

The Resurgence of 1882 Onward

by J. Edwin Orr

The sermon highlights the resurgence of blessing in the 19th century, particularly through the ministry of D.L. Moody and the Student Volunteer Movement.

Duration: 25:54

Scripture: 2 Chronicles 7:14, Psalm 85:6, Isaiah 57:15, Joel 2:28, Habakkuk 3:2, Zechariah 1:3, Acts 2:17, Romans 12:11, James 4:8, Revelation 2:5

Topics: "Spiritual Revival", "Holy Spirit"

Description

This sermon reflects on historical revivals and movements of God, highlighting the impact of spiritual awakenings in the past, such as the prayer movement of 1858, the surge of lay activity, and the growth of missions. It emphasizes the distinction between general revival and the blessing of God upon faithful evangelists like D.L. Moody, Andrew Murray, and others, showcasing how these movements influenced regions like Germany, Sweden, and the United States. The sermon also touches on the decline of certain movements due to shifting priorities and the importance of praying for a fresh outpouring of the Holy Spirit.

Transcript

Five years ago, people were talking about a bicentennial. Supposing someone had said, well, what happened 200 years ago? Would you have been able to answer? All right, I'm going to ask you then, what was God doing 100 years ago? You say, is that important? Of course it's important. We wouldn't be here if it wasn't for what God has done in the past.

Now, the last time I talked to you on the subject of spiritual awakening, we talked about the wonderful prayer movement of 1858, which not only filled every downtown theater and public hall with praying people at noon, but filled every church in the evening, so that out of a population of 27 million, about a million people professed conversion and added to the churches. Out of that movement of 1858, there came a great surge of lay activity. We take for granted that lay people help in church work.

Before that time, church work was the work of ministers, so that it wasn't a new doctrine that came out of the Revival, but a new activity. Another thing that came out of the Revival was a new activity in missions. In 1860, all the missionary societies got together in Liverpool, in England, for a conference on missions.

That was followed by another one in 1878 in Mildmay, then London, 1888, and then in New York, 1900. One of the leaders of that great conference on missions was Hudson Taylor. But the great evangelist of

those days was Dwight Lyman Moody.

I remember when I was visiting Moody's home, and I don't misunderstand, I've never met Moody personally, but I have visited his home. His granddaughter was a good friend of ours. I used to be base chaplain at Westover Field in Massachusetts, and directly north of the Connecticut Valley, up at Northfield, was Moody's home.

I asked lots of questions of his son-in-law and his granddaughter about Moody's way of working. Now, some people talk about Moody as if Moody was an embodiment of revival. I was talking once to a great Church of Scotland minister, D.P. Thompson.

He said to me, How do you distinguish between revival and successful evangelism? Well, I said, It's like this. When D.L. Moody was in Toronto, 1884, practically every church in Toronto was blessed. But there wasn't anything much happening in Buffalo or Cleveland or Chicago or Philadelphia or Montreal.

In other words, the blessing of God followed Moody's ministry. But in the 1858 revival, there was a revival in every city in the United States and Canada. That's the difference.

He said, D.P. Thompson said, It's exactly the same as what happened in Scotland. When Moody came to Scotland in 1873, there was a revival everywhere. But when he came back in the 1880s, there was blessing in his campaign in Edinburgh and then expectation and blessing in Glasgow and then in Aberdeen and Belfast, Dublin and so forth.

So we've got to distinguish between an outpouring of the Holy Spirit in general revival and the blessing of God upon a very faithful evangelist. One of my professors, Professor William Warren Sweet of the University of Chicago, said the attempts of sociologists and psychologists to explain D.L. Moody seem trite and foolish. Now, there are men who are blessed through Moody's ministry.

I once met a German professor, and he said as a result of the revival of 1858 and especially as a result of Moody's first campaigns in London, some Germans living in London or visiting London caught fire for God. The result was 30 years of revival in Germany. Now, in 1881, that sounds a little familiar.

1881, there was a Swede called Frederick Franson who came to the United States. He was a friend of Moody. He'd been converted wonderfully, became an evangelist to Scandinavians in the United States, went back to his native Sweden.

And there began times of revival in Norway and Sweden and Denmark and other parts of Europe. Another man who was greatly blessed 100 years ago was a man whose name you ought to know, Andrew Murray. Andrew Murray was Dutch Reformed.

Isn't it wonderful how God uses people, no matter what their label may be. He was moderator three times of the Dutch Reformed Church. But in 1882, he came into a new experience of God at the Keswick Convention.

And he became a great power for holy living, a great man of prayer. I trust you've read some of Andrew Murray's books. Now, at the same time, 1880, there was an Australian evangelist, John MacNeill.

Not the famous Scottish evangelist John MacNeill, this man spelt his name a little bit differently, M-A-C, capital N-E-I-L. Another man of God was George Grubb, an Anglican. I take it you have heard of Norman

Grubb of the Worldwide Evangelization Crusade? He's an old man now.

I knew him and also his brother, Sir Kenneth Grubb, who died in London last year. I didn't know their uncle, but their uncle was a great power for God. Of course, that name Grubb is an Irish name.

I remember once I was in Leeds, in Yorkshire, and at that time there was a very famous Scottish scholar connected with the Sunday School movement, Alexander Smelly was his name. And then there was a very famous Bible teacher at Keswick, Graeme Scroggie. You may have read his books.

And then, of course, this famous evangelist, George Grubb. And there they had this convention in Leeds. It said, Smelly, Scroggie, and Grubb.

And I thought, what a kettle of fish. There was something else that happened in 1881. There was a revival in a congregational church in Portland, Maine.

The pastor was a man called Francis Clark. He wanted to conserve the benefits of the local revival. So he started a young people's society of Christian endeavor.

And it caught on. Let's see. Is there anyone here ever belonged to the Christian endeavor movement? Oh, yes.

You notice quite a number of those who raised their hands have gray hair. The movement was very strong. As a matter of fact, 1886, there were a thousand delegates at the first Christian endeavor convention.

1888, 5,000 came to Chicago. Philadelphia, 6,500. St. Louis, 1,898,000.

And by 1895, there were 38,000 local societies with 2,225,000 members. You say, what was Christian endeavor? It was like a kind of junior church. They taught young people how to work within a congregation.

They had a prayer meeting convener and someone in charge of music and so forth. It was a Christian endeavor society. And I learned to use my voice, learned to forget shyness and so forth, learned to preach in the open air.

Why hasn't that movement continued? It was interdenominational. And I find that denominations don't like interdenominational movements. So after it became so successful, the Methodists said, would it be alright if we had a special Epworth League of Christian Endeavor? And the Presbyterians said, let's have a Westminster Fellowship of Christian Endeavor.

And the Baptists had the Baptist Young People's Society of Christian Endeavor. And the Lutherans had the Walter League of Christian Endeavor. Then they chopped off the Christian Endeavor, and they were left with the Westminster Fellowship, and the Epworth League, and the Walter League, and the Baptist Young People's Society.

They had them under their control. It broke up that interdenominational movement. But Christian Endeavor was greatly used of God for many years.

Now, you may be surprised to know that Dwight Lyman Moody was not an educated man. He couldn't spell to save his life. He spelled orthodox, O-T-H-E-D-E-X, orthodox.

On occasion he said, how do you spell Philadelphia? F-I-L-A, what comes after that? You say, well, when you read Moody's sermons, you don't find this out. Oh, no. Christians during the Victorian age always smoothed things over a little bit.

They felt it wouldn't be glorifying to the Lord if you allowed Moody's bad spellings to get into his books. We always had someone to edit them. But Moody was not an educated man.

Out of the 1858 revival there came lots of student groups, student associations in the major universities of the United States. And their leader was a young man called Luther Wishart. By the way, the second in command was a young man called T.W. Wilson.

That sounds familiar, doesn't it? T.W. Wilson. Not Billy Graham's sidekick, T.W. Wilson. I was talking to him the other day.

But an earlier T.W. Wilson, he was secretary of this student group at Princeton. He became president of Princeton University, became governor of New Jersey, finally became president of the United States. T. Woodrow Wilson.

Did you know that he was a student evangelist? And a man of God. Now Wishart and Wilson and others said to Moody, why don't you have meetings for students? Well, Moody saw good reasons for not having them. He couldn't spell.

He didn't want to make a fool of himself with students. But when Moody went across to England in the 1880s, some group of students, the Cambridge Intercollegiate Christian Union, invited Moody to hold a campaign at Cambridge University. Now in those days, Oxford and Cambridge were universities for the sons of the wealthy or the noble.

And when these undergraduates heard that, quote, an illiterate American was coming to speak to them, they were outraged. They determined to teach him his place. And there's nobody quite like an Englishman for teaching you what your place is.

Moody came with Sankey. And the very first night, the place was packed. Now it may be a great surprise to those of you who have gone to university or college here in the States to know that to this day at Oxford, when you go to a class, you wear a gown.

When you go to the library to borrow a book, you wear a gown. You say, well, why do they put up with that? They get like the United States Marines. They're sort of proud of the uniform after a while.

I remember I had to wear a gown to go to an examination when I was studying at Oxford. A thousand university students piled in all dressed up in their gowns to hear this illiterate American. Moody called upon the vicar of St. Mary's to lead in prayer.

When he prayed, the students rudely interrupted him with hear, hear, which is not polite in prayer. It's all right in Parliament, but not in prayer. When Sankey sang, the students sang a parody along with him to make fun of what he was singing.

Moody preached on Daniel in the Den of Lions. I think he must have felt like that. Now, the Hebrew word Daniel has three syllables, Dan-ee-el.

The English word has at least two, Dan-ee-el. But in those days, the American had just one. I'm not joking.

Have you ever heard of Dan-el-boon, Dan-el-webster? In those days, they spelt the name D-A-N-apostrophe-el. They pronounced it in one syllable, Dan-el. And every time Moody referred to, then God spoke to Dan-el, and Dan-el said to the Lord, there was a great cheer, they clapped their hands, they tramped their feet, they were enjoying this.

Brought the house down. Every time Moody mispronounced the name Daniel. But Moody kept his temper.

When he got home that night, he said to Sankey, Sankey, I've got no hankering for that crowd. But he wasn't a coward either. He went back the next night.

There were only a hundred at the meeting. On the Wednesday, they had begun on a Monday, but on the Wednesday, the maid in the lodgings where Moody was staying brought a visiting card. Mr. Gerald Lander wished to see Mr. Moody.

Who did he bring him in? This was Mr. Gerald Lander of Trinity College, the most aristocratic college in Cambridge. That's where Prince Charles studied. When the young man came in, Moody saw he was one of the ringleaders of the riot of two nights before.

So he said, what can I do for you, sir? He said, Mr. Moody, I was one of those who thought that you were singularly unequipped to speak to gentlemen. But sir, he said, as I observed you on the platform, I came to the conclusion that you were the only gentleman in the meeting. Sir, he said, I wish to apologize.

It was the British sense of fair play. There is a very strong sense of fair play. You know, when somebody fumbles the ball in a rugby game, the spectator shouts, hard luck, sir.

When he hits the ball, the shot, well played, sir. What do they do over here? Throw him out. So Gerald Lander said, Mr. Moody, I wish to apologize.

Moody shook his hand. He said, I'll forgive you if you come to the rest of the meetings. And Gerald Lander sat in the front.

Moody waited five nights before giving any kind of invitation. The first man forward was Gerald Lander. He became Bishop of Hong Kong.

Moody turned that university upside down. Stanley Smith, the chief oarsman of the Cambridge rowing crew, was converted, became a missionary. There were two brothers called Paul Hill Turner.

They became missionaries to China. Sir Montego Beecham, nephew of Lord Radstock, was converted, became a missionary. W. W. Castle, son of a famous importer in London, was converted, became Bishop of Sichuan in China.

There was a young man there that was not converted under Moody, but greatly stirred through this time of reviving. His name was C. T. Studd. He was the Babe Ruth of English cricket.

And they formed a team called the Cambridge Seven, turned the universities and turned them upside down. Students began, turned to God by the hundreds. In the meantime, Moody was preaching in London, in North London.

They built a big tabernacle seating 25,000. While he was preaching in North London for a month, they built another tabernacle in South London, and when Moody finished North London, he went to South London to

preach. Meanwhile, the people of North London moved the tabernacle a few miles over, and Moody finished there, went to the next place, North London, turned about.

Then there was such a demand for his preaching, they wanted him to preach in both places at once. Not even Moody could do that. So Moody alternated and sometimes got others to help, including the Cambridge Seven.

There was a young atheist who went to hear Mr. Moody preach. Moody called upon a Presbyterian minister to lead him in prayer. The man had never prayed before 25,000 before.

He got sort of carried away. Now, I once heard an Irishman say, if a man prays for three minutes, you pray with him. If he prays for another three minutes, you pray for him.

And if he prays for another three minutes, you pray against him. This good brother had been praying for quite a long time when Mr. Moody got up and said, while our brother is finishing his prayer, let's sing hymn number 11. And the young atheist said, there's an honest man.

He came back the next night, but Moody wasn't preaching there the next night. The Cambridge Seven were there and he was converted. He became the famous pioneer to Labrador, Sir Wilfrid Grenfell, whose name was famous in your grandparents' day.

One of the great pioneer missionaries. That was the sort of thing that was happening in England just a hundred years ago. When Moody got back to the States, Luther, Richard, and Tommy Wilson said, now what about American students? Moody said, well, let's start with a Christian convention.

So they had a meeting for students only at Mount Hermon in Massachusetts, near Moody's home. 250 students came. One student said to Mr. Moody, I want to speak to the students.

Moody said, I'm sorry, son, but we have Professor McCosh speaking. We've got Henry Drummond from Scotland. Finally, he said, all right, you can speak to the students at lunchtime.

This young man got up and said, my father was one of the students that sat under the haystack in Massachusetts and went out to be a missionary to India. He's come back to die. But he's praying that God will raise up a thousand university students from the mission field.

He spoke so powerfully that 100 out of the 250 volunteered to the mission field. This young fellow just finished his law degree at Princeton. Instead of going to law, he went around the universities and the theological seminaries recruiting university students for missions.

2,000 volunteered the first year. It began a movement called the student volunteers. And in a long generation, in about 30, 40 years, more than 30,000 university students went to the mission field.

Kenneth Scott Latourette, the great church historian, said, a large proportion of the outstanding leaders in the worldwide spread of Protestant Christianity in the 20th century were recruited through this movement. Their slogan was the evangelization of the world in this generation. In half a century, they sent out to the mission field evangelists, educators, doctors, agriculture specialists, and astounding work with social implications, but all subordinated to evangelism.

Now, why did that movement die? 1920, they reached their peak. Every four years, they had a convention. This time, they met in Des Moines.

6,890 students came, of whom 2,783 volunteered. And 637 actually left the Foreign Service the next year. But in 1940, 20 years later, instead of 6,890, they had only 465.

Why? Well, you see, after World War I, students were greatly taken up with the horrors of war. The British lost a million men in World War I. The French lost more than the British. The Germans lost more than the French.

The Russians lost more than the Germans. World War I was a slaughter of the young men of Europe. Consequently, students everywhere were greatly concerned with peace propaganda.

Ah, the Scripture says, blessed are the peacemakers. But the trouble was, the students began putting this before the preaching of the gospel. The result was, their interest was completely captured by social action.

I believe in social action, but not at the expense of preaching the gospel. And just a few years ago, this movement voted itself out of existence. It went out with a whimper, not with a bang.

Now, in the 1880s that we're talking about, there was a great revival in the Congo. It was called Pentecost on the Congo. 2,000 converted in one year at Banza Manteke.

The revival increased. On the other side of Africa, an Anglican bishop, Hannigan, was murdered in Uganda in 1885. But seven years later, a young missionary called Pilipinon read a tract on the work of the Holy Spirit.

It came into new experience. The result was a revival among the Anglicans. The number of lay teachers increased from 75 to 2,032.

Communicants from 230 to 18,000, Communicant Christians. Baptized Christians from 1,100 to 62,000. They had a revival also in southern Africa.

In 1881, 100 years ago, there was an extraordinary revival in the Mosquito Coast of Nicaragua. Church membership trebled within 10 years. 1884, a great revival in Chile.

Even the Presbyterians agreed it was an outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Great revival in the 1880s among the Armenians in Turkey. And in the 1870s and 1880s, a great movement of God among the aristocrats of the Russian Empire.

You see, from the 1857 revival to 1882, it was quarter of a century. There was no recession. Rather, there was a resurgence of blessing.

I used to think the tide had to go out before it could come in again. But not in God's way of doing things. Sometimes he adds blessing to blessing.

And this certainly is what happened in that century. The 19th century, before the death of Moody. Moody died in 1899.

He was still preaching. He said just before he died, I would like, before I go hence, to see the whole Church of Christ, quickened as it was in 1857, and a wave going from Maine to California to sweep thousands into the kingdom of God. In 1906, there was an editorial in the Christian Missionary Alliance Weekly which spoke of 1905 as the year of the Holy Ghost.

And so next time I speak to you, God willing, I'm going to tell you about the sweeping worldwide revival of 1905. Now, nearly everyone in Pentecostal churches or among charismatics has heard of Azusa Street. But not many people know that before that remarkable local work at Azusa Street, there was a great revival sweeping the whole world, including Los Angeles.

I'm going to tell about that revival next time I have an opportunity to talk to you. What's the lesson for us? Let's pray, Oh God, do it again. Do it again.

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