

# Leonard Ravenhill

by David Bercot

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*Leonard Ravenhill's ministry was marked by a deep conviction and a call to obedience, humility, and a genuine walk with God.*

**Scripture:** Matthew 3:8, Matthew 5:14, Matthew 7:21, Matthew 23:27, Matthew 24:12, 1 Corinthians 1:18, 1 Corinthians 3:13, James 1:22, 1 John 2:6, Revelation 2:5

**Topics:** "Genuine Repentance", "Spiritual Leadership"

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## Description

David Bercot delivers a sermon reflecting on the impactful life and teachings of Leonard Ravenhill, a dedicated evangelist who fearlessly preached the Gospel without compromise, leading to lasting conversions. Bercot shares insights into Ravenhill's unwavering commitment to God's truth and his ability to challenge and inspire believers to live authentically for Christ. Through Ravenhill's powerful messages and spiritual maxims, Bercot emphasizes the importance of genuine repentance, true spiritual leadership, and the necessity of living out one's faith consistently in all aspects of life.

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## Transcript

Leonard Ravenhill was one of Britain's foremost outdoor evangelists of the 20th century. God used him to help bring thousands of people to Christ throughout Britain. Unlike the case with many of today's evangelists, the conversions that Leonard helped to bring about were generally lasting conversions. That's because he did not water down the Gospel when he preached it. Later in life, Leonard and his family moved to the United States, where he worked with Bethany House Publishers. In the 1980s, Leonard and

his family moved to a home near Lindale, Texas, a short distance from Last Days Ministries. Leonard regularly taught classes at Last Days Ministries, and he was a mentor to the late Keith Green.

A. W. Tozer, who was a friend of Leonard, said this about Leonard: "To such men as this the church owes a debt too heavy to pay. The curious thing is that she seldom tries to pay him while he lives. Rather, the next generation builds his sepulcher and writes his biography--as if instinctively and awkwardly to discharge an obligation the previous generation to a large extent ignored.

"Those who know Leonard Ravenhill will recognize in him the religious specialist, the man sent from God not to carry on the conventional work of the church, but to beard the priests of Baal on their own mountain-top, to shame the careless priest at the altar, to face the false prophet and to warn the people who are being led astray by him.

"Such a man as this is not an easy companion. He is not the professional evangelist who leaves the wrought-up meeting as soon as it is over to hurry to the most expensive restaurant to feast and crack jokes with his retainers. Such evangelists will find this man something of an embarrassment, for he cannot turn off the burden of the Holy Ghost as one would turn off a faucet. He insists upon being a Christian all the

time, everywhere. And again, that marks him out as different."

I first met Leonard in 1989, when he was eighty-two years old and in frail health. At first glance, I would not have thought that God could still use this fragile, white-haired man. He walked slowly and unsteadily, and he sometimes needed help to get up and down from his chair. Yet, as soon as he opened his mouth, I immediately realized that my initial impression was wrong. At eighty-two, Leonard still spoke with fire and conviction, and it felt like his eyes were piercing right through to my soul.

During the last few years of his life, Leonard moderated a prayer meeting held once a week (later once a month), which was attended primarily by pastors and evangelists. Some of these men made a four-hour round trip to attend those prayer meetings. I attended those prayer meetings from 1989 until they ended in the summer of 1994, a few months before Leonard's death. During the years that I attended those prayer meetings, I never once left without being deeply challenged by what Leonard had said.

One of Leonard's gifts was his ability to spontaneously create insightful spiritual maxims as he spoke. These were short, memorable observations about God, the church, and the world. I always took a notebook with me to these meetings to write down some

of his observations and maxims. Here are some of Leonard's spiritual insights from those meetings:

"A popular evangelist reaches your emotions. A true prophet reaches your conscience."

"The last words of Jesus to the church (in Revelation) were 'Repent!'"

"A true shepherd leads the way. He does not merely point the way."

"You never have to advertise a fire. Everyone comes running when there's a fire. Likewise, if your church is on fire, you will not have to advertise it. The community will already know it."

"Your doctrine can be as straight as a gun barrel--and just as empty!"

"John the Baptist never performed any miracles. Yet, he was greater than any of the Old Testament prophets."

"I doubt that more than two percent of professing Christians in the United States are truly born again."

"Our God is a consuming fire. He consumes pride, lust, materialism, and other sin."

"There are only two kinds of persons: those dead in sin and those dead to sin."

[Concerning the darkness that has enveloped most of Christendom:] "When you're sitting in a dark room, you can either sit and curse the darkness--or you can light a candle."

"Children can tell you what Channel 7 says, but not what Matthew 7 says."

"Some women will spend thirty minutes to an hour preparing for church externally (putting on special clothes and makeup, etc.). What would happen if we all spent the same amount of time preparing internally for church--with prayer and meditation?"

"Maturity comes from obedience, not necessarily from age."

"What good does it do to speak in tongues on Sunday if you have been using your tongue during the week to curse and gossip?"

"Would we send our daughters off to have sex if it would benefit our country? Yet, we send our sons off to kill when we think it would benefit our country!"

"The only time you can really say that 'Christ is all I need,' is when Christ is all you have."

"The Bible is either absolute, or it's obsolete."

"Why do we expect to be better treated in this world than Jesus was?"

"Today's church wants to be raptured from responsibility."

"Testimonies are wonderful. But, so often our lives don't fit our testimonies."

[Concerning one of the new "movements" in the church that was causing a stir among Christians:] "There's also a stir when the circus comes to town."

"My main ambition in life is to be on the Devil's most wanted list."

"You can't develop character by reading books. You develop it from conflict."

"When there's something in the Bible that churches don't like, they call it 'legalism.'"

"We can't serve God by proxy."

"We must do what we can do for God, before He will give us the power to do what we can't do."

"There's a difference between changing your opinion, and changing your lifestyle."

"Our seminaries today are turning out dead men."

"How can you pull down strongholds of Satan if you don't even have the strength to turn off your TV?"

"Everyone recognizes that Stephen was Spirit-filled when he was performing wonders. Yet, he was just as Spirit-filled when he was being stoned to death."

"If a Christian is not having tribulation in the world, there's something wrong!"

[Concerning the fixation that today's church has with numbers, with growth at any price:] "The church has paid a terrible price for statistics!"

"Any method of evangelism will work--if God is in it."

"Church unity comes from corporate humility."

"You can have all of your doctrines right--yet still not have the presence of God."

"Many pastors criticize me for taking the Gospel so

seriously. But do they really think that on Judgment Day, Christ will chastise me, saying, 'Leonard, you took Me too seriously'?"

"If Jesus had preached the same message that ministers preach today, He would never have been crucified."

"You can know a lot about the atonement, and yet receive no benefit from it."

"If the whole church goes off into deception, that will in no way excuse us for not following Christ."

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Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/david-bercot/leonard-ravenhill/>

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