

# 'We Don't Know God!'

by Leonard Ravenhill

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*Leonard Ravenhill's sermon emphasizes the urgent need for believers to move beyond mere knowledge of God to a transformative relationship with Him through prayer and revival.*

**Duration:** 8:12

**Scripture:** Psalm 85:6, Jeremiah 9:23-24, John 17:3, Acts 4:31, James 4:8

**Topics:** "Intimacy With God", "Spiritual Revival"

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## Description

This sermon emphasizes the importance of truly knowing God, highlighting how many people may know about God but not truly know Him intimately. It shares stories of past revivals and the powerful presence of God that transformed lives, contrasting it with the lack of spiritual fervor and depth in modern times. The message calls for a return to fervent prayer, deep intimacy with God, and a hunger for revival that can set hearts on fire for God.

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## Transcript

The word of God. Two things we don't know. In fact, I said to the seminary men, do you know God? Well, I didn't know, no.

I answered yes or no. Oh, I learned Hebrew. I didn't ask if you know Hebrew.

Do you know God? You ask ten young people in your church to answer in less than fifty words why did Jesus come into the world? To save us from hell. To save us from sin. And so they go on.

But what does Jesus say in John 17 2? That they may know Thee, the only true God. And that's the answer. We don't know God.

If we knew God, we'd set the world on fire. If we knew God, we wouldn't beg for money. We know things about God, but we don't know God.

We don't know God. But I want to tell you then, in 1932, I preached in Swansea, South Wales, in a little upper room and there was a lady there with white hair and she said, do you know my husband? I said, I didn't know you had one. She said, well, my husband is Major Russell.

I said, well, who's Major Russell? In the British Army? No salvation army. She said, would you come up and have a meal with us? I said, well, this is a crusade. She said, I only have Friday off.

I said, I'll take the bus and come up to the place of Scola Rovina. I'll come up Friday afternoon. She said, well, come and have some tea and we'll talk.

So here's a grey-haired fellow sitting. I said to him, well, it's a privilege to come and talk with you. How old are you? He said, well, I'm 82.

And he said, I'll tell you some things that when you're my age... I said, I never lived to be 82. Well, I'm 84 now, nearly 85. But he shared the office with William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army.

I said, what were the days like? Days like heaven on earth. He said, God, the Holy Ghost came. And he mentioned a certain place which is on the Strand in London.

He said, now it's a theatre. In those days, it's a hall you hired. And movies weren't... houses and theatres weren't open on Sunday.

So you could rent them on Sunday. So you used to rent them Saturday and Sunday. And he said, he said, I've been in that meeting.

He said, people won't believe you when you tell them... That was 1932, so it's almost 60 years back. And he said, when you tell them they won't believe you... I said, well, they'll believe me, not tell me. I said, I want to know.

I don't care if it puts my nose in the ground. I don't care what you say. As long as you realize that just as you're a link with the past, at my age of 82, I'll be a link with another generation that doesn't know God.

So I said, well, I'll tell you what happened. He said, William Booth could preach like nobody else from Jeremiah. The harvest is past, as somebody said it.

Oh, his favourite was... And they were doing the swelling of the Jordan. Fire of Ollie, which meant say hallelujah, so they all roared hallelujah. And he said that William Booth could get men trembling, he said.

He said, as a matter of fact, you give them a hymn book of maybe 25 pages and they'd sit with it on their lap and shred it while they were so disturbed. He said, you could see where these men had been. All the back pews were full of shredded hymn books.

The same thing happened in 1926. I talked with the greatest revivalist Ireland's ever had, W.P. Nicholson. He said, people used to shred the hymn books when we listened.

They were under conviction. They were so nervous. And sweat would run off their noses.

It doesn't happen anymore. Anyhow, going back to this, he said that old William would preach hellfire. Boy, he said he could make you shake.

And he said, but he couldn't make an altar call. So, he would say, now come to the mercy seat. Come, run for your life, you're going to hell.

And he couldn't get anywhere. He'd shout out, where is Lawley? Where is Lawley? Well, Commissioner Lawley was one of the stalwarts of the Salvation Army, like Bringle. And he said he was under the platform and it'd come out.

And they used to hand clothes to each other, you know, like somebody gave me your suit, it would be hanging down on me. And Commissioner Lawley's coat was down to his ankles. But he said, come out on all fours and do this.

There'd be a cloud of dust. And then Lawley would begin to make an appeal, you know. Come to the mercy seat.

He said the altar would be lined, but sometimes they wouldn't come. He said the general would turn round and roar at us, you know. Pray! Boy, everybody looked down and prayed.

And usually they should pray. But he said this day they prayed, and nothing happened. So he said again, pray! He said everybody's nervous.

Hey, what's happening to the old boy? He's angry, he's angry. Well, let's pray. And he said, Lord, Lord, move right now, move right now.

And he said nobody came. So the third time he'd roar, you know, get hold of God. He said this meeting is going to go to hell.

These people are perishing. Some of them are wealthy, some are poor, some are ignorant, some are backslidden. Pray! And he said the Holy Ghost would take all the men on the back seat and lift them bodily over the congregation and drop them at the altar.

I said to Pentecostal, you saw that, you'd run for the door, you'd say spiritism or something. I said there was an unwritten law in the Salvation Army. They called their churches a corps, you know, like the Army does, C-O-R-P-S, Corps.

And it was an unwritten law in the Salvation Army that when you finish your street meeting at nine o'clock Saturday night, you go to pray till midnight. And he said to me, we have men that would pray and one old man particularly would say, he'd jump up, maybe at twelve or one, and raise his hand and shout, victory, victory, there'll be ten tomorrow. And he said there'd be nine or ten saved.

Or he'd say there'd be fifteen, there'd be thirteen or fourteen. He said there was only one or twelve every time. But he said, remember we had street meetings, we got baptized with rotten eggs.

In those days, there were no houses with bathrooms, they kept a, what they call a pot under the bed and they'd always empty it and people would run out and throw it from the window and throw urine on them. And he said we kept two coats, we kept an old one with eggs and you went home and scraped them off and then you put your Sunday best on and he said, Bert, he said, who cares when there's revival? As I said to you, you don't have to advertise a fire. Colonel Brangle was the biggest orator in America and I don't know who it was, the multimillionaires offered to build him the biggest church in America, give him the biggest salary if he would stay.

He said, I'm going to London. Why? Because there's a fire. There's a man called William Booth who was a Methodist, they got rid of him and he's having revival and he went and had revival.

And he gathered all kinds of people to him. But the secret again was they had a burning. You went in a prayer meeting, you know, you felt the glory and the majesty of God and now you don't do that.

Like I was with the team not long ago, well before the meeting at night we went in a side room and they'd hot tea and cold tea and drinks and fruit and everything and trivia talking and straight off there to the platform. How do you suddenly turn off and suddenly become spiritual? We travelled the country but I walked the length of England, I walked the breadth of England with five college fellows. We slept in fields at night, we slept in churches.

We didn't get a penny wage in six months and nobody ever said a word. Because at night we'd kneel in the street at ten and eleven o'clock at night and people get saved in the street. You don't care who where you sleep.

We slept in sleeping bags for three years. Slept on the floor of churches, anywhere they'd take us in. But we had revival, the churches are still standing today.

But now I go to a meeting and everybody's nice to see you and they want to talk. I say leave me alone. We went, brother we had a solid hour of prayer together eleven o'clock to twelve in the morning then we had a bit of a rest in the afternoon and mostly went to prayer.

Then we had a prayer meeting one hour before the night service, went on the platform charged with the power of God and full of expectation and faith. And night by night the elders were lined with people. We don't do that today.

We've got

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