

David Ford Interview

by David Ford

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Description

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Transcript

My name is David Ford. I'm based in Phoenix, Arizona, born in Springfield, Missouri, for all those show-me people, and accepted Christ as my Lord and Savior at seven years old, 1966, in Oxnard, California. Jesus saved me.

He saved me. I didn't pray a prayer, as it were. Jesus saved me, and it was in prayer, obviously, but it was a change in my life, even at seven years old.

And there was a hunger for the Word of God, a hunger for prayer. I'd never go to sleep at night without having prayer in my own bed with the Lord. And then on May 28th, 1978, in that year, God called me to preach and used the Scripture in Ephesians 6, where Paul said, And for me that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, that therein I may speak as I ought to speak.

My dad was preaching on Jonah that night, how he ran from God. I was a youth pastor at 16 years old, or 17, whatever it was. But that night, God got a hold of my heart, and I knew, and He was drawing me, David, I've called you to preach.

I argued, no, Lord, you've got the wrong person. Broken, weeping back there in that pew. God gave me that Scripture.

You leave pastors to me, because I thought that's a lot of hypocrisy. Leave that to me. I've called you to preach.

And from then on, it was just prayer really has been the main focus. That night, I ended up in a prayer meeting at the altar of the church, in front of the church, down in McNeil, Mississippi, a little church down there. God met us, people again weeping all over the auditorium, broke out in the movement of God even that very night in the service.

Years later, went to Bible school in Canada, and from there, God led the travel with Dr. Stephen Oldford, the great expositor. In 1983, traveled with him around the country, and then ministered with him from time to time until his homegoing in 2004, and he was on my board for many years, and we prayed a lot together during those early years, especially. And that was a real privilege to be with him.

Preaching blessed my life from Stephen Oldford, but what blessed me even more than the preaching was the praying together. I love D.M. Panton's definition of revival. Prayer is God the Spirit talking to God the Father in the name of God the Son, and the believer's heart is his prayer closet.

That puts all the onus on God to pray through us in his indwelling presence. Globe for Christ International is the name of the ministry, basing out of Phoenix, and from there, traveled all over the world, countries all over the world, and in the U.S., focusing on the God of revival, not just where is the Elijah of God, where is the God of Elijah as well. GlobeforChrist.com is the website, so pray for me, brother.

Pray, pray, pray. I believe revival is not a series of meetings in the church. It's not a glorified Sunday morning service on a Tuesday night in the church.

It's not, let's do it this way and sing three fast songs and two slow songs and get up and preach a three-point outline and then a hymn of closing at the end. Revival is the manifest presence of God, and all that God does when you're in the presence of God, the brokenness, the repentance, the prayer, and people praying for revival need to realize, and we all must see, and I had to in my life, that sometimes praying for revival can be the greatest hindrance of revival praying. They're not the same thing.

Many are praying for revival, don't have a clue what they're praying about. Their mindset is a series of meetings in a church, but what drives a man to this deeper thing of real revival is lack in his own life and ministry, his powerlessness in his own heart and life, not just the church, in his own heart and life. He cries out to God.

God breaks him, and he gets thoroughly, thoroughly honest with God. The greatest hindrance to revival is the church of Jesus Christ not getting honest with God about their true condition. So I love Brian Edwards' book on revival and the definitions given in there in the Lewis Awakening of Duncan Campbell of 1949, A People Saturated with God, A Community Saturated with God.

I was in a meeting one time, and that's not just, let me say this first, firstly. People say, well, God's omnipresent. God is omnipresent, but omnipresence, I believe Isaiah knew about omnipresence when he said, oh God, that you would tear open the heavens and come down.

He knew God was omnipresent. It's taught in the book of Isaiah. Times are refreshing from the presence of the Lord, Acts chapter 3. Peter knew about the omnipresence of God.

Revival is not the omnipresence of God. Revival is the tremendous, overwhelming effusion, outpouring of the manifest presence of God. And the result is revival in the church.

And the way for it to be sustained, I use three words, stay hungry, be hungry, be humble, and be holy in your walk with God. And then learn about revival. How has God moved in? What does it look like? God took me in my own life to a place of brokenness.

I said, God, I'm tired of reading about revival. I traveled with Stephen Olford, met Billy Graham, been around and read for years the histories of revival. God began to break my heart.

I said, God, I'm tired of hearing about revival. I want to see it. And God laid on my heart, how serious are you about this? I said, I'm dead serious.

I don't care what the cost is. I've got to see your glory and your power in true, real revival. God led me on 10 days of fasting and prayer, and he worked differently in people's lives.

But all I can say in a short summation is in the middle of the night on the 10th night at about 2.05 in the morning, God broke me and God met me. All I could do is weep and cry and say, thank you, Jesus. Thank you, Jesus.

Thank you, Jesus. The next week, a pastor called, I had met several years earlier. He said, David, I don't know if you remember me, but we met over here, a little church in the country in Arizona, Arlington Baptist Church.

He said, we need revival. I was at my prayer hall the other day. God put you on my heart to ask you to come to our church.

You see, when we pray for revival, God doesn't start the work with somebody else. He starts it in you and me. He breaks us first.

I went to that church. Sunday morning, not much usual happens. Sunday night, nothing really unusual happened.

Monday night, or Tuesday, I said, Lord, I'm tired of this. I don't want to say more. I used to always say, Lord, what's it like to see you move in such a way we go beyond scheduled dates and meetings? Because you come, not because we orchestrated.

On Tuesday night, it was a very firm message. The message was this. The reason this church is half empty, it's not God's fault.

He said, the harvest is plentiful, but the labors are few. Pray, therefore, the Lord of the harvest to send forth labors into his harvest. I said, the Bible says that God's not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance.

It's not God's fault. So the reason why we're half empty in the many of our churches is because we don't know enough of the power of the Holy Spirit in our hearts and lives for something to change and transform our churches. It's because we're missing it with God somewhere.

Brother, it was one of those nights when we didn't leave happy, clappy. We didn't leave, but yet in a solemn solemnity of heart, a brokenness, quietness, the next night, Wednesday night, was going to be the

final night. God came and God broke us.

The only way I could define it at that time and even now in meetings, two weeks ago in the church, it's like a hovercraft. God just sits down on the audience. And when God shows up like that, there's very little you have to do and say, just stay out of his way.

He'll do what he wants to do. And so just pray and obey, pray and obey. God came on Wednesday night and God let in my heart to pray for the pastor, that there was bitterness and anger in my dear, dear, dear brother's heart.

I said, Lord, I don't want to pray over. He's the pastor. I don't want to.

I got that in my heart. You pray over him. I'll take my glory off these meetings.

I said, all right. I said, brother, can I pray for you? He said, yeah, please. And I turned sideways and he was to my right.

And I put my back to him as if I was standing between him and the throne. And such a travail broke out of my heart, out of my spirit. For that dear brother, God, my brother's being attacked with anger and bitterness.

Lord, it'll destroy his ministry of life. I ask you tonight to protect him. I ask you, God, to break him.

I ask you, God, to use him. I ask you, God, to pour out your spirit upon his life. I didn't pray a very long time.

I finished praying. He had tears coming down his face. He said, brother David, can I say something? I said, sure, brother.

Standing where he was, not even facing the people, but facing sideways. He said, my wife has told me for years I've been an angry, bitter man. She's right.

And it's sin in my life. But tonight, Jesus has broken me. He cleansed me and set me free.

And it broke out. You can't really define revival without telling stories of how God moves in it. You just have to be there.

We went on the next night. God came again. We went on Friday night.

God came again. Brother, I could drive to that church. I could see way in the distance in the Arizona desert.

Back then you could see the steeple. And I remember coming under the influence of the manifest presence of God, about maybe a mile away from that church. And all of a sudden my heart would be warmed and broken and melted because of God's presence.

We were going to end. And he and I pull off on the side of the road. He came walking up to my car and said, brother David, what's wrong? We were going out to eat after the Friday night service.

I said, Tom, we can't close these meetings. God isn't done. He called three people the next day and he called me back and he said, David, before I even brought it up, three people said, pastor, we can't end

these meetings.

God's come. Please, we can't end these meetings. And we went on for four weeks every single night.

That's what happened when God comes. That is revival. Jesus said there in Luke and prophesied in Isaiah about John the Baptist preparing you the way of the Lord.

John preached it. Every mountain should be brought down. Every valley should be filled up.

Every crooked way made straight, et cetera. And the idols in our lives in America are the things that hinder the manifest glory of God in our churches. Hosea 10, 12 says, sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy, break up your fallow ground for it's time to seek the Lord until he comes and rains righteousness upon you.

So we can take that and back it up. Are we seeing the rain of righteousness, R-A-I-N, let alone the R-E-I-G-N of righteousness? Many places, no. I've been in some mighty dead prayer meetings over the years.

And I have to get on and say, Lord, if I'm not seeing the rain of your manifest presence, if the unbeliever doesn't come into our churches like in 1 Corinthians 13 and fall on his face and say, I have a truth, God is in this place, then all we're doing is rearranging the furniture. That's all we're doing. If I'm not seeing that, then God hasn't come in his manifest presence.

If God hasn't come in his manifest presence, I haven't broken up the fallow ground. I've not made ready. I've not prepared the highway for the king to come.

And if I've not done that, I'm definitely not reaping in mercy and I'm not sowing in righteousness. It gets back to my responsibility. I've been preaching the last two years everywhere God sends me that greed in America is not going to kill America.

Greed in America is killing America and other countries. Because when America sneezes, other countries catch a cold. I travel all over the world and they tell me that.

A dear brother from Africa came to the U.S. to preach and said, we know this in Africa. If America falls, then freedom in the world globally will fall. We're praying for the movement of God in America.

To be quite honest with you, when it dropped stock market at 7.7, 7.68 on that Monday, I wasn't shocked or surprised at all. As a matter of fact, one of those seasons of prayer, I hardly ever talk about this. Usually about two weeks before, God lays on my heart to pray certain ways about things of international consequence.

Maybe in my living room, on my couch, on my knees, I'm single, 48, never married, nothing wrong, I'm just never married, you know. But God broke my heart over this nation. And God broke my heart in prayer one night in travail, I mean travail.

And it just exploded out of my heart. And God smashed Wall Street and bring this nation to its knees. Because we're so arrogant and we're so proud.

And we have our topsiders and we have our nice little name brand shirts, our nice little pants. And we go to church in our nice little vehicles, nothing wrong with blessing. God, the word says, hey, enjoy what I've

given you, but don't get your eyes off of me in the process.

In many places, we tip God. Many people, even the great wealth in this country, instead of giving to missions and giving to ministry and giving at church, they got to make sure the little 401k stays in place and their retirement is set in place. And God said, you know what? Let me show you what I think about your little stink of 401k.

Because your dependence has turned to your money and not me. And that offends the righteous and holy God. So money, pleasure, ease, love of ease, tradition, bankrupt preaching, cold praying, those have become idols in the American church.

There was a time many years ago in America that before the group came to town to set up to have a little carnival, they called the churches and asked, are you having revival meetings in your church this week? Because we don't want to come if you're doing that. Nowadays, I'm driving to churches to preach somewhere on a Sunday morning and the little league baseball fields and soccer fields are all full of people. And they can't tell me I don't have time for church because I'm so tired because of work.

No, we're so stinking self-centered in America. It's no wonder. It's no wonder God is allowing and bringing judgment upon this nation.

And I believe it's only just the beginning, but that breaks my heart. I've been crying out for years at the church. We trivialize God.

We trivialize his word. We trivialize prayer. We trivialize coming together as the body of Christ.

Prayer meeting on Wednesday night is anything but prayer meeting anymore with just the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost showing up and you can barely feel the vestries in church, but I don't criticize a lot of people for that. Because I believe if we as leaders were as near to the heart of God as we should be, if the flame burned in our souls at prayer meeting, they'd come to watch us burn. So the responsibility is not just upon the people.

I have found in traveling, usually the hindrance to revival is not the people sitting in the pews. It's leadership in churches. They really don't want revival.

They're making their nice little paycheck. They got their retirement going. Their wife has a nice little job somewhere and everything's going wonderful and fine.

And Deacon so-and-so who's been mean for years has finally calmed down and gotten quiet. Brother, you know the difference between wheat and tares? It's this. You can hardly tell between wheat and tares until the wind blows.

But when the wind blows, the wheat waves and bows with the pressure and movement of the wind, but the tares stay stiff and straight. The problem in many a church is this. There's such a lack of blowing of the wind of the Spirit of God, you can't tell who the wheat is and who the tare is because of a lack of a movement of the Holy Spirit of God.

But you let God come and revive over your church, and you don't have to look for the Pharisees. They rise to the surface, but God can handle the Pharisees. I agree with Leonard Ravenhill.

Someday, somebody's going to pick up the Bible and read a verse of Scripture and believe it, and revival is going to break out. That's the problem in America. We don't want the revival, the God of revival, and the result is judgment.

I believe in many cases, the pill, be it Ritalin or whatever it is, has become one of the idols in America that's hindered revival. Hardships in life are like the nails that hold us to the cross. So then crucifixion, His resurrection life emanates from us and through us.

If I don't have hardships and affliction, if I don't have those things in life, I'll never know what the exchange life was all about. Jesus didn't come to cure the self-life. He came to crucify it.

And the crucified life is that I died with Christ 2,000 years ago. I was buried with Him. I rose again with Him, seated with Him in the heavenlies.

When I rose again from the dead with Jesus, did my sins come with me? No. He bore all my sin and shame, all the guilt. He took it all.

The problem we're having in America is we've gotten away from the place of surrender, the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and prayer. I was in a church one time when God came in precious revival. It went four months in one church.

Five drug houses around that church closed down during the days of revival. When God comes to church, He loves the powerless, the weak, the impotent. How many people are sitting by the gate beautiful all those years, and there's not enough power in the church to transform their life on our very steps? That's not a condemnation because God has given us the pathway, and the pathway is ever and always through the blood of Jesus.

If I'll humble myself, He'll raise us up in due time, but I've got to humble myself before Him first and say, God, I'm not going to confess everything's okay and all right because it's not. That's why I need you, but not just to puff me up and promote me on my agenda, but Lord, because Your glory and honor is at stake. When Jesus was exalted as Lord, Acts 2:33, that's when the Holy Spirit was poured out.

We need to get back in the churches to preaching and living through the lordship of Jesus Christ, not theologically, not mere theology, but practically. I was sharing recently at a staff retreat, we're talking about pornography and sins of addiction and how do you deal with temptation, and it wasn't part of what I was going to share. When they began talking about those things, when my address came, I said, I want to address what you've been talking about.

The way to handle temptation, I said, Romans 5, I mean, Galatians 5, they that are Christ have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. I said, sometimes that lust rises up within you in such a way that you feel like it's a lion, it's a raging thing inside of you that you can't even control it. It has control of you.

I'm like, yeah. I said, I've had men come up, one guy came up one time, and I think I'm in particular, beautiful, gorgeous wife. Pornography was eating his lunch, destroying his life.

I said, what do you tell someone when you're a little counseling session, how to deal with temptation? What do you tell them? I said, if it's outside of the cross, all it is is a band-aid. But here's the truth. Years ago, I asked the Lord, I said, Lord, I'm not trying to, I'm not trying to be unbelieving, but Lord, your word says that the gospel is the power of God unto deliverance, to all that believe.

What makes it so powerful? You're down on the cross, you're buried, you rose again. But why is that so powerful? God taught me this, the school of the spirit, I guess he takes us all through, that the cross of Jesus Christ, the gospel of Jesus Christ is not only the only message of deliverance, it is the only method of deliverance. Romans 8, 13, if you live after the flesh, you shall die, but if you through the spirit, present tense, go on putting to death the deeds of the body, you shall live.

Every time temptation comes, I pray this, oh God, by the power of the Holy Spirit, apply the slaying power of the cross against my flesh that wants to rise up right now within me, whatever it is. And brother, every single time that desire totally disappears and leaves, the gospel is the only method of deliverance. And that's the answer for our homes.

Let's get focused on Jesus.

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