

No Small Stir

by Bill McLeod

God's power is demonstrated in the Bible through various examples, and prayer is essential for revival and making a stir for God.

Duration: 35:30

Scripture: Psalm 40:1, Psalm 90:17, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:15, John 12:42-43, Acts 1:8, Acts 17:6

Topics: "Christian Life"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker begins by emphasizing the importance of prayer and having faith in God's ability to exceed our expectations. He then reads from Psalm 40:1, which talks about waiting patiently for the Lord and being delivered from difficult situations. The speaker also mentions the phrase 'no small stir' found in the book of Acts, which refers to the impact that Christians can have in the world. He encourages believers to boldly share their testimonies and make a stir, so that others may see and trust in the Lord. The sermon concludes with a prayer for God's guidance and involvement in the spiritual stirrings happening around the world.

Transcript

Well, good morning. Did you come praying? I hope so. Praying and expecting God is able to do exceeding, abundantly above all that we ask or think.

And His power works in all of our hearts. Thank God for that. I want to read from Psalm 40, verse 1. I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry.

He brought me up also out of a horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. Many shall see it, and fear, and shall trust in the Lord.

That's a great thought. There is a statement found twice in the book of Acts. And it's very short.

It says, that there was no small stir. That occurs twice in Acts, and then also in Acts. They were quite upset because, that is many people were quite upset because, they said, these guys that are turning the world upside down, they've come here too, you know.

No small stir. Turning the world upside down. And it should be, to some extent, the same today.

There were many times in Israel's history, and the world's history, where things happened that you could honestly say were no small stir. Something God did. When Pharaoh's army drowned in the Red Sea, I used to wonder, well how come not even one made it to shore, you know.

I'm sure they knew how to swim. But in Exodus 15, after what had happened, they were singing about it. And it says, the depths, that's the depths of the sea, the depths were congealed.

So I looked that word up and it says, they were frozen. So when he talks about the water standing like a wall on both sides, apparently it was frozen. There was no way they could swim.

They had ice falling on them. I mean the word, the Hebrew word is frozen. So you can make of it what you want.

But one thing we know, God was totally, completely victorious. And it was no small stir in Egypt when not one other army returned. They were now a very helpless nation without defense of any kind when God was through.

It was no small stir. Later on, Joshua, they were pursuing the enemy. And they wanted to do a good job on the enemy.

And so he suddenly, he spoke before Israel. And he said, son, stand still upon Gibeon down moon in the valley of Esalon. And says, the sun didn't go down for a whole day.

Now Joshua didn't understand. He wasn't a scientist. He knew a lot of things that God had shown him.

But I'm sure he didn't understand that he was really asking God to stop the world from spinning. And that's probably why in commending on it, the writer said, there was no day like it ever in the history of man where God did a thing like that. Why was it so great? Because God had to actually, it had nothing really to do with the sun.

But the earth had to stop its spinning. And to do that, God had to do a million trillion miracles all at one time in preventing everything on the earth from flying out into space. That's why the writer says he understood something about it because of what he said.

No day like it. No day like it. No small stir.

Especially, I guess, among the angels when they saw what had happened and knowing that the men on earth did not really clearly understand what God was up to. No day like it. It says, when the Lord listened to man.

Well, He often listened to man. But this was an absolutely stupendous miracle. Never been one like it is what we're told.

When Elijah was called up to heaven with a chariot of fire, there were 50 prophets not far off watching. What a sight. They'd never seen this before.

I don't think you ever saw it again. A chariot of fire? And Elijah taking a ride to heaven? And a chariot of fire? I'm sure those 50 prophets, among them, it was no small stir that God had done. I mean, they'd never witnessed anything like this before or since then.

One night, the Syrian army, the Spirit of God, the Angel of God, actually moved in. And 185,000 soldiers died. Now think about it.

185,000? How many thousand tents did they have to live in while they were sitting in the field waiting to destroy Israel and Judah? 185,000. If there were 185,000 men in tents, you'd hear men coughing. You'd hear men talking.

And certainly they had animals to ride on. But it was absolute silence. And I wonder if the head of the host wondered what was going on.

If he did, he didn't have to wait long. Waking in the morning and get up. And I'll tell you something, there was no small stir in his heart when he couldn't find one soldier alive out of 185,000.

Something God did. Something great. The flood of Noah's day.

No small stir again as angels watched and saw. You know if, and some of you I'm sure know this, but if you were to level the entire planet to be a perfect sphere, you would have water a mile deep everywhere in the world. But it happened then, it says all the high hills were covered.

It was not a local flood. It was a universal thing that Almighty God did again. Among the angels, there was no small stir as they saw what God was doing.

They may not have understood why. Perhaps they did, we don't really know. No small stir when God is at work.

When the angels watched the incarnation of Christ, for they were a witness I'm sure to that, again did they know what God was up to I wonder? We really don't really know, but I'm sure there was no small stir among them as they talked about it and wondered what God was up to. What's going on down there? Jesus, the Creator, being born of a woman. I'm sure again there was no small stir in heaven at least.

And when Christ was born, Hebrews 1, 6, tells us that God commanded the angels to worship Him. So we hear of a great host in Luke's Gospel, chapter 2, praising God, worshiping Christ in other words. And His birth, and again I say, I'm sure they were wondering, what is God up to? You know, God does many things.

We see the outline. We see what's going on. We kind of say we understand.

We pray for revival. Don't tell God how to do it. Don't tell God when to do it.

Just ask God in humility to do it. They were praying in Ireland years ago for revival, and they had a school. And one day in the school, one of the boys felt quite agitated, so he went to the teacher and asked permission to go home.

And they let him go. And another boy got up and followed him. And the two of them were walking along, and they came to an empty house.

And they went into this empty house, and they started to pray. And the Spirit of God fell on the whole school while these boys were praying. And a mighty revival.

They had to close the school down for a while. Everybody was under conviction. The whole school was converted.

Then it spread into the houses, and a glorious work of God was carried on. I have many books in my library on revival, and in the total I'm sure there would be at least a thousand historical references to what God did. And it's amazing.

It's always connected with prayer. Fasting and prayer. And not just a little praying.

They had prayer meetings in 1858. They had prayer meetings with 5,000 people praying together, lasting the prayer meeting for seven hours. Crying to God for revival.

And it finally came. But there were meetings like that. Anywhere from 800 to 5,000.

Mobs of people, of Christians, crying to God. And He heard as He always does. And you know that revival in 1859 and on.

Marvelous. The things that God did. Every county in North America was touched, not including Mexico, but Canada and the States.

We were a very small nation then. Marvelous though what God did in answer. So when we think about revival, we have to pray.

I read one revival. Seven people prayed together for some months. Then a mighty revival followed.

So it doesn't have to be a great number, but it may be. In any case, we need to keep praying and believing God for another great work of His. Because these are, all of them, to some extent, they're never a small serve.

Whole communities. Many stories in Scotland of entire villages being converted in a day by the power of God. Everybody finding Christ because the Spirit of God had come in power and answer to people's prayers.

Revival, you never talk about it being a small stir. It's usually a big stir. And thank God for that.

But God sets the circumference. We don't. That's His business, how far it goes, how long it lasts, and what it does.

But it's never a small stir. I was reading a report from some brewers in the States. It was an annual meeting.

Everything was going well. Finances were fantastic. More and more people were drinking liquor.

But one of the speakers said, We have just one fear that these old-fashioned Christians will bring in some kind of revival and spoil it all. Well, it happened before where breweries had to close down because nobody wanted to drink their product any longer. In those Kentucky revivals where before God came, one person in five was an alcoholic, and missionaries were afraid to go in there to work.

It was so radical. They said, You can look in any direction and see drunk people falling off of horses or walking along and falling in the ditch or fighting with each other with clubs. Nobody wanted to go in there.

But some people prayed, and revival came. And I'll tell you people, it was no small stir. They said, You couldn't find a drunkard in a hundred miles.

They were all converted by the grace and the power of God. We need to be thinking about what God has done, and why not ask Him to do it again. We should be praying, I think, that way.

There was a great story when Jesus fed 5,000 men, besides women and children. It could have been 10,000 altogether, with a few loaves and fishes. He did it once.

Then later with 4,000 men, He did it again. And it says in the Gospel of John that when the people saw what Jesus Christ had done, they tried to make Him king. They laid hold of Him.

They were going to make Him king. There was no small stir when they realized what Christ had done by His power. They'd never seen anything like this before or even dreamed of it.

And again, it was just no small stir. The raising of Lazarus. There was quite a stir there.

The Pharisees were so angry when they saw what had happened, they laid a plan to kill Lazarus again to take care of the problem. They didn't succeed in it. He eventually died years later, I suppose.

We don't know as to that. But what had happened there? Hundreds of people saw the miracle and they talked about it. There was a great stir.

A man was raised from the dead by Jesus. Jesus, the Son of God. And people, it's been going on.

There are so many records here in the Bible in Acts chapter 2. Jesus of Nazareth, a man approved of God among you by miracles and wonders and signs which God did by Him in the midst of you. As you yourselves also know, Him being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, you're taken and crucified and slain. And there was a great stir on earth when Christ died on the cross.

The sun refused to shine for several hours. There was a sense of woe and foreboding among men. There was an earthquake and many bodies of the saints who slept rose from the dead after His resurrection, not before.

A reason for that. And this was noise abroad. No small stir.

Great things that God had done. They saw Him walking in the water. Walking in the water? Really? They thought it was a spirit, a ghost.

It wasn't. It was Christ. And He came on board a ship.

On one occasion, the ship traveled I don't know how many miles an hour, but they were in the middle of the lake and when Christ came on board, the ship was at shore immediately. So it could have been a thousand miles an hour. We don't know.

It was something God did. And all through His ministry there were things done by Christ and the apostles and after Christ's ascension to heaven by the apostles alone and then others. Great things.

Demonstrating clearly the power of God and the wisdom of God. Jesus Christ, who of God has made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption, that according as it is written, He that glories, let him glory in the Lord. Give thanks to God for all He's done.

You know, they set a guard at the mouth of the tomb where Jesus lay. And I guess they felt quite satisfied because they had the Roman seal on it. Nobody would dare do anything about it.

But then an angel came down and there was an earthquake. And the guard, they became like dead men, it says. They couldn't move.

They couldn't speak. They were terrified. There was no small stir at that point.

And you know, when Peter was in jail, guarded carefully by Roman soldiers, and an angel came in the middle of the night and knocked the bracelets off the stuff he had in his body and took them out. And they finally got to the city where a big iron gate opened of its own accord. And then you stop and think.

Later on, the sun came up. And then one of the soldiers woke up, rubbed his eyes, looked around. Jesus wasn't there.

He wakened the others. It says there was no small stir among the soldiers as to what had happened to Jesus. Because these men knew they'd be killed by the upper authorities of the Roman army for having lost him.

No small stir, it says. And the other reference has to do with the apostles being accused of stopping people from worshipping idols. And it says there was no small stir because people who were making money through idolatry, it was hurting them.

There was no small stir among them. And they started a riot, which didn't accomplish very much. But I guess they gave vent to their feelings at least for a little while.

No small stir, people, on the day of Pentecost. You know the story in Acts 2. I'm sure it's there in order to build our faith. Three thousand Jews converted, not by one sermon, but in one day.

And then later, five thousand converted after Peter's sermon. Amazing. Jews, eight thousand converted in this short period of time just by some people getting up and preaching.

I'll tell you there was no small stir in Jerusalem at that time. It's computed there probably were 50,000 converts altogether. Nobody really knows, but it might be a good guess.

In any case, with that many people converted to Christ suddenly, marvelously, powerfully, everybody was affected. There was no small stir anywhere. Everybody was talking about it.

It was the only subject of conversation, I'm sure, for days on end. People, unbelievers perhaps, trying to figure out what God had done or what had happened. How can this be? How could all these Jews so strong in their religion then suddenly embrace a new religion? But they did.

Turning the world upside down. It says the way of the wicked, God turns upside down. So when you think about them turning the world upside down, they're turning a wicked world upside down.

And the Gospel has done that. And it's doing it in some areas today. I was thrilled reading the other day of a group in India.

You've heard before about 40,000 evangelists in India. I don't know what part they had in this, but there's a group of people who got together, godly men, and laid plans to build 2,000 churches in India in a fairly

short period of time. They built 20,000 churches in that period of time.

The work of God was so deep and powerful. That's going on in India today. Don't forget India in your prayers.

A billion people. A struggling church. But now it's bursting.

There's no small stir in India, I'll tell you. It's something great. And God is certainly in it.

George Whitefield, in the 1700s, he preached to a crowd at a place called Cambuslang in Scotland. I was very close there and we almost got to see the place, but we didn't. Apparently it was just a natural amphitheater in the field.

And 100,000 people had turned up to hear this man. No voice amplification, whatever. But there was a great stir that day when Whitefield preached and hundreds found Christ as their Savior.

There was no small stir. Satan hates this. He tries to do his best to shut it down, to close it off, to lie about it.

Don't listen to Satan. Listen to God. He's doing things to get our attention.

And sometimes they are hard to take. They may seem to be hurtful things he's doing. But if we're not listening, God has ways that may not be peaceful and nice.

It says, because they have no changes, therefore they don't fear God. And you get to the place where you don't really have a fear of God. By the fear of the Lord, men depart from evil.

God will do something. There will be changes come that you can't control, you can't understand, you can't get away from. They'll get you.

God is in this kind of business. He doesn't want anyone to go to hell. He wants them to go to heaven.

That's why Christ came. That's why He died. Don't miss it.

Don't miss it. Humble yourself under His almighty hand. You know, by the way, there's a great stir in heaven among the angels every time a sinner is converted.

It tells us that. There's joy in the presence of the angels of God when a sinner repents. And we're in that business, are we not? I mean, working to God, not in our own power, to persuade people to come to Christ and find life.

The greatest stir ever will yet be when Christ returns. All the tribes of the earth will cry, the word is mourned in Matthew 24. And then in Revelation 1, He comes with clouds.

Every eye shall see Him and all kindreds of the earth shall wail because of Him. The biggest stir in the history of the world when Jesus comes back the second time. We have to think about this.

You see, going back to Psalm 40, the Scripture we read. Many shall see it. See what? See a sinner converted.

Many shall see it. And what do they do? Well, they'll rejoice and many will fear God because just one sinner being converted to Christ creates a stir in the circle He knows, in the circle that knows Him. And so, we shouldn't be afraid of that.

Sometimes people like, well, in John 12, among the truth rulers, many believed on Him, but because of the Pharisees, they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue. So they were quiet about it. Didn't say anything.

And many of us as Christians, you know, we're like that. We have nothing to say. We don't want to disturb people.

We figured they wouldn't want to hear. Many will see it and fear and trust in the Lord. Make a stir if you're a Christian.

Make a stir. Let people know who you are and where you're at with God through Christ. Jesus Christ said, if you'll be ashamed of me, I'll be ashamed of you when I come.

So He wants us... We're not going around beating on drums. We're just telling people what Jesus Christ did in my life. How He changed me.

I remember sharing with a neighbor one time and I told him, I just felt a lot of God. I gave him a little story of an answer to prayer that I'd had. Now, he didn't become a Christian, but he was so moved.

He didn't know what to say. He couldn't believe. He wasn't saying he didn't believe, but he'd never heard anything like this.

Do you have an answer to a prayer? Share it. Not just with Christians, but with the unconverted. People, please remember, we're here to create a stir among neighbors and friends and employees, employers, and all of this.

We're here to be seen in order for grace to be seen. That's the whole idea. And to go back to Psalm 40 again, I want to read it.

He said, I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of a horrible pit of sin, out of the miry clay, and set my feet on a rock and established my goings. Stop there for a moment because in Psalm 90, let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us, and establish thou my goings.

Well, that's exactly what he's talking about here. Straighten me up so I wasn't wandering around wondering who I was and where I was going. Not that.

My goings were established. And then, He has put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God. And again, many shall see it and fear and shall trust in the Lord.

Let's pray. Well, Father, thank You for these stories of things You did in the past and no doubt many things You've done of like nature that we haven't heard about. Thank You, Father, for what's happening in India and in some African countries and some other places where Your Spirit, Father, has been poured out.

And many are finding Christ. O God, thank You for what You're doing. Lead us as individuals and as a church so we can best support and help and be involved, Father, in these great spiritual stirrings that

You're sending around the world.

You're telling us You're still alive. Satan is not in control of everything by any means. Nor can he ever be.

Thank You for Your power. Thank You, Father, for coming to me and others in this congregation. Maybe years ago, I can never forget that day when I knelt in my parents' home here in Winnipeg.

O God, You remember? Surely You were there. I knelt on the floor in the basement and called to Christ. And You came into my life.

That was years ago. O God, thank You. You're doing the same in Selkirk, in lives.

May it continue and grow and glow for Your honor and glory, we pray. In Christ, our Savior's name. Amen.

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