

Welsh Revival Facts and Fallacies

by J. Edwin Orr

J. Edwin Orr's sermon explores the Welsh Revival, its causes, key figures, and its lasting impact on the church and society.

Duration: 1:16:30

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 7:7-8, Matthew 18:3, Luke 11:9-10, Romans 5:6, Romans 5:8, James 5:16

Topics: "Welsh Revival"

Description

In this sermon transcript, the speaker recounts a revival that took place in Wales before the rise of Karl Marx. The students of a theological school petitioned their principal to close down the school and attend a preaching by Seth Joshua in Blaenannurg. The speaker emphasizes the impact of the revival on the community, with a decrease in crime and the police joining the crowds at church services. Evan Roberts, a key figure in the revival, had a spiritual experience and felt compelled to spread the message of salvation throughout Wales. The meetings grew in size, and the speaker confidently declares that they are on the eve of a great revival, the greatest the world has ever seen.

Transcript

You understand that if this were the year 1999, everyone would be excited about the year 2000. It was a scene during 1899, the beginning of the 20th century. Across the Atlantic, the Methodists announced a 20th century forward movement.

They decided to win 2 million souls to Christ. They raised 20 million dollars to do it. And they said in an editorial, it was believed, with a better knowledge of how to work, and a feeling that it was a church-wide movement, a great religious awakening might be secured at the opening of the 20th century.

You say, what happened? After three years, they confessed that very little gain in membership. One Methodist said, God, wait until we got our project out of the way, and then he allowed us to have revival. The Baptists were having Baptist advance all over the world.

There was an interest in the 20th century. In fact, in the United States, they launched a new magazine called the Christian Century, because they felt sure the 20th century would be the century of Christian triumph. They didn't know that there would be two blood-letting world wars, that there would be two major revolutions, the Russian Revolution and the Chinese Revolution, that there would be the great economic depression.

They didn't know all that. The Lord, of course, knew. In 1899, the deeply spiritual people engaged in prayer.

There were all-night prayers at Moody Bible Institute. There were special prayer meetings at the Kazakh Convention. There were 10,000 people in prayer circles in Melbourne.

There were prayer meetings in the Middlebury Hills in India. Everywhere, people were praying for a spiritual movement in the 20th century. Now, this was also true of Great Britain.

There was a special burden in Wales. David Howell, dean of the Cathedral of St. David's, declared, this is my last message to my fellow countrymen. He was dying of cancer, I think.

The chief need of my country, my dear nation at present, is a spiritual revival through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In June 1900, the moderator of the Calvinistic Methodist Church of Wales, now called the Presbyterian Church of Wales, insisted that revival was the great need. And, until met, all effort to supply every other need were in vain.

I once spoke to a breakfast of ministers, a breakfast meeting. I tried to get involvement by asking, what do you think is the great need today? One man spoke up, he said, surely it's the Great Commission to preach the gospel to every creature. I said, what is your work? He said, I'm a missionary on furlough.

I said, anyone else got a suggestion about the great need? Someone said, well, it's Sunday school work. If we don't capture the next generation, we're lost. Has anyone else got a suggestion? One man said, surely it must be the training of the ministry.

If we don't train them right, we're going to lose our leadership. Another man said, well, I think you're all missing the boat. The big menace of today is the drug traffic.

Drug addiction, you have no idea what it's like. He was connected with Teen Challenge. So I took all these different needs.

One man said, well, we need money. We can't do any of these things without money. So stewardship is what we need.

So I collected about a dozen different suggestions. Nearly all were interested in that particular field. I said, well now, do you think, for instance, if we raise enough money, we could take care of the training of the ministry, or if we had successful Sunday schools, that that would take care of the drug problem.

They said, not quite, no. These are separate problems. I said, do you think there's anything that would meet them all? They said, no.

I said, well, yes, there is. When there comes an outpouring of the Holy Spirit, there's no lack of money in the church. When there comes a great revival, the missionary societies are embarrassed of so many candidates for the mission field.

When a great revival comes, you find all the theological schools are crowded with candidates, deeply spiritual candidates of that. So Evan Phillips was right. Revival is a great need.

Of course, it depends what you mean by revival. I would say the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon the whole body of Christ is the great need. Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones once said to me, if you're interested in the

beginning of the Welsh revival, get the records of the church at New Quay in Cardigan, which I did.

The pastor of that church was Joseph Jenkins. He was a Keswick man. He said to his Christian Endeavour Society one Sunday morning, what does Jesus Christ mean to you? They were a little embarrassed.

It was a very personal question, but one young man said, Jesus Christ is the hope of the world. He said, no, no, I don't mean that. What does he mean to you? A girl who had only been converted three weeks, Florrie Evans, my name, said, I love the Lord Jesus with all my heart.

It was so heartfelt that there was a sense of the presence of God there. Joseph Jenkins formed that group of young people into a team and took them around with him preaching. He preached, they testified.

The great evangelist of Wales at that time was Seth Joshua. He wasn't the only one. I never met Seth Joshua, but I know his son, Peter Joshua, who is retired in Southern California, must be about 87 years of age.

He told me that his father went to Newquay to hold a preaching mission. I went up to Aberystwyth. People ask me, where do you get your facts? I look for them.

I find Seth Joshua's diaries in the archives of the National University of Wales. 19th September, 1904. 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. 20th.

I cannot leave the building until 12 and even 1 o'clock in the morning. I closed the service several times. It would break out again, quite beyond human control.

Peter Joshua told me, my dad would say to the young people, young people, it's three minutes to 12. Tomorrow is another day. Let's have the benediction.

And he would pronounce the benediction, and they just ignored it, and went on singing or testifying or praying. Then he would say, it's away after 12. Tomorrow is another day.

And someone would point out, Mr. Joshua, it's already tomorrow. He went from there. By the way, he had 40 conversions in that week of meetings, but he felt that there was a real movement of the Spirit of God.

He went from there to Newcastle, England, where there was a training college. There, where Evan Roberts was studying for the ministry, 26 years of age. He'd been a coal miner.

In fact, his father was badly injured in the mines when Evan Roberts was 12. He was a big boy, so he took his father's place. It's not the same job, but his first job was opening and closing the steel doors.

He was a godly young man. I tried to find out his lifestyle from his diary. He had prayed for revival for 13 years.

On Sunday, he went to church twice on Sunday. He taught Sunday school. He went to Bible class.

On Monday, he went to prayer meeting. On Tuesday, he went to a mission service. On Wednesday, he went to midweek service.

On Thursday, he went to a temperance meeting. On Friday, they had class meetings. I've been asked many times in the United States, what did he do on Saturdays? He didn't say.

But of course, knowing the life of the poor, I know what he did on Saturday. Saturday night was bath night. They used to get the big galvanized iron tub in front of the kitchen fire.

In those days, we only heated one room in the house, and each member of the family had the use of the room to perform their ablutions. My American friend said, you mean they only took a bath once a week? I said, only if it was necessary. I said, only if it was necessary.

By the way, before the rise of Karl Marx, they didn't call the people the proletariat. They called them the great unwashed. Well, Seth Joshua told the students what God had been doing down in U.K. The students petitioned the principal, Evan Phillips, to close down the school for a week and go to Blaenannerch, where Seth Joshua was preaching.

They were hoping to see the same sort of thing there. And principal Evan Phillips said, you'll learn more in one week of revival than in three years of theological study. So off they went.

They had crowded evening meetings, but on the mornings at ten o'clock they had some day meetings only attended by the nice old ladies of the parish, because most people at school couldn't go, most people at work couldn't go, there were no babysitters in those days, but those were the praying women. The older ladies with more time on their hands. So we had theological students and praying women.

It was there that, on a Thursday morning, that Seth Joshua moved, gave a moving prayer. Oh, our glued polygny. Oh, Lord, bend us.

Evan Roberts felt he had reached the crisis of his spiritual experience. He wanted to pray publicly, but he waited and he waited. Then he went forward.

The verse that moved him was that verse, God showed his love to us, that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for the ungodly. Then a wave of peace flooded his soul. He was filled with the Holy Spirit.

It was not a glossolalic experience so far as I know, but he said, I felt ablaze with a desire to go through the length and breadth of Wales to tell of the Savior. And had it been possible, I was willing to pay God for the privilege of doing it. Actually, he withdrew his savings from the post office to form a team of his friends.

He said to Sidney Evans, his roommate, who afterwards married his sister, went to India as a missionary, he said, do you think God could give us 100,000 souls? Now, if one of my students at Fuller came to me and said, I'm going into evangelism, do you think God could give me 100,000 souls? I'd put it down to enthusiasm. Evangelism is hard work. Yet, about 100,000 people were converted in the next five weeks.

Evan Roberts went to Principal Phillips and said, Mr. Phillips, I can't concentrate. I keep hearing a voice that tells me I must go and speak to the young people back home. Mr. Phillips, is that the voice of the spirit or the voice of the devil? And Principal Phillips said wisely, the devil never gives orders like that.

You can have a week off. So he went down home to Lochor, near Gorsimon. His parents said, are you in trouble? Have you been sent down? Who knew? I've come to preach to the young people.

They said, we were in church on Sunday, there was no announcement made. He said, Mr. Morgan doesn't know yet. Mr. Morgan wasn't quite happy with the suggestion.

Imagine Prince coming to BBI for two months and then going and telling your minister, I've come back to preach. He said, how about speaking on Monday? He didn't let him speak to the prayer meeting. He said to the prayer meeting, after they'd done their praying, ready to go home, he said, our young brother Evan Roberts feels he has a word for you if you care to wait.

Seventeen waited. But Evan Roberts had a most direct manner. He paced up and down until they receded.

Then he said, I have a message for you from God. You must confess any known sin and put any wrong done to man right. You must put away any doubtful habit.

You must obey the Spirit promptly. You must confess Christ publicly. Now, the meetings were not big, but Evan Roberts in faith wrote to the editor of a big paper and said, we are on the eve of a great and grand revival, the greatest the world has ever seen.

Do not think that the writer is a madman. On Saturday night, he spoke on Be Filled with the Spirit. The meetings were getting bigger and bigger.

On Sunday, a visiting clergyman came by appointment and Evan Roberts sat with his family in the pew. But the paper rose up Sunday evening and said, we'd like to hear from Evan Roberts again. And so, Mr. Morgan said, if I make it right with Principal Phillips, will you stay for another week? Then the meetings got hard.

I suppose Satan realized there was something happening and now there was opposition. In fact, the meeting was so hard on Wednesday. He said, we'll pray all night if need be.

And he meant it because at three o'clock in the morning, his mother got up and left the meeting. He followed her to the door. He said, are you going home, mother? She said, son, the meeting is hard.

The people are tired. You are stubborn. And she went off.

He said, don't go, mother. But she went. Evan and his brother Dan went home at daybreak, went to bed to catch up and sleep.

About ten o'clock they heard weeping when downstairs there was Mrs. Roberts sitting in front of the kitchen fire, weeping over the fact that her sons were more spiritual than she was. They prayed with her and it was that evening that the break came. People say, what do you mean, the break? Well, I've read the Welsh papers of that time, little snippets of church news.

Reverend Peter Jones has just been appointed chaplain to the Bishop of St. David's. Mowbray Street Methodist Church has had a very interesting sale of work. But then a headline, great crowds of people drawn to Lochor.

Congregation stays till 2.30 in the morning. A remarkable religious revival is now taking place in Lochor. For some days a young man named Evan Roberts has been causing great surprise in the Moriah Church there.

The place has been besieged by dense crowds of people unable to obtain admission. Such excitement has prevailed that on the road, that the road on which the church is situated is crowded from end to end. Ended by saying, the vast congregation remain praying and singing till 2.30 in the morning.

Shopkeepers are closing early. In order to find a place in the church, tin and steel workers through the place in their working clothes. Now the news was out.

I suppose every praying woman in Wales called in her neighbors to pray. Many went on their knees for a long time because of distress and agony of soul. Western Mail sent down a reporter to report on what he saw.

I'm sure he was an Englishman. He wrote the report. Instead of the set order of proceedings, everything was left to the spontaneous impulse of the moment.

We would say it was spirit directed. At 4.25 the gathering dispersed, but even at that hour the people were reluctant to go home. This is how I know he's an Englishman.

He said, I felt that this was no ordinary gathering. Very interesting that the same time precisely, a Baptist pastor called R.B. Jones was holding a meeting in Thrill in North Wales when the prayers of the people overwhelmed the preaching. The revival went like a flood over Wales.

And most people jump to conclusions and say, well then, Evan Roberts became the Billy Graham of Wales. No, he's not of the sort. He wouldn't even advertise his meetings.

Could you imagine during Mission England, Billy Graham refusing to tell people where he was preaching? That's the difference between revival and evangelism. It doesn't depend on an individual. Evan Roberts went to a meeting once, crowded with 2,000 people.

They were glad to see him. He began in his Welsh way. Most of his preaching was in Welsh.

Do you really believe the promises of God? With a great cry of Amen. Then he said to them, Would you agree that a promise made by the Lord Jesus, especially precious? A great cry of Amen. Amen.

Some shouted, Arre ben bo go ran. On his head be the crown. Crown him.

He said, Do you know one that says, Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst. Great cry, Yes, yes. Do we have two or three here tonight? Great roar of laughter.

Is Jesus here? Yes. I asked you, Is Jesus here? They all shouted, Yes. He asked a third time.

They all roared, Yes. Then said Evan Roberts, You don't need me. He put on his hat and coat and he went to another meeting.

Laughter. I asked the man that told me that, Then what happened? He said, We all realised that Jesus was there and we all began to talk to him. That was a feature called Simultaneous Audible Prayer.

But Evan Roberts wasn't the only preacher. I mentioned Seth Joshua. He was at Amman Fort, 20th of November.

This has been one of the most remarkable days of my life. Even in the morning, a number were led to embrace the Saviour. In the afternoon, the blessing fell on scores of young people.

In the evening, the crush was very great to get into the church. At seven o'clock, a surging mass filled the Christian temple. Cries were unable to obtain entrance.

The Holy Spirit was indeed among the people. Numbers confessed Jesus, but it's impossible to count. This was like a tide that filled all the churches.

I had a friend, H. J. Galley. When I met him, he was pastor of Woodcombe Chapel in Bath. He said he'd just graduated from Spurgeon's College and was in his first little church in London when the English newspapers reported the Welsh Revival.

He thought, This I must see. He sent a telegram to an ex-classmate, Meet me off the London Express. I think the time was Rhonda.

There was Williams with a shining face, and Galley said, Is this real revival? Now a Welshman can't answer directly. He has to give you a poem, you know. He said, It is the gate of heaven to our souls.

Well, said Galley, I've travelled a long way. I'd like to hear Evan Roberts preach. Where is he preaching? He said, I don't know.

Isn't he the leader of the revival? No. Oh, he said, The newspapers have got it wrong. No, no, he said, The Holy Spirit leads the revival.

He said, Look, Brother Galley, Evan Roberts just might show up at my church tonight. On the other hand, there are a thousand other churches he might be at. But he said, The Lord will be there.

Oh, said Galley, You're having special meetings too? He said, My church has been packed for six weeks. You mean the other churches are using your church for united meetings? No, he said, The Anglican Church, every church from the Anglican Church to the Salvation Army is packed. Galley said, How do you keep up with the preaching? Williams laughed.

He said, I hadn't thought about it. I haven't preached for six weeks. Well, he said, Who preached last night? I said, I can't remember them all, about 17 people I suppose.

Including a little boy of 12 and an old granny of 78. Galley said, When do you hold the meetings? He said, Six to midnight. What? He said, Six hours? He said, I mean six in the morning to midnight.

He said, At first we went on all night, but the people do need to have some rest, so we close the church at midnight and we open again at six. These are not the same people. No, he said, We get coal miners coming just before their early shift, and during the mid-morning we have housekeepers who slip away, and at noontime all sorts of people, in the afternoon school children, but the evening from six to midnight would be packed with everyone.

By the way, during the Welsh Revival there were no separate meetings. No young people's meetings, no old people's meetings, no women's meetings, no boy scouts, nothing. The whole body of Christ was in the church, and the young people were as much caught up as the older people and vice versa.

That was the Welsh Revival. About 100,000 people were converted and added to the churches. J.B. Morgan, Vernon Morgan, wrote a book to debunk the Revival five years later.

It was called The Welsh Religious Revival, A Retrospect and a Criticism. His major criticism, there were two criticisms. One, there was too much emotion.

The other was, of the 100,000 who joined the churches in the Revival, after five years, only 75% still stood. Only. It wasn't 100,000 that he said.

He said 80,000 joined the four major non-conformist denominations. He assumed that the Church of England was not affected. He was quite wrong.

I have the figures from the Church of England. There were at least 100,000 in the Church of England. The number of confirmations doubled.

That's what an Anglican does when he's converted. He wants to be confirmed. So, I decided to make a study of this.

75% still stood. There's a book published, I don't know if you have it in your library, by Currie, Gilbert and Horsley on church statistics in Britain since they were kept. The methods go all the way back to John Wesley.

The Church of England only since 1882. But you can get those figures. I discovered that the churches in the height of the Revival gained 20% on average.

And five years later they had lost 2%. Now, of course, Wales is a poor country. It doesn't have rich soil.

A lot of rocks there. They have coal mines too, but it's seasonal employment in the sense that sometimes it's good, sometimes it's not good. Welsh people migrate to Glasgow and Liverpool and Birmingham and London, Bristol.

They go to Canada and Pennsylvania. You'll find them in Australia, New Zealand, which might account for some who are not any longer in the roles of the churches. But J.B. Morgan gave the game away.

He said many were lost to the Pentecostals. Yes. And to the mission halls.

There was a multiplication of mission halls. Some of the churches tried to go back to their formal ways and the people who had been converted in the Revival didn't like formalism. They liked free meetings.

So they'd start mission halls in which they could do as they pleased. And then, of course, the Pentecostal movement began about 1907. Of some of those, for instance, Donald Gee was converted under Seth Joshua.

He was a friend of mine. George Jeffries was converted about that time. I might mention one thing, however.

A professor in the state's University of Georgia, quite a famous man, stated that speaking in tongues came from the Welsh Revival to Azusa Street. But I thought it was the other way around, I told him. So he said, well, I was told that many people who had never spoken in Welsh before spoke in Welsh during the Revival.

I said, that's right. But they were from bilingual families. For instance, there are people in Wales today.

Perhaps the mother speaks Welsh, the father speaks English, and they use English in business. Come home, the mother speaks to them in Welsh, they reply in English. The beautiful Kimmerag, the Welsh language is in decline.

The number of speakers is getting less and less, unfortunately. But these people in the meetings were so caught up with the spirit of the meetings, the preaching was in Welsh, the singing was in Welsh, they just spoke in Welsh. But, of course, they knew what they were saying.

And I don't consider that speaking in tongues. So Vincent Simon said to me, well, when did speaking in tongues begin in Wales? I said, well, on the 23rd of December, 1907, in the home of Thomas Maddock Jeffreys, a place called Wanluid, about 8.30 in the evening. I said, beyond that, I wouldn't care to commit myself.

He said, how do you know? I said, Donald G. told me. And it came through the visit of A.H. Post from Azusa Street. Now, Evan Roberts did write to Azusa Street.

You see, the relation of Pentecostalism to the Welsh Revival was, I'll put it this way, out of the Puritan movement came the Baptist movement. But not all the Puritans were Baptists. Out of the worldwide revival of 1905 came the Pentecostal movement.

But not all those who were revived became Pentecostal. Let me use the American expression, just the eager beavers. Well, that revival had social impact that was astounding.

Drunkenness was cut in half. In 1904, there were 10,000 arrests for drunkenness in Glamorgan. It was a great seaport place, Cardiff, and also a great industrial area, and people drink.

But the number was cut in half within a year. However, it caused a wave of bankruptcies. Many of the taverns couldn't sell their booze, went bankrupt.

The churches would take over the taverns and turn them into youth clubs or board them up. Crime was cut down so much that many judges were presented with white gloves, not a case to try. You say, why white gloves? I don't know what the significance would be except that you can take a white glove and rub it on a slate and you don't get any mark if there's nothing on the slate.

No robberies, no burglaries, no rapes, no murders, nothing. District councils had emergency meetings to discuss what to do with the police now that they were unemployed. There was one district council, I forget which county it was in, where they discussed reducing the police by 50%.

And one of the councils said, that's not fair. These men have dedicated their life to public service. Why should we penalize them because we're having a revival? They sent for the sergeant of police and asked him, what do you do with your time? The sergeant said, well, before the revival we had two main jobs.

One was to prevent crime, the other was to control crowds at football games, market days, that sort of thing. But he said, since the revival there's no crime, so we just go with the crowds. The councillor said sharply, what do you mean you just go with the crowds? The councillor, he said, you know where the crowds are? Every church is filled.

But he said, they don't need police assistance, do they? Well, he misunderstood. He said, we have 17 police in our station, but we've got three of the finest men's quartets you could know, and if the church wants a quartet to sing, they notify the police. There was a policeman standing outside a courtroom in Anglesey when he heard a burst of singing in the courtroom.

So unusual to hear anyone sing in a courtroom, he rushed in. He found what had happened. The prisoner in the dock had broken down and wept, confessed that he had committed the crime, asked his defender not to defend him anymore.

The judge took his gavel and adjourned the court. He said, young man, I would like to speak to you as a Christian. You have offended society, but you have offended almighty God, and I want to tell you how you can be right with him.

The young man was converted in the dock, and the Welsh jury burst into great hymn of praise. And the policeman stayed and added his bass to the choir. They had a praise service for about an hour.

That's what was happening in Wales. There were slowdowns in the coal mines, though. He said, how could a revival cause a strike? Not a strike, just a slowdown.

Mervyn Lewis, Birmingham, he's dead and gone now, told me that his father told him that what they called the holliers, the men that operated the horses, were the most profane men in Wales. Over in the States they called them muleskinners, and mules were very hard to handle, and of course they got cussed out all the time. But so many Welsh coal miners were converted and stopped using profanity that the horses couldn't understand what was being said to them.

And transportation slowed down until the horses learned the language of Canaan. Mervyn Lewis told me that his father saw one of these holliers who couldn't get the horse to respond. It was used to be cussed at, but... He said, come on, Betsy, come on, girl.

And the horse laid its ears flat. Then he said, you know, Betsy, I can't cuss you anymore. Oh, he said, but I can have a word of prayer, so he takes off his hat and he asks the Lord to help this dumb beast understand what he was saying.

That happened in the mines of Wales. In 1974, I was speaking at Moody Bible Institute. I remembered that the pastor of the Fourth Presbyterian Church in Chicago was a Welsh orator.

I've clean forgotten his name. Very typically Welsh name. He married the daughter of one of my good friends, J.W. Owen of Heath Presbyterian Church, who'd been a missionary in China.

I hadn't seen either for a long time, so I went over to ring the acquaintance. And I found this man rather disturbed. He said, what do you think of this? He showed me the three articles in the Western Mail written by a man called Tom Jenkins.

And I was outraged. I could hardly believe my eyes. It said Evan Roberts was an immoral man.

There were whispers of the many women in his life. His preaching was pure aphrodisiac. He so inflamed his congregations that they poured into the churchyards and when the women became pregnant, they blamed it on nightingales.

And it quoted a historian saying that the Welsh Revival had raised illegitimate children, had raised the illegitimate birth rate, and that the illegitimate children were called the children of the Revival. I wrote to the editor of the Western Mail. I said, you haven't heard the last of this.

I said, I intend to raise this at the next conference at Oxford University. I was writing a notepaper which had us as sponsors the Archbishop of Canterbury and outstanding leaders of every denomination. So he

must have taken notice of the letter.

He wrote back. I ended up with a real dig at him. I said, this man is dead and gone now.

He's been cruelly slandered. Where is your British sense of fair play? And that got under his skin. He replied, we'd be glad to publish three articles from you.

The fee will be £40. That meant it was a bona fide offer. It was.

I wasn't satisfied. I got in touch with Davy Davies, Principal of the South Wales Baptist College. He said to me, well, Edwin, this is just froth.

I said, I'm not a drinking man, but I was in the Air Force. I know what you do with froth. First thing a man does when he gets a tankard of beer, he blows the froth off, and I intend to blow this off.

So I went across. Davy Davies arranged for me to speak in Bangor, Aberystwyth, Swansea and Cardiff in the college towns of the University of Wales. We ended up with a great rally in the haze in Cardiff.

Admission by ticket only. The Lord Mayor was there in his regalia. Hundreds were turned away, and I really felt that I was Samson with the jawbone of an ass slaying a thousand.

I tried to find, I said, who was the historian who said that the illegitimate birth rate went up? Well, it turned out to be a minister in Birmingham. I called him. I said, did you say that? He said, yes.

I said, how did you know that? He said, my mother told me that. Well, I said, and she keeps statistics? Well, she knew a girl who got into trouble. I said, in the meetings.

I said, did you go to Haringey? He said, yes, I went once. I went up to hear Billy Graham. I said, could you imagine someone calling out, Dr. Graham stopped the meeting, there's a girl getting in trouble in the fifth row? Oh no, he said, I don't mean that.

He said, I mean, you know, in the excitement of the times, perhaps some girl was careless. I can't argue with anecdotes. Perhaps for every girl that was careless, if there were any careless, a thousand stopped fooling around.

But he said, that wouldn't show in the statistics. I said, you're quite right, non-pregnancies are never reported. And I thought, indeed they are.

Indirectly, I took a train back to London, went to the Strand, went to Somerset House, got the records of births, deaths and marriages. A whole section on illegitimate births. The number of illegitimate births was increasing all over Britain at that time.

But I found that in Radnorshire and Marinerhire, the illegitimate birth rate dropped 44%. In Glamorgan, 8%, with a significant drop. Yet they lied about Evan Roberts.

You know, of course, they always watch evangelists or people in the public eye. Billy Grain will never counsel with a lady alone in a room. If someone closes the door, he'll have the door open or have somebody in there.

Why? Well, you know they could stage a scene, couldn't they? They could send some prostitute in there to make an exhibition of herself and then take pictures of Billy Grain. He's very careful. They were after Evan

Roberts like that.

The worst that they got on him was that one of the girls of the Quartet from Newquay had washed his socks. And that caused some clucking among the old hens. When I finished at Wells, 1974, I just looked up to heaven and I said, Well, Brother Evan, if you're watching, I'm glad to have done it.

Declare your name. Martin Lloyd-Jones called me and said, Thank you, Edwin. I said, The only thing I'm dismayed is that I had to come from California to do it.

One of the troubles about the Welsh revivalists, most of the reports by evangelicals are effusive, gushy. Hallelujah, what a revival. Whereas the enemy wrote objective reports.

They would nail down things that they would want to object. That's why I believe in objective reporting. So that the record stands clear.

Well now, on to deal with the fallacy. As I grew up in the United Kingdom, I heard times without number, Why did the Welsh revival not affect England? I've already mentioned that. But I find them quite mistaken.

The Methodists in Bootle, in Lancashire, reported a marvelous awakening in the year of 1905. 700 conversions. The town of Wigan aflame.

The Holy Spirit descending on crowds of more than 5,000. In the greatest movement ever known at the time. This was followed by a great movement in Accrington.

In Liverpool proper there was simultaneous audible prayer. Great movement in Manchester. Revival in the churches, evangelism outside their walls.

Gypsy Smith had a great meeting for drunks and prostitutes. At midnight. Blackpool Charles Barraclough led a movement in that resort town.

The Bishop of Dorking went to the Welsh revival incognito. And was so enthused, he went back to his former parish, Barrow-in-Furness, to tell the Anglicans what he had seen. Revival began in January and ran through unabated month of February.

Hundreds converted. Great movement in Birkenhead. Across the Pennines in Yorkshire, the first outbreak of revival apparently was in Hull.

By March of 1905, the enthusiasm was so increased that it was called a converting furnace. The great awakening began in Halifax. In Sheffield it was said, the city of steel has caught the fire.

That was an expression from Wales. Catching the fire. Two thousand people were interceding with God for revival in Bradford.

Then came the great movement of the Holy Spirit. Blessings unknown since the visit of John Wesley. Guiseley, there was a movement in Yorkshire in which a tenth of the population was converted.

Great movement in Leeds. There was a Methodist preacher there called Samuel Chadwick. His church was open night and day, just as in Wales.

Great revival swept York. Cathedral cities are always difficult, but great revival in York. The revival swept Northumberland and Durham.

There was a tiny little village in Durham. 450 conversions reported. But in Bishop Auckland, a bigger town, the town hall and the drill hall were overcrowded.

They used the churches as inquiry rooms. Glorious after-meetings in all the churches. John McNeill, the Scottish evangelist, had a standing room only in Durham, not a cathedral city.

Spencer Walton found Sunderland ripe for blessing. By the way, it was in Sunderland that the Pentecostal phenomenon began first, about 1906 I think, through the visit of T.B. Barrett to AA Boddy. Take, for example, Cumberland.

It's a town called Ellenborough. 279 adults and 128 young people converted. One third the population of the town.

The Anglican clergy and the free church ministers of Westmoreland got together. There was such a movement that David Lloyd George came up to speak at Kirkby Stephen in a political rally. In a weak moment, he called in someone to lead him in prayer.

The dear brother was so carried away he really prayed and somebody else followed him and somebody else followed him. It was the most glorious prayer meeting they'd ever heard David Lloyd George. Now, many Christians in Birmingham were called to pray.

By January, almost every church was having simultaneous mission. By March, the Methodists were reporting great awakening in Birmingham and the Midlands affecting all denominations. Ian McLaren, the great writer, called it springtime in the church.

It was also called Wales in Birmingham. There was a congregational chapel called Rocky Lane Chapel. The movement was unprecedented.

300 inquirers enrolled. Hansworth Methodist Theological College moved by the spirit of prayer all classes abandoned for meetings of prayer, confession and dedication. In Nuneaton, the week of united prayer was followed by an outpouring of the spirit.

A man called Redwood, a local supply minister went down to see the Welsh revival came back and electrified the town and then there were wonderful outpourings and remarkable scenes in all the churches. They used the great Prince's Theatre packed every Sunday night after church with 1500 praying saints and seeking sinners. It was a very cold winter all over the world but during the great blizzard in Nuneaton there were 826 conversions.

The railway ran special excursions to Nuneaton from all around the Midlands. You could go from Birmingham to the meetings and get back for midnight for a shilling return. The awaiting began in Nottingham with no leadership, no advertising, no missions just fellowship, praise, prayer, testimony and opportunity for decisions.

The whole city felt the glow. There was a place nearby called Bulwell where some of the most degraded drunkards of the time were converted. 386 conversions in 8 weeks.

In Ashby there was a similar sort of moment. Worcester was shaken. Little advertising, little preaching, little order but prolonged meetings.

A densely packed mass of men, women and children who had come in spite of arctic weather. In Bedfordshire there was a remarkable movement. The soloist of the meetings there was Charles Forbes Taylor.

He's known in the American Baptist circles. He just retired as an evangelist, must be about 80. The remarkable thing was at that time he was 5 years of age when he was a soloist in Bedfordshire.

Revival in Bedford, Grantham, Hereford, Hinkley, Kettering, Ketterminster, Leicester, Loughborough Northampton, Rugby, Stratford, Maiden, Wellington Gypsy Smith was in Hanley. Hundreds filled the inquiry room. With very few exceptions the 2,000 converts became members of the local churches.

Gypsy Smith said this great movement in Wales was whetting the appetite. Prayer meetings were held in Gloucester. So entered the pubs that the pub owners were angry and they set the roughs of the town on a Christian demonstration.

They gave these people drink and told them to attack the procession. But it didn't prevent the crowds from filling the biggest church with 1,500 and the nearby school hall with 600 and the roadway would just fill the people. Great revival in the city of Bristol.

Soon the news of revival in Bristol was reaching the far ends of the United Kingdom. Remarkable scenes. The local daily paper carried a column on phases of the revival.

By the way, over in the States during the revival this connected gazette ran a column called Yesterday's Conversions. If you want to know who was converted yesterday you can just look it up. Kingswood, where John Wesley began his ministry Reverend Hugh Smith, an American congregational church there reported 900 conversions.

He said that more than 3,000 in the district had professed conversion and there was a committee of 73 ministers and laymen following them up. The Baptist and Methodist ministers in Hanom affirmed that there were 250 converts there and only one had gone back. Reverend A.E. Bray of St. George's Anglican reported that the Jolly Boys Society a gang of roughs that terrorized the neighborhood had broken up because they were all converted.

In the daily press in Bristol it was commented by a secular writer that it was very hard now to meet anyone drunk. Instead the pedestrians were more likely to do street demonstrations led by brass bands followed by six or seven hundred people marching to a meeting. The Methodists had their annual meetings there.

They didn't get much business done. Of course annual meetings are for business generally speaking, some inspiration but mostly business. But Methodist minister after Methodist minister would get up and say I've never had a time like this in my life praise God and then burst into some great hymn.

They didn't get much business done. Revival in Swinton crossed between 2,500 and 3,000. Weymouth, Bath, Somerset.

Tides of the Spirit reached Devonshire. Extraordinary Awakening in Torrington. Barnstable had truly wonderful work.

Bedford was called Floodtide. Exeter was really moved. Falmouth, 750 conversions.

Devonport, Plymouth. Revival swept Cornwall. At Newquay in Cornwall a pastor's strength gave out after 15 nights in a packed church.

Whole families and some just professed conversion. Redruth was stirred. The British press reported the revival now had reached land's end.

It broke out among the Salvation Army in Penzance. Out of that revival came a very famous Brethren evangelist called Harold St. John. In Southampton by February of 1905 it was reported Christians had never seen anything like this for many years past.

The revival swept all of Hampshire and the Isle of Wight. The vicar of Shirley in Southampton was afraid of emotion but he invited two young Irishmen from Dublin to come over and preach for him. He was so highly thankful for this.

I am, I cannot say. The absence of the energy of the flesh was a marked feature of every service. We know of at least 500 inquirers.

The two young men were Frederick and Arthur Wood who founded the Young Life campaign. Reading, St. Mary's Church packed out, all the Baptist churches packed, 200 conversions in Wilking, Great Awakening in Watford, Tunbridge Wells, Deptford, throughout Essex, throughout all of East Anglia, Kingsland, a remarkable outbreak. The revival swept London.

There has been a rumor always that Keswick repulsed the revival. 300 Welshmen went up to Keswick that year but I didn't find this was the case. The speakers were R.B. Jones and Charles Inwood and they were all praying that the 1905 convention might be a means of communicating revival.

A.T. Pearson led a midnight prayer meeting on Wednesday. He said nothing like this had ever been seen at Keswick before. It was like Wales on a larger scale.

Every student in the Oxford and Cambridge house parties was converted or committed his life to God. In less than a week the convention became a revival. On Friday open confession swept the assembly and yet it was said that Keswick was not moved.

John McNeill was a great evangelist in those days. He said audiences are easier to get together than ever they were during the 12 years of which I can testify. He explained that the success of Tory and Alexander in Britain they were in Britain at that time was, I'm going to use a Scotch word here we use it in the north of Ireland too but I don't know if you could translate it he said Tory and Alexander benefited by the soch in the air produced by the Revival in Wales s-o-u-g-h you would call it the sow in the air you better ask some Scotsman to interpret that for you he said all evangelists know that in previous years even with large meetings and conversions we failed to get the churches to carry on after we left but it's different now every church is busy every night this was happening at that time Hanley Moore was Bishop of Durham he wrote a prayer that was pasted into every prayer book of the Church of England Revive, O Lord, we humbly beseech Thee the work of Thy saving grace in the church universal in our Church of England, in our diocese in this parish wherein we dwell and in our own hearts to the conviction and conversion of forgetful souls to the quaking of Thy true disciples in life and witness and for the glory of Thy holy name through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ thirty bishops of the Church of England met together to discuss what should be the attitude of the Church of England to the revival the first speaker, a bishop said, fathers and brethren I've just come from Shropshire where in a single parish church I confirmed nine hundred and fifty

new converts the bishops voted for the revival Cosmo Lange was Bishop of Stepney he became Archbishop of Canterbury he went to St.

Paul's and preached to the whole Church of England on get oil for your lamps the Bishop of Rochester convened a meeting of a hundred and fifty clergy at St. Augustine's in Clapham they began by saying, revive Thy work, O Lord Thy mighty arm make bare the Bishop of London was high churchman but according to the record it said he laid aside his mitre, coat and staff and started holding evangelistic missions in London starting in Lancaster Gate with two thousand people continued in St.

Paul's Church in Oswald Square he was followed up by Barclay Buxton, the great missionary to Japan and prevalently well, Peplow hundreds turned away from the meetings did it have any effect? the Baptists in five years nineteen three, nineteen eight increased twenty percent Congregationalists, ten percent Presbyterians, twelve percent the Methodists passed the middle mark in membership the membership of the free churches passed the number of communicants in the Church of England for the first and only time it was felt every part of this country swept Scotland Motherwell, the churches seven churches, four public halls were packed for two months during the Revival outbreak streets were packed from wall to wall spread all over Scotland broke out in Lurgan, first of all, in Northern Ireland among the Methodists, then it spread to the Presbyterians swept Northern Ireland I picked up this from the official denomination journal of the Methodists happily, there is no longer any need to use the phrase the Revival in Wales there is spiritual movement in the churches all along the line in London, the Midlands the North and the West tried by every test thus far it stands there have been elements of excitement that caused many sober people to shake their heads but the results have proved that the emotion was deep and true the imprint which all can read is the high ethical character of the movement the Revival was felt in Norway I knew Albert Lunder, whom God used there so great was the movement in Norway that the Norwegian Parliament which has a state church passed special legislation to allow licensed Lutheran laymen to conduct Holy Communion clergy couldn't keep up with the movement so they allowed laymen to conduct communion for converts the Revival swept Denmark Norway and Sweden were almost at war the troops were on the frontier Norway wanted independence but the troops were withdrawn Prince Oskar Bernadotte, whom I also knew invited Albert Lunder, the Norwegian seaman over to preach in the great Blasieholm church in Stockholm the Revival swept Sweden swept Finland broke out in St.

Petersburg broke out in Riga the German Keswick Convention was called the Blankenburg Convention prayers of the people drowned out the preaching there Revival was felt in all of France the outstanding evangelist was a man called Ruben Saillans his grandson Jacques Blochet was Billy Graham's interpreter I preached for the Blochet family but Ruben Saillans took his worldly daughter to Wales she was an opera singer a Welsh girl sang in Welsh and Madame Zelle Saillans heard it in French that wasn't speaking in tongues, I don't know what you'd call that it was a miracle of hearing anyway she heard the words in French well I'd been in meetings where the Lord was working where the language was unknown to me but I seemed to know what was going on the Revival swept India increased 16 times its population the Christians did, for 10 years the same Revival swept Burma, China, Japan, Korea I've talked about Korea broke out in Australia, New Zealand broke out in East Africa, in Mombasa and then in Kampala swept Uganda the same Revival was felt in South Africa in Malawi, then called Nassaland broke out in South Africa under Rhys Howells who was converted in the Welsh Revival that was much later but the Revival was still effective if you read what David Barrett says about growth of the church in Africa he says, from 1910 onwards the growth of the churches in Africa, south of the Sahara has been twice that of the population explosion by from 1910 on that was when the Welsh Revival movement was most effective

throughout Africa Revival broke out in Brazil I was in Brazil during the Revival in 1952 when Christians were deeply moved you know the way in this country they sing, Spirit of the Living God, Fall Fresh in Me over there they sing a hymn Ven visita tu igreja o bendito Salvador come visit thy church, O blessed Saviour but the tune is, O the deep, deep love of Jesus that was the theme song of the Welsh Revival there was a man called Sargent who wrote a book released some time ago attacking Christianity as being a brainwashing was it William Sargent?

I'm not sure Battle for the Mind you mean? Yes, the Battle for the Mind and he talked about the wheel in preaching in Wales there was no wheel in the Welsh Revival you say, what's the wheel? it's a kind of sing-song preaching when a Welsh orator is preaching he gets his voice up to a certain pitch there was nothing like that in the Welsh Revival but you will find that they also say that there were hellfire preachers and brimstone and all the rest of it nothing of the sort the theme was the love of Jesus the Revival swept the United States from coast to coast I asked Oswald Smith once what do you know of the Welsh Revival what do you know of the Revival in 1905 in Canada he said, never heard of it I said, in First Baptist Church in Winnipeg they were turning 2,000 away in the snow never heard of it I said, do you want me to tell you about it in Nova Scotia and British Columbia I said, when were you converted he said, 1905 I suppose his conversion was such a big event in his life he didn't know what was going on around him that was a sweeping Revival well now, how do you account for the fact that so many pessimists have said why didn't the Welsh Revival spread from Wales how do you account for that it's one of the legends, one of the myths and as I say, even Welsh people believe it it's not true the reason I've told you about it is this Stuart Hammond wrote a hymn called It is no secret what God can do I think I should write a verse to that when it says what he's done for others he'll do for you I'd write one that says what he's done before he can do again he's the one, why doesn't he because they're not praying the way they used to all right any questions I've tried to be provocative but I've used facts, not theories any questions raise your hand and ask your question yes the excitement of course died down after about two years the real excitement a human being can't stand indefinite excitement I had a phrase here from I think it was Seth Joshua or someone like that I wonder if it's here in 1906 Alvin Roberts was preaching for three hours in the Anglican church in Aberdeen Seth Joshua said in 1906 there's no great blaze but just a steady glow A.T.

Pearson said in 1907 he said there's a noticeable reaction but he contradicted this he quoted Cary Evans, a great Welsh preacher he said only the form has changed in other words instead of having these tremendous exciting meetings they were building up the converts as I told you the perseverance factor was 82.2% the life of the churches had been distinctly and permanently quickened after the storm the calm not of stagnation but settled conviction not so much ecstasy but a lot of peace so in Wales the excitement died down but the effect was felt until 1914 you mustn't forget what a traumatic experience World War I was the British lost a million men the French lost more than the British the Germans lost more than the French the Russians lost more than the Germans I remember myself the 1st

of July 1916 when practically every family in Belfast was in mourning over the slaughter in the Battle of the Somme and a whole generation was missing people say where are the converts to the Welsh Revival now? nearly all in the glory in fact almost every last one the only survivors of the Welsh Revival would be in their 90's unless there were some infants converted but the rumour nevertheless persisted that the Welsh Revival was a flash in the pan I can disprove that I think sin has always been sin for instance in the days let me just mention after the American Revolution before the French Revolution conditions were deplorable I can give you American figures for instance they took a poll at Harvard discovered not one believer in the whole student body they took a poll at Princeton, a

much more evangelical place only 2 believers in the whole student body only 5 that didn't belong to the filthy speech movement of that day the largest denomination was the Congregational Reverend Samuel Shepard of Lennox Massachusetts said that in 16 years he hadn't taken a single young person into fellowship the Presbyterians met in General Assembly to implore the ungodliness of the country the Methodists were the most aggressively evangelistic and they were losing members the Baptists said they had their worst season the Lutherans were so badly off they discussed amalgamating with the Episcopalians to try and prop each other up the Episcopal Church in the States was so moribund that Samuel Provost the Bishop of New York quit functioning he had confirmed no one for years so he decided to

look for other work the church was finished the younger generation totally, totally alienated but the revival that followed completely swept the place but you see now do you not understand the word a Woodstock have you heard of these great rock concerts in the States where maybe 40,000 young people would get together to hear rock music to drink to share drugs they've even passed girls around naked what would you do with people like that they're completely alienated from our church life when the Holy Spirit fell on that sort of congregation in Kentucky people were smitten I hear a lot about this expression being slain in the Spirit it was a little different in those days those who were slain in the Spirit were the scoffers they came fortified with a strong drink it was as if the Lord took

a cricket bat and hit them in the back of the head some were unconscious for hours by the way there was a prostration like that in the North of Ireland in 1859 I'm not suggesting that we should pray that that would be repeated but if the Lord does send an awakening to Britain he'll have to get the attention of these people who don't care anything about it and it won't come through ordinary church life it just will not come through ordinary church life so I just simply think that the power of God is sufficient to beat any situation I don't regard TV as an evil it's completely neutral but we've allowed evil to capture TV well you see the thing is this that for instance if only 10% of the British population go anywhere near church and they're not all evangelicals not all converted people the

world just shrugs us off just shrugs us off now I heartily support Mary Whitehouse, is that her name? in protest against pornography and all the rest of it I think a Christian should do that but the world will go its own merry way we can appeal to law but they can change the law one of the problems in the United States is they've taken these cases to court and they always manage to weasel around it they say well these immoral things are permitted if it's not contrary to community standards so we say alright let's take a vote how many people are against this sort of thing then they won't let us take a vote they say let's take national standards it's just an excuse to give people the right of way the thing is this the problem is too big for the church we have to enlist the help of almighty

God he may use the church to stop it on the other hand he may use other means for instance many people in the states were praying for the abolition of slavery but slavery was still it provoked civil war but in 10 minutes Abraham Lincoln passed a proclamation freeing all the slaves and the prayers of Christians were answered thank God that Abraham Lincoln was a man of Christian conviction I don't know how active a Christian he was he wasn't a member of any church but he had Christian convictions now I personally believe that we should go into parliament or congress or into the district councils into the town councils municipalities and so forth and stand for righteousness far too long Christians have been other worldly and said well I'm only interested in heaven the world can go to hell no

I think we should go into every phase and appeal to the higher instincts of people and wherever we can to use the law I believe in all that we should do that whether there is revival or no revival but when there is a tide of evil it gets so big that we just can't sweep it back then it's time for God to work and in the great awakens in the past he has completely reversed the tide it is the body of believers in the Lord Jesus Christ I don't use the term the organized church because it's a very mixed body I would say the church is the word ecclesia means the gathering of those born again of the spirit of God that's my definition of the church I would say this that for instance if the institutional church is 10% of the population then I would say the true church is a smaller figure than

that and it's even harder for us but as I say a man who is truly born again can go into parliament stand for the right will of the force stood against the forces of evil when he brought in the abolition of the slave trade I do believe that a Christian one Christian with God on his side can do all sorts of things of course he can but you see things have been getting worse and worse and worse conditions are worse yes let me see of course if I take every country revival broke out at Cannes on the Riviera great awakening in a place called Henin-Littard the French correspondent said it would fill a volume to recount the marvelous things we saw at a place called Valentinier there was bitterness, remorse, tears confessions and repentance before an outbreak of spiritual power revivals felt among

the Eglise Reformée as well as among Methodists and Baptists the McCoy mission which drew its support from Britain reaped a harvest during the revival the evangelist Ruben Sainz found himself so busy holding revival meetings all over France and the year 1905 when France was characterized by persevering prayer, conventions for the deepening of spiritual life, tourism, revival and evangelism French Protestantism had been fragmented, but it brought so many fellowships together that they set up a Protestant Federation to cooperate, same sort of revival in Switzerland now if somebody says tell me about Bulgaria, I'll have to tell you about Bulgaria and so forth, so take my word for it it was felt in nearly all the countries of Europe now I'm going to make a suggestion if you are challenged by

what the Lord did in this country in the days of your grandparents, there's one thing you can do and that's to pray

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