

The following letter from Brother William Branham is a timely explanation concerning his ministry and the outlook for the future. May God's people join hands and hearts for this dear servant of God that the Lord's perfect will be wrought in his life. Also pray that God will strengthen his body and give rest and relaxation to a nervous system that has been strained almost to the point of a breakdown. - C.P.T.

Jeffersonville, Ind.
Box 325
June 30, 1958

Rev. C. Parker Thomas
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Southern Pines, N.C.

Dear Brother Thomas :

I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your gracious hospitality while I was your guest speaker at the convention held in your town. I only regret that I came to you so tired. No one will ever know how weary I was had I been able to come when I was fresh and strong, I am sure the results would have been greater. I always try to do everything that I can to build up the kingdom of God, so naturally I was strained when I knew I could not do my best. I hope that I may be able to return at some later date and then greater effort will be put forth. But whatever I lacked, I am sure you and the visiting brethren more than made up by your wonderful spirit of cooperation and humility. Believe me it is refreshing to be with brethren of like minds, faith and doctrine. I must admit that I was surprised and blest at the atmosphere and good results that came fourth, for I had not even met you and I doubt if a half dozen there really knew me. It just goes to show that if we love the Lord and try to please Him, He will make all our paths full of joy and pleasant on every hand. I wish every place I went would abound to the praise of God as did our meeting at Southern Pines.

Brother Thomas, your meeting in Southern Pines was unique in that I feel it was the last of this particular kind which I have held for several years. I have been led of God through two phases of a threefold ministry. As I look to the future, I am confident the third phase is upon me. Now, if you do not mind and would even go so far as to publish this letter in your paper, I would like to acquaint you and your friends with certain information that should give you a clearer knowledge and understanding of the ministry which the Lord has given me.

Being a Bible student you know that the infinite, omniscient God had a plan that He not only originated in His wisdom, but by His omnipotence put into effect. Being God, He could not fail. He is sovereign. Thus it must stand that this sovereign God would predestinate men or otherwise His purpose would fail. That this is so (that He would predestinate men) we see in the book of Jeremiah 1:5,

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee, and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ORDAINED thee a prophet to the nations." Jeremiah was born a prophet. He could not help being what he was. A prophet, according to Eph. 4 is one of the gifts God gave to men in order to perfect the church. He is a minister by virtue of his office. He does not make his office, but his office makes him. Now I don't want to make great claims, nor even begin to compare myself with Jeremiah. I don't mean that. But I want to say, that I was born to be the man. I am. I did not ask to be what I am, and many times I have cried to God to let someone else take over this ministry. But God is sovereign and the thing formed can not talk back to Him that formed it. So, I was born to fulfill a certain plan God has and when my young mother placed me in a tiny crib in a very humble log cabin in Kentucky she was amazed that over my cradle there hung a light, like a halo. My parents and the lady who was with my mother were amazed and they did not understand it.

This light marked me as a peculiar child. But if the light was startling how much more misunderstood would be the fact that from the age of about 18 months I began having visions during the day. Those visions I would tell to my mother. She would shrug them off but eventually she had to wonder because the visions would come to pass. And then, if this were not enough, one day as I was out playing near a large tree a whirlwind stirred in the leaves and a voice spoke out of the whirlwind telling me that I must never drink or smoke but keep my body clean for God had a work for me to do. You have no idea how this frightened me. I was always high strung by nature, and now this added more burden to me. I ran into the house in a state of shock crying. I was so frightened I did not even tell my mother what had happened. Now, I believe God kept me from saying anything but I could not swear to it. On top of that as I played in the yard one day I suddenly saw a vision of a great bridge being formed over the Ohio river in the exact spot and in exactly the same structural form as it is today. Suddenly I saw the bridge break-huge beams fell into the river, and with it I saw men swept to their death. Of course that happened many years later exactly as I saw it then.

Now many people think that my childhood was one of calm, sweet growth in spiritual things. But this is the farthest thing from the truth. I was not born again. I knew God by the fact that He had spoken to me but I did not know Him as my Savior. I was the heir to an uncontrolled temper and my life would have all the ear marks of a vicious criminal except that voice would come and tell me to keep clean and never defile my body and then even when threatened with punishment if I did not drink or smoke I could only cry and refuse that type of sin. Not knowing God, and yet with the pressure of the Spirit of God in my life, you can see that my life was very stormy. Added to that was the fact that being so terribly poor, I was the mark of cruel jokes and mean tricks. Crushed and beaten terribly on many occasions, I found I had the heart of a murderer and except for His grace, except for His protecting hand I might have shed blood.

As I grew up into manhood I had one great love, nature. I loved to hunt. The outdoors was heaven to me. That is all I wanted. City life and luxury meant nothing. I am still that way. But it was in this state, in my early twenties, that I came under conviction for sin and God showed me His glory. A blazing cross of glory appeared before me. Once more His voice spoke but this time it spoke peace. All fear vanished. Amazing Grace. Once it had held my heart in fear but now in stillness my spirit was set free and I was born from above. The end to which I was born would now begin to come into its place in Christ.

Since I was now truly a vessel of God, God sent His holy angel to speak unto me. Here again is something that seems so hard for people to understand. God sent His angel. Usually people cry for God to manifest Himself. They pray for visitations. I did not do that. God sent His angel because it was part of His purpose in my life that would be lived for others. Angels are real but their reality is dependant upon man for angels were made to serve man. They are ministering spirits for the heirs of salvation. Most people are just like Gehazi. They can't see the angels but they are there. This angel addressed me in terms that he was sent from God with a Gift of Divine healing to take to the world. He told me that I was to pray for the sick. I was willing to do this since God wanted me to. I had learned what it meant to obey Him. I had seen Him give me crowds that sometimes numbered three thousand, with many-many conversions. I was zealous for God. I had seen how many had been healed. Often when I went to the hospital the nurses who knew the one to whom I was coming would say to each other "So and so, is going to be better now. Here comes that little Baptist preacher." And the people would get better. I can introduce you right now to many people who are alive today after being given up to die. Of course God gets all the glory, for He alone is the Healer.

This angel did not only tell me that I was to take a Gift of Healing to the world but he tole me (when I complained as did Moses) that God would grant me signs to convince the world that the claims I would make were legitimate and of God.

He told me that I would have a sign in my hand appear as I took the sick one's right hand in my left hand. The sign would be various, angry swellings and coloring in my hand, depending on the type of disease. This came to pass exactly as God said it would. He appeared again and told me that if I would be faithful and humble a second sign would appear. That sign was that I could tell the thoughts and intents of people's hearts, and nothing should be hidden as well as tell the diseases. This was to come to pass by trance and vision. You know that this also came to pass. It was during this time of the first sign that crowds came to such very proportions that little towns of a few thousand population would overflow in a few days to many, many thousands. During this time of the first sign, my prayer lines were city blocks long and some nights there was not one person who did not get healed. They would carry me from the platform physically exhausted. During this time there was every kind of miracle conceivable. And then one day in Canada the second sign which was to be

greater than the first came into being. I suddenly was in a trance and I spoke out of vision everything concerning the man who appeared before me. I knew who he was, where he was from and all about his life. Nothing was hidden.

People responded in a tremendous way. They were startled but edified. Nothing like this was known since the time of Christ. But a peculiar thing happened. After a few visions I was so weak that I could not pray but for a few. This was hard to understand for if the second sign was greater than the first then the results should have been greater - greater crowds, and more healings. But as so few were personally ministered to each night the crowds fell off. People could not understand why I was weak and so few were touched. I must admit this puzzled me too until God showed me in His Word the truth of the second sign.

I mentioned that the ability to read men's hearts had not been in evidence in a continuous ministry since the time of Christ. If you will read in the Gospel of John Chapter one and in Chapter four, you will see that Jesus spoke to Peter and called Peter by his name and also revealed the name of his father. This he did without having discussed with Peter or Peter's father. Right after this Philip got to know Jesus and no doubt he saw the ability of Jesus to read people's hearts. Anyway he accepted Jesus as the Messiah for he went after Nathaniel, his dear friend and told him who he was and where he had just been. Immediately Nathaniel embraced Jesus as the Messiah. Now note that the Jews received Jesus according to verse 45 as "of whom Moses in the law spoke." But Moses spoke of the "PROPHET." who of course is the God-prophet. And a prophet is one who knows that which it is humanly impossible to know, and takes supernatural revelation to know. When Jesus came and nothing was hidden, as Scripture demonstrates, then the Jews accepted Him as the Messiah for that was the SIGN OF THE MESSIAH. Now, follow the story through in John 4 where the Samaritan lady met Jesus. He told her what was hidden in her life. She recognized him as a prophet. Then she mused that when the Messiah came, He would be the greatest prophet of all and would know all things. To the Samaritans the Sign of Messiah was the ability of a prophet with nothing hidden. So then both Jew and Samaritan accepted the Sign of the Messiah as the one who knew all things - the great prophet. But notice when He appeared with the sign. In the last generation of both peoples as He was about to turn from the remnant of Israel. That generation did not pass away, until God turned from them. This in their closing day, did the sign of the Messiah appear. But note further, the Gentiles never had the sign. Miracles they have had from the start. There have always been revivals of healing and now and then mighty wonders, but never have we had this peculiar sign of the ability to read men's hearts with nothing hidden. Only this last seven years or so have we had this sign. This sign, then, is that God is now ready to turn away from the Gentiles. Their day is about over. This generation shall now pass away until all is fulfilled. That is why this sign is greater than the wheel chairs emptying out. This is our evidence, that He is at the door.

Then too, I want to give you a clear idea why I get weak when I minister in the spirit. Contrary to popular opinion that man is strong in the spirit and very mighty, he actually gets weak. Samson slew a thousand and then became so weak that he felt he would die over a bit of thirst. Daniel, after one vision, was sick many days. Elijah, after the Mt. Carmel experience, crept away and tried to die. Mortal man is not sufficient for a prolonged overwhelming experience in the spirit, even though saved and Spirit filled. Visions weaken me. I won't try to make you understand. You just have to accept it, I know. There is nothing I can do about it. Even as Jesus felt power leave Him when one little lady came for help, even so when hundreds pull on me and by their faith they operate the gift in me, they break me down-I lose strength. I grow weak. But God has promised to change that.

Recently God gave me a vision. In it, I saw a vast tent holding up to twenty thousand people. There were city blocks of people coming for prayer. In this huge tent, there was a small cubicle where God told me He would meet me. There from under prying eyes I would minister. The cripples would come in one door and leave by the other-whole. The miracle would be so terrible in power that when questioned the newly healed person would have no other comment to make than that, whereas I had once been sick now he was whole. It would defy description, for there would be no feeling that one could tell. It would be God, and His doing. No tongue could utter it.

I am not ready for that ministry. I feel that if I but reached out I could grasp it. I simply wait for Him to tell me to step out. I am anxious for that day. When it comes, I hope that I may come back to you and minister in your city and share fellowship in Christ our Lord.

May God bless you and every effort you make. May your labor be all in the Lord.

Your humble servant and Brother,

William Branham