

SermonIndex Announcements :: 38 DAYS LEFT UNTIL THE REVIVAL CONFERENCE**38 DAYS LEFT UNTIL THE REVIVAL CONFERENCE - posted by sermonindex (), on: 2007/9/15 10:51**[Image: <http://www.sermonindex.net/revival/revivalc8.gif>]

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38 DAYS LEFT UNTIL THE REVIVAL CONFERENCE

1904 - 1905

That movement lasted for a generation, but at the turn of the century there was need of awakening again. A general movement of prayer began, with special prayer meetings at Moody Bible Institute, at Keswick Conventions in England, and places as far apart as Melbourne, Wonsan in Korea, and the Nilgiri Hills of India. So all around the world believers were praying that there might be another great awakening in the twentieth century.

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In the revival of 1905, I read of a young man who became a famous professor, Kenneth Scott Latourette. He reported that, at Yale in 1905, 25% of the student body were enrolled in prayer meetings and in Bible study.

As far as churches were concerned, the ministers of Atlantic City reported that of a population of fifty thousand there were only fifty adults left unconverted.

Take Portland in Oregon: two hundred and forty major stores closed from 11 to 2 each day to enable people to attend prayer meetings, signing an agreement so that no one would cheat and stay open.

Take First Baptist Church of Paducah in Kentucky: the pastor, an old man, Dr J. J. Cheek, took a thousand members in two months and died of overwork, the Southern Baptists saying, 'a glorious ending to a devoted ministry.'

That is what was happening in the United States in 1905. But how did it begin?

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Most people have heard of the Welsh Revival which started in 1904. It began as a movement of prayer.

Seth Joshua, the Presbyterian evangelist, came to Newcastle Emlyn College where a former coal miner, Evan Roberts aged 26, was studying for the ministry. The students were so moved that they asked if they could attend Joshua's next campaign nearby. So they cancelled classes to go to Blaenarnerch where Seth Joshua prayed publicly, 'O God, bend us.'

Evan Roberts went forward where he prayed with great agony, 'O God, bend me.'

Upon his return he could not concentrate on his studies. He went to the principal of his college and explained, 'I keep hearing a voice that tells me I must go home and speak to our young people in my home church. Principal Phillips, is that the voice of the devil or the voice of the Spirit?'

Principal Phillips answered wisely, 'The devil never gives orders like that. You can have a week off.'

So he went back home to Loughor and announced to the pastor, 'I've come to preach.'

The pastor was not at all convinced, but asked, 'How about speaking at the prayer meeting on Monday?'

He did not even let him speak to the prayer meeting, but told the praying people, 'Our young brother, Evan Roberts, feels he has a message for you if you care to wait.'

Seventeen people waited behind, and were impressed with the directness of the young man's words.

Evan Roberts told his fellow members, 'I have a message for you from God.'

* You must confess any known sin to God and put any wrong done to others right.

* Second, you must put away any doubtful habit.

* Third, you must obey the Spirit promptly.

* Finally, you must confess your faith in Christ publicly.'

By ten o'clock all seventeen had responded. The pastor was so pleased that he asked, 'How about your speaking at the mission service tomorrow night? Midweek service Wednesday night?'

He preached all week, and was asked to stay another week. Then the break came.

Suddenly the dull ecclesiastical columns in the Welsh papers changed:

'Great crowds of people drawn to Loughor.'

The main road between Llanelly and Swansea on which the church was situated was packed with people trying to get into the church. Shopkeepers closed early to find a place in the big church.

Now the news was out. A reporter was sent down and he described vividly what he saw: a strange meeting which closed at 4:25 in the morning, and even then people did not seem willing to go home. There was a very British summary: 'I felt that this was no ordinary gathering.'

Next day, every grocery shop in that industrial valley was emptied of groceries by people attending the meetings, and on Sunday every church was filled.

The movement went like a tidal wave over Wales, in five months there being a hundred thousand people converted throughout the country. Five years later, Dr J. V. Morgan wrote a book to debunk the revival, his main criticism being that, of a hundred thousand joining the churches in five months of excitement, after five years only seventy five thousand still stood in the membership of those churches!

The social impact was astounding. For example, judges were presented with white gloves, not a case to try; no robberies, no burglaries, no rapes, no murders, and no embezzlements, nothing. District councils held emergency meetings to discuss what to do with the police now that they were unemployed.

In one place the sergeant of police was sent for and asked, 'What do you do with your time?'

He replied, 'Before the revival, we had two main jobs, to prevent crime and to control crowds, as at football games. Since the revival started there is practically no crime. So we just go with the crowds.'

A councillor asked, 'What does that mean?'

The sergeant replied, 'You know where the crowds are. They are packing out the churches.'

'But how does that affect the police?'

He was told, 'We have seventeen police in our station, but we have three quartets, and if any church wants a quartet to sing, they simply call the police station.'

As the revival swept Wales, drunkenness was cut in half. There was a wave of bankruptcies, but nearly all taverns. There was even a slowdown in the mines, for so many Welsh coal miners were converted and stopped using bad language that the horses that dragged the coal trucks in the mines could not understand what was being said to them.

That revival also affected sexual moral standards. I had discovered through the figures given by British government experts that in Radnorshire and Merionethshire the illegitimate birth rate had dropped 44% within a year of the beginning of the revival.

The revival swept Britain, Scandinavia, Germany, North America, Australasia, Africa, Brazil, Mexico, Chile.

As always, it began through a movement of prayer.

What do we mean by extraordinary prayer? We share ordinary prayer in regular worship services, before meals, and the like. But when people are found getting up at six in the morning to pray, or having a half night of prayer until midnight, or giving up their lunch time to pray at noonday prayer meetings, that is extraordinary prayer. It must be united and concerted.

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