

Greg Laurie: 'Jesus Revolution' Sparking Historical Number of Baptisms

✖ In 50 years of ministry, Greg Laurie has seen a lot of wonderful things happen in the kingdom of God, from healings to deliverances to mass salvations.

But what he has seen recently has even come as a surprise to him. Last Saturday, the Harvest Christian Fellowship senior pastor, along with Jesus Revolution movie director Jon Erwin, hosted and celebrated what may be the largest one-day baptism ceremony in American history.

More than 4,500 people, many who traveled across the nation and from countries around the world, were baptized in the Pacific Ocean at Pirate's Cove, the southern California beach where Laurie and his wife, Cathe, were baptized 50 years ago.

It's also the location for the first sermon Laurie preached as a younger man of God.

"I can tell you right now, we've never had anything like what we saw here. It's never happened before," Laurie said. "I could say very safely say it's among the largest, for sure."

Among those baptized on the main beach at Pirate's Cove was approximately 100 disabled people.

One woman sent Laurie a message after she and her husband joined the long line of people waiting to get onto the beach.

"My husband and I showed up to Pirate's Cove today and got baptized together. We accepted Jesus into our hearts and into our marriage," the woman told Laurie. "My worries, fears, anger and sadness have been washed away. God was with us today

and I felt His presence. We will be attending Harvest Fellowship now in person rather than watching online.”

Laurie baptized his grandchildren Stella and Christopher, calling it a joy and honor.

People all over the nation and world want to be baptized, Erwin said.

The most baptisms in America—at least by the largest denomination, the Southern Baptist Convention—were recorded in 1972, the culminating year of the Jesus Movement.

“My prayer is, ‘Can that record be beaten? Can there be more baptisms in America this year or the next than (back) then?’” said Erwin, adding 4,500 people in one day is a good start.

As for the Jesus Revolution film’s inspirational baptism scenes at Pirate’s Cove, they encouraged “almost every person” in his or her obedience to the Lord, Laurie said.

Laurie’s friends in the UK tell him that people who see the film stand and cheer during the baptism scene. In Ireland and Scotland, reactions are similar.

Jesus Revolution Film Still Making Impact

The film itself, which has broken some records for the Christian film genre, is still making an impact globally. Dubbed into Spanish, the film is headed to theaters in Mexico. Jesus Revolution is also headed to Brazil and, in the United States, it’s coming to Netflix July 31.

Laurie told Erwin, who visited Harvest Christian Fellowship for worship, he was grateful to the director for bringing to life part of the Jesus Movement story in film, as well as telling the origins of his church along with the testimonies of how he and Cathe came to faith in Jesus.

“The thing that seems to resonate with so many people are

these baptism scenes,” Laurie said.

“What we felt on the beach was what we felt while filming the movie. It was the most magical day of my career,” Erwin said. “I remember Jonathan told me, ‘This is real. These are not movie extras. People are coming to be baptized for real.’”

During filming of the baptism scene, some told Erwin “The Spirit of God is here.”

“It was our hope during filming that people watching would accept Christ,” Laurie said. “You found a way to convey what salvation is like through the movie’s baptism scenes.”

Laurie says it is working, too.

“This is something God is using as a powerful tool to touch people,” Laurie said. {eoa}

Steve Rees is a former general assignment reporter who, with one other journalist, first wrote about the national men’s movement *Promise Keepers* from his home in Colorado. Rees and *Promise Keepers* Founder Bill McCartney attended the Boulder Vineyard. Today Rees writes in his free time.