
Do It Again

Part 4 - Small Beginnings

What is Revival?

“God’s major means of extending His kingdom” - Johnathan Edwards

“movement of the Holy Spirit bringing about a revival of New Testament Christianity in the church of Christ and its related community” Edwin Orr

Revival should be a visceral and tangible reality that we can see and experience.

“Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds, Lord. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.” – Habakkuk 3:2

20th Century Wales

At the beginning of the 20th Century, Welsh society was in a period of great turmoil. Globally the world was in a period called ‘modernity’, where innovation, progress and industrialisation reigned. eg newspapers, telephones, coal mines, steam engines and railroads.

Economic, political and social unrest which had its effects on the church. Modernity brought about a dependency on science and reason rather than faith and religion.

Battle of “Church and chapel” between big and small churches.

When the night is at its darkest, the dawn is on the way.

Small Beginnings

God chooses to start off small when the world is in a moment of crisis.

- + The creation story
- + The exodus
- + The prophets
- + Jesus' birth and
- + The birth of the church

God is in the business of taking small and unpretentious people and groups and putting them in places of crisis and hardship, to bring about spiritual change.

"The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed that a man planted in his field. Although it is the smallest of all seeds, yet it grows into the largest of garden plants and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches." Matthew 13:31-32

Revival Starts Small

"Take note, if this was to be my last message to my fellow countrymen... before I am taken to the judgement it would remain thus... The greatest need of my dear nation and country at this time is spiritual revival through a specific outpouring of the Holy Spirit... Not a local disturbance... but a kind of spiritual saturation, that overflows into the country as a whole, that would immerse all classes with the Baptism of the Holy Spirit..." Dean David Howell

Seth Joshua *"had it laid upon his heart to pray to God to go and take a lad from the coal-mine or from the field, even as He took Elisha from the plough, to revive His work"*.

The pure confession that started the Welsh Revival: "I love the Lord Jesus with all my heart" – Florrie Evans

Revival Changes Culture

- + Church services ran everyday of the week
- + The order of service was abandoned

- + Crime rates were halved
- + Magistrates wore white gloves
- + Sports teams burned their kits
- + Coal miners had clean mouths, and
- + Pubs closed and liquor stores went out of business

I mean, if you want to look at how revival can change culture and society, the Welsh Revival did it all. These are just some fruit of the Welsh Revival. And if you want further proof, there is living and breathing proof here amongst us at Riverlife - this person's great grandmother was converted, and we see this today through them.

Lord, I have heard of your fame; I stand in awe of your deeds. Repeat them in our day, in our time make them known; in wrath remember mercy.

It would be foolish to focus on the fruit of revival, alone.

Evan Roberts

A young, but devoted man of God. He prayed that he might receive the Spirit, at any cost.

"I continually went to meetings, despite all difficulties. Often, as I saw other boys putting out to sea in their boats, I was tempted to turn round and joined them. But no. I said to myself, 'Remember your resolution to be faithful'. And I would go to the meeting. Prayer meeting on Monday evening at the chapel, prayer meeting for Sunday School on Tuesday evening at Pysgah, meeting at the church on Wednesday evening, and Hope meeting on Thursday evening ...I supported all these faithfully for years." – Evan Roberts

Oh Lord, Bend Me

Evan Roberts encountered God in such a profound manner that it would blossom into the theme of the entire Welsh Revival.

Our will needs to be aligned to His will.

“Father, if you are willing, remove this cup from me. Nevertheless, not my will, but yours, be done” – Luke 22:42.

Didn't Jesus know that He was sent by the Father to save the world through His death and resurrection? Of course He did, but it's here alone in the Garden of Gethsemane where Jesus restores the way that we are supposed to live in submission to the Father's will.

Adam and Eve said, “not your will but mine be done”. Jesus said, “not my will but yours be done”.

Evan left that meeting praying “Oh Lord, bend me” which eventually blossomed into the theme of the revival: *Bend the Church and save the world.*

Fire Needs a Fireplace

Just as a fireplace is poised ready to hold the heat and light of the fire, we need to prepare the place for the fire to rest.

How are we, Riverlife, preparing ourselves for revival? God will work in ways that we can't prepare for, but just like Evan Roberts and others of the Welsh Revival, submission of our will to God's will is our first step.

Discussion Questions:

1. What aspect of the Welsh Revival particularly stood out to you?
2. Remembering that the Kingdom of Heaven is like a mustard seed, where do you think God is prompting you to start small?
3. How can you submit your will to the Father's will this week?
4. Spend a moment praying Evan Roberts' prayer “Oh Lord, bend me”.