

Historic: The Boston Revival

After Portland we went to Boston for eight days of meetings. I had organized a group at Angelus Temple to be praying around the clock for this campaign.

The first night, when we opened in the Boston Garden—which seats some 8,000 people—we did not have the crowd that we expected. Now, 5,000 is a sizable crowd at any revival meeting anywhere, especially in Boston, where faith had faded drastically from the days when that city had been the cradle of American religion. Nevertheless, 5,000 spectators scattered through that immense Boston Garden looked like a small crowd.

Some of my best-attended revivals, however, had commenced from much smaller beginnings. One had grown from about 3,000 at the first service to almost 18,000. After a few meetings, Boston Garden, too, was crowded, and I was preaching to some of the largest audiences I had ever addressed.

The closing service drew almost 24,000, and many were turned away because there was no room left inside. I was told it was the largest audience ever assembled together under a roof up to that time for an evangelistic meeting anywhere.

It is impossible to estimate how many were converted in this Boston revival. The Holy Spirit moved in the place, and when I gave the altar call, it made me dizzy. I could not believe that the people had heard correctly. Hands went up all over, many even behind me, where some 1,500 people sat who could not see my face all the time I was preaching. In one single service, as many as 2,000 people stood, signifying their desire to receive Jesus.

From Boston we went to Providence, R.I., for three days and preached God's Word in a building seating 12,000. And God filled that place, too. The campaigns in New England were a real inspiration to me.

So often when I go into a city, some reporter approaches me and says: "It is a wonderful work you are doing. But how do you know the converts last? Don't you suppose it is personal magnetism, or psychology, and the moment your back is turned, the coverts will go back to the world?"

"If they were converted to me," I would reply, "that would be true. But if they are converted to the Lord Jesus Christ, it lasts."

Still, in my mind often lurked the haunting question, "You say it lasts, but are you sure about it?" For almost nine years in Angelus Temple, I had had a chance to see the converts last. Only God could have held those people together through the storms and tests we had gone through. I know it lasts.

And back in New England, I discovered fresh evidence of this. When I stood on those platforms in Boston and Providence, people came up to me from every direction and said: "Do you remember me, Sister? I was converted in your meeting 15 years ago."

"Do you still stand true?" I asked.

"Oh, yes," came the reply. "And there is a whole band of us who were converted in your meeting."

What a thrill it was to have people come and say, "I was converted 14 years ago ... 15 years ago ... 16 years ago ... in your meetings."

Soul-winning is the one abiding work that is going to last when all else has passed away. That is the reason why, when an offer of a stage career came to me while I was in the East from a well-known theatrical leader in Los Angeles, I sent word back: "Not even if it were for \$10,000 a night would I accept. I expect to stay in the church and preach the gospel."

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