privilege, and then we can come out a little louder right near the end. Everybody, shall we sing it.

Just sing me a song about Jesus,
 My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.
 Others may sing of birds on a wing,
 Of flowers that bloom in the brightness of spring,
 But if to my heart you would comfort bring,
 Just sing me a song about Jesus.
 My wonderful, wonderful, Jesus.

Amen. I'm not a prophet or son of a prophet, but I predict that we will be singing this chorus for a long time to come, and every time we sing it we'll remember his shining face and his overflowing heart.

Now, the little folks that are singing tonight are a little too young to get all of the implication of these words, but we're thinking of them as they are coming, soldiers of tomorrow. Sing it to the tune of Pilgrims. All right, #884, the first stanza and the last stanza.

Rise up, O youth! For mighty winds are stirring,
 Men's hearts grow faint through all the earth today;
 Evil, with evil everywhere conferring,
 Summons its legions forth in dread array.

Hear then our answers;
 Lord, lead us on,
 Fighting nor resting,
 Until Thy war is won.

Arm then, O youth! The battle front increases,
 Leaping the frontiers of a stricken world;
 Strive till the foes of God are dashed to pieces,
 Back with their armies into darkness hurled.

Hear then our answers;
 Lord, lead us on,
 Fighting nor resting,
 Until Thy war is won.

Bring on the youth. [The children sing]:

Jesus loves me, this I know,
 For the Bible tells me so.
 Little ones to Him belong,

They are weak but He is strong.

Yes, Jesus loves me,
 Yes, Jesus loves me,
 Yes, Jesus loves me,
 The Bible tells me so.

(Clapping from the congregation)

COLONEL HARRY WARD, PRESIDING:

Well, this is Mrs. _____ group, and who's with him? Captain _____ Moore had the group that has just left us and this is Mrs. _____ group. All right?

MRS. _____:

We have been learning the words to the song, *How Great Thou Art*. Don't worry, we're not going to sing all of the verses, but we thought you might be interested in seeing how we are learning it. And also this class has been studying, *The Lord's Prayer*. At the end of this year, they will not only know the words, but the meaning to *The Lord's Prayer*. We hope you will enjoy our song. [The children sing]:

Oh, Lord my God. When I in awesome wonder,
 Consider all the worlds Thy hands hath made;
 I see the stars, I hear the rolling thunder,
 Thy power throughout the universe displayed.

Then sings my soul, my savior God, to Thee,
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
 Then sings my soul, my savior God, to Thee,
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

When through the woods and forest glades I wander,
 And hear the birds sing sweetly in the trees;
 When I look down from lofty mountain grandeur,
 And hear the brook and feel the gentle breeze.

[Congregation joins the children]
 Then sings my soul, my savior God, to Thee,
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!
 Then sings my soul, my savior God, to Thee,
 How great Thou art! How great Thou art!

COLONEL HARRY WARD, PRESIDING:

...get the props out of the way so quickly, we've used 10 minutes of the evening.

An announcement: A fishing rod has been found out in the street. [Several in the congregation claim it. Laughter.] Well good.

Now then, someone has said that they'd like to do some extra singing. Some of the older folks that come in early might like to do it before. Someone else said, can we spend some time after just singing. Let's sing all of Coxes choruses. We'd be here to breakfast time if you did that – be here til breakfast time. How many would like to do some more singing? Well good. Do you want to do it before the meeting starts in the evening, or after? Whoa! I am reminded [of what] happened in The Acts of the Apostles when a question was asked – someone said one thing and some said another. Well now, let's find out, how many would prefer it before the meeting, would you raise your hand? How many would prefer it after? Those that want it before won. All right. Now that's preferable according to my boss because she said because of the children's situation. All right. So those of you that would like to come and sing before, get here a little early. The big meeting starts under the big top at 7:30pm, if we can come in here say a little after six, six ten and have 20 minutes of good singing. Seven? Oh, I see you're listening. It's a good way to check. Some of them are not even with us yet. Well, about 10 minutes after seven, that'll give you time to get the dishes all done, husbands...and help the wives with the kiddies. See you tomorrow night then, 10 after seven and we'll have something planned.

Now, we need some more coffee break money.....

[Band rendition of an upbeat march]

SPECIAL MUSIC: COLONEL AND MRS. ALBERT G. PEPPER

[Editorial Note: Colonel and Mrs. Pepper were special guests at the conference. Of note, Colonel Pepper became the first principal of the Brengle Holiness Institute, named for another Army icon, Colonel Samuel Logan Brengle. Like Brengle, Pepper became a noted teacher of the doctrine of holiness and a personal witness to holy living.]

This is young peoples' night, so I don't know if they include the folks who are in their second childhood or not, but anyway, here we are. And we're doing this, as the Colonel has already said under special request, sort of a special prep type of thing. But it's our testimony. We heard the other night that some people say that, God is dead, and we want to sing to you, or try to at this late date, *I Know That My Redeemer Liveth*.

I know that my Redeemer liveth,
And on the earth again shall stand;
I know eternal life He giveth,
That grace and power are in His hand.

I know, I know, that Jesus liveth,
And on the earth again shall stand;
I know, I know, that life He giveth,
That grace and power are in His hand.

I know my mansion he prepareth,

That where He is, there I may be;
 O wondrous thought, for me He careth,
 And He at last will come for me.

I know, I know, that Jesus liveth,
 And on the earth again shall stand;
 I know, I know, that life He giveth,
 That grace and power are in His hand.

SPECIAL SPEAKER: DR. LOGAN

I was asking how it sounded in Spanish. Wouldn't you like to have heard them sing it in Spanish? [Clapping] There you are. Or, something else in Spanish, if that's.....come on back up here. Retired commissioners are the easiest folks in the world to order around.

[What follows is Colonel and Mrs. Pepper singing in Spanish the words to one of the most well known and rousing Salvation Army meeting choruses. Following a rendition in Spanish, the congregation joins in enthusiastically with singing and hand clapping.]

On we march with the blood and the fire,
 To the ends of the earth we will go;
 And the Savior's love will be the theme of our song,
 Because we love Him so!

On we march with the blood and the fire,
 To the ends of the earth we will go;
 And the Savior's love will be the theme of our song,
 Because we love Him so!

COLONEL HARRY WARD, PRESIDING:

Well now, that was wonderful.