



# WILLIAM BOOTH FAQS

Here are some of our frequently asked questions by kids about **William Booth**.

## What were you like as a boy?

My nickname was **Wilful Will** because I liked to have fun and get up to mischief! My father sent me to a good school, in the hope I would grow up to be a gentleman with lots of money.

But when I was 12 my father lost his money and a year later he died. **I had to leave school** to get a job to help my family.

I became an apprentice pawnbroker. I hated it - seeing poor people selling their precious belongings just to survive. **It wasn't fair.**



## Why did you become a Christian?

When I was 15 I heard a visiting preacher and he inspired me to live my life for Jesus. **I wanted to make things better** - so I started with myself, by apologising to people for my pranks.

I tried **to help people** in need and also encourage them to **come to church**. But many did not feel welcome because they were poor and could not afford nice clothes.

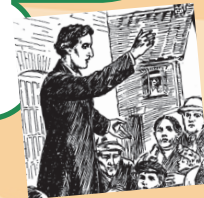
So I spent my free time **preaching on the streets**, telling people about **God's love** for them. I got a new nickname - **the Boy Preacher**.



## Why did you want to help people?

I saw **unfairness** everywhere. People were being **treated poorly** and I knew that was **not the way** God wanted us to live. I also wanted to help people **to know God**, to have a **special connection** with him, as I knew how wonderful it was having God in my life.

When I met people, including kings and presidents, I wanted to strengthen their **relationship with God**.



## Did you have any children?

Catherine and I had **eight children** and some of them became members of The Salvation Army. Later on, Bramwell and then Evangeline, were elected to be **The General**, the leader of The Salvation Army.



## Were you popular?

Some people loved what we were doing and joined us or gave money **to support us**. But there were others who thought our ideas were **ridiculous** and **hated them**: ideas like **fair wages** and **not drinking or gambling** so there was **money for food**.

Plus I believed **women could be leaders** just as well as men.

**I wasn't always popular**, but that didn't stop me **doing what I believed was right**. **Opinions changed** when they realised we just wanted to **improve people's lives**.



## What happened in 1912?

**In 1912 I was 83** and nearly blind, but **my voice was strong**.

I gave a passionate speech to 7,000 members. Later it was called the **'I'll fight'** speech, to inspire people to **keep fighting for fairness**.

Three months later I died. More than **40,000 people came to my funeral** and crowds filled the streets, bringing parts of London to a standstill.

People were sad I had died but they also called it being **'promoted to Glory'** and **celebrated all I had achieved**.



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