

*Heart
Breathings*

Other Books by Leonard Ravenhill

AMERICA IS TOO YOUNG TO DIE

MEAT FOR MEN

REVIVAL GOD'S WAY

REVIVAL PRAYING

SODOM HAD NO BIBLE

TRIED & TRANSFIGURED

WHY REVIVAL TARRIES

Heart Breathings

*by
Leonard Ravenhill*

UNITED STATES ADDRESS

Harvey Christian Publishers, Inc.
449, Hackett Pike, Richmond, KY 40495
Tel./Fax (423) 768-2297
E-mail: books@harveycp.com
<http://www.harveycp.com>

BRITISH ADDRESS

Harvey Christian Publishers UK
11 Chapel Lane, Kingsley Holt
Stoke-on-Trent, ST10 2BG
Tel./Fax (01538) 756391
E-mail: jjcook@mac.com

Copyright © 2014
Harvey Christian Publishers Inc.

All rights reserved. No part of this book may be reproduced or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or by any information storage and retrieval system without written permission from the copyright owner, except for the inclusion of brief quotations in a review.

Printed in USA
First Edition 1995
This Edition 2013

ISBN: 978-1-932774-49-8

Cover Design by
Isaac Samuel
faithgrafikdesigns@gmail.com

Printed by
Lightning Source
La Vergne, TN 37086

Foreword

“Heart Breathings” is a fitting title for a book where words are only the vessel that somehow endeavors to hold, and show forth, the breathings of the spirit that is not flesh. There is a frustration when yearnings beyond words find themselves clothed in the only medium that can cause them to be tangible to others. These poems are the roarings and sighings and longings of the inarticulate soul trying to create a substance through which to transmit its feelings to others.

To my father, religion was of the heart—the realm of the Spirit’s quickening life. Other sources failed to satisfy, and produced within him a hurt, a scorn, a weariness. For him, the heart was supremely important, and he saw that the only source of ministry to the heart was the Spirit of God—all else is at enmity. All the limits that reason, or society, or human frailty would interpose, were to be attacked without mercy. Any failure in Christians to give their all in response to God came under the same attack.

The mind has its measures and gives itself to the object of its thoughts in the degree that corresponds to its reasoning. The heart has no measures; with the heart it is either “yes” or “no,” and the object that calls forth a “yes” is worthy of everything. The object that elicits a “no” is worthy of nothing. It is here where many misunderstood my father—they could never see, with him, that in the spiritual realm everything that is man-generated is absolutely

6 *Heart Breathings*

valueless. His life and ministry were a passionate protest against the religion of the twentieth century in which man has made his image of God, not graven in stone but rather graven in words, and then set this up saying, “This is your God, worship Him.”

My father saw God as infinitely beyond man’s endeavors to explain Him, infinitely beyond man’s efforts to serve Him. He saw God as an eternal fire of Infinite Life and Infinite Holiness—to be known in the total surrender of ourselves. He saw God as bringing us into an awareness of His limitless world where His holiness and mercy meet in a glory that transforms all it touches. God was to be known not by the mind but by the heart. Read then these poems with the heart, and you will find that the mind will follow on behind.

Paul Ravenhill

March 1995



About the Author

Leonard Ravenhill was born in Leeds, England, in 1907. After training at Cliff College, he entered on a widespread evangelistic ministry in the British Isles and in the U. S. He has also written a number of books, one of which, *Why Revival Tarries*, has been translated into more than five languages.

Mr. Ravenhill spent his last years living in Lindale, Texas, from which he traveled throughout the country. His books and messages, with their insistent call for repentance and revival among Christians, have inspired and challenged many. Perhaps his greatest ministry in later years consisted in personal contact with hundreds of hungry souls who came to his home for blessing and encouragement, or called him on the telephone. He did our ministry a great service by recommending our books to many of these people. Mr. Ravenhill passed away on Nov. 27, 1994.

A. W. Tozer said of Mr. Ravenhill, "Toward Leonard Ravenhill it is impossible to be neutral. His acquaintances are divided pretty neatly into two classes, those who love and admire him out of all proportion and those who hate him with perfect hatred. And what is true of the man is sure to be true of his books. . . . The reader will either close its pages to seek a place of prayer or he will toss it away in anger, his heart closed to its warnings and appeals." It is our prayer that this posthumous edition of Leonard Ravenhill's poems and sentence sermons will find readers of the former class, with hearts open to the burning passion for Christ found in these pages.

Index: Poetry

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| A Talk at the Wellside | 56 |
| Amazing Grace | 23 |
| Call Back | 28 |
| Calvary's Tree | 53 |
| Christ the Borrower | 40 |
| Eternal Night | 31 |
| Gethsemane | 21 |
| He Knows the Way He Taketh | 34 |
| I am a Slave | 62 |
| I am Thy Captive, Lord | 20 |
| I Did the Will of God | 61 |
| I Kiss Thy Rod | 18 |
| I Walked Today | 15 |
| In Heathendom | 43 |
| In Thy storehouse | 49 |
| It is Hell in My Soul | 16 |
| Judgment | 44 |
| Jungle Girl | 45 |
| Let Me Drink Thy Cup | 36 |
| Lord, Don't Ask Me | 58 |
| Lord, Emancipate | 46 |
| Love Like Thine | 14 |
| Men of Blood | 52 |
| Nearer, Still Nearer | 54 |

Index: Poetry Cont.

| | |
|----------------------------------|----|
| Oh, Wonder of Wonders | 25 |
| Our Lethargy | 38 |
| Our Status Quo | 47 |
| Point'd Preachin' | 39 |
| Pour Thyself through Me | 11 |
| Seeking Thee | 42 |
| Some Work—Some Shirk | 48 |
| Stephen | 17 |
| The Calvary Track | 24 |
| The Heathen | 50 |
| The Heroic C. T. Studd | 29 |
| The Martyr's Crown | 37 |
| The Revival Song | 55 |
| The Sweet Love of Jesus | 19 |
| The Victor's Pathway | 26 |
| The Wise Men Worshiped Him | 32 |
| This I know | 60 |
| Thy Glory | 12 |
| Thy Glory and Thy Majesty | 27 |
| Thy Sweet Correction | 19 |
| To Please My God | 22 |

Pour Thyself through Me

Spirit of the living God, pray Thy mind through me;
Nothing less than Spirit-power do I ask of Thee.
Purge me, urge me, guide me, hide me—
Spirit of the living God, pray Thy mind through me.

Power of the eternal God, flow Thy power through me;
Holy, Pentecostal power do I ask of Thee.
Lowly, holy, for Thy glory—
Power of the eternal God, flow Thy power through me.

Mercy of the living God, channel love through me;
Nothing less than Calvary love meets the need for me.
Love that's burning, love that's yearning—
Mercy of the living God, channel love through me.

Grace of God, eternal grace, reach the lost through me;
Tenderness for every race do I ask of Thee.
Love them, lift them, reach them, teach them—
Grace of God, eternal grace, reach the lost through me.

Life of God, eternal life, pour Thyself through me;
Nothing less than Thine own life do I ask of Thee.
Life compelling, life that's telling—
Life of God, eternal life, pour Thyself through me.

Thy Glory

When Thy Shekinah glory fell,
The priests stood still in awe;
Nor could the great Apostle tell
The glory that he saw
When Thou didst lift him to the sky
To sights unseen by mortal eye.

When Moses stood with unshod feet
And Thy great Presence felt,
No trumpeter could call retreat
While gazing where Thou dwelt!
He listened, raptured by Thy voice,
And strangely did his heart rejoice.

The toilers' fishing nets were left
In answer to Thy call,
And worldly men, of sense bereft
Before their feet would fall.
Those simple men Thou didst endue
With power original to You.

O Lord, we labor in a day
When men of faith are few,
Now just a remnant watch and pray.
Again we beg—endue
Thy church with apostolic power
For true revival in this hour.

Have we the holy channel blocked
 With unbelief and sin?
Have we not asked and sought and knocked
 To bring the glory in?
How is now Thy Spirit grieved
 That He withholds the shower
That would revival tide bring in
 And apostolic power?

Is Thy blest Holy Word unread?
 And have we ceased to pray?
Have carnal longings in our hearts
 Brought spiritual decay?
Come, great Physician, come,
 And circumcise the heart;
Fleshly impediments remove
 And all Thy might impart.

So let the beauty of the Lord
 On Christians be outpoured,
That we forget “our” ministry,
 And glorify the Lord.
We hate the boasting flesh
 Which often claims Thy name.
Descend, Oh Holy Ghost, descend
 With all Thy purging flame!

Love Like Thine

Love divine all love excelling,
Love divine all love compelling,
Love that counts all things but dross
In the light of Calvary's cross.
Love that loves unto the death,
Love that loves with every breath.
Love that knows His deepest pain,
Love that gives and gives again.
Love that burns with holy fire,
Love that prays in His desire,
Love that's deeper—love that's higher;
Love that serves and knows no cost,
Love to reach a world deceived and lost.

I Walked Today

I walked today as Dante walked
In days of long ago;
I gasped through stench of this earth's hell,
The air was filled with woe.
Men scarred with sin, in rags, ill shod,
Their face blank in despair,
Their livid eyes burned into me—
I cried, "O Christ of Calvary,
Waken Thy church to care."

I walked today where Christ would walk
If He were here on earth;
The air was thick with discontent
And dark with lack of mirth.
It seemed despair had carved each face,
And greed and lust and vice
Like chains, had bound resentful men.
"And, Lord," I asked, "Oh when, Oh when
Will Thy dear church revive again
To seek Thy power in prayer?"

I walked today mid cultured vice
And, as I walked, I wept.
I thought, Lord, of Thy sacrifice,
And how Thy church has crept
Along the road this past decade
And slumbered in soft pews,
While millions in their sinful plight
Fall into hell's eternal night.
O Christ, in mercy purge our blight;
Anoint Thy church to tell!

(Written after a visit to a drug area in a large city).

It is Hell, It is Hell in My Soul

No peace like a river attendeth my way,
My sorrows like sea-billows roll.
This heart-breaking lot has just taught me to say,
It is hell, it is hell in my soul.

My sin—O the grief of this guilt in my heart—
My anguish, not part, but the whole,
All adds up to loss, and I bear it alone;
It is hell, it is hell in my soul.

Now Satan can buffet, sore trials can come,
When life is all out of control;
My conscience just burns, and dark memories haunt,
It is hell, it is hell in my soul.

But, Lord, haste the day that will chase off this night,
And scatter this doom from my soul.
With tears I repent, so, dear Lord, let me know
There is hope and relief for my soul.

With great condemnation I fall at Thy cross,
To confess, not in part, but the whole
Of a sin-blighted life, and to cry to be cleansed,
And to plead, "Take control of my soul."
Only then can I joy and rejoice as I sing
Now it's well, it is well with my soul.

Stephen

They spilled out from the upper room
Not cowering or clothed with gloom.
They were ablaze with holy fire,
Fully consumed with one desire—
To know and to be known by Him
Who purged them from defiling sin,
To let the Temple crowd just see
How holy simple man can be.

By God they formed a holy band
Who would, through Him, possess the land.
They formed a special holy crew,
—A deacon band, something quite new.
Men Christ saved to the uttermost;
Purged and filled with the Holy Ghost.
They heard from God that His first choice
Was one called Stephen, a faith-filled youth.

This flaming soul, with holy power,
Did wonders and miracles by the hour.
The other apostles, beaten and in jail,
Were not in fear—they just prevailed.
They could not be intimidated.
Why? Just because they were related
To One above upon a Throne
Who kept His touch upon His own.

The more men beat this holy crew
The more their testimony grew.
Never did men of any nation
Hear anywhere a greater oration
Than that which Bro. Stephen gave,
Choosing not his life to save.

Into an outer court thy led him,
Battered his body, stoned and bled him.
He saw that crowd through blooded eyes,
He further saw—into the skies,
And, surely to his great surprise,
He saw his Lord and Savior rise
Before the throne at God's right hand
To welcome him to his Homeland!

I Kiss Thy Rod

I bow my head, my Holy God,
To kiss Thy loving, chastening rod,
Because I know, how oft You smite,
It only can be true and right.
I want my simple life to be
A living copy, Lord, of Thee,
In love and Thy humility,
A humble, lowly, contrite heart
With truth set in the inward part.
Dear God, I really do aspire
For a soul inflamed with holy fire,
To burn with an untiring zeal.
O! Master! Master!! Let me feel
The inward throes of Your compassion
As my inner life You gently fashion,
Until men's eyes can see in me
Thy travail in Gethsemane.

The Sweet Love of Jesus

O, the sweet, sweet love of Jesus,
Vaster, deeper than the sea,
Flowing in majestic fullness
From His throne right down to me.
Love before me, love behind me,
Love beneath and love above.
Love beyond man's full dimension,
Love beyond man's comprehension,
Holy, awesome, endless love
Showered in mercy from His throne
Just for those He claims His own.

Thy Sweet Correction

How can I, Lord, repine
When I am surely Thine,
And, yet more wondrous still,
I know and do Thy will.
O Lord, what bliss is this
To know Thy soothing inward kiss!
To know Thee in a new dimension,
To welcome all Thy sweet correction,
And goads that lead me to perfection.
Thy rebukes are good for me,
They purge for deeper chastity,
They draw me closer to Thy breast,
And there, and only there, dear Lord, is perfect rest!

I Am Thy Captive, Lord

I am Thy captive, Lord,
Not wishing to be free;
To know I am Thy bond-slave
Is glorious liberty.
My life, my all, in Thy control,
Is glorious freedom to my soul.

I am not tossed about
By vicious doctrine wind.
My soul is safely anchored
Because I have Thy mind.
My will is Thine, Thy will is mine,
And, in this my blest soul estate,
My longings do not wander far,
I seek not to be great.

Just lead me in Thy garden, Lord,
The garden of Thy Holy Word.
It's loaded with a thousand spices—
Delicious fruits, boundless advices.
Lead on, O King, in full control,
Thou are the Master of my soul.

Gethsemane, Gethsemane

Gethsemane, Gethsemane,

Where Jesus groaned to set me free.

Way back there in eternity

He planned salvation full and free

For sinners such as you and me.

He felt hell's billows o'er Him roll;

They should have crushed my guilty soul.

He knew the ransom must be paid,

That on a cross He must be laid,

Deserted by His chosen few,

Deserted by His Father, too.

His depth of anguish who can tell

As He was buffeted by hell.

He had planned to die alone! Alone!

And turn that Cross into a Throne.

In pain He groaned for cruel hours,

Not for His own sins, but for ours.

The greatest purchase ever made

Was when His priceless blood was paid,

When sinless Jesus crucified

Gave up the ghost, in anguish died.

This caused a panic all through hell,

And every demon had to tell

That Satan suffered full defeat

And from that hour beat a retreat.

To see that on the Cross He laid

The everlasting ransom paid!

There on that dread Calvary

Death, sin and hell were crushed for me.

"It is finished," was His cry,

Death and hell had no reply!

In glorious majesty He rose
Triumphing over all His foes.
Angels chanted, "Here's the King,
"Ope the gates and let Him in."
King of glory! King of Peace!
Let Him give thy soul release.
Victory He now offers thee
For time and all eternity.

To Please My God

I ask no bliss
But this,
To know Thy will,
And it fulfill,
In every part
So that my heart,
Without alloy,
May know the joy
By peace
Or rod
To please
My God

Amazing Grace

Sin shall not have dominion over you.
This from God's Holy Word, and it is true,
He forgives our sinful heart,
Cleanses, purges every part.
Takes sole possession of our throne
Where sinful self has reigned alone.
Drives out every foul desire,
Cleanses with His holy fire!
O, my soul, without alloy
This on earth is Heavenly Joy.
Daily I my vows will pay,
Walking in the Holy Way.
My will married to His will,
Mine a life that He can fill
With a love to reach the lost,
Showing me what Calvary cost,
Giving me anointed eyes
That can see beyond the skies,
Showing me His glorious Throne,
Where, one day, we all shall stand
And bow to kiss the nail-pierced Hand.
Lord, blest Savior, can it be
We'll share with Thee ETERNITY!
What bliss is this for us who once were so remiss!
AMAZING GRACE

The Calvary Track

They turned it into a circus,
And the Actor writhed and fell.
They baptized Him with oaths and curses
As He tried to save them from hell.
They burned with the fires of their pagan lust,
He burned with a heart of love.
In the ragged road of a vassal king,
He staggered beneath His load—
Not the chafing wood upon His back,
But a greater, invisible load.
The angels wept at His bloody brow
And the spittle upon His cheek;
They knew He could turn those men to stone,
But He acted—Oh, so meek.
He fell in the dust—from which men came
And from which He would lift them high;
And He carried a billion, billion sins
As He staggered on to die.
He turned not back on that Calvary track
With its grief and humiliation;
He had planned way back in eternity
For us and for our salvation.
Alone in dark Gethsemane—
O Lord, how could it be?—
He had to cry in agony,
“Thy billows go over Me!”
He knew full well, it was black as hell,
If God’s will He consummated,
When for men like me, He went to that Tree—
For souls He had created!

Afterword

by Paul Ravenhill

Now, at the end of this book, thinking again of the author and the yearning of his heart which transcended all that words are capable of transmitting, I look at myself and I look at the church and the question comes, “Where are we?”

Perhaps this is the echo of an eternal question which has resounded in the ether of this creation ever since the words came from God’s lips in the garden: “Where? ... where? ... where? ...”

This is a question which can only be answered in relation to things other than ourselves. (We cannot say, “I am with myself.” We must say, “I am behind the house,” or “I am under the oak tree,” etc.) Where are we with regard to the kingdom of God? What are we “behind” or “before” or “within” or “without” or “above” or “below”?

My father used to quote, “Beyond the sacred page, I seek Thee, Lord; my spirit pants for Thee, Thou Living Word.” We live in an age which, like the Greeks, seems to have exalted reason and devalued everything which has to do with the more important inner aspects of being. In doing this we have cast down that which has to do with the true essence of spiritual life. It is not so much that we have become worshipers of the Word as that we have taken the Word of God as if it were a painter’s palette—a base from which we mix and match our own concepts without discerning the true nature of the Spirit speaking the words. We have the words about the Spirit and think that we have the Spirit, and yet we only possess the death of words. The written word has become a substitute for the word spoken by the Spirit, the “Logos” for the “Rhema,” with the result that we, as the Jews before us, have become slaves to our interpretations, bound by our own concepts and imprisoned in the darkness of our own fallen understanding.

Paul says, "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." What does it mean to be "in" Christ? It certainly does not mean that we can be "in" (or "into" as we like to say nowadays) other things at the same time. We can only be in one place at one time—is this too difficult for us to understand? We live in the place of our hearts, not in the place of our minds, and in the place of our feelings, not the place of our religious theory. Solomon had all the theory—he had inherited all the psalms of cry and prayer and worship from his father. He systematized all of his knowledge into his three thousand proverbs and taught with a stunning exactitude, and yet died with "his heart far from God." Do we see him displayed for our example? Does it make us tremble? Does it humble us? Sometimes it seems today that we have "out-Solomoned Solomon" in our trying to understand and explain God.

Geographically speaking we can only come to a true understanding of where we are in this world in the measure in which we have become acquainted with other places, races and cultures. Spiritually speaking God must expose us to a full gamut of experience if we are to really know the place in which He would have us to dwell. We cannot see the light unless our eyes have beheld the darkness. We can only see the light of God to the degree that we have met the horrific depths of that darkness which is a foretaste of death and the dwelling place of the unclean powers of a satanic empire. Only as our souls have felt the crushing powers of evil which move over the face of the nations to rob, to kill and to destroy, can we reach forth to the power of His Resurrection.

The trouble with our age is that it wants light without having known darkness, happiness without having known pain. We live in a generation which wants only the positive and never the negative—healing without hurt, salvation without damnation, hope without despair, power without weakness, maturity without aging, knowledge without the price of learning, fullness without emptiness, joy without sorrow. The Gospel has been turned upside down as we have become conditioned to possess the kingdom without poverty of spirit, to possess comfort without mourning, and to possess the earth without paying the price of meekness.

Our problem today is that we have tried to make it all too easy. We have done with the Word as the ants do in their storing of seeds; we have filled the germ so that we might keep the seed sterile without the inconvenience of having it shoot forth in growth to upset our plans. We have avoided the hurt and pain and loss and invented a “contemporary” (cursed word) Christian culture. God won’t have it and so we are left, as the people in Isaiah, to wither “by the hand of our iniquities.” Our mental games will not hold up in exposure to reality, and in choosing the theory of a man-engendered Christianity we find that we have chosen death. This is not a static state but rather a kingdom of falsehood which drags us down into an ever-deepening morass as we struggle to build for ourselves and for our contemporaries God’s true house on a shattered foundation.

Only as we return to the presence of the living God can we hope to find reality. In the beginning was Reality, before there was anything false or evil. I believe God’s call for us is to go beyond the physical world, beyond the world of man’s thoughts and fears and imagination. We are called to Reality, beyond all the sham and shame and sickness and sin which the enemy has built up around mankind and around the church. We are called to live and breathe, to abide and to walk in the realm of the life of the Spirit of God.

I believe the day is coming, and now is, when God will start to call forth a people formed in the mold of the original purpose of God—a people who have tasted the joy of that kingdom which is not of earth, and have counted all else but dross. “We” can never fight and overcome the earthly—we are the earthly. Liberation and transformation, the heart of the Gospel message, are possible only as the kingdom of God in its true spiritual essence takes root in our lives and springs up overwhelming every other presence, every other influence.

I believe that there is a principle involved when Jesus says to Peter, “Upon this rock I will build. . .” Peter has seen and declared Jesus to be the Son of the Living God and, in effect, Jesus is saying, “Peter, everything you have seen in Me I give to you. . . You see

Me with the keys of heaven and earth, you see Me with the power to bind and loose—Peter, the keys and the power which you see in Me I give to you. As you see me and My power, your portion will be to share in My kingdom and to participate in the outworking of its power.”

Perhaps we have been taught too much to look upon the negative in all our looking at the Bible. We have stood with Adam as he fell and lost a kingdom and inherited a curse as judgment, but we have never seen or stood with Adam in the glorious majesty and victory of the day when he stood before God and all created beings, and in total dominion could answer God’s question, “What is this?” We have not seen him, I say, when he stood, and discerning the heart of God he discerned the nature and named the name, one after another, of every living creature that walked the face of this whole vast earth. We have not thrilled with his triumph, nor felt the call of God in our own spirits to discern and to name every part of the whole nature of our own world.

We have read of Noah, but do we feel the immensity of the pathos of the world-ending judgment and the overwhelming glory of the resurrection purpose of God locked in his breast and paid for in his life throughout one hundred and twenty years? We read of Moses and of David and the prophets, but have we ever heard the question within ourselves, “understandest thou what thou readeest,” shocking us into living awareness?

Some day we will stand before God, and before the Word of God, and in that moment we will see all as it really is in the clear light of eternity. The power and the passion of the world to come will be absolutely clear to us then, in that morning without clouds. Yet God is the same today; His will and His purpose will not be any different then from what they are now. Maybe the land is yet “afar off,” but His call to us, and His Spirit’s call through us, is ever for the fulfillment—“Thy kingdom come. . .” There is nothing more glorious for this old earth, nor is there for the child of God, than the attaining to the Presence of the One Who reigneth for ever and ever and being a living part of His Kingdom.

Torch My Heart

Lord engage my heart today
With zeal that will not pass away.
Now torch it with Thy holy fire
That never more shall time's desire
Invade or quench the Heaven-born power.
I would be trapped within Thy holy will,
Thine every holy purpose to fulfill
That every effort of my life shall bring
Rapturous praise to my Eternal King.
I pledge from this day to the grave
To be Thine own unquestioning slave.

—Leonard Ravenhill

(The last poem written by Leonard Ravenhill at 2:30 a.m. on February 12, 1994, nine months before he “passed into life.”)