



The Secret Of The Hicks Revival in Argentina

I Saw Three Million People Bow Before God

By **TOMMY HICKS**

As Told To G. H. Montgomery

SUDDENLY the great man lunged toward me, his arms outstretched as if he were about to seize me by the throat! His form towered above me, his height exceeding mine by inches, but in that instant those inches were magnified into feet.

In the split second between the initial lunge and the physical contact of our bodies, I saw his face working with emotion, an emotion which I, in my frame of mind, interpreted as anger. Then his arms were around my neck, his hands pressing hard upon my back. Fear engulfed me, and I found myself trembling like an aspen leaf in the wind. I said, "This is the end of Tommy Hicks!"

I had been ushered into his office only 30 minutes before. I was at a distinct disadvantage from the beginning, for I knew no Spanish, and he spoke very little English. There I was in the office of a man so high up in the Argentine government, that even now to call his name would be an impropriety. My admission to his office had been miraculous. I didn't realize at that time that it was a thing unheard of that an ordinary human being coming down from the States should gain an audience with so great a man without a lot of preliminary preparations. As a matter of fact, I was facing a lot of the impossibilities that I hadn't known about. For instance, when I left the airport in Los Angeles only a few days before, I didn't know that it was impossible to conduct mass meetings in Argentina, or to get on the radio there, or to report revival campaigns in the newspapers. I didn't know about these impossibilities. So, like the bumblebee in Brother Roberts' famous story, when I arrived in Argentina, the first thing that I did was to start out to do the impossible.

The purpose of my visit to this particular official's office was to get permission to conduct mass meetings, use the radio and

newspapers in a great evangelistic and healing campaign. He had received me graciously and had been the soul of courtesy throughout the half-hour that I had been with him. Then abruptly he had started to close the interview and had reached out his hand to say good-bye. In that instant, I knew that my opportunity was made or lost, perhaps forever. So I said, "Mr. X, will you let me pray with you?"

He replied with some surprise, "Why yes."

"Then," said I, "give me your right hand and repeat after me this prayer." When he had complied, I started to pray the sinner's prayer. My words were conveyed to him through my interpreter, and he followed faithfully in the prayer—"God, be merciful to me, a sinner!"

It was at that point that he dropped my hand and made his lunge. And it was at that point that my terrible fear told me that time had run out for Tommy Hicks.

Then, as I stood there with his arms tightly around me, I suddenly became conscious of the fact that his own body was shaking, and what seemed to be convulsive sobs were racking him from head to foot. And then he spoke. In his faltering, broken English he said, "All my life, this is what I have wanted!"

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WHAT was the beginning of the great Argentine revival. And it started within three days after I had arrived in Buenos Aires. I had wasted no time after getting to the hotel and finding my room, but started out immediately to hurdle my first impossibility. I had learned first, and to my dismay, mass meetings of a religious nature were not

permitted in Argentina. There was only one man who could give me permission to hold those meetings, and it was impossible to see that man. At least, that is what I was told.

But I had seen him. I had talked with him. And now, he turned to say good-bye again, and then remembered, "Oh, but there was something that you wanted!" he said.

Then calling one of his secretaries, he instructed, "Give Pastor Hicks whatever he wants. Write him a permit to hold mass religious meetings, to use the radio and newspapers, and to do whatever else is necessary for the success of his work. Only two stipulations: He is not to discuss politics or to speak against any religious group."

Well, those terms were easy for me to follow. In the first place, I knew nothing about politics; and in the second place, I had nothing in my heart against any religious group. So the revival was on.

After I secured permission to conduct mass meetings in Argentina, I went to Chile for a brief campaign while waiting for an opening in Atlanta Stadium, where I opened the Argentine campaign on April 14. In our opening service in the Stadium, we had about 6,000 people present.

Three nights later, God wrought the first great miracle of the campaign. They had brought a woman out to the stadium who had been a cripple, a total cripple, for over 17 years. She was laid on a cot in the midst of the stadium, where everybody could see her. You will understand that all of my services were conducted through an interpreter. I had instructed him that he was to copy my every gesture, and, insofar as possible, every inflection of my voice and even the expressions on my face. He was an expert, and he did a wonderful job of interpretation for me. I have explained this at this point, so that it will not be necessary for the remainder of the story for me to point out that all that I said and preached

to the people was done through an interpreter.

On this particular night, as I looked down at this hopelessly crippled woman lying there, I suddenly knew that this was God's night to begin his great work. I felt the power of God upon my own body, and faith was strong within me. So I looked at the woman, without even going down to her and shouted to her, "Woman, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, get off of that cot. You are healed!"

Without a moment of hesitation, the woman struggled to rise. Finding that she was unable to lift herself from the cot, but determined to obey my command given in the name of Jesus, she frantically twisted her body until she rolled herself off the cot on the floor of the stadium. Then, with another tremendous effort, she struggled to her feet and stood haltingly there before the thousands of breathless people looking on. Finding herself standing alone for the first time in 17 years, she dared to take a step. It was a painfully halting, faltering step. But she made it. Then she took another, and another. Then she was walking freely around the stadium. Then God took over completely.

That was the first great miracle of the meeting, and it broke the ice, so far as Argentina was concerned. Doctors began to bring their patients out for prayer and healing. In one of the services a mother brought her little boy out for healing. The child had a rare bone disease, and the bone was softened to the point where the leg would actually bend under his weight. He was wearing a brace, but the mother had so much faith in God that she brought a shoe along for the child to wear after God healed him.

Again, without going near the child, I commanded him in the name of Jesus to rise and walk. He was healed instantly, and walked all over the arena. That was another time when God took complete control.

The doctor who had put the brace on the child's leg two days before was sitting on the platform. When he saw what had happened, he came rushing up where I was standing and fell down on his knees at my feet and begged me to pray for him. He said, "I can serve a Christ who can do this for little children. What shall I do to be saved?" *In the 62 days that I was in Buenos Aires, more than 40 doctors came to my room for consultation and prayer.*

After about four weeks we had to move into Huracan Stadium to accommodate the ever-increasing crowds. The story of this meeting is so fantastic, that if I had to come back to you unarmed by any facts, I would hesitate to tell you what God did. For the things that happened in Huracan Stadium are incredible. The mind of man can hardly grasp a congregation of 200,000 people, with 190,000 of them kneeling before God pleading for salvation. And yet, that is what I saw in Buenos Aires.

To support this incredible report, I have brought back with me government endorsed newspaper reports, and government taken pictures. You will understand that the newspapers, the radios, and the photographing of great mass meetings are all under the control of the Argentine government. Every pic-

ture that was taken of the Argentine revival was taken by a government photographer. When I left Argentina, the government presented me with an album of all those pictures. I have that album. It weighs between 25 and 30 pounds. So you see, as Paul said to Festus and Agrippa, "These things were not done in a corner." The *Buenos Aires Herald*, *Dallas Times Herald*, *Los Angeles Times*, *Christian Century*, *Christian Life*, and other publications that are definitely not in the category of deliverance publications, have studied and reported the meeting. Statistically, at least, they bear out the facts that I am giving you.

Up till the third night of the campaign, our largest congregation in the great stadium had been little more than 6,000, but after the crippled woman was healed, the crowds increased in almost unbelievable proportions. The *Buenos Aires Herald* reported that we were having crowds of 200,000 in Huracan Stadium. One night it was officially estimated that we had 400,000 people present.

People were healed of almost every known disease and affliction. Cripples leaped out of their beds and walked and ran at the command given in the name of Jesus. How many were healed is a fact that nobody but the recording angel knows. I could not even begin to estimate. But I do know that God was good to his suffering people and literally thousands testified that his power had set them free from their afflictions and diseases.

Giving the altar call in a congregation of 200,000 is not an easy thing to do. I remember my first experience. I had the great mass of humanity standing before me and I was explaining to them God's plan of salvation. I told them that God wanted to save every one of them and that he would do so if they would give their lives to him and believe. Then when I had finished my detailed explanation of what I was going to do, I said, "Now, I want every one of you who want God to save your souls to kneel where you are and the rest of you remain standing." Almost before the words were out of my mouth, it looked like the entire congregation was sinking down on their knees. The few that remained standing looked pitifully alone with the countless thousands of their fellow countrymen kneeling around them praying for salvation.

The next night, afraid that they had misunderstood my proposition the night before and wanting to be sure that they knew what they were doing, I went even to more pains to explain the plan of salvation. I urged them in advance that if they did not want to be saved, please not to kneel down, but to remain standing as the others knelt. There were 200,000 people present that night. When I finished my exhortation and explanation and gave the command for those who wanted to be saved to kneel down, again it looked like the entire congregation sank to its knees. Hurriedly I called to my friends on the platform to help me count, or at least arrive at an accurate estimate of the number of people who were standing. It was the unanimous decision of those counting with me that, of the 200,000 people present, not more than 10,000 were still on their feet. That meant (and this is the

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Evangelist Tommy Hicks was raised up from a deathbed a few years ago after the doctors had pronounced him incurable. After God healed him, he felt that, as the Lord Jesus had said, he had freely received; now he must freely give. He got his bearings in an Oral Roberts meeting in Bakersfield, California, and launched out to preach deliverance to humanity. His trip to Argentina was fulfillment of a long-cherished desire to preach Christ to "the regions beyond." His revival in Buenos Aires has probably never been matched in the history of the Christian church.

incredible part) 190,000 people were on their knees asking God to save their souls!

I think that was the night that President Peron was on the platform. I didn't know he was there, for he had come incognito and was not wearing his uniform, which it is customary for him to wear at all times when moving in official circles. I had seen him before in his uniform, but on this particular night my first knowledge of his presence came when, at the close of the service, he came forward and threw his arms around me and kissed me on both my cheeks. That was not the only time he was present in the services. At least twice he sat on the platform during the service. He may have been there other nights, also.

For 62 days after the opening service in Buenos Aires, I could not call my life my own. I was besieged constantly, day and night, by people looking for my help. If I had been in the United States, I might have had some measure of relief, for I would have had ministers to help me. But in Argentina, it was a different matter. I had gone there without any party. After I had purchased my ticket, and was on my way to the airport, a friend asked me how much money I had to take with me. I replied truthfully, "I have \$47.00."

My friend was almost indignant that I would have the temerity to start on such a trip with \$47.00 in my pocket. He gave me \$200.00, and at the airport spoke to another friend who loaned him another \$200.00 for me. So I started out on this venture of faith alone with about \$447.00 in my pocket. If God had not gone before me and stayed with me, it would have probably been the greatest failure of my life.

So, not having any party to stand by me, or any manager to stand between me and the demands of the people, I was constantly at their mercy. They had the utmost confidence in me, and I felt that I just couldn't

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FULLY PREACHING

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I discovered God is a good God, that he came not to destroy, but to save; not to enslave, but to set free; not to afflict, but to heal; not to impoverish, but to give life and to give it more abundantly (Luke 9:56; John 10:10; Acts 10:38; 3 John 2; Matthew 8:17).

I immediately began preaching Bible deliverance, which is the supernatural concept of God and his plan of salvation. During this time, I have not deviated from preaching Bible deliverance, and by God's help, I do not intend to. To me, God is not an abstract being, far removed from man and his needs, nor is he an untouchable nonentity. He is a living reality who sets the human being free, makes him whole, illuminates his mind and establishes fellowship and direct contact with him. He loves man supremely and wants to make him "more than conqueror" (Romans 8:37).

This I believe, this I have experienced and this I preach to my fellow man. My desire is for more courage to obey God more completely, more anointing to more "fully" preach the gospel, more power to perform more mighty signs and wonders, more faith to reach more people, more love to be more faithful to Jesus.

I am happy to announce that through God's leading and the co-operation of my many partners for deliverance, we are successfully filming our tent campaigns to be released next February on television stations coast to coast. Millions in their own homes will have a "front row seat" to hear the Word, see the hands that minister and see God's healing power in action. I believe when this is done we will, without the shadow of a doubt, fully preach the gospel in a new and larger way. For this purpose I dedicate myself and ask for your prayers. Everywhere I go I am asking people to pledge me their prayers, which I feel will give me more anointing to fully preach the gospel of Jesus of Nazareth.

I am counting on two things: the faithfulness of God and the faithfulness of God's people. With these two things assured, my cry is: Let's fully preach the gospel!

—The end.

I Saw Three Million People Bow Before God

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disappoint them. Even if it cost me my life, I would have to serve them as long as I was able to stand. So for 62 days and nights, I suppose that I averaged sleeping two and three hours out of every 24. Day and night, an almost unending line of people sought my help.

From the first to last in the meeting, more than six million people attended the services. Believe me, I am being ultraconservative when I say one half of those people, or three and one half-million, knelt before God in the meeting and confessed Christ as their Savior.

I say that I am being ultraconservative in making that statement, and I am. The congregations for 62 nights averaged 100,000 people a night. I followed the system of giving the altar call which I have already described, and on an average, not more than five per cent of the people were ever left standing when I asked those who wanted to be saved to kneel and pray. *So actually almost six million people knelt for salvation.* But I am allowing for "repeaters" and those who knelt but were not genuinely converted, and am conservatively estimating that 3,500,000 people were led to Christ in the Argentine revival.

Not all of this was accomplished without opposition. We had opposition. That was to be expected. The sick believed in us and stood by us. The medical profession gave us all the encouragement, and more, that we could expect from it. The government was our best friend. Millions of the unsaved loved us more than we ever expected to be loved in this world. Still we had opposition. They say that politics makes strange bedfellows. Religious prejudice does also. Believe it or not, a very prominent religious body joined hands with the communists to try to drive us out of Argentina. I say, "tried to drive us out," but thank God, they did not succeed. God did not intend for this revival to be defeated, and he turned the hearts of the highest government officials in our favor. So the meeting continued until the Lord said that it was his time for it to close.

Many of the full gospel and evangelical missionaries came forward to assist us in the meeting. Mission churches that had

been struggling for 15 to 25 years with congregations of from 20 to 40 people began to flourish and to grow, until 500 to 600 people were attending their services. So the revival was not localized. It was not confined to Huracan Stadium, but spilled over into the churches who opened their doors to receive its blessings.

THE Argentinian revival was the fulfillment of a cherished dream of many years. For years I had felt God leading me in that direction. Ever since the Lord healed my body when I lay on a deathbed with a disease the doctors pronounced incurable, I had wanted to go to Argentina. Then when I attended the Oral Roberts healing campaign in Bakersfield, California and heard him preach, God spoke to me and said, "This is the course that you are to follow." Before that time I had felt the burning urge within me to launch out into the healing ministry, but I never knew just how to do it. Nothing that I had seen in the healing ministry had ever satisfied me, but by the time I sat through one service in an Oral Roberts campaign, the Spirit of God said to me, "Tommy Hicks, this is it. Here is where you get organized and launch out to bring deliverance to lost and suffering humanity."

I'm expecting to go back to Argentina. As a matter of fact, within 30 days after this article appears in print, I expect to be on my way. But this time, my final destination is not Argentina. After I finish my next meeting in the Argentine, I plan to push on into Russia. By God's help, I mean to preach the gospel of Christ and the power of deliverance to the people in the Soviet Union before the Lord calls me home. Pray for me.

—The end.

RADIO LUXEMBOURG LISTENERS!

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The Oral Roberts Overseas Schedule

JERUSALEM — DECEMBER 15-29

JOHANNESBURG, SOUTH AFRICA — JANUARY 1-8

While in the Holy Land, Brother Roberts will not only preach and pray for the sick, but two full length films will be made for the new television series, "Your Faith Is Power," to be launched about February 6, 1955.

Details of these campaigns will be published soon after their close.