

It Was Not So From The Beginning

[59-0405A, It Was Not So From The Beginning, Angelus Temple, Los Angeles, CA, 43 min]

L-1 Standing just for a moment of prayer. Shall we bow our heads. Lord, we are grateful to Thee for this most remarkable opportunity to speak to Thy people. And it is written in the Scriptures, "If the people that is called by Your Name shall assemble themselves together and pray, then You'll hear from heaven." And that is the attitude that we come in now, O Lord, is why we are assembled together, that You will receive us, and pardon us of our sins and our trespasses against Thee, and condition our lives, so that there would be no good thing withheld from us, that Your Spirit would deliver to us freely, as we know You have made preparations for them to be given to us.

L-2 Bless the words that has gone forth, the singing of the hymns, and our loyal Brother's message just now. And we pray that You'll continue to be with us, and help us tonight in the healing service. May as we pray, may You be here to answer prayer, healing the sick and the afflicted. And above all things, save the lost, Father, for this we ask in Jesus' Name. Amen. May be seated.

L-3 Just behind the curtain, I've been enjoying this grand message that Brother duPlessis, from South Africa, had just given us. And these messages, he will giving each morning, giving instructions on how to receive Divine healing. For this afternoon, so that we will not linger too long, for the boys wants to pass out the prayer cards immediately after this service. Tomorrow, the prayer cards will be given out at six to seven o'clock in the evening. But I believe they're having a concert of some sort here in the Temple tonight that takes up that time. So the cards will be given out immediately after this service.

L-4 I wish to call your attention to some of God's Word. And that's... This portion that I shall read just now is found in Saint Matthew's Gospel, the 19th chapter and the last seven words of the 8th verse, Jesus speaking:
It was not so from the beginning.

This is rather an unusual text. And it's for an evangelistic service, as we're in now. But as I have said before, God is unusual. He does things in unusual ways. But all is good, because it comes from God. All of His Words are e--eternal.

L-5 And maybe by taking such a text, it might be thinking that we were trying to say something, that someone else was wrong and we were right. Now, we would pray God that no one would take that attitude.

Just today, before coming out here, I was met and greeted by a good friend of mine, who is Catholic by denomination. And he loves me, and I love him. And I have, by the grace of God, thousands of such friends across the nation, or the world, that would firmly disagree with me on Scriptural doctrines, but in fellowship...

L-6 A minister called my wife about a month ago, and he and I had been talking on some Scripture. He firmly taken his stand, that my belief in Divine healing was wrong, that the Scriptures did not support what I was teaching, that Christ was the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Well, he is an American and got a right to his own beliefs. But I tried to talk to him nicely. No matter how much he tried to argue, I just talked to him like a Christian should talk, stayed on what I believe, but give him room for his belief. He called my wife, and he said, "Is Brother Branham at home this afternoon?"

Said, "No, he's on his hospital calls."

Said, "Sister Branham, I want to say one thing. I have disagreed with Brother Branham upon Scriptural doctrine. But one thing I know, he's a Christian." I like that. Just so we are Christians.

L-7 This Catholic friend of mine said, "What's the strange thing to me, Billy, is this, that you have not come back to the Mother Church, the Catholic Church."

"Well," I said, "I have never left it."

And 'course, this was most amazing to this fellow. As he looked at me strangely, I said, "You know, as according to the teaching of the church, that Christ founded the Catholic church, and put over it the twelve apostles, Peter being the first pope. And they, by inspiration, wrote the Bible. And the Bible is the history of the early Catholic church. And then the claims of the church is, that it has power to change these rules whenever it wants to, or sees fit to do so." I said,

"Therefore, I just believe the Bible, just the way It's written. And that was the doctrine of the first Catholic church. So I am an old fashion Catholic then, believing in its first doctrine; because I read that the Founder said in the last part of His Book (That was Jesus Christ.), that, "Whosoever shall take away one word or add one to it, the same will be taken out of the Book of Life for Him." Therefore, I'm an old fashion Catholic like the first Catholic church was, if the Bible was written by the first Catholic church."

L-8 Jesus, when He came on earth, He found, as He would find today, teachers of the Scriptures, teaching things that wasn't so by the inspired Word.

They were talking on the subject of divorce, as you see the previous part of the Scriptures was teaching. And they had said that they had a commandment that the woman should be put away for any cause. Jesus said, "Moses did this because of the hardness of your heart, but it wasn't so from the beginning."

We have to go back and find out what the foundation is. And then, if we can get the foundation, then we can build on a solid foundation. And no building is any stronger than its foundation, because the complete building is resting upon that foundation. Every pilaster, every window, and all the building rests upon that foundation.

L-9 And if God has said anything, it is the most solid foundation that we can rest on. Faith can rest on no other. Faith cannot find its resting place upon the shifting sands of people's ideas. But it takes its everlasting stand upon the unmovable Rock of God's eternal Word. We can rest on it if God said so. That should settle it.

But we find that it's just in the heart of man to pervert something, or to make it seem more up-to-date. But nothing can be more up-to-date than what God has said.

I feel about it like the old darkie was down in the south. He was packing the Bible? And they said to him, "Mose, why do you pack that Bible?" Said, "You can't even read one word in it. And why do you carry that Bible under your arm?"

L-10 And the expression from the old man was this: "I carry It, boss, because I believe It. And I believe It so much, that I believe It from civer to civer, and the civer also; for on the civer it's written, 'Holy Bible.'" Said, "I'd rather be standing on this Bible in the hour of my death than to be standing in heaven."

And the man who was speaking to the old gentleman said, "That's quite a statement, Mose, for you to make,"

He said, "The reason I say it, boss, is because that It's more sure to stand than heaven is. For in this Bible it is written by Jesus Christ, (its inspired Author), that, 'Heavens and earth will pass away, but My Word shall never fail.'"

I think we all feeled about like that. Let God's Word, way He wrote It, no private interpretation, just speak for Itself when no one has polluted It. Read It; believe It. It may seem strange, some of its quotations. But God sometimes works in mysterious ways. His wonders to perform. We must believe It.

L-11 We find out that in the days of our Lord, when He visited us in the form of flesh, that He found worshipers looking to the church for salvation. I do not believe that it has changed very much. People are still looking to the church for salvation. And they're sometimes getting the same thing they got in that day, some sort of a man-made affair, some creed instead of Christ.

Creeds are all right. Churches are all right. They are God's institutions. And I have the highest respects for any church, regardless of its denomination, that's established in the Name of the Lord Jesus to turn people from sin to righteousness. But then, as it goes on, we begin to find that we have this little let-down, and that little let-down, and we adopt something for something else. And so it goes.

L-12 And Jesus found those people, the Jews, perverting the Word of God, making the commandments of God of non-effect. He said, "You, with your traditions, take the Word of God and pervert It into making It saying something that It does not say.

And when someone says that the Word of God does not teach Divine healing, they are saying something that the Word does not say. And when they say the Word does not teach the baptism of the Holy Ghost for believers in all ages, they are saying something that the Word does not say. They are substituting something to take Its place.

When we try to say that shaking hands, or membership, or some of those things--which are all right--but it'll never take the place of the Holy Spirit in the church. That's God's foundation, and there can be no other foundation laid. We can hear the Author of this Book so solemnly warn, "Except a man be borned of the Spirit, he will in no wise enter into the

Kingdom."

L-13 So we find today, that man still say, "It doesn't mean just what It says, It means something else. Oh, we know they will say the Scripture says that Jesus is the same yesterday, today, and forever. The Scripture does speak of the healing; but that was only for the apostles, and for the men of those days, to... in the days of heathenism to prove that He was God."

I do not want to be critical. I would not want you to think that I was entering it like that. But I say that it needs that proof more today than it did then, for today... That day, they were completely on the other side, knowed nothing of God, and cared nothing of God. But today, after two thousand years of Gospel teachings, and churches, and so forth, they know better, or they should know better.

And then they try to pervert It to make It fit a certain creed. But God's Word remains stable, always the same. Then in a day like this, men and women who will come to Christ will then call out to the pastor, "Where is the God that used to do certain things?"

L-14 May I say this, that a historical God does not do any good, unless He is that same God now that He was then. What good does a God of Moses do, if He is not the same God this afternoon? What good would it do to tell a man that was freezing to death, "I have a fire painted here, that someone painted years ago when a great fire was warming the certain places." A freezing man could get nothing out of a painted fire, no more than a congregation can get out of a historical God, that's not the same God today.

He is the same God. It's against even thinking, when we try to place Him off as something that was, if He isn't today. He could not be God, infinite, unless He remains the same today.

L-15 And if He gave one generation a wonderful, great square meal of spiritual things, and set us down to corn bread and sorghum molasses, it wouldn't be fair, it wouldn't be like a father. It wouldn't be the nature; it wouldn't be becoming to the--the Judge and the justice of all the world to do such a thing.

Fathers of flesh might do that. They might despise their children in such a way and--that they would--and so stingy that they would not feed their children and--and they die from an allergies and so forth. But never will our Heavenly Father ever let His children die from the lack of spiritual vitamins, for His bountiful blessings are full, and longing to give to whosoever will. Why would we cry, "Where is the God?"

As the little fellow once asked in my city, "If God is so great, why can't someone see Him? Why can't we behold Him as we used to do it, as the Scriptures say He was?" How many ideas people can project into that. But still it's trying to bypass the facts. And facts still remains.

L-16 It reminds me of Saint Luke, the 1st chapter, where Jesus and His parents had gone up to the feast of Pentecost. And Jesus was at the age of twelve. And it was customary in those days, that the people attended this great nationwide feast of Pentecost. It was the in-gathering of the first fruits of the harvest. Mary, and Joseph her husband, and the little boy Jesus, took their journey up to Jerusalem. And after being in Jerusalem for several days at the feast, they left the city so interested in their peoples that they were with, until they forgot to check up to see if Jesus was with them. Oh, how that parallels today. And they went a journey out into the desert before they ever checked, for they thought, surely He was along.

L-17 May I say this, not critical, but for the--making this point. I believe the church has did that, just upon the thoughts, "Oh, He's with us. We don't have to have miracles, and signs, and so forth. We don't have to have Divine healing today. We don't have to have the gifts of the Spirit; they're not for this day. Oh, He's with us anyhow." But, my most precious brothers, do you realize we have found out that all of our creeds and churches, we're finding discord and confusion. Something's wrong.

And we sometimes thinks He might be among our kindred. I've heard that expression many times. "My mother was a Methodist, or Baptist, or Presbyterian, or so forth." You'll never find Him like that. And sometimes you're depending on what mother had, an experience with God, to atone for you. It's got to be your own personal faith in God. You just don't find Him there.

So they checked from pastor to pastor, from church to church, we would say, making it modern. And they could not

find Him anywhere.

L-18 I feel sorry for people today. Many thousands of people in this nation that's belonged to dozens of different churches, trying to find where Jesus is. They go down to one certain church, and they check there. They go to another church; they check there. They find out there's something wrong. They don't act like, and believe like, and worship like... And there's no sound of the King in the camp. There's no joy.

L-19 I might say this. If there was one thing that I find in Pentecostal people that makes me believe that they are certainly outstanding Christians, is not because of their speaking with tongues, or the signs of the Divine healing; it's the joy that they have. They just have no embarrassment. They just let down their hair and start to rejoicing, because they've got something they're not ashamed of. That makes me believe that there's something outstanding about them. They're not ashamed. They'd just as soon shout out there in the street as they would here in the church. And if a hundred people are laughing at them, that wouldn't stop them a bit. They'd continue on shouting--joy.

Find them on the mission fields starved to death almost. I've seen them with no shoes on their feet, living off of about thirty cents a week, preaching the Gospel, brother, just as happy as you are coming to church in a limousine. They are happy, for they've found something that means more than creed, or denomination, or--or church affiliation. They found what it takes to bring joy. And a Christian should be happy. We were prayed for, that our joys might be full. It's something about it that's real.

L-20 Now, if we've lost that joy, if we've lost those things, and we can't find them among our kindreds, we can't find them, then there's one thing to do, is go back where we left Him at. The Church should go back to the beginning where they left Him. And that's exactly what Mary and Joseph did. They left Jesus at the feast of Pentecost. That's where Mary and Joseph left Jesus.

Now, I say this to all due consideration and respects. That's where both Catholic and Protestant left Jesus--at the feast of Pentecost. You can't find Him searching around here through creeds and denominations. The denominations and creeds and all should go back to the beginning.

L-21 When Jesus was on earth, He said, "I am the Vine; ye are the branches." And when a vine comes forth, the branches come out of the vine. And the first branch comes up. The second branch looks just like the first one. The third branch looks like the first one. And on to the end of the vine, every branch looks the same. One don't come up with grapevine leaves, and the other with paw-paw leaves, another with oak leaves, and another with palm leaves. If it starts with a grape leaf, it ends with a grape leaf.

And if the first church was a product of that Vine, Jesus Christ, and wrote a book of Acts out of it, the second branch will have to be the same thing, or it's been grafted into something that has a different life.

L-22 "I am the Vine; ye are the branches." If the first branch brought forth joy, love, loyalty, the gifts of the Spirit, casting out evil spirits, water baptism by immersing... And if we today find that not all into the church, the church is not getting its life from that Vine. For church today... We Baptists, Methodists, Pentecostals, and whatmore, if our church, they cannot write a book of Acts behind this church, then it's in the wrong vine. There's something wrong with it.

If Jesus was on earth today, and I'd walk up to Him and say, "Lord Jesus, I go to a church that doesn't believe in Divine healing." He would say, "It wasn't so from the beginning."

If I went to Jesus and said, "Lord, my church does not believe in speaking with other tongues." He'd say, "It wasn't so from the beginning."

If I went to the Lord Jesus and said, "I been sprinkled, and my church says it's all right. My pastor says, 'If I sprinkle you with water, it's just as good as immersing in water.'" Jesus would answer, "It wasn't so from the beginning."

If I walked to Jesus and said, "I shook hands and took the right hand of fellowship from the church; I believe that I've been borned again." Jesus would say, "It wasn't so from the beginning." It's true.

We've got to go back to the beginning. Where did the church leave Jesus? At Pentecost. There's where the churches will have to go back to find Him, back to Pentecost.

L-23 That's what the Angelus Temple needs today. I did not know Mrs. McPherson; I was a little boy then. But I heard

of your meetings, how that they camped in the park, and the aisles was filled full, and that great signs and wonders took place. Back to the beginning, Angelus Temple. Go back to your first place and your first love. Get pack to a place where the power of the Holy Ghost can take over in this meeting, signs and wonders can be done, and great wonders, and thousands of souls being filled with the Holy Ghost. Back to the beginning. That's what we need. That's what our--Los Angeles needs. That's what it needs: back to Azusa Street, back to the beginning where the Holy Ghost had right of way.

L-24 Instead of the fancy fandangos, Hollywood evangelism, where people set starchy and stiff, and there's hardly an "Amen" among them. I'm against such stuff. I'm an old fashion Catholic that believes: back to the beginning, the way God spoke it in the first place. There came a sound from Heaven, not a preacher down to give a right hand of fellowship, or not a priest to give you the communion, holy eucharist, which means Holy Spirit.

It didn't come like that. It come like a sound of a mighty rushing wind from heaven, and it filled all the house where they were setting. Back to the beginning, hungry hearted Los Angeles. And you in radio-land, and wherever you may be, back to the beginning.

L-25 This form of creeds that we're following today is man-made doctrines. Back to the beginning, to real Pentecost, until the pouring out of the Holy Spirit, where men and women become lost in the Spirit of God, where they worship in the Spirit, where the joy bells are ringing even on the sick bed. In the hours of death, the joy bells still ring.

You say, "But my church don't teach that." But It wasn't so from the beginning. The beginning was at Pentecost. The beginning, the first Branch brought forth a church that signs and wonders followed, a missionary minded Church, men who laid down their lives for the cause. And now, we can't stand a little criticism for the cause. Back to the beginning; these things wasn't so.

Now, denominations are fine. Creeds are fine. But when you tear down that brotherhood... If a Methodist and Baptist can't shout the glories of God on the same basis, there's something wrong.

L-26 I used to herd cattle. We took them through the gates at Arapaho Forest. Some of them was branded, "Turkey Track" "Diamond-T," but every one went through there had a real genuine blood registered tag that they were herefords.

I believe that's the way it'll be at the coming of the Lord Jesus. There, God won't ask if you been Pentecostal, if you'd been Baptist or Presbyterian, it'll be the blood tag that takes you through. And the Blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin, and it powers the church with the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and sends forth His great blessings to all.

L-27 Closing, I might say this: not long ago, there was a great American musician, a young fellow, outstanding character. But, oh, how he could play that music. And so his... The man was so great everywhere, until finally he went to Europe to play there before the great lovers of his kind of music. And one night, after he had played his music, the audience was so excited, until they stood on their feet, and screamed, and clapped their hands together. And they expected the young man to walk out and bow to appreciate their applauding. But they noticed he didn't say a word. And they stopped to see what was the matter. And they noticed the young man wasn't even noticing his audience; he was looking up in the balcony, way up high. And they all turned to see what the young man was facing. And up in the balcony set the old master teacher. He wasn't noticing what his audience was saying, he wanted to get a--a bowed head from the old master teacher.

L-28 I think that's it today. This old fashion preaching of the cross, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, signs and wonders and miracles in their true state, it isn't very attractive today. People call you "crazy." And lots of times, if you'll polish it up and get a little order here and a little bit there, thousands times thousands will come to listen to some orator, someone who's polished in grammar. And they'll applaud to it.

But, church today, let's not listen to the applauding of the world; let's keep our minds on the teacher, the Holy Spirit, see what He's a bowing to. Will He sanction this? Is He giving His sanction to our preaching? Is these signs that He said would follow, are they following our ministry?

Here's what He said: "These signs shall follow them that believe." Mark the 16th chapter, His last commission, the great commission to the church, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel. He that believeth and is baptized shall

be saved. He that believeth not shall be condemned. And these signs shall follow them that believe..."

L-29 Don't stop just at that first quotation, for you add, "That's all." But it wasn't so from the beginning. Jesus said, "And ("And" is a conjunction) these signs shall follow them that believe. In my Name they shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues. And if they should take up serpents or drink a deadly thing, it shall not harm them. If they lay their hands on the sick they shall recover." That's the way it was at the beginning. May we ever remain true to the great commission. Let us pray.

It wasn't so from the beginning: for man to shake hands with another, and call himself a Christian upon them basis. It wasn't so from the beginning: to join a church, or say a certain creed, and call yourself a Christian. It wasn't so from the beginning. And if that's all that you have did, my dear friend, and you're standing here today and maybe have not even done this, and you in radio-land, I speak also, the hour has come that God must speak.

The enemy is coming in like a flood. The Bible teaches that the Spirit of God will rise up a standard against it. If you would like to be included in this prayer, saying, "God, take me back to an experience like they had on the day of Pentecost," would you raise your hands, you in this visible audience? The Lord bless you. Literally hundreds of hands are going up. And you out in radio-land, if you would like to be included in this prayer, will you raise your hands out in the radio-land, and let God give you an experience like it was on the day of Pentecost.

Let us stand to our feet here in this visible audience with our hands up to God, and say, "God, take me back to the beginning. Take me back to an experience like they had on the day of Pentecost, that the holy fires of God condemned sin, and burned out all the dross, and men and women were made new creatures, and their hearts were on fire." May God answer that while we pray.

L-30 Lord, these few broken words I commit unto Thy hands. And when You were here on earth, You found things going on that wasn't according to the Scriptures. And You strictly told them, that it wasn't so from the beginning. Lord God, grant today that every man, woman, boy, girl, that's standing with them hands lifted just now to Thee with a heart's desire to have an experience like they had at the beginning... May the Holy Spirit come like a rushing mighty wind and fill every crevice of their heart and giving it to them their great desire. We ask it in Jesus' Name.

L-31 While you remain standing with your hands up to God, believing that... Just don't let this Spirit that has told you that you need that experience; don't let the enemy let you--your flag drop down. You're defeated. Hold it there till God comes. He promised it; He's here to fulfill it.

"And they were all in one place in one accord. And suddenly there came from heaven, as a sound of a rushing mighty wind, and It filled all the house where they were seated." Oh, God, let it once more appear here the Angelus Temple this afternoon, and out in radio-land. While they are waiting with their hands up, praising Thee here all over this mammoth place, may there come to their heart an experience, a little warming back to an experience that they had on the day of Pentecost, that it would be so with them like it was at the beginning.

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