

How Greg Laurie's 'Crazy, Chaotic' Childhood Paved the Way for His Powerful Conversion

Pastor Greg Laurie, founder of Harvest Crusade and Harvest America and the pastor of Harvest Christian Fellowship in Riverside, California, once had a “crazy, chaotic” childhood, but a chance encounter with the gospel set him on course to become one of the most transformative pastors of the modern era.

Laurie, who has traveled the nation to deliver the gospel to massive audiences in recent decades and who authored the book *Jesus Revolution: How God Transformed an Unlikely Generation and How He Can Do It Again Today*, recently shared his own personal conversion story during an appearance on 's “Pure Talk.”

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“[I had a] crazy, chaotic childhood, so when I was 17, I felt like I was 70,” Laurie said, explaining that his mother was an alcoholic. “I’d seen a lot of horrible things that a little boy shouldn’t see.”

Watch Laurie share his powerful story of coming to faith:

At one point, Laurie fell into drugs, but then an incredible encounter with a group of Christians changed everything. The preacher recounted a group known as the “Jesus freaks” would sometimes meet on his high school campus.

Friends warned Laurie to stay away, but one day he found himself eavesdropping on the group’s discussion—and what he

heard forever changed the trajectory of his life.

“That’s the first time I heard the gospel,” he said. “I understood it, and that’s the day I gave my life to Christ.”

Now, Laurie wants Americans to look at their own personal journeys to ignite personal revival– and he’s encouraging people to pray for a spiritual revival in America—a much-needed cultural resurgence of interest in the Christian message.

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“The ultimate solution for America is not a political solution ... but it’s ultimately a spiritual solution,” he said.

Laurie spoke about how he became a Christian during the Jesus movement, a time in the 1960s and 1970s when Christianity was sweeping America, among other locations.

Considering that America has had a total of four great awakenings “that changed the course of the country,” he offered up some hallmarks of the Jesus movement that he said are worth considering as Christians look ahead in hopes of another spiritual awakening.

In addition to passionate worship, Laurie saw a focus on evangelism, a belief that Jesus could return at any moment, a real focus on Bible exposition and an openness to the Holy Spirit.

“[There was a] sense that we need God to work, we want God to work,” he said.