

GROWING IN GOD

PODCAST



GIG145 – Bill Hart Interview on the Asbury Revival

Hi everyone, and welcome to the podcast today. We have a very special guest with us on this podcast. We have Bill Hart, who has agreed to join with me and talk about this idea of outpourings. Now, first of all, I just want to introduce my dear friend and brother, Bill Hart. We have known each other for probably about fifty years, isn't it, Bill?

Bill: "Yeah, it was 1973."

Gary: "1973. So everybody now can figure out about how old we are. Bill has been really, really a faithful servant of God during the years of his life that I have known him. He has been a pastor for all of these years, and he truly has a prophetic insight into the Church and the coming Kingdom of God. Bill always has been involved, since I've known him, in a real seeking of the Presence of God, the glory of God, the manifestations of the glory of the Lord; and he has a tremendous faith for revival, the coming outpourings of God's Spirit during these end days. So, I think what you are going to receive from him today is going to be a tremendous blessing. He is not just going to be talking about his experience, but he is also going to be imparting to your hearts what he received."

"Now, we are talking about this outpouring at Asbury University, which began on February the 8th of 2023. And, as they say on their [website](#), the University's regularly-scheduled chapel service never ended on that day; and what they 'experienced since that Wednesday morning has been a current immeasurable goodness flooding the community and quickly moving into other regions of the world. Words fail any effort to communicate the abundance of experiences and stories that will leave us forever changed.' And Bill, in his hunger and drive, went to Asbury himself to experience the outpouring. So what you are going to be receiving today is actually a firsthand account of what God was doing at Asbury University."

"So, Bill, I'll turn it over to you and you can just jump in however you feel led."

Bill: "Yeah, and Gary, same goes for you too. Just jump right in if you feel like I need to be corrected on a different pathway. You know, when you get a little older, sometimes you tend to wander. So, I'm so happy to be with you today. I count you as my dearest friend, ever, and just love you so much. It all started for me back, well, it's been a long journey, of course, in fifty years. But this particular movement of God at Asbury really started for me back in December of this last year, because I began to have a series of dreams. And then also, I began to wake up every morning at 444. And I've known in the past that when I have that happen, there is some spiritual significance in that. And so, a friend of mine helped me look up the meaning of this, and it literally means a door, and talks about an open door of the spirit, the soul, the body, opening to the flow of the Holy Spirit."

"And there is a Scripture that we came up with, that came out of Isaiah 44, verses 3 and 4, 'For I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground; I will pour out My Spirit on your offspring, and My blessing on your descendants. They will spring up like grass in a meadow, like poplar trees by flowing streams.' Then also, Ezekiel 44:4 says, 'Then he brought me by the way of the north

gate to the front of the temple, and I looked, and behold, the glory of the Lord filled the temple of the Lord, and I fell on my face.’ Before this happened in February, this had been burning in my heart that God is fixing to do something. I just had a sense that there was fixing to be a demonstration of His Presence, and I didn’t know how it was going to come. In my local church that I’m a part of, I pastored here since 1984, and since 2020, our church was merged with a younger pastor and man of God; and he had been preaching about repentance, worship, the whole month of January and February. We went on an extended period of prayer every morning at 6:30, and fasting. And on February the 5th, at the end of the service, we began to have the worship more at the end than we did at the beginning, to give time for people to seek the Lord at the altar. That particular morning on Sunday, February the 5th, as I went to the altar, I had an encounter with the Lord that was so precious; because my heart was just totally open to receive from Him, and it was a brokenness, a repentance. It was a depth that I had been seeking for quite some time. I came out of that service and just felt the total refreshing of the Lord; and little did I know that something was happening in Wilmore, Kentucky that same week.

“So on Wednesday morning, as they had their normal chapel service – they had chapel three times a week, where it is mandatory that all the students come. And you have to understand, Wilmore is a small town of about 6,000 people just outside of Lexington, Kentucky. The main industry of Wilmore is Asbury University and Asbury Seminary, and these two institutions are relatively small; Asbury University has, I believe, about 1500 students, and the seminary is fairly large for a seminary, I think over a thousand students. But they have been known throughout the years as being a place where God moved. In fact, the most famous movement of God there was in 1970. Right at the time the Jesus movement was beginning to sprout forth throughout the United States and the world, there was a chapel service similar, and it took place in the month of February. They went in one morning and it was a week later before they left. It was incredible. Of course, there was no social media back in those days, so it was pretty limited to the local student body and people in the area. But out of that outpouring they had in 1970, students that summer dispersed all over the United States. They began to take the same spirit that happened at their chapel service throughout the United States, and many people believe it was a real catalyst to add fuel to the flame of what was happening in the Jesus Revolution.

“So when this happened, this February in 2023, it was remarkable. Because what happened, a young man came to speak to them from Lexington that morning, and he was very tired. He had been traveling, he was a traveling minister; he also worked part-time at the Asbury University as an assistant soccer coach. But he got up to speak, and he just talked about God’s love out of the book of Romans. You can actually go to YouTube and find his actual sermon. And it was, as described later by the president of the university, it was ‘unspectacular.’ In fact, when he walked off the platform, he did what we have probably done oftentimes, Gary, over the years – we turn to our wife and say, ‘I laid a stinker on that one. It wasn’t any good.’”

Gary: “That has happened once or twice, yeah.”

Bill: “Yeah, once or twice. And any preacher that is really a true man of God never leaves the platform feeling confident. We all feel like, well, we didn’t really hit the mark. And he really didn’t, it was a pretty unspectacular message. So he led the prayer and left, and they dismissed. And they show a video of this – the young people are filing out of the auditorium, but there is a group of just about a dozen or so that stayed and kept praying. Well, the president of the university had been watching on the livestream, and when the livestream feed cut off, he didn’t think anything more about it. But all of a sudden, they began to hear rumors that something was happening special in the chapel. It’s called Hughes Auditorium, seats

about 1500 people. I think it was built in 1899. And it wasn't very long until there was a buzz throughout the whole university that something was happening in this chapel.

"So students began to go back, and by that afternoon they had actually canceled the classes so students could feel free to go back to the chapel and seek the Lord. In the chapel, it was a tremendous repentance that began to take place among these students. Humility and repentance. They were confessing their sins, they were opening their hearts to God, and it didn't take long until social media, people began to post on TikTok and Facebook about what was taking place. And so, I heard about this first about, I guess it happened on Wednesday; by Thursday night, I began to see posts on Facebook about this chapel service still continuing there in Asbury. It was nonstop after that.

"The minute I heard about it, I began to get this anointing on my life that was just phenomenal. It's like I was just being bathed in the Holy Spirit; and I call it being bathed in love. It was just phenomenal. And it was so dramatic that I went and told my wife and said, 'Honey, something's happening at Asbury that, it's just phenomenal.' And she said, 'Okay, so what?' you know, because I tell her stuff all the time like that."

Gary: "She has put up with a lot over the years."

Bill: "She does, yeah. You know me, Gary, I tend to get pretty excitable; and Gary and I kinda laugh about it over the years, because we are kind of opposite in our personality, to say the least, I guess. But by Sunday, this had continued, and I had been under for like three or four days the constant Presence of the Lord like I hadn't experienced in, I couldn't even remember when I had experienced this. And by Sunday night, I was just impassioned to go to Wilmore. And being a little older in age, you know, my wife was not too excited about us doing this, and she said, 'Well, if you go, I'm not going with you.' And I said, 'Okay.' She said, 'I don't really want you to go.' So I secretly looked on the computer and said, 'Well, if I can get a room in Wilmore, I'm going to take a leap of faith and go.' Well, there was only one hotel in all the city, and it was owned by the Asbury Seminary across the street. I looked online, I was able to book the room; that gave me the go ahead. So I booked a flight, I booked a rental car. Then I began to call people, 'Hey, do you want to go with me?' Because I had a pretty big room. And one after another, they said, 'No, I can't go this week. Maybe I'll join you later in the week,' so on and so on. So I finally just said, 'I'll fly by myself.'

"And so on Tuesday, my flight was delayed, I had to go through Chicago; I didn't get there till about eight o'clock at night on Tuesday night, checked in. 'Well, I'll just go over there and walk to the auditorium.' So I walked across the street and I looked; the line was about a quarter of a mile long, and this was like at 8:30 at night. And I said, 'Well, I'll do it tomorrow.' So the next day, I finally got in about 11:30. I walked in the door and got to the seat. In fact, they had closed it to the general public from like 9:00 to 11:00, just so the students alone could be there, so they would have an opportunity. Then they opened the building up for this public. And so, when I got in the door, walked to my seat, I just began to weep; because the Presence of God was so powerful that it was almost indescribable. And right over the altar was the sign, it says, 'Holiness unto the Lord,' and that was truly what was happening there. The Presence of God was so pronounced that it brought you to an instant place of repentance and humility that just was incredible.

"The beautiful part about that first encounter was that there was no band on this platform. In fact, I was there for three days, there was no platform presence to speak of. It was only like a worship leader, a guitar and maybe a piano in this large auditorium; very small sound system. In fact, once the singing

began to really move forward, you could barely hear anybody on the platform; and it was not anything that was driven from the platform. There was no real leadership. There were a lot of leaders, but they weren't forward, they were in the background, and it was just students of this move of God. It took place from February the 8th up till the 23rd when they finally had to stop the services there in Wilmore, because there were so many people that were coming that the town could not handle it.

"In fact, the day after I left, I left on Friday the 17th, and on the 18th there was, they say, up to 20,000 people that invaded that small town of 6,000 people that has two stoplights, one gas station, and I only saw two restaurants. And it was, it was incredible. They had to actually block the roads from people coming in, because there was something drawing everyone to this incredible outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And I have to say that in my fifty now, almost fifty-four years of knowing the Lord and ministering, it was the single most impactful, transformational encounter that I ever had – even though I have had a lot of great encounters, and have been in places where there has been a lot of anointing, and experienced many things in the Lord; this was the top of the line, because it was so transformational that it was almost instantaneous, when you just got in the Presence, that everything changed. In fact, it has changed my life. It has turned me 180 degrees since those days, and everything that I'm pursuing, everything that I'm looking for. I saw this incredible Presence of God coming upon people that was literally bringing them back to the Lord like you can't believe. And to see this happening among the young people was so encouraging; because to be honest, and Gary, you may have felt this way too, with all the things that have happened in our nation, in fact in the world, in the last couple of decades, where it just seemed like there was an acceleration of degeneration of our young people, where the enemy is just totally trying to destroy them. To see this glimmer of hope arise just brought me right out of my feeling that there is not much hope left. And all of a sudden, hope began to arise within me again, through this happening. And, how do you describe something that's indescribable? It's pretty hard."

Gary: "You know, I want to emphasize something here just for our listeners, because Bill has, as he said, experienced many things over the last fifty-four years of his life. And I have known him well, and as I said in the introduction, he is someone who has pursued this reality of God's Presence, of His outpourings and movings, His glory manifesting in the earth. So, I just want to emphasize the words that he is using. When he talks about this being as dramatic in his life as anything he has ever had previously, those are tremendous words, and I take them very seriously. It is one of the reasons I wanted to do this today on the podcast, because I want others to feel; you know, I'm sure we have seen news reports about Asbury, but there is something deeper here, and I think you are getting to the root of it now, Bill. Because there has to be, I think, in this day and age, something really of God meeting the young people, as He met us when we were young people; because it was Him preparing to change the whole scope of the world. So I really want you to emphasize this vision you are seeing about a change in the youth today."

Bill: "Amen. You know, what I sense, Gary, the thing that I sensed – you know, there were no obvious manifestations there. I mean, people were healed, yes. The reports of a lot of people that were healed in their physical body, there were people that had deliverance, a lot of things that you don't see. But in the meetings themselves, it was so unspectacular as far as man's flesh, that it made it spectacular because it was the Holy Spirit. And what it was creating in those students, and what it created in me and other people that I know, of course, that were there, and many that weren't there, is this sense of purity. You know, in my heart, I'm longing that God clean me. Lord, let there be a clean heart within me. It's like David – Lord, renew my spirit. Give me a clean heart. Lord, give me that union with You that only can happen when there is a willingness on my part to allow the Holy Spirit to examine me, to allow the

Lord in His tender mercy – not condemnation, not judgmentalism – but simply His mercy poured into my life to where this Presence comes.

“The last morning I was there, on Friday, I took a little journey in the car and went down the main street that runs in front of the University, and I filmed it all; and that little clip made it around the world. In fact, Fox News, you heard the story of course, Gary, Fox News contacted me on the Saturday I got back, Fox and Friends for Sunday; they wanted to interview me on their program. But due to conflicts of scheduling, they had to cancel that. But I was excited to be interviewed, because I felt that there is an impartation. Because everybody I talked to right after that, there was an impartation to them. And I’m going to pray that happens this morning, too, or whenever this is airing, that there be an impartation of His Presence.

Let me give you a few points that I think may help us. First of all, how do we get into this? How do we get into this new move of God that He wants to do upon the earth? How do we proceed forward? That always is the question. First of all, we can’t go into this with preconceived ideas. It’s not going to be church as usual; as we see God outpour His Spirit upon the earth in these last days, it’s not going to be something that we have actually seen before, necessarily. It’s not going to come because we have charismatic leaders, because we have performance bands on the platform, because we have an organized program to make it happen. None of those things will make it happen. It’s going to happen because the individuals begin to prepare themselves to receive. That is always the first step, we prepare ourselves.”

Gary: “That is true.”

Bill: “So we position ourselves.”

Gary: “That’s true. Bill.”

Bill: “And I wrote these four things down. We position ourselves; first of all, humility. We have to be willing to humble ourselves to receive something fresh from God. If we think it’s going to be the way we want it, it’s probably not going to happen for us. So we humble ourselves, then we pray. And prayer means we start seeking. We start asking the Lord, we start beseeching the Lord for His will to be done in our lives. Then we begin to worship out of that prayer. We worship God. Worship means to simply open yourself up to Him and come into His Presence, come into His Presence with thanksgiving. And then that brings us to repentance. Repentance is the most important thing in this whole formula, because, you know, it says in the book of Acts chapter 3, verses 19 and 20, ‘Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out.’ That’s not just talking about initial conversion, I don’t think. It’s the ongoing process of sanctification”

Gary: “Right”

Bill: “where the sin nature is destroyed by the work of Jesus Christ on the cross. ‘That your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the Lord, and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before.’ So humility, prayer, worship, repentance. So if you are listening, what do you do today? Well, start your journey. Start humbling yourself. Get in your private place, your prayer closet, wherever you can be before the Lord and humble yourself. Begin to pray. Begin to worship. Begin to repent. And worship and prayer and humility will bring you to repentance. And then the second thing – you position yourself, then the second thing, you begin to anticipate now. You begin

to anticipate that God actually could do this in my life. So, what do we do when we anticipate? First of all, we have hunger. Hunger is the anticipation of being fed, right?"

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "So if I'm hungry enough, then I'm going to have that need met. And then hunger will turn into a faith expression, because just hunger alone needs to have faith to acquire. I can hunger all day long, but I've got to go up in the ice box and get something out, right?"

Gary: "Right."

Bill: "So, faith projects me then into that place of encountering. Because everything about the Lord is based on an encounter. You can have all the doctrine in the world, you can have all the principles, the precepts. You can have all the teachings. You can have all those things; but the letter of the Law does not produce life. It's when we encounter the living Christ, by hungering and thirsting after Him and His righteousness through faith, that God begins to meet us. Then next of all, we need to open ourselves to receive. Once we begin the hunger, we have faith, then we open ourselves. We allow the Lord to move without any preconditions on how He should do it."

Gary: "Yes, that's important."

Bill: "You know, I've found, Gary, that the Holy Spirit is the most capable leader of the church. Most of the time, the Holy Spirit can't lead the church the way He wants to lead the church because we as men or women, we tend to want to lead it the way we think that He wants us to lead it."

Gary: "Yes. Sometimes we get too nervous about what He is going to do."

Bill: "Right! And we have often talked over the years, I know you and I have shared the same thoughts on this, that the end-time church is going to be a church that does not have visible leadership that we see, the dominant leadership that we see in the church today."

Gary: "True."

Bill: "There will be leaders, but they won't be noticeable,"

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "because they'll let Him be the leader. And so, what does that do to our church services? It literally can transform our church services into a Spirit-led encounter every time we meet together, where the people are being prompted by the Holy Spirit.

"What I've found since I came back, and I've been in a number of churches, and they're all good churches, don't get me wrong; they all are seeking the right thing. But it's very difficult for leaders to allow this to happen in their church. Because all of a sudden, it ruins our program. It ruins our step 1, 2, 3, how we thought it was going to happen. It ruins our, you know, platform, because it can't be platform-driven. It can be platform-led, but not platform-driven."

Gary: "Right."

Bill: "And all of a sudden it requires a willingness to allow ourselves to utterly fail, because when you really reach into God, you're putting all of the responsibility back on Him for the success."

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "None of the responsibility for your success should be upon us. It's all upon Him. You know, with the late great leader Charles Stanley, he just passed away, they said, uh, I just saw a deal last night; they asked him, this was right before he died, 'What would you like for them to put on your tombstone?' He said, 'Well, let's see. Obey God, and trust the results to Him.' So I think the church is going to come to the place to where we have to trust that the Lord has something greater in mind than what we thought was going to happen."

Gary: "So Bill, did you witness that kind of leadership there at Asbury? Did you see a spark of something starting like that?"

Bill: "Yes, I did. You did know who was leading there, because there was no designated leadership visible, yet there was leadership behind the scenes. Actually, they didn't know what to do with this, to be honest with you. Within twenty-four hours, this thing was getting out of control. I mean, there were so many people coming in. Just the amount of people alone, just to steward it was phenomenal; because you could imagine, when you have thousands of people converging on one little chapel – it wasn't even a church, it's a college. How do you steward this? Well, they went back in like a back room and got together a bunch of 'em, and they said, 'We don't know what to do,' you know. I mean, they were overwhelmed. And out of that little meeting, God began to formulate a plan; and the plan was simply, 'Let's just get out of the way and let God do what He wants to do. We will be there in support, we will be there in service, we will be there in labor of love – but we are not going to try to direct this thing. We are simply going to make sure it doesn't become someone else trying to direct it the way they want it to go.' There were many famous ministers that went there during that time from around the world; many of them showed up during that two-week period. But none of those people got up and spoke. None of them got up and led worship. None of them got up and gave their opinion about how things were going."

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "And you know, any that maybe went there to do that would have probably realized real quick that it wasn't going to work. Because it's when God does it, man cannot control it."

Gary: "Yeah."

Bill: "When man controls it, God cannot be a part of it."

Gary: "That's probably a lot of the way the conversation went in the Upper Room just before the day of Pentecost. They didn't know what in the world to do with it."

Bill: "Yeah. And it's amazing how the church world just keeps messing up the work of God, you know."

Gary: "I wasn't the one to say that, but I will say amen."

Bill: "I mean, I look back over my life, and I can honestly say I've messed it up many times. I mean, I look back and I know God wanted to do certain things at times, but then I was maybe afraid to let go, because to let go means to let go. I mean, it is hard to let go. It's like someone throws you out in the ocean and you've got a life raft there, and someone then hollers, 'Just let go!' Well, no, I'm not going to let go. I'm going to die if I let go! Well, that's the purpose. That's the purpose, that's what God wants to happen. He wants you to die. He doesn't want you to try to save yourself anymore. He doesn't want you to try to build His Kingdom anymore. He didn't want you to try to build His church. It's not your job to build it, it's His job. He just wants you to be a steward. He just wants you to be a faithful servant."

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "And I think what's going to happen in this next move with God, I believe this is what happened there. You know, right on the heels of that, the *Jesus Revolution* movie just was released. *The Chosen* has come out. There are a lot of things happening, just that football thing that happened last year – remember when the guy died on the field? That was incredible. They were even praying on the set at ESPN. There's something happening in our nation, in spite of this tremendous evil that we see happening. Right alongside that, there's this growing swell of righteousness that God is raising up in the midst of that; where sin did abound, grace did much more abound, you know. And we know this is biblical. The world isn't going to evolve into a perfect place; the world is getting worse. But the church, that's going to be the church's finest hour, because it will be church like we've not known church before. People don't want church the way church has been. But when they have God, they want God."

Gary: "Right. Well, when you look at the surroundings of almost every outpouring that has taken place historically, it has not been because society is in a wonderful place. It's been, you know, look at, like you're saying, the *Jesus Revolution* movie. Well, you know, we were young people back at that time, and you had the Vietnam War, and you had protests, and you had so many things that were taking place. The world seemed like it was spinning out of control. And yet, it was during that atmosphere, or within that atmosphere, that God stepped forward. And, you know, people were hungry. People didn't know what to do, so they started crying out to God. And in my mind, a revival or an outpouring is always started with people's cry unto God for Him to step in. We look at the deliverance from Egypt, and when God came down and spoke to Moses, He said, 'Look, I've heard their cry, and now I've come down in response to that.'"

Bill: "Right. And I think there are enough people in the body of Christ that are starting to cry."

Gary: "Yeah."

Bill: "I think they really are. I mean, I know I was. I was getting into a place of despair, to see what was happening with our young people was so heartbreaking. And I just, I wept over it,"

Gary: "Mm-hmm."

Bill: "you know? It takes that; the human nature is so reluctant to get into God, you know. It takes sometimes crises or despair to bring us to a place to where we have this truthful seeking of the Lord."

Gary: "Yes. Well, I know that we have come to just about the end of our time here, but I wish you would pray. You mentioned earlier really believing that as people are hearing this, that that Presence of God come on them and into their lives, and something really transformational happen for them as it happened for you when you went to Asbury. So, can you end this all with any final comment that you have, and then just really pray and believe for us?"

Bill: "I will, Gary, thank you so much for having me on. I love you like crazy."

Gary: "Same here."

Bill: "Folks, let me just ask the Lord to touch you during these next few moments, because this could be the most important day of your life. As you listen to this, I pray that you haven't heard just words. I pray that the Holy Spirit would reveal Himself to you at this very moment. And so Father, I pray in the name of Jesus that You will release a spirit of hunger in every listener. That Lord, You will open up windows of heaven. You will open up windows they have not seen into before. You will give them new hope and

faith. You will give them a new desperation, that they may know You and the power of Your resurrection. I pray that each one here realizes, Lord, that they are not insignificant, but they are a significant part of what You want to do upon the earth during these days that we live in; because these could be the days that are the days that we all remember as the best days that God has ever put before us. So in Jesus' name, I bless you right now. Let the anointing of the Lord be transmitted to you through these words, through this media, that you may be touched by His Spirit right now. May His Presence come upon you. May it go down to the very depths of your being and stir your hearts. Stir the waters, Lord. Stir the waters of the people right now. And I release Your Presence into their lives, in Jesus' name. Amen."

Gary: "Amen. Amen. Thank you so much, Bill, for being here. And we just ask that the Lord bless you back, and bless your family. As always, you know, I long to be with you and see you. And hopefully the Lord will bring us together, and we will continue to see His Presence and His outpouring upon the earth in our day and age. Amen?"

Bill: "Amen and amen."