

BUILDING THE BRIDGE
FROM A REFRESHING
TO AN AWAKENING

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FOR PASTORS

WHY THE BOOKLET

At the time of writing, 22nd March 2023, events in the USA and the UK led me to think that finally an Awakening is possibly on our doorstep. If this is the case, it will be the first time that we will have had an Awakening in the UK since 1921.

So how are we to react?

With the dreadful state of the United Kingdom, an Awakening is the only answer – nothing else can save our society at this time!

Unfortunately, since virtually nobody in the UK has experienced an Awakening, it is unlikely that pastors will know what to do. At the time of Toronto in 1994, which I define as an Outpouring or Refreshing, my pastors were rummaging through history to try and identify what was going on. I believe that there is a need to help pastors understand from an historical point of view, what they are going to experience and give some pointers to help them.

Why me?

Over the last 25 years I have been researching revivals in the United Kingdom. My website, www.ukwells.org, has approximately 4,000 first-hand accounts about Revivals in different towns. Also, on the website there are biographies of great Saints from the past and many videos of my Forgotten Hero's and past Revivals. I have also written books and preached in many places on the subject.

Have I experienced a revival myself? The answer to that is sadly, no. I have, however, being to several Moves of God in the UK, the USA and elsewhere.

MY DEFINITION OF AWAKENING AND REVIVAL

The way I define a Move of God is as follows.

The word Revival comes from the 18th and 19th century when most people went to church and therefore, when there was a Move of God, what they had learned in church was 'revived' in them. The sad case is that few people go to church and learn the Bible today, so it is not really an appropriate word to be used.

When God starts to show His face, I call this a Move of God, which I breakdown into four stages. He normally visits a church first, in order to Refresh His people. When this happens, I think the term Refreshing or Renewal is appropriate. One could use the word Revival in this circumstance, but I am trying to keep away from that word to avoid confusion. I would call the Move of God that took place in 1994 through the church in Toronto, known as the 'Toronto Blessing,' a Refreshing or Renewal. Generally speaking, it remained in the church, with God's people being Refreshed.

There have been several such instances over the years, but the problem has always been how to build a bridge from Refreshing to Awakening. This is the second stage. Once the Move of God has been established in the church, it should be taken out into the streets where the unsaved can be Awakened to their sin and Awakened to the understanding of Jesus being their Saviour. The need to build a bridge is the reason for this booklet. We must ensure that the next Refreshing turns into a national Awakening.

Once the Awakening stage is fully developed stage three, which is the Reformation of society; which the UK desperately needs.

Once Reformation is established, if we are truly blessed, we will move to stage four which is Transformation. You may have heard of what happened in Almolonga in Guatemala, where they used to worship the spirit of the dead. Then there was an Awakening when 85% of the population turned to God. There was then Transformation, with God blessing the town so much that, the fruit of the farmers' labours yielded massive sized vegetables. The jails were closed together with most of the bars and the farmers had new trucks with Bible verses on them. The town was transformed!

I breakdown a Move of God into two types. The first is one that is started by an evangelist. The evangelist carries, let us say, a spirit of revival and he/she releases that into a body and people are saved. For example, George Jeffreys, who came to the Lord in the Welsh revival of 1904, would visit a town, hire a hall, and start preaching. People would come to hear him; they would give their lives to the Lord, and he would start a church, which is now called Elim. Now the point I would like to make about his ministry, is that he carried a spirit of revival and when he left to go to another town the anointing went with him.

The second type is a Sovereign move of God. This is what we long for. It is the Spirit of God hovering over a church, a town, a country - there is no need for a pastor or evangelist to be involved necessarily, as the Spirit of God will just fall upon people in the fields, in the streets, wherever He pleases. The difference here is that when the evangelist leaves the area, the Presence of God does not leave with him.

Examples of a Sovereign move of God are the 1904-5 Welsh Revival, the 1859-1864 Revival, the 1873-75 Moody Revival and the 1949 Hebrides Revival. Videos of all these revivals can (or will soon) be found on my website at www.ukwells.org/films.

WHY HAS IT BEEN OVER 100 YEARS SINCE THE LAST AWAKENING IN ENGLAND?

From my research I believe there are four main reasons why we have not seen an Awakening for so long. These are:

- the absence of the Baptism of Fire;
- the absence of Travailing Prayer;
- the downgrading of the Evangelist in the body of Christ;
- church leaders not understanding the season they are in.

The Baptism of Fire and Travailing Prayer used to be common in the Church of the 19th century. But in the 20th century these gifts were largely lost. I always wondered how it was possible for the Gifts of the Spirit to have been lost for hundreds of years after the 4th century. How could something so amazing just disappear?

What happened was that people stopped testifying about how God used them; people became ignorant of what was available to them and with no experience of the Gifts, the teaching about them stopped. My research has found this happening repeatedly – it is shocking how easy it is for a biblical truth to be lost! If people do not testify that they have the gifts of the Baptism of Fire or Travailing Prayer, then how are people to know that they exist? Some churches today still claim that the Gifts of the Spirit were only for Apostolic times.

These two gifts have been crucial to the very existence of Awakenings in the past. I have traced them through history and what I have found can be read in two free booklets that can be found on www.ukwells.org/downloads.

Briefly, the Baptism of Fire takes a Christian, makes him/her holy and commissions him/her as a Revivalist. Those who Travail, pray what is on God's heart and bring down a Move of God (if that is what is on

God's heart). I do not know an Awakening that did not begin with Travailing Prayer.

Regarding the downgrading of Evangelists, they have been used over the last two centuries to light fires all over the nation. When God is hovering over a church or town, often people do not know how to access what God is offering. The Evangelist recognises this and releases it over the people. The Evangelist is a vital part of partnering with God to bring about His plans and purposes, but, over the last decades, the Body of Christ has not recognised this role for the Evangelist and has, generally speaking, blocked him/her from the church. This must change!

Regarding church leaders not recognising the season they are in, I believe that it has been God's plan for us to have Awakenings over the last century, but leaders just have not recognised what God has wanted to do. I believe that the 'Toronto Blessing' was supposed to have been an Awakening. However, the churches who got involved generally were dealing with individuals who kept crying out for 'more Lord.' Everyone was deeply involved in the Refreshing of their people, so it never got outside the church to the Awakening stage. Then, after a time, leaders felt that they needed to get back to usual business, and said, 'OK we've been there, done that, now it is time to move on.' Only a handful of churches continue to this day pressing in.

As a comparison to the last 100 years, if you look at my website and search on 'dates', you will find that there was an Awakening every single year between 1735 and 1905, both in England and Wales. I do not believe that it has been God's intention to leave us without an Awakening for so long.

HOW DOES A REFRESHING/AWAKENING START?

The key to any Move of God is prayer – Travailing Prayer. In researching hundreds of accounts of the 1874 Moody Revival, almost every time the churches in the town met regularly, over years or months, in united prayer. Unity amongst the churches is vital. In fact, there was one town that did not and there was little fruit. Fortunately, many towns across the UK already have such prayer meetings.

Holy Spirit is more likely to be present in power if the congregation is open to what He is doing. I have found that reading accounts of past Awakenings really does that. In my research, I have discovered several Awakenings that have begun at a Love Feast. The Methodists used to have Love Feasts every quarter, which were really times of worship and testimony.

I was speaking on this subject the other day and as I told stories of the past a spirit of expectancy became apparent in the room. The word Testimony in Hebrew is 'Edut,' which means, 'do it again God with the same power and authority.'

How incredibly powerful those words are! So, every time you testify you are asking God to do it again with the same power and authority. I believe that the telling of testimonies, makes the congregation respond to Holy Spirit and He then responds back. They produce expectation and hunger which Holy Spirit really loves.

During a Refreshing it would be good to have individuals testify to what God has done for them at the start of each meeting.

You can see my full teaching on this here <https://ukwells.org/films/7-testimony>.

If there is a main hub where the Move of God is occurring, then it is advisable to encourage as many as possible to go and visit it. Undoubtedly, the anointing is transferrable, get people to go and bring it back to the church.

POINTS TO NOTE DURING A REFRESHING

Pastors need to be flexible for disruption is going to come in an Awakening.

There will be a need for nightly meetings for a period, perhaps a long period. The impact of Holy Spirit on a congregation builds up over time, getting more and more powerful.

For a small church meeting so regularly can be challenging. This is why working with other local churches is important, so everyone plays their part and helps sustain the refreshing. Where there is unity in this way, there the Lord commands the blessing.

It is not only important for members of a church to pray for God to come; it is also very important for them to continue praying during the Refreshing. The enemy will not be happy that God is visiting the church and he will do everything possible to disrupt and stop what is happening. So, groups of intercessors will be required to pray daily on specific subjects as well as on what is on God's heart. William Booth found that whenever he came across obstacles in the early days of the Salvation Army, prayer would remove them.

Allowing Holy Spirit to do what He wants is crucial. Anything that controls Holy Spirit will quench what God is trying to do. In the first part of the 1904 Welsh revival, Evan Roberts allowed Holy Spirit full reign in all his meetings. He allowed people to stand up and start a hymn or pray, he allowed people to come up to the front and interrupt him while he was speaking, to give a testimony or say something. I know this is very difficult for pastors because they are afraid that somebody will say something inappropriate, but one needs to have wisdom and discernment to deal with any such inappropriateness.

The benefits of allowing Holy Spirit to do whatever He wants far outweighs the problems that some unsuitable comment might bring about. Interestingly, after taking some time off, Evan Roberts came back and started to control the meetings, and nothing was really at the same again.

Discerning what is going on in the meeting is very important. I remember being in a meeting led by a wonderful revivalist who was a leader of the Jesus Movement in California. During the service there were pauses where she was trying to understand what Holy Spirit wanted to do next. She never wanted to impose anything of herself on the meeting.

Apart from understanding what Holy Spirit is trying to do, there is also the need to discern if there is anyone in the meeting who is a disruptive influence. There may be people with a critical spirit visiting to see what is going on. This can change the atmosphere in the meeting and should be discouraged from the front. Evan Roberts would often highlight this.

One should not take it for granted that everyone in the congregation is saved. There may be many 'nominal' Christians who will find their Saviour at this time.

Unity is critical in a Refreshing for it to continue as long as possible. The enemy will do everything possible to break the unity in the church, so this is an important subject for prayer throughout the Move of God. There may well be a portion of the congregation that does not want change – they are happy with the way things have always been. A decision has to be made as to which is more important – a move of God or keeping key members of the church happy.

A very important expression of a Refreshing is Holiness. When the Lord is pouring out His glory in church meetings, Holiness will often be a part of it. As already mentioned, those who received the Baptism of

Fire will be receiving an aspect of Holiness as well. During the expansion years of the Salvation Army, many of their churches would have a Holiness meeting every Friday. These were incredibly powerful and was where many received the Baptism of Fire. A turning away from sin is so important for existing congregation as well as the new believer.

HOW DO WE BUILD THE BRIDGE?

In my opinion, how we Build the Bridge is the most important issue we face today regarding an Awakening. Unless we work out how to do this there will not be one!

As already mentioned, there is a tendency during a Refreshing in a church for people to remain in church day after day saying, 'more Lord.' This is bad for two reasons, firstly the people themselves need to move on, but more importantly the church will need space to receive the unsaved. While the saved remain in the church there can be no Awakening.

I suggest therefore, that the saved be allowed in church for a certain number of days to receive what God is offering, to have their lives changed, and then be limited to a certain number of visits a month unless they have an unsaved person with them. Time after time in Awakenings of the past there are reports of the churches being overwhelmed with the number of people attending and there not being room for the unsaved. This is not surprising because where else would a Christian want to be than in the presence of God?

The 1874 Awakening and the Salvation Army Awakening a few years later found the hiring of large neutral buildings important, because they realised that multitudes of people did not want to go to a church building. Time will tell if this is true today.

This leads to another major problem. During Awakenings of the past there have been many large churches to which the people have flocked, many of them for instance having seating for 2,000 but being filled with 2,500 to 3,000 people. Today there are many fewer churches and Health and Safety will not allow them to be overfilled. This underlines the need to get the Christians full of Holy Spirit and

then sent out to bring in the lost or to do whatever else they are called to do.

Building the Bridge from a Refreshing to an Awakening requires Christians to go and bring in the lost. A wonderful example of this can be seen in the Salvation Army of the 19th century.

One of the most powerful weapons we must bring in the lost is the newly saved convert. I remember the church that I was in during the 'Toronto Blessing,' encouraged new Christians to go through a course and to be more experienced before they went out to minister. This is a mistake, because anyone can see God shining through newly converted people and they cannot help but be impacted by what they say.

I mentioned the importance of Testimony earlier, but this is really where Testimony is at its most powerful. William Booth, the founder of the Salvation Army, would send out new converts immediately into the streets to testify to the unsaved what God had done for them. This was extremely successful, and they would then lead a band of unsaved people into the church for a service where many of them were saved. New converts testifying to their families is also very powerful.

I have recently published a film of the Salvation Army which can be seen here <https://ukwells.org/films/9-the-salvation-army>.

In the 1859-1864 revival, which is the largest one we have ever been blessed with, Awakenings began in many towns through some young person coming from another town and testifying to what happened there. Soon after they began speaking, the glory of God would just fall on the congregation and people would start weeping, asking God for mercy.

In the Moody Revival they were more organised. In Scotland, an Association was formed of young converts (and Evangelists) and these

would then be sent out, normally in pairs, when towns asked for help. Repeatedly, they would light the fire in the town and an Awakening would begin.

An important aspect to consider is what to do once someone has lit the fire and then left the town. The Awakening needs to be maintained and expanded, through prayer as mentioned above, and through evangelising. Each town needs to identify people who can carry on with the meetings and people who can go out to the surrounding villages to light the fires there.

In my opinion, young converts are the most powerful weapon we must Build the Bridge from Refreshing to Awakening.

We now come to a more contentious issue, how do we lead the unsaved to Christ? At this point in time, I do not know what the Lord is planning, how He is going to do things this time round. I keep hearing prophets say that it is going to be different this time, but I am not sure that people can be led to the Lord differently.

In more recent years there has been a tendency to do an altar call and pray over the people and get them to declare themselves for Christ, but I personally would love to see the old way of doing this return.

The old way was to allow Holy Spirit to convict the unsaved of their sin. They would then, recognising their sin, cry out to God for mercy. Sometimes, the Lord would reveal Himself to them and they would immediately accept Him, and they would be saved. But in many cases people would struggle to make that leap, so experienced Christians would kneel beside them and point them in the direction of Christ. Many of them would then understand and see Christ as the answer and give their lives to Him. Most people would have an encounter with Christ, repent of their sins and be saved.

It is important for the Awakening to continue until the Lord wants it to end. I am not sure this has ever happened in the past – man has always been responsible for ending it. A common reason for Awakenings ending in the past has been pastors making the decision that they cannot cope with so many new believers, so they shut down the evangelistic side of their ministry and concentrate on pastoring those who have recently come to Christ. This is clearly not ideal, so I suggest that pastors have two sides that will run parallel in the church, evangelistic and pastoring, Then through delegation one can have one side of the ministry bringing in the lost while at the same time the other side pastors the new believers.

PROBLEMS TO OVERCOME

The first problem to overcome might be in yourself. There are several instances in history of pastors praying for an Awakening but then rejecting it because it did not come in the form that they were expecting. We do not know how God is going to bring the next Awakening, so we must keep an open mind. Very sadly there were pastors who believed that the 'Toronto Blessing' was not from God. I assume that this was because of all the shakings, people falling over etc, but if you were at those meetings (many of the critics never went to one) you would know that this was from Holy Spirit. There will always be an amount of 'flesh' in an Awakening, but we must focus on the good that God is doing and not on the comparatively few instances where the enemy gets in to disrupt.

I would suggest that there are prerequisites for an Awakening, whatever form it might take. These are repentance, salvation and holiness.

In the initial meetings in your church you are bound to come across the 'flesh.' A gift of discernment will be very useful. Most people will be manifesting because of the power of Holy Spirit, but some, possibly the younger members of the congregation will be copying what their friends are doing.

Tiredness is a real threat to the continuation of God's work. Moving in the power of Holy Spirit is highly addictive; you will just want to go on and on; especially if you think that it might all end the next day. After the initial excitement one needs to ensure that one gets enough rest – getting burnt out will help nobody. To achieve this pastors need to rely on members of their congregation – delegation is key. The priesthood of all believers will come into its own. If ministering away from the church for any length of time, it would be wise to take someone with you so that all the burden is not on you.

We must be prepared for a great financial cost. An Awakening is not cheap. If you host one you must be prepared for financing it, including: security, cleaning, food, electricity, damages to carpets etc. Then there is the organisational aspect. Worship teams, parking, hotels, live streaming, travel, organising loads of helpers etc. One may even need a stadium!

Any church hosting a move of God needs an army of helpers who can be relied upon.

SOCIAL MEDIA

I have no idea how social media will be used in the coming Awakening, although I do know that it will be used extensively. I certainly favour personal ministry. I believe there is more power in the laying on of hands than through a television screen or mobile phone screen.

This media was used powerfully during the time of Covid, but I personally very much missed the love that can be expressed through personal conversation and hugs.

However, I have seen healings over Zoom calls, and I have certainly myself felt Holy Spirit upon me many times when watching services on the Internet.

I am sure that over time we will see many creative uses of social media by young people that will lead many to the Lord.

CONCLUSION

Our wonderful nation is in a truly dire state and without a national Awakening I do not see how we are going to solve our problems. It is vital that we recognise what God wants to do in our nation and partner with him to maximise the effect of any Awakening. As mentioned, we have not been able to bridge from a Refreshing to an Awakening for over 100 years, so it is going to take a great deal of dedication, energy, wisdom and discernment to bring this about.

My vision for the last 25 years has been to see 10 million brought to the Lord in the next Awakening. I believe that is the least number that we will need saved to bring a Reformation to our nation. If this happens, we will need a new structure for the Church. We will not have nearly enough churches to cater for these numbers, therefore we will have to find many other buildings and I suggest that the answer will be in the home.

As numbers of the saved increase, we can spill out of the church into people's homes. This should not be a concern because after all this is where meetings were held in the early days of the church. As has been seen in large Awakenings in China, Colombia, Argentina etc, young people grow up very quickly in an Awakening. In China for instance young people, we are in charge of hundreds of churches and so it will be here in the UK. As mentioned, the priesthood of all believers will come into its own. We must not worry about giving young people and even children responsibility when they are radically awakened.

I think one of the greatest challenges for pastors during this time will be letting go, delegating and trusting in others. Undoubtedly, Awakenings need a lot of planning to facilitate what Holy Spirit is doing, one needs to be very proactive.

**I believe we have exciting times ahead -
we must not miss them, we must Build the Bridge!**