

The Canadian Revival - Part 2

by Bill McLeod

The Canadian Revival was a period of spiritual awakening that took place in Canada, characterized by large crowds, conversions, and a spirit of restitution and forgiveness.

Duration: 9:25

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 85:6, Joel 2:28, Matthew 18:20, Acts 3:19, Romans 12:2, Galatians 5:22-23, Ephesians 4:32, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Revival Movement", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

This sermon recounts a powerful revival that took place in Saskatoon, Canada, where churches were filled beyond capacity, people confessed their sins publicly, and individuals experienced profound spiritual transformations. The revival led to reconciliations, forgiveness, and a deep sense of God's presence, with lives being changed and prayers being answered in remarkable ways.

Transcript

And then the next night it was worse, it was about 800 there, so we had to move again. So we contacted the Alliance pastor. This was very interesting because to the Alliance people, the missionary, the annual missionary conference is a real sacred call.

They don't give that up for anything. They already had missionaries in Saskatoon preparing for that time, and they closed it all down and opened their building to us, because many of their people were being blessed in the meetings. So we moved there, but in two nights we could get about a thousand in there, and two nights, that was too small.

So we moved to the largest church building in the city, which would seat maybe 1,700, and we were only there. Well, the first night we were there, we were not only packed to the doors, we had some hundreds of people outside trying to get in. So I asked my people to leave and go to a neighboring church, and I said, I'll have a meeting with you down there.

So my people left, and then people from the street came back in. They had the same problem. An interesting thing happened then.

The caretaker came to me, and he was actually, he was not a Christian guy. He was actually a Christian. He said, you can't, you can't have this many people in this building.

The fire marshal will close this place down. Well, he got saved a few days later. Then he said, hang them on the lights, get them in anyhow.

So that was neat. And then we had to start having double services and early service and late service. And then when it came to Sunday, that was too small, so we moved to the Centennial Auditorium, seeing 2,200.

We had double services there. We went for seven weeks. Well, that's speaking, that's the statistics of, at least one side of the statistics that went on.

What really happened? I don't know how to handle that. There was a tremendous spirit of restitution. Chief Kettles was the chief of police in Saskatoon at the time.

He issued a statement to the Star Phoenix, the daily newspaper, in Saskatoon. And he said, I'm not a religious person, but I do know the difference between normal church work and revival. And revival has come to Saskatoon, I know, because people are coming to us on their own, and confessing crimes.

He said, we've never had this happen before. This is what happens, I know, he said, when revival comes. We had heard a few little things, but we didn't know to what extent.

And then people asking forgiveness publicly, sometimes in tears before large crowds, confessing their failures and their sins, and asking for forgiveness and prayer. We had a ladies' meeting one day. There were 800 ladies showed up.

It went on for hours, with different people testifying, and some of us bringing short messages. And through that whole period of time, ladies were leaving, sometimes two, sometimes 10 or 12 at a time, and going off to the prayer room to have a meeting with God, because He had spoken to their hearts. And then people began talking about answers to prayer, things they'd prayed for for years.

They were seeing happen constantly, day after day. Just everybody you talked to, almost, had exciting things to talk about when it came to answers to prayer. People being converted.

Two young men, both around 18 or 19, they did not like what they saw happening. And so one day, they were talking on the phone, and one of the fellow's mothers, she shouldn't have been, but she was listening in on the conversation, and it went like this. This revival thing is a bunch of hysteria, and remember, we're not getting involved.

Okay, we're not getting involved. We have to go Sunday morning because our parents will put the pressure on us, but that's all. Okay? We're not going forward.

Remember, yes, they promised each other they wouldn't go forward. Well, Sunday morning came. I didn't know a thing about this till much later.

And one of these fellows, the deacons came and said, the Phil wants to be saved, but we can't do anything with him. I said, bring him into my office, and I'll talk to him. So he knelt at my desk, and he kept shaking his head, just saying, no way, no way, no way.

I knelt beside him and waited, and I said, Phil, what's on your heart? And finally, he finished the sentence. He said, no way can I ever doubt the reality of Jesus. He said he spoke to my heart.

He broke me. I've been saved. The other kid went forward on the other side of the church and got saved.

He's now a civil engineer living in Denver, Colorado, walking with God. So much for their promises to each other. And then a tremendous spirit of love and understanding and forgiveness, and there were two men in my church, they had never, well, they hadn't spoken to each other for two years.

They used to sing duets. They hadn't sung duets for, I understand, 10 or 12 years. I hadn't been there that long.

I didn't know that. And so they operated by hand signals through third parties. One of them went forward.

They were both graduates of a Bible college, by the way, and they were both in their 40s. One of them went forward, and God touched his life, and I said to him, Sam, I think you and your brother need to get together and get things straightened out. And he said, God's been telling me that, too.

So then I talked to his brother and the three of us. Well, I took a deacon with me, Ken Merritt, and we went down in the Lower Altone. We told the church Sunday morning what we were going to do.

You people pray. So we went downstairs, and the one brother sat here, and Sam went over and put his hand out and said, My dear brother, can you forgive me? And he sat like this, and he said, Yeah, it's about time you came. No forgiveness at all, you see.

And so I put a truckload of Bible verses on him. It didn't mean anything, you know. So then I said to Ken, Ken, let's pray for God to speak to this guy.

So we knelt and prayed, and while we were praying, God broke him. I can't explain it here. He ran to the wall.

He was kicking the wall with his feet and beating it with his fists and begging God to have mercy on his soul. He had not been living a Christian life. He'd been a Christian for years, but he'd been living in some sin, and he just poured out a fountain of stuff that was bottled up inside, and at one point he was running around.

Ken and I thought he was going to jump on us. He didn't. He was just so wrought by the Spirit of God, and he kept on and on, and we just prayed and thanked God.

And then there was silence, and I looked, and he had the light of heaven on his face. So I looked at him, caught his eye, and pointed to his brother, who was standing over here that was back to us, and he ran over and almost cracked his ribs. He grabbed him and lifted him off his feet, and they made everything right.

Then we went upstairs, and the congregation got their feet and turned to face us, and these two brothers went marching down the aisle. We just let them go. I stood at the back, and they marched to the front and turned around, and they told the congregation what had been going on, how they'd made things right.

They wanted the congregation to forgive them, and then the wives came running because the wives had been fighting, and then the kids from both families came running. Finally, there was two families. They knelt in a big circle at the front of the Church with their arms around each other, asking each other's forgiveness, getting right with God, and I'm standing at the back, and my heart is going, thump, thump, thump.

I said, man, what a beautiful way to die, you know, watching this kind of stuff. Anyway, we'd never seen anything like that before. It was just revival.

The Spirit of God was in control, and He was doing some marvelous, marvelous things. We had meetings where you'd sing a song. You'd open the meeting with a song.

Before you got to the second verse, there were 40 people kneeling at the front, seeking the face of God, not even an invitation. This commonly happened. And in meetings, on one occasion, Sherwood Wirt, who at that time was editor of Billy Green's Decision magazine, he heard from Leonard Ravenhill that there was a revival in Canada.

He phoned me and asked where. I said, well, right now we're in Winnipeg. And so he said, I'm coming down for a night.

And so he was in that meeting in Elam Chapel in Winnipeg that night. And we had rented the building. The building's seating about 1,200.

We had no churches cooperating. This is not how you operate in evangelical service. That's what we did in times of revival.

We just rented the building, had a few spot announcements on radio. We had a revival team from Saskatoon in town. And the first night, we had 600 people there.

And before long, it was packed to the doors. And the night Sherwood Wirt was there was very, very unusual. People were coming forward all the while I was speaking and kneeling at the front and praying.

And then the whole front of this church was crowded with people kneeling. We needed more room. So then we filled the choir loft, and then we filled the platform in the choir loft, and still more people were coming.

So I asked the first row to vacate the seats so people could kneel, and they did that. And then those first--then we did the second row, then we did the third row, and that's where Sherwood Wirt was sitting. And Sherwood came up to me, and he said something like this.

I've been involved with Billy Graham in the largest sense of revival or of evangelism, he said. I've never seen revival. This is revival.

Then he told me how his wife needed revival, and how not Billy Graham--Billy's clean, he said, but some of the people in the organization need revival. And then I just--I didn't say anything. I just looked at him, and finally he said, and I think, I need revival.

And Sherwood Wirt experienced revival during those Canadian revival days.

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