

Spiritual Awakening for Today
with Dr. Lewis A. Drummond
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(Recorded May 16, 1987 on location at the 1791 Cane Ridge Meeting House, Bourbon County, Kentucky where the Second Great Awakening broke out in 1801).

(titles)

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Twenty thousand people gathered here. One observer counted seven ministers, all preaching at one time from wagons, stumps, or fallen trees. The year? 1801!

Hello, I'm Lewis Drummond. I'm here at Cane Ridge, the site of one of the greatest revivals on the Western Frontier. Here in the bluegrass country just north of Lexington, Kentucky, thousands found salvation in that summer of 1801. The old hewn log church built in 1791, is still here, although it is now preserved inside a stone building. It stands as a rugged reminder of God's power to call his people to repentance and revival even in the wilderness.

A long time before the great Cane Ridge Revival, the Psalmist wrote: (85) "Restore us again, Oh God, of our salvation, and put away thy indignation toward us . . . Will thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee."

Such a cry raises a timely question, namely, what is a genuine revival? That is, a revival in the biblical, historical sense? For

what was the Psalmist actually praying? It also raises an even more pertinent question: Do we need such a touch from God Today?

Here at Cane Ridge, we're going to take an overview of the Bible and church history and see what God has done in days gone by in these movements we call revival, renewal, inspirational awakening, or refreshing times from the Lord. Let's go inside the historic Cane Ridge church and explore our revival heritage.

(titles)

Evangelism Section,
Home Mission Board
of the
Southern Baptist
Convention

presents

SPIRITUAL
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Dr. Lewis Drummond

We can begin our historical, biblical sweep by looking at some of the monumental moments when God poured out His Spirit in an unusual manner upon His people. The Old Testament abounds in such incidents. For example: Jonah (the reluctant, rebellious prophet) was dramatically arrested by God during his flight from his responsibilities. He found himself in the belly of a great fish. After his own personal revival that produced a yieldedness to God's will, he turned to the great city of Nineveh and there the Lord did one of his monumental things. The entire populace was prostrated before the glory of God. The Ninivites believed God, repented of their sins, turned from their idols, and a

true spiritual awakening dawned.

Young King Josiah's reign had an inauspicious beginning. He had inherited deep seated spiritual problems. His father Amon and grandfather Manasseh had both proved to be wicked rulers of Israel. The nation floundered in a deep moral, spiritual slump. But Josiah began to pray, work, exercise his influence, and soon a mighty spiritual revival came to the people of Israel.

A similar experience occurred in the reign of Hezekiah. Actually, one can go through the pages of the Old Testament and see this picture repeated many times over. Were it not for those high, holy moments wherein God sent true revival, Israel would have probably disintegrated many times over.

When we come to the New Testament, however, we see the principle of spiritual awakening blossoming out in all its beauty, especially in the book of Acts. Chapters 1 and 2 of that book present the prototype, or pattern, or what a church should be. Chapter one reveals that the disciples first got their priorities right by grasping the fact that their primary responsibility was being witnesses, "you shall be my witnesses," Jesus said (Acts 1:8). Then, making preparation through prayer (verse 14), and establishing the church on good organizational foundations (verse 15ff), they were ready for the Pentecostal outpouring.

Acts 2:1-4 reads: "When the day of Pentecost had come they were all together in one place and suddenly a sound came from heaven like the rush of a mighty wind. It filled all the house where they were sitting. There appeared to them tongues of fire distributing and

resting on each one of them and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit." That dramatic event thrust Jerusalem into turmoil. Verses 6 and 7 and 12 of Acts 2 tell us the people were "amazed," "perplexed," and "dumfounded." Finally, they threw up their hands in despair and cried out, "What does this mean." In answer, Peter stood up and preached Christ. That day 3,000 were converted. Moreover, the infant church, "Continued steadfastly in the Apostle's doctrine, fellowship, breaking of bread and prayers," as chapter 2, verse 42 tells us. Then comes the capstone: verse 47 of that great Pentecostal chapter states, "The Lord added their number DAY BY DAY those who were being saved."

Thus the pattern for what the church ought always to be is established. Therefore, whenever a church falls away from those essential principles, it needs to be revived. A revival is simply returning to biblical standards.

For the first three hundred years of Christianity, the church burned with committed zeal, and the Mediterranean world was brought to the foot of the cross. Then the tragic thousand years we call the "dark ages" settled in. Even in these dismal days, God granted some refreshing times through the ministry of spiritual giants like Bernard of Clairveux, the saintly St. Francis of Assisi, and Savonarola, the rather dour, depressed monk of the Dominican order who ministered in Florence, Italy, in the dynamic 15th century. Savonarola preached with such power that soon the city of Florence virtually became the city of God. (picture) Even in the depressing Middle Ages, there were still times of real revival.

Standing at the door of the Wittenberg Church on October 31, 1517, a monk by the name of Martin Luther, nailed up his 95 theses and the great Reformation burst on the European Continent. Luther, John Calvin, Ulrich Zwingly, and other did a tremendous reformation work. Revival came when the biblical truth, "the just shall live by faith," was heralded across Europe. Multitudes pressed into the kingdom. Revival had come, but even in the lifetime of the reformers themselves, revival waned. Luther himself said, a spiritual awakening lasts only 35 years. (picture).

Then, suddenly, God did a new reviving work. It began in an unexpected place, a theological institution: Cambridge University in England. There, a young professor began to affect his students profoundly. He became as well known in his time as Billy Graham is in our. But he is almost a forgotten personality today. His name? William Perkins! He became a founding father of a great revival / reforming movement called the Puritan-Pietistic awakening.

Puritanism and pietism have not enjoyed a very good reputation, largely because of the writings of some historians. Unfortunately, some historians have not been accurate in their analysis of the Puritans. The Puritan-pietistic Movement proved to be a mightily reviving time. The Puritans and pietists were not the mean, legalistic kill-joys as some people have viewed them. They were a happy, revived people. All Europe was soon caught up in the Puritan Revival blessings, beginning first in England under Perkins and other leaders. A beautiful chain reaction of revival influence can be traced here. God simply reached down into his bag of blessings and

began to fling spiritual superstars all across the dark continental scene, each one touching the next. Men like William Aimes, Lodenstein, and William Tellink of Holland were influenced by Perkins. Then a man from Northern Germany named Theodore Untereck made his way to the university of Utreck in Holland. There he imbibed deeply in the Puritan-pietistic spirit. He went back to Germany and this chain reaction began to spread the new spirit of revival into the Lutheran stream.

In Germany God raised up mightily men, for example: John Arndt, whose book "True Christianity" graced every Lutheran home. Significant in the German awakening were Philipp Spener, the mighty preacher of Berlin, and his protege, August Hermann Francke, who became a professor of theology at the University of Halle. This pietistic educator influenced hundreds of young students; one of whom was Count Ludwig von Zinzendorf. After the Count finished his theological education, he went back to his lordly estate, called Herrnhut, and there he began providing refuge to persecuted Moravian Brethren.

In that setting, one Sunday, when they were observing the Lord's Supper, God came down in mighty awakening power and the Moravian revival erupted on the scene. That outpouring of the Spirit brought the missionary thrust into the Puritan-pietistic awakening. The Moravians went everywhere sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Meanwhile, back in Britain, where the movement had its beginnings, there was a young disturbed Anglican priest. He sailed to America to do work among the American Indians. He met some Moravian missionaries on the journey. A raging storm swept over the little ship. The poor

priest was terrified, yet the moravian missionaries were calm with a deep abiding faith. Their calmness shook the priest tremendously. This young Anglican spent three years in America, sailed back to London only to pen in his journal, "I went to America to convert the heathen, but, oh, who will convert me?"

In London, another Moravian, Peter Bohler, affected him significantly. Then, a short time later, a further citation is found in the young priest's journal: "Wednesday, May 24, 1738. In the evening I went very unwillingly to the Society in Aldersgate Street, where one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans. About a quarter before nine . . . I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone for my salvation; and an assurance was given me, that He had taken away my sin, even mine, and saved me from the law of sin and death." John Wesley came to faith in Jesus Christ.

Then, taking his brother Charles by one hand, his close friend and companion George Whitefield by the other hand, the great Weslian - Whitefield Revival come to the British scene. God so mightily awakened the British that historians, even those of the secular world, declare that the 18th Century Awakening saved Britain from the fearful fate that was causing blood to flow down the streets of Paris as the guillotine eliminated the lives of multitudes in that tragic time called the French Revolution.

Now the circle of influence was complete: from Perkins to Aimes, to Lodenstein, and Untereck; through Arndt, Spener, Francke, Zinzendorf, and the Moravians, back to Britain through John Wesley -- the great

Puritan - pietistic revival transformed all Western Europe.

During the time of this circular - development, sorties were constantly being sent to America. (picture) George Whitefield himself came to the New World seven times. On his last trip he died on a Saturday night after preaching to a multitude in the little town of Newberryport, Massachusetts, where he remains interned in the First Presbyterian Church. The mighty First Great Awakening came with the preaching of Whitefield and other notables like Jonathan Edwards, the Tennents, and Theodore Frelinghuysen. Edwards' sermon, "Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God," remains a classic of early American literature. The First Great Awakening transformed the colonies.

But once again, deterioration set in. The Revolutionary War took a dramatic toll in the morals, ethics, and spiritual life of young America. As J. Edwin Orr, a revival historian, put it, "in the wake of the American Revolution, there was a moral slump. Out of a population of five million, three hundred thousand were confirmed drunkards. They were burying fifteen thousand of them each year. Profanity was of the most shocking kind. For the first time in the history of the American settlement, women were afraid to go out on the street at night for fear of assault. Bank robberies were a daily occurrence. What about the churches? The Methodists were losing more members than they were gaining. The Baptists said they had their most wintery season."

Kenneth Scott Latourette, the great church historian, wrote, "It seems as if Christianity were about to be ushered out of the affairs of men. The churches had their backs to the wall, seeming as if they were

about to be wiped out." Then, God raised up a handful of men who called the young nation to a Concert of Prayer for revival, a plan conceived earlier by Jonathan Edwards. Baptist historian and preacher Isaac Backus (picture), along with 23 others, called the country to intercession, and the people responded. In 1792, God answered, and the Second Great Awakening commenced. God mightily revived individuals, churches, and entire communities. At this time, the Western movement had begun. In 1800, an awakening erupted in the south central part of the state.

The next summer, Barton Stone, (Picture), pastor here at the Cane Ridge Meeting House in Bourbon County, Kentucky, called for a similar meeting. And though this was but a small country church (picture) on the Western frontier, 20,000 people arrived. The whole nation blazed with the Gospel. This Second Great Awakening produced the ministry of Charles Grandison Finney, (picture) a man so powerful that entire communities would come to faith in Christ in a matter of weeks through his preaching ministry.

But the Second Great Awakening had its day, and again stagnation set in. Then, in 1858, a lay missionary of the Dutch Reformed Congregation on Fulton Street in New York City, called people to pray over the noon hour. His name is revival history: Jeremiah Lanphier. His first prayer meeting, however, was very inauspicious, only six people arrived -- and they came half an hour late. Nevertheless, they decided to have another prayer meeting the next week. On this occasion, sixteen people arrived. Then the dam burst. In a matter of months, this nation was on its knees as every church building,

theater, and auditorium where people could gather, filled to overflowing during the noon hour as folk fell before God in earnest prayer.

The revival swept across the entire nation from New York, to Seattle, Washington. Church bells ran three times a day, morning, noon and night, calling the faithful to prayer. For the next two years, fifty thousand converts a month were added to the churches. There were only thirty million people in America at that time. Put those figures into America's contemporary population statistics and we're talking about four hundred thousand people being converted every month for two years. That would transform the nation today. The great Prayer Revival of 1858 prepared the country for the holocaust called the Civil War.

In 1904, the little country of Wales, saw the significant Welsh Revival ushered on the stage under the preaching of twenty-six year old Evan Roberts. (picture) Moreover, that movement was not just a small revival in a corner of the British Isles. It engulfed all Britain and spread across the Atlantic. By 1905, it had reached America. As a single case in point; in 1905, Dr. J. J. Cheek, the pastor of the First Baptist Church of Paducah, Kentucky, a small town and congregation in that day, dedicated himself to the winning of souls. The pastor said, "I will give myself to the salvation of souls." In the next two months, Dr. Cheek took into the fellowship of the First Baptist Church of Paducah, nearly one thousand new members and literally died of overwork.

Great periods of revival are not just ancient history limited to old

churches like this one.

There are many bright spots in today's world. A revival has been going on in East Africa for decades. The great Indonesian revival of a few years ago brought two million people to Jesus Christ. And of course, practically all are knowledgeable of the great awakening coursing through Korea. Recently, I had the privilege of ministering in Seoul, Korea. There I preached to a Friday night prayer meeting. People came to pray through the night. Between fifteen and twenty thousand people were in attendance at this all night prayer meeting. Thousands are being won to faith in Christ weekly. Today, in Korea, the church is growing four times the rate of the general population. And that's where the population explosion is taking place.

The history of spiritual awakenings is really glorious. Moreover, it surely causes to well up within us the heart cry for revival, as the Psalmist prayed, "Wilt thou not revive us again that thy people may rejoice in thee." But, what really happens in the context of a true spiritual awakening? What is the nature of revival blessing? Several principles always emerge.

*** (CG: Principles of Revival
1. fullness of time)

The first basic principle of revival states that a spiritual awakening always comes in the "fullness of time." God's providential work bring factors to bear that precipitate the "fullness of time" for revival.

*** indicates Character Generator letters typed on screen.

Such was the case during 1927 in the province of Shantung, in North East China. God had sent several missionaries to the seaport city of Chefoo because of political unrest inland. There, the missionaries began to pray earnestly, for themselves and for the Chinese Christians they had left back on their field. A profound renewal began in the hearts of those praying servants of God. When the political situation corrected itself and they were able to return to their field, revival broke out all over Shantung Province. Soon the entire nation of China flamed with the Gospel of Christ. Multitudes pressed into the kingdom, the churches grew dramatically, the theological training institutions were flooded with new candidates for the ministry. This went on until the Japanese invasion of 1936. God had brought all factors together. Those divine factors finally precipitated the fullness of time.

(CG: 2. cleansing).

The second principle of revival is confession and cleansing of sin. I call this "the principle of cleansing."

It was Tuesday morning, February 3, 1970, in little Wilmore, Kentucky. In the heart of the village sits Asbury College and Theological Seminary. On that particular Tuesday morning, a professor was about to bring the daily chapel message at the College when he decided he should ask the students to share their spiritual experience. One young man stood up and said to his fellow students, "I have been a phony. You all think I am a dedicated Christian; yet, there has been no reality of Christ in my life. But last night, I met the Lord." With those words, God simply rent the heavens, and for the next five days, 24 hours a day, the chapel of Asbury College overflowed with

students. What were they doing all those long hours? It took that much time for those revived students to get all their sins confessed and restitution made. In revival, there is ALWAYS a period of profound confession and cleansing of sin and the healing of ruptured relationships.

(CG: 3: power).

The third principle, states that in real revival, God pours out the Holy Spirit to empower his people for ministry. It follows hard on the heels of the principle of cleansing.

Charles Finney, the revival preacher of the Second Great Awakening, mentioned earlier, was a twenty nine year old young lawyer when he came to Christ. He had a glorious conversion and experienced this "infilling" of the Spirit's power. He put it this way: (picture) "I was powerfully converted on the morning of the 10th of October, 1821. In the evening of the same day I received overwhelming in-fillings of the Holy Spirit that went through me, as it seemed to me, body and soul. I found myself so endued with power from on high that a mere word dropped here and there in conversation was the means of immediate conversions." In real revival, the Holy Spirit fills His people with joy and power that their witness and Christian service might be powerful. Revived Christians become happy, powerful witnesses.

(CG: 4. missions and evangelism.)

The FOURTH revival principle: revival brings missions and evangelism to the fore. Earlier, I made reference to the revival in South Korea. The Korean Christians are a great reviving evangelizing

people.

But, then, there has never been a revival without a tremendous evangelistic in-gathering. Every great missionary, evangelistic thrust has come in the context of a spiritual awakening.

(CG: 5. social action).

The fifth principle states: revival brings social action.

Social concern invariably surfaces when God comes among His people in refreshing revival seasons. In the setting of the eighteenth century awakening, for example, John Wesley started credit unions, hospital work, prison reform, and a host of social ministries. William Wilberforce, one of the converts of the Wesley-Whitefield Awakening stopped the slave trade in Britain. Historically, virtually every significant social movement had its birth in spiritual revival.

Social action and evangelism are not in opposition. Revival meets the total needs of the people of God.

(CG: 6. evangelical faith & doctrine).

Revival brings a return to basic, apostolic, evangelical faith and doctrine. Revival is what ultimately solves theological problems that would be divisive among people. Of course, the Great Reformation of the sixteenth century forms the classic case in point.

(CG: 7. prophets).

The seventh revival principle, is God raises up people to be his prophets for revival.

In an awakening, God primarily uses people, not schemes or programs. What sort of prophets does God raise up for these refreshing times? First, they are people of (1) PURPOSE. John Wesley and George Whitefield set their faces like a flint to see the awakening of England. Secondly, they are people of (2) PASSION. David Brainerd, ministering in the dynamic days of the First Great Awakening, became a missionary to the American Indians. (picture) He was so concerned for the conversion of the lost that he said: "I cared not where or how I lived or what hardships I went through so that I could but gain souls for Christ. While I was asleep I dreamed of these things, and when I awoke the first thing I thought of was this great work. All of my desire was for the conversion of the heathen and all my hope was in God." He died at the age of thirty, pouring out his very life for revival. Moreover, revival demands people of spiritual (3) POWER. Never was there a greater, more powerful preacher than (picture) Charles Haddon Spurgeon of London, England. (picture) Multitudes came to Christ as the British people hung on the words during the days of his great revival.

(CG: prophets: purpose, passion, power, presence of God)

In the final analysis, the prophet of revival is a person who 4. PRACTICES THE PRESENCE OF GOD.

When Moses came down from Mt. Sinai after his renewing encounter with God, his face glowed. These are the kids of prophets used in revival; people of purpose, passion, power and the Presence of God.

(CG: 8. ebb & flow.)

Finally, as has been previously implied, all revivals ebb and flow.

Glorious revivals come and, then, sadly, they pass away.

What about the situation today in the light of this last principle? Certainly, we are all conscious that we find ourselves in the ebb time. It seems obvious that we stand in desperate need of a fresh flowing spiritual awakening. So the question now becomes, how are we to seek a new reviving for our time? Three key words emerge.

(CG: Reviving Our Time
1. CHALLENGE)

The first word is CHALLENGE. We need to be challenged ourselves. Then, we are to challenge others to seek a genuine awakening. May we permit the Spirit of God to speak to us and challenge us, and then in turn challenge others through us to seek God in revival. An awakening does come from God alone. We MUST seek Him.

(CG: 2. SCRIPTURES)

The second key word is THE SCRIPTURES. God always uses His Holy Word in revival.

The Word of God makes a three-fold impact in reviving times. First of all, (1) it convicts us of our sins and our need of cleansing. Secondly, the (2) Scriptures move us to acknowledge the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ in our lives. Personal commitment is always the core of revival. Finally, (3) the Bible gives us the guidelines on how to attain true spiritual power and the fullness of the Holy Spirit.

All this is the work of the Word in our lives.

(CG: 3. INTERCESSORY PRAYER).

The last key word in seeking A SPIRITUAL AWAKENING is INTERCESSORY PRAYER.

Investigate every great spiritual awakening from the Bible, through church history, up to the present moment, and you will always find that fervent prayer constitutes the bottom line. In the First Great Awakening, it was the ardent prayers of Jonathan Edwards and others that brought the blessings. The Second Great Awakening was a direct result of the call to the Concert of Prayer. The Prayer Revival of 1858 became itself a revival of prayer. The Korean church goes forward today on the wings of fervent intercessory prayer. Oh, that God would raise up revival prayer warriors. The most significant action we can take to bring about an awakening is to ban together in prayer groups, study God's word, and fervently pray that the Lord will once more rend the heavens.

Will you earnestly give yourself to prayer, and then gather a praying group around you and hang on to God until He sends a mighty revival? We need a spiritual awakening desperately today. May we join with the psalmist when he cried out to God: "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee." May we just intercede until God just rends the heavens and a great spiritual awakening dawns on our land!

(credits)

written & narrated by
Dr. Lewis Drummond

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Atlanta, GA 30367-5601
(404) 873-4041

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