

Revival Series 1 - Part 1

by Leonard Ravenhill

Leonard Ravenhill's sermon calls for a revival of the Church's strength through the Holy Spirit, emphasizing the urgency for spiritual awakening in a morally declining society.

Duration: 39:12

Scripture: Judges 16:6

Topics: "Revival"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher discusses the current state of America and mankind, stating that they cannot hold together for another five years. He plans to preach on various topics such as the second coming of Christ, revival, vision, judgment, the cross, and problems in the Christian life. The preacher also mentions a book called 'Death in the City' which discusses how God has rejected those in America who have rejected Him. He then talks about the decline of the church, stating that it began with supernatural power but is now ending with superficiality. The preacher concludes by mentioning the story of Samson as a representation of the current state of the church and the world.

Transcript

Our text tonight is in the 16th chapter of the book of Judges. Judges, the 16th chapter, reading verse 6. And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict me. One of the old European versions of the scripture has an extra word in this text, and the extra word is secret.

So then the text reads, Tell me, I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict me. Now you may not want to accept that word secret. You say it's not there by inspiration, and that's true, but it's there by influence anyhow.

This is a question of a woman of the world to a man of God. It will be a great day, and God hasten it, when the world again begins to ask the Church what. I believe right now the world has a suspicion that the Church has no strength.

About 400 years ago in England we had a breed of men, a very unusual breed, most Englishmen are, but they were a very unusual breed. By any standard they were giants, morally, spiritually, intellectually. And history has classified them as the Puritans.

Quite a number of them, but I think the tallest of them, theologically, spiritually, was John Owen. John Owen left us a massive volume on the Holy Spirit. That is my interest right now.

My interest is this, and he criticized men this way. He said the sin of men in the Old Testament was against the Father. The sin of men in the New Testament, he said, was against the Son.

And the sin of men in my day, he said, 400 years ago, is against the Holy Spirit. The sin of men in my day, he said, 400 years ago, is against the Holy Spirit. I think if he came back he wouldn't need to mollify that criticism in any way.

I've said, I shall say tonight, say other nights, that I believe that this is the most perilous hour in the history of America. In the last two or three years I have been able to preach at the National Convention of the Southern Baptists, at the Florida State Convention, at the Texas State Convention, and at each of them I've said I would like to give all the preachers a sheet of paper and a pencil and ask them to write on that piece of paper what or who they think is the greatest threat. And I've said and still say that I don't think ten percent of them could give me the right answer.

They might start off with the devil and finish with the Democrats, and in between have drink and dope and I don't know what else, divorce. But I believe the greatest threat to America tonight is God. If you haven't read any books by Francis Schaeffer, who is a full-blooded American in one sense, I think one of the great spiritual intellectuals of our time, he's running the Liabri Fellowship there in Switzerland.

It's a rescue station for intellectuals. Some kids from the richest homes in America, kids that have had the very best of everything. They've done his own things and yuck.

They lived in millionaires' homes. They've had the finest of education, but they hit the gutter. They got caught in the vortex of modern life.

And they've made their own pilgrimage there to the Liabri Fellowship in Switzerland with a language something. If you don't have the answer, we can't find the answer in the churches in America. But I'm interested in this observation he makes in his book called *Death in the City*, which is only about a dollar and a quarter.

He says, remember this, that every leading... Where is that church tonight? God said that he was married to Israel. God said he divorced Israel. In between, God hasn't bothered with Israel football and every nation has kicked around.

Five times in history, they have been almost annihilated. God hasn't bothered with Israel, the people he married for 2,000 years. What makes you think he didn't walk out on America or England? You don't legalize abortion.

You don't take living babies out of living mothers and let them be babies. And I'm not facetious. Nevada has legalized prostitution.

England has legalized homosexuality. We have 9 million alcoholics. We have roughly 30 million people on some kind of drugs.

We have an all-time high in venereal disease amongst kids under 15 years of age this past year in America. And England is very much the same. You see, you only shake your finger at God and break his

law so long, and God walks out on nations.

Just like he does on men. He says, my spirit shall not always strive with man. And one of the terrible things about preaching is that while some people come forward and say they'll take Christ for eternal life, there are others who say no, not openly, secretly.

In that very moment, they say they're dead as long as God lives. Because there comes a time when God knocks at the door of the heart for the very last time, and then he goes. This story of Samson to me is a story of a superman.

To me, Samson is a type of a spirit-anointed man. He's a type of a spirit-anointed church. The two most elusive things in the world tonight, what are they? While we've been in the Bahamas the last three years, there was a scare.

The newspaper articles, they thought they'd rediscovered the lost island of Atlantis, but discovered they hadn't. And right now, for some reason, I don't know. There are two expeditions on the Himalayan ranges trying to find the abominable snowman.

If they were trying to find the abominable snowman, I could give them the names of six evangelists. But they're trying to find the abominable snowman. Are these the most elusive things in the world, the abominable snowman and the elusive lost island? No, no, no, no, no.

The two most elusive things on God's earth tonight are, number one, personal anointing by the Holy Spirit, and number two, Holy Ghost revival. In every other area you can energize, organize, get money. And you just sweat in your labor when it comes to it.

God won't anoint you because you're a millionaire, and He won't refuse your anointing because you're a pauper. God won't send blessing because you have this God, this church, and I think it's very beautiful. And He won't bypass it either because you have it.

You see, God is sovereign, and there are certain things that men must do if God is going to come and bless. Samson is a title of spirit-anointed man. I suppose it's fortunate for mankind that at only once in maybe a thousand million men you'll get a man who wants to dominate the whole world.

We've had a few of them in history. Remember they told you at school, perhaps, that Alexander the Great at twenty-seven years of age conquered the world and sat down and wept because there were no more worlds that he knew of to conquer, and he was only twenty-seven years of age? And then in my day almost conquered the world, his name was Hitler. Prior to him, a little, small, copulent Corsican by the name of Napoleon, one of the greatest military strategists in history, almost conquered the world.

And one day he gathered together his warlords. On the wall of his office he had a great map of the world, and he snapped these men to attention and he plunged his index finger round the ragged edge of the great country. And then he said to his generals, Gendelman, there lies a sleeping giant.

Let it sleep! He said this before the Battle of Waterloo, which happened to be on June the 18th, which is tomorrow, and it's my birthday. You know where I'm staying. But on the day of the Battle of Waterloo, with his ambition to conquer the world, he ran his finger round that country, there is a sleeping giant.

Let it sleep! He said if that country ever wakes up and discovers its mineral wealth and harnesses that mineral wealth to its manpower, let the rest of the world know, that giant will shake the world. If you're interested, the country that he outlined was China. America's biggest headache tonight.

Russia's biggest headache. Doesn't the Book of the Revelations say somewhere round about the 9th chapter that one day 200 million men will come marching from the east? From where? Well, they don't have 200 million in Japan. The only country could be China.

Do you remember you being patched up to your ears to make atom bombs and hydrogen bombs? And wasn't it Mr., who was the president? Wasn't it that Baptist president, Truman? No wonder he made so many mistakes. But anyhow, wasn't it Truman that said after that bomb was dropped on Hiroshima or Hiroshima at 16 minutes to 8 on the 6th of August 1945, if there's another war, if the war is threatened, we drop the bomb the first week and get it over. About 50,000 bodies of the choicest American boys in Vietnam.

You've been patched your ears to make atom bombs. We don't use one of them. Why? Because when America dropped that bomb, as I say, at 16 minutes to 8 on the 6th of August 1945, she had the big stick and she was telling the world what to do.

But remember tonight, China, that has no conscience, has that atom bomb. You don't need aircraft. All you have to do is to make an intercontinental ballistic missile and put a warhead in it and shoot the thing and boy, they can blast us to smithereens.

Interesting, isn't it, that Mr. Breesnath, Leonardo Breesnath, is going to have a political reception tomorrow with pomp and circumstance and white-gloved soldiers and drums and bugles. And he hates us like the devil. And Nixon doesn't hate him much less, anyhow.

But we'll play hypocritical games with politics. Did you nearly roll out of bed the other night or was it Tuesday or Wednesday? They shot the thing off across the water there, one of those rockets. At 3.30 in the morning it rocked your house and your window.

And it was a new gadget that's going around in space right now and it's specially put there to listen in for anything that Russia sends over and relay and release a message within seconds. Once Russia starts firing these missiles, which they know we have and we know they have, for the last 12 years some men under the mountains there in Colorado have marched down under an area that's thicker than this place with concrete and they simulate pulling a switch. They never pull the right one because it has a bit of wire on it so they won't.

But if they pull the right one, rockets would shoot out from all over America to blast everything. And the article I had on that says the men were waiting for Armageddon. China's our biggest headache.

Napoleon said over a century ago, century and a half, there lies a sleeping giant, let it sleep. If China ever decides to yawn and stretch and go on the march, let the world look out. All right, you don't like politics, let's change it.

Instead of seeing Napoleon there, instead of seeing a map of the world, see a map of the ages. Instead of seeing Napoleon, see the devil. And he brings all the demons out of hell and he says to them, There, see that? He runs his finger around the ragged edge of something.

What is it? The Church of Jesus Christ. And he says there is the Church of Jesus. Because if the Church of Jesus Christ ever rediscovers the power of the Holy Ghost and harnesses what it already has for the power of the Spirit, let the earth look out and let hell look out.

For the Church anointed in the power of the Holy Ghost is the greatest power after the power of the Triune God. Tell me where in the secret of thy great strength I am. I first heard about America when I was a little boy in a school in England.

I had a teacher I didn't like. I never had one I did like, as a matter of fact. Look, this one I particularly didn't like.

She didn't like me either. I don't know why. I've always been attractive, but anyhow, she didn't like me.

And she thought I didn't know much, and I knew she didn't. And she told us a story. The best known story, I don't care whether you go to Russia or Africa, wherever you go around the world, there's one story that's known above all other stories in America.

About America, you know what it is? The story of Ritland Winkle. I don't know whether he's a Democrat or Republican, but he's very famous. And she told me about this man who went up a hill and he fell asleep, and when he came down the hill he got involved in argument with a group of people.

All I know, she said he slept for 20 or 50 years, she wasn't sure. And that's all I learned about the man. And that's exactly what the story is, which proved her ignorance anyhow.

You see, the story is this, that when he went up the hill there was a sign hanging outside of the tavern. When he came down the hill they had painted out the face of George I. And they had painted the face of another famous Englishman. Did you guess his name? George Washington.

You didn't know he was English? How ignorant can you get? But anyhow, they had erased the face of George III, they had painted there the face of George Washington. Is the story secret that he went to sleep for 20 years? No! The secret is this, he slept through a revolution. And I tell you with all the power of my being tonight, I believe that's what the Church of Jesus is doing in this very moment.

Sleeping through the greatest moral, spiritual, social, economic revolution in history. America can't hold together five more years, nor can mankind, none of the present. A week tonight I'm going to preach, God willing, on the second coming, the King is coming.

Tomorrow night I want to preach on revival praying. Tuesday night I believe on vision. Wednesday night, if the Lord gives us permission, on the judgment seat of Christ.

Thursday night maybe on the cross. Friday on problems in the Christian life. Saturday night, there'll be no preachers unless these boys do it.

I'm not preaching twice a day every day. Scripture says, six days shalt thou labour. And in case you are going to give me anything to eat, I'll lend a mission, so you know I won't get a dime.

All right. But we'll ask the question, what is the secret of thy great strength? Well, abnormal days demand abnormal men, with abnormal methods and abnormal messages. And Samson is one of the most abnormal men in the Bible.

You know, we got this man kind of mixed up in our thinking. Wherever you find a picture of Samson, you'll find him a kind of colossus. You know, he's got muscles like watermelons, and muscles on his chest like a range of mountains.

And that's exactly what he was. Of course, he's read mythology. Maybe you have.

Read about Atlas carrying a road on his back, Hercules kicking a range of mountains over. Or if you're not so well educated, Jack and the Beanstalk, let me come down to your level. But every man is a giant, he's a Hercules, he's a Colossus.

Now, I don't think women are stupid, always. Can you imagine a woman looking up to a man 19 feet? And here is Saul, head and shoulders above the average man. And here is Goliath, head and shoulders above the man who's taller than the rest of them.

And here is a colossal Samson up there. Now, you can't imagine a woman going to a man and saying, of course, buddy, what's the secret of thy great strength? It's pretty obvious that you'd think a man... I'm not going to suggest he was no bigger than the staff here, that wouldn't be right. But by the same token, I don't think he was six feet thick to six foot seven.

He was a normal man doing abnormal things, and everybody asked a question. You lock him up in a city, he carries half the city away with him. He meets a lion and destroys it.

Two thousand men come from West Point, he picks up a jawbone of an ass and slays them. And I said in one meeting, the Lord doesn't use a jawbone of an ass anymore. One of those nasty little ladies on the front seat said he does a dark church every Sunday.

But the jawbone of an ass? Why are you so sure he wasn't a giant? I always thought he... I have a Bible and it has a picture of Samson. He's a huge man. I'll tell you why.

Because the sign is written outside of his church there, not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of hosts. Again, the Word of God says, And to those who have no might, increase of strength. Again, the Word of God says, He's a normal man doing abnormal things.

He's a very epitome, he's a very answer to that text that says, That when you're walking in the Spirit, no weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper. Oh, but in all things we are more than countless through him. You see, over and over and over again.

The most precious thing you can say of any man who's started, he said, I would rather have this. But it says that whatever this man does, what nobody else could do. It says of him, the spirit of the Lord rested night in the apartment.

And you can't get that by college or seminary. Still God's prerogative is to give it to those who are hungry. And so desperate.

But they'll do what this man did, as we'll come to the end of the story and find out. The woman said, What is the secret of thy great strength? What do you have that nobody else has? What's the mystery? Where do you have this energy? You see, the church began by being supernatural. She's ending by being superficial.

What is the secret of thy great strength? What is the secret of thy great strength? He gives the answer, he says, If you fasten me, verse 7, if you fasten me with seven green whips that were never dried, then I shall be like another man. No, I wish he didn't say that, he didn't. What did he say? He said, If you fasten me with some of those vines that climb around the trees, if they're green and they're not brittle, and if you fasten me with seven green whips, I shall be a rebel.

No, no, no, he doesn't say that. You know, the greatest curse of modern Christianity is that there are too many of us that are too much alike. We say it's a normality.

He's earning five million, he has his own yacht and everything now. But I notice he says for the last four years particularly, eight years in all, I spend no less than eight hours in the water every day. I was determined.

I'd do what no other man did. And I tell you this for nothing, an experience of God that costs. So the devil doesn't fear organizing, he fears.

He doesn't mind our brilliance, our genius. And that won't cost you a penny except a broken heart. It may cost some of you boys a few silly hours with your girlfriends.

The other night God moved on that church in Merritt Island and many young people came forward, maybe sixty people came out one night. There was a moonlight madness sale and my dear wife and the lady with us at the time, the sale and my dear wife and the lady with us at the time, they wanted to get some bargains, we went along. This young lady came up to me breathless in the mall there, and she said, by the way, you know, the devil's doing all he can to keep me from praying tonight.

I met the lady the next day and she said, you know, the next day, and she said, you know, I just met one of our young kids, a girl sixteen, that trusted God to fill her with the Spirit last night and she went home and prayed the whole night through at sixteen years of age. Does that sound foreign to you? You may be sixty and never did that. I met a boy seventeen, he said radiantly, this is the first time, I met a boy seventeen, he said radiantly, this is the first time in my life I've invited the Holy Ghost to take full control of my life, the Holy Ghost to take full control of my life, control of my life.

I met another of my life. I met another teenager joyously, I met another teenager joyously and he said, my, this is transforming, God has come into my life as never before. I went to get a hair trim the other day, ducked all I got, nearly.

As we came out my wife and I met a fine looking man. He said, Brother Ragnar, man he said I could shout and leap down this mall I've been looking for answers. And I found the answer to spiritual power and anointing this week.

I'm a new man. I'm energized by the Spirit of God. Fasten me with seven green robes.

They fasten him, he gets up. That's not the secret. No he says fasten me with seven new robes.

And they fasten him and he gets out. Because he said if you fasten me with seven new robes I'll be weak like those other guys around here. Now he did have to wear long hair.

He was a Nazirite. A Nazirite had three things incumbent upon him. He could not drink wine, a sign of worldly pleasure.

He could not touch anything dead, a sign of people who are dead in trespasses and in sin. He could not have his hair cut. Now just having long hair isn't the secret of power.

If it was many of our churches would explode. Not a case of long hair. What's the secret? Somebody asked me that in the office.

I'll tell you what the secret is of the Christian life for tonight, next night. I don't care if you go to theological cemetery. I don't care how much learning you have.

The whole secret is this, trust and obey. There's no other way. Whatsoever he says to you, do it.

When I was youth leader in the church I went to, we had a tremendous time. We had many people saved. We had fantastic meetings.

And I remember asking God to take full control of my life. But it meant partying company with girlfriends and boys. Or you've read about Sherwood Forest and the fellow that used to go down there on and on.

Well I didn't go robbing anybody. I went in the Sherwood Forest to pray that night. Took my mother's little pedigree dog.

I walked over the golf links. I got down under the wild bracken. The wild fern.

I got up in the morning before six. Particularly Sundays. While everybody else slept.

I went across into the forest. Got under the bushes and prayed. And if I've had any secret in my life the only thing I know is that I've given God time all the time to talk to me as well as me to talk to him.

Fastening with rocks? No. Fastening with weeds? No. Unlock my hair and fasten it to a beam and then when you get my hair fastened there I'll be powerless.

And they did that. And he shook his head and nearly pulled the house down. And then she said now that's not the secret.

And he said no. And you know what she did? It's an old trick women have if they can't get the wrong way. She pulled his socks out.

You know she said you don't love me. And of course he said oh yes I do. Oh yes.

I'll tell you what my secret is. My secret is I'm a Nazarite. I've kept every vow that God has asked me.

I haven't touched wine. I haven't touched anything. And with the instinct that women have she knew right there she'd got his secret.

Now she had said repeatedly to him the Philistines would be upon me. Do you know that you can cut this man's life down into three simple things? First what did they do? They bind him. Secondly what? They blind him, put out his eyes.

Thirdly they ground him. Put him in the basement and make him tread round and round and round and round and round. Grounding time for the Philistines.

But wait a minute. There's something else. If Samson is a type of a spirit filled man and I'm persuaded he is.

If Samson is a type of a spirit anointed church and I'm sure he is. Then later in the chapter it says that he was going to Timnath. Now he could go that way to Timnath or that way.

Didn't make any difference. The road was just as short because he was going to see his girlfriend. The road's never long when you're going to see her.

But he must not go that way. Why not? Because there's a lion in the way. Now if Samson is a type of a spirit anointed person the lion must be a type of the devil.

And when Samson went down the road the lion thought, boy my I'm going to have a good lunch today. Look at this fellow coming. I'm just going to tear him up.

And Samson thought the same thing. He's going to tear the lion up. He had his mother and father with him and he said mummy daddy would you sit round the corner I've just got a little bit of business to do.

And when they went round the corner he took hold of the lion as though it were a kid of the goats and he ripped it apart and he threw it down. Now that's wonderful but the next statement in the verse is more wonderful. It says that after he destroyed the lion he said nothing about it.

I'm sure a woman couldn't have done it like that. But anyhow Samson destroyed the lion and he said oh if we destroyed the lion we'd have photographed it. We'd have stretched it out it would be the longest, strongest, heaviest, fiercest, terriblest lion in the whole world.

And I killed it all by myself. He slew a lion. He pushed the devil back and he said nothing about it.

I'm looking for a revival and I'm sure it's coming. A holy ghost tidal wave that's going to engulf the whole world and they're going to have such a revival that no man will steal the glory. He slew a lion.

Let me ask you a simple question. Not so simple. Alright.

Do you push the devil around or does he push you around? When I was in Australia a lady said to me after one service Mr. Ravenhill I've had a terrible day today. I said you look like it. I've never seen a more miserable face.

Mr. Ravenhill do you know what happened today? I said no I couldn't guess. When I got out of bed this morning the devil was standing with me all day. I said lady how conceited can you get? I thought if the devil's been in your home all day he hasn't been anywhere else in the world.

Satan can't be in two places at the same time. God can, Satan can't. Demons might be.

He might sublet certain areas but Satan can't. I looked her straight in the eye and I said lady you say Satan's been with you all day I seriously doubt he even knows you're living. Does he know you're living? I got saved when I was 14 years of age.

I never doubted it. Never been ashamed of it. Talked round the world about it.

And according to this book when I was born again my name was written in the book of life. I'd like to get it written somewhere else. Not in Westminster Abbey.

I've never been a competitive preacher. I don't care whether you think I'm the worst you've ever heard or the best. It won't move me out of the way.

I say what God wants me to say. But I'd like to get my name written somewhere. Do you remember in the days of the apostle Paul he cast demons out of some people.

Jesus did that. Everything that Jesus did Paul did. And one day he cast demons out of a person.

Do you remember the time when Jesus cast demons out of a man that had a legion of them in him. And if you take demons out of a person you must put them somewhere. They can't live disembodied.

They can't float in the air. They have to occupy something or somebody. And you remember that Jesus took a legion of demons out of a man.

And if you think pigs aren't smarter than men tell me this. When he put the demons into the swine they committed suicide in about 40 seconds. The man had had the devil in in 40 years and he wasn't smart enough to commit suicide or bad enough.

But the pigs wouldn't even have the devil in. And hell is so bad the demons said don't send us back from whence we came. Now one man one day said I'm not getting on I'd like to be famous I'd like to do something.

And somebody said you find a man with a demon in cast the demon out. This is what you do you say in the name of Jesus Christ and Nazareth come out of him the demon will come out. The man tried it and it worked.

The demon came out of the man. But he never sent a demon anywhere. So the demon turned around and he beat up the preacher.

Kicked him, bruised him and finally he came back and he said listen preacher Jesus I know and Paul I know. I think the most embarrassing thing of all the embarrassments to quote Balthasar Tozer again. I remember him saying to me one day Len not many of us are going to stand erect as the gentlemen see this time with all our talk and all our boast.

Not many of us will lift our unblushing heads. Most of us will bow our heads in the presence of a holy God. I think the most terrible.

When we stand there alone without your pastor without your wife without your husband you stand there as an individual. Remember you have as big a Bible as I have or anybody else that ever lived and you have to give an account to God for this word that he gave you. I think the most embarrassing thing will be when God calls Satan to bear witness.

I wonder what do you say. I wonder if you say Jesus I know and Paul I know and Ray Gill I know and Billy Graham I know. Will he say he knows you? Did you ever draw a line and take your rights in Jesus Christ and draw a line by the precious blood and then put the promises of God against it and the power of the spirit and say yes yes Satan you shall not pass that line.

When I was a boy in a little church I attended in England they used to talk a great deal about Pastor Fetler of Latvia. Latvia got absorbed in the United States and Soviet Russia. They used to talk to some degree about a German Pastor Bloomheart.

Bloomheart was reading the word of God one day and he read that terrible statement. He was asking God to do something and God said do it. He said Lord tie up the powers of Satan and Jesus said listen I give you power over all the power of the enemy.

He went along and he stood over that girl and demanded her deliverance and nothing happened. He went the second day and like that she was delivered. He became famous for casting out demons.

One day they asked him to go to a girl many miles away and he went. The girl sat up in bed and laughed and screamed the most devilish hideous noises he'd ever heard in his life and everything he said the demon counteracted and every time he said he'd come out the demon said I won't and every time he pled the blood of Jesus the demon said some obscene things about Jesus Christ because a long story short this man was so determined that he'd exercised his authority over all the power of the enemy. That he went to that girl's bedroom eight hours a day for two years.

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