

# (Christian History) 20. the Welsh & Worldwide Revival of the Early 20th Century

by David Guzik

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*David Guzik's sermon explores the Welsh and Worldwide Revival of the early 20th century, highlighting its origins, impact, and key figures like Evan Roberts and Joseph Jenkins.*

**Scripture:** Acts 2:17

**Topics:** "Revival History", "Holy Spirit"

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## Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker discusses the unique lay movements that have occurred in the past, where ordinary people become on fire for God. The focus is on the story of Evan Roberts, who had a powerful impact on a group of 17 people. Roberts emphasized the importance of confessing sin, putting away doubtful habits, obeying the Holy Spirit, and publicly confessing Christ. The speaker also mentions the intense prayer and spiritual fervor that characterized the revival meetings led by Seth Joshua and Evan Roberts.

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## Transcript

In this final lecture in our church history series, we want to take a look sort of in greater depth at this last revival work in our list of six of them, the Welsh and the Worldwide Revival of the early 20th century. Again, just some of the highlights of it to give ourselves a quick overview. If you want to associate a person with it, the person that's most notably associated with it is Evan Roberts.

But it's really unfair, because even the work in Wales, as we'll talk about later, was much bigger than Evan Roberts himself. But the work that happened as a result of the Welsh Revival, again, had its influence way back with Evan Roberts, but went far, far, far beyond him. It was mostly, you could say, one of those works of God that was mainly furthered anonymous people, you know, just laymen doing the work of the Lord in a wonderful and remarkable way.

And then, of course, also the Pentecostal movement came out of this revival. The context was with a disappointment at the beginning of the century and a commitment to prayer. It had beginnings in South Africa, in Australia, in Japan, but then the really notable work was Seth Joshua and Evan Roberts in Wales.

In Wales, in a period of six months, and Wales is not a tremendously big geographical area, 100,000 people were converted in six months. It spread worldwide with approximately five million converts, and it was the spark for the Pentecostal movement of the 20th century. Let me give you a little background, moving back sort of before the beginning of this great work of God.

In the year 1899, every denomination and every Christian group seemed to have a plan for evangelism. The Methodists had a plan to evangelize the entire United States. They raised \$20 million, and they planned to lead two million people to Christ in a nationwide evangelistic campaign.

The Baptists had a program called Baptist Advance, and they were going to go forward and do this remarkable evangelistic campaign. The Presbyterians launched great evangelistic crusades all over the country. So as 1899 came around, people were anticipating great things at the turn of the century and this wonderful evangelical advance as the century turned over.

It didn't happen that way. One Methodist said this, he said, God waited until we got our project out of the way before he sent revival. Yet one of the good outpourings of this work that began in 1899 with the anticipation of the new century coming was there was a tremendous increase in prayer.

There were all nights of prayer at the Moody Bible Institute in Chicago, at the Keswick Convention in England, they had special prayer meetings for revival, and in the hills of India they had special prayer for revival. There were similar movements in Korea, in Australia, and in other places. The early 20th century evangelical awakening was a worldwide movement.

It's wrong to think that it really started with the Welsh revival of 1904. Rather, you could say that its sources were the little springs of prayer meetings all over the world that seemed to arise spontaneously. And they sort of seemed to combine in a great stream of expectation, which became a river of blessing into which the Welsh revival became the most dramatic waterfall or outpouring in it.

And so if you want to make an overview of it, you could say that this was the most extensive evangelical awakening of all time. It revived the Anglican, the Baptist, the Congregation, the Disciple of Christ, the Lutheran, the Methodist, the Presbyterian, and the Reformed churches, and even other evangelical bodies throughout Europe and North America, Australia, South Africa, and their daughter churches and missionary causes in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. It won more than five million people to evangelical Christianity in the two years of its greatest impact in each country, and indirectly it produced the Pentecostal movement.

Now, these little springs of prayer meetings, remarkably starting almost spontaneously in all these different spots over the world, if you want to say it sort of coalesced, spiritually speaking, into a river that flowed right through Wales. The Welsh revival of 1904 can be traced to the church of the Reverend Joseph Jenkins at Newquay, Cardiganshire, as early as February 1904. Now, I told you the place was called Newquay.

Don't think that's spelled, you know, N-E-W-K-E-Y. No, Newquay is spelled N-E-W, and then in a separate word, Q-U-A-Y, but it's pronounced Newquay. Joseph Jenkins, who had also been born during the revival of 1859 in Wales, he was moved by the work of the Salvation Army, and he was influenced by another man named John Pugh of what was known as the Forward Movement.

Coming there at this work at Newquay in 1892, Jenkins was helped by different other evangelical conventions and works, a Keswick-type conferences resulting there, kept him very busy in the area in 1904. But most of all, Joseph Jenkins was deeply burdened about the lack of concern in both heart and what you might say in voice in preaching. You see, Jenkins wanted to see a deeper knowledge of Christ.

The meditations of Andrew Murray in the School of Prayer really influenced him. He was greatly burdened by the spirit of indifference among Christians around him, and he was especially concerned at the apathy of young people. And so in 1904, early in the year, he called the young people of his church together, and he talked to them most seriously about giving their lives really to the Lord and obeying the Holy Spirit.

So here's this minister, Reverend Joseph Jenkins, there with a group of young people in his church. And it's not a big group. It may not have been any bigger than the group of people in this room here right now.

But in a prayer meeting for these young people on a Sunday morning, the pastor asked them, do you have a testimony of spiritual experience? Not many of them started to answer, but they would start talking about a subject that was completely different until Joseph Jenkins finally redirected them to the subject. He said, no, really now, who is Jesus Christ to you? And then one young man, he said, Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. He said, well, Jenkins responded.

I don't mean that. Who is Jesus Christ to you? At last one girl at the meeting, her name was Flory Evans, and she had just been converted a few days before she stood up and she spoke with a tremor in her voice and she said, I love Jesus Christ with all of my heart. And I can't explain it, but that simple word from that newly converted girl had such power, such sincerity, it impressed the young people's society at that church so greatly that it just started a spark of the work of God among them.

That movement among the youth in Newquay grew in strength and people started hearing about it in nearby towns. There was an open door for these young people to go around from church to church and just minister to the youth groups all around where they would conduct testimony meetings about what God was doing in their life and their experience. And so after six months of this sustained kind of movement there at Newquay, a man named Seth Joshua came to this church at Newquay again in the year 1904.

Now, Seth Joshua came there and he was sort of an itinerant preacher with a real heart for evangelism. And when he came there, he was impressed by what he called the revival spirit in that place. And on Sunday, the 18th, 1904, he reported, I have never seen the power of the Holy Spirit so powerfully manifested among the people as it is at this place just now.

The meetings were spontaneously lasting far into the night. So let me read to you a few selections from Seth Joshua's diary from September of 1904 when he was at this church at Newquay. On the 19th, he says, Revival is breaking out here in greater power.

The young are receiving the greatest measure of blessing. They break out into prayer, praise, testimony, and exhortation. On the 20th, he wrote, I cannot leave the building until 12 and even one o'clock in the morning.

I closed the meeting several times, and yet it would break out again quite beyond the control of human power. They say that Seth Joshua would say to the young people, he would say, oh, young people, it's late. Please, tomorrow's another day.

Let's knock it off for the night. And then one of the young people just filled with enthusiasm would say, look at the clock. It's past midnight.

It's already tomorrow. Let's keep the meeting going. And it would be quite spontaneous like that.

On the 21st, he wrote, Yes, several souls. They're not drunkards or open sinners, but they're members of the visible church who aren't truly grafted into the true vine. The joy is intense.

On the 22nd, he wrote, We held another remarkable meeting tonight. Group after group came out to the front seeking the full assurance of faith. On the 23rd, he wrote, I am of the opinion that 40 conversions took place this week.

I also think that those seeking assurance may be fairly counted as converts, for they never received Jesus as personal savior before. So this week of unparalleled services in New K ended with with nothing else than four hours sleep. Seth Joshua, exhilarated, went on his way to a place called New Castle Elm.

Now, when he went to New Castle Elm there, he was going to minister to a church. And there were a number of students at a nearby Christian academy who were stirred. One of them was named Sidney Evans.

And this man, Sidney Evans, was the roommate of a younger man named Evan Roberts. Evan Roberts was a remarkable young man. As a young teenager, he was challenged by the remark of an elder at a fellowship meeting.

This is what the elder told Evan Roberts. He said, Remember to be faithful. What if the spirit descended and you were absent? Remember, Thomas, what a loss he had.

Now, this made Evan Roberts resolved to be at church meetings as often as he possibly could. He intended prayer meetings Monday, youth meeting Tuesday, congregational meeting Wednesday, temperance meeting Thursday and class meeting Friday. We have no absolute record of it, but Saturday was the traditional bath night for people in that culture.

That's probably what he did with his Saturday night. But his greatest passion was an interest in revival, a subject that obsessed him from his youth up. He wrote this to a friend.

For ten or eleven years, I have prayed for a revival. I could sit up all night to read or talk about revivals. It was the spirit that moved me to think about a revival.

Roberts worked for twelve years in the coal mines. From the time that he was twelve, excuse me, for two years in the coal mines, from the time that he was twelve to fourteen years old, and then he became a blacksmith. Finally, in 1903, he offered himself as a candidate for the ministry.

He entered a school to train for the ministry, this Newcastle Emlyn Universe Academy, and then his greatest fear in going to school was not the academic inexperience, but his greatest fear about going to school was losing his fellowship with God under the busyness and pressure of study. But at Newcastle Emlyn Academy, he attended a meeting conducted by Seth Joshua. The next day, he came with other young people to prepare for a meeting at a place called Bleninarach.

In the mid-morning meeting, mostly attended by women and students, something remarkable happened to Evan Roberts. Now again, it's a mid-morning meeting, right? There's not many men there. They're out

working.

So there's some, you know, nice old ladies and mothers there, and then there's some students there who've come to the meeting as well. Seth Joshua was leading the meeting, and he ended the meeting with a moving prayer, crying out in Welsh. Most all of these meetings were conducted in the Welsh language.

He cried out in Welsh, Lord, bend us. Evan Roberts went to the front of the room to kneel, crying in great agony, Lord, bend me. Seth Joshua made a note in his diary about that, remarking on the prayer of this young man.

Joseph Jenkins was also there, and Joseph Jenkins said that he was disturbed by the strange intensity of Evan Roberts. He feared that it would be the start of something crazy, and he was afraid that maybe Evan Roberts was a spiritual neurotic. But Evan Roberts knew that he had reached the crisis of his spiritual experience.

He was moved to pray publicly right there at that meeting, but he waited until one had prayed, and then another had prayed, and then finally he felt compelled to pray, but he still waited until a few more prayed. But then when he prayed, he said it was like he felt a living power invading his chest. He said it took his breath away.

His face was bathed in perspiration, and he cried out, bend me. He was overwhelmed by the verse, but God demonstrates his own love towards us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. He said then a flood of peace poured into his soul, and then instantly he stopped thinking about himself, and he was concerned for other people.

This is what he said, quote, I felt ablaze with a desire to go through the length and breadth of Wales to tell of the Savior, and had that been possible, I was willing to pay God for the privilege of doing so. Evan then felt God telling him to preach to the young people at his church, so he asked the headmaster of the academy for permission to leave his studies to visit his church for a week. You know, he went and he said, listen, sir, I don't know.

I feel like God's telling me to go to my school and go back to my home church and preach. I don't know if it's God or if it's the devil. The headmaster smiled.

He said, I don't know. I don't think the devil gives instructions like that. You can have a week off school.

And so quite unexpectedly, he came home and told his parents that he had come to speak at the church. Can you imagine what that scene was like? Evan Roberts comes home, and the parents are like, well, why are you home? Why aren't you at school? Well, I took a week off. What, are you in some kind of trouble? You've been kicked out of the school? No, just took a week off.

I've come to speak at the church. And then the parents say, you know, that's funny because the pastor in the announcements for the week, he didn't say anything about you coming and speaking, then said that to confess. Well, the pastor doesn't really know yet.

You see this man home after two months of Bible college, asked the pastor for permission to speak to the congregation. Now, if you were a pastor, what would you do? You know, Bible college students, right? What would you do if a guy came back all full of fire after two whole months of college and said to the

pastor, let me speak to the church. God wants me to speak to the church.

Well, the pastor didn't want to hurt his feelings. And so he said to Evan, all right, I'll let you speak at the Monday evening prayer meeting. No, wait, I'll let you speak after the Monday evening prayer meeting.

And so after the Monday evening prayer meeting, the pastor got up and he said, our brother Evan Roberts has said that God has given him a word to share. If you'd like to stay around and listen to it, you're welcome to stay around to it. 17 people stayed behind to listen to Evan Roberts.

And then this is what he said. Those people probably stayed just out of kindness. They knew him, they knew his family.

Let's not hurt his feelings. And so to these 17 people, this is what Evan Roberts said. He said, I have a word from God for you.

There are four things that you must do. You must confess all known sin. You must put away all doubtful habits.

You must obey the spirit promptly, and you must confess Christ in public. You know what? It was somewhat like the work that God used through that newly converted girl, Flory Evans. There's no real explaining it, but this simple message from Evan Roberts had an amazing spiritual power on those 17 people.

The pastor said, you know, can you share something at tomorrow night's meeting? And after one week of blessed meetings at that church with overflow crowds, Evan Roberts was asked to stay at the church and not go back to Bible school for another additional week. And during that week, the evening services hosted by Evan Roberts would last until three or four in the morning. You know, one night they felt no blessing, but they persevered in prayer until five in the morning.

And they say that that is when the break came. You say, well, what do you mean by the break? You see, that break could be illustrated by what was reflected in the newspapers of the time. You see, the newspapers of that day, they reported what was going on in the churches.

You know, such and such church is having a rummage sale to support missionaries. Such and such church is having a special guest speaker here. Such and such church would like to announce the new leader of the flower committee, on and on and on.

But the next day's papers in that area of Wales read revival breaking out, crowds trying to get in to Moriah Chapel. That was the name of Evan's church. But they said that they couldn't get in because there wasn't enough room.

And revival started spontaneously breaking out throughout the whole region. Every church in the region had to schedule extra meetings, and the police had to assist in managing the crowds outside the churches. In the year 1905, the Welsh revival reached its greatest power and extent in the Principality of Wales.

All classes and ages and every denomination shared in the general awakening. Totals of converts added to the churches were published in the daily newspapers. 70,000 in two months, 85,000 in five months, and more than 100,000 in half a year.

Now this figure did not include nominal church members who were converted to a vital Christianity. This didn't include churchgoers who were converted. This included, this only documented outsiders who were added to the church.

Interestingly, Evan Roberts only preached outside of Wales once, in a series of meetings to the Welsh community of Liverpool. The series of meetings was beset with difficulties from the very beginning. The leadership in Liverpool thought more along the lines of a very traditional evangelistic campaign, but that wasn't Evan Roberts' style at all.

Evan Roberts was much more spontaneous. He was even reluctant to commit himself to dates for meetings, just sort of preferring to wait on the sense of the Holy Spirit. But when he had these meetings in Liverpool, they were crowded with reporters who wanted to write about the Evan Roberts revival phenomenon.

And during the meetings, at one time, Evan Roberts abruptly stopped the service by saying to the thousands of people gathered there, he said, There is an English friend at this meeting who is trying to hypnotize me at this very moment. Will you leave the building at once or ask the Lord to forgive you? God is not mocked. Well, obviously the audience was taken aback.

But a hypnotist later acknowledged the truth of the same strange accusation. His name was Walford Bodie, sometimes known as the British Edison, and he was a known hypnotist, and he took the blame for trying to hypnotize Evan Roberts at that meeting. Well, what was it like during the Welsh revival? What were the meetings like? Well, a man named Merlin Lewis, who was seven years old when the Welsh revival came, described what the meetings were like.

He said that his father came home from working at the coal mine. Of course, in Wales, one of the big industries was coal mining. So his father came home from working at the coal mine at about three o'clock in the afternoon.

He had started his day at six in the morning. So Mr. Lewis took a bath, put on his Sunday clothes, and he said, Come, mother, we're going to church. So they got to church with all the children at about four o'clock in the afternoon.

They couldn't find a seat, but when they saw a mother with three small children, they sort of made room for her. Evan Roberts came to that church very unexpectedly at seven o'clock. Now, when I say very unexpectedly, I mean very unexpectedly, because Evan Roberts never kept the schedule.

Well, I shouldn't say never, but rarely. He would just spontaneously go to whatever church he felt he should go to. It didn't really matter whether he was there or not, but at that particular church, at that particular evening, Evan Roberts showed up.

The church was so crowded when he came that he had to climb up on a bench and walk on the shoulders of men standing in the aisle, and the platform was crowded so that he had to climb up over the pulpit in order to find a place to stand and preach. He said the phrase that is three words in English, but it's one word in Welsh. He said, let us pray, and immediately about 1,800 people crowded in that church began to pray.

Now, it wasn't prayer like where people pray on their own and just sort of give short little, you know, thank you, Jesus, praise you, Lord. It wasn't like that, nor was it the kind of thing where everybody's silent and

people pray one by one. No, it was like everyone was praying his own prayer.

Merlin Lewis described it like this. He said, one man was praying behind me, oh God, give me another chance. I'll put things right if you'll just give me another chance.

And then somebody else prayed on the side, Lord, I'll go to India as a missionary. I won't argue anymore. And then over on the other way, you could hear some mother praying for her son in Liverpool who needed Jesus.

And this would go on for hours. He said in the middle of that meeting, a man elbowed his father and said, will you stop praying and tell me how I can become a Christian? I can't stand this anymore. At two o'clock in the morning, Mr. Lewis said to his wife, come mother, let's go put the children to bed.

So they walked home in the drizzle. They put the children to bed. Mr. Lewis slept in the rocking chair by the fire.

He got up to go to work at six o'clock in the morning. He came home at three o'clock in the afternoon and he said, come mother, let's go to church. They came back to the church to see the same prayer meeting continuing on full tilt.

Now do you see what I say about times of revival being unique times when seemingly everything else is put on hold. Normal things of life are interrupted and people become as it were obsessed with this move of the spirit of God. Now the Welsh revival also had a remarkable effect on society.

So many coal miners were converted and were on fire for God that they held worship services before and after their work shifts. And the sounds of their hymns could be heard throughout the mines. Taverns closed by the scores for lack of business.

And in many communities, the police and the courts had nothing to do. One member of the city council asked a police official, well, look, there's no crime in the city. What do you do with your time? And the policeman said, well, there's really two things that we have to do.

First of all, we have to do a lot of crowd control. And the guy asked, well, where are the crowds? He said, well, the crowds are all at the churches. So we're there at the churches sort of managing the crowds.

And then the city councilman said, well, what's the second thing you do? He said, well, we formed a nice gospel singing quartet and we sing at the churches wherever they let us. It is recorded, however, that production in the coal mines actually decreased for a season. It wasn't that the miners were now distracted or lazy.

No, it was because they could no longer speak to the cart ponies that pulled the coal carts out of the mines with the foul language that they once used. You see, they used to scream obscenities at these poor cart ponies that would pull the coal carts out of the mine. And that was the only thing that the horses understood.

And so now they would just say, oh, you know, oh, Bessie, I can't talk to you like that anymore. Would you please go on? I'll pray for you. Would you please go? And it took several weeks until the horses learned to respond to the converted language of these converted men.

You know, Dr. J. Edwin Orr, this remarkable historian of the phenomenon of revival, described the story of a man named H.J. Galley. H.J. Galley had just graduated from Spurgeon's College in London and was in his first pastorate in England. Upon reading of the reports of the Welsh revival in the newspapers, he said, you know what, I got to see this for myself.

One of my classmates has a church in Wales. I'll arrange a meeting with them. So he visited a classmate of his in Wales named Williams, who pastored a church in Wales, of course, and he learned about the revival firsthand.

And so as soon as he got off the train, Galley wanted to know from his friend Williams. He looked at him square in the eye and he said, Is this truly revival? Williams smiled. He said, It's like the gate of heaven open to our souls.

And Galley said, Well, you know, I've come a long distance. I'd like to hear Evan Robbins preach. Where is he preaching tonight? Williams replied, Well, I don't know.

He doesn't tell anyone where he's going to be. And then Galley wondered. He said, Listen, I thought he was the leader of this revival.

Williams said, Oh, no, he's not the leader of the revival. And then Galley replied. He said, Well, wait, I've been reading that in the newspapers.

Did you mean that the newspapers have it all wrong? Williams replied, God specially uses Evan Roberts, but the Holy Spirit's the leader of the revival. Galley replied with what I probably would have said. He said, Don't we always say that? Williams replied, Brother Galley, we mean that.

Look, Galley, there are about a thousand churches in South Wales. Evan Roberts might show up at my church tonight. But if he doesn't, the Lord will be there in mighty power.

He said, Wow, you're having special meetings. And Williams said, My church has been packed for six weeks. He said, That's remarkable.

You mean the other churches in town are having united meetings at your church? And he said, Listen, every church in town from Anglican to Salvation Army, they're all packed every night. And then Galley said, Well, when do you have the meetings? He said, Well, we have them from six to midnight. Galley couldn't believe it.

What do you mean, from six to midnight? He said, Yeah, I mean, from six in the morning to midnight. Galley was dumbfounded. He said, Wait a minute.

You're not telling me that you have the same people at this meeting from six in the morning to midnight? He said, No, no, no. First, we get the minors before they go on to their shift. At midmorning, we have the housekeepers.

At noon, we have a united meeting. In the afternoon, the schoolchildren are there. But from six in the evening until midnight, the place will be packed with everyone.

And Galley was dumbfounded. He said, Williams, every night for the last six weeks, how do you keep up with the preaching? Williams said, What'd you ask? He said, How do you keep up with the preaching? Six hours every evening? Williams said, I haven't preached for six weeks. What do you mean? He said, Who

preached last night? He said, Well, to the best of my count, 17 people preached, including an old granny of 78 and a boy of 12.

You see what I mean about these being unique lay movements, where just people, ordinary people get remarkably on fire for God. You know, it was really true that that Evan Roberts did everything he could to take the emphasis off of himself. The story goes of Evan Roberts, you know, appearing at one church, and the people were delighted that Evan Roberts came to his church, you know, and he made his way through the crowd, and he came up to the to the front.

And he said, You know, wow, you know, I'm here. I'm glad to be here. He said, Do you believe the promises of God? And everybody was so excited that Evan Roberts.

So they go, Yes, we believe the promises of God. He said, Do you believe that a promise made by the Lord Jesus is especially precious? And the people love that. They go, Yes, it's especially precious if it's made to us by Jesus.

And then he said, Do you believe the promise that wherever two or three are gathered, that Jesus Christ would be in their midst? And the people just I mean, they were so thrilled. Yes, we believe it. The Lord Jesus is in their midst.

And then Evan Roberts said, Well, if Jesus is here and you believe Jesus is here, they go, Yes, we believe Jesus is here. He said, Well, then you don't need me. And he put on his hat and he left and he went to another meeting.

And they asked somebody, Well, what did you guys? I mean, that must have been a downer, you know, to have Evan Roberts leave. They said, No. He said, People looked around at each other just for a few seconds, kind of dumbfounded.

But then they said, It's true. Jesus is here. We don't need Evan Roberts.

And they had a beautiful, powerful meeting that night. Now, one thing that's interesting about the Welsh revival, and it's interesting when you consider the historical phenomenon of revival in general, that there was not much emphasis on preaching in the Welsh revival, mainly because it happened among a biblically literate population whose culture had already been powerfully affected by the Great Awakening of 1860 to 1861 in Great Britain. And I mean, I've kind of noticed this through my own research of this phenomenon of revival.

Some revivals are real preaching and teaching revivals. Some are not. And I think it kind of depends on whether or not the revival happens among a generally biblically literate people or people who are generally biblically illiterate.

If there are people who generally know their Bibles and just be kneed awaken to do it, then it may not be much of an emphasis on preaching and teaching. But if it happens among Christian people who don't know their Bibles, then it'll follow the pattern of those revivals that have seen a great emphasis upon preaching and teaching. You see, as one researcher says, he says, the Welsh revival took scripture knowledge for granted and preaching was thus deemed superfluous and was at a minimum.

The Welsh revival constituency was ill-prepared for a new onslaught of anti-evangelicalism, which captured a generation of otherwise disillusioned Welshmen, that sort of a later historical development.

Now, you may have heard of the Welsh revival before. It wouldn't surprise me if you have.

But what a lot of people don't know is that the Welsh revival, as remarkable as it was, was really just the beginning. It's as if a great stone was dropped into a lake and then the ripples of that work started to be carried out all over the world. There was a genuine worldwide spread of this work that began in the Welsh revival.

You could say, first of all, that it spread to Northern Ireland and to Scotland, to Lurgan, North Ireland, where 50% were added to the churches, to New Townards, where there were 1,300 conversions at a single church, to Belfast, where there were 700 conversions at citywide evangelistic meetings, to Dublin, where there were 300 converts at citywide meetings, to Motherwell, Scotland, where hundreds were added to the churches at a time, to Stirling, where churches were filled in hundreds of conversions, to Coatbridge, where there was never a more successful year evangelistically. In Glasgow, churches were packed, there were hundreds of conversions, including 500 at one meeting. In Kinning Park, 140 were converted and 142 were added to church membership.

At Leith, evangelistic meetings were packed nightly for 12 weeks straight. And in Edinburgh, a thousand conversions were seen at Charlotte Chapel. Now, there's a couple of things I want you to notice about this.

First of all, obviously, it was a widespread work, right? But what I want you to notice here, I mean, these are figures. This is the result of statistical research. This phenomenon of revival isn't just about wonderful stories about amazing works.

I mean, there are real numbers and statistics to back it up. This is one of the reasons why I appreciate the scholarship of Dr. J. Edwin Orr so much. He went very carefully with an Oxford-trained historian's precision and documented these great works of God so that people wouldn't say that it's just built on a bunch of tall tales and fancy stories.

The work spread to England. In the city of Boodle, 700 were added to the Methodist church. In Wigan, the town was aflame with the Spirit of God, and there was a great moving of the Spirit among crowds as large as 5,000 people.

Accreton, the largest crowds ever Barrow-in-Furness, evangelistic meetings for weeks on end with hundreds converted. In Hull, they said it was not in magnitude, but in power, it was equal to the Welsh Revival, a converting furnace. I like that term.

A converting furnace was going on. And in Bradford, as many as 2,000 attending a single prayer meeting with blessing not seen since the time of Wesley. It spread to Scandinavia.

Albert Lunde, in the Oslo Revival of 1905, they said, quote, the awakening in the land of the midnight sun under Albert Lunde has no parallel within a hundred years. In Denmark in 1905, Molrup preached nightly in Copenhagen's largest hall to overflowing crowds. Quote, there has not been a winter like it in Denmark since Christianity came into our country.

It was said that the streets of Copenhagen were filled with the echoes of revival hymns that were sweeping the world. Albert Lunde came to Sweden and was warmly welcomed, especially by Prince Oscar Bernadotte. He preached to a packed out church of more than 2,000, and there was an immediate response.

Virtually every church in Sweden increased in size and strength, and in 1908, the new king, Gustav Adolf V, publicly supported the revival. It spread to the European continent. In 1905, R. A. Torrey spoke to the Blankenburg Convention in Germany, and he found that they were greatly interested in the Welsh revival.

After Torrey left the conference, they continued on, and they had a remarkable season of prayer. This is what they said of that time. Quote, at last we came to prayer.

One prayed and another. Suddenly the Spirit fell upon us and numbers were praying at once. There was no disorder.

It was all harmonious, like the advance of a wave. Prayer merged into praise, into song. I have never been in a meeting like it.

If it was like Wales, it was because the same Holy Spirit was present. In 1905, there was extraordinary revival among the Christian Endeavor Society meetings in Berlin. In Mülheim, Ernest Mondersohn and adjoint prayer meetings lasted weeks in the spring, attended by thousands.

In the summer, the German tent mission set up a tent for 3,000, but more than 4,000 came nightly, and as many as 200 people were converted each night. In Hanover, F. S. Webster reported an unusual revival taking place that summer. Quote, by the new year of 1906, German evangelicals reported gladly to their London contacts that while Germany had not yet experienced a religious awakening as powerful as the one in Wales, a great increase of spiritual religion had already occurred.

All through Germany, an ingathering of converts into fellowship was going on. There were similar reports from Austria, Bohemia, Slovakia, Hungary, Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, and in Russia. But then, you know, it even spread to the United States.

Logically, it began first among the Welsh-speaking or bilingual churches of Pennsylvania. There were a lot of Welsh coal miners in Pennsylvania, and they heard about the work from their Welsh friends and relatives, and it spread there first. In Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, Pastor J. D. Roberts instructed 123 converts in one month in 1904.

In Scranton, large congregations gathered all over the area with a spirit of revival evident in the churches. In Philadelphia, by early spring of 1905, the Methodists reported 10,000 converts. They said that it was the greatest work in the city seen since Moody and Sankey meetings in the previous century.

In Atlantic City, such a revival happened that it was claimed that there was not more than 50 unconverted persons among a population of 60,000. In Atlanta, in November, stores, factories, and offices closed for a day of prayer, and thousands gathered together for prayer. In Louisville, more than 4,000 conversions and 58 leading business firms of the city closed at noon for an hour of prayer.

In Michigan, Baptists reported more baptisms in 1905 than in any year for a decade. In Denver, January 4th, 1905, was declared as a day of prayer. At 10 a.m., the churches were filled, and at 1130, almost all stores and businesses were closed, and at 12 noon, 12,000 people gathered into the largest theaters of the city for combined prayer meetings.

Every school in Denver was closed for prayer. In Los Angeles, 100 churches cooperated and combined for meetings that saw more than 180,000 people in total attendance, with more than 4,200 decisions for Christ. And in Portland, more than 200 major stores signed an agreement to close between 11 and 2 to

allow their employees and customers to attend prayer meetings.

Significant works were also seen in Latin America, Australia, and the South Pacific, Africa, and South Africa, and all over India, China, Korea, and even in Japan. And look, you've got to admit, this is absolutely remarkable. And I dare say that even though many of you, or maybe all of you, have at one time heard of the Wells Revival, I bet very few of you knew that there was such a remarkable worldwide work following the Wells Revival, that this spread and had such an amazing impact on the United States of America.

But it wasn't just the United States, it was genuinely worldwide an amazing work of God. That's sort of interesting. There are many people who have asked the question, why didn't the Wells Revival last? And I have to say, I think that's a foolish question.

I think it did last. Look at how it extended all over the world. Now it lasted in its greatest excitement in Wales for about two years.

But the spiritual temperature of Wales was noticeably raised all the way up until the World War I started, until 1914. Now that great war had a deadly effect on almost all organized religion. And then after the First World War, there was a rapid rise in modernism, in theological liberalism, in scientism, and in psychology.

But it was amazing to see what God did in those years. J. Edwin Orr says this, the worldwide awakening of the early 20th century came at the end of 50 years of evangelical advance, following the outpouring of the spirit far and wide in 1858-59 and the 60s. Thus, it did not represent a recovery from a long night of despair caused by rampant infidelity, as was in the case in the days of Wesley.

It seemed rather a blaze of evening glory at the end of the great century. You know, there were people who criticized the Welsh Revival. Five years after the height of the Welsh Revival, a critic wrote a book criticizing the movement.

He said that it wasn't of God, because five years after the Revival, only 75,000 of the 100,000 of those converted were still strong Christians, were still in the churches. Now listen, most evangelists today would be thrilled with a 75% retention rate. But the truth of the Welsh Revival was even greater.

That 25,000 reduction, it doesn't count those who were lost to death, to emigration, and he says, many were lost to the mission halls and to the Pentecostals. So I mean, it was a much greater retention rate than 75%. I would hazard a guess that it might have been as great as 90 or 95%.

But again, it's foolish to ask why the Welsh Revival did not last. It did last. It had an impressive worldwide impact, but yet we admit that things changed dramatically in Europe and in the world, as we discussed in a previous lecture, after the First World War.

I mean, when you had the situation where Italy lost half a million men, and Britain and the British Empire lost more than them, and Austria and Hungary lost more than the British, and France lost more than the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and Russia lost more than France, and Germany lost more than Russia, it's staggering to see the damage done. Matter of fact, I have to say that one of the interesting phenomenons of revival is that it seems that sometimes before there is a tremendous calamity that will come upon the world, God will send revival. I mean, this Welsh Revival, Welsh and worldwide revival, happened before the First World War.

Another very notable revival, the one where a million people were saved in one year in the United States, that revival of 1857-58, and then 1859 and 1860 in Great Britain, I think it's significant that it happened in the United States just a few years before the Civil War. You see, there just seems to be that sometimes there's this pattern that God knows that before this great catastrophe comes, I want to bring as many into my kingdom as possible. Now, it's interesting to see that there is, if you will, an abiding legacy of this revival.

And the abiding legacy, you might say, is the Pentecostal aftermath. Because the modern Pentecostal movement began in Los Angeles, California. That's the roots of the history of the modern Pentecostal movement.

But actually, it was stirred into being by people who were directly influenced and inspired by the Welsh Revival. I could go through the specific history of it, but it was just a remarkable thing, the beginning of the Pentecostal movement, and it happened as a direct result of what happened. Or, I shouldn't say as a direct result, I would say as one of the waves that came forward from the rock being dropped in the water from the Welsh Revival.

One more quote here from Dr. J. Edwin Orr. He says, It can be stated boldly that successive evangelical awakenings are each more radically proto-New Testament in emphasis. The Reformers were more evangelical than the Lawlords, and the Puritans more evangelical than the Reformers, and the 18th century revivals more evangelistic than the Puritans, and the 19th century evangelists more enterprising than their predecessors, and though the 20th century ecumenicists sincerely credit 20th century Pentecostals with a bounding zeal.

This is what I wanted to get to. He's trying to indicate that it seems that with each successive revival, it almost seems to get closer to the New Testament church each time, which makes people ask, When will there be another great outpouring of the Spirit? Now, some people believe that there will not be another great outpouring of the Spirit before the rapture of the church. I don't know.

Of course, I believe that the rapture of the church could happen at any moment. I believe that before we finish our lecture here this evening, we could be taken up, and wouldn't that be glorious? We'd all be in favor of that. But you must say that if you take a look at a historical pattern, it would be far too much to call it some kind of historical law, but you could say that it's at least a sometimes pattern, that God sends revival before times of great catastrophe.

Wouldn't it make sense to you for God to send a tremendous revival to the world before the rapture, so that as many as possible could be converted and escape the terrors of the Great Tribulation? Now, I don't think that this contradicts for a moment the idea that there will also concurrently be a great apostasy in the last days. The two can happen at the same time. I don't think that they necessarily contradict each other.

But yet it's interesting to see that there may yet be again a great revival. If it happens, know a few things. First of all, it won't happen by hype and by cheerleading, right? It won't happen by a bunch of people going around screaming, Revival! Revival! Revival! Listen, it'll happen as people seek God and pray, and the Holy Spirit is poured out.

But I would also say this. There's something about this outpouring of revival that is strange and unexpected and mysterious. You have to admit that when God sends revival, parts of it will look familiar to us historically, but parts of it will probably look strange to us.

And we just have to be sensitive to what the Holy Spirit is doing. Now you should know that there are some people who have ideas of revival over the last 60 years. They point to different works that have happened, different phenomenon.

Some people point to what some people call the healing revival in post-war America, 1947 to 1958, where there just seemed to be a remarkable number of charismatic Pentecostal healers going around the United States. Some people talk about the charismatic revival, where it seemed that main line of Protestant groups, Episcopalians, Methodists, Presbyterians, sometimes even Roman Catholics, were really experiencing an outpouring of the Spirit without becoming Pentecostals themselves or joining Pentecostal churches. But it was a charismatic revival within their own churches.

Some people talk about the Asbury revival, which was a remarkable work among college students in 1970. There's the Jesus movement of 1970 to 1980, of which, of course, our own church movement of Calvary Chapel genuinely comes forth from that period. And then other people point to what is known as the Toronto blessing in 1994, or what's called sometimes the Brownsville revival in 1996.

Would you like to hear my historical opinion on these things? Most of these I do not regard as true revival at all. I'm not going to say that the Holy Spirit wasn't doing anything in these works. Perhaps he was.

But if you take the historical measure of revival, I don't think any of these adequately match up. Any of these were not the kind of phenomenon where you had, for example, proportionally speaking, 10 million people saved in one year in the United States, where you had every church filled every night for a period of weeks or months. But I do think that among these six works that I've listed for you here, two of them stand out.

One of them was the Asbury revival. When you talk to people who were influenced by the Asbury revival, which was a Methodist college in the middle part of the United States, they say that there was something awesome and spectacular about that work. Very much the same kind of thing that I spoke to you about regarding the Welsh revival.

That was happening at the Asbury revival. Now, that was real. It was genuine.

You might call it a mini revival because it didn't spread out as broadly as some of these great works in the past. Then with the Jesus movement, listen, let me tell you, I don't know if you've ever had the opportunity to talk to some of the grand old men, so to speak, of the Calvary Chapel movement. If you ever have the opportunity, you ask them, tell me what it was like in the early days of the Jesus movement.

Tell me what that was like and ask them if they think it was really revival. Now, I've talked to men, and I sort of came in in my own experience at the tail end of it, but I've talked to men who tell me of the kind of phenomenon, of the kind of thing that sounded just like what was happening in previous revivals, even to the extent that they said that it just couldn't continue on indefinitely. It was so consuming.

It was so engrossing that a season like that can't go on indefinitely, right? They're unusually times of blessing given to the church. I have to give you an opinion that I think might shock many people, but I'll give it to you anyway. There are people who say that revival should be the standing condition of the church.

I cannot agree with that perspective from a historical perspective. I mean, I just can't agree with that. I see times of revival as a unique outpouring in the church.

But then again, I may have a higher view of revival than what people say. You see, what a lot of people think of when they think of revival, they just think of a season of spiritual excitement. And if that's what revival is, well then, praise God.

God's people should always be excited. But when you take a look at these amazing outpourings of the Holy Spirit from a historical perspective, I think it's impossible to say that that should be forever the standing condition of the church. They are unique gifts and outpourings of the Holy Spirit that we should seek God for and value.

And the Jesus movement was a genuine movement. But the thing that made it different and the thing that makes it fall short of a true revival in the same context as the previous six that I mentioned to you before is this, is that it didn't reach beyond the set of churches that it was in. It didn't transform the Presbyterian church and the Methodist church and the Episcopalian church.

It wasn't as if every church was impacted by this. And I'll tell you why. It was because I think that those mainline people shut it out.

I think that those mainline people didn't want it. I think that the Jesus movement could have been, of course, this is all historical speculation. I'm just speaking out of opinion here, of course.

But I think that historically speaking, the Jesus movement could have been on par with one of these great six revivals that we mentioned in the past. God, as it were, offered it to the whole church, but the whole church didn't want it. And so it was a real work.

It was a deep work, but it was not as broad as a work as some of these previous historical revivals. Or so it seems to me. I would just say that we should sort of educate ourselves about this idea of revival.

We should recognize, as I said before, that we can't hype ourselves into it, we can't cheerlead ourselves into it, but we can pray for it. And we can be excited about the opportunity that God may pour out His Spirit again and we may be able to see it.

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