

Radio Interview: In the Light of Eternity the Ministry of Leonard Ravenhill

by Mack Tomlinson

The sermon discusses the life and ministry of Leonard Ravenhill, a 20th-century evangelist and preacher who emphasized the importance of living a holy life and being accountable to God.

Duration: 53:21

Scripture: Psalm 90:12, Matthew 6:19-21, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Timothy 4:2, Hebrews 9:27, James 4:14, 1 Peter 1:24-25

Topics: "Radio Interview"

Description

The video discusses the ministry of a preacher who delivers powerful and convicting sermons about the serious matters of God. The preacher's seriousness and reverence for God's word is highlighted, contrasting with the light and irreverent approach often seen in contemporary music and preaching. The video emphasizes the need for believers to have a deep understanding of eternity and the judgment seat of Christ, and to live with a heavenly perspective. It also encourages viewers to learn from the examples of faithful servants of God and to recognize the difference between genuine and counterfeit expressions of faith.

Transcript

V-C-Y-A-M-E-R-I-C-A PRESENTS CROSS TALK, A NATIONWIDE CALL IN PROGRAM DISCUSSING ISSUES THAT HAVE AN EFFECT ON OUR FAMILIES, OUR COMMUNITIES, OUR CHURCHES, OUR NATION AND OUR WORLD. CROSS TALK, AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO VOICE YOUR CONCERNS FOR BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES. AND NOW LIVE BY SATELLITE AND AROUND THE WORLD ON THE INTERNET AT V-C-Y-A-M-E-R-I-C-A-D-O-T-O-R-G.

HERE IS TODAY'S CROSS TALK. The boy wrote this, only one life will soon be passed, only what's done for God will last. And when I am dying, how glad I shall be if the lamp of my life has been burned out for thee.

Only one life will soon be passed. That's the voice of Leonard Ravenhill. Excuse me, this is Ingrid Sleater.

Welcome to Cross Talk today. We begin the program with just a little audio from the preaching of an evangelist and a preacher who made a very big impact for the Lord Jesus Christ in the 20th century. And we're going to talk about him today and discuss his life with someone who has written a brand new

biography of his life.

It's coming out in just a few weeks time. And I saw the promotion for this biography, watched some of the video. And I realized this was something that was really needed on Cross Talk.

That we needed to talk about those that God has used. You know, so often on this program we discuss what has gone wrong in the evangelical church. And we talk about all of the corruption and the sad things that are going on doctrinally.

But how wonderful to go back and to see those that God has used to learn from their example, to learn from their lives. And to be encouraged to see that God is still at work. That there is a lot of counterfeit out there, but there still is the genuine article.

And that's why we're doing this particular program today. I'd like to introduce our guest today. His name is Mack Tomlinson.

And he is a pastor at Providence Chapel in Denton, Texas. He's a graduate of Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene, Texas. And Veritas Theological Seminary in Heber Springs, Arkansas.

He has pastored four churches since 1977 to the present. He also serves as the editorial director for Free Grace Press in Conway, Arkansas. He also travels widely in an itinerant preaching ministry to churches and conferences here in the United States and overseas.

He has been married to his wife, Linda, for 32 years. And they have six children and three grandchildren. And he and his wife, Linda, were friends with Leonard and Martha Ravenhill from 1977 until their deaths in 1994 and 2001.

And he is uniquely qualified to do this biography. And I want to begin, first of all, by welcoming our guest, Mack Tomlinson. Hi, welcome to Crosstalk.

Hello, good afternoon. It's nice to be with you. Thank you for having me on.

Who was Leonard Ravenhill and why does it matter today? Well, Leonard Ravenhill was an Englishman born in Leeds, England in 1907. And he ministered for 28 years in the British Isles and then moved to America in 1958. And he was here for 36 years in America and ministered all over the world.

And though he's been dead now 17 years and with the Lord in heaven, his message is timeless and is very applicable to Christians today and to the Church of Jesus Christ. You know, when you hear the kind of preaching that Leonard Ravenhill did, it makes you sit up in your chair and listen. It's very sobering.

It's not cotton candy. It's not being dispensed by some of the happy preachers on television today. It's nothing like that.

But it's the kind of thing that is immediately convicting. It pierces your heart almost instantly when you hear this man preaching about the serious things of God. And that's one of the reasons I wanted to let some of our listeners know about his ministry.

In the famine we have today in the country for solid preaching, for prophetic preaching that says, this is what does say of the Lord. This is what his word says. And so that is why I wanted to do this particular program.

Let's talk about his beginnings. He had a very interesting start to his ministry. He did a lot of walking or trekking, as they called it.

Yes. He grew up in a strong Methodist home in the north of England in Leeds with godly parents. His father, who was not a Christian originally when Leonard was young, had a powerful conversion to Christ.

And then Leonard became a Christian himself at the age of 15 because he saw a difference in his father. He saw his father had a reality that he himself didn't have. So Leonard came to Christ at the age of 15.

And he immediately began to have a real prayer life and began to engage in personal evangelism around the north of England even as a teenager. Then five years later, he answered God's call to the Christian ministry when he was 20 years old while working as a tailor there in Leeds. And he left immediately to move near Sheffield, England, which is north of London, and to Cliff College where the famous Samuel Chadwick was the principal.

Chadwick was one of the better known preachers in Britain. And Leonard went there to study under Samuel Chadwick. While he was there, Leonard read two books that had a powerful influence on him and began to shape his whole life.

The first was *The Life of David Brainerd*, the American missionary to the Indians in New England in the 18th century. And then the second book was by D. M. McIntyre, *The Hidden Life of Prayer*. These two books showed Ravenhill a reality of prayer that he didn't realize existed.

And so he began to develop a real prayer life. And as a result of that, he developed a reputation as a very forthright, bold, and powerful preacher known for his evangelistic gift in preaching, but also known for his fearless and powerful proclamation of truth. And then he probably became more widely known in the late 50s around 1960 when his first book was published, *Why Revival Tarries*.

And he is known primarily by that book title in a clear international way. I love what you said on the video promoting this book, the biography that's coming out shortly on his life called *In Light of Eternity*. I like what you said where they called him the gospel trekkers and they had some kind of a cart they pushed around England in their evangelistic efforts.

They really literally carried it all over England. They did. The trekking ministry, the word trek, originally I think was a South African origin meaning to walk long distances, a long journey on foot.

And Samuel Chadwick at Cliff College had a vision of the young evangelist at the college taking the gospel to the unreached masses of society around Britain, the people unchurched. And so teams of young men in their 20s and 30s, most of whom were single, they weren't married, a few of them were, they literally had a cart and they would have basically a personal backpack on it with bare necessities that they needed to carry with themselves. And then they had a large tent on the cart.

And they literally walked across England from the south to the north, from the west to the east, and they would go into towns for two or three weeks at a time. They would pitch the tent and they would be there for two or three weeks preaching, doing evangelism, and sometimes they ended up staying for two or three months. So they walked village to village, town to town.

Well, you know, I've heard people criticize what they call, quote, revivalism. But I want to say something about this kind of preaching ministry. My grandmother was actually converted to Christ as a teenage girl

when she was walking down the street in her neighborhood and came across a vacant lot.

And on that lot, an evangelist had pitched a tent. And that is where she heard the gospel and God really grabbed her heart and she was converted to Christ and she ultimately became a missionary here in the United States planting Sunday schools. She and several of her colleagues after Bible college did much like Ravenhill's group there did and took the gospel to some of the areas out there in South Dakota.

And there's a church, in fact, alive today that began as a small Sunday school for children. And God raised up some men and a church was raised up. And so I want to just say to those who say, well, I don't know about this revivalist stuff.

You know, doesn't that leave problems in communities? When the gospel goes forth in power, God chooses sovereignly how he uses that gospel as it goes forward. And it excites me to hear about a ministry where they didn't have any fancy sort of self-fulfillment, life enhancement messages, but they had the truth that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners and that he wants us to have a relationship with him through his son. And I think that's exciting.

I want to talk about his message spoke much about holiness throughout his life. Many of the sermons I hear by Ravenhill had to do with the topic of holiness. And I know that was also a theme frequently of A.W. Tozer and some of the other great preachers of the past.

He was saying something at his time in the 20th century already in the evangelical church that troubled him. Could you just talk about that for a moment? Yes, well, that's true. Like his close friend, Dr. Tozer, Leonard felt troubled and grieved in his heart that he did not see professing Christians living according to biblical standards.

He felt that it was due to several reasons. Number one, he believed many church members were not true Christians, that though they had been baptized perhaps, joined the church, they had not experienced true regeneration and conversion by the Holy Spirit. So he felt many were not true Christians in the church.

Secondly, he saw compromise and worldliness among professing Christians. He saw a lack of seriousness about God and professing believers living like the world. And he was troubled very much by it.

He felt many Christians often lived below their spiritual inheritance in Christ and the privileges that were there for them. So the common themes in his preaching were really several. Holiness of life for the Christian, true prayer, genuine revival and spiritual awakening, and the glory and greatness of Jesus Christ and the power of the gospel.

Those were the themes that most of his preaching centered around. And that's why his preaching is still relevant today and such an encouragement in his exhortations. I heard someone commented on our Crosstalk blog that what he was hearing smacked of legalism.

And I wrote back and I said this kindly, but I said, you know, I think we are so far removed from the kind of preaching that Leonard Ravenhill and Tozer and these others did that it offends our soft sensibilities to have anyone call out and point us back to Christ. When I hear this kind of preaching, my reaction is analyze my heart. Let's see what's going on in my own life.

Am I and isn't that what the Apostle Paul said that we are to examine ourselves to see whether we are in the faith that we're not to just float through life with this kind of complacency. And of course, that is what

we see in so much of the Laodicean church is this kind of lukewarm, nominal Christianity that has absolutely no impact on the real way that we live. Yes, I agree.

And Leonard Ravenhill would certainly agree with that. Well, we are going to take a break in just a moment. And as we go to the break, I want to mention your website where people can watch.

I actually can see the video or excuse me. I believe that video is connected to your website, isn't it? The promo video for the book. Okay, it's ravenhillbiography.com. That's the website.

You can pre-order the book if you'd like. We'll talk more about the book when we come back from the break because this is not your ordinary paperback biography with just a few little notations. This is a very thorough job and it has some beautiful pictures in it.

We'll talk more about that when we return. But the website ravenhillbiography.com. We'll be right back. Back to Genesis with Dr. John Morris, scientist with the Institute for Creation Research.

Dr. Morris, what can you tell me about bird calls? Chris, birds employ many types of calls for different purposes and to communicate different thoughts. Consider the cassowary bird in Australia. They make many distinctive calls that humans can hear, but they also make low-pitched sounds that we can't hear.

These enable the birds to communicate over long distances in the forest. They not only have the vocal apparatus, but they have an unusual hearing apparatus too. It's all quite mysterious and quite similar to the ear of a whale.

But these two are not supposed to be closely related according to evolution. And that's the point. They didn't evolve from a common ancestor.

They were created by an intelligent god to perform a variety of functions in a variety of environments. It's necessary to have a back-to-Genesis perspective to really understand the world around us. For more information, you can find us on the web at www.icr.org. Welcome back to Crosstalk.

Today I'm Ingrid Schleiter and our guest today is Mac Tomlinson. He is pastor at Providence Chapel in Denton, Texas. And we are talking about his new biography, about to be released, called *In Light of Eternity*.

This is the story of Leonard Ravenhill. Our guest was friends, along with his wife, of Martha and Leonard Ravenhill from 1977 until their deaths, and has written quite a comprehensive look at the ministry of a remarkable servant of Christ. Can you tell us something about the book itself? This is not a short little read, is it? No, I have been working on the book on and off for about six years through research and gathering of material.

It is pretty comprehensive, around 600 pages, 40 pages of pictures scattered throughout the book. It covers from Leonard's birth all the way through the end of his life and his legacy. It is a chronology of his whole life and ministry in Britain and America and around the world.

There are many chapters that deal with topics such as preaching, prayer, revival, Ravenhill's theology, and other various topical chapters that endeavor to give a full view of his ministry and his viewpoints and his perspective on life and ministry and all things. We have tried to make it as extensive as possible. If anyone is interested, that website, once again, ravenhillbiography.com. I want to go to a clip of Mr.

Ravenhill's preaching.

I have found this very convicting. I know several people that saw it on our Crosstalk blog commented the very same thing. This is a montage of excerpts from his various sermons having to do with eternity and the judgment seat of Christ.

Oh God, stamp eternity on my eyeballs. If God should stamp eternity or even judgment on our eyeballs or, if you like, on the fleshy table of our hearts, I'm quite convinced we'd be a very, very different tribe of people, God's people, in the world today. We live too much in time, we're too earthbound.

We see as other men see, we think as other men think. We invest our time as the world invests it, we invest our money. We're supposed to be a different breed of people.

I believe that the church of Jesus Christ needs a new revelation of the majesty of God. They're all going to stand one day, can you imagine it? At the judgment seat of Christ, to give an account for the deeds done in the body. This is what? This is the king of kings.

And he's the judge of judges. And it's the tribunal of tribunals. And there's no court of appeal after it.

The verdict is final. Listen, when you see Jesus, you're not going to often say, Hey, buddy, I'm glad you died for me. When you see Jesus, you'll be almost paralyzed with fear unless you have a glorified body and a glorified mind.

You say, well, Mr. Raymond, I won't be in serious trouble because, you know, I don't have a good memory. Well, I'll tell you what, you'll have one that day. In Malachi, it says that God has a book of remembrance.

And I think it would do you good before you go to bed every night this week to ask God, What did you put in your book today for my life? Did you get up this morning and thank God you're pure? Did you thank him that that devilish fever you used to have for sniffing cocaine and drugs or something, that he broke the fetter of it? Are you really glad you're not a prostitute now? You're going to be a part of the bride of the Lamb? Are you glad he's removed from your heart covetousness and bad temper and all those creepy, horrible things that used to master you? The most shattering thought I've ever had is my personal accountability to God one day. We're not going to be judged just because of what we've done. We've got to be judged for why we did it.

Not for the action, for the motive. What motivated your giving? Why? What's the motive behind it? It doesn't just take your sins, it takes yourself. It takes the government of your life.

It's not only true that we live in a world of bankrupt politics. We live in a world, and this is the most tragic of all, of a bankrupt church. When in God's name is the church going to open a heart again and open a mind again and see again? Can God forgive every sin I've ever committed? I said, he sure can.

That is, if you repent of your sin and you plead for the blood of Christ and you ask for mercy, that tender Christ who went about doing good and he kissed little babies and blessed people, now, ah, there's nothing more beautiful than a little lamb. There's nothing more terrible than the wrath of the lamb. God should bring every work into judgment with every secret thing.

The dead, small and great, are going to stand before God in that awesome day. But say, am I just a showman? What's my secret life like? For God has not merely given us Jesus Christ, he's given us all things. And because there isn't enough joy in the house of God, we need entertainment.

Because entertainment is the devil's substitute for joy. I think before we point the finger at the world, we'd better turn to the church and say, look, we'd better all get sacked off in ashes and humble ourselves and say, almighty God, when I see the church in the New Testament, they didn't have stately buildings. They didn't have paid evangelists.

They didn't have a lot of money. They didn't have organizations. They couldn't get on TV and beg.

But I'll tell you what they did, they turned the world upside down. And I'm embarrassed to be part of the church of Jesus today, because I believe it's an embarrassment to a holy God. Most of our joy is clapping our hands and having a good time, and then afterwards we're talking all the drivel of the world.

Oh, to be lost in him, to be consumed in him. You get so near to the heart of God that you'll share his grief over a world and over a backslidden church that we have today. Because if you're going to get mature in God, all the dwarfs around you will criticize and sneer at you and say you're trying to be holier than the rest of us, eh? You'll discover this, the men who have been most heroic for God have been the men with the greatest devotion of life.

The only thing that will tie me in victory continually through the blood of Christ is my personal devotion to him, the Son of God. My adoration that I give him my tribute every day. It's more than my service.

It's more than giving my money. That I love him and I adore him and I magnify him. I take him as he were by the feet.

That is the voice of Leonard Ravenhill, a preacher and an evangelist who had a big impact in the 20th century. There's a new biography out by our guest today, Mack Tomlinson. Did writing this book change you in any way? Well, just hearing that clip reminds me of so many times that I heard him preach like that over the years.

And you could not hear Ravenhill without being changed, either hardened or softened, without being made angry or your heart being broken. And so yes, the book was life-changing for me. I suppose in a number of ways, just to realize afresh, the power of the ministry that God gave him and how important his message is, and to learn about his British years and the ministry he had there because he never kept a diary or a journal.

And so there was very little record of that that his family, his sons knew existed until I went to England and researched his British years and found out that there was much recorded there that was discovered that God put into my hands. So to learn about his British ministry and to see that he had a powerful ministry of over 25 years in Britain before he ever came to America or was even known here. He was controversial.

And if you heard that clip where he talked about the American church, it's not difficult to see why this offended some in leadership. Some pastors may not have liked to have heard that message. Tell us about the controversy and how he handled that.

Well, Leonard Ravenhill was a fearless man. And he was motivated by one thing, a fierce loyalty to God and a fierce loyalty to the truth of Scripture and to the Gospel. And God made him in such a way to be a

preacher that did not care about men's opinions.

He did not preach to please people or to entertain, certainly. He had a message burning in his heart that he felt like God wanted him to preach, that he felt like the people he was preaching to needed. And so he would preach it with boldness, with fearlessness, with a powerful anointing of the Holy Spirit, and he just let the chips fall where they may, as they say.

He did not care if it offended people. He cared if it was the truth because he knew it was the truth that people needed to hear and it was the truth that would set men free. So you either loved his preaching or you hated it.

A.W. Tozer said of Ravenhill, Toward Ravenhill you cannot be neutral. You will either love him or hate him, but you will not go away unmoved or neutral. That's right.

No neutrality when you hear that kind of preaching. You're either with it or you are not. You'll be offended by it and discard it and carry on, or you will be convicted by the Lord who is so very obviously with him in his preaching, as I listened to that.

I wanted to say, you know, there are not many preachers like this in America today. Could you just comment on why that is? Well, I think there are several reasons possibly. I think many ministers today have given in to an attitude of political correctness where they don't want to offend people.

They want to inform people and they even want to entertain or encourage people, but they fear losing popularity or losing people from their congregation, so they will not preach forthright the way Ravenhill did. Perhaps fear of man, fear of consequences, fear of loss of position. And so if you have a view that your sermons must please everyone or be entertaining or simply be positive and encouraging, then you're not going to fully preach the truth because the truth will build up and tear down.

It will encourage and it will rebuke. It will be both positive and negative. And Ravenhill's view of preaching was so high and his fear of God was so much that he didn't preach to please men.

He had many sayings that he was famous for, but one of the most famous was, he said, this generation has itching ears, but I have no commission from God to scratch them. Amen. And so there aren't too many men today.

They are out there. I think lesser known men, unknown men who have the same loyalty and same commitment to faithfulness to the truth, but they're not as widely known as Leonard Ravenhill is. You know, and of course, as a young person in ministry, young man in ministry, many of them are coming out of seminaries that have totally discarded biblical theology and knowledge of the scriptures anyway.

And those classes have been substituted by things like church growth methods, how to be missional, how to be to run these very popular churches, how to be a leader. You hear this constantly. I have a book sitting here right next to me, a pile of books.

And one of them is about how to, the biggest need of the church claims the book. This brand new book is leadership. It's leadership.

How to make leaders, how to make leaders, not a word about the Holy Spirit, not a word about being called to the ministry, not a word about the role of the gospel. And so it's little wonder that many of the

pastors today are simply careerists who see a great job, nice benefits, a chance to be somebody, chance to develop themselves and be positive. But that is not the gospel.

That's not the shepherd. That's not the shepherd that scripture talks about. So you can see why there is not much of a taste or an appetite for truth today.

We are going to continue our discussion in just a moment. You're listening to Crosstalk. Perhaps you're a person that is active on the issues of today.

And while these things are necessary, there's nothing more important than your personal relationship to Jesus Christ. Have you met him as your personal savior? All the issues we face on earth pale in comparison to the real issue of your relationship to God. What really matters is eternity, and we hope that you're ready for it.

I'd like to send you a brochure that is absolutely free. This will help you to consider this very important matter. It's entitled, *Where Will You Spend Eternity?* It's brief, it's to the point, and it helps you to understand the urgency of having a personal relationship to Jesus Christ.

If you'd like to receive a free copy of this pamphlet, right now pick up your phone and call 800-729-9829 and ask for the brochure. That's 800-729-9829. Call now.

We're back on Crosstalk with Mac Tomlinson. We are going to just, I want to mention the website, ravenhillbiography.com. I also would like to mention the other website. Our guest today is the Editorial Director for freegracepress.com, freegracepress.com, if you'd like to see some of their other offerings.

I want to return to our guest right now. We were talking before the break about why there seems to be, there seem to be so few preachers like this today, whether pastors or evangelists. And I want to return to our guest who has a few more thoughts on that.

Well, I think one reason there seems to be less kind of preaching like this today is I believe it's rooted in what preachers depend on when they preach. Ravenhill used to say, unanointed preaching is the unpardonable sin of the modern pulpit. And I think there's so little preaching like Ravenhill's today because men don't have the anointing of the Holy Spirit like Ravenhill had.

So how do they get that? Well, seeking the face of God. First of all, seeing their need for it. Preachers today often depend on their education, their degrees, their knowledge, their personality and such.

And so if that's what they're depending on, they're not depending on the Holy Spirit when they go into the pulpit to preach. They're depending on their preparation, their personality, anything except the Holy Spirit. Another reason for the lack of such preaching is that there is a low view of preaching today.

Leonard had a very high view of preaching. And that high view has been greatly lost in our day. Preaching has been dumbed down today.

There's mostly teaching today which is needed, but that's generally just the giving out of biblical information. And it's not even just the need of doing expository preaching. Some exposition of Scripture is often not preaching.

It's merely teaching. And as I intimated earlier, men today in the pulpit don't want to offend anyone. They just want people to enjoy their sermon or be informed by their message.

But Leonard believed what the Puritan Richard Baxter said. Baxter said, I must preach as if I will never preach again and preach as a dying man to dying men. Ravenhill believed that every sermon was a word from God for the people who were hearing him.

And he believed that he would give an account to God for every word he spoke. So he took it very seriously. He realized that there were people in the audience who were unconverted and that their eternity was at stake in their response to the truth of God.

So Leonard preached very seriously with eternity's values in view. Well, I would like to give out our phone number today to our listeners who may want to talk with you. 800-733-9829 800-733-9829 It's, I think, you know, I commented about some of the negative response that he got during his lifetime and also just watching it and thinking to myself, it's the gravity and the seriousness of his presentation that makes you sit up and take notice.

How many times have I sat in a pew and listened to pastors that act like they use sports jokes and movie references and I just shut my mind off. How many times our family sat at a Thanksgiving service that had wonderful hymns, wonderful hymns of the faith and then after the scriptures were used and then all of a sudden it comes to the sermon. Pastor gets into the pulpit.

He's a young guy. He opened it up with a line from Dr. Seuss and his theme vaguely was something about taste and see that the Lord is good. So the book Green Eggs and Ham broke the audience up, audience, the congregation up and it was a great laughing.

It never got better from there. That, I think, is what, is the thing I noticed about his videos and there's many of these, of course, on YouTube if anyone's interested. But listening to him, it's the seriousness of his presentation that makes you think seriously about God and if we're going to present the Lord in a light fashion, just like much of the music does today as well, I might add, it has no reverence, no sense of awe and here we're talking about the God of the universe from whom we escaped for our sins by this grace alone in the sending of his son and yet we treat him like a buddy.

I mean, that is revolting but I think it just ties in with what you were saying about the fact that when the Holy Spirit is present, there is a seriousness and you realize, eternity is forever and ever and ever and I heard Mr. Ravenhill say in one of his sermons, he said, there's a million roads into hell and there's not one road out. Just that sentence alone, a million roads into hell and not one road out. That they're singing in heaven, worthy is the Lamb, but in hell, they are singing only one song, the harvest is over, we have not been saved and it just very, very much imprints upon your mind what we're dealing with.

We're dealing with souls that will live forever in all eternity. Shouldn't we also be serious about that? We're going to, let's see, I want to see, we've got some callers online here today and who may want to ask some questions. We're going to start with Keith calling from Oregon and Keith, welcome to Crosstalk.

Hi, thank you for having me on here. The first thing I want to say is I'm shocked. I am so shocked because I'm hearing a breath of fresh air in the midst of milk toast, watered down, sad, sad, what is called Christian preaching today on Christian radio and then I was just driving down the street and heard this and almost drove off the side of the road because as far as Ravenhill goes and what he's preaching, I hate to say this, but in the Kingdom of God, this is common sense stuff.

This is common sense, what he's preaching. This is the way it's supposed to be. I wouldn't be offended listening to him.

If I were offended, that would only be a testimony that something's not right in my life. What happened to us here in America if we are so far departed from this that we have lost such a perspective in the Church that the kind of preaching he did, oh, maybe you don't like his style, maybe you don't agree with everything he said, but in Biblical Christianity, man, that's common sense. This is what we're called to live.

There is no other, there's nothing to negotiate here, and that's all Ravenhill made clear was this is not negotiable, this is the way it is. And I just wanted to say I'm shocked to hear a breath of fresh air on Christian radio. Thank you.

Thank you so very, very much because there's a lot of us out here who are frustrated, who are looking to God and saying where is the true manna from Heaven? Well, what has happened? I mean, as we watch the country unfold and unravel, so thank you very, very much. Well, Keith, thank you for calling, and God bless you. I'm so glad that it was an encouragement to you.

That was our prayer. That was my guest's prayer going into the program that this would encourage and lift up the heads of a lot of us who simply say, you know, this stuff, this kind of preaching is far, far too rare today. Appreciate that call from Oregon today.

We're moving. Did you have any comment? Mac, did you want to say something? Yes. Well, thank you, Keith, for the call, and, you know, it's exactly right.

It is. What Leonard Ravenhill preached was not deeper life Christianity or superior Christianity. It was true Christianity and biblical Christianity.

And America has lost that, and so when the real thing comes along, people aren't used to it and they are shocked by it. Ravenhill, he did... You know, Keith referenced how he wanted to pull off the road. That's what Ravenhill's preaching did to people.

It gripped you and it stopped you. I mean, he was well known for his many single stand-alone statements that were gripping. I might just mention a few of them.

He said, a man who is intimate with God needs never to be intimidated by men. Amen. Or a sinning man stops praying and a praying man stops sinning.

True. God isn't training Boy Scouts. He's training soldiers.

That's right. So Leonard had these statements that he would throw out, and he didn't... I mean, he was theologically sound and biblically sound, but he didn't care if his words passed someone's theological test. He was wanting to stir people and awaken them, and that's why he would say the things that he said.

That's right, and you can get lost in some of those debates when what really needs to be said is thus sayeth the Lord and Scripture at the ready to prove it, and that's what he had. And I saw an interview with him that is on YouTube. If anyone's interested, just type in Leonard Ravenhill interview.

It's a 59-minute interview about what was wrong with the American church. It was recorded in 1989. Absolutely jaw-dropping candor.

This was not Joel Osteen on Larry King, friends. This was just... He was speaking, I believe, to a group of pastors and their wives, but this interview was very, very gripping and interesting. What's wrong with the church? And he started with the term prayerlessness, prayerlessness, and he really drove that point home about what's happened, why prayer meetings are basically not attended anymore and why pastors need to stop preaching on Wednesday nights and require prayer meetings because he said that is where God gets a hold of our hearts, and that's where he comes to us and how we, our ministries, how barren ministries are that do not have prayer, are not rooted and grounded in prayer.

We're moving along. We have Timothy in Waukesha calling, Waukesha, Wisconsin. Hi, Timothy.

Hi, yeah. I think it's mainly, from my perspective, an American problem with the pastors or the church probably overall, and I think we have it. We have our widescreen TVs, three cars.

We have our four PCs in the house. We have our laptops. We have all the entertainment, the DVDs to replace.

I mean, we're really not a hurting church, and we're tempted by all these temptations of the world that in other countries where perhaps they don't have all these things, they probably, for the most part, have a closer relationship with God. I think we're just like in the tent, the 12 spies that went in to scout out Jericho. Only two were really obedient, and I feel like America, we're like the 10 spies.

Yeah, that's a very good analogy. Or the disobedient ones. Yeah, yes, I hear what you're saying.

Well, Timothy, thank you for calling today from Waukesha to make that point. We live, I want to paraphrase a columnist I read recently. She wrote that we live in a global technocracy of gadgets but emotional poverty, and I would say the same is true spiritually.

We have every electronic gadget known to man, but we are spiritually impoverished in the church today. Does it matter if we have smoke machines from Caesar's Palace in our congregation, state-of-the-art sound systems, theater seating with cup holders to hold the hot drinks we bought at the kiosk in the lobby of the church? Spiritually poor, wretched, blind, and naked, and that's what Revelation, that's what Christ said about the church of Laodicea in the book of Revelation. We are going on.

We have more callers holding here. We're moving along next to Harry who's calling from Port Huron, Michigan. Hi, Harry.

Thank you very much for this today. I would say one thing as far as one of the comments that you made earlier. I didn't read the book you mentioned that was offending, but I will say this as a man.

There is a lack of leadership in our churches today, and that starts in the pulpit and it starts in the home. Right. Harry, I wouldn't disagree with you.

The book I was referring to is from Leadership Network. It's spewing forth emergent teachers, emergent church teachers, and one of the hallmarks of that movement is the clamoring about the creation of leadership without any effort made whatsoever to ask where people are being led. That was kind of the point I was trying to make about how many leadership books there are about personal development absent any reference to the gospel and the true office of the ministry.

I just wanted to clarify that I wouldn't disagree with you. Godly leadership is in short supply. We're going to take a break and return in a moment with our guest Mack Tomlinson, author of the book *In Light of Eternity*, the biography of Leonard Ravenhill.

You can pre-order the book. It's about to be released in a couple of weeks. You can pre-order at RavenhillBiography.com. We'll be right back.

For the Worldview Week and Minute, I'm Brandon House. I talk to Christians every day who are getting discouraged because of all this happening. But I'm here to tell you, don't be discouraged. This could be our greatest hour.

Even when we appear to lose, we're really winning. Peter Marshall put it this way, it's better to fail in a cause that will ultimately succeed than to succeed in a cause that will ultimately fail. Dr. Erwin Lutzer added to this by saying, better to fail within the church than to be successful outside of it.

God wins even when the church appears to lose. My friends, God has a remnant and the dominant false church is and will persecute the remnant. But we invite the opportunity if it brings an understanding to the lost that our hope is not in this world but in the next.

For more information on a biblical worldview and making disciples in these the last days, our website is worldviewweekend.com where you can find columns as well as my daily radio show all at worldviewweekend.com. We are back on Crosstalk with Mack Tomlinson and I'd like to go ask our guest a question. We will take more calls so hang in there callers. Mack, can you tell us please, we were talking about the role of prayer in the life of Leonard Ravenhill and how much he preached on that theme.

Was this a man who practiced what he preached? Yes, it is true. He was a man Leonard had a favorite saying, a man's ministry is never greater than his prayer life. And Leonard Ravenhill, I've known a lot of preachers and pastors over the past four decades, but Leonard was the only man I've ever known who prayed probably more than he studied and more than he spent time in public with people.

From the time he was a teenager, he prayed for hours each day and probably in every day as he got into adulthood and into full-time ministry, I would imagine six to eight hours daily in private prayer, sometimes more. And then in addition to that, several hours of reading and meditating in Scripture and reading the best books. So he probably spent 13 to 14 hours alone with God every day for the whole course of his life.

Several hours in the morning and the same in the afternoon and then generally around midnight he would get up and he would be in his study until 4 or 5 or 6 a.m. He rarely slept through the night. He'd be in his study in prayer. And so his life was an amazing example of a hidden life of prayer.

And he believed that prayer was more important for a preacher than anything. Famous, well-known pastors from all over the world would call him and come to see him. And they would get honest and they would break down in tears and they would say, you know, I don't even pray five minutes a day.

I lead committees. I do this. I do that.

I'm very busy. But my life spiritually is empty. I don't pray.

I don't seek God. And Ravenhill called men of God back to the prayer closet to truly pray and seek God because he knew that only there was the anointing of the Holy Spirit and the authority of Christ secured for public ministry. Well, amen to that.

I want to ask you quickly because our time is going so fast. I want to ask you, what are some of the titles of books that Ravenhill wrote, just in case some of our listeners are interested? Yeah, his books are, there are seven books he wrote. Why Revival Carries is the most well-known one.

And he wrote Meet for Men, Revival Praying, Tried and Transfigured, Sodom Had No Bible, America is Too Young to Die, and his last book was Revival God's Way. And then he edited an eighth book. He compiled and edited a book, A Treasury of Prayer, which was the best of the writings of E.M. Bownes on prayer.

Oh, excellent. Yes, I love E.M. Bownes. Well, great.

Well, thanks for giving that to us. I want to quickly go back to our callers, take a couple of more at least. I want to go, let's see, who is next? We have David calling from, oh, Tom's waiting, from Spanish Fort, Alabama.

Hi, Tom. Hi, Ingrid. Good afternoon.

Hi, Matt. Hello. It's just a miracle that I was in my automobile and heard the name Leonard Ravenhill.

And I just want to share quickly with you, in Mobile, Alabama, back in the late 70s, early 80s, he came to Cottage Hill Baptist Church. And what was to be a week revival meeting turned into two weeks. And it was not uncommon, as you said, for Leonard Ravenhill to pray all night and call us to pray all night.

And just a couple of things. I remember one of the statements was that God had written Ichabod across most of the doorways of churches in America. And this was back in the 70s, which, as you know, Ichabod means God has departed.

And he always preached about the challenge the pastors that would come to these revival meetings. And several of them came from the local area to this revival that you preach a lot about God's love, but you don't preach about God's holiness. And then he would challenge us there was no real grieving over sin, not only individual sin, but corporate sin in the church.

And then one story that I remember that you mentioned during ministry, his ministry in Britain. I'm sure you probably included this in your biography. When he went to live on the streets with those homeless people, that he was sitting one night in a cold, damp, rainy side of the street.

And there was a homeless woman there. She had not bathed. She was unkempt.

Her hair was stringy and straggly. She smelled. And he was sitting there next to her, huddled up, you know, by this small fire.

And she had a small, dirty cup of tea that she had brewed. She found a used teabag. And she took a sip and she handed it out to Leonard to offer it to him.

And it revulsed him, you know. And he said, I can't drink out of that cup. And God immediately shared with him.

He said, I drank of the cup, of a cup much dirtier than this for your sake. And it, you know, it so impacted his life. But his life was filled with those kinds of testimonies and stories where God used him when he placed, when Leonard placed himself in a point of total obedience and surrendered to Christ.

And finally, your message, the clip that you played while ago brought tears to my eyes and grief and repentance to my heart even today. Amen. Thank you, David.

Wow. I'm so glad to hear that. That was our prayer at the outset of the program.

Tom, I'm sorry. I appreciate that call today. Have to move along quickly.

Spanish Fort, Alabama. Appreciate that. Very quickly, we have one last caller.

Andrew, David is calling from Ohio. David, sorry to make you wait so long. Oh, it's okay.

Hey, Mac, this is David. How's it going? Good. Hello, David.

Hey, I just want to share real quick. I've been in ministry about 23 years, and a bunch of years ago I got this idea in my head. I love Leonard Ravenhill's books and his messages.

I'm just going to see if his number's listed. And so I called and it was listed. And when I got him, he was just so nice with me, so respectful.

I mean, I was so fearful. It was like standing in judgment or something, that he would see something not right or say something to me. And one thing he always encouraged me more than one time.

It was, as a young minister, read 1 and 2 Timothy. And to me, there's so many days I still cry out to God after 20 years of preaching. I'm humbled in his presence that he saved me, and I'm humbled that he called me.

But at times it's been a lonely road. I weep and I say to my wife, I wish I could talk to Leonard Ravenhill again on the phone. I wish I could talk to him and just share what I'm going through.

But I just want to just say that he's changed my life, and he's changed many other people's lives. And I just want to encourage everybody to realize that what Ravenhill was, he said this, you have as much of God as you want to have. I want to come to a place where there's none of me and all of him.

And this is what he really inspired in my heart, 2 Corinthians 5.15. Thank you so much. I appreciate that call, David, that testimony in Ohio. I'm so sorry our time has gone, Mac.

Well, thank you very much. It's been a delight. Well, I'm glad to have had you again.

Ravenhillbiography.com if you'd like to read the biography written by our guest today. Thanks for joining us today on Crosstalk. I'm Ingrid Schleiter.

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