

Imparting a Vision for REVIVAL

Graham McLennan

First a Little bit of Pre European History:

When he set out, he didn't know where he was going. When he got there, he didn't know where he was. When he returned, he didn't know where he had been!

This has been said about Christopher Columbus though when he set out for the Americas in his four voyages from 1492 to 1502 he recalled in his "Book of Prophecies":

"...It was the Lord who put into my mind — I could feel His hand upon me — the fact that it would be possible to sail from here to the Indies-All who heard of my project rejected it with laughter, ridiculing me... There is no question that the inspiration was from the Holy Spirit, because he comforted me with rays of marvellous illumination from the Holy Scriptures... For the execution of the journey to the Indies I did not make use of intelligence, mathematics, or maps. It is simply the fulfilment of what Isaiah had prophesied... No one should fear to undertake any task in the name of our Saviour, if it is just and if the intention is purely for His Holy service... the fact that the Gospel must still be preached to so many lands in such a short time — this is what convinces me".

South America mainly become Catholic because of the Spanish influence. Columbus' voyage ultimately led to the first permanent Protestant English settlement in North America at Jamestown. They placed a cross at Cape Henry now Virginia Beach on April 29, 1607, claiming America for God as his vehicle for spreading the gospel to every nation. With the settlement of the Puritans and Pilgrims the rest has become history.

In Search of the Great South Land It was Portuguese Catholic, Magellan who opened up the South Seas to the Europeans. Magellan's main purpose was to convert the barbarous nations to Christ. It was his faith that sustained him through terrible deprivations until a strait was found into the Pacific. Magellan's ship was the first to circumnavigate the world from 1519 to 1521, being the first to enter the Pacific via South America ultimately reaching the Philippines which was to become a Catholic nation. This is how they initially became Christians:

"Magellan having noticed in the Chief's house a sick person in a very wasted condition, asked who he was and from what disease he was suffering. He was told that it was the chief's grandson, and that he had been suffering for two years from a violent fever. Magellan exhorted him to be of good courage, that if he would devote himself to Christ he would immediately recover his former strength. The Indian consented, and adored the cross, and received baptism,

and the next day declared that he was well again, rose from his bed and walked about, and took his meals like the others...the Chief and over 2200 Indians(Filipinos!) were baptized and professed the name and faith of Christ."

Another sailor [Pedro Fernandez de Quiros](#), a Portuguese Catholic, in 1606 was also seeking to convert the Inhabitants of the South Seas to Christianity and believed he finally had discovered "Austr(i)alia Del Espiritu Santo" - a land he dedicated to the Holy Spirit - which he described as being the region of the south as far as the pole. Since he in fact discovered the New Hebrides now known as Vanuatu, the region he described was Australasia, which includes New Zealand. De Quiros thought he had made it to the shores of Australia but found another country, Vanuatu claiming it for the King of Spain and in the Name of the Holy Spirit.

It wasn't until Captain James Cook discovered the East Coast of Australia that people realised De Quiros hadn't reached this Southland of the Holy Spirit for there was a separation by sea of several thousand kms.

On the 11th of June 1738, John Wesley blew the first trumpet call of the great evangelical revival. This revival was to have a deep and lasting effect on Britain and on those in succeeding generations.

Fifty years later a Christian minister gave the first service on Australian soil. [The Rev. Richard Johnson](#) was recommended as Chaplain to the first fleet because of his religious fervour – he was recommended by men such as William Wilberforce and John Newton. At this service, Johnson spoke from Psalm 116, Verse 12 "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits towards me".

[Rev Richard Johnson](#) continued faithfully to proclaim the Gospel until the day he left. He wrote: "I trust I have not laboured wholly in vain, and I trust in time, in spite of all opposition and obstacles, God will make bare his holy arm in the conversion and salvation of the souls of men. . . . Last Sunday I preached I suppose to not less than six or eight hundred, and I have since heard that one at least went away sorrowful and heavy-hearted, and some others rejoicing in the Son of God manifested towards them."

The second clergyman in Australia [Samuel Marsden](#) was instrumental in providing lamb as a food source not only here in Australia but as alternative diet for the New Zealand Maori's who like many Pacific islanders were cannibals! "Marsden said,"I can say this that I do not eat the bread of idleness. It is my opinion that God will ere long visit New South Wales with his heavenly grace. Out of these stones he will raise up children unto Abraham. There has not been any shaking yet among the dry bones, but the Son of Man is commanded to prophecy and I hope by and by the Lord will command the wind to blow. Stir up thy strength O God & come amongst us." This prophetic word was based on Ezekiel 37.

In 1905 [Alfred Deakin](#) one of Australia's early PM's remarked "sufficient to say that the religion of Jesus Christ is the life of the present, the light of the future and the hope of the world."

Many years later he stated: "A life, the life of Christ, that is the one thing needful - the only revelation required is there... we have but to live it."

And a prayer after a vote for Federation:

"God preserve this people and grant its leaders unselfish fidelity and courage to face all trials for the sake of brotherhood. Thy blessing has rested upon us here yesterday and we pray that it may be the means of creating and fostering throughout all Australia a Christlike citizenship."

We now turn to South Australia's Godly beginnings and the aspirations of its founders for many years South Australia's capital was known as the Holy City but today it is known as the City of Churches.

Adelaide in its formative years couldn't contain all the parishioners in its churches. During Adelaide's first eight years there were more preachers and places of worship than in the first decade in New England in the United States. From the time of South Australia's settlement in 1836 to 1915 more children attended Sunday School than attended school and within ten years, over half the population of 9,000 were attending two of the Episcopal and Congregational churches, and further church buildings were necessary.

Many of South Australia's founders were Christians. Such people as [Robert Torrens](#) who stated in a House of Commons speech in 1827 that "We are co-operating in the scheme of Providence and are the favoured Instrument In causing Christian civilization to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea." This scripture is found in Isaiah 11:9 and Habakkuk 2:14.

[Charles Sturt](#) like Marsden was prophetic about the new nation of Australia. "If indeed, I have been an instrument, in the hands of Providence, in bringing about the speedier establishment of the province of South Australia, I am thankful that I have been permitted to witness the happiness of thousands whose prosperity I have unconsciously promoted. Wherever I may go, to whatever part of the world my destinies may lead me, I shall yet hope one day to return to my adopted home, and make it my resting-place between this world and the next. When I went into the interior I left the province with stormclouds overhanging it, and sunk in adversity. When I returned the sun of prosperity was shining on it, and every heart was glad. Providence had rewarded a people who had borne their reverses with singular firmness and magnanimity. Their harvest fields were bowed down by the weight of grain; their pastoral pursuits were prosperous; the hills were yielding forth their mineral wealth, and peace and prosperity prevailed over the land.

May the inhabitants of South Australia continue to deserve and to receive the protection of that Almighty power, on whose will the existence of nations as well as that of individuals depends!"

Then there were men who believed God had a special purpose in the Christian settlement of Australia. Men such as the Permanent Under Secretary of the Colonial Office, **James Stephen, who believed the government should be governed by biblical principles and encouraged Christian families to settle here and Stephens was influential in the choice of Christian leaders in the colonising of the country. Co-operating with providence Stephen's desire was to establish Australia as a Christian progressive and wise nation within reach of the Chinese, Hindu and Muslim nations.**

Certainly we are seeing the continuing fulfilment of this great prophetic statement given to the Lieutenant-Governor of Van Diemen's land **George Arthur, in 1824 as we see countries opening up to the Word of God, and as we see missionaries continuing to be sent out from this nation.**

****George Fife Angas**, who resigned as a Colonisation Commissioner to take up a position of the board of directors of the South Australia Company, was also a committed Christian and the real father of South Australia's religious liberties.**

'My great object was, in the first instance, to provide a place of refuge for pious dissenters of Great Britain, who could in their new home discharge their consciences before God in civil and religious duties without any disabilities.' It was the hope of Angas "that South Australia will become the headquarters for the diffusion of Christianity in the Southern Hemisphere."

It was claimed that in fifty years he circulated over one million copies of scripture, many millions of tracts and two million copies of devotional books such as Spurgeon's *'Morning by Morning'* and *'Evening by Evening'*. Angas also provided a voluntary non-denominational elementary education for sixpence a week. The schools' sole textbook was the Bible!

- How would you define the word revival?

Renewal, refreshing, outpouring of conviction and CRYING out to God for a reformation. I will say more about that a little later.

- Have you personally experienced revival?

In 1974 we visited the US staying at Chuck Smith's Church, Calvary Chapel in Los Angeles where many from the Jesus movement were meeting. Chuck read the Bible explaining it. Chuck Missler was to do the same ministering to the world. We then visited other Christian Communities including the *Word of God Community* in Ann Arbor, Michigan where the presence of God especially in worship with unity was powerful.

Perhaps even in our own house in Orange during the late 1970's after returning from the USA that same presence of God existed we had to knock a wall out to contain the young people.

Also in Port Vila in the early 2000's especially among the islander students like Fijians attending the University of the South Pacific.

There was a real anointing on these students that our son Michael was involved with.

- What are your favourite revivals from history?

Though there are some small outbreaks of revival in Australia recorded in Robert Evan's book *Pam & I lived in the US* for well over a year and it was great to learn and read about the revivals there, some of course had an influence here and some debate that the Melbourne awakening may have occurred first in the early 1900's

The Great Awakening, 1734-43. In December 1734, the first revival of historic significance broke out in Northampton, Mass., where a young Jonathan Edwards was pastor. After months of fruitless labour, he reported five or six people converted—one a young woman who had been one of the greatest company-keepers in the whole town. He feared her conversion would douse the flame, but quite the opposite took place. Three hundred souls converted in six months—in a town of only 1,100 people! The news spread like wildfire, and similar revivals broke out in over 100 towns. Starting in Philadelphia in 1739, [George Whitfield's](#) dramatic preaching was like striking a match to the already-underway awakening. An estimated 80 percent of America's 900,000 Colonists personally heard Whitfield preach. He really became America's first celebrity. If you want to be inspired read Whitfield's two Volumes!

The Second Great Awakening, 1800-1840.

In 1800, only one in 15 of America's population of 5,300,000 belonged to an evangelical church. Presbyterian minister James McGready presided over strange spiritual manifestations in Logan County, Ky. The resulting camp meeting revivals drew thousands from as far away as Ohio. Rev. Gardiner Spring reported that for the next 25 years not a single month passed without news of a revival somewhere. In 1824, Charles Finney began a career that would eventually convert 500,000 to Christ. An unparalleled 100,000 were converted in Rochester, N.Y., in 1831 alone—causing the revival to spread to 1,500 towns.

By 1850 the nation's population exploded fourfold to 23,000,000 people, but those connected to evangelical churches grew nearly tenfold from 7 percent to 13 percent of the population—from 350,000 to 3,000,000 church members!

The Businessmen's Revival of 1857-1858.

In 1857, the North Dutch Church in New York City hired a businessman, Jeremiah Lanphier to be a lay missionary. He prayed, "Lord, what would you have me do?" Concerned by the anxious faces of

businessmen on the streets of New York City, Lanphier decided to open the church at noon so businessmen could pray. The first meeting was set for September 23—three weeks before the Bank Panic of 1857. Six attended the first week, 20 the next, then 40, then they switched to daily meetings. Before long all the space was taken, and other churches also began to open up for businessmen's prayer meetings. Revivals broke out everywhere in 1857, spreading throughout the United States and world.

Sometimes called The Great Prayer Meeting Revival, an estimated 1,000,000 people were added to America's church rolls, and as many as 1,000,000 of the 4,000,000 existing church members also converted!

The Civil War Revival, 1861-1865.

The bitter dispute over **slavery** thrust the USA into a deadly war.

By the end, 620,000 Americans lay dead—one out of every 50 of the 31,000,000 people counted in the 1860 census. At the start of the Civil War in 1861, it seemed as though the soldiers from both sides had left their Christianity at home and gone morally bankrupt.

By 1862, the tide turned, first among the Confederate forces. An estimated 300,000 soldiers were converted, evenly divided between the Southern and Northern Armies.

The Urban Revivals, 1875-1885.

Young businessman **Dwight L. Moody** participated in the Great Revival of 1857 as it swept Chicago. Moody later conducted revivals throughout the British Isles where he spoke to more than 2,500,000 people. In 1875, Moody returned home and began revivals in America's biggest cities. Hundreds of thousands were converted and millions were inspired by the greatest soul winner of his generation. At this time, the general **worldview** of Americans was shifting away from a Christian consensus. Darwinism and higher criticism were gaining traction, and Moody became the first evangelist to come under attack—accused of making religion the opiate of the masses.

By the turn of the 20th century, the mood of the country was changing. Outside the church, it was the era of radio, movies and the "Jazz Age" and World War I led to a moral slide along with the "Roaring Twenties".

Then this era came to an abrupt end in October, 1929, with banks and stock markets creating huge financial losses, followed by the Great Depression, there was surprisingly little interest in spiritual revival. Inside the church, a half-century long battle raged between evangelicalism and theological liberalism, which had penetrated major denominations. The effect was that

20th-century revivals were more limited in scope, and lacked the broad impact on society of earlier awakenings.

The Revivals of 1905-1906. Word of the Welsh Revival of 1904-1905 spread to Welsh-speaking settlers in Pennsylvania in late 1904 and revival broke out there as well. ([The Melbourne awaking came just before this!](#))

By 1905, local revivals blazed in places like Brooklyn, Michigan, Denver, Nebraska, North and South Carolina, Georgia, Taylor University, Yale University, and Asbury College in Wilmore, Kentucky.

Billy Sunday, who became a key figure about this time, preached to more than 100,000,000 people with an estimated 1,000,000 or more conversions.²⁶

Now we come to the Azusa Street Revival, 1906. In 1906, William J. Seymour, an African-American Holiness pastor blind in one eye, went to Los Angeles to candidate for a pastoral job. But after he preached, he was locked out of the second service! He began prayer meetings in a nearby home and the Spirit of God, which they called “the second blessing,” fell. This was after many months of concerted prayer. Eventually, the interracial crowds became so large they acquired a dilapidated Methodist church at 312 Azusa Street where daily meetings continued for three years.

The resulting **Pentecostal** Movement and the later **Charismatic Movement**, which both exploded worldwide in the 20th century, both trace their roots to this revival.

The Post-World War II Awakening.

After World War II, in 1947 and 1948, Pentecostals experienced two strands of an awakening, one the Latter Rain Revival and the other the Healing Revival. Large numbers of evangelicals also experienced revival resulting in many conversions. It was at this time that a great generation of Christian leaders emerged. Bill Bright began Campus Crusade for Christ. In 1949, **Billy Graham's** distinguished career, which popularized evangelical Christianity for a new generation, exploded on the scene during his Los Angeles crusade sponsored by the Christian Businessmen's Committee. Huge numbers estimated at 180 million attended his nearly 400 crusades, and millions more viewed these crusades on television. College Revivals started as early as 1946, but when the prayer-based Wheaton College Revival of 1950 achieved national publicity, it sparked other college revivals throughout America.

Adapted from: [A Brief History of Spiritual Revival and Awakening in America \(churchleaders.com\)](#)

- Which revival events from Australia's history should the church be more aware of?

Among many early evangelical revivals, including those in Bob Evans Book *Early Evangelical Revivals*. Bob records over 200 awakenings mainly in towns & villages such as the Moonta Revival in 1875

The convict ships the Theresa & Earl Grey revivals as recorded by Dr Colin Browning

"The Coming of the Light" 1 July 1871 Torres Strait bringing cultural transformation

Further indigenous Revivals such in Elcho Island, Arnhem Land & Central Australia in the 1970's and eighties recorded by John Blacket in his Book *FIRE IN THE OUTBACK* and videos of Dan Armstrong's ministry are available to read or view on the CHR Website at www.chr.org.au RIVIVALS PAGE

- What are Australia's prospects for revival today?

Presently I would say very little with our complacency and apathy. Maybe need a huge crisis to awaken us from our stupor such as War with China!

The Book of Daniel and the Olivet Discourse in Mark 13 & Chapter 24 of Matthew give us a lot of insight.

Also Covid hopefully may be the beginning with the GREAT reset to Christ! Hopefully it has given us more time to reflect on one's mortality. Solitude can be a good thing!

- How would a major revival change Australia?

God speaks to individuals as well as nations so Revival should change ourselves and our public lifestyle such as **reformation** in families- divorce, alcohol & drug use, not to mention spheres of influence such as in media, entertainment, government, education, business, work and so on. Hopefully through this a Spirit of Repentance & Holiness would cover our land.

- What will it take to bring revival?

Several circumstances like hardship, long suffering will produce perseverance, commitment and CONSECRATION.

THE POWER OF CRYING OUT from the Vision Christian Media's Word for Today by Bob and Debby Gass which says:

"The most significant difference between the prayers of God's people in Scripture (so powerfully effective) and our prayer today (so seemingly ineffective) is this: there was fervency in the prayers of biblical saints – a fervency that is inherent in crying out. When we grasp this fact, the pages of scripture come alive with sound!"

David said: In my distress I cried out to the Lord; yes, I prayed to my God for help....my cry to him reached his ears. (Psalm 18:6NLT) The Hebrew word that describes David's plea for help is 'shava' a higher pitched cry. Again the Psalmist says: 'I called to you for help and you healed me.'(Psalm30:2NIV) '

We know from our own families that a true father's heart hears his children's cries, and that his children naturally cry to him. In the same way, crying out to God is our child-to-father impulse, planted within us by the Holy Spirit. Paul says: You received God's Spirit when He adopted you as His own children. Now we call him, "Abba, Father." (Romans 8.15 NLT)

The Greek verb here for calling out is a strong word usually translated as 'shouting or 'shrieking'! Away with dignity and decorum! Desperate situations call for desperate measures. We must allow the Holy Spirit to cry out from within us. Why? Because God hears and answers the cry he himself inspires.

Ever found yourself deliberately suppressing an urge to cry out to God? Could you be quenching the Spirit of God? If so, it's time to make a change – to respond to Him in humility and obedience by crying out."

Other Scriptures about Crying out include:

In the Old Testament verses such as in Exodus Chs 2 & 3 where the Israelites CRIED out to God about their slavery & oppression and He sent Moses to deliver them.

And in Numbers 20:16 "He heard there CRY and sent an ANGEL

In Psalm107 there are three repetitions of the same sixth verse: "Then they cried out in their trouble & God delivered them from their distress."

In the N T in Hebrews 5:7-8

Jesus offered up prayers & petitions with LOUD CRIES & was heard because of his REVERANT SUBMISSION and before his last breath on the cross he Cried out with a LOUD Cry to his Father

A HOPE FOR THE FUTURE:

Gerald Rowland's vision,

Pastor **Gerald Rowlands** shares about a "[Coming Visitation of God upon Australia](#)" to remote Australia over sixty years ago. In the article, he says "It was really amazing how this seed came to be spread in this remarkable way. He was not sure how God spread the seed like that. It was done in part by literature, radio and television, but beyond all this there was something new in the proclamation of the Gospel. It was something new that God was doing. I had the impression that God was working supernaturally in a way that He had not worked before as far as our own experience of Spiritual things is concerned. I had a strong impression that God was using preachers in a mightier way than we had ever seen."

Now God is raising up [Vision Christian Media](#) which today has over 770 radio stations, to accomplish this great vision, along with many other media outlets to bring people to Jesus and to mentor those seeking, pursuing God and Discipleship with sound training.

If you want to read more, we have outlined [Our History of Prayer in Australia](#). We have documented many outbreaks of Revival in Australia. You can find [God's hand in our nation over many years](#) and other articles such as the returning Chaplains from Gallipoli who founded ANZAC Day on the [Christian History Research website](#) at www.chr.org.au