

# God's Work in All Nations



## The Church in the Nations

NOTES COMPILED BY CHRIS RAGG

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## God's Work In All Nations

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**GOD'S WORK IN ALL NATIONS**  
**THE CHURCH IN THE NATIONS**

## **I. Wonderful Growth Worldwide**

THEME: A look at revival, the challenges of defining church growth and also current figures of growth.

**Text: Psalm 48:12-13**

*12 Walk about Zion,  
And go all around her.  
Count her towers;  
13 Mark well her bulwarks;  
Consider her palaces;  
That you may tell it to the generation following.*

**Isaiah 52:10**

*The LORD has made bare His holy arm  
In the eyes of all the nations;  
And all the ends of the earth shall see  
The salvation of our God.*

**Isaiah 61:11**

*<sup>11</sup> For as the soil makes the sprout come up  
and a garden causes seeds to grow,  
so the Sovereign LORD will make righteousness and praise  
spring up before all nations.*

**Romans 16:25-26**

*25 ¶ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery kept secret since the world began  
26 but now made manifest, and by the prophetic Scriptures made known to all nations, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, for obedience to the faith.*

**Habbakuk 1:5**

*Look among the nations and watch –  
Be utterly astounded!  
For I will work a work in your days  
Which you would not believe, though it were told you.*

**Psalm 66:4-5.**

*<sup>4</sup> All the earth shall worship You  
And sing praises to You;  
They shall sing praises to Your name. Selah  
<sup>5</sup> Come and see the works of God;  
He is awesome in His doing toward the sons of men.*

## **A. Introduction**

In the first course we saw how God's heart is for the nations. We saw from the Bible how He works to bring in the people of the nations to His fold. The second course looked at the call of God to His people to bring the gospel to the nations. Not so long ago, some people looking at parts of Europe where it seemed the church was dying, concluded as religion was passing away that effectively God was 'dead'. The Bible calls them 'fools' (Romans 1:22). To them Christianity was fading away; the Church had failed in its call to spread the gospel. The global picture, however, tells a different story. Christianity has not passed away. God is very much alive and at work in incredible ways building his Church. His people have succeeded in spreading the gospel to the nations. Today the Church is no longer the same. It has changed its nature. It is no longer a 'western' one. It is truly international, stronger than before and growing. In this course we will look at where and how that growth has occurred.

We will be looking at information and stories from different countries around the world. To aid understanding of how God is working in the world I have included a number of articles in the appendix of each course unit. I have also given a number of references in the footnotes to allow readers the opportunity to confirm and follow-up on the details. I have particularly given references from the worldwide web to allow ease of access. Sometimes articles on the internet can be removed from the web so the dates in brackets in the footnotes show the dates in which I last accessed the articles.

My hope is that which is included will give you a great insight into how God is working, so that you may learn how to cooperate with Him wherever you serve Him.

## **B. Words of Prudence**

### **Concerning this course**

Before we begin this study I want to give a number of words of prudence concerning material included in this course which you need to bear in mind. Firstly, all information that is dated runs the risk of soon being outdated as change can unfold quickly. Secondly, as we will note, there can be no certain guarantee of accuracy when it comes to statistics or even stories. I do believe, however, that which is included gives a very good general picture of what God has been doing in the nations in these recent days. Thirdly, I have had to be selective in the choice of material. I am aware that there are many more wonderful stories of God's work in many countries that are not included in this course.

### **Concerning statistics and definitions**

When we study the work of God in the nations an area in which we have to be cautious is in the use of statistics. They can be inaccurate due to wrong reporting,<sup>1</sup> or just simply confusing. Some statistics inform us that a third of the world's population is Christian. Yet there are many under that name who never darken a church except for hatch, match, and dispatch (birth, marriage and death). They are 'Christian' because of the place of their birth and the fact that they are not Muslim, Buddhist or Hindu. The majority of them have never known the new birth and salvation. We need therefore to be careful in reading statistics.

I believe it is important that we differentiate between those named 'Christian' and those who are 'born again' having found new life in Christ Jesus.<sup>2</sup> It is, however, not always easy to quantify the numbers of all who have received the new birth. Salvation is not the work of man; it is only God that can change the heart of man, regenerate him and bring him new birth

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<sup>1</sup> Sadly Prof David Barrett and Todd Johnson report 'Some 250 of the 300 largest international Christian organizations regularly mislead the Christian public by publishing demonstrably incorrect or falsified progress statistics.' Source: World Christian Trends; Pasadena: William Carey Library. [[www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/globalchristianity/gd/findings.htm](http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/globalchristianity/gd/findings.htm)] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>2</sup> John 3:3, 5-7 <sup>3</sup> Jesus answered and said to him, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." <sup>5</sup> Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God." <sup>6</sup> "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." <sup>7</sup> "Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.'" John 1:12-13 <sup>12</sup> But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: <sup>13</sup> who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

and life. It is therefore only God who knows those who are truly His. In order, however, to try and give some indication of how many real Christians there are in each nation some refer to Evangelicals only (as Evangelicals believe in the full authority of the Word of God and the necessity of new birth through justification by faith).<sup>3</sup> Others have created a new category called Great Commission Christians, and some have added Spirit-filled believers to include believers outside the Evangelical camp to the figures.

Some of the statistics are also gathered from different sources and all run the risk of inaccuracies, people been counted more than once, and exaggeration or understatement. Hence in this course there may be seeming contradictions between figures. However, although there are challenges to getting accurate statistics of true believers, this study will show that great numbers of people are finding new life and that the church is growing in remarkable ways.

### **Concerning embellishments and exaggerations**

We need to be also aware that when people report on the work of God in different nations sometimes exaggeration occurs. We need to be very careful to avoid embellishments, and even be cautious in our use of terms. The word 'revival', for example, is often used and sometimes used too casually. To help us, I have included an article of revival written by Duncan Campbell who saw an extraordinary move of God in Scotland known as the Hebrides revival. It includes a description of the difference between successful evangelism and revival.

*"The difference in successful evangelism, (and I use the word 'successful,') and revival is this: In evangelism, the two, the three, the ten, the twenty, and possibly the hundred make confessions of Jesus Christ, and at the end of the year you are thankful if half of them are standing. But the community remains untouched. The public houses are crowded, the dances, dancing ballrooms, packed. The theatre and the picture houses are patronized by the hundreds. No change in the community!*

*But in revival, when God the Holy Ghost comes, when the winds of heaven blow, suddenly the community becomes God-conscious! A God-realization takes hold of young, middle-aged and old. So that, as in the case of the Hebrides Revival, 75% of those saved one night were saved before they came near a meeting!"<sup>4</sup>*

True revival is different from successful evangelism. However, both are good. Whether it is through successful evangelism or revival, people are being added to the church of Jesus Christ today in numbers never before seen in history. As Patrick Johnstone writes, 'the church is bigger than you think'.<sup>5</sup>

### **Concerning the wheat, the tares and the seed sown**

Another factor that needs to be borne in mind is that of the wheat and the tares. When looking at God's work in the nations we remember Jesus made the promise "And this gospel of the kingdom will be preached in all the world as a witness to all the nations, and then the end will come" (Matthew 24:14). He gave a number of parables about how the Kingdom would grow.

#### **Matthew 13:31-32**

<sup>31</sup>Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a mustard seed, which a man took and sowed in his field, <sup>32</sup>which indeed is the least of all the seeds; but when it is grown it is greater than the herbs and becomes a tree, so that the birds of the air come and nest in its branches."

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<sup>3</sup> The Joshua Project defines an Evangelical Christian as a Christian who generally emphasizes: 1. The Lord Jesus Christ as the sole source of salvation through faith in Him. 2. Personal faith and conversion with regeneration by the Holy Spirit. 3. A recognition of the inspired Word of God as the only basis for faith and Christian living. 4. Commitment to biblical preaching and evangelism that brings others to faith in Christ. International Journal of Frontier Missions Vol. 16:2 Summer 1999 p. 96 [[http://www.ijfm.org/PDFs\\_IJFM/16\\_2\\_PDFs/07%20JP%20List13.pdf](http://www.ijfm.org/PDFs_IJFM/16_2_PDFs/07%20JP%20List13.pdf)] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>4</sup> When the Mountains Flowed Down. A taped message given by Duncan Campbell before the students of the Faith Mission Bible College in Edinburgh, Scotland. [<http://www.revival-library.org/catalogues/twentieth/campbell/d/title.htm>] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>5</sup> Patrick Johnstone, *The Church is Bigger Than You Think* (Great Britain: Christian Focus Publications, 1998)

He spoke of two types of seed sown in the field.

**Matthew 13:24-30**

<sup>24</sup> Another parable He put forth to them, saying: "The kingdom of heaven is like a man who sowed good seed in his field; <sup>25</sup>but while men slept, his enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat and went his way. <sup>26</sup>But when the grain had sprouted and produced a crop, then the tares also appeared. <sup>27</sup>So the servants of the owner came and said to him, 'Sir, did you not sow good seed in your field? How then does it have tares?' <sup>28</sup>He said to them, 'An enemy has done this.' The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" <sup>29</sup>But he said, 'No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them. <sup>30</sup>Let both grow together until the harvest, and at the time of harvest I will say to the reapers, "First gather together the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, but gather the wheat into my barn."'

The disciples did not fully understand the parable and Jesus gave them the explanation.

**Matthew 13:36-43**

<sup>36</sup> Then Jesus sent the multitude away and went into the house. And His disciples came to Him, saying, "Explain to us the parable of the tares of the field." <sup>37</sup>He answered and said to them: "He who sows the good seed is the Son of Man. <sup>38</sup>The field is the world, the good seeds are the sons of the kingdom, but the tares are the sons of the wicked one. <sup>39</sup>The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the end of the age, and the reapers are the angels. <sup>40</sup>Therefore as the tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so it will be at the end of this age. <sup>41</sup>The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather out of His kingdom all things that offend, and those who practice lawlessness, <sup>42</sup>and will cast them into the furnace of fire. There will be wailing and gnashing of teeth. <sup>43</sup>Then the righteous will shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father. He who has ears to hear, let him hear!"

Jesus lets us know that the world is the field in which both good and bad seed are sown. The good seed is sown by Himself and the bad seed is sown by the devil. 'The servants said to him, "Do you want us then to go and gather them up?" <sup>29</sup>But he said, "No, lest while you gather up the tares you also uproot the wheat with them."'

We live in a time in which we can see both the good seed and the bad seed that has been sown in the world. In the nations we can see the wonderful work of God, but we can also see the terrible hand of the devil. This parable also helps us to understand that when we look at successful evangelistic campaigns and church growth among the nations it may not all be fully glorious. There may be tares which can pollute the work of God either at the time or later. This needs to be borne in mind.

We need also to understand that even when the good seed is sown it may produce different results.

**Matthew 13:18-23**

<sup>18</sup> "Therefore hear the parable of the sower: <sup>19</sup>When anyone hears the word of the kingdom, and does not understand it, then the wicked one comes and snatches away what was sown in his heart. This is he who received seed by the wayside. <sup>20</sup>But he who received the seed on stony places, this is he who hears the word and immediately receives it with joy; <sup>21</sup>yet he has no root in himself, but endures only for a while. For when tribulation or persecution arises because of the word, immediately he stumbles. <sup>22</sup>Now he who received seed among the thorns is he who hears the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word, and he becomes unfruitful. <sup>23</sup>But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

People receive the gospel in different ways. Only some 'bear fruit and produce', while a number 'endure only for a while', others 'stumble' and yet others become 'unfruitful'. This helps us to understand that initially many more will respond to the gospel than will remain

faithful to it. We need to be cautious about making quick judgments about evangelistic campaigns. We need to be looking for the fruit that produces when it comes to our figures and articles.

Despite these potential pitfalls in assessing Christianity in the world and the challenges of the tares and fruit that does not produce, Jesus did promise:

**Matthew 16:18**

*I will build My church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it.*

And His Kingdom would advance.

**Matthew 11:12**

*And from the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force.*

**Matthew 11:12 (NIV)<sup>6</sup>**

*From the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven has been forcefully advancing, and forceful men lay hold of it.*

**Matthew 11:12 (Amplified)<sup>7</sup>**

*And from the days of John the Baptist until the present time, the kingdom of heaven has endured violent assault, and violent men seize it by force [as a precious prize--a share in the heavenly kingdom is sought with most ardent zeal and intense exertion].*

It is advancing as we now shall see.

**C. Christianity: Percentage of World Population**

Christianity as a percentage of the world's population remained almost the same throughout the 20<sup>th</sup> century and remains so until the present today.<sup>8</sup>

Total Christians as % of world	1900	1970	Mid-2004
	34.5	33.4	33.0

This means approximately 2 billion of the world would call themselves Christian. Yet as we have noted many of these are but 'Christian' in name. This figure actually hides the state of true Christianity. Stephan Holthaus, Deacon of Giessen's Free Theological Academy, estimates only about thirty per cent of these to be true Christians.<sup>9</sup> Actually while the percentage of 'Christianity' in name remains the same, the numbers of true believers is rising.

**D. Numbers of Christians**

Although there are some 39,000 denominations in Christendom, they can be put into six main ecclesiastical megablocks in the world:<sup>10</sup>

- Roman Catholics (1.119 billion)
- Independents (427 million)
- Protestants (376 million)
- Orthodox (220 million)

<sup>6</sup> New International Version copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society

<sup>7</sup> Amplified Bible, copyright © 1954, 1958, 1962, 1964, 1955, 1987 The Lockman Foundation

<sup>8</sup> For figures See 2001 *World Christian Trends*, William Carey Library, David Barrett & Todd Johnson

[<http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/globalchristianity/gd/gd04.pdf>] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>9</sup> See International Bulletin of Missionary Research, January 2004

<sup>10</sup> Looking Forward: An Overview of World Evangelization, 2005-2025 A special report for the Lausanne 2004 Forum on World Evangelization Todd M. Johnson, Peter F. Crossing, and Bobby Jangsun Ryu p 8.

[[www.globalchristianity.org](http://www.globalchristianity.org) <http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/globalchristianity/gd/Lausanneinsert.pdf>] (accessed 18/9/06) Such figures may help us to get some understanding of different sections of Christianity, but need some clarification of definitions. Anglicans belong to the Protestant family, and I would argue that many independents because they are not under the Roman Catholic or Orthodox hierarchical structure are in fact Protestant in belief and practice.

Anglicans (80 million) and  
 Marginals (34 million).<sup>11</sup>

The Independents are the fastest growing group in the church.<sup>12</sup>

### ***E. Growth Rate of Evangelicals***

Helpful as these divisions may be, they do not help us to see the state of true Christianity. The term 'Christian' needs to be defined much more carefully. When this is done, we begin to see considerable growth. The following is often stated:

It took 18 centuries for dedicated believers to grow from 0.3% percent of the world's population to 2.5% in 1900. Only 70 years to grow from 1.5 to 5% in 1970 and just the last 30 years to grow from 5 to 11.2% of the world's population (year 2000). Now, for the first time in history, there is one believer for every nine people worldwide who aren't believers.<sup>13</sup>

Statistics vary. Some give higher figures.<sup>14</sup>

#### **Evangelical Growth in the Last Two Centuries**

Defining Christian growth by looking at Evangelical growth helps us to get a clearer picture of the state of true Christianity. Evangelicals emphasize the authority of the Bible, teach on justification by faith and the necessity of new birth, seeking to bring people into a conversion experience. Although people may experience the new birth outside the Evangelical camp, this is less likely as many churches teach that which is contrary to Scripture that people become Christians when they are baptised as a baby. Many within such churches hope that by living a good life, doing good works or observing church rituals that God will accept them. Not understanding the need of the new birth they are not born again and therefore not true Christians. Although recognising that some outside the Evangelical camp can come to a true saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is my contention that figures which emphasize evangelical growth (such as in the Operation World book<sup>15</sup>) give us a much more accurate picture than others which are too broad in their definition of Christianity.

The Evangelical church has grown substantially particularly in the last two centuries. This growth has been *exponential*, increasing decade by decade. Patrick Johnstone in Operation World gives the following figures related to the last four decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

1960	84.5m (2.8%)
2000	420m (6.9%) <sup>16</sup>

#### **Annual Growth Rate**

The magazine 'Missions Frontiers', published by the US Center for World Mission, presented the following figures in 2000<sup>17</sup> based on their own research and David Barrett and Patrick Johnstone's statistics:

Religion	Annual Growth	Conversion Growth
Global population	1.47%	N/A
Christianity (all Christians)	1.45 %	.135%

<sup>11</sup> This would include cultic groups such as the Mormons whose belief in many gods and other unbiblical doctrines I believe put them outside the category of true Christianity.

<sup>12</sup> The Independents, the writers say, have no interest in historical denominations. They are found in 220 countries and number 19% of all Christians.

<sup>13</sup> See for example 'The Diminishing Task – Lausanne Statistical Task Force' [<http://www.missionfrontiers.org/2000/03/200003.htm>] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>14</sup> "This ratio has gone from 360 (100 AD), to 220 (1000 AD), to 69 (1500) to 27 (in the year 1900), 21 (in the year 1950) to 11 in 1980, to seven last year." The Diminishing Task: The Field and the Force by Ralph Winter Mission Frontiers Jan-March 1991 [<http://www.missionfrontiers.org/1991/0103/jm912.htm>] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>15</sup> Operation World – Patrick Johnstone and Jason Mandryk (2001 Paternoster)

<sup>16</sup> See diagram of evangelicals 1960-2010. Operation World p. 3, 5.

<sup>17</sup> The World in 2000 by Religious adherence (fig 4), Mission Frontiers, June 2000.

Evangelical churches	1.47%	.423%
Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches	2.33%	.588%
Islam	2.15%	.080%
Buddhism	1.13%	.045%
Hinduism	1.84%	-.087%

These figures tell us that while Islam is growing quicker than Christianity as a whole, it is not growing faster by conversion rate. In fact, Evangelicals are growing more than 5 times faster than Islam, and Pentecostal, and Charismatics more than seven times faster. Some give higher figures. Patrick Johnstone reckons Evangelical Christianity is growing at 4.7% and Pentecostal and Charismatic churches at 7% (Evangelicals now growing 3.5 times as fast as the world population and Pentecostal and Charismatic churches 4.5 times as fast).<sup>18</sup>

Jim Rutz, American church growth researcher, believes that in the mid-80's, Evangelical Christianity experienced a strong upward turn. Prior to 1985, the growth rate was 2% per year, slightly higher than the growth of the world population; today it is around 7.5% per year.<sup>19</sup>

Year	Christians	Growth rate	Period
1970	272 million		
1985	366 million	2%	(1970-85)
1990	445 million	4%	(1985-90)
1995	596 million	6%	(1990-95)
2000	836 million	7%	(1995-2000)
2001	899 million	7.5%	(2000+)

Jim Rutz, however, does not just include Evangelicals. He believes the true church is a “powerful mix of Charismatics, Pentecostals, Evangelicals, and a few Catholics. They are in countable networks. In 1970, there were 71 million of them. By 2000, there were 707 million.” He now adds that it is “growing at a white-hot pace – 8 percent a year.”<sup>20</sup>

### ***F. Growth Rate of Pentecostals***

The greatest growth rate of Christians has been among the Pentecostal grouping. From the beginning of the grouping in 1900, Pentecostals/ Charismatics/ Neocharismatics have mushroomed to 524 million affiliated (602 million including unaffiliated believers).<sup>21</sup> Growth has been increasingly sharply in later years:

Pentecostals from: 11 million (1960) to 116 million (2000) worldwide – a 7% growth rate.  
Charismatic movement: 181 million (1990) to 345 million (2000).<sup>22</sup>

### ***G. Number of People Coming to Christ***

It has been said that the number of people in the world coming to Christ each week is 155,000.

<sup>18</sup> Operation World, p. 5

<sup>19</sup> [<http://www.jesus.org.uk/dawn/2001/dawn47.html>] (accessed 18/9/06) The figures are Jim Rutz' extrapolations of statistical material from the "Global Evangelization Movement" (David Barrett) and Dawn Ministries, and an 'intelligent estimate' of 130 million evangelical Christians in China today. (2001)

<sup>20</sup> [[http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE\\_ID=44309](http://www.wnd.com/news/article.asp?ARTICLE_ID=44309)] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>21</sup> Todd M. Johnson [<http://www.gordonconwell.edu/ockenga/globalchristianity/gd/wct-1-2.pdf>] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>22</sup> Operation World p.5

- In Africa – 54,000
- In South America – 46,000
- In Asia - 43,000
- In North America - 12,000
- 1,000 Churches planted every week<sup>23</sup>

The Joshua Project believes it is much higher. Every day another 74,000 people across the globe come to faith in Christ and 3,500 new churches open each week.<sup>24</sup> Greg Parsons says there are now 100,000 new Christians every day and 4,500 new congregations every week.<sup>25</sup> Jim Rutz once more believes the figures are higher again. ‘When I was a kid in Sunday school, I was really impressed that 3,000 people were saved on the Day of Pentecost, I thought, ‘Wow, that’ll never happen again!’ Rutz says, it now happens around the globe every 25 minutes. ‘By tomorrow, there will be 175,000 more Christians than there are today.’<sup>26</sup>

Even if Rutz’s figures seem a little fantastic, there is no doubt that thousands are coming into the Kingdom each day. We may need to reevaluate our understanding of the growth of the Kingdom.

*“God has huge plans for the world today! He is not content to merely establish a handful of struggling churches among each tongue, tribe and nation. Even now He is preparing and empowering His Church to carry the seeds of revival to the uttermost ends of the earth.”<sup>27</sup>*

## **H. Less Unreached People**

We need, however, to take all things in context. We have already noted that one-third of the world’s six billion + people in the world call themselves ‘Christians’ yet not all of them are saved. In addition, there are also another one-third of the world who have been reached in some form by the gospel but remain non-Christians; and there are yet another *one-third* of people who live in ‘unreached’ groups.<sup>28</sup> Two billion people without the opportunity to receive Jesus is a very high number and is a great challenge to the church to take the gospel message to these unreached peoples of the world. Yet in the midst of these figures there is good news. In 1974 the figure of the unreached was much higher. There were around *one-half* who lived in unreached people groups!<sup>29</sup> For the first time in history, there are fewer non-Christians in unreached people groups than in evangelised groups! Winter and Koch conclude:

*We are in the final era of missions. For the first time in history it is possible to see the end of the tunnel when there will be a church movement within the language and social structure of every people group on earth, powerful face to face evangelism taking over in all peoples. God is moving throughout His global body to fulfil His promise to the nations in ways that we could not possibly have imagined 20 years ago.<sup>30</sup>*

## **I. Next**

From the next section we will begin to look at the growth in different parts of the world. It is an exciting study. Before that read through the article written by Duncan Campbell concerning the Hebrides Revival and then answer the questions that follow.

<sup>23</sup> Shaping Eternity Infobytes Caleb Project. [[http://www.calebproject.org/main.php/news\\_and\\_interactive/infobytes\\_animations](http://www.calebproject.org/main.php/news_and_interactive/infobytes_animations)] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>24</sup> [<http://www.joshuaproject.net/assets/FromEveryNationMap.doc>] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>25</sup> Momentum · March/April 2006 · Page 30 · [[www.momentum-mag.org](http://www.momentum-mag.org)] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>26</sup> Jim Rutz, [[http://www.cbn.com/700club/Guests/Bios/Jim\\_Rutz042805.aspx](http://www.cbn.com/700club/Guests/Bios/Jim_Rutz042805.aspx)] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>27</sup> David Smithers, [<http://www.tentmaker.org/Quotes/evangelismquotes.htm>] (accessed 18/9/06)

<sup>28</sup> Defining a people group and who exactly is unreached is complicated. We will look more at this subject in the course ‘The Peoples of All Nations’.

<sup>29</sup> Patrick Johnstone, The State of World Evangelisation, [<http://www.missionfrontiers.org/newslinks/statewe.htm>] (accessed 18/09/06)

<sup>30</sup> Finishing the Task: The Unreached Peoples Challenge by Ralph D. Winter and Bruce A. Koch [<http://www.missionfrontiers.org/newslinks/finishing.htm>] (accessed 18/09/06)

## ***Appendix One: When the Mountains Flowed Down***

By Duncan Campbell<sup>31</sup>

*Oh that thou wouldest rend the heavens, that thou wouldest come down, that the mountains might flow down at thy presence. As when the melting fire burneth, the fire causeth the waters to boil, to make thy name known to thine adversaries, that the nations may tremble at thy presence! When thou didst terrible things which we looked not for, thou camest down, the mountains flowed down at thy presence. Isaiah 64:1-3*

I never read that third verse without my mind going back to what actually happened in the parish of Barvas on the island of Lewis. At the outset, let me make it clear that I did not bring revival to the Hebrides. I had the privilege of being there and in some small way leading the movement for about three years but God moved in the parish of Barvas before I set foot on the island. Revival is still a sign which is spoken against, and you cannot believe every story you have heard about the Lewis Awakening. Down through the years things have been said which have no foundation in fact, however, facts are powerful things.

### **REVIVAL DEFINED**

First, let me tell you what I mean by revival. An evangelistic campaign or special meeting is not revival. In a successful evangelistic campaign or crusade, there will be hundreds or even thousands of people making decisions for Jesus Christ, but the community remains untouched, and the churches continue much the same as before the outreach. In revival, God moves in the district. Suddenly, the community becomes God conscious. The Spirit of God grips men and women in such a way that even work is given up as people give themselves to waiting upon God. In the midst of the Lewis Awakening, the parish minister at Barvas wrote, "The Spirit of the Lord was resting wonderfully on the different townships of the region. His Presence was in the homes of the people, on meadow and moorland, and even on the public roads." This presence of God is the supreme characteristic of a God-sent revival. Of the hundreds who found Jesus Christ during this time fully seventy-five per cent were

saved before they came near a meeting or heard a sermon by myself or any other ministers in the parish. The power of God, the Spirit of God, was moving in operation, and the fear of God gripped the souls of men - this is God-sent revival as distinct from special efforts in the field of evangelism.

### **A FOUNDATION OF INTERCESSION AND VISION**

How did this gracious movement begin? In 1949, the local presbytery issued a proclamation to be read on a certain Sunday in all the Free Churches on the island of Lewis. This proclamation called the people to consider the "low state of vital religion . . . throughout the land . . . and the present dispensation of Divine displeasure . . . due to growing carelessness toward public worship . . . and the growing influence of the spirit of pleasure which has taken growing hold of the younger generation." They called on the churches to "take these matters to heart and to make serious inquiry what must be the end if there be no repentance. We call upon every individual as before God to examine his or her life in light of that responsibility which attends to us all and that happily in divine mercy we may be visited with a spirit of repentance and turn again to the Lord whom we have so grieved." I am not prepared to say what effect the reading of this declaration had upon the ministers or people of the island in general, but I do know that in the parish of Barvas a number of men and women took it to heart, especially two old women. I am ashamed to think of it - two sisters, one eighty-two and one eight-four, the latter blind. These two women developed a great heart concern for God to do something in the parish and gave themselves to waiting upon God in their little cottage.

One night God gave one of the sisters a vision. Now, we have got to understand that in revival remarkable things happen. It is supernatural; you are not moving on human levels; you are moving in divine places. In the vision, she saw the churches crowded with young people and she told her sister, "I believe revival is coming to the parish." At that time, there was not a single young person attending public worship, a fact which cannot be disputed. Sending for the minister, she told him her story, and he took her message as a word from God to his heart. Turning to her he said, "What do you think we should do?" What?" she said, "Give yourself to prayer; give yourself to

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<sup>31</sup>[  
[http://www.sendrevival.com/pioneers/Duncan\\_Campbell/when\\_the\\_mountains\\_flow\\_down.htm](http://www.sendrevival.com/pioneers/Duncan_Campbell/when_the_mountains_flow_down.htm)] (accessed 21/09/06)

waiting upon God. Get your elders and deacons together and spend at least two nights a week waiting upon God in prayer. If you will do that at your end of the parish, my sister and I will do it at our end of the parish from ten o'clock at night until two or three o'clock in the morning." So, the minister called his leaders together and for several months they waited upon God in a barn among the straw. During this time they plead one promise, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon dry ground: I will pour my spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring" (Isaiah 44:3). This went on for at least three months. Nothing happened. But one night a young deacon rose and began reading from Psalm 24, "Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? Or who shall stand in his holy place? He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully. He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation" (Psalm 24:3-5). Closing his Bible, he addressed the minister and other office bearers in words that sound crude in English, but not so crude in our Gaelic language, "It seems to me so much humbug. To be waiting as we are waiting, to be praying as we are praying, when we ourselves are not rightly related to God." Then, he lifted his hands toward heaven and prayed, "O God, are my hands clean? Is my heart pure?" Then, he went to his knees and fell into a trance. Now, don't ask me to explain the physical manifestations of this movement because I can't, but this I do know, that something happened in the barn at that moment in that young deacon. There was a power loosed that shook the heavens and an awareness of God gripped those gathered together.

### **BREAKTHROUGH IN BARVAS**

Now, I wasn't in the island at the time. I was in another area when word came asking me to come to Lewis for ten days. I had other meetings scheduled and wrote back that I would put Barvas on my calendar for the following year. However, do to circumstances I won't go into, my other meetings were canceled, and I found it possible to go to the islands as requested. Arriving by boat, I was met by the minister of the church and one of his office bearers. As I stepped ashore, the office bearer came to me and said, "Mr. Campbell, may I ask you a question? Are you walking with God?" I was happy to be able to respond, "I can say this at any rate, I fear God."

They had arranged for me to address the church at a short meeting beginning at nine o'clock that night. It was a remarkable meeting. God sovereignly moved, and there was an awareness

of God which was wonderful. The meeting lasted until four o'clock in the morning, and I had not witnessed anything to compare with it at any other time during my ministry. Around midnight, a group of young people left a dance and crowded into the church. There were people who couldn't go to sleep because they were so gripped by God. Although there was an awareness of God and a spirit of conviction at this initial meeting, the real breakthrough came a few days later on Sunday night in the parish church. The church was full, and the Spirit of God was moving in such a way that I couldn't preach. I just stood still and gazed upon the wondrous moving of God. Men and women were crying out to God for mercy all over the church. There was no appeal made whatsoever. After meeting for over three hours, I pronounced the benediction and told the people to go out, but mentioned that any who wanted to continue the meeting could come back later.

A young deacon came to me and said, "Mr. Campbell, God is hovering over us." About that time the clerk of the session asked me to come to the back door. There was a crowd of at least 600 people gathered in the yard outside the church... Someone gave out Psalm 102 and the crowd streamed back in to the church which could no longer hold the number of people. A young school teacher came down front crying out, "O God, is there nothing left for me?" She is a missionary in Nigeria today. There was a bus load of people coming to the meeting from sixty miles away. The power of God came into the bus so that some could not even enter the church when the bus arrived. People were swooning all over the church, and I cannot remember one single person who was moved on by God that night who was not gloriously born again. When I went out of the church at four o'clock in the morning there were a great number of people praying alongside the road. In addition to the school teacher, several of those born again that night are in foreign mission work today.

### **IN CHURCH, MEADOW AND MOORLAND**

From Barvas, the move of God spread to the neighboring districts. I received a message that a nearby church was crowded at one o'clock in the morning and wanted me to come. When I arrived, the church was full and there were crowds outside. Coming out of the church two hours later, I found a group of 300 people, unable to get into the church, praying in a nearby field. One old woman complained about the noise of the meetings because she could not get to sleep. A deacon grabbed her and shook her, saying, "Woman, you have been asleep long enough!" There was one area of the islands which wanted

me to come but I didn't feel any leading to accept the invitation. The blind sister encouraged me to go and told me, "If you were living as near to God as you ought to be, He would reveal His secrets to you." I agreed to spend a morning in prayer with her in the cottage. As we prayed, the sister said, "Lord, you remember what you told me today that you were going to save seven men in this church. I just gave your message to Mr. Campbell and please give him wisdom because he badly needs it." She told me if I would go to the village, God would provide a congregation. I agreed to go, and when I arrived at seven o'clock, there were approximately 400 people at the church. The people could not tell what it was that had brought them; it had been directed by the Spirit of God. I spoke for a few minutes on the text "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent' (Acts 17:30). One of the ministers stopped me and said, "Come see this." At one end of the meeting house, the most notorious characters in the community were on their faces crying out to God.

On a trip to a neighboring island I found the people were very cold and stiff. Calling for some men to come over and pray, I particular requested that a young man named Donald accompany them. Donald, who was seventeen years old, had been recently saved and baptized in the Holy Spirit about two weeks later on a hillside. As we were in the church that night, Donald was sitting toward the front with tears falling off his face onto the floor. I knew Donald was in touch with God in a way that I was not. So I stopped preaching and asked him to pray. Donald rose to his feet and prayed, "I seem to be gazing into an open door and see the Lamb in the midst of the throne and the keys of death and hell on his waist." Then he stopped and began to sob. After he composed himself, he lifted his eyes toward heaven, raised his hands, and said, "God, there is power there. Let it loose!" And at that moment the power of God fell upon the congregation. On one side of the room, the people threw up their hands, put their heads back and kept them in that position for two hours. It is hard to do this for ten minutes, much less two hours. On the other side, the people were slumped over, crying out for mercy. In a village five miles away, the power of God swept through the town and there was hardly a house in that village that didn't have someone saved in that night.

In one area of the district there was bitter opposition to the movement because I preached the baptism of the Holy Ghost as a separate and distinct occurrence following conversion. Those who opposed me were so successful in their opposition that very few people came to the

meetings. One night, the session clerk came to me and said, "There is only one thing we can do to correct the situation which now prevails. We must give ourselves to waiting upon God in prayer. I have been told there is a farmer who said we could meet in his home. He is not a Christian and his wife isn't saved, but they are God-fearing people." About thirty of us, ministers and elders from the district, met in this farmer's house. I felt the going very, very hard. I prayed. All the ministers prayed. One felt that the very powers of hell were unleashed. About midnight I turned to one of the elders and told him I thought the time had come for him to lay hold of God. This man rose to his feet and prayed for about half an hour. (Of course, you must remember that we were in revival, and in revival time doesn't exist. Nobody was looking at the clock.) The man paused, lifted his hand toward heaven and said, "God, did You know that your honor is a stake? You gave the promise that You would pour water on the thirsty and floods upon the dry ground, and You are not doing it." I wonder how many of us could approach God with words like that on our lips? Then he said, "There are five ministers in this meeting, including Mr. Campbell, and I don't know where a one of them stands in Your Presence. But if I know anything about my own heart, I think I can say that I am thirsty for a manifestation of Your power." He paused again, then cried out in aloud voice, "God, Your honor is at stake and I now challenge You to pour water on the thirsty and floods upon the dry ground." And in that moment the stone-built house literally shook like a leaf. I immediately went to the Acts of the Apostles where it is recorded that they prayed and the place where they were assembled was shaken. As soon as this dear man stopped praying, I pronounced the benediction a little after two o'clock in the morning and went out to find the whole village ablaze with God. I went into one house and found nine women on their knees in the kitchen crying out to God. One woman saved that night has written some of the finest Gaelic hymns in our Gaelic hymnal. On the following Sunday, the road was black with the people walking two miles to the church. The drinking house in that particular village closed that night and had never reopened since. This is God at work. A God sent revival is always a revival of holiness.

#### **CONCLUSION**

It takes the supernatural to break the bonds of the natural. You can make a community mission-conscious. You can make a community crusade-conscious. But only God can make a community God-conscious. Just think about what would happen if God came to any community in power. I believe that day is coming. May God prepare us all for it. Amen.

## **STUDY QUESTIONS:**

### *Section One:*

- a) What do you think of Duncan Campbell's definition of revival?
- b) We have noted worldwide figures for the growth of Christianity. What are the figures for growth within your country or region? Are they similar to that of the world, or are they different? Suggest some reasons for the similarities and differences.

## **PRAYER:**

We thank you Lord for the growth of the church in the world. We rejoice with the saints at each new birth. However, Lord we realise that the task is unfinished, and there are many who have never heard the gospel or received you as Lord and Saviour. Lord, we pray for these now, and we ask that as you show us how we can do our part in the Great Commission that we can be faithful to it.