

# Early Preaching Efforts.

by J. Tudor Rees

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*The sermon highlights the early preaching efforts of Evan Roberts and the importance of prayer in his life.*

**Scripture:** Psalm 119:105, Proverbs 3:5, Jeremiah 29:13, Philippians 4:6, James 4:8

**Topics:** "Prayer Life", "Revival Ministry"

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## Description

J. Tudor Rees shares the journey of Evan Roberts, a passionate preacher who faced mental anxiety and physical exhaustion from his fervent preaching. Despite feeling ill-prepared for challenges, prayer sustained him through difficult times. Roberts struggled with the fear of losing his close communion with God when entering college, but eventually found solace in prayer and Bible reading, dedicating all his time to religious devotions. His charismatic personality and poetic soul reflected a deep zeal for God's purpose in his life, leading him to impact many with his revivalist fervor.

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## Transcript

But to preach was always somewhat of an ordeal, He was passionately fond of it, but the mental anxiety and soul-worry must surely have told upon him.

"Because he was never over-strong," Mrs. Roberts informed me. "After preaching he would come home very tired, and sometimes done up. His chest used to trouble him a great deal; but now, thank God, he is all right."

With preaching and praying, his time was much encroached upon, and the hours devoted to study became proportionately less. And when the eventful examination day came the student considered himself somewhat ill prepared for the ordeal. But prayer sustained and encouraged him, and he got through the examination without much difficulty. "But Evan says," declares his mother, "that he does not know how he passed. How God must have helped him "

It now remained for the young man to enter college, and, packing up his belongings, not without some sad regrets, he proceeded, at the commencement of 1904, to the Preparatory School, Newcastle Emlyn. But of all his sorrows at leaving home, the greatest was his fear lest the sweet communion with God which he had enjoyed for so long should cease.

"I dreaded to go to college," he says, "for fear I should lose those four hours with God every morning. But I had to go, and it happened as I feared. For a whole month He came no more, and I was in darkness."

Roberts decided to give up half an hour every day to communion with God; but such planning and organising his Master did not seem to favour. At the end of the first month at the school the darkness became pierced by a Light unspeakable. The old joy returned, and once more he communed with God, "as with a friend, face to face." As the days wore on he became less inclined to study, and more inclined to pray and read the Bible. And soon, as he himself says, "all the time was taken up" in those religious devotions.

To study was all right; but--but--but he was straining towards a nebulous something.

Dissatisfied--or, rather, unsatisfied--at home, he was the same at college. He could not yet understand God's purpose in his life.

The critic says that Roberts is nothing; but, eliminate the human as much as you like, you are bound to reckon with the charming, forceful, captivating personality of the revivalist. The active brain and powerful individuality of the student made it as easy for him to have lived an obscure life in his humble village at Loughor as for General Booth to have kept within the limits of his Methodist circuit, or Wesley in his tiny parsonage at Epworth. The youth was brimming over with a zeal that soon was to be shed in all directions.

At college, as at home, he frequently wrote poetry, and some of it was of no ordinary merit. His mother told me that often he would go and sit alone on the hillside, and do no small amount of rhyming. He was a poetic soul, and he sought to give expression to the thoughts that haunted him when alone with Nature.

Much of this poetry has appeared in the Golofn Cymraeg (Welsh column) of the "Cardiff Times" under the revivalist's bardic name, "Bwlchydd." He frequently sent his MS. to that eminent Welsh poet, Rev. Elvet Lewis, who criticised the verses of his ambitious student.

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