

# Garland, Texas - What Revival Is

by J. Edwin Orr

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*Revival is a work of God, a spontaneous and simultaneous outpouring of the Holy Spirit that requires the response of believers and leads to the reviving of God's people and the evangelization of the world.*

**Duration:** 1:00:35

**Scripture:** Psalm 85:6, Acts 2:17

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

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## Description

This sermon delves into the historical context of revivals in the United States, emphasizing the transformative power of God's spirit during times of spiritual awakening. It highlights the impact of prayer meetings, conversions, and societal changes brought about by these revivals, showcasing how God's work can lead to significant transformations in individuals and communities. The sermon encourages a deep longing for revival and a reliance on God's spirit to bring about change in a world filled with challenges and moral decay.

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## Transcript

We spoke this morning about how words change meaning. Now, many of you were at the meeting this morning. What did I speak on? What does repentance mean? Ah, you remember that.

Now, I told you also that not only has the word repent changed to mean just to feel sorry, but it really means to change, to change your attitude. But the word homely I gave as an illustration, in the rest of the English-speaking world means home-like, whereas in the United States it means ugly. So I'm going to speak on another word that's changed meaning.

I was in Griffin, Georgia, talking to a good Baptist there. I said, the country's in such a mess, don't you think we ought to pray for revival? He said, yes, but closer to the time. I said, run that past me again.

Well, he said, we always pray for revivals in August. What's the good of starting to pray until July? The word revival obviously has changed meaning in some places. I saw a sign outside a church in the San Fernando Valley which said, revival every Monday.

What they do during the rest of the week, one can only conjure. But I got a clue down in Burbank, five miles away, there was a sign outside another church that said, revival every night except Monday. Left me wondering what they did on Monday night.

And I was preaching in their great center of learning, Baylor University. Oh, yes, first time I spoke there was 1950. But a Baptist pastor there said to me, brother, oh, we had a revival here last fall and nobody got revived.

Well, I said, then you didn't have a revival. Oh, yes, we did, he said. And he gave me the name of the evangelist and the name of the song leader and how much money they put out on publicity.

But he said, we never got off the ground. This must be the only country in the world where a non-event may be considered an event just because you call it that. In other words, it's a revival whether anyone gets revived or not.

Now, the word revival is not found in the English Bible. But the word revive is. By the way, the word came into the English language, revival, 1702.

It was described as an awakening in or of evangelical religion. That's the standard definition. You'll find it in all the encyclopedias and in all the dictionaries.

But since about 1930, American dictionaries give a second definition. A is what I've just said, B, also a week of meetings, especially in the South. Now, when we use the word revival, what does it mean? The poor guy was pulled out of the creek, but through artificial respiration he was revived.

What does that mean? To bring back to life again. If they say he was in the creek for two days, nobody tries to revive him. He's dead.

But if he's got any life, you can bring him back to life. That's the meaning of the word. But we also use it in other ways.

You might say, Baylor University has decided to revive a program of Shakespearean plays. What does that mean? It means it's been in abeyance for a while. They decide to bring it back to life again.

The plain meaning of the word revive means re, again, vive, life. You know the Spanish word viva. Well, it's the same idea.

Bring back to life. But there's a more serious controversy, and that is, can you organize a revival? Jonathan Edwards said revival is a work of God. But Charles Finney said revival is nothing more than the right use of the appropriate means.

In other words, if you do certain things, you'll get certain results. In other words, revival is a program. How we love programs.

In fact, some people have said we worship the Trinity of Father, Son, and Holy Program. We have programs for everything. Is revival just a program? Now, Finney gave us his illustration, in case you think I'm not being fair to him.

Just as a farmer chooses a day to plow a field, and chooses a day to sow the seed, and chooses a day to reap the harvest, so you can have revival. In Georgia, of course, always in August, at least in certain parts of Georgia. Now, what is the truth about this? The scripture says, Wilt thou not revive us again? Who? Thou.

And who's that? God. It doesn't say give us a blueprint or a program to revive ourselves. Wilt thou not revive us again? The prophet says, Revive thy work, O Lord, in the midst of the years.

In wrath remember mercy. Who does it? The Lord. According to scripture, the work of reviving God's people is the work of God, whereas we have made it into a human effort.

We plan it. We arrange for speakers. We arrange for special music.

All this is proper in evangelism. I believe that what Phinney says about the right use of the appropriate means applies every time to evangelism. When I was in New Guinea with the United States Air Force, I had a chaplain's assistant, a godly young man, a Methodist.

He had the strange idea that if he spoke English loudly enough, the natives would understand. Any time he addressed a native, he always raised his voice. Now that's not the right use of the appropriate means.

I'm a professor in the School of World Mission. We have nearly 300 missionaries in mid-career coming to study this year. But they learn that you use the appropriate means.

You better learn their language, and second, you better learn their culture. That's equally important. Now in evangelism, the right use of the appropriate means, but you can't say we're going to have a revival, and we're going to arrange it from the 15th of November onwards, and we better get out of the way by Thanksgiving, because we've got a lot of important things to do on Thanksgiving.

You can't talk about the work of God like that. Now, how can we give this a scriptural background? I'm going to quote some very familiar text to you. The Lord Jesus met with his disciples for the last time, and they said, Are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel? They had been taught that when Messiah came, he would deliver the people of God from the tyranny of their enemies.

They wanted liberation. What did he say? It is not for you to know the times or the seasons. You can't fix a date.

You can't have a blueprint. But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. He didn't give them a program.

He said, You will receive power. Now, did that result in the disciples forming a committee and discussing the various ways of doing it? No, no. It says in the same chapter of the Acts, All these, after naming the disciples, with Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the half-brothers of Jesus, continued in prayer.

They just prayed. And then when the day of Pentecost had come, quite unexpectedly, the Holy Spirit was outpoured upon them. Now, the Apostle Peter stood up before that vast multitude and he said, These men are not drunk as you suppose.

It's only nine o'clock in the morning. But this is that which was spoken of by the prophet Joel. It shall come to pass in the last day, saith God, I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions.

And that long quotation ends with, They that call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved. This is what we call the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. If you read nineteenth-century literature, the days of Moody, and Torrey, and Finney, and these other great preachers, you'll find they often talked about the outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes they used a more Latin term, the effusion of the Holy Spirit. We seldom hear the term today. Even in the charismatic movement, which is so concerned about the gifts of the Spirit, it's so often an individual experience.

What will this do to me? That there's very little concern about a general outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And this is where we begin. If we get this first stage right, we'll understand what revival is, and what evangelism is, and what God does in this work of his.

Now, if I were to ask you the question, Is the work of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit the work of God or the work of man? What would you say? The Lord Jesus answers for us. The wind blows where it lists. You can't tell where it's coming from or where it's going to.

So it is with the Spirit. Now, in Western Canada in 1971, a remarkable movement of God broke out in Saskatoon, Saskatchewan. Spread all over Western Canada.

One of the leaders came down, he was a Mennonite brother, belonged to the Mennonite brethren, came down to Fuller to study for his doctorate. So I asked him, Is the Canadian revival movement in its second stage yet? He said, I don't know what you mean. I said, the first stage of revival is spontaneous, simultaneous.

It just breaks out here, there, and everywhere. Nobody knows where it will be next. But the second stage is export.

Those whose lives have been transformed decide to carry the message elsewhere. There's a godly Baptist pastor, William McLeod, from Saskatoon. It was in his church that the great movement began.

And I found he was down in San Antonio and down in Brownsville in Texas preaching in different congregations. He didn't set Texas on fire, but he brought blessing by bringing the message of that revival. That's the second stage, export.

The third stage is fellowship. People who have had the same experience like to look together, as in the charismatic movement. And the fourth stage is organizational.

They may form what we call a para-church movement, or else they may form a new denomination. You see, we talk about Methodist revival. Actually, there was a general revival in the days of John Wesley, not only among his followers, but with others.

It was worldwide. But John Wesley organized his converts and friends into classes within the Church of England, and that became the Methodist denomination. There was general revival, but when it reached that organized stage, it became a denomination.

Now, the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is exclusively the work of God. World Vision, the Billy Graham Organization, the Southern Baptist Convention, none of them are capable of organizing and outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Imagine God consulting the Home Mission Board.

When do you think we should begin? God bless my friends in the Home Mission Board. I've just come back from Australia with Glenn Sheppard, a man of God. But Glenn would agree with me.

You can't organize the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. So that's the work of God exclusively. But what's the result of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit? The first effect is the reviving of God's people.

Now you see, by saying reviving, you weren't misled. I didn't say the result is a revival organized in August. No, no.

It's the reviving of God's people wherever they're found. That always happens when the Holy Spirit is outpoured. The Holy Spirit brings us back to what we ought to be, quickens our prayer life, gives us conviction soon so it will put things right.

That's his work. Now could you say that revival of that sort is the work of God or the work of men? I've already answered the question. It's the work of God, but it requires the response of believers.

Tomorrow night you're going to have Robert Coleman speak on the Asbury College revival. During that revival, a team from Asbury College visited a Baptist seminary, and the president wouldn't let them speak because he said, This is not part of the program of the convention. It requires the response of believers.

I'll tell you this. If a pastor of a church is opposed to revival, you won't have revival in that church. God recognizes leadership.

The godly people may be praying, but their prayers may be answered in the illness of the pastor or his removal or his call to somewhere else. But the leadership of a congregation can frustrate the work of God. So you could say revival is the work of God with the response of believers.

I used to hold the view, Revive the church and win the world. As a matter of fact, Evan Roberts, the man whom God so signally used in the great Welsh revival, I knew him personally, he used a slogan in Welsh, Revive the church, bend the church, and win the world. But is that always true? Now, get a church on fire for God, you're bound to win some people to Christ.

Very seldom does it happen otherwise. But will it change the whole community? Not necessarily so. You see, the apostle Peter preached Christ crucified, Christ risen from the dead on the day of Pentecost.

120 believers overnight became 3,120. That's what my colleague Dr. Donald McGavin calls very satisfactory church growth. 120, 3,120.

What was the secret? Peter preached the word, Peter was filled with the Spirit. Does that mean that if you're filled with the Spirit and preach the word, you're going to see very satisfactory church growth? Not necessarily so. Stephen was filled with the Spirit, the scripture says so.

He preached the word just as faithfully as did Peter. But they murdered him. And it taught me something else.

We need to pray for an outpouring of God's Spirit not only upon believers, but upon the masses. I used to think that John Wesley was such a genius of an evangelist that when he started to preach, strong men broke down and wept. But when John Wesley began, he was a rather stuffy high churchman.

You read in his own diary, in his journal, I made a series of appeals to the intellect, will, and emotion. Just talking like an Oxford professor. But what happened? The same Holy Spirit that had revived Wesley and Whitfield at Oxford was poured out upon the non-churchgoing masses that never darkened a church door.

If you want to try and visualize it for yourself, can you imagine a huge crowd like Woodstock, one of these rock concerts, and the Holy Spirit being poured out upon them so they repented with strong crying and brokenness? That's what happened in that revival. We need to pray for the revival of the people. I took a

team with me to New Zealand and Australia in 1956-57.

We wanted to reach all the denominations, so we had an Episcopal evangelist, a Presbyterian evangelist, a Methodist evangelist, a Baptist evangelist, and we also had Corrie Ten Boom. No doubt you've heard her name. But when we took her, nobody knew her name.

Very few knew her name. She was a member of our team for three years. We adopted as our slogan the evangelization of the world through the reviving of the Church.

And there's truth in that. But it's not the whole truth. We need God to work upon the people.

There are more and more people in America who are secularized, couldn't care less about the Church. They don't persecute us, but they're just indifferent. So we need to have an outpouring of God's Spirit upon the masses.

Is that the work of God or the work of man? That's the work of God. But it takes the response of unbelievers. When God begins to work among the masses, perhaps some man will say to his wife, You know, honey, we haven't been to church since we were married.

We've got children growing up. We've got to do something about this. They look around for a church.

In this pluralistic society, they're not quite sure what church to go to. He says, Well, I'm Presbyterian way back. What were you? And she says, Well, I'm Mission Covenant, but I haven't been there for so long.

They may start going to a Baptist church. They might go to Christian Missionary Alliance. They might even go to a Christian science church.

They don't know any better. But they get hungry for God. That's where we come in.

That's where the work of man comes in. God has chosen to work through us. He could send a legion of angels to proclaim the gospel, but he's chosen not to do that.

That's why he needs to revive the church, so that we do it. Now, the church then engages in evangelism, let's say evangelizing and teaching. There's the Great Commission for you.

Go into all the world, preach, teach. What do we mean by evangelism? The best definition I know was written by a good friend of mine, Canon Max Warren of Westminster Abbey. Died a few years ago.

He said, to evangelize is so to present Jesus Christ in the power of the Spirit, that men may come to put their trust in him as Savior and to serve him as Lord in the fellowship of his church and in the vocations of the common life. That's the best definition I know. Is that the work of God or the work of man? That is the work of man.

That's the work of converted men. We have to do it. Also teaching.

You see, we evangelize inquirers, but we teach disciples, those who wish to follow. We teach them the commandments. Also we teach their children.

And then I find in every great movement of the Holy Spirit there is social reform. Out of every great movement of God's Spirit there has come social change. You say, well, do you equate social action with evangelism? No.

I would say this just in passing. Many Southern Baptists confuse revival and evangelism. Many Northern Baptists confuse evangelism and social action.

I remember when Valley Forge adopted what they call lifestyle evangelism. I thought that's great. I said to one of the men there, how's it getting along? He said, we're doing wonderful.

He said, we've got at least six firms to stop investing in South Africa. Now is that evangelism? It's social action, all right. But is that evangelism? No, no.

So I can't equate evangelism and social action. Then is there any kind of priority? I think there is. Now don't misunderstand me.

The scripture teaches social witness. We're told to visit prisoners, to visit the sick, to help those who are in distress. Inasmuch you've done unto the least of these, you've done it unto me.

There is a place for social action. Most of the social action in this country has come from the great revivals. But I made an interesting discovery.

I was speaking at that great Methodist center, Asbury College, with Stanley Jones and Frank Laubach in 1969. Frank Laubach was called Mr. Literacy. He was a missionary to the Philippines.

And he was getting nowhere. He was in Mindanao working among the Muslims. Getting nowhere.

Winning no converts. And he sought the Lord. Lord, what's wrong with me? And the Lord said to him, You don't love these people.

You're just trying to get converts the way some people go out and get scalps. If you love them, why don't you teach them to read and write? They need to learn, don't they? So he started to teach them to read and write. He still was an evangelist, but he became so famous, he coined the phrase, Each one teach one.

And he became consultant of third world and colonial governments when they wanted to teach their people how to read and write. That was his work. That was social action, all right.

But when I was in China recently, I had to admit the communists had done a good job in teaching the Chinese people to read and write. Everyone agrees about this, even their greatest enemies. So you see, if we Christians don't have a social testimony, if we don't engage in social action, somebody else will.

But if we don't preach the gospel and teach the commandments, nobody else will. They're not interested. So I see a certain priority, but I don't criticize people who have gone into social action.

I told you we had a team of evangelists in Australia. One was an Episcopal, another Presbyterian, another Methodist, another one Baptist. The Methodist fellow today is speaker of the Tasmanian Parliament.

A fine Christian man, standing for Christian things in political life. And I believe there are many men like that in Washington. In spite of the way we all like to criticize things that go on in Washington, there are many good Christian men there.

And if God calls one man to work for him in that way, I say let him follow the leading of God just as much as Billy Graham has followed his leading. So I've given you terms to think about. The Holy Spirit is the author of revival.

The outpouring of the Spirit is the work of God. The reviving of the Church is the work of God with the response of believers. The awakening of the masses is the work of God.

We can't do it ourselves with the response of the masses. But what we can do, the work of men, the work of believers, is to evangelize and teach and to give our testimony for righteousness. Now the best way to illustrate this is from what has happened.

Now let's see anyone who keeps up with current affairs. If I were down at Baylor, all sorts of students keep up with current affairs there. That's one of the departments of study, I suppose.

Does anyone remember how much the deficit is in United States today? Some months ago it was 200 billion dollars. What is it today? I think it's 280? Is that the figure? 280 billion dollars. Does anyone know what the national debt amounts to? You say, what's the difference? The deficit is what we owe the bank.

The national debt is the mortgage on the house. It's more than one trillion dollars. I can't keep up with it.

It's maybe one trillion five hundred billion. Now when James Buchanan became President of the United States, in his inaugural address, he complained, believe it or not, he complained that the United States government had too much money in the treasury, too much surplus in the bank. He said, our present financial condition is without parallel in history.

No nation before has ever been embarrassed from too large a surplus in its treasury. Could you imagine President Reagan getting on TV and saying, we've got a different problem today. We've got too much money.

So, President Buchanan proposed paying off the national debt. Just as a man may be doing so well in business, he said, let's pay off the mortgage. We'll never have another chance.

We're getting on so well. The country was so flourishing. You say, where'd all the money come from? You ever hear of the California gold rush? All that gold was accumulating.

People who washed out gold nuggets from the rivers of California didn't keep them in their pocket all the time. They traded them in as soon as they can. And of course, finally, the treasury had so much money they didn't know what to do with it.

Yet, 32 weeks later, every bank in the United States went bust. Now, I don't know what bank you deal with, but recently in Ohio, there was a run on the savings and loans and people heard the rumor they were queuing up hundreds of people every morning waiting to get their money out. That's what happened.

A bank panic that closed every bank in the United States and it lasted from the middle of October until the middle of December. All the banks closed the whole time. Men went to bed dreaming of their millions and woke up in the morning broke.

What a disaster. Now, it was followed by the greatest awakening this country ever knew. There's a professor at Brown University Professor William McLaughlin who calls the great awakening of 1858 the bank panic revival.

In fact, he says the only way to explain it is that businessmen in New York panic stricken turned to God in their distress. And this resulted in a revival spreading all over the country. Now, evangelicals say, no, no, that's not the way it happened.

They say it was a man called Jeremiah Lanphier started a prayer meeting in New York. Out of a population of about a million, only six showed up. But the following week there were twenty and the following Wednesday there were forty, and on the day of the bank panic there were a hundred.

Only a hundred out of a million. That didn't suggest hysteria or a panic in turning to God. And they said this prayer meeting spread all over the country and that resulted in the great revival.

But McLaughlin turns around and says that happened at the time of the bank panic. So what? I decided to re-research this movement and find out what actually did happen. I found out to my amazement that the revival began in Canada.

Oh, before that there were prayer meetings all over the United States as well as Canada. One thing about the churches in those days, they knew what to do when times were bad. They prayed.

I can give you an illustration of that. You know that our Presbyterian firms are noted for their soberness and their rather staid denomination. But here's what was said in the State of Religion message of 1857.

One Presbytery declares the dearth of a revival influence is alarming. Another says the Church needs a refreshing from the Lord. Another touchingly declares we would upon our bended knees offer the prayer of Habakkuk, O Lord revive thy work.

These were the official reports of the Presbyteries to the General Assembly. Here's what it said, and I was struck with these words. This longing for revivals we cannot but consider as a cheering indication of the noblest life.

Next to a state of actual revival is the sense of its need and the struggle to attain it at any sacrifice of treasure, toil, or time. I'm going to emphasize that. I'm going to say to Pastor MacDonald, and I'm going to say to my friend John Cramp, next to actual revival is the sense of its need.

And if there are people in this congregation praying for what Southern Baptists call a real revival, that's the most cheering news you can have, if they're not satisfied with the general run of things. I found that all over the United States there were prayer meetings, and all over Canada. But the actual outbreak occurred in Hamilton, just south of Toronto, in Ontario.

The Methodists still sing some hymns about the revival of the Church. But the actual occurred in just south of Toronto, in Ontario. Methodists still sing some hymns about the revival of the But outbreak just south The Methodists still sing some hymns about the revival of the Church.

But that night B.B. Palmer couldn't sleep because she had a premonition God was going to work in an unusual way. And that's what happened. I found out there was only one sermon preached during the Hamilton Revival of 1857.

That was the first night. Because next night the Holy Spirit took control of the meeting and it became a spontaneous revival. The Mayor of the City of Hamilton converted.

Doctors and lawyers were converted. Farmers and housemaids were converted. Drunkards and prostitutes.

It was called the Hamilton Revival. But I found as I researched it, it spread all There was a very godly Presbyterian John Gerardo, a brilliant theologian, one of the greatest preachers of the South. He could

have had any white church he wanted in South Carolina.

But he had a love for black people. So he started what we would call a mission church. He had 48 black members and 12 white members.

No doubt the white members were office bearers because the white Then he said, I believe in answer to prayer the spirit has come. We will start preaching tomorrow night. Like a good Presbyterian he wanted to prepare a sermon.

He pronounced the benediction but nobody moved. Then he said, like a gentle rain, people began sobbing over the meeting. So he decided not to wait for preparation.

He began exhorting them in the name of the Lord. He was there dealing with them until midnight. For the next six weeks he was speaking to 1,500 to 2,000 people.

Lots of white people came in to see what was happening. Some came to scoff but stayed to pray. The revival was on.

There is a little town in South Carolina called Beaufort. The pastor there was a Southern Baptist pastor called J. M. B. Breaker. I think the number he was I found about 100,000 blacks were converted.

Now, I'm sure there may be one or two who may know this, but it was a great surprise to me as an historian to find that in 1857, that's four years before the Civil War, there was an army of 100,000 blacks drilled, ready for an insurrection, planning to march on Atlanta. I'd never heard of this. But so great was the revival that the chief of that movement, they were called the Knights of Tabor, had a revelation from God that God was going to intervene in the matter of slavery, and that they were simply to wait upon God.

Now, had that insurrection taken place before or during the war between the states, the South would have crushed it. They were ready. You know, the Southern Confederate troops ran rings around the Union troops for two years.

They would have crushed it, and there would have been reprisals, and white folk would have been killed on their farms, and then retaliation on the blacks. It would have been a bitter, bitter struggle. But instead of that, the blacks remained quiet.

It was as if God said, slavery is a sin, there will be a blood atonement. Six hundred thousand white Americans died. It was the worst war of the nineteenth century.

But nobody, either North or South, could blame the blacks for slavery. You couldn't say, it's your fault, you're slaves. So the Lord said, you keep quiet.

Wasn't it interesting, have you ever thought about it? Confederate soldiers left Texas to fight against the Union armies, and left their women and children in care of blacks. Some humorous things happened. I read one case of a lady, mistress of a plantation, and the Yankees were coming closer, so she called a meeting of all the servants and said, the Yankees are coming closer, let's maybe burn our farm, let's have prayer.

So they all prayed, including the black servants, Lord spare this farm and don't let anyone be hurt here. And so she stayed for a couple of hours, but they continued praying, and after she left she said, bring the Yankees closer all the time. They were praying for liberation.

It was a strange situation. But you see, when you think about it, those black slaves didn't have a dime in the bank. They weren't allowed to open bank accounts.

You can open a bank account for a ten-year-old boy, but nobody could open a bank for a slave. He was a non-person. And this knocks McLaughlin's idea that the revival was caused by the bank panic.

Then we find revivals breaking out all over the United States in the fall of 1857. I think I can give you an illustration from Texas. It's right here.

It was in December. A great movement of revival began in a Baptist associational meeting in Waco. Now listen.

The occasion participated in by ministers of the Baptist, Methodist, and Presbyterian denominations. Have you ever heard of a Baptist association in which the Methodists and Presbyterians participated? This is most unusual. A month later, the interest was unabated and the excitement high.

Here's the actual words of the report. Never before in Texas have we seen a whole community so effectually under religious influence. Day and night, the church has been crowded during the meeting.

Our schools have suspended operations until after this religious excitement abates. Our community has been thoroughly regenerated. Now this was at a time when conditions in Texas were rough.

And this was long before Jeremiah Lanphier's prayer meeting in New York started to spread. I won't weary you with detail, but I have reports from Ohio, from Iowa, among all denominations. A Lutheran church of six became twenty-six overnight.

Movers got out among the settlers in the frontier. General revival, but in the churches. Then a strange thing happened.

There was an editor called Horace Greely, chiefly famous for saying, Go west, young man. He sent a reporter in horse and buggy around prayer meetings in New York. The Fulton Street prayer meeting started by Lanphier had spread to other places.

And so he thought this would make news. In one hour he could only visit twelve meetings. He simply rushed from one meeting to the other and counted the number of men present and then added them up and reported to the paper.

Six thousand one hundred businessmen meeting for prayer in downtown New York in the middle of the day. This was news. It became headline news and it spread.

They took over not only the churches but the biggest theaters. Burton's Theater on Chamber Street, five thousand people packed from pit to roof. A minister got up and said in one of those meetings, I was here until three o'clock dealing with people who wanted to find Christ as Savior.

I'm sure there must be many more. But you must go back to work. So I'd like to announce that from tonight onward indefinitely my church will be open for the preaching of the gospel.

Now, you haven't taken in what I said. I attended Billy Graham's Anaheim Crusade. In fact, I closed the crusade in prayer on the last night.

I also attended Billy Graham's Los Angeles Crusade in the Coliseum. Forty thousand a night. What a crowd.

There was mass evangelism at its best. But if Billy Graham had said on Tuesday night, don't come here tomorrow night, go to your own midweek service, and you pastors who don't have one, you'd better open up because some of these people are going to come. If a pastor had said to his custodian, we're going to have a meeting tonight, the custodian would have said, how many do you expect for me to prepare for? If you had divided the forty thousand by the five thousand sponsoring churches, it would have meant eight people per church, and they all could have sat in the front row.

How could you compare mass evangelism at its best, and I regard Billy Graham as an anointed evangelist, with a revival that would fill every church every night, because that's what happened in the United States. It went on for months and months. You say every church? Yes, even the Roman Catholic churches.

Now in those days the Roman Catholics had nothing to do with Protestants, but the people at work were excited when they heard all about what was happening, and when people would bring back things they'd stolen, that sort of thing. So they went to their own churches, and the priests would bring in, say, some redemptorist or Paulist fathers to preach for a week and hold confessionals and so forth. That was the nearest to what we'd call an evangelistic crusade.

Even the Unitarians had special meetings. Now Theodore Parker, the leading Unitarian at that time, said to expect revival among Unitarians is like expecting sparks when you rub ice blocks together. I didn't say that, he said that.

But the Unitarians had to keep up with the movement. There are people who go to church and say, why can't we have a meeting? You say, well, what happened? Well, I'll give you one instance. Frederick Dan Huntington was professor of religion at Harvard, which was a completely Unitarian institution at that time.

He started a meeting on Wednesday evenings for students, as a result of which he himself was converted and became an Episcopal bishop. That was happening. It swept New York.

It swept New England. Charles Finney was in Boston in Park Street Church. He said there was no way of keeping in touch with the number of converts.

The Baptists had been losing a thousand members a year in New York State, but in the year of the revival they went up 13 percent across the board. You could get similar figures from every state in the Union. The revival went up the Hudson, down the Mohawk.

In the Mohawk cities, the Baptists had so many candidates for believers' baptism they couldn't get them into their churches. They marched them down to the river, cut a big square hole in the ice, and baptized them in the cold water. And when Baptists do that, they are really on fire.

The revival reached Kalamazoo. An Episcopal layman convened the first meeting in the town hall. He said, This place is so crowded, I'm afraid you won't be able to get a chance to pray.

It will save time if you write your prayer request on a piece of paper and pass it up to me. I'll read it, then somebody will pray for you. The first note passed up was, A praying woman asks the prayers of this congregation for the conversion of her husband, who is far from God.

Immediately, a burly blacksmith stood up in his apron and said, I'm far from God. I know that my wife prays for me. Would somebody help me? A lawyer got up and said, I think I'm the one that's being prayed for.

I know that my wife prays for me. I know I'm far from God. In the first three minutes, six husbands converted.

In evangelism, the evangelist seeks the sinner. In times of revival, the sinners come running to God. Charles Finney said that the only part of the country not touched by the revival was the South.

He said the people there were so addicted to their peculiar institution, slavery, that there was no place found in their hearts for the Spirit of God. I'm amazed that Finney, who was a lawyer, could make such a statement, because I can document the revival from Richmond to Waco, from Richmond to Galveston, right around, an extraordinary movement all throughout the South, white and black. Do you know that the mayor of Chattanooga called for Thanksgiving in February instead of November? What was the cause of the celebration? To celebrate the coming of the millennium.

The whole community was so changed that they thought the millennium had begun. This was typical of many places. They said, It's the great day of the Lord.

It's the The population of the United States was 30 million. There were 4 million Protestant Church members. A year later, there were 5 million.

25 percent increase across the board. And when I say across the board, I mean it, because it happened not only with Baptists and Methodists who were evangelistic, not only with Presbyterians, but with Episcopalians and Lutherans and all the rest. It was one great time of revival.

Out of it came D.L. Moody's ministry. You say Chicago was revived? Yes. Take an Episcopal Church, 121 members in 1857, 1860, 1400 members.

This was typical of all the churches in Chicago. And it was then that D.L. Moody went to the superintendent of a Sunday school and said, I'd like to teach Sunday school. Now remember, Moody had applied for church membership in Boston and had been turned down because when they asked him some questions, he didn't give satisfactory answers and they told him, you wait for a year until you understand the gospel better.

This young man, a shoe salesman, went along and said, could I teach Sunday school? And the superintendent said, I'm sorry, I've got sixteen teachers and only twelve pupils, but you could start your own class. Get some boys off the street. He was a great one for recruiting members.

He brought along seventeen boys. Another teacher said to him enviously, I've been waiting for three years for a class. All right, Moody said, you can have mine.

And he went out again and brought in another twenty. That was the beginning of the life work of Dwight Lyman Moody. By the way, tomorrow night I'm speaking at the centenary celebration of Moody Bible Institute.

They want me to speak on the revival that made Moody. This was typical. The revival spread all over the world.

There isn't time to tell you about that, but here's one big question. I always assumed that it stopped when the war between the states began. I was quite mistaken.

It continued. Do you know that it can be documented that in the Army of Northern Virginia, in which many Texas regiments served, there were 150,000 conversions of soldiers? Do you know that there was revival sweeping Vicksburg during the siege? However, Bennett and Jones and others who have written about this said there was no comparable movement among the Union armies. I thought, well, it's easier to say that than to research it.

I began to study all the points, and I discovered revival in the Union armies. Before the Battle of Fredericksburg in Virginia, we say that every hilltop was a prayer meeting. This was after the Confederates had defeated the Union troops.

It was a terrible sleet storm. God was dealing with them. Then I discovered something interesting.

I mentioned Georgia. I know a little town just south of Chattanooga called Ringgold. I know a little town called Cleveland.

There were 10,000 Union troops there when a great revival began. They marched 150 converts down to the river for baptism. They were of different denominations, so they were baptized according to preference.

Some were immersed, some had pouring, and some had sprinkling. But they all meant it as their confession of faith. And that night Major General O. Howard preached the gospel, and 86 more soldiers were converted.

I found that four young men from Illinois had written to General Sherman--have you ever heard that name?--and asked permission to visit the front. And Sherman wrote across their applications, certainly not, We have more need of oats and gunpowder than moral instruction. Sherman was not a professing Christian.

Robert E. Lee was, and so was Stonewall Jackson, and there were many others. In fact, some of the generals of the Confederate Army were converted in the revivals. But these four young men finally were let in.

I got their names, Reynolds, Nichols, Bliss, and D. L. Moody, the shoe salesman from Chicago, working in Georgia. And that happened, and after the war was settled, the revival broke out all over the states again. It was God's preparation of this nation for the trauma of the Civil War.

Why do I tell you all this? It's because It was as if God said, Stand aside everyone, and I'll show you what I can do. And if we could but learn that lesson, if we could say, Let's let up for a while, and wait upon God, let him pour out his spirit upon us, then we'd see phenomenal results. Our country is in great need with the pornography and the crime and the immorality, the drug addiction, the alcoholism.

It's in a mess. It's in a mess. Even if we had a local revival in this church, it wouldn't affect all of Texas.

We need a movement of God's spirit. That's why we're having this series of meetings. Would you like to see God work like that? You say, Yes.

Well, now he wants to work in your heart. And I want you to come to the rest of the meetings to find out what God has learned to you. I'm going to ask Ron Owens to close our meeting.

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