

THE EVIDENCE OF THE HOLY GHOST

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Before I begin I just want to send greetings from the brothers in Australia. We had a meeting last evening on zoom, we had a really nice time speaking about the things of the Word and they mentioned to send their greetings as well.

Last Sunday we were talking about Israel. That's not the subject I'm going into today but you probably heard that the bill the Israeli government was trying to pass did get passed. I thank God for that.

There was every kind of pressure under the sun against it, from the United States to Europe, even from agencies that give credit ratings. And we well know the massive protests they had within the very state of Israel. It even got to the point that Netanyahu's heart wasn't working like it should. To me that's just a testament to the extreme amount of stress that was put upon him from basically the whole world. But the Lord gave him strength.

Now even though the law is passed, they want to say that it's unconstitutional or something like that. We'll see how that goes. They don't really have a constitution so you can't say it's unconstitutional but the other side is still trying to do everything they can to make that law of none effect.

So I would just say: let's definitely keep remembering Israel and continue to pray for the peace of Jerusalem. Pray for the government. Pray for the leaders that God will direct them and give them wisdom.

I'd like to start this morning with a verse we've read somewhat frequently lately to give a backdrop for the subject we're going in today.

Let's go to the book of Matthew.

Jesus said here:

Matthew 5:6

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled.

Praise the Lord.

Now we have Webster's definition of what *righteousness* is, and that's a good starting place to have an understanding of the word.

But as we look into the Word of God, it speaks about, for example, Noah. God told Noah to *build an ark* [Genesis 6:14] and Noah *obeyed God*. [Genesis 6:22] Noah *believed* that God was going to bring a flood. Amen.

Was Noah necessarily *righteous* in the way that we might naturally think about righteousness? That's a question I have because it did say that *Noah was counted as righteous*. [Hebrews 11:7]

As far as what we might look at as *righteousness*, Noah still had his problems and his faults as a man. We read how after the flood, he got drunk on wine to the point that he completely passed out. [Genesis 9:21] We might look at that and say: well that's not a righteous person. But the thing is: God can work on the faults in His time. Praise the Lord.

It also says that *Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him for righteousness*. [Genesis 15:6] There are things we can look at in the life of Abraham that we might wonder about as well, such as: why did he accept to go in unto Hagar? [Genesis 16:4] Nonetheless, he *believed* that God was going to appoint him that seed. Amen.

So what we understand is that as God brings a Word for *our day*, if we *believe that Word*, God sees us as *righteous*. Praise the Lord.

Abraham couldn't believe the Word for Noah's day. It would have done Abraham no good to build an ark. He could look back and see what God had done and see how that brought about where he was *in his day*, but the Word for Abraham was *not* to build an ark. Praise the Lord.

So we see as time progresses God has a *Word for our day*, and those who *hunger and thirst for righteousness desire that Word*. Praise the Lord.

Just as natural hunger and thirst, if we're hungry and we eat a meal, first of all there is a *satisfaction* from that meal. Amen. And we can rejoice: I've eaten this meal and I feel full. That's when we always tend to be really certain about going on a diet [laughs]. But just a few hours go by and we're hungry again.

Now somebody might say: Jesus told the woman at the well, *I have water and if you drink of it you'll never thirst again*. [John 4:14]

We have to understand what Jesus was looking at there.

Once we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, we no longer have to look in another place for what is going to be our spiritual walk. In other words, our salvation is complete when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

As far as that *thirst* for the understanding and receiving of eternal life, when we receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, it satisfies us and we don't have to look anywhere else like: maybe it's in Hinduism, or maybe it's in Confucianism, or whatever. At that point, we know where we are in the Lord.

We have to understand, as far as the religious world, they want to make it that once you receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, well that's it: you're saved. Well if you have truly received it, yes you're saved. Praise the Lord. Amen.

But I'll say this: if we have truly received the gift of the Holy Ghost, our spiritual walk has just begun. Praise the Lord. We will *hunger and thirst* for the things of the Word of God. Praise the Lord. And God will fill that hunger.

In other words, He will *provide* the spiritual food and drink. Praise the Lord. And we will be able to *rejoice* that our hunger has been *satisfied*.

But at the end of the day, as we continue to *walk*, we're going to have *more hunger*. Praise the Lord. That's why He has likened the Spirit of this age for the church to a *flying eagle*. What is that eagle looking for? It's looking for *fresh meat*. It's not sitting on a branch, it's not sitting up somewhere in the cleft of the rock but it is *flying*, praise the Lord, looking for that prey.

This morning the title is The Evidence of the Holy Ghost.

Let's go to Acts chapter 2.

Obviously we're not going to read the entire chapter but we all know how it begins with the Holy Ghost descending on the 120 and it speaks of how they spoke with other tongues.

When we look at the history of this Age of Laodicea, we see when the anointing fell at Azusa Street, how there were many who also spoke in tongues. That was not the only sign or manifestation that was given. There were many different manifestations of the Spirit but we know that the people who were immediately affected by that anointing said: this is what we read about in the book of Acts.

As time moved on, they began to have a question: well what's the evidence that someone has received the gift of the Holy Ghost? They even came up with this phrase *the initial evidence* and for the Pentecostals, the initial evidence is speaking in tongues. They actually organized around that as their central doctrine. According to them, the initial evidence is speaking in tongues.

I want to say this morning: first, the phrase *initial evidence* is not even in the Bible. That's a man-made term as they wanted to determine if somebody had the Holy Ghost or not, or even a person themselves could know if they had the Holy Ghost.

I'll say: that's a very sad thing because there's nothing in this Word that says the evidence of the Holy Ghost is that somebody speaks in tongues. That's the truth.

But this has been taught to people over and over throughout the Age of Laodicea. And many people have had a fear about whether or not they have the Holy Ghost because that's the manifestation they're looking for.

When I look at my own life, I knew it wasn't just *tongues* but different people told what it was like for them and that still gave me a concept: it has to be like *this* or like *that*. Also different ones said things like: you have to show the Lord that you're really serious. I have to say: the Lord knows whether you're serious much more than you know whether you're serious. That's absolutely the truth.

But I had a couple of dreams and I thank God for those dreams. In one of them, I was at Faith Assembly and Brother Jackson asked the young people who needed the gift of the Holy Ghost to come up. They all lined up and I was the last person in the line. He would begin to pray for somebody and they would either start shaking or shouting or they would fall in the Spirit, and it was like that, one by one. I thought: well praise the Lord, I'm only two away, one away, and then he came to me and he said: I thought you already had the Holy Ghost. That was it. He didn't pray for me. The dream just ended right there.

I thought: oh wow, perhaps I *already have* the gift of the Holy Ghost. Yet because of what I had been taught, not by Brother Jackson but what I had heard from many others, here I was still looking.

Let's go down to verse 38. This is after Peter's sermon.

It says:

Acts 2:38

Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins,

Now the key here is *repent*.

God knows if you repented. And *you* should also know if you repented. Praise the Lord.

And he says, of course, *be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ*.

Acts 2:38
and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Praise the Lord.

Then he goes on to tell how the promise is not just for those right there but *to all down through time and around the world*. Peter didn't even realize what he was saying when he said *as many as the Lord our God shall call*. [Acts 2:39] That *included the Gentiles*. Peter didn't realize it but as he spoke under the anointing, that was including Jew and Gentile. Praise the Lord.

He said *ye shall receive*. Praise the Lord.

He didn't say: first you have to show the Lord that you're serious, or you have to speak in tongues.

Now I will say: we do see when the Holy Ghost would come upon the people, there was some kind of a manifestation. [Acts 2:4] [Acts 19:6] But I can guarantee you one thing: the people weren't there just waiting, well what kind of manifestation is there going to be? I can't wait until there's a manifestation.

They were *rejoicing* that God had saved their soul. Praise the Lord. And as the Holy Ghost came on them, yes some *spoke in tongues*, others it just says *they glorified God*. [Acts 10:46-47] They *rejoiced*. Praise the Lord.

Throughout every one of our lives, there are different ways that the Lord from time to time makes Himself known to us. It doesn't necessarily have to be an outward manifestation but it could be something that happens, or something that we read in the Word and something that happens in our life.

This morning we're going to talk about what really is *the evidence*.

Now I said that the term *initial evidence* is not used anywhere in the Bible to describe how we know that somebody has the Holy Ghost. Even the word *evidence* itself, we also don't see it in that context in the Bible.

But remember: there is also an enemy who comes against people and causes them to fear and to question: am I saved or am I not saved?

Remember: the devil will try to get you off track. It's like a bowling alley: he doesn't care whether you fall in the right gutter or the left gutter, he just wants you to fall in one or the other.

He doesn't want you to stay on the straight and narrow so he will either have you in fear, doubting your salvation, because if you're at that point, you really can't begin your walk.

There are others, they are so far from *saved* but the Lord himself could tell them *you need salvation*, they wouldn't believe it.

They have their name on the church book or their pastor has told them: yes you're saved, and they're completely convinced that they don't need anything else. They say: I've got my church, I love the Lord, I'm saved. And anything in the Word that would show them differently, they close their eyes and they close their ears to it.

If we are *sincere with the Lord*, then we will receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, but we have to understand: there is not just a little formula in the Bible. We have a game called Monopoly and there is a get-out-of-jail-free card. A lot of people think John 3:16 is a get-out-of-hell-free card. But it's *not* just doing A, B, and C, and then I've done my part. It's *not*: Jesus paid the price so I don't have to worry about anything else.

I've mentioned many times about a friend I had. He had *John 3:16* written on his windshield and he didn't want to hear any other verse in the Bible. He would just say: I've got John 3:16. He lived like the world, he was *part of* the world. But he would say: I believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and according to John 3:16 I have eternal life.

So my question becomes: well if you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, why don't you want to read about anything he said? How can you say you believe on him but you don't want to hear what he said? You can say it, but again: God knows the heart.

If our repentance is *genuine*, then yes if we trust on the Lord and we're baptized in his name, we *shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost*. [Acts 2:38] Praise the Lord. That is the only way.

All the meditation in the world is not going to get you there. All the other religions of the world, they're not going to get you there. I don't care what kind of spiritual experience you've had, if it's not by the Lord Jesus Christ, if it's not according to this Word, it's *not* going to bring you to eternal life. Praise the Lord.

I have here an excerpt from Brother Branham. We can find time after time from about 1957 or since there was a record or tapes, all the way up to about 1963, he would say things like this.

And there is a truth, biblically it is true, but the thing is: we can observe something and *think* it's love or it's peace, but *God knows* if it truly is that.

So he says here:

Bro Branham

- There's not one thing left in the Bible, as "evidence of the Holy Ghost,"

That's exactly true.

- only the fruits of the Spirit. Find out any place that Jesus said so. Yes, sir. The evidence of the Holy Ghost is the fruit of your Spirit. Jesus said so, "By their fruit you shall know them."
- "And the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, goodness, peace, gentleness, meekness. And the fruit of the enemy is enmity, hatred, malice, strife, and so forth; that's the fruit of the enemy."

Now like I said, this is not the only place we see him say this. Other times he would just say: it's love. Again he was looking at what Jesus said and he was looking at what Paul said. And in the purest sense, yes he was right.

But the problem is when people look at *human love* or a *human display* of what *appears* to be love and they think it's godly love.

I have a lot of writing today. I probably won't get into all of this but on this next slide he's speaking about how somebody in Jesus' day might have compared him to the religious leadership of the day.

He says here:

- Now we're talking about fruits of the Spirit: kind, love, joy, peace, understanding, longsuffering, patience, see, fruit of the Spirit.

That connects back to what he said in the other sermon.

- "What about this Jesus, where did He come from? We haven't got a word that He ever come out of any school. All He does is try to tear up the schools that we've built." Not much fruit of the Spirit there, is it?
- "What did He do up there where them poor merchants down there, and businessmen that had to... They, they don't raise sheep, so they--they set a little pen out there so the man can bring in a sheep. That poor businessman, he--he wants to offer a sheep 'cause it's God's requirement. He brings in the--the sheep, to sell to the businessman, so that he can offer for his soul.
- What has this Jesus of Nazareth done? Kicked over his tables; took some leather plaid it together, beat them priests out of there; and called your kind, old priest, a 'snake in the grass; a hypocrite'!"

Now what is Brother Branham doing here? He's showing how the *natural man* would look at Jesus Christ and the judgement he would give: he's just going around causing trouble, causing problems. And he doesn't respect our leaders. What kind of love is he showing?

- Now you call that fruit of the Spirit? Certainly not. Then where is your fruit of the Spirit landing up at? No more than you think of compassions, and Him going through a multitude of people there, multitudes laying, blind, crippled, afflicted, withered, halt, lame, and never healed any of them; full of compassion.
- People with a carnal mind will never know It. Seminaries don't teach It. It's a revelation. Certainly. Fruit of the Spirit drops off there, doesn't it? Them priests had ten times the fruit of the Spirit.

Now again, let's not misunderstand what Brother Branham is saying here. He's saying: that was in the *natural mind* or let's say the *religious mind* as they would look at the Lord Jesus Christ.

Then they would look at the priests and they would say: well they have ten times the fruit of the Spirit that Jesus does. They are the ones who are loving, they are the ones who are patient with the people but this man Jesus, he goes and he calls them names and gets them upset.

- How would you know what's right? The manifestation of the spoken Word of God being made manifest, Light of the hour. Certainly.

We're preaching the same message today.

He says:

- There is what the evidence of the Holy Spirit is,

See? He's changed it. Not that Brother Branham can change the evidence, but we can say that he has a *better explanation* of how to be able to judge the evidence of the Holy Ghost.

What did we read last Sunday? If *we will walk in the light, as he is in the light*. [1John 1:7] And here what does he say? It's the *light of the hour*.

That verse ends by saying: *the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses us from all sin*. Praise the Lord.

- There is what the evidence of the Holy Spirit is, believing the Word of God when It's manifested.

Look how he says that: *when it's manifested*.

It's not all manifested at the same time.

When the devil tempted the Lord Jesus, he said: *man shall not live by bread alone. Amen. But by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.* [Matthew 4:4]

God shines that light on the Word *in its hour*. So as God shines the light, we are to *believe* that Word.

Now he says:

- He was the Word, manifested. And some of them denied It, laughed at It, made fun of Him and called Him a--a fortune teller, some evil spirit; there is evidence, speaking in tongues, there is evidence of the fruits. The only evidence there is, is when man believe the written Word. When It's vindicated, walk in the Light of It.

Again, notice how he says *when* because as we move through time, God shines more and more light. Especially at the end of this Laodicean Age from the First Watch on down, that light is growing and it's going to come to *sevenfold* of the basic gospel light or the fundamental gospel light. [Isaiah 30:26]

I'll go ahead and move on. I believe this excerpt is from 1964. He's talking about a talk he had with Doctor Lee Vayle.

He says:

- And that's the way it is with a lot of these parasites today.

Now look how Brother Branham is talking. He's speaking about a certain group of people and he's calling them *parasites*.

There are people today, they say: don't mention that word *tare*. Well then Jesus was wrong because he mentioned what a tare was. [Matthew 13:38] In fact, he talked about it more than once.

But here we have beloved Brother Branham who says: look at these *parasites!*

- You can't live in the fresh water of the Holy Spirit. That's the reason they're so firmly against the Word, and say, "It contradicts itself. There is nothing to It." Is because they have to have some kind of a stagnated pool to wiggle in. Right.

- That's the same way it is with frogs, and with lizards, and with tadpoles, and such as that. They've got to get around the swamp or the stagnated pool, to live, for it's their nature to live there. And you can't change the animal till you change its nature.
- And you cannot make a man see the Word of God till his nature has been changed; and when his nature is changed from what he is, to a son of God, and the Holy Spirit comes into him. The Holy Spirit wrote the Word of God!

That's the same thing we've been preaching.

If you have the Holy Ghost, you're going to be able to believe the Word of God because it's the *same Spirit* that's motivating.

- Today I was talking with my good friend, Doctor Lee Vayle, who is present now. And he's quite a theologian, and so we usually have some—have some pretty good discussions on the Scripture. Very smart.
- And he asked me one time what I thought about the initial evidence of the Holy Ghost. “Was it speaking in tongues?” It's been many years ago. I said, “No; can't see that.” He said, “Neither do I,” said, “though I've been taught that.”
- He said, “What would you think would be an evidence?” I said, “The most perfect evidence I can think of is love.” And so we got to talking on that. And then I thought that sounded pretty good so I just held that, “If a man has got love.”

That comes from First Corinthians 13.

- But one day the Lord, in a vision, straightened me out. And he said, that, “The evidence of the Spirit was those who could receive the Word,”

Praise the Lord.

- neither love, nor speaking in tongues, but it's receiving the Word. ... So there is the genuine evidence of the Holy Ghost! He has never told me anything wrong yet. That, “it is the evidence of the Holy Ghost, is he who can believe the Word.”

Praise the Lord.

Again, that lines up exactly with what we read last Sunday.

John said *if we walk in the light*. What is that? That's *believing the Word*. As he is *in the light*. First of all, he says *we have fellowship one with another*. I have to say: yes this is that *beautiful true spiritual fellowship*. Then he said *and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin*. [1John 1:7]

A lot of people today say: whether I believe that or not, the blood cleanses me. But that's *not* what John said. Yes the blood is there to cleanse but it's *conditional* on believing the Word of God.

On this next slide he's speaking on the same thing, how many will look at it as *love*.

He says:

- Now that's no evidence of the Holy Ghost.

He's speaking of *love*.

- See? You can't rely upon that. You can't rely upon the fruit of the Spirit, because the first fruit of the Spirit is love. And the Christian Science exercise more love than anybody I know of, and they even deny Jesus Christ being Divine. See? There's only one evidence of the Holy Spirit that I know of, and that is a genuine faith in the promised Word of the hour!

This is the last one I'm going to read of Brother Branham. It's similar to what we were looking at before.

- Is there any here that hasn't received the baptism of the Spirit, yet? Now, you say, "Brother Branham, I tell you, I shouted one time." That's very good. "I spoke in tongues once." That's very good, too. But still that ain't what I'm talking about. How can you shout and speak in tongues and deny the Word? **The evidence of the Holy Ghost is believing His Word.** Always been, every age, if you can receive the Word. **Those priests had Jesus beat a million miles when it come to fruits of the Spirit:** gentle, and peaceful, and meek, lowly. He tore up churches, kicked them over; and tore the people out, and called them "snakes in the grass" and everything. See? But He was that Word.

In other words, he was the *manifested Word* of what was written in the Old Testament.

- He was that Word. That's it: believe God. God is the Word. Believe It.

Praise the Lord.

So we see how he began, and does what we're saying this morning discount the fruit of the Spirit? It does not. But we can't see with our natural eyes or judge with our natural eyes or even our religious eyes: oh these people have such great love.

They can *look* like they have love. Look at the pope today, hear how he talks. He talks so sweet and calm. And: oh I love the poor people, I'm not going to go around in the pope-mobile, I'm going to go around in my twenty-year-old Fiat.

To the natural eye, oh he's full of love. But then turn around and they'll bring to his knowledge that there are young boys who have accused priests of sexual molestation and he says: I don't want to hear that, I don't believe them. How is that *love* for those children? But they don't push that out for the whole world to see all the time.

Let's look here. I think due to time I'm going to jump to the last slide. This is an excerpt from Brother Jackson. I'll just read this last page.

He said:

- But you never would have heard a believer deny a scriptural truth.

Listen to what he says: you never would have heard a believer deny a scriptural truth.

- For that matter, no true believer even in this hour of time, would ever deny, nor speak against any truth of the scriptures.

Now I'll say this, I'll put this in: we might have a question the first time we hear it. We might need to look at it a little while. I said *a little while*, we shouldn't need twenty years. I'll say: we shouldn't need five years to be able to see that it's *truth*. There is a time when we may study and bring it before the Lord but it's not something that year after year we're struggling with.

- But you can sure find a lot of people who profess to be saved and filled with the Holy Ghost, denying an awful lot of God's Word, and accusing people who do believe it, of being off on false doctrine.

Do we not see that today?

Now I'll say this: if there is false doctrine, it needs to be *exposed* as false doctrine. But what we *don't* do, like Brother Branham said that they said about Jesus: oh he doesn't have the fruit of the Spirit, his spirit is not right so how can the doctrine be right?

We have to see it *in the Word*. If it's a false doctrine, the Word Itself will put light on that. We can prove it wrong *by the Word*. Praise the Lord. But here Brother Jackson says *an accusation*, not a scriptural proof.

- Nevertheless, no matter what others may do, those who are true children of God, delight in the revelation of His word; and that stimulation of revelation, sometimes causes us to act a little like those who received the promise of the Father, on the day of Pentecost.

Praise the Lord.

As we look at this, now let's look at *our day*. I'll close with this.

Those who sat under Brother Branham's ministry said: oh yes God gave him the Word. They said: I believe the Seals, I believe the Church Ages and the Seventy Weeks of Daniel. But when God took Brother Branham and we come to the time of Brother Jackson, they said: oh that man's a blackbird, he's *off*, he's out of the message.

Okay, show me *in the scripture* where he's wrong. They never could do that. They never went back to scripture but they said: well Brother Branham said this over here, Brother Branham said that over there. He said there's three-and-a-half years left. Brother Jackson said *seven* so he's got to be wrong.

What were they doing? They were *denying the Bible*.

Yes they had accepted it and they had *knowledge* of what was taught but the *basis of their belief* was because Brother Branham spoke it *not* because the Holy Ghost had revealed the scripture to their heart. If that had been the case, they would have continued on.

God does *not* take away the Holy Ghost. When Brother Branham passed off the scene, those who had the Holy Ghost still had it. So when the Lord Jesus shined more light on His Word, they were *able to receive it* because they had the Holy Ghost. Praise the Lord.

Again, we see what Brother Jackson said: these people *say* they have the Holy Ghost but *where's the evidence?* They're *not believing* the Word of God.

Now some people today would say that Brother Jackson was trying to condemn them to hell. That was *not* his point.

The doors of Grace are still open. If you have that *unbelieving spirit* on you, there is still time to get things right with the Lord and to receive the Holy Ghost. Praise the Lord.

When we have seen people make that move and say: well I believe what Brother Branham said but I can't believe what Brother Jackson is saying. What is that? They *didn't* receive it by revelation of the Spirit.

The same thing is happening now with those who sat under Brother Jackson's ministry. They could accept it because Brother Jackson spoke it: he's the Apostle.

But I'll say as well: do you really even *believe* what he spoke? Because he said there would be *apostles* plural. And here we are almost twenty years after his death. I would think by now they should be somewhere on the scene. Praise the Lord.

So can we receive what the Lord has for us *today*?

If we can't, that *shows* we received it on the basis that we understand who Brother Jackson was. And because *he* spoke it, we're going to stay with that.

But I have to say: if it was the Holy Ghost that *revealed* the scripture to us, we would still have a *hunger for more* [Matthew 5:6] and we would *partake when the Lord serves*. [Luke 12:37] [Revelation 3:20]

So that really *shows where we are* as to whether we have the Holy Ghost or not. [Matthew 24:28]

I'm going to go ahead and close with that. Let's go ahead and pray.