

# When God Stepped Down - Part 1 (Cd Quality)

by Duncan Campbell

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*Duncan Campbell recounts the powerful and spontaneous movement of God during the Lewis revival, emphasizing the importance of prayer and community transformation.*

**Duration:** 28:40

**Scripture:** Psalm 24:3-5, Psalm 37:4, Psalm 102:13, Isaiah 55:3, Matthew 6:33, Matthew 11:28, Acts 1:14

**Topics:** "Revival History"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher recounts a powerful revival that took place in a parish during the Lewis revival. The revival was sparked by a young man who read a portion of Psalm 24 during a prayer meeting in a barn. He emphasized the importance of being rightly related to God while praying. The preacher then shares a story of an 84-year-old blind woman who had a vision of a crowded church filled with young people and a strange minister in the pulpit. This vision led to the parish minister seeking God's movement and eventually preaching to a congregation of about 300 people. Although there was a sense of God's presence, nothing significant happened until the preacher witnessed young men kneeling by the roadside, including one under the influence of alcohol, with his mother pleading for his repentance. This moment marked the outbreak of God's supernatural power and the beginning of a revival.

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## Transcript

Now before I begin the story, I would like to say one thing, and that is that I did not bring revival to Lewis. It has grieved my heart again and again to read articles about the man that brought revival to Lewis. Notices on church boards, come and hear the man that brought revival to Lewis.

My dear people, it's not true. I don't carry revival about with me in my pocket. Revival broke out in Lewis sometime before I went to the island.

I thank God for the privilege of being in its midst for over three years. I went at the invitation of one parish minister for ten days, but God kept me there for three years. Now I'm thankful to God for the privilege of perhaps in some small way leading that movement and teaching the young converts in the deep things of God.

Now having said that, I want to read you a few lines from this little book, The Lewis Awakening. It will give you an idea of the desperate state of this island prior to this gracious movement. The Presbytery of Lewis met to consider the terrible drift away from the ordinances of the church, especially the drift away from the

church by the young people of the island.

Now here are words from a declaration that was read in all the congregations. The presbytery affectionately plead with their people, especially with the youth of the church, to take these matters to heart and to make serious inquiry as to what must be the end should there be no repentance. My dear people, take that to heart.

Should there be no repentance, and they call upon every individual asked before God to examine his or her life in the light of that responsibility which pertains to us all, that happily in the divine mercy we may be visited with the spirit of repentance and may turn again unto the Lord whom we have so grieved with our iniquities and waveriness. Especially would they warn their young people of the devil's man traps, the cinema, and the public house. That was a declaration by the presbytery read in all the congregations and published in the local press.

Now you might ask me, what do you mean by revival? There are a great many views held by people today as to what revival is. So you hear men say, are you going out to the revival meetings? We're having a revival crusade, and so on. There is a world of difference between a crusade or a special effort in the field of evangelism.

My dear people, that is not revival. As I already said from this platform, I thank God for every soul brought to Christ through our special efforts, and for every season of blessing at our conferences and at our conventions. We praise God for such movements.

But is it not true that such movements do not, as a general rule, touch the community? The community remains more or less the same, and the Nazis go past us to hell. But in revival, the community suddenly becomes conscious of the movings of God, beginning among his own people. So that in a matter of hours, not days, in a matter of hours, churches become crowded.

No intimation of any special meeting, but something happening that moves men and women to the house of God. And you find within hours, scores of men and women crying to God for mercy before they went near a church. You have read the history of revivals, the Jonathan Edward revival in America, that was what happened.

And the Welsh revival, that is what happened. And the more recent Louis revival, that is what happened. When God stepped down, suddenly men and women all over the parish were gripped by the fear of God.

Now how did it happen? This to me is an interesting story, and I want to tell it in full. One evening, an old woman, 84 years of age and blind, had a vision. Now don't ask me to explain this vision because I cannot, but strange things happen when God begins to move.

And this dear old lady, in the vision saw the church of her father's crowded with young people, crowded with young people. And she saw a strange minister in the pulpit. She was so impressed by this revelation, because a revelation it was, she sent for the minister and told her story.

The parish minister was a God-fearing man, a man not long to see God working. Oh, he had tried ever so many things to get the youth of the parish interested, but not one single teenager attended the church. That was the situation.

Well, what to this dear old lady to say to him? I'll tell you what she said. I'm sure, Mr. Mackay, that you're longing to see God working. What about calling your office bearers together and suggest to them that you spend two nights a week waiting upon God in prayer.

You've tried mission, you've tried special evangelists. Mr. Mackay, have you tried God? Oh, I tell you, this is a wonderful old woman. So he meekly obeyed and said, yes, I'll call the session together and I will suggest that we meet on Tuesday night and Friday night and we'll spend the whole night in prayer.

I tell you, dear people, here were men that meant business. The dear old lady said, well, if you do that, my sister and I will get on our knees at 10 o'clock on Tuesday, 10 o'clock on Friday, and we'll wait on our knees till four o'clock in the morning. I tell you, this puts us to shame.

So they went to prayer and I want to mention that they had but one promise from God and that promise they pledged. I will pour water on him that his thirsty floods upon the dry ground. That's God's promise.

And in their prayers, according to the minister, they would say again and again, God, you're a covenant-keeping God and you must be true to your covenant engagements. The praying and the meetings continued for several months until one night a very remarkable thing happened there kneeling among straw in the barn, the barn of a farmhouse, when suddenly one young man rose and read part of Psalm 24. Who shall ascend the hill of God? Who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart to have not lifted up his soul to vanity, nor sworn deceitfully, he shall receive the blessing of the Lord.

And he shut his Bible and then looking down at the minister and at the other men who were kneeling there, he said this, rather crude words, not so crude in Gaelic, but this is what he said. Brethren, it seems to me just so much humbug to be praying as we are praying, to be waiting as we are waiting, if we ourselves are not rightly related to God. Oh, my dear brethren, let's take that to heart.

He began to pray, God, are my hands clean? Is my heart pure? And that dear man that no farther, he fell on his knees, and then on his face among the straw, and within a matter of minutes, three of the elders fell into a trance. Now, please don't come to me at the end of this meeting and ask me, what did I really mean by men falling into a trance? I cannot answer that question. All that I know is this, that when that happened in the barn, now it happened in the Jonathan Edward revival, remember that, not peculiar by any means to Lewis.

It happened in America. It happened in the 59 revival in Wales, not the 1900 revival, but the 59 revival. But this I can say, the moment that that happened in the barn, a power was let loose in Barvas that shook the whole of Lewis.

I say shook Lewis. God stepped down. The Holy Spirit began to move among the people.

And the minister writing about what happened in the following morning said this, you met God on Meadow and Moorland. You met him in the homes of the people. God seemed to be everywhere.

What was that? Revival. Revival. Not an evangelist, not a special effort, not anything at all organized on the basis of human endeavor, but an awareness of God that gripped the whole community so much so that work stopped.

What was happening? The people were meeting in groups. Young men would gather in a field, and begin to talk about this strange consciousness of God that had gripped the community. In a matter of days, I received a letter inviting me to the island.

I was at that time in the midst of a very gracious movement on the island of Skye. It wasn't revival, but men and women were coming to Christ, and God was glorified in the number of prominent men who followed the Savior at that time, but it wasn't revival. I imagine that in Canada or in America they would refer to it as a big revival, but it was definitely a move of God.

So I received this invitation to come to Lewis for 10 days, and I wrote back to say that it wasn't possible for me to do that because I was involved in a holiday convention on this island, and the speakers were arranged and accommodation in the different hotels for the people that were coming from all over Britain. I cannot take time to tell you how that convention had to be canceled. Largely because the tourist board took the hotels over my head for a special Skye week that they were going to have, so I had to cancel everything.

However, the minister received the letter and he went to the old lady with him and read the letter to her. This is what she said, Mr. Mackay, that is what man is saying, but God has said something else and he'll be here within a fortnight. And I told you the convention wasn't canceled then, but she knew.

Oh my dear people, listen, the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him. And she knew God's secret. When I was on the island, within 10 days, I just spent 10 days among the people.

I was met at the pier by the minister and two of his office bearers. Just as I stepped off the boat, an old elder came over to me and faced me with this question, Mr. Campbell, may I ask you this question, are you walking with God? Oh, here were men who meant business, men who were afraid that a strange hand would touch the ark. Are you walking with God? Well, I was glad to be able to say, well, I think I can say this, that I fear God.

The dear man looked at me and said, well, if you fear God, that will do. And then the minister turned and said, we're sure, Mr. Campbell, that you're tired and you must be longing for your supper. And supper will be ready for you in the manse.

But I wonder if you would address a meeting in the parish church, just on the way to the manse, to show yourself to the people. There'll be a fair congregation. I'm not seeing a great number, but, oh, anything between two and three hundred, I expect.

You see, there's a movement among us. Well, it will interest you, dear people, to know that I never got that supper, because I didn't arrive at the manse until twenty minutes past five in the morning. I went to the church.

Now, this is the interesting bit, because it deals with the outbreak of God in supernatural power, the God of miracle revealing himself in revival. I preached in the church to a congregation of about three hundred, and, uh, I would say a good meeting, a wonderful sense of God, something that I hadn't known since the 1921 movement in Middergyle, but nothing really happened. And I pronounced the benediction.

And I'm walking down the aisle when this young man came to me and said, uh, nothing has broken out tonight, but God is hovering over us. He's hovering over us, maybe they, and he'll break through any moment. Well, I must be perfectly honest, I didn't feel anything.

But you see, he was a man much nearer to God than I was. Oh, he knew the secrets. We're moving down, the aisle and the congregation is moving out.

They're all out now except this man and myself. He lifted his two hands and started to pray. God, you made a promise to pour water on the thirsty and plants upon the dry ground, and you're not doing it.

And he prayed, prayed, and prayed again until he fell again onto the floor in a trance. He's lying there. I'm standing beside him for about five minutes, and then the doors of the clerk came in.

Mr. Campbell, something wonderful has happened. Revival has broken out. Will you come to the door and see the crowd that's here? Eleven o'clock, Matthew, eleven o'clock.

And I went to the door and there must have been a congregation of between six and seven hundred people gathered around the church. This dear man stood at the door and suggested that we might sing a psalm. He gave out Psalm 102 when Zion's bondage God turned back.

Us men that dreamed where we then filled with laughter was our mouth, our tongue with melody, and they sang and they sang and they sang, and in the midst of it I could hear the cry of the penitent. I could hear men cry into God for mercy. And I turned to the elder and said, I think we had better open the doors again and let them in.

And within a matter of minutes, the church was crowded at a quarter to twelve. Now, where did the people come from? How did they know that a meeting was in progress in the church? Well, I cannot tell you, but I know this, that from village and hamlet, the people came. Were you to ask some of them today, what was it that moved you? They couldn't tell you.

Only that they were moved by a power that they could not explain, and the power was such as to get them to understand and see that they were hell-deserving sinners. And of course, the only place they could thank God where they might find help was at the church. And here they were, between six and seven hundred.

There was a dance in progress that night in the parish, and while this young man was praying in the aisle, the power of God moved into that dance. And the young people, over a hundred of them, fled from the dance as though fleeing from a plague. And they made for the church.

And when I endeavored to get up into the pulpit, I found the way blocked was young people who had been at the dance. When I went into the pulpit, I found a young woman, a graduate of Aberdeen University, who was at the dance, and she's lying on the floor of the pulpit crying, Is there mercy for me? Is there mercy for me? Is there mercy for me? God was at work, and Peggy's vision, now actual and real, a church crowded with young people as well as old. Well, that meeting continued until four o'clock in the morning.

As I was leaving the church, a young man came to me. Oh, he's not a Christian, but he's a God-fearing young man, and told me this story. Mr. Campbell, there must be anything between two and three hundred people at the police station.

They're gathered there and some are on their knees. Now, I can't understand this. Now, he wasn't in the church, you see.

But here, a crowd of men and women from a neighboring village, five and six miles away, were so moved by God that they found themselves moving to the police station because the constable there was a God-fearing and well-saved man. And just next to the door, Peggy's cottage. And they were there, and this young man begged of me to go along to the police station.

And I went along, and I shall never, never forget what my ears heard and my eyes saw. That morning, young men were kneeling by the roadside. I think just now of a group of half a dozen.

One of them under the entrance of drink, and his old mother kneeling beside him and saying, Oh, Willie, Willie, are you coming at last? Willie, Willie, are you coming at last? And Willie today is the parish minister of Oogie. And from the group of young men who sought the Lord that night, there are nine in the ministry today. God moved.

My dear people, that's revival. That's God at work. And I may go to sin passing.

That is the crying meat of the Christian church in Canada today. But not this effort and that effort. On the basis of human endeavor, but a manifestation of God that moves sinners to cry for mercy before they go near a place of worship.

My dear people, that was how it began then. That was how it began. And then it left over the bounds of the parish at the neighboring parishes.

This is

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