

RIVERBANK NEWS

A Publication of The Ol' Ship of Zion

MESSAGE 1 - 1996

WILLIAM BRANHAM: APOSTLE OF HUMILITY!

By Gordon F. Nelson

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you ALL THINGS." John 14:26.

Are you an "all things" believer? or are you "limited" by the tradition of Darby-Scofield-Larkin or the denominational creeds of your sectarian church? *"How oft did they provoke him in the wilderness, and grieve him in the desert! Yea, they turned back and tempted God, and LIMITED the Holy One of Israel."* Psalm 78:40-41. As a result, they wandered in the wilderness and desert of Sin for forty years until their dead *"carcasses fell."* Hebrews 3:17. Belonging to an organized denomination, you are "limiting" the Holy One of Israel. The structure of the walls limits God. *"But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!"* 2 Chronicles 6:18. Solomon, in the dedication of the temple, realized the inability of man to house God.

Pastor-Evangelist William Branham was an "all things" believer in Jesus Christ. His belief system was never stymied by the "limits" of some denominational "creed" or "bylaws." As I recall the story, Brother Branham was first ordained a Baptist preacher. Later, he would be baptized in *"the Holy Ghost, and with fire."* Matthew 3:11. His ministry definitely changed as a result of "the fire", but his ordination remained the same. His tent revival in Anaheim, where my wife was miraculously healed of a fibroid tumor, had a sign advertising "Baptist-Pentecostal Healing Revival."

Congressman William D. Upshaw was miraculously healed in the same meeting. He served our House of Representatives for eight years. All those years he came to and from Congress with a cane. Brother Branham received a vision on the platform before five thousand people telling the people of a Congressman's presence, and that he was on a cane. The Congressman acknowledged his presence, and God healed him. Do you think the Pentecostal Evangel would report this healing? It happened "off limits."

As a member of Trinity Church in Sacramento, I attended a Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship and received a healing from their special visiting evangelist. I then testified in my own church of this healing I received elsewhere. Wow! Don't ever try it. If I had received healing at their altars, I probably would still be a member there.

The Apostle Paul declared himself to be the chiefest of sinners (1 Timothy 1:15) because he persecuted the church of Jesus Christ. *“And when Saul was come to Jerusalem, he assayed to join himself to the disciples: but they were all afraid of him, and believed not that he was a disciple. But Barnabas (an apostle) took him, and brought him to the apostles, and declared unto them how he had seen the Lord in the way, and that he had spoken to him, and how he had preached boldly at Damascus in the name of Jesus.”* Acts 9:26,-27.

It was Barnabas who first accepted the Apostle Paul. He broke down the wall of fear in the disciples to where they could give him the right hand of fellowship. Barnabas, however, first told them of all the signs of Paul's life to convict him of being an “all things” believer in Christ. If you were in a courtroom, could your own lawyer produce enough evidence before a jury that they would convict you as being an “all things” believer? Barnabas was the lawyer, the disciples were the jury, and Paul was found guilty of being a Christian. As evidence, Barnabas cited his client had heard from heaven, *“Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?”* Acts 9:4 Secondly, Paul had preached boldly in Damascus in Jesus' Name.

Brother William Branham of Jeffersonville, Indiana, next to the great Apostle Paul, has been difficult for Christians to accept. For one thing, he never came down their chimney like Santa Claus: he never graduated from their schools. I would be surprised if the name William Branham has ever been mentioned in the Pentecostal Evangel, the chief organ of the Assemblies of God. Why should they? He never graduated from C.B.I. (Central Bible Institute) in Springfield, Missouri, nor ever sought their ordination.

The truth is Brother Branham never even graduated from grammar school, let alone our sophisticated Bible colleges. You talk about “unlearned”? I recently read his book, The Seven Seals. I think I am uneducated and unlearned, but my grammar is scholarly by comparison to Brother Branham's. If you want your intellect teased, this is not your man.

In Luke 19:42,44 is recorded the story of Jesus weeping over Jerusalem saying, *“If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes...because thou knewest not the time of thy visitation.”*

The time of visitation was in the year 1944, when the great Pentecostal Church had a choice. Two men arose from nowhere--William Branham and Oral Roberts. If America had made the correct choice, there would never have been Jim and Tammy Bakker, Jimmy Swaggart, Robert Tilton, Larry Lea, W.V. Grant, Jr., O.L. Jagers, A.A. Allen stories to fill unbelievers with even more reason to blaspheme God. Just how far will the Pentecostal Church follow the leadership of Oral Roberts. He is a “Judas goat” to lead you all the way to the False Prophet who will head up the “One World Church.”

Oral Roberts was sitting in a coffee shop with his wife, Evelyn, looking out the window, peering at a brand new car across the street. Finally the silence is broken by Oral saying, “Evelyn, look at that brand new car across the street, and now look at ours!” Oral continues, “Evelyn, that is not pleasing to the Lord! I’ve got a scripture! We’ll never be poor again and I’ll drive nothing but new cars from this day on.” He read out loud to Evelyn in the coffee shop, “*Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper* (Gk.-prosperous journey, succeed in a business affair, succeed in reaching a goal) *and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth.*” 3 John 2. “Evelyn, it says right here in the Bible that God wants us to be prosperous, and no longer drive that ‘heap’.”

Robert Tilton and Kenneth Copeland, students of ORU, heard this loud and clear. Larry Lea was on faculty at ORU when he went for the “prosperity message.” Too bad these men didn’t listen to the instructions of the Apostle Paul, “*But they that will be rich fall into temptation...which drown men.*” 1 Timothy 6:9. Oral has repeated many times the story in the coffee shop which gave birth to the “abundant life” and the prosperity message!

The extortion of money was of more significance than the healing of the sick.

With the entrance of the Abundant Life Gospel, the “healing waters” dried up. The Healing Waters magazine that recorded all the miracles in the great tent revivals had its name changed at this very time. It would now be called Abundant Life and gave birth to the ever popular “Health and Wealth Gospel.”

The extortion of money was of more significance than the healing of the sick. Oral’s passion for money grew to where he received international notoriety in worldwide press reports of his decision to hold himself hostage in his own prayer tower. He would not come down from the tower, and would be on a fast to death, unless \$20 million was raised. Finally, a greyhound dog racer (a gambler) coughed up the final money to pay off the release of Oral, held hostage in his own tower of death, with a \$4.5 million donation.

“*Then the devil taketh him (Jesus) up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple* (Gk.-extremity [top corner]), *and saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down!*” Matthew 4:5-6. Jesus had rejected Satan’s idea of climbing up a tower to tempt God in death, but Oral accepted the challenge. He did nothing new! “*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be...and there is no new thing under the sun.*” Ecclesiastes 1:9.

Oral Roberts only met William Branham one time: “The humblest man I ever met.” It was the humility of the man that was so awesome. The Bible says, “*knowledge puffeth* (Gk.-to inflate, i.e., make proud) *up.*” 1 Corinthians 8:1. “*Now when they saw the boldness of Peter and John, and perceived that*

they were ignorant and unlearned men, they marveled; and they took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus.” Acts 4:13. In 1 Corinthians 1:26-29 we read: “For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many WISE men after the flesh, not many MIGHTY, not many NOBLE, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the WISE; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are MIGHTY; and the base things of the world, and the things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and the things which are not, to bring to nought things that are: that no flesh should glory in his presence.”

The reason God cannot use the WISE, the MIGHTY, and the NOBLE is because their brain is always contrary to God’s way. *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Isaiah 55:8-9. “Because the carnal mind is enmity (Gk.-hostility, reason for opposition, hatred) against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” Romans 8:7.*

The reason God cannot use the wise, the mighty, and the noble is because their brain is always contrary to God’s way.

I was a student of Dr. Bebe H. Patten’s Bible College when first I saw William Branham. I was walking on East 14th Street in Oakland, California when suddenly I encountered a crowded sidewalk! Its source was around the corner and down the middle of the block. My curiosity got to me! What was the cause for all this congestion? Following the line the crowd made from the street, I sneaked into an already packed-out church.

In the pulpit was a man of small stature with a winning smile, and draped in humility. “Little David,” a child evangelist, had held a revival at our church. His father seemed to be the master of ceremonies, and introduced Brother William Branham to this Oakland, California audience.

Brother Branham said he did not believe in advertising in the newspapers or on radio to tell anyone that he was in town. “I am the only man on earth presently with the ‘gift of healing’ (or “word of knowledge” as he called it). But I will prophecy tonight that you will soon see literally hundreds follow me.” No offering was taken. “I have an icebox (this was back in the 1940’s) and I am perfectly content to be without a refrigerator. In my church in Jeffersonville, Indiana, we have a ‘poor box’ in the back of the church. No money is raised during the service, and the only money given is dropped in the box as you leave the building.”

This was the exact formula I used in my church on “C” Street and Foothill Boulevard in downtown Hayward, California. If the box didn’t provide the need, my secular work would. Brother Branham tells

in his book how he too worked to provide any lack in his church in Jeffersonville. I came to so detest the word “hireling”. If all churches operated like this, who would care about who owned the church? Ronn Haus, buying a television station in 1978 for approximately \$3 million, and selling it in 1995 for possibly \$25 million, becomes a public concern.

“I’ve refused palatial homes,” declared William Branham in this Oakland church in 1944. “Materialism is not what this ministry is all about.” One could hardly look to the government of the Assemblies of God for the cure to “hiring and firing preachers”; they invented it!

Do you want to know the New Year’s resolution of the *RIVERBANK NEWS*? It will be the policy of this monthly publication to report every sale of some preacher’s “personal family-owned kingdom” by virtue of his “non-profit religious incorporation.” We will, by the grace of God, track them down like the Jews did the Nazis war criminals.

I have a story I enjoy telling about why the magpie has the only perfect nest! Someway, it seems to fit into this story of William Branham. To tell my story correctly, let us pretend Brother William Branham is the magpie. The magpie called all the birds together to be their teacher. He would teach them how to build the perfect nest. The magpie starts in, “First you must get some mud.” With that statement, all the mud-hens said, “I understand,” and left the meeting. “Next, you get some sticks.” “I understand,” said the wrens and they flew off to build their nest. “You must place your nest on a high mountain”, and off flew the eagles. When the magpie finally arrived at lining the nest with down, he noticed all the birds had left. This is the reason the magpie is the only bird to have a perfect nest: the others had all flown away before the final instructions had ever been given.

O.L. Jagers, A.A. Allen, T.L. Osborn, Mildred Wicks, Clifton Erickson, W.V. Grant and many other birds attended a William Branham healing crusade during the late 1940’s and 1950’s. T.L. Osborn was sitting in a William Branham crusade in Portland, Oregon. Every time Brother Branham would pray for the sick and God healed them, the Lord would speak to T.L. Osborn; he left for the mission fields of the world. One by one the pastors and evangelists would leave thinking they understood fully, but never stayed for the final meeting to hear the final instructions, “Touch not the gold nor the glory.” None of them were present at the final meeting, and that is why William Branham, like the magpie, is the only one that built the correct nest.

You wonder why the *RIVERBANK NEWS* is sent out free. I stayed until the very end when Brother Branham told of only a poor box at the back of the church. I heard this man say, “The icebox is fine, I don’t need a refrigerator.” When he preached in a tent, it was borrowed from Gordon Lindsey. The tent meeting held in Anaheim had so many holes in the top that had it rained, 5,000 souls would have gotten

wet. However, it did “rain” down the power of Almighty God. This is a man without a grammar school education. But he was stupid enough to believe what Jesus said, “*Freely ye have received, freely give!*” Matthew 10:8. Then Jesus said, “*Lacked ye anything?*” I still am a student of the magpie.

His life and example is the closest to what you would picture Jesus of Nazareth of being like. The power in humility! The birds merely added, “healing”, to their arrogance and pride, only to make the ministry more devastating when it failed.

This was no reflection on the magpie, but along come another bird, Oral Roberts, who never attended a single meeting of the magpie. Now, this is what the religious world can relate to! “Send me \$100 and God will give you 100-fold.” Either the magpie is a liar, or this 100-fold prosperity bird is. You make the choice. I already made mine. The magpie is still correct. Jesus said, “*Beware of men,*” (Matthew 10:17) for He knew of their ambition and greed for power.

The magpie taught us, “If you belong to the World Council of Churches, don’t worry about the number 666, you’ve already got it.” The magpie’s message was so different from the Evangelicals & Catholics Together: The Christian Mission in the Third Millennium of Chuck Colson, Pat Robertson, and the Assemblies of God.

The FGBMF (Full Gospel Businessmen’s Fellowship) seems to be an organization that God purposely raised up to be a type of Barnabas to introduce William Branham to the rest of Christendom. Demos Shakarian and these Full Gospel Businessmen loved Brother Branham dearly. After Branham’s untimely death by a head-on collision with a drunk driver, FGBMF seemed to die as well. The reason for their very existence (unknowing to them) was to provide avenues of ministry for William Branham. You cannot expect a church to let you preach unless they first see your credentials! “He is not one of us--throw him out!”

Rome never was conscious of the fact that she was building her famous roads so that the gospel could be spread quickly to the known parts of the world.

Rome never was conscious of the fact that she was building her famous roads so that the gospel could be spread quickly to the known parts of the world. God is still in charge of “the affairs of men.” Daniel said, “*Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his: and he changeth the times and the seasons: he removeth kings, and setteth up kings: he giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that know understanding: he revealeth the deep and secret things: he knoweth what is in the darkness, and the light dwelleth with him.*” Daniel 2:20-22.

The Bible says of Jesus, *“All the people were amazed, and said, Is not this the son of David?”* Jesus had just healed a man possessed of the devil: he was both dumb (or deaf) and blind! *“But when the Pharisees heard it, they said, This fellow doth not cast out devils, but by Beelzebub the prince of the devils.”* Matthew 12:23-24. The Pharisees were the Fundamentalist Southern Baptists of that day! They believed in the supernatural, the resurrection, angels as a doctrine, but, in their real theology, all “signs and wonders” died with the Apostle John on the Isle of Patmos.

In a former generation, prior to 1944, when the Evangelicals had full control of the single outlet--radio --Dr. H.A. Ironsides, Dr. J. Vernon Magee, Dr. Donald Barnhouse, and John R. Rice declared, “All manner of speaking in tongues is of the devil.” This was before the Catholics, Episcopalians and even Presbyterians became involved. With their entrance, we were no longer termed “Holy Rollers,” but “Charismatics”!

A protégé and disciple of Dr. Donald Barnhouse, Dr. Walter Martin declared William Branham to be of the devil. Walter Martin was asked if he ever spoke in tongues. His answer, given at Trinity Church in Sacramento before 2,000 people, was “None of your d*#%n business!” Walter Martin further states that God killed William Branham to protect the church from any embarrassment of his doctrine. Personally, I believe the untimely death of Walter Martin was brought about through his “big mouth” that bordered on blasphemy against the Holy Ghost. The William Branham course of founding The Voice of Healing with Gordon Lindsay as editor, and his ministry with FGBMF was complete. He completed his course! On the other hand, the ministry of Walter Martin was cut short. He had not yet begun to fight!

“And Jesus knew their thoughts (You can obtain a “status sheet” through the Christian Research Institute, Walter Martin’s own “watch dog” organization over “truth” of the Dallas Theological Seminary persuasion.), and said unto them, Every kingdom divided against itself is brought to desolation; and every city or house divided against itself shall not stand: and if Satan cast out Satan, he is divided against himself: how shall then his kingdom stand?...But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you. Or else how can one enter into a strong man’s house (his body), and spoil his goods, except he first bind the strong man (the devil)? and then he will spoil his house. He that is not with me is against me; and he that gathereth not with me scattereth abroad.” Matthew 12:25-30.

Walter Martin was not with William Branham. When the real manifestation of the power of God is being demonstrated, a man’s religion will surface, like the Pharisees of old, causing the mouth to speak in blasphemy. Following the story of the dumb, blind, and demon possessed healing was Christ’s own warning. *“Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men: but*

the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men. And whosoever speaketh a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him: but whosoever speaketh against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, neither in the world to come.” Matthew 12:31-32.

Of course, an “unconditional eternal securitist” need not worry about blasphemy against the Holy Ghost because he owns an “indulgence” (he thinks) of eternal life through the new birth. He is God’s child, the reasoning goes, and God would never disown his own children. These people totally blot out the “provocation” and the “temptation” in the wilderness where their “*carcasses fell*.” Hebrews 3:17.

Have these folk never read, “*And the son of an Israelitish woman...and a man of Israel strove together in the camp. And the Israelitish woman’s son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses...and they put him in ward (Heb.-prison), that the mind of the LORD might be shewed them. And the LORD spake unto Moses, saying, Bring forth him that hath cursed without the camp; and let ALL THAT HEARD HIM lay their hands upon his head, and let all the congregation stone him. And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, Whosoever curseth his God shall bear his sin. And he that blasphemeth the name of the LORD, he shall surely be put to death.*” Leviticus 24:10-16. I believe it was Walter Martin that was “put to death.” Walter Martin taught that the only ones capable of committing blasphemy were people living at the time of Christ. I have just quoted the story of the son of an Israelitish woman who committed blasphemy against God in the time of Moses that never witnessed the miracles of Jesus.

“*And he took a child, and set him in the midst of them...Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my name, receiveth me: and whosoever shall receive me, receiveth NOT ME, but him that sent me. And John answered him (still on the same subject), saying, Master, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and he followeth not us: and we forbad him, because he followeth not us.*” Mark 9:36-38. William Branham was obviously not a disciple of Walter Martin. He completely disregarded all his teachings on “unconditional salvation” based on a one-time experience.

William Branham, without a grammar school education, knew nothing of Dr. C.I. Scofield and Clarence Larkin’s chart to teach him “dispensationalism”! It is what he did know that astounded his congregations over the world! “*But he that is spiritual judgeth all things.*” 1 Corinthians 2:15.

“*But Jesus said, Forbid him not: for there is no man which shall do a miracle IN MY NAME, that can lightly speak evil of me. For he that is not against us is on our part.*” Mark 9:39-40.

“*Without a parable spake he not unto them (the people).*” Matthew 13:34. Taking a child into his arms and setting him in the midst of them, stating, “*Whosoever shall receive one of such children in my*

name, receiveth me...And whosoever shall offend one of these little ones (Brother Branham with no education was one of these little ones Christ was referring to) *that believe in me, it is better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he were cast into the sea.*” Mark 9:37,42. Walter Martin, at the very prime of his ministry, is not with us. Did he commit the unpardonable sin with his attack of William Branham? William Branham was like Jesus in that “*the (common) people gladly received him.*” Luke 8:40.

“*He that receiveth a prophet in the name of a prophet shall receive a prophets reward.*” Matthew 10:41. Brother Branham is a prophet who I have accepted as such, therefore there is a reward laid up in heaven for me. Where there is anticipated reward for accepting Brother Branham as a child, there is corresponding curses on Walter Martin for his attributing the miracles wrought by Brother Branham to Satan, as a warning to the rest of you Pharisees.

WILLIAM BRANHAM (1906-1965)

As far as anyone can determine, the only ordination he ever held was as a Baptist minister. But convicted of his insufficiency after attending a Pentecostal church, he quit! But, he never gave up on seeking God for more. All is described in his book, The Laodicean Church Age.

Branham claimed that the seven stars in Revelation 1:20, the angels to the churches, were the following people: St. Paul to Ephesus - 53 to 170 AD; Irenaeus to Smyrna - 170 - 312 AD; Martin to Pergamum - 606 to 1520 AD; Wesley to Philadelphia - 1750 to 1906 AD; and Branham to Laodicea, 1906 to ?

Is it coincidental that 1906 AD is the birthday of the Assemblies of God, the Dr. C.I. Scofield Bible, William Branham, and the “cooling off” of Azuza Street?