

Lean Not Unto Thy Own Understanding

Phoenix, Arizona, USA

January 20, 1965

1 Let us remain standing just a moment, now, for prayer. How many in here has a request on their heart, that you would that God would do something special for you in this convention? Bow our heads, now, unto Him.

Heavenly Father, we are a privileged people to be assembled together here, in the name of the Lord Jesus, in a free country, where we can worship you according to the dictates of our conscience, as yet. And we pray, Father, that this will long be. And now, may we take advantage of this great privilege we have. May we put our whole heart into the service tonight, to worship You, that it might be said that God was in our midst tonight, blessing His people.

Save every lost soul that's in here tonight, Lord. And every backslider, may they come back to the house of God. I pray for every sick person. May he be healed, the afflicted might walk, and the blind see, the deaf hear. Praise and glory be given to Jesus Christ among His people! May it be long remembered, Lord, because that we have assembled ourselves together, and ask in Jesus' name for these blessings. Amen. Be seated.

2 Somehow, in coming to the Ramada Inn, always seems like coming back home, in a way, because I've been here so much that I think they just must begin to know me. And I'm glad of that, because I've found a fine bunch of people at these Ramada Inns. The one in Tucson, and the one here—they've been very kind to us, letting us have services. Not long ago I had a service of my own down in Ramada Inn, and the manager wouldn't even let me pay for the rent of the building. That's really nice! I remember that, when I'm crossing the country too, now, those who are good to the household of God.

3 Now we've had, since Sunday night, Sunday afternoon rather, some great times in the Lord. At least I have. I've had a wonderful time enjoying his blessings, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, and with His people. I like to remember that together we are worshipping God. You are an attribute of God, part of God, when you become a son and daughter of God. And God is in you, willing His will, if you'll let Him do it.

So we hope tonight, that every person will forget about the things that's been in the days, and laying everything aside, and just put our hearts right into the service—not only to this night, but in the coming convention. No doubt many delegates has gathered. I do see some of the extras tonight on the platform, gathering for the convention that starts tomorrow. And I asked the people who are here for the revival that we just had, that if it's at all possible, I wish you'd stay over for the convention. We're going to have some fine speakers listed. One brother could not come, but we got many will be here to take his place. I want to be in the complete convention, myself, to enjoy this fellowship.

4 You know, we get up here as ministers, and we speak. And we're always giving out to the people everything that's in us. I preached a subject one time, where Jesus said, "Behold the lily, how they neither toil or spin. And yet I say unto you, that Solomon in all of his glory was not arrayed like one."

And I find out the lily has to grow day and night, spin, toil, and to make itself radiant. But it gets no blessing out of it, itself. He opens up himself and bypassers smell the perfume from him. The bee gets the honey right out of the heart. He gives everything out that he toils to take in. And I called my message, "Reverend Mr. Lily." So, that's kind of an odd text, but it is.... Ministers give themselves out to the people. And it's good, then, just to sit down and listen to others, like warming by the fire. We like to sit under each others' fire-blaze, and warm our hearts with the gospel that our brother is preaching to the people. And I'm grateful to have this opportunity to do that.

And now, I'm trusting tonight....

5 Billy told me that he gave out prayer cards totally. And we couldn't get a prayer line up here if we had to, see. You'd have to go out around through there, and through a

dark hall, and come up this way, and you'd stumble over everything to get in here. And the afflicted, crippled, would be in an awful shape doing it. But, we don't know what our Lord may do. He may fall right among us, tonight, and heal everyone that's here—every sick. And oh, I'd rather see that, than all the prayer lines I ever had in my life—just to see the sovereignty of God fall among His obedient children. I always like that.

6 Usually if you had any personal contact with the people, like laying on of hands, it could be.... I don't think too many would do that.... Well, they would say, "A certain, certain minister laid his hands upon me, and glory to God...." That makes the people look at that minister then.

But if you can just stand here, preach the Word, and let the Holy Spirit heal everyone, then there.... It's absolutely just the grace of God. And then God gets all praise, glory, and there's not a shadow of nothing for no one else.

That's the way I, in my ministry, the reason I don't get to too many that.... Now, last night we tried to pray for as many as we could. But laying on of hands,

7 and usually.... Tonight just ... maybe the Holy Spirit come right among us and go to manifesting Himself, making Himself known among us. And then, by that, I think it's real, when He can, maybe, in sovereignty....

See, I can't say now, "This man, or this woman, or that child." See? The Holy Spirit moves out on the building, and speaks to whomever He will speak, see. That's sovereign. And then, that brings the knowledge (because it's a promise of God), and that brings the knowledge of the.... God's sovereign, and also brings His presence down among us. We should see it, and rejoice!

And no matter, you say, "Well, I was crippled in my hand. I was there last night. I didn't get any better." That don't have anything to do with it. To you, it's already finished. You're not looking at your hand then, you're looking at a promise, you see.

And therefore you can't say, "Well, Brother So-and-so didn't pray the prayer of faith," or, "so-and-so." It's the presence of the Lord gave you faith, you see. And then He sent His Word, and healed them.

8 Now, last night I broke my promise again, and I'm going to sure try to keep it tonight, if I can. And I had.... Somebody said, "You didn't stay on your text last night."

No, I didn't. Because, I'll tell you why. I was going to preach on a subject, now I forget just what, but ... "God Rich in Mercy." And I got to trying to explain, how that Paul speaking there, said, "We who were in past times—one time, some other time than now—we were dead in sin and trespasses, who God has quickened, made alive."

Now, you see before anything can be quickened, there has to be something there to be quickened by. That's right.

9 So you see, if you were in the foreknowledge of God, then you are becoming a part of God. And the only way you can be a son of God, or a daughter of God, you had to be a part of God. And God isn't complete without you. Has to be, right. 'Cause there is one, only one resource of eternal life, and that is God—and Him alone has eternal life, see. Now, and you were are part of it, insomuch that you are an attribute in His thinking, in the beginning. And that, because He thought of you in the beginning, it gives that little tug toward you. That's what has to be quickened.

Some of them may never be quickened. They just don't have it, that's all. Just like, if you put a grain of corn in the ground, didn't have.... Ever how pretty it was, if it didn't have the germ of life in it, it can never be quickened. But the germ of life has to be there first.

10 And I got that little story about that eagle, walking with the hens and the chickens, because he was hatched out and born there. But he never did feel just like them chickens. And you know, when his mammy come by and hollered, he heard a voice that sounded awful good to him. Because, remember, he was an eagle to begin with. He just had to come to find himself, to find his place.

That's the way every believer is. You wasn't born for this world, you was created in the image of God, to be a son of God. And you don't belong in this chicken yard out here. You are an eagle! And you know, I got on that eagle, and I couldn't get my feet back on the ground. So I just got.... I went too long, and then I forgot what my text

was. And I lost my notes, and everything else. I had an awful time. But that's what it was, it was—just on that eagle.

11 Now, may that eagle of God.... You know God likens His prophets to eagles, and he calls Himself an eagle. He's Jehovah-eagle, Papa-eagle. And the reason He does that, an eagle can fly higher than any bird there is, and because he's made different from any other bird. Now, he does not build his nest on the ground like chickens, and so forth, but he goes high to build his nest.

And another thing, that he is a special built bird. Now, if a hawk, or a crow, or a buzzard, or any other bird would try to follow him up in the heavens, he would disintegrate. He's not made for it. He has to be a special person to go up there. His feathers are tighter than any other bird, and his eye is sharper than any other bird. And the higher he goes the further he can see. Well, some of them birds when they get as high as they're supposed to be, they're blind as a bat.

And that's the way with, well a.... They leave that creed, they don't know nothing about that. "Days of miracles is past." Why, they can't see it. But eagles can go into the heavens, and heavens of heavens, up there. What good does it do to get up there, if you can't see?

Oh, I'm so glad to be "one of them," and associated with a whole nest full of them, now.

12 Let us turn in the Old Testament, to the book of the Proverbs, written by Solomon, one of the wisest men in the world outside of our Lord Jesus. But He wasn't exactly like Solomon, insomuch as Solomon was a man born of a woman, and was begotten by an earthly father, David. But Jesus was a virgin-born son and was not altogether a man, but He was God, the God-man. And He was more than a man. He was a man, plus.

But Solomon was just a man, like you and I. And he asked God for wisdom to run his kingdom. And he had a gift of wisdom—the smartest man that we've ever known of outside of our Lord. He wrote the Proverbs, and I think they're very good.

And we're going to turn, now, to the book of Proverbs, the 1st chapter—the 2nd chapter, rather—and the first few verses of the Proverbs, of 2 beginning with 1, Proverbs 2, beginning with 1, the continuation of Solomon's advising his son. "My son, if thou wilt receive...." I'm sorry, it's Proverbs 3:1. I'm sorry. I looked over here on my book, and it, I see that it's Proverbs 3, instead of 2. I'm sorry. Proverbs 3:1.

My son, forget not my law; but let thine heart keep my commandments:

For length of days, and long life, and peace, shall they add to thee.

Let not mercy and truth forsake thee: bind them about thy neck; write them upon the table of thine heart:

So shalt thou find favor and good understanding in the sight of God and man.

Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding.

In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths.

Oh, I think that's the most beautiful scripture. Now I want to take for a text, out of the 5th verse, "Lean not unto thine own understanding."

13 Now, this is a very strange text, for the day that we're living in, because the emphasis, today, is certainly laid upon education, and upon our own understanding of things. It's a day of learning. But we find out here, that this strange statement—like other scriptures—it has its place, and we trust that God will let us see where the place is.

Today we send our children to the school to have understanding. Then after they're through the grammar school, we send them to high school for a better understanding of knowledge. Then after they're through there, some children are even fortunate enough to go to college, and go through college to complete their education, and their understanding of knowledge, what they are acquired of by....

Many times, to get a job, you have to have at least a high school understanding, a college education, or so forth.

14 Yet, the wise Solomon told us that, not to lean to it—not to our own understanding.

Learn not of these things, because....

We wonder why that he would say such a thing as this for.... It's because that, usually our modern understanding is usually the wisdom of men, which is contrary to the Word of God. I think that's what Solomon was trying to advise his son—was not to be illiterate, but not to lean to their understanding.

And I think it would be a good exhortation today, if we said to our sons, and to the sons of God, that, it's all right to have an education, there's nothing against that; but when that education is contrary to the Word of God, then lean to the Word and let your education go, see. Because the Word.... And education will stand, and will give you a good job, and probably a good standing among intellectual people, but.... That's all right, which will probably be a great help to you, help you in your financial, and your livelihood—make living maybe a little better for you.

15 But remember one thing, my son, you've got to die. No matter how much education you've got, how much culture you're able to accumulate, you've yet got to face death. Because it is written that man must die, and after that the judgment. And God when.... Death is not so bad; but coming to the judgment is the bad part.

Now you can die, but after that the judgment. And God is not going to inquire of you, how much schooling you got when you were here on earth, how much knowledge you've accumulated, whether you got your bachelor of art, or whatever degree you might have been. Even as a minister, it's not going to be required of you.

But it's going to be required of you, what you did about the understanding of God's Word. That's where the requirement comes, because that your education is fine, but the Word of God is life. "My word is life, and to know it is life."

And he said, "Know him. He is the Word. "So you can only know Him by the Word, for He is the Word. And that's the only way you'll know Him, is by His Word.

16 Somebody could come up and say, "This is God," or "That is God," or "This is God," or "This is right," and "That's right." But we come back to the Word, which is the truth.

And the Word is just like the North Star—it's a true star. No matter which way the world's floating, that North Star is centered with the earth. You set your compass to the North Star. It's always in the center of the earth. Other stars float around with the world, but the North Star stays stable.

Now, the compass is the Holy Spirit, and the ... your tie-post would be the North Star. So the Holy Spirit will always point towards the Word. The Holy Spirit will never lead you to anything else but the Word of God.

So how could a man accept a creed when it's contrary to the Word? And then still say he has the Holy Ghost? The Holy Ghost would point you away from that. It takes the Holy Spirit to point you to the Word, for He is the Word. He is the Word.

And it can only, as the.... As the magnet in the compass is only set towards the North Pole, that's the only way it can draw. And when the Holy Spirit is the author, and writer, and the quickener of the Word, how can it point the person to anything else but the Word?

17 So when a person says they have the Holy Ghost, and accept something contrary to the Word, it shows that ain't the genuine Holy Ghost they got, see. It may be a ghost, I wouldn't dispute that. But it isn't the Holy Ghost of Christ.

But now, you know many times they take one another's spirit, and so that might point in a—like a group of men—to a certain thing, but it won't, it won't point to Christ. But the Holy Spirit always points to Christ, and Christ is the Word.

We see this so plainly in the Bible, or I do. Maybe I might be wrong, but in my thinking.... But I don't think so. Because that, this lean not to your own understanding of things.... If you lean to your own understanding, then you're bound to get off of the right road.

You can't lean to anyone else's understanding, when it comes to life. To find life, you've got to lean to the Word, that's right.

18 We see this from the beginning. It's so plainly made known to us, from the beginning, that God gave His first family on earth His Word to live by. Only His Word

was to live by. Now, that's not your eating of food, and so forth, but His word they were to live by eternally. And as long as they kept that Word, they lived eternally. But the first little phrase of that Word was misplaced, the whole chain broke, and the human race plunged into death. See?

Now we notice. Eve, which was, no doubt, an intelligent person, the first right off of Adam, who was the son of God.... And Eve, certainly—being in that spot where there had been no sin, no place for sin—she certainly must have had a wonderful conception of what God was. Because every afternoon she and her husband walked in the cool of the garden, in the evening, and talked face-to-face with God.

What an unreasonable thing that a person who would walk face-to-face with God each day, and then would turn to the reasoning of something, that reasoned her away from the Word of God!

19 We still got them. And it's so easy to be reasoned away from the Word of God, after sitting in the presence of God, seeing the Word of God preached, the Word of God made manifest, drunkards and sinners come to the altar and be converted and made new creatures in Christ, people of ill-fame made ladies and gentlemen; and then to turn from that blessed thing that led them to this life, and then be perverted off after some kind of a creed, to become more popular, or to get into what they would call a "better class of people."

Why, you're in the best class that there is! Sons and daughters of God! Why, I like that company better than I would ... with all the kings and potentates and everything else. Give me that humble bunch of people. If they don't know their right hand from their left, as long as they know God and love Him and serve Him, that's the celebrity of heaven to me! Yes, sir!

20 Now, but we find that Eve was easily persuaded by Satan from the Word of God, and she leaned on her own understanding. Because Satan had projected something to her which wasn't to her real understanding of God. But she had something else told to her by the enemy, Satan, and she believed it. Now we find the results of this. It plunged the whole human race to death. Because, the first mother on the earth leaned to her own understanding, contrary to the Word of God, and plunged the whole human race to death. Now, do you believe that? That's the Word.

Well, a woman is always.... A church in the Bible is typed to woman. And a church today can accept a bunch of dogmas or creeds, and plunge the whole congregation into separation from God! Those people who adopt those things in the stead of the Word of God are just like Eve. And it's been done over and over till it's got this whole generation plunged away from the Word of God.

21 And when the Word is made manifest, the Word is revealed, they won't accept it, because.... They won't do it, because they lean to their own understanding. "This church is built here, it's a beautiful place, it's a great organization, it's a member of a great body of people. Why shouldn't we belong to that? I'll trust in it." Trust not in your own understanding, but trust in the Word of the Lord.

Now, now it ended finally in death to the whole race, as I said. Same as now, to the many people who rely upon their own understanding, their dogmas and creeds, and so forth, claiming the Word of God is not altogether true, that some of it is inspired and some is not.

How can you have faith in a Bible, if part of it is inspired and part of it is not? If one quotation is wrong, then the whole thing might be wrong. It's all got to be right. Exactly right.

22 And some of these so-called perverted Bible schools, teaching men knowledge accumulation, where they get together and sit in a council of people, and say, "Now, look, if the days of miracles ... it ended in the days of the apostles...."

And many men under the bishop, or the high man, would sit there, and say, "Well, if I can just agree with him, no doubt but I might be in line next for his position." See, then you lean to your own understanding, instead of standing on your two feet for the Word of God. That's what causes these things.

23 Some time ago, someone.... I was in a dispute on income tax. And they said to me, said, "Why, your trustees are nothing but puppets, I suppose."

I said, "If I had a trustee on the board that had a different idea, and wouldn't stand up—and I don't care who's speaking about it—wouldn't express his own views of it, I'd throw him off the board!" Yes, sir! Though it was contrary to my belief, I want him to express what he thinks is right. That's what I got him there for, see what he says about it. But we have that.

24 Notice, Jesus said, in St. John 10, "My sheep know my voice." A voice, of course, is His word, when He's speaking. "My sheep know my voice. My voice has been proven to them to be true. It's been vindicated, that it is my voice." Now notice, they are not subject to following any other voice. They won't. "My sheep know my voice, and a stranger they will not follow."

In other words, they will not understand a theological voice that's teaching contrary to the Word. The sheep don't understand that. No more than the eagle, last night, could understand the clucking of the hen. They don't understand, because he was an eagle. And that's the same thing with a genuine, borned-again child of God. They understand only the things that are of God.

Now, somebody say, "Well, now look. You can do this, I think."

"As, I believe that.... Isn't this the way?"

"I believe that the days of miracles is past. I don't believe that that's divine healing."

"I don't believe this."

Now, a genuine, borned-again Christian, that'll never stop in his ears. He don't understand it at all. And how could a man that believes in God, and can read the Bible, and see that He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, will ever accept such a thing as that, I don't understand it. So, they do not lean to their own understanding.

25 Just like a baby. You take a little baby, and let him be born, and let him once lean upon his mother's bosom, nurse from her the warm milk, lean his little head upon her bosom, though he's just a few hours old.... In a day or two from then, take him away from his mother and give him over on the breast of a strange mother, he'll kick them little feet up in the air and yell! It's not his mother. See? He has already had a ... something about him, because he is a part of this mother. Yet nature has provided him a way to know his own mama.

And if nature has provided a way for a baby to know its mother, from where it's born from, how much more has He a son of God, that's born by the Spirit of God! He knows his mama! He knows, because he was borned of the Word, and he understands the Word! Put him in a strange place, he's.... Certainly he's out of place. He'll get out of there as quick as he can, because he has.... He doesn't lean.... Somebody say, "Now, wait dear, this is your mama now." It's not his mama. Because he has a way of knowing that he's part of this mother, that's his mother. No one else can ever take her place. He knows his own mother.

Notice, how it is really.... So God has made everything after its kind—

26 the cattle after their kind. Many time in bringing a round-up down ... we bring the whole herds of cattle. And the little calves, I used to wonder how they would ever know their own mama.

Now, they.... Coming down out of the mountains, the cattle all mixed together, a cow that is with the calf.... Maybe a little hungry calf might nurse a little from the other mother, if he's real hungry. But when we stop them out on the prairie, that mama starts through that crowd of cows and calves, until she finds her own; and the calf is running for its mother. It knows that certain little whine in her bawl. And she's bawling for that calf. And the other mothers are bawling till you can't even hear yourself think. But that little calf will find that certain call of its mother, because it's part of the mother.

27 And a borned-again Christian from heaven, he is a part of this Word! That's right. Another mama he will not follow. He's a part of the Word. He stays with the Word. "If the trumpet gives an uncertain sound, who can prepare himself for battle?" said Paul. He knows the sound of the Word.

Notice how this is the predestinated hand of God following them through. He knows that he was ordained, he was in the gospel truth. He knows that he was borned by the

Spirit of God. He knows that the Spirit of God cannot deny the Word of God. So therefore, a stranger he will not follow.

Notice, how....

28 I was looking back here on a note that I had wrote down here. I passed by it, but I just happened to see the scripture reading and thought I'd refer back to it again.

Notice how His own predestinated sheep followed Him, right in the days of the greatest theologians that we ever had. They come right out, because they knew Him. They knew what the Word had promised for that day. They knowed what the Messiah was to be like. When He came, and Simon Peter came to Him, which was only Simon then ... and Andrew had tried to tell him about that.... "This man is the Messiah." Well, Simon—of course he was, maybe, a little hard-headed—he wouldn't go. But when he walked up into the presence of Jesus, when Jesus said, "Your name is Simon, and you are the son of Jonas...."

Now, we know that Jesus told His apostles that he knew them before the foundation of the world. They were the attributes of His thoughts. Therefore, being that seed laying in him, and he knew that the Word said (and had been promised) that the Messiah would be a prophet. And when he seen that, he was through with fishing. He knew then that he'd drop his nets, because he was going to become "a fisher of men."

For,

29 now, there stood others standing there, who seen the same thing done, and classed it a evil spirit. That was the theologians, because it wasn't in the taste of their theological teachings. And they turned it down, because they leaned to their own understanding by their doctrine. When Jesus Christ came in the fulfillment of the Word of promise; and they were too blind to see it. They leaned upon what the priest said, and upon what the church said, instead of upon what God said.

Now Jesus rebuked them for it. He said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them you claim you have everlasting life: and they are they that testify of me. These scriptures that I'm asking you to search, they tell you who I am." But they wouldn't lean to what the Word said, but they leaned to what their understanding was. They leaned to their own understanding. And the Scripture tells us that they were veiled. The veil of their own theology had them blinded.

You say, "Brother Branham, what are you getting at?"

30 I'm just getting to this: that thing is occurring again, till men and women and people will lean to a certain church that they have joined, and belong to, no matter what the Word of God says about it. They go right on with that, leaning to their own understanding, and ignoring the Word of God, as if it hadn't never even been written. It's ungermized seed of human life. It's got the physical life, but no spiritual life in it to be quickened.

The veil was over their face. Now notice, they had their own thoughts of what God should be. They had their own ideas of what Messiah should be. But the Word said what the Messiah should be. Now see, they had their own understanding of what He would be.

No doubt but what the high priest said, "All my priests under me—now when the Messiah comes.... We've built a great temple here, and we done all of this, and the Bible says He'll quickly come to His temple, and all these things. When He does, the Messiah will come right up here, and recognize Himself with us, and say, 'I am the Messiah. I have arrived. I am that Messiah, that you been looking for.'" Well, when He did come, He come in such a different way from what they thought it was, they didn't recognize Him. They didn't know who He was.

But His

31 own if.... What if some hypocrite would've walked up there and said, "I am the Messiah. I'm Dr. So-and-So."? They would've accepted it. But when you come to a man that was borned with a darkened birth behind him, no education of any school He ever went to to learn, no seminary did He have, no fellowship card.... But He was the interpretation of God's Word made manifest! "The works that I do tell you who I am. If I do not the works that was promised I'd do, then believe me not."

And could we not apply that to this day, when the Holy Ghost comes, and they

want to apply to some other age? When he comes in the actions, and the demonstrations of His power of eternal life? The people want to call it a wild fanaticism. Why? They are leaning to their own understanding and not to the Word of the Lord. You know that's right.

32 The identification that's God's own interpretation is the manifestation of the promise.

Maybe I'll say it, make it a little plainer. When God speaks a word, He doesn't need any man or any woman, or no one else, to say what that means. When He said.... "Well," you say, "God meant this." God means just what He says He means, see.

Now, how does He interpret His own Word? By fulfilling it!

The Bible said, "A virgin shall conceive." She did. That don't need any interpretation. God said, "Let there be light," and there was. That don't need any interpretation. God said also, that in these last days He'd pour out His Spirit upon all flesh. And He's done it! That don't need any interpretation! That only needs an acceptance—somebody to accept what God has done. It doesn't need an interpretation.

God interprets His own Word. God promised the things that we see, day by day, that he would do it in the last days.

33 People are today like it was then—they lean upon their own understanding. "My pastor says that that's fanaticism." But the Bible said it would happen. Whose understanding are you going to lean upon?

The Bible promised in the last days, that the Laodicea church age would get so rich, and get so in ... sufficiency of their own.... "I am rich, I have need of nothing. I sit as a queen." And she's rich!

And He said, "Thou knowest it not, that you are miserable." Now that's the entire church age. The church!

To the church of Laodicea: "You are naked, blind, poor, miserable, and don't know it." Sitting in their riches! Ten thousands times ten thousands, and thousands of members—wealth of the world in their hand, almost. Putting it all together, they, with the Catholic church and the Protestant together, as they're going together, they got the wealth of the world.

34 We are busted in this nation, just about. We're borrowing on taxes that'll be paid in forty years from now they tell me, so they said on "Lifeline." Taxes we're spending now will be paid forty years from now. My little grandson, if Jesus tarries, the taxes that he'll pay when he's forty years old we're spending on it now, sending to foreign aid—and our own Indians and things, starving to death—trying to buy fellowship.

You don't buy fellowship. You don't buy friends. No. But that's what we're doing—that's the way we're set up. Taxing people to everything they can get on to. Tax, tax, tax!

And we'll not be out of war debt for hundreds of years yet, I suppose, that we been thrown into by politicians. And now, we shouldn't be that way, there's no reason for us to be that way.

But the churches themselves have become rich. Remember, the wealth of the world, says the Bible, lays in the Catholic church. That's why Russia run her out. Why Russia excommunicate.... That was the very grass roots of communism. Because the church taught to be something ... he wasn't no more from the rest of the world.

35 When we was up there in Finland, and that little boy was raised from the dead, there stood them Russian soldiers at attention. And they said, "We will receive a God that can raise up the dead!"

We have made denominations, and schools, and buildings, and failed to do what Jesus told us to do—was preach the gospel! We try to educate the world. He never said, "Educate the world. He that's educated shall be saved." You've got to be borned again, filled with the Spirit.

That's the reason we have so miserably failed, everywhere. See, we got the wealth. We got the thing.... Now what will happen? And when this church, World Council of Churches goes together, can't you see who's going to do the leading? Can't you

Methodists and Presbyterians understand that? The rest of you, even to Pentecostals? You say you're not going in. You'll either go in, or you'll bust up the denominations. You'll do one or the other. It's right before you! Got to do it! It's a forcing—the mark of the beast.

And that's what it is, exactly. Denominationalism, absolutely (I'll prove it by the Bible) is the mark of the beast. She was a whore. She had prostitute daughters. And we know that that is the truth. Organized religion is contrary to the Word, and it's antichrist in its principles. Not everything in there is antichrist; but in its principles, its system is antichrist, because it's against the Word of God. Every organized system is that way!

36 There you are, see? And you lean to somebody else's own under ... their understanding, instead of leaning to God's understanding, and what God said about it. That's the reason it's wrong. Boys go off to seminaries, who have good education, off to these Bible schools so-called, and maybe they got a call of God in their heart. And they get out there, and they're so indoctrinated with one view: "So-and-so said it, Bishop So-and-so, this one said it, that one said it, the council of men agree that this is the way it should be."

Don't care what anybody says. Jesus said, "Let every man's word be a lie, and mine be the truth." No matter whose it is ... mine be the truth.

Now, how do we know what's truth? When the Bible declares that something will happen, that something's going to take place, and it happens that way.

Now, the Bible said, in her was the wealth of the world, gold, silver. Now, if we're on the gold standard, and we're broke, now what's going to happen? What's going to happen?

You know the rich people of this nation—these big factories and whisky men, and tobacco men, and so forth like that, is not going to stand to change the currency. So the only thing we'd have to do is borrow. And there's only one place we can borrow it. And when we do, we sell our birthrights out to it. That's right.

Then, what are you going to do? You're owned by it. There's that system. There's nothing else you can do.

37 Oh, people, don't think I.... You may think I'm crazy, but when my voice is silenced in death these tapes will still be playing, and you'll recognize that what I've said has come to pass.

I'd be a most silly person to take the stand I have took, that ... even against this thing.... I would be ... I'd be against God. I'd be against everything that's God, if I ... if I had ... was wrong in my thinking and my calling. The thing would be against God.

But I took my stand because I see it here in the Word. It's God's Word. Then I see it being vindicated, proving that it's the truth. That's the interpretation that God gives of His Word. God's own interpretation of His Word is how He vindicates it, and makes it true.

38 Why were these Pharisees blind? What made them so blind? Because they would not accept revelation. or vindication of the Word. And that's the reason, today, that the churches are blind, is because they won't accept revelation that's been vindicated. If the Word says so, and it's revealed, and then it's proven, still they won't accept it.

That's the reason these Jews, the Jews of this day, will not.... You cannot talk to them about Christ, because the veil is still over their face—blinded. And the church—you can't talk to them about the full gospel, and the power of God, because the god of this world has blinded them from the truth of God, and they lean to their own understanding.

When women come into the church and bob off their hair, because their pastor tells them, "Oh, that's all right. That man's crazy!" But the Bible said she's done wrong when she does it. God refuses to answer her prayer. And some of them women make another disgrace, and try to be a preacher. Then she's done a double thing. The Bible said she should not do that, none of it.

But the church organization will receive it and ordain her, and send her out there, leaning to their own understanding.

39 One Word of God misplaced, or misconstrued, or it not accepted, breaks the whole

chain. Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.

Why is it, women? You hear me preach against these things of wearing shorts, and paints, and hairdos of this here bobbed hair, and all that kind of stuff; and then every year when I come back you're still sitting in the same condition. It's because you're leaning to your own understanding, instead of the Word of the Lord.

And pastors, why don't you clean up your church? Because you're going to your denominational creed, instead of the Word of the Lord. Right. Lean not to your own understanding.

Well. Lean not to your own understanding, but upon the Word of the Lord.

40 They would not accept it, because they would not accept vindication. Jesus come with a gospel, just exactly the way He said He would come. Even many times....

John was a little bit confused when he was throwed into prison. And he got down there and he had preached that there was coming a Messiah, whose fan was in his hand. And He'd thoroughly purge his floor, burn the chaff with unquenchable fire, and gather the wheat into the garner—the Spirit of God bringing forth, gushing out of Him like a fountain.

And then, when he seen Jesus come on the scene—a little meek, lowly sort of a fellow, being pushed around, run here for His life, and over there—why, they didn't, John couldn't understand it. So he sent some of his disciples to find out from Jesus, if He really was the one.

What a dishonor to Jesus! After that prophet, standing there in the water with the Word of God, said, "I knew Him, because I seen the Holy Spirit like a dove—God descending from heaven like a dove—and going into Him and I heard a voice in heaven saying, 'This is my beloved Son.'"

And then John said, "Go ask Him if really He was the one, or do we look for another?"

41 Now, Jesus never sent him a book on how to behave in prison, or what church he should've joined, but He said, "Stay around a little while and watch what happens. And then go show John the things that you have seen, and done." Because that his works that He did vindicated Him to be the Messiah, the Son of God. "Blessed is He, who is not offended in Me."

So many have become offended. So many people get offended so easy, at the Word of God. If it's contrary, they want to lean to their own understanding. They don't want to take the Word of the Lord. And they have to go just the way that they've been taught to go. And the way that they are taught, the church leans upon it. No matter if God promised they'd have rain in the morning, and the church said, "That's nonsense," they'd believe the church, instead of God.

Because why? They're borned of the church. But a man that's borned of God is of the seed of God, and the seed of God is the Word of God, and he only lives by that. That's his life.

42 Now, they leaned on to their own understanding. But they didn't want to lean on God's Word. They knowed better—it was in the Scripture. They called it an evil spirit, that man. 'Cause why? Their priests said, "Anybody that goes to hear this man preach, they'll be put out of the synagogue."

When a man was healed that was blind once, by Jesus.... Even his parents, so happy about the healing, but they was afraid to confess that it was Jesus that did it. Yeah. He said a ... he said, "Is this your son?"

"Yes."

"Who made him well?"

Said, "I don't know. He's of age, you ask him. He can talk for himself." Because it had been said that any man that leaned to His, Christ's understanding, instead of their understanding, would be put out of the church. Now isn't that just the same? I ask you a point blank question. Right.

It's a doing the same thing. No matter what God does, it had to be according to

their understanding—not what God vindicates to be the truth.

Now, and that man had the answer, though. He said, "Who healed you?"

He said, "One called Jesus of Nazareth."

Said, "He's a sinner. We don't know from whence He come."

He said, "Now, that's a strange thing. You're supposed to be the leaders of this hour. And here's a man that opened my eyes. That hasn't been done since the world began. And yet, you say you don't know from whence He come."

Oh, my!

43 Why? They was leaning to their own understanding instead of the Word of the Lord. Because Isaiah said the blind would see, the lame would leap like a hart, the desert would break forth in joy. But you see, they leaned to their own understanding, not to the Word—their own system they had drewed up.

Now, notice the churches of today do the same thing. They have formed a great super-race of understanding in their denominational system, that they have such a super-understanding they don't want nobody else to fool with it, nobody to come in unless they belong to that group.

Don't tell me. I live in Tucson, Arizona. I come down there three years ago. I met with the council of churches. And I said, "I never come to start a church. I come to fellowship with you. I come to help you. I'm a missionary, an evangelist. Whatever I do...."

They said, "Are you coming here to start a church?"

I said, "No, sir. I come here.... If I want a church, I got one in Indiana." I said, "I come here because the Lord led me here in a vision. I'm going to stay for awhile now, unless He leads me away. But I never come to start a church. I come to help you brethren."

44 That's been three years ago. I've never been invited to one place. Why? Because there was a get-together right after that, and said if any man had me in their pulpit, they would excommunicate that preacher.

See, why? Leaning to their own understanding. Certainly. That is the so-called.... They form their super-understanding. Unless you put your name on their book (you're saved), you're lost. A minister told me that.

"Oh," you say, "that was a some quack." It was a Pentecostal. Jack Moore and I sat there and listened at him, in Dallas, Texas. He said he was going to have to take a man off the book. I said, "Why?"

"'Cause he fellowshipped with you."

I said, "Well, take it off."

He said, "Well, he's lost then."

I said, "Lost?"

"Why," he said, "well, if his name's not on there...."

I said, "You mean you're a district presbyter, and believe that?"

He said, "That's the truth."

I said, "Get off the phone, Mister!"

That ain't the grace of God. That, see....

45 For by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body and become members of that body. I don't care what brand you got on you, that don't have nothing to do with it. You are absolutely a Christian by birth, that's the only way. The only way you can be—not by joining, not by creeds, not reciting this, or reciting this, or any other thing, or by education, theology. You're a Christian when you're borned again. And you cannot be borned again unless you been elected to be borned again. For, "No man can come to me, except my Father draws them. And all that the Father has given me will come." Amen. "I'll raise him up again at the last day."

Great so-called Bible schools, we have this. They lean upon their own learning. Oh,

my! They.... No matter what the Word says, they can so plainly explain it, oh, to their own selves, make their own selves believe it. And their own kind believe it: that, "The days of miracles is past. There is no such thing as prophets, prophets, apostles. There is no such thing as gifts of healing, and so forth. It all ended back in the Bible days."

They can make themselves believe that.

46 You know the Bible says you can believe a lie, and be damned by it. That's exactly the truth. They.... Oh, no matter what the Word of God says, they lean to their own understanding. They lean on it, they believe it. They think it's the truth. You can keep believing a lie over, and over, and over, until it's the truth, to you. That's right.

But how do we know whether it's the truth or not? God proves it's true, 'cause it's in His Word, and He'll vindicate it. He does his own interpretation of it.

How did it get to this? They do it by their culture, their education, of their understanding, of their degree of—doctor's degree and so forth—that they have come from some certain seminary and learned these things.

47 But look, friend. Listen. Nowhere in the Bible are we asked to understand. We're not asked to understand it; we're asked to believe it. Believe it by what? By faith. If you understand it, then that makes faith null. You can't understand it, but you believe it anyhow.

If I could understand God, I wouldn't have to believe God. I do not understand God—no man understands God. I cannot understand the Word of God, but I accept it. I believe it. I'm not asked to understand it. I don't want to know seminary, or all this great understanding of man's knowledge on that. I just know that the Bible says that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and forever, and I look for Him in that same category. I know He promised what He would do in this day. I look for Him to do it, and He does it. That's right. He promised grace. I looked for it, and I received it. He promised healing. I believed it, and I accepted it, and I received it.

48 Now, don't want to take too much of your time, but I want to ask one thing, if you'll bear with me a minute to consider some of those who did not lean on their own understanding, some characters of the Bible. Just for a few that leaned not to their own understanding, regardless of what the understanding of their age was.

Let's take for instance, Noah. Noah lived in a day of great scientific research. In the days of Noah they probably built the pyramids, that they cannot reproduce again. Now we haven't got nothing to do it with, nothing to lift the boulders up there. They could not today.... In them days they had some kind of a chemical they could put in dye, and make the clothes look natural till today. They had an embalming fluid that they could make a mummy. We could not make one today, if we had to. A lot of the arts that we have lost, and they.... He lived in a smart, scientific age.

Jesus referred to it, that that same kind of an age would return again before He come back, "For as it was in the days of Noah...." Now you will believe, that won't you? You believe that Jesus said that? Do you believe we have returned to that age? Now that is in the book of Luke, the 17th chapter and the 29th verse.

49 Now in Luke 17:30 He said, "And as it was in the days of Lot...." When the angel of the Lord.... Now He was reading the same Bible we are. And when He'd.... Go back and find out what kind of day it was before Noah's rain. Go back and find out what kind of a day it was before the world was destroyed in the days of Lot. Find out what it was, and you see what Jesus was talking about.

In the days of Noah, they was eating, drinking, marrying, and giving in marriage; knew it not until Noah entered into the ark and the flood come and taken them all away.

In the days of Lot, just before the world was fired, burned, the Gentile world, the Sodomites, there were homosexuals, perversions, everything in the world. A great.... It was a modern Los Angeles. Not a modern only Los Angeles, but a United States. Not only a United States, but a world. It sure was. Perversion!

Men lost their natural course of life, and their natural understandings of common sense, become perverted by an evil spirit that changed the whole course of their natural life. And they were possessed with demon spirits. If that ain't the picture of the days of Noah, I don't know it.

And in the—days of Lot, I mean—and the days of Noah also, eating, drinking, marrying, giving in marriage, divorce courts filling, and everything—just like it was.

50 But remember, before the world was destroyed, Abraham was sent on the face of the earth, and was given a promise of a son. And Abraham met God in many stages, as a type of the church has met God. But just before the destruction, and the promised son returned (or came, rather), the son had been promised came. God came down, and was manifested in human flesh in a man, three men. And they come down to Lot—come first to Abraham. And they sit down. And Abraham had his name changed from Abram to Abraham, and Sarai to Sarah.

And this man, the speaker, Elohim, when He came down to speak to him, what did He say? He said, "Where is your wife, Sarah?"

Said, "She's in the tent behind you."

Said, "I will visit you according to the time of life." And she laughed in the tent behind Him, and He said, "Why did Sarah laugh?" See?

Now, He would've took the life of Sarah right there, for laughing at His word. But He could not do it, because Sarah was a part of Abraham.

51 And today, Jesus said in Luke the 17th chapter and the 30th verse, "As it was in the days of Lot so shall it be at the end-time when the Son of man...."

Now remember, "son of man" is a prophet. Jehovah called Ezekiel a "son of man." Jesus come in three names: Son of man, Son of David, Son of God. He called Himself "Son of man" so that the people would understand, for He was that prophet that the Lord God would raise up.

Now notice, then He promised that the Son of man would reveal Himself again. Just before that time, before the fire ... that Abraham saw before the promised son arrived. And he turned back to a young man and she to a young woman, before....

Now, notice. The Scripture specifically says that. Now we must look for that. And then if we see the world in perversion, and the things that's in it today, carrying on the way it is, then how can we think that's right, and don't say this other's right? Because somebody.... You're leaning on their understanding, and not the understanding of the Prince of life, who was that person that was there at the gate with them, at Sodom.

Now we notice.... We lean not to our own understanding.

52 Noah did not lean to his understanding. It was a great scientific age, but he didn't lean to his understanding of his day. But he leaned on the promise of God, and moved by the power of God, and prepared an ark in the saving of his house, when it was absolutely contrary to common sense. There was no water up there, never had been. But he knew if God said there would be, there would be. So he leaned not to his own understanding, but by faith he moved by the Word of God's promise. The Spirit moved him and he did it.

Abraham, he did not lean to his understanding about human life. He'd married his wife at about seventeen years old. Here he was, seventy-five years old, and she was sixty-five years old, being ten years younger. But Abraham did not lean to his understanding, when God said that He'd give him a son by Sarah. But he called anything, any scientific proof that was contrary to God's word, any learning outside of God's word, as though it wasn't so. And he give God praise—strong, giving Him praise.

He did not even consider looking at his own body, or the deadness of Sarah's body, or his body. He did not consider anything, but leaned upon the promise of God. He leaned not upon his own understanding. He leaned not upon reason.

53 "Why," you say, "Brother Branham, it's reason that God wouldn't heal the sick, when we got so many fine doctors." The Bible said we cast down reasoning. We don't reason. Faith don't reason; faith believes and accepts.

Notice. But he believed, instead of unbelieving, and called the things which were not as though they were, which was absolutely against any reasoning. But he didn't reason; he just believed it. There was no reasons could prove that that baby could be born. That woman was about twenty years a-past menopause, and his body was as good as dead. And when he was a hundred years old, twenty-five years later, he still was

giving God praise! Against any kind of an understanding, but by faith he knewed that God would keep His Word. He leaned not to his own understanding.

54 What if Moses would have leaned to his own understanding, when God told him that he was to take Pharaoh—the children of Israel out of Pharaoh's hands? What if he'd leaned to his own understanding, when he was there by the pillar of fire, when God said, "Go down, and I'll be with you."?

What if he'd leaned to his understanding, when he brought them to the Red Sea. And there they was at the water. And here God had promised them the promised land. What if he'd leaned to his own understanding? "How am I going to get across there? We haven't time to build a bridge. Here's the army coming right behind us. Here's the mountains on either side. Here is the water in front of us, the Red Sea."

Now, if he'd leaned to his own understanding, he'd have throwed up his hands and run, fell at the feet of Pharaoh, and said, "Pharaoh, forgive me, I did wrong." But he leaned not to his own understanding. But he prayed, and God told him to step forward, and the sea opened up, which was against all reasoning. But he leaned not to his own understanding.

55 What if Joshua, when he went over there with the other ten denominations, and walked over there and seen that promised land of God, and would've come back with them and said, "Now wait a minute. It is true, we look like grasshoppers. They're giants. How can we ever take them? We don't even have swords—just what we picked up. How can we ever go in and take that land? Why, it's totally impossible. They out-number us fifty men to one. They're trained soldiers, and we're nothing but a just a bunch of sheep herders and mud daubers out of Egypt. How ... we don't even have shields and things. How will we ever take it?"

Why, understanding would sure prove that they could not do it. Any military man like he was, or Moses, could not have leaned on their own understanding. But their understanding they leaned not on. But they knowed that God said, "I have given you that land. Go take it!"

56 Lean not to your own understanding.

If you lean on your own understanding today, when you're sick, maybe sitting in a wheelchair, dying with cancer, heart trouble—and the doctor says you're going to die—if you lean to that understanding, you'll die. But don't lean to that understanding. Certainly not.

What about if the walls of Jericho, that.... They say they could run a chariot race around the top of them—them great big walls. God said "Go up there and march around it so many times, and sound a trumpet, and all of you let out a shout, and the walls are going to fall down." Well, that was absolutely ... would be silly to the carnal mind.

But Joshua, knowing how thick those walls were.... 'Cause he built many walls down in Egypt he knowed the cement that was in them—how tight they were to hold them chariot races on top, and even houses built on top of it. But he didn't lean to his own understanding. He believed what God said was the truth, and obeyed His Word, and the walls fell down, leaning not to his own understanding.

57 What if he was fighting that battle and (that I was preaching on Sunday) and there the sun was going down? The enemy was routed. That night, they'd get together and they'd come with another force, kill plenty of his men. Now, what if he'd said, "I need some daylight, I've got to have some more sunlight. Well, now wait a minute, God set this in order. The sun turns so.... The world turns.... Now, let's see. If I pray for the sun to stop, maybe.... If the world stops, now, then it lose its gravitation. I'll fall."

He didn't listen to his understanding. Only thing he said was, "Sun stand still, and moon, you stay where you are!" And it obeyed him! He didn't lean to his own understanding. But he leaned to the promise of God, "I've given you that land. Go get it!"

58 He's give you the promise of the Holy Ghost. You can get it in this convention, you can get it now! Don't lean to your own, "I'm tired."

I tell you, I ate too much supper."

"I-I-I hate for John to see me doing this."

Oh, for goodness sakes! You're leaning to your own understanding. The promise is unto you, and your children's children, to them that's afar off, even as many as the Lord our God should call.

"The doctor said I'm going to die. He examined me and said I had this cancer, I had this, or whatever it was. I've got to die." Don't lean to that understanding. God is the Lord thy God who heals all thy diseases. So don't lean to that understanding, no man's understanding. Lean to God's understanding.

59 What if Samson, out in the field when the Philistines, a thousand men, run upon him? And there he was standing there, a little, bitty, curly-headed shrimp about that high. And he.... Well, he wasn't a swordsman, 'cause he didn't know.... He had no training in military training.

He was just a little old, curly-headed sissy like, with seven locks hanging down. Mama's boy. Standing out there, and here come a thousand Philistines. Well, he didn't have nothing in his hand. He looked down and he found an old, bleached-out, white jawbone of a mule. And he picked it up, and he said, "Let's see. Now, I won't do much with this, because them helmets on their heads is, of them Philistines.... All them soldiers—they've all got spears, they've all got coats of mail, and their helmets weigh about fifteen pounds apiece. Great big men, all out. Well, if I ever hit with this old, brittle jawbone of a mule upon one of them helmets, why, it would burst to pieces. That's it."

He didn't lean to his understanding. He just took what was in his hand, and started beating Philistines. And after he had beat down a thousand of them, he still had the jaw bone in his hand! Amen!

60 I don't care what man's theology says, don't lean to that. Lean to the Word of God, Jesus Christ the same yesterday, today, and forever. Certainly. He believed it.

What if David would have listened to Saul's theology? There stood Goliath out there with his big boast—and all, everybody scared, Saul—head and shoulders above all the army. Goliath said, "Somebody come out and fight me. No need in all of us dying. If I kill you, then you all serve us. And if you kill me, why, we'll serve you."

'Cause he had the edge on him. That's the way the devil likes to do, when he's got his whole seminary out, and all of them, when he's coming along, see.

Little old David, walking around there a piece of sheepskin on him, ruddy, stoop-shouldered—little bitty guy, about a hundred pounds, a hundred and ten—he said, "Do you mean to tell me, that the armies of the living God, that's circumcised (see, to a covenant) will stand there, and let that uncircumcised Philistine defy the armies of the living God?"

61 Saul said, "Come here, boy." He said, "I admire your courage, but the days of miracles is past. We don't have no such a thing as that." See. "And let me tell you something. What fellowship card can you show?" See?

"You ain't even got on no armor, you ain't got nothing but a sling shot in your hand." See? "You ain't got a Ph.D. or LL.D. How you going to do this? Why, that man is a warrior. Why, he's a D.D., double L, Ph.D., LL.Q.—why, he's got so many degrees, he could plaster a wall with them. And who are you? A sheepherder!"

He said, "But I want to tell you something." He said, "You know what?" Said, "I was herding my father's sheep out there, and," said, "a lion come in, and grabbed one of them and ran out. And you know, I took this little sling shot, and went after him and knocked him down. I took the lamb out of his mouth, and he rose up against me. And when he did, I just took the knife and killed him."

"And I went on back, and here come a bear in after that sheep, and grabbed him and run out. I slew him too." He said, "Now, but God, not my Ph.D., not my own understanding.... I can't tell you how I do it. I don't know how it's done. But the God—(Amen!), but the God that delivered me out of the paw of the bear, and the lion, how much more will He deliver me out of the hands of that uncircumcised Philistine!"

62 Bishop Saul said, "You know, I believe you got a calling, boy. I tell you, if you come over here I'll learn you how to duel, you see. And I'll tell you, I'm the doctor, so you put on my armor. I'm going to dress you up."

David stood there, and they give him a Ph.D., an LL.D., and all that. And the poor little fellow couldn't even move. He didn't know how. He said, "I never proved this. That ecclesiastical vest don't fit me. Take the thing off. Let me go with what God helped me with." That was faith in the power of God!

And he didn't lean to his own understanding. He didn't lean to what somebody else said. He leaned to faith, because he knowed that if God had saved him from the bear's paw, how much more would He save him from that Philistine!

Well, if God loved you well enough to bring you up out of sin, and to fill you with the Holy Ghost, what's the matter with you, you poor, spineless, weaklings around the country? Won't He much more deliver you from your afflictions, when He promised He'd do it? God's Word said so. He'll do it. Sure, He delivered him out of the hands....

63 Oh, every one of the prophets—what if they were to lean to their own understanding in their age? They'd have never walked up to them priests, and high priests, and called them whited walls and everything else. They'd have never prophesied contrary to them. They'd have been like some of them modern prophets—would agreed, wore fine clothes, and been in kings' palaces.

What if John would've tried to lean to his own understanding? But he walked right up, and they said, "Now wait a minute, John, don't you preach on marriage and divorce."

He walked right up to Herod, and he said, "It's not lawful for you to have her!" Yes, sir.

Said, "Well, you know who that is? That is the prophet."

"I don't care who it is!" He didn't lean.

Said, "Now, you know you haven't got much—you're down here in this wilderness. The association won't receive you, if you're going to act like that." He didn't care about any association. He didn't lean to his own understanding, but to the understanding of God. Sure.

64 There was one man who did lean to his own understanding, and his name was Judas Iscariot.

Oh, he ... I don't see how he could've done it. He'd walked face-to-face with Christ, just like Eve did in the beginning. He'd seen the vindication. He'd looked at God in the face, like Eve did, in the cool of the evening. Eve looked at Christ, in the cool of the evening in the garden. And Judas had sat in the cool of the evening, in the Garden of Gethsemane, and many places. And he'd looked at the same Christ, and heard Him teach, prove Himself by the Word—vindicated to be the prophet that Moses had spoke of, would be raised up—and told them in the Scripture who He was, and all about it. They seen it proved by God that He was. And then he leaned to his own understanding. Uhm!

65 How could he do it! It was because he never had it down here in the first place. He wasn't a germitized seed. He was the son of perdition, borned out of perdition, returned back to perdition.

Now we notice.... But he went out, and maybe he might've had an idea, of his understanding. He might've thought that Jesus—he had so much respect for Him—"Now you know, I might sell Him for thirty pieces of silver. And if I do, I'll have some money. Now I can do something with that. And He's able to deliver Himself." See, he didn't know, in the Scripture, that he had raised up to take that same place.

And neither does the people today realize what condition that they're in. It's ordained for this Laodicea church to be in this condition: putting Christ on the outside, and Him knocking trying to get back in, no cooperation nowhere, vindicating His Word in the day and out, like He did in every day. And they walked right away from it, leaning to their own understanding. That's all there is to it.

66 Or maybe, let's say this, that he thought maybe if he did sell Christ for thirty pieces of silver, why he would have a fellowship with some of the great denominations of that day, the Pharisees and Sadducees. He said, "Now wait, He can take care of Himself. I seen Him in great battles. I know that He can take care of Himself. So I might make some money, kind of little retirement, as it was. And then again, I might have a great

standing with these churches today, if I would betray Him to them." See?

But he leaned to his own understanding, instead of the understanding that that was the vindicated Word of God. And he did to Jesus just what the Scriptures said he would do. And today the church world has turned Christ out in this last day, just exactly like the book of Revelation said they would do it. It's the spirit of Judas again, in form of church, having a form of godliness, but denying the Word. That's right.

Now, oh my! What did it result in? Death, just like it did to Eve, and it does to all others who try to pervert the Word of God, and lean to their own understanding. Even now, they sell—not for thirty pieces of silver—but maybe become, oh, some great officer. Some seminary experience—wasn't even worth thirty pieces of silver—but they sell it anyhow. Sell their understanding of God out for such a thing as that.

67 How different from the great, learned St. Paul, who had all the knowledge he could brag about. But he said, "I turned the whole thing of my reason down. I met a pillar of fire, one day on the road down to Damascus."

And he said, "I never come to you with excellency of speech, because if I did, you'd trust in the wisdom of men. But I come to you in the power and demonstrations of the Holy Ghost that you would lean upon the Word of God." Amen.

Said, "If an angel from heaven come preaching any other thing, let him be accursed!" Galatians 1:8. That's right. No, sir, he never.

The little woman at the well—she was immoral, but she knowed that the churches had excommunicated her, and.... But she never leaned upon her own understanding, once she met this one at the well, who told her all the sins that she had done. She run into the city. Now, it wasn't right for a woman to do that, to go in and say anything, 'cause she was a prostitute.

But when she had met Jesus, she never leaned to the understanding of the people of them days. She come, said, "Come, see a man who told me the things I've done. Isn't this the very Messiah?" She never leaned upon her understanding. No.

68 The virgin Mary, when the angel Gabriel met her, and told her that she's going to have a baby, without knowing a man.... Whew! Never been! She never leaned upon her own understanding, that a woman could not have a baby without having a husband. She didn't lean upon that.

But she said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord; be it unto me according to your word." She didn't say, "How am I going to do it?" and, "When am I going to do it?" and, "How's this all going to take place?"

The angel said, "The Holy Ghost shall overshadow thee ... and that holy thing that'll be borned of thee shall be called the Son of God."

She said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." She didn't take her reasoning, that it couldn't be done. She just said, "Behold the handmaid of the Lord." That's right.

Notice.

69 The woman that had the blood issue—the doctor told her, said, "There's no hope." She spent all of her living with the physicians, and none of them could help her. And she didn't lean upon that. When Jesus.... She walked through the crowd, and she said, "I believe if I can touch that man's garments, I'll be made well."

She goes over.... "Now wait," the doctor said "You can't get well." She'd had this blood issue for years and years. She got weaker all the time, and worse. The doctors had give her up. That's all the understanding they had.

But she said, "By faith!" There's no scripture telling her to do that. But she said, "If I could touch the border of His garment, I'll be made well." And she slipped around, and touched Him. She walked back, sat down.

Jesus turned around, said, "Who touched me?" He looked around till He found her. He told her of her blood issue, and she felt at that moment, in her own body—she couldn't prove it, then—but she felt in her own body that her blood issue stopped. She never reasoned that the doctor had turned her down, how could anything else help her? She never went to reason, but she went to faith.

70 Now, the Bible says that He's a high priest today, that can be touched by the

feeling of our infirmities. That right? Don't go to reason, say, "Oh, that ..."

He said "Today." He said, He is right now a high priest that can be touched by the feeling of our infirmities.... The same yesterday, today, and forever.

What do you think, when I was out there as a Baptist preacher and that angel of the Lord met me out there, and commissioned me to go do this that I'm doing? "Why," my pastor said, "you've gone crazy. Why, you had a nightmare. You...."

I said, "You better take my fellowship card, right now."

Now, he said, "How can you, with not even a grammar school education, preach around the world? How can you ever pray for kings and potentates, and you can't even use your grammar right?"

I wasn't trusting in my grammar. I wasn't trusting in any ability I had. I was commissioned. Hallelujah! And I didn't go to reasoning. If I had've listened to reasons, there probably been thousands of people died years ago. But I carried a message exactly like He said, around and around the world!

71 And I'm going again, by the grace of God—not by reason, but by a commission. Hallelujah!

I leaned.... Now, you say, "You're fifty-five years old?" If I was ninety-five, that don't mean a thing. He's still the same God that He was with Abraham. Yes, sir! Lean not to your own understanding.

And, after the sign went forth and the voice followed, the churches began to turn me down, and close their doors upon doctrine that any of them daresn't to stand before me, to say it's right, or wrong.

I challenge any of them! Not to be smart, but I know where I'm at. That's right. What did they do, why did they do it? They shut every door. Now, what are you going to do?

72 The other day, up on the mountain, I was standing there. I said, "Lord, I got one open door in the whole nation, as far as I know. That's Phoenix, Arizona. The only one I got."

And I started down off the mountain. Just as plain as I ever heard anybody speak, said, "What's that to thee? Follow thou me." No more my own understanding. I lean upon His promise!

Oh, friends, don't lean upon reason. Then you cry out, with Eddie Pruitt [Perronet] of,

All hail the pow'r of Jesus' name!

Let angels prostrate fall;

Bring forth the royal diadem,

And crown Him Lord of all;

... crown Him Lord of all.

That's right. Don't lean upon what you think, what somebody else thinks. By faith accept the promise of God. Will you do it? Now it isn't whether somebody else did it, whether they didn't do it, but what about you?

What will you do with this Jesus, called the Christ, that makes Himself known in this day the same as He did in that day. Do you believe Him? Let us pray.

73 Lord Jesus, King of kings, Lord of lords, God of gods, God of all potentates, the first, the last, the Alpha, Omega, the beginning and the ending, the bright and morning star, the rose of Sharon, the lily of the valley, the root and offspring of David, come. Lord God—the same yesterday, today and forever—bless this crowd of people, Lord.

This.... We're just getting ready to start, tomorrow. We've had a little meeting here and You've blessed us in it. You've made Yourself known to us. I pray, God, that You will continue to make Yourself known to us. Bless us tonight. Help us now. We're a needy people.

Lord, thou knowest I don't like to scold people, but how can I hoist that holy burden? I don't like to do that. Lord, you know my life, my heart. I must do it, and I

pray God that You'll help me to do it. Just give me.... And never let me lean to my own understanding, but let me lean upon Thy promise. In Jesus' name. Amen.

74 I want you, everyone, to be real reverent, just for a few minutes. In this crowd of people there's men and women sitting here, no doubt, who are sick. How many are sick and afflicted in here? Raise up your hand, just say, "I am in need of God." Just raise up your hand, right now. "I'm in need of God."

Now, I don't know very many people. I know these three boys sitting right here. I know Mr. Dauch and his wife sitting there, and I think, I think this is Sister Moore. Is that right, Sister Moore? Outside of that, I guess that does it. Brother [name not clear] on the platform, that's as far as I see that I know. But the heavenly Father who promised in this day He would vindicate Himself in this age, just exactly the way He did at Sodom.... Did He promise it? He manifested Himself? Do you believe that?

75 Now, if you will pray, and by faith....

Now, don't try to reason, "How can I touch Him as a high priest?" Now the Bible says, in the New Testament, He is a high priest right now. He continues a high priest of the order of Melchizedek. He's the High Priest forever. There's no other high priest but Him, no other mediator between God and man but the man Christ. That's right. He is the only one, and He is the same yesterday, today, and forever.

Now if He remains that same High Priest, and the Bible said we can touch Him by the feeling of our infirmities—like that little woman did that touched His garment—your faith can touch Him, tonight. And He'll act the same way in human flesh, like He did when He was in human flesh, there at Abraham's oak. Do you believe that? He promised He would do it.

I just pray ... anybody has a need, and I....

76 It's like I said, a gift is not something that.... Like, you take a knife, and you want to cut this with it, you can cut it. Or you can cut this, you can cut it, or whatever you want to. That's not a gift of God, see. No.

A gift of God is some way you have of getting yourself out of the way. And gifts and callings are the predestination of God. Gifts and callings are even without repentance. You're born with them, a little gear that you pull yourself over in. But you cannot step on the pedal, see. God has to operate it.

You have to get yourself out of the way. Your faith can operate it; not mine, yours. Mine just takes it out of the way. You believe, with all your heart, that Jesus Christ lives today.

77 Don't lean to your own understanding. You say, "Well, now look, I'm in serious shape, brother. You don't know me. I've been in this wheel chair, I've been...."

I don't care what you been, and it.... See if God won't come down and do exactly like He did, when He was here on earth in a physical body. He'll do it in your body and my body, together, as a unit, believing in Him. He'll do it because He promised He would do it.

Now, don't lean to what somebody says. "That's a mental telepathy," they call it. Said Jesus was the same thing. They said He was a fortuneteller, a devil. But He was the Son of God, because He was according to the promised Word of God.

78 Now as I said, our places.... We don't have to have that, to come up and lay hands on people. We laid hands on them last night. But the only thing you have to have is faith, and then recognize by faith ... You accept it by faith, not anything that....

Don't say, don't say, "How can it be done?" If I could tell you how it was done, then it would be no more faith. I don't know how it's done. I don't know, but I believe it. I don't know how God saves a sinner, but He does it. I don't know how God does any of these things, but I accept it, see. He does it. That's the way.... Because I can't explain it, now I, well.... It never will be explained. No one can, because if you do, then it is no more faith.

I don't see how God and Christ could be the same person—but they were, the Scripture says. Right. You can't explain it, but they were. "My Father is in me. It's not me doing the works, it's my Father in me. If I do not his works, then it shows I'm not of

Him. But if I do his works, then He testifies Himself that I'm of Him." Why, it's the same thing. Now, exactly the same thing. He's the same yesterday, today, and forever, if you'll believe.

79 Now, there's a man sitting, right here before me. He's got dark hair. He's got a watch upon his arm, a dark suit. He's wearing glasses. You can look right here, and see him sitting, with his eyes closed, praying. I don't know that man. The heavenly Father knows I don't know him. I'm just going to look to him, just for a minute, 'cause he looks like he's so sincere, sitting there.

Ever since I made mention, that man just closed his eyes, and started praying. That man is a stranger to me. I don't know him. God knows that man, and He can reveal to me if that promise is true in the Bible. He can reveal to me what that man's got his eyes closed for, and what he's praying about. Do you believe that? Do you believe it, sir? If you'll open your eyes.... You're sitting right here, look, right here. Do you believe that? Now, you know I don't know you. We're strangers to each other, but God knows you. Now he started crying, weeping, because I can tell him now, that God's going to answer his request. See? Because that was what struck him, just then. That light—from darkness, changed to light, see.

80 Now, the man—he's praying for somebody else. And that's this little boy, sitting over here, by him. That's his son. That's right. Now that little boy is suffering with a stomach disorder, and also something wrong with his intestines. That's right. That's right, you're not from here. You're not from Arizona, you're from California. That's right. You're a minister, and your fellowship is with the Assemblies of God. That's true. Reverend McKay is your name, or Reverend Cabe. That's right. If that's true, raise your hands, like this. Now your little boy is going to get well.

Your faith.... Now, what.... Now there's a man with his hands up. He don't know me. I don't know him. Well, what was it? He touched the High Priest. Now, see, he couldn't lean to his own understanding. Now, what's he got to do? What does he do now? He's got to believe that, what was told him, the truth, 'cause he knows He knows not me. That's right.

81 Here, here sits a woman, sitting right down here, in front of me. Also, she's got her head bowed. She's suffering with a cancer. She also comes from California. I hope she don't miss this. Miss Adams, that's her name. I never seen her in my life. See. That's true.

There's a lady sitting right back out here. I can't just put my point to her, but I see a light hanging over her. She's deeply in trouble. She's got trouble with her neck, for one thing. And another thing, she's got a spiritual trouble, worry, she's troubled about. And she's got a domestic trouble—her daughter's just run away. That's right, that's true, isn't it? She's got her hand up. Mrs. Miller, that is right. Do you believe? God will send her back, heal your body. I never seen her in my life. She's completely a total stranger.

Here's a lady standing here in the audience, she's not from here. She also is from California. She's got cancer, and the cancer's on her breast. She's been operated on one breast, and it's went to the other. That's right. Miss Calvin, that is right. Do you believe that God will make you well? You believe it? I'm a stranger to you, lady. I don't know you, that's true, see.

That you might know that God is present,

82 there's a lady sitting right next to her. Her name is Mrs. Harris. She's a total stranger to me. But when the Spirit struck this woman, she also in sympathy with her, and she comes from California tonight. And she's got trouble with her shoulder. That's right. You believe that God will heal you? If that's true, raise up your hand, so that the people can see. Total stranger. Lean not to your own understanding.

What can do that? You can't explain that. That's a paradox. It's beyond explaining. Ask those people. I never seen them in my life, never knowed nothing about them. It could just go on to the.... But now, look. Don't lean to your own understanding, but lean to what He promised, that He would do that. If that isn't the same Spirit that was dwelling in human flesh, that knowed that Sarah laughed in the tent, behind the man! Is that right...?

And He promised just before the world was destroyed with fire, when the Son of

man would reveal Himself again, in like manner as.... If the Son of man, prophetic, would reveal Himself in human flesh, like He is here with us tonight, as He did then, now what hour are we living in? Just near the destruction.

83 Please, don't stand in here no longer a sinner! Accept Jesus Christ, while you're in his presence now. I know usually it's customary for ministers to make pleas, and tell stories about mother that's dead, and gone on. That's all right. But we don't come upon the basis of our mother being dead. My mother's dead, too, my father, also. But we come intelligently, accepting upon the basis of God manifesting Himself in Jesus Christ, to take away the sins of the world. We come, and believe upon the atonement, and while He has vindicated his word.

I don't care what church you've gone to—Methodist, Baptist, Catholic, Presbyterian, or no church at all—if you will admit that you have understood it different, and know that you really never have been born again, but you want to be, and want to accept it now, the promise now. You might not be filled now, but you will be filled when—as the meetings goes on.... You want to accept it upon those basis, would you stand up to your feet, and let me offer prayer for you, right where you're standing? Everyone in here that knows,

84 don't lean on your own....

Oh, say, "I spoke in tongues." Now, that don't have nothing to do with it. I believe in speaking in tongues, too. But I've seen witches, devils, and everything else, speak in tongues and interpretate. That's right. Ask missionaries down here. We can find out. Brother Creachy here—ask him. You know that's right.

I've seen them speak in tongues, and drink blood out of a human skull, call on the devil. Sure, I've seen them lay a pencil down, and it'd get up and write in unknown tongues, and a witch, wizard, standing there and interpret it.

So speaking in tongues is no sign you got the Holy Ghost. If that, if you speak in tongues and deny this Word, there's something wrong, somewhere. Don't lean to your own understanding. Somebody might, you say, "But I shouted!" I do too, but don't lean to that. I've seen all kinds of demon power shout, and scream. I've seen Mohammeds shout and scream, till they work themselves in such a place they could run splinters through their hands.

In India, I seen them scream, and jump up and down, take balls of water with hooks in it, and push it through their skin, and walk on hot fire-coals. That's right. Denying Jesus Christ.

85 See? Don't lean to your own understanding, but upon the Word of God.

If your life doesn't cope with this Bible to believe every word that's in there, and you want to believe it, and want God to work His will through you because you can be a part of God, will you stand and say, "I will accept it, right now brother."

Thank you. Thank you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. God bless you. Wonderful! God bless you. May God grant the.... Audience, do you think this.... Just keep standing. You say, "I'm a church member, Brother Branham. But really, I'm a Pentecostal, but when it really comes to really saying I can believe all that Word's the truth.... I just can't do it, but I want to. Could you help me? You pray for me. I want to stand up and say I...."

You say, "Well, let's sit here."

Or, "I've testified in this church that I was," but you know down in your heart, you're not. God knows you're not, too, see.

So why not just stand? Don't lean to your own understanding, but lean to His Word.

86 Will you stand? Some more, anybody else, wants to stand? God bless you, God bless you, God bless you, you. "God help me." God bless you. Oh, that's good. Just keep standing.

Say, "Will that do me any good?" Stand up one time, see if it does. Really mean it. "I want, Brother Branham, I want to be right. I want to be right."

Now, I'm not saying leave your church. No, sir. Stay right there where you're at. Just be a real Holy Ghost-filled person in that church.

You say, "Well, I don't know what my pastor will say." He'll appreciate you, if you're, he's a man of God. That's right. Let your life so shine before men, that they may see good works, and glorify the Father.

God bless you, God bless both of you. You, you brother, you. God bless you, each one. God bless you. God bless you.

87 Now, you that raised up, if you feel better after raising up, just raise your hand, to tell others that you feel better about it after you raised up. See? Everyone. Sure you do, see.

If you're sincere, you're standing up, say "I'll be a witness."

"He that will stand for me here, I will stand for him there. He that's ashamed of me here, before these men, I'll be ashamed of him before my Father, and holy angels."

Don't be ashamed of Him, don't lean upon your own reasoning. Lean upon the Word of God. "He that will confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father, and the holy angels." Will there be some more just before we pray? Let us bow our heads, then.

God bless you, sister. Sure. God bless you, you, brother. Certainly. Would there be another? Just while we have our heads bowed, God bless you, you. God bless you, still standing. Just wait a moment, just a moment. God bless you, brother. God bless you.

Say, "Does it mean anything to say 'God bless you'?" That's pronouncing my blessing to you. God bless you.

88 Some of you that's standing around the wall, where you have no room to sit down, would you just raise your hand and say, "Me, God. It's me, God." Bless you. God bless you, and you, and you, sister. You, my brother, and you, my sister.

Oh, the Holy Spirit's so sweetly moving over the audience. Can you feel that? God bless you, young man, up here on the platform. God bless you, over in the corner. God bless you, young fellow. Yes.

Oh, Holy Spirit move especially in our hearts. Now, show us our wrongs, Lord. We're not leaning to our own understanding, our own reasoning. But we lean upon You, because we know that we're standing on your divine, vindicated promise of today.

You made yourself known beyond any, beyond any reasoning. We could not reason and explain it, but you've come right down here in our midst, now, and made known to us, that You are here. And men and women are believing that, and accepting it.

God, take each one of them into your bosom and hide them in the Rock of Ages, until the fires are past. We're fixing to be burned, Lord. We know it. We're back in Sodom, but the righteous shall not perish with the guilty.

You'll call your children, Lord. You told Lot, "Get out of there, get out!" I pray, God, that each one that's in that condition, tonight—that's out there, not sure where they're standing.... God, they wouldn't take a chance on going down a one way street the wrong way. They wouldn't take a chance on running a red light, if they're in their right mind, because they might get killed. Then how could a person take chance on their eternal destination, just guessing, presuming. Adventuring, without really authority to adventure, because they belong to a church or denomination.

And really, they can't—they can't understand how that the Word of God could be the "today" as it was then, how these promises might be made manifested, the apostolic ages to be gone. Help them, Father. I commit them to you in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

89 Thank you, my brother, sister. I'm so glad to call you my brother, sister. Remember, God will make me answer for every word at the day of the judgment. Everything that I preached tonight, I got to answer for it. I'm conscious of that. And what have I done, since a little boy? Preached this gospel. And then be a castaway?

Now, how many of you sick and afflicted here tonight, and you want to be prayed for? Raise up your hands. Now, will you just do one more thing for me? Lay your hands over on one another. Lay your hands on each other. Everybody bow your head now, just like you was in church, up here on the platform. Dear God, in the name of Jesus Christ, and of His presence—a vindicated presence—the very word that's been preached has

been confirmed, that you are the same yesterday, today and forever. Let the Holy Spirit of God sweep over this crowd of people just now. Many of them has come and accepted you as their Saviour. Many backsliders has accepted you and come back.

Oh, God, I pray that, in the name of Jesus Christ, that you'll heal every person. You said, "These signs shall follow them that believe: if they lay their hands on the sick they shall recover." You promised it, Lord, and the believing children have their hands laid upon one another. Satan, you are defeated, come out of these people, in the name of Jesus Christ. Let them people go, for the kingdom of God's sake, in the name of Jesus. Amen.

90 All that believe that Jesus Christ now is your healer as well as your Saviour, and you want to accept Him upon them same grounds, stand to your feet. Say, "I now accept Jesus as my healer as well as my Saviour." Wonderful! Praise the Lord! Thank the Lord! Now let's raise our hands and sing to Him.

I will praise Him, I will praise Him,
Praise the Lamb for sinners slain;
Give Him glory all ye people,
For His blood has washed away each stain.
Oh, don't you feel good? Raise your hands. Oh my, let's sing it again.
I will praise Him, I will praise Him,
Praise the Lamb for....
Remember, the same yesterday, today, and forever. That man is here.
Give Him glory all ye people,
For His blood has washed away each stain.

91 Do you love that? Let's reach over and shake hands with somebody. This is breaking of the meeting, starting the convention. Say "God bless you, brother pilgrim. God bless you." That's fine! That's good! Wonderful! Now do you believe we're going to have a great convention after this? We thank God for a great meeting. Now we're going to have a great convention. All that believe it, say "Amen."

My faith looks up to Thee,
Thou Lamb (let's look to Him now)
of Calvary,
Oh, Saviour divine;
Now hear me while I pray,
Take all my sin away,
Oh, let me from this day
Be wholly Thine!
While life's dark maze I tread,
And griefs around me spread,
Be Thou my Guide;
Bid darkness turn to day,
Wipe sorrow's tears away,
Oh, let me from this day
Be wholly Thine!
Amen. The congregation said, "Amen." Hallelujah!

.....

Praise the Lamb for sinners slain,
Give Him glory all ye people,
For His blood has washed away each stain.

How wonderful!

92 All right, shall we bow our heads now for the benediction? Now, I don't know who has been chosen to do it. Brother Johnny Manedahl from California, while we have our heads down. Now don't forget tomorrow night. That's the first of the meetings—tomorrow night. The convention will be right here, right here, in this hall at 7:30. God bless you. Have you enjoyed the presence of God? Now let's bow our heads while Brother Johnny dismisses us.



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Sermons By
William Marrion Branham
"... in the days of the voice ..." Rev. 10:7