

# Investments

Chicago, Illinois, USA

August 3, 1963

1 Let's just remain standing just a moment, while we speak, now, to Him as we bow our heads. Our heavenly Father, we are indeed grateful for this time again that we can stand to present the gospel to this city, Chicago; as it's upon the hearts of these people here, these Christians, to see their people saved. And Father, we know that no man can come unless You've drawn him first. Jesus said so.

And we believe that every foreordained seed that lays in this city now, there's no way to keep them from receiving the light of the gospel. You will grant it, Lord. You'll watch over it to be sure it gets there. You present the message, and I believe that You're able, and will bring those to the light of the gospel who You've ordained to see it.

So, Father, as we let our light shine and put forth our efforts, and all that we know how, to bring this great gospel of the evening time, the tides truly of sin is flowing in—unbelief on every hand—oh, so many horrible things facing the faiths of us. But we have the assurance of.... When the enemy comes like a flood the Word of God will raise up a standard against it, Father, and you promised it. So we thank Thee.

And now today, help us as we settle down now on ... thanking you for the jubilee of the morning, these wonderful songs and testimonies, whatever has been done. And now, may we look to thy Word, Lord, to draw from this strength for the day. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

2 You may be seated.

Thank you very kindly for the fine invitation of coming to be here with you. And I want to thank the little lady here for her song. How wonderful it was. I believe it was the first time I've ever heard her sing. And then, of course, our Brother Mel Johnson there, I requested he'd sing that song when ... "Remember Me." And we've got it down home, and I want to get it anew. Billy Paul, I think, just lives on those songs. They put them in the ... while they're in the office, and playing it constantly for people who are coming and going from across the world. And you can come around the office, and you can hear Mel Johnson singing quite often around there on the tape.

Then, when I get feeling kind of wore out, and tired, I'll go down and sit somewhere in a room, and just speak ... bring one of the speakers up, and I'll listen to it again.

3 So we're very grateful for these fine singers.

I'm thinking of the time when we cross over this river of Jordan, I want to hear that golden voice of Mel Johnson blending in with Einar Ekberg and many of those great singers who has crossed the river. So we're looking for that time.

I want to thank my good friend here, Dr. Lee Vayle, a former Baptist minister—very fine scholar, wonderful man—who stood, before me, this week, and has brought up the ministry in his way of doing it. Give me a great help here in the meeting,

4 when we're having those services, prayer for the sick. We call it healing service many times, just before the people, but, of course, we realize that we can't heal people. We just simply pray for people.

Someone said some time ago, said, "Brother Branham, did you heal So-and-so?"

I said, "I never healed anyone in my life. But I have had some direct answers to prayer, because Jesus promised it, and I believe it."

5 I remember the night that the picture of this great being, the Holy Spirit.... From Exodus 13:22 (I believe), or 21, where "The pillar of fire shall go before thee to lead thee in the way," and how that pillar of fire that had been with Moses—it went before them.

And then, when it was made manifest here in a person called Jesus, which was the Son of God.... And then He said He come from God, and returned to God. Then after his return back after the ascension, how great it was to....

St. Paul (before he was St. Paul) was stricken down. Now, him being a Jew, he would by no means call that "Lord." "Lord, what would you have me do?", see. But he knew that that was that same pillar of fire that had followed His people, or led His people. That's the reason he called it, "Lord, what would you have me do?" and, "Who are You?"

And He said, "I'm Jesus."

6 And now, in this last hours to see it return back to us....

And that night, when it was first officially taken in Houston, Texas, a brother (Baptist minister) was discussing with Dr. Bosworth—as many of you probably here was there—about divine healing, and said that I was a divine healer. Dr. Best said that.

And I said, "If preaching the gospel of salvation, and believing that Jesus heals the sick because that the Word said so, if that would make me a divine healer, it would make a man who believes in salvation a divine savior, because it's the same Word," you see.

He's Jehovah-jireh and Jehovah-rapha.

7 All of His compound redemptive names was represented in Jesus Christ. And there's where they were brought out, and magnified what God was, where the great attributes of God before He even was God, before there was.... God's an object of worship. Before He ever become that, He was still God. He's eternal, and these attributes was in Him. And they just display themselves as being a Father, and a Son, and a Saviour, and a healer. That's just God's attributes displaying themselves.

So we're grateful that we have the privilege of enjoying this fine time of fellowship, and the assurance of our salvation through the attributes of God, who is the Saviour. May His name be praised.

8 Now, I want to thank Brother Vayle, a able man to explain these things. I'm not a theologian, as anyone knows. I'm ... just haven't the education. I heard this little brother here from the Moody Bible stand up, and I thought, "My, I wish I had the boy's education." And I trust that God given him this vision, will use him, as I'm getting old as I go down along the road—that these young fellows will come up to take this gospel in a more powerful way than it is now.

As the generations goes, and the enemy comes in, God keeps raising the standards higher and higher and higher, until finally we'll meet with Christ. That's who we look forward to seeing anyhow.

9 Now remember this week, and the finishing of the services. And everybody's invited—and even all the denominations. And I might say this, while I got the opportunity. Don't never get in your mind that I'm against those people. I love those people. It's the system of denomination that breaks up fellowship. That's the....

I'm going into South Africa now, after I've been invited since I was there the last time, because we got some chapters of the Full Gospel Businessmen. And I don't belong to any organization, nothing but this Full Gospel Businessmen, and to.... Yet it isn't an organization. And when it becomes, then, of course, I'll have to leave it 'cause it's an organization. An organism is all right; but not an organization.

So we....

10 The groups in Africa ... like on the east side, it's an English speaking people, and Pentecostal Assemblies of God; on the west side it's Afrikaans, which is a Boer, and from the Boer, the Dutch. And they have what they call the A.F.of M., the African Apostolic Missions of Africa. And there's two sections of those—two divisions.

They baptize a triune baptism by.... One of them baptizes, I think, three times face forward: once for the Father, once for the Son, and once for the Holy Ghost—making Him three Gods, instead of one. And the other one baptizes three times backward: in the name of the Father, and one in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, baptizing three different times—once for the Father, once for the Son, and once for the Holy Ghost.

One of them says, "We're baptized to His death, and when He died He pitched forward." And the other one said, "Whoever buried a man on his face? You bury him backwards." So there ... such as that.

And each one of them writes me a letter, and signs here: "Brother Branham, Africa's calling for you. Come at once. But will you please teach this doctrine?"

Well, I can't go when it's such as that. See, I have never....

11 I was ordained a Missionary Baptist minister, and I have great respects for my Baptist brethren, and I love them. But in order ... with a gift that's sent not to the Baptists, not to the Presbyterian, but to the church, I have to stand between them independent—not independent from them, but a brother with them. I believe like the third well that Jacob dug: there's room for us all. And I believe that there's room at the fountain for every one of us, for whosoever will.

12 Now I do have, of course ... I wouldn't want to call it opponents, but I have people who does not accept the message. Why, my, I can't think hard of them. Jesus had the same thing in His day. Everybody else has. In each time of a message of God, the world has never received it. But that doesn't make one speck of bitterness towards that person, or them people, or that organization. It's still just the same. I'm so thankful for that. That's one of the evidences that I know that I've passed from death unto life. No matter what the brethren do, I still love them, you see. In my heart I love them, you see, 'cause it's a love that God has put in my heart for my brethren. And now, the Lord bless.

13 And now before we approach the Word I'm going to ask a dear friend of mine, a young minister sitting out here, that.... He had a kind of a complex. And he and his little wife used to come to my house all the time, and he'd sit around, and.... He wouldn't talk, and he just asked one question: "Brother Branham, what do you think? The Lord's called me to the ministry?"

And I saw the potentials of this young man from a fine Bible institution. But just ... he lacked.... Like Moses with all of his training, he.... What Moses lacked, the burning bush had. That's what Brother Ruddell lacked, is what the burning bush had. And one day it caught fire. And the brother has a church there, just outside the city limits (I believe) of Jeffersonville—a real on-going work for the Lord, one of our sister churches from the Tabernacle. And I would like if Brother Don Ruddell (I see him sitting back here) would stand to his feet, and offer prayer for the Holy Spirit to use the Word this morning in the way that He would see to use it. Brother Don, if you will, while we bow our heads. [Brother Don Ruddell prays from audience.] Amen.

14 Let us turn now for the Scripture reading, as I change what I was going to say this morning (had in mind saying) after I heard about this "Businessmen's Voice." You know, I've had a little idea about this myself. And let's turn to St. Mark the 10th chapter, and begin with the 17th verse, I believe is the way I had this written down here.

And when he was gone forth into the way, there came ... running and kneeling down to him, and asked him, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?

... Jesus said unto him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good but one, that is, God.

Thou knowest the commandments, Do not commit adultery, Do not kill, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Defraud not, Honour thy father and thy mother.

And he answered and said unto him, Master, all these have I observed from my youth.

Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, One thing thou lackest: go thy way and sell whatsoever thou has, and give to the poor, and thou shall have treasures in heaven: and come, take up thy cross, and follow me.

And he was sad at this saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.

May the Lord add His blessings to the reading of the Word.

15 I have had a little ... kind of little a saying that I ... around the Full Gospel Businessmen. Some of them, as we ministers know, they would say to me, "Say, you're a preacher. What are you doing around them businessmen?"

I said, "I am a businessman.

They said, "What kind of business are you in?"

I said, "Eternal life assurance." See, not insurance now—assurance. "Blessed assurance, Jesus is mine! Oh, what a foretaste of glory divine! Heir of salvation, purchased of God, born of His Spirit washed in His blood." And I would like to ... being that this is businessmen, and businessmen like to talk on business terms.... And I want to say to the businessmen, and business women also that's sitting here, I want to take this text first, and call it "Investments."

16 Now, most any business person is interested in good sound investments. If you're a businessman, that's ... you are interested in that. And a businessman is always looking for some good sound investment. You know, it's a good thing that we are. And I'm going to speak to you this morning on the best investment that I know of, and I want you to listen close on investments.

17 Now it's not a good policy at all for a businessman to take chances. After all, taking a chance is gambling, and gambling is wrong. We don't want to gamble on nothing, because it's not right. Some of these here "get rich overnight," you know, some broker or something, that's not even established very well, but he can present something to you that sounds so good, you'd say "Oh, my!", and you just fly into it. And when you do, the first thing you know you find yourself broke. But if a man is a good sensible businessman, he must first try to find a business that's been established—an old, reliable firm.

And then, it's not a good thing for a businessman to keep his money in his pocket. If you keep your money in your pocket it won't earn you anything. But you've got to get it to working somewhere—put it out. And then watch what you do with it.

18 Now, I think that's kind of business terms, that we would.... I think it's a good logical thing that we think of it in that way, of what I'm going to say.

Now we find that if you.... We got so many in the world today—there's short cuts, and get rich overnight, and they spring up here and there. I just had a friend that was taken for all of his life savings on such a thing as that. Someone told him, "You invest your money here. This is just it. This is it." And the man looked at the painted picture which was before him, and invested his life savings in that, and lost everything he had overnight, just in a few days. And the firm closed up, and there they went.

Now a man is the most foolish to do a trick like that. A good, sound thinker won't do business on them kind of terms, see.

19 First, you ought to investigate the firm that you're going to deal with. And if the firm is no good, no matter how good a proposition they offer you, you wouldn't do it, if you're a good businessman. You wouldn't take such a chance as that—of your life's earnings, to invest in such.

And now, speaking that parallel-like, there's a lot of these religious things that's come up in the last day that's "do it overnight." Tonight you're a barroom singer, and tomorrow you're preaching the gospel. I don't go for such stuff as that. No. I think a person's got to be proved first.

20 I think there's where many of us Pentecostal denominations let down a little bit there, because we take a woman.... Tonight she's a striptease on the platform somewhere, and the next night she's out here singing somewhere, and going out, and got a Bible under her arm—the Lord called her to preach. I don't doubt that. That's all right, but I think that woman ought to be proved first. That's right.

Let it prove ... let the seed grow a little while, and see what kind of a life that's behind it. 'Cause even the people that she's going to be associated with will not believe her testimony, nor his testimony—whatever it might be—if they see her one night, or him, one night in the bar, and the next night out there with the gospel. They'd say, "What kind of hoax is this, anyhow?"

But when that woman lives such a life in the city for awhile, and around the people, until they see there's a change in that woman, then her testimony will stand out. Until that time she'd be better just to live the life, until it's established.

21 Now, we don't want this "Get rich overnight." It.... And we don't want to keep it, because, if you keep your money, I say thieves will break in and steal it. And if you've

got something in your heart for God, and you won't express it, and so forth, and just keep putting it off ("Well, later on, later on.") and that little desire that you once had to serve God will be taken from you. The devil will come in and steal that away, and then you won't have any desire to serve Him.

So, if you have the least desire.... There must be something that even brought you to this breakfast this morning. There's something. "Faith cometh by hearing, hearing of the word." And there must be some desire, or you wouldn't even be here. Now, don't let that desire trickle off into some little joining, or shake hands, or be sprinkled, or something out there. Let's find the real firm that's established, something that's really all right, some good reliable firm that pays off in great dividends. That's the way you want to make your investments, is something that's worthwhile.

22 And I'm thinking ... the reason I thought of this this morning, I believe, for this group, was this rich young ruler. This young fellow, as we know him, is called the rich ruler. He was a young fellow—no doubt a fine character. He'd come up in a good home, perhaps in a very religious home, from the way he approached the Lord Jesus.

You know, Jesus said to him, "Keep the commandments."

And he said, "This I have done. I have observed this since my youth. I have did this."

You see, he had a good background. That means a whole lot, because ordinarily he probably wouldn't have never approached Jesus. But there must have been something about Jesus that attracted his attention, different from what that he had been used to in his synagogue; because, you see, Jesus was different.

23 And, as this young fellow here just testified from the Moody Bible Institute down here.... Great place, there's no doubt at all; but you see, one day he found something that seemed it was different—and he was presented with the opportunity.

And this young man was presented with an opportunity for an investment. Being a businessman, as he was, a ruler, of course he had great possessions. And Jesus knowed there was much potential to this young man, because the Bible said, "beholding him he loved him." He must have been a kind sort of a fellow, with a nice character. His approach was dignified.

24 He never run up and said, like some little Ricky of this day would say, "Say, you. Come here, Preach."

That wasn't his approach. He come up and he said, "Good Master," see. "Master [or teacher], what must I do to have everlasting life?"

Now you see, he had found in Jesus.... Though he had kept the commandments, though he had been loyal to his synagogue, and to the cause; but yet, he found something in Jesus that produced life.

25 Now, the law has no life in it at all. The life ... the law, pardon me, the law is only a policeman that points you to your sins. But it has no grace to pardon your sin. It only points you, and tells you that you are a sinner. And that has been twisted so that it's been brought over into Christianity—just a form, just to say that we should ... and make a declaration of creeds, or laws, bylaws of Christianity. And we have been very able, with intellectual beings, to present this to the world.

But, you see, we don't find them taking it like they should, because it hasn't got life in it, see. We must find something that.... Every man is looking a-past the curtain from that somewhere beyond that he come from, and knows he's got to return some day. Now everybody wants to see that, wants to know what is beyond that.

26 A very beautiful picture.... Jesus said, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man.... [Did you notice He never said, "When he's cast out of a man....", but, when he goes out by his own will?] When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man and he returns back to this man, and finds that the house that he lived in has been swept and garnished, then he goes and gets seven other devils [demons, unclean spirits] and enters into this man. And the last estate of this man is seven times worse than it was at the first."

Did you notice, the devil went out by his own will, and he returned by his own will? Now, if this house had already been occupied when he returned, he would not been able

to get in. But you see, he just found it swept and garnished.

27 It's a very beautiful picture of a moralist, as we would think today of a man that tries to think he's going to heaven just because that he quit gambling; or maybe he quit running with a woman that wasn't his wife; or stopped his drinking on New Year's Day, and turned over a new leaf and joined church, see. You see, he doesn't ... he really isn't converted. He's just a moralist. And the devil using moralists just to go out and make a foolish representation, when really the real power of the living Christ isn't there, see.

They ...

28 the world is wanting to see Christ. Jesus said, "I am the vine; ye are the branches." And the branch bears record of the vine, because it draws its energy and life from the vine. When the first vine, first branch that came from this vine, they wrote a book of Acts behind that branch. We see the way the Holy Spirit acted in that first church, that church of Pentecost. And then when we.... We believe that if this original vine ever puts forth another branch, they'll write another book of Acts behind it, because it's the same life that's in the vine.

And if the first branch put forth a bunch of grapes, and then we find a bunch out here that's got watermelons growing on it, or pumpkins, or cucumbers, we know that it isn't the life that's in the vine. Therefore, I think even where we call ourselves Pentecostals has failed to represent it, the real thing that Christ has set forth for us to represent—the Holy Spirit and the life of the Spirit, see.

We represent sometimes sensations, and we represent joy. And that's good; but there's more to it than that. There's a fruit that goes with it that the hungry man is looking for, this fruit of the Spirit.

And this is the quality that was in Jesus,

29 because Jesus wasn't just an ordinary man. Jesus was God. He was nothing short of God. Not just a prophet, yet He was a prophet. He was the God-prophet. He was the house in which all of God dwelt. In Him was the fullness of the Godhead bodily, God coming down to become man to die.

God could not die as a spirit because He could not die. He's eternal, and He could not die. But God could make Himself in such a way that He could feel pain, and He could feel and suffer. God could not suffer as the eternal spirit; but when He become man He could suffer, and feel the pain and the temptations that man went through—like Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and everyone since. He had to become that in order to fulfill His own law, to take upon Himself His own law. He could not've been the second person, He could not've been the third person, He could've been nothing else but the person, see. He had to be.

30 If I had the jurisdiction of this congregation this morning in the same measure that He has in the earth, and I would say, "If anyone looks at the post he must die," and this young Catholic woman sitting here would look at the post....

"Well," I would say, "after all, she's just a newcomer among us. Let her die the death"; but yet I feel sorry for the lady. I'd say then, "Let this man here die in her place." No, that wouldn't be right.

"Well," I'd say, "my son, Billy Paul ... I'll let Billy Paul die in her place."

That's still not just, because the suffering is upon somebody else, and leaving me secluded from it. But the only way I can be just, as God is just, would be take her place. I've got to take her place. Therefore God had to be manifested in the flesh in order to suffer death—the only way He could die. And through that He brought redemption.

And this young man saw in Jesus something more than the commandments had.

31 Now I realize this, gentlemen (maybe not in the faith that we are trying to represent): we are poor representatives of what we are trying to say. I am myself. With a bowed head and heart, the message that has been given me for the church in this day, I'm a poor representative of it. And my life, though I try to do what's right, I have my ups and downs. But I don't ask you to look at what I am. Look at what I'm saying, who I'm talking about: is the Lord Jesus. In Him is salvation.

32 And this young fellow saw that, that this man surely had God in Him. He could look

down into the hearts of the people and see what was wrong, and could tell them of it, could raise up the dead after they had died. Now, he knew that the law did nothing like that. He knew that his own church did no such miracles as that. Yet he was conscious that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob was alive. He could not die. But he saw all that God was in this man called Jesus, and his heart hungered. And he knew that....

Yet he had been a member of a church, a fine church member. Maybe his father was one of the great ... the trustee, or one of the great executives, or something on the board. And the boy had been raised to that law, and he'd kept it reverently and respected it; yet down in there there was something that longed to find something more.

33 I trust that that's in the heart of every man and woman here this morning—to find something that's real.

You remember, you can't come back and make the second trial; you've got to get it now. The way the tree leans, that's the way it falls. There's no scripture for a hereafter repentance. That's your time now.

No matter how it becomes popular today, and a purgatory somewhere—there's no such. There's no such thing in the Bible. It was wrote in one of the ... "Book of the Maccabees," or something another. But that wasn't added to it.

And look, in that one book is purgatory mentioned. Yet in the rest of the Bible it's not mentioned nowhere. And after all, Jesus speaking of this same young man when he died.... He said there's a gulf fixed that no man has ever crossed, and never will after death, see. And that settles it when Jesus said so.

34 Now we find out in this, that this hunger for this ... to become a partner ... or not a partner, but a source of life that existed in Christ. This young fellow was wanting to be part of it, just what Jesus was there to give—the new birth, see. That's what we got today: the opportunity to receive the new birth, that we become part of God, see, sons and daughters of God. You understand?

35 Notice. Just like a sin. The church has long forgot its place (the denomination), by blindly walking away from this by blind leading of the blind. Look, if I had one drop of black ink in my pen here, and I had this cup full of bleach, or tub sitting here full of bleach, that the women use.... Now, it used to be that bleach....

Well, when I got something on my shirt when I was just a little boy, Mama used to get some coal oil, or some turpentine, or something, and put on it, and try to take the color of the stain out. She only spread it, but it wasn't all in one spot. But now they have manufactured something called bleach. My! That bleach will take that stain right now.

36 Well, there was a law of God that ... under the blood of a lamb, that didn't take away sin; it just scattered it. And when man sinned, he crossed a great chasm. When he sinned away ... he separated himself away from God, leaving himself no way back. But God, in tender mercy, accepted a substitute for him. And this substitute lasted for thousands of years. But it wouldn't take away sin; it only covered up sin.

But when.... Not manufactured, but God in His creative power created a blood cell—without sexual desire—in the womb of the virgin, that don't only cover sin; it omits sin. It takes it so far away till it's never in the mind of God again. It don't make a bridge across the chasm, but it moves the chasm, that....

Drop this little drop of ink into that bottle of bleach, or whatever it might be. You'll never find that color again.

37 Where did the color come from? Now, we find out that in making color.... (I do not know. I'm not a chemist. But I'm just saying, if there would be a chemist sitting here you'd think I'm mentally upset, or didn't know what I was talking about if I use these terms.) But just to let you know what I mean, let's say now, the color....

Now, at first we'd say it come ... it's some kind of an acid. Well, then, where did the acid come from? Let's take it on back and say, well, it was a certain type of acid went with another kind of acid to make a color, which.... There's only one original color, and that's white. We all know that. Others are perversions from it. No color but white—that's the only real color there is. Now.

Now, we find out that ... this chemistry, we'll run it back just a moment, and we find out that.... Maybe it says it comes in now to atoms. Well, we'd say atom B-1 times atom B-C times four makes black. If it had been atom B-8, it would have come out pink. And then, molecule times molecule times so-and-so comes out black. Now there shows there was an intelligence behind it that brought it out black.

And then, if you take it beyond that, and beyond that, as long as it is a creation it has to come from a creator. There cannot be a creation without a creator. Now we find out then, when this come in.... And any color is a perversion.

38 And anything outside of a pure unadulterated son of God is a perversion. And what is sin? Is righteousness perverted. What is an adultery? Is the act that God ordained just to replenish the earth has been perverted. What is a lie? It's the truth misrepresented. So you see, the whole thing now is a perversion.

And the original color is white. We got to get this back to white, yet it's black. It's perverted somewhere. But when it's dropped into this ... this ink is dropped into the bleach, it sends it all the way back, and it's white—just like the bleach is. You'll never find it again! It's finished forever!

39 Now, all your sensations, as we Pentecostal people like to jump and shout.... I do. I believe that's right. We like to speak with tongues. I believe that's a gift of God. The devil can impersonate anything that you can produce in that line. But notice, then it shows that something's wrong. The life of Christ isn't flowing through the church the way it should, the body, the bride. It's not going through there like it should. Now we find it clogged up somewhere.

Notice. When this ... your sins are confessed, and your sins are dropped into the bleach of the blood of the Son of God, it remits sin—so much that it is put in the sea of God's forgetfulness, and can never even be remembered in His sight anymore. Then what that ... does that make a man? A son of God. God never remembers you to be a sinner. You are a son, you are a daughter. There's no more remembrance of sin at all. God puts it in the sea of forgetfulness—the bleach.

The sea of forgetfulness is Christ's blood that was shed for you. And therefore, then you and God are Father and son by Jesus Christ's grace. Not by anything you done, but by His grace you are sons and daughters of God, and a partaker of His blessings, and of His power, and of His life. His life is in you, for you are a son of God.

Oh, if the church could.... We would only ... to represent that!

40 No wonder Jesus said, "If ye abide in me and my word in you, then ask what you will," see. "The works that I do [John 14:12] ... He that believeth [confessed and believeth] on me [see], the works that I do shall he do also," because God is in the believer just like He was in Christ. Not in the fullness He was in Christ, but He's in you just like He was, because you are a son of God through Jesus Christ.

41 Oh, how this young man in his church life could see that this was something in the Lord Jesus. And He was presented with this problem: to come to Jesus, yet it was against his church. But he had the audacity, he had just something about him that wanted to find out—a hunger. And he came to the Lord Jesus. And this young fellow.... I think of him being presented then with the opportunity for this investment; but he wasn't interested in such an investment. It was all right if he could go on living with his friends, and go on living in the things that he was doing, and affiliate in it; and yet not willing to surrender.

42 Now there's where we find the great trouble today is, the church knows the Scripture. Here, this institution that this young fellow here just come from, and these ... this Baptist brother sitting here—they know that Word. They are students of the Word. And yet, if they say, "Well, we believe it. We accept it," it's just like a bottle of medicine, a cure, see. Not morally cure—it reproduces the life of Christ, see. If you take the gospel, then you become part of the gospel. And if you become a part of it, like Peter, James, and John and them did on Pentecost, your life is another living book of Acts. There's no way out of it.

Jesus said in Mark 16, "These signs shall follow them that believe." But the people will learn, and they go through seminaries and schools to learn it, but don't want none of it themselves. Yet they think that they got it. They think that they got it, but the actions

speaks louder than all the words. Your life proves it, whatever you are.

43 And this fellow was not interested in such, although this great investment was not just some overnight something. It was just not something that Jesus asked him to come jump right into. Jesus had thoroughly been identified the Son of God.

How could a man walk to a grave where a dead man laid and say, "Lazarus, come forth," that wasn't God? How could a man stand on a ship, when ten thousand devils of the sea swore they'd drown Him—Him and His disciples—that night; and just put His foot upon the brail of the boat, and look up and say, "Peace. Be still," and the winds and the waves obey Him?

44 How could a man look down into a human heart and say, "You done such and such, and such and such." It had to be God. It was thoroughly a-vindicated.

And he wasn't asked just to invest in something that ... just a mythical thought, or some cult. It was thoroughly identified what his investment was to be in. If he could've said, "Now, I don't know about this.".... But you see, he called Him "Good Master," and he knew there was something; but yet, he wasn't ready to take the medicine because Jesus asked him something to do.

And that's what does ... the hindrance among men today is.... They believe there is God. There's no man with good intelligence but what knows there is God. Because if he doesn't recognize God, the Bible plainly says he's not mentally right. He's a fool, see. The Bible said, "The fool has said in his heart there is no God." Now, but if he believes there is God, but yet he's not willing to separate himself in the very same way that Jesus was asking this young man—this young businessman—to make his investments....

45 He saw something in Jesus that other men never had. He saw there was something that Jesus had that those priests didn't have. He saw something that the rabbis, the teachers, none of them had it. But he recognized it in Jesus, and recognized it to be God.

When he thought, "Well, if I can come in, and not have to do all this.... I'll go find out." But he found out that there's only one way to come. That's where the world's got to learn today. And Christ is that way—not a church, not an affiliation, not a denomination, as good as they may be. And I have nothing against them in that manner. But yet, you've got to realize that it's Christ, the new birth.

46 Men, you businessmen of this city, I'm not condemning your churches as you sit here. We appreciate you being here. But I'm trying to sell you an assurance this morning. I'm not trying to sell it to you. I'm a representative of this firm, and I want to tell you that the policy is free, and it has.... It's well identified on earth today: that Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today, and forever, by His same works, His same signs, the same gospel, the same Word of God. He's perfectly identified as it was then.

Now, you're here this morning for some reason. Why? Why are you here, anyhow? There's a little tinkle in there that tells you. I'm not saying to leave your church. You go to your church a better person than you was when you left it, and you'll be a light that's set upon a hill—a candle that's lit, not covered with a basket. You'll have eternal life.

47 Now we find out, it puts a man right back in a place where the people are today. The Bible said over here (I have a scripture written down here I'd like to refer to), Jesus said in the 3rd chapter of Revelation that the Laodicea church is the last church age, and we all are believing that we are living in the end-time. And this is the last church age.

Now compare this church age with that rich young ruler. Compare them. Now, didn't Jesus say the Laodicea church was rich, increased in goods, had need for nothing? Isn't that the condition of the church today? And yet Christ has unfolded Himself through three church ages—through Luther, through Wesley, and through the Pentecostal age; has unfolded Himself in His Word of justification, sanctification, and the baptism of the Holy Spirit, the restoration to the gifts; and now His own personal identity among them trying.... And you rich young ruler businessmen of Chicago, this morning....

48 See, Laodicea.... We find all the other church ages Jesus was still in the church; but on the Laodicea age He was on the outside, knocking, trying to get in. And this is the age that when the manifestation of Christ comes so perfect, in the image of Christ in His church, until the churches (as the brother said awhile ago) is closing the door. And yet He stands with love, knocking. "If any man hunger or thirst...." Do you understand?

You expect a closed door. It's the Laodicea age. The Bible said it would be that way.

49 And now, if your denomination has closed the door to such a message and such a messenger.... Not me. I'm your brother, fellow-servant with you. But the messenger is the Holy Spirit, expressing Himself through a human being, the church that Christ sanctified for this very purpose.

And now you are presented with the opportunity to make an investment in this eternal life. Your business may be legitimate and great. But there's no business any greater than the saving of your own life, see. You have the opportunity.

50 Now, your church may put Him out but ... as a whole. But Jesus never come just for a church, just any certain group. He come for individuals. "Ye shall receive the Holy Ghost," the individual. That's what He come for.

Now we find out that the Laodicea church age now is presented with the same opportunity for investment, in the same person that the rich young ruler turned down flatly. And so is the Laodicea church age turning it down flatly—put him out. They love....

51 What did this young ruler ... what was it he said? He went away sad, because that he had great possession. It was a great opportunity, yet he was so wealthy that he felt that it would mar his wealth.

I wonder if a man's popularity at the Kiwanis, or at the lodge, or maybe his popularity in the church, even as a pastor, would be so great in that denomination that you'd walk away from the same opportunity, and turn it down coldly because it would mar your inheritance with the church?

Wonder if the stewardship with the church, your organization, is great enough to you this morning that you would turn away from it—some of you men who belong to churches, and sitting here this morning as businessmen? Think of it. The rich young ruler was presented that, and turned it down, and Christ turns and said the church age will do the same thing in the last days.

Now, it's in Chicago now that you are faced to make a decision. The time is running out. You must do it at once. Make your decision for Christ, to be born of His Spirit.

52 Now. Now we find out that this rich man did this because that he loved the world. He loved his fellowship with his organization more than he loved the fellowship with the Lord Jesus. Many of them this morning say, "Well, I would be considered one of you Pentecostals. I'd be considered a holy roller if I did such a thing." Now, where is your treasure anyhow? Is it in your church? is it in your business? or is it in heaven? "For wherever your treasure is, there your heart will be also." So why not make an investment this morning of life? Your business will go to ashes some day.

53 I don't know that brother that prophesied (the brothers, rather), about the tidal wave. That may be so. But I'm telling one thing—I know this: The Bible says that this earth will burn; and Chicago has never had a fire to what it's going to have one day. And God, the just God, cannot let Chicago escape the wrath of God.

As a friend once put it (Jack Moore), said, "If God let this generation get by from spurning the gospel, and for doing the things that they are doing, and living in the type of sin that they're living in, immorals and so forth, why, He'd be obligated to raise up Sodom and Gomorrah, and apologize for burning them up."

54 So they spurned, they shunned it; and they have looked Christ in the face. The moving of Christ has never been no great big world-wide thing. It's humility. Why, He was in the world.... In the days of His ministry perhaps one-third of the Jews of Palestine never knowed nothing about Him till He was gone. And they never know it till it's too late.

But let's think this morning that this is a special day, that we are presented, as business people, to make an investment in Jesus Christ; to give up, be ready, and just forsake everything that there is that's dear to this world, that we might find the treasures of heaven, as Jesus told him, and, "Come follow me."

Take up your cross; not take up your popularity, where everybody's saying, "Certainly, Doctor. Come right in. It's such a great thing to have you here. Oh, the

deacon, you find....”

See, it's a cross, and they might call you crazy, heresy. And as Paul, you could testify “In the way that's called heresy, that's the way I worship the God of our fathers,” see. We've had other men before us who had to make these decisions.

55 And, remember St. Paul and the rich young ruler versus one another. Paul was a man with great opportunity before him also, and was presented with it—but he accepted it.

Now, you can look at their outcome and place yourself. What's your outcome going to be? You can base it upon the Word, the inchangeable—unchangeable, rather—Word of God, the promise of God. God cannot do one thing, and then turn around and do something else about it, and say that He done wrong in the first place. God cannot change. He's God, and God is the Word.

56 Now this Word was well identified to be the Son of God. He saw something in Jesus that other men didn't have. But the price was too great. And it's too great today with the Laodicea church.

But remember, they went out of the synagogue because that ... put Him out of the synagogue because they had no room for Him in the synagogue. They are putting Christ out of the organization today—the real, living manifestation, thoroughly identified, vindicated Word of God that no man can stand against—proving that Christ has raised from the dead, and His life is living in His people, doing the same thing that He done. It's got to be called “devil, fortune-telling,” and everything else; but remember, the Word is the same. One word against it is unforgivable. Never in this world or the world to come will it ever be forgiven.

57 This is the last church age. It could not be in any other ages; it had to be in this age. Every timepiece, if we just had the time, could voluntarily put in here and prove this. The Word of God is now being fulfilled, and the last word that the called-out church....

And Abraham is in the type and Sodom. Now remember, He expressed so definitely about Sodom, see. Now, He said, “As it was in Sodom in the days of Lot....” Look at the modern Billy Graham, the angels (messengers) down in Sodom, calling a people out, to see if they can find forty just people. And God would even compromise for ten, and yet they can't find them.

This great evangelist, Billy Graham, and Jack Schuller of you Methodist people, and, oh, Oral Roberts of you Pentecostals, how that ... out there in Babylon these organizations that's cooperating;

58 but remember, Abraham did not represent any of those. He was not a city; he was looking for a kingdom. And He had a group with Him. And there was one of the three that stayed behind, and showed him a sign of who He was—with His back turned to the tent, knowed what Sarah said in the tent—a discernment of Spirit. Jesus plainly saying....

Now remember that there was not one more sign done until Sodom was burned. The last thing that the church is going to see is Christ manifested in His power and fullness in His church, just before the fire falls. Remember, Lot was the one the fire fell from the skies; not ... back in the days of Noah the water came. But Christ expressed what type of ministry would be in the days of Lot. And now we see the Holy Spirit moving among His church in the same manner. We find it in the Laodicea condition, just as it was then.

59 Now, let us find out here why this man wouldn't invest in this policy, the holder of it: because that there was too much on the other side that he didn't want to give up. And that's what's the matter with the church today.

There's not a man with his common sense—the pope, potentate, or anything else—can stand and deny that Jesus Christ didn't say, “These signs shall follow them that believe. [How far?] ... all the world, to every creature.” They cannot say that Jesus didn't say, “A little while and the world [cosmos, world order] will see me no more.” (The order, the church order, order in the world, of the world....) They think

60 ... and God's kingdom is never of the world, no matter how many intellectual men

you can stand up.

I'm not condemning those people, but I'm trying to show you a trick that Satan's done. They cannot, I don't care how big.... You Pentecostals, you Oneness, wants all the Threeness to unite with you, and you Threeness wants all the Oneness and Church of God, and so forth, unite with your thirty-some-odd organizations and become one—you Methodists, and Baptists, and so forth, the same way.

61 This ecumenical council that's just meeting over there this week to discuss the problems, they're all wanting to unite in one, and they'll do it. The Bible says they will do it—make an image unto the beast. You see where the very background comes from? A beast is a power, and it'll be a power; but it will be the wrong power.

Jesus said His kingdom was not of this world. If it was, His kingdom, His delegates, would fight. But said, "My kingdom is of above." The kingdom of God is not an organization that can make a great thing. It's the power of God, the Holy Spirit in the human life.

62 (Quickly now. I don't want to keep you here a long time, and I've done kept you too long now. But just ... could I have a few more minutes? We'll hurry. I think you know what I'm speaking of.)

Let's just investigate some of the policy holders of this eternal life—that's took this investment in eternal life, the holders of this Word of God policy. Remember, this is God in letter form. "My words are spirit," Jesus said. "They are life." Did He say it? He also said this: in St. John, the first chapter, the Bible tells us, "In the beginning was the Word ... and the Word was God ... And the Word was made flesh [as I just got through telling you] and dwelt among us."

63 He's still the same yesterday ... the Word that was, the Word that is, and the Word that is to come. He is all things in the Bible. And if you read the Bible and don't see Jesus, then you better ride back and read that scripture again, because this is the testimony of Jesus Christ—Old Testament in type, New Testament fulfilled.

Then Jesus is He that was (the history), He that was back in the beginning (the prophecy). He was the prophecy, He was the history, He was the Psalms, He was the Lord Jesus, and He is the things to come that's in the Bible. So He is ... the testimony of Jesus Christ is the Bible. Now ... and the Bible is called the Word of God.

And God's got to judge the world by some standard. If He puts you here and go to judge you, then there's got to be some standard. You say, "By Jesus Christ." Every man's got his conception of that.

64 This little lady here, the Catholic.... My background was Catholic, too, you understand. I'm an Irishman. Notice. Now, the Catholic church says that they are the church. Now look, there's many different types of Catholic church. Which one of the Catholic churches is it? If it's the Roman, then the Greek Orthodox is lost. Then if it's the Greek Orthodox, the Romans are lost.

If it's the Lutheran, then the Methodists is lost. If it's the Methodists, the Baptists is lost. If it's the Pentecostal, then the rest of them's lost. But if it is the Presbyterian, then the Pentecostals are lost. See, it's too confusing. You can't understand it. Which is right?

There's none of them right.

65 Jesus said, "I am the way [and He is the Word], the truth, and the life." No man can come, only by that—not through your church, through your creed, through your prayer. You've got to come by Jesus. He is God. He is the Word. He is the way, He is the truth, He is the life.

And if a candle's sitting here not lit, and you light the candle it throws a light. What will it reflect? The same light it reflected when it was lit the first place. And when the gospel is manifested He's the same yesterday, today, and forever. Do you see it?

66 Now, let's just investigate some of the holders, now, and find out what taken place in their great intellectual day—just for the next ten or fifteen minutes, and we'll close.

Noah made an investment in a promise of God, the Word of God. Now, remember, it was the Word of God that Noah made his investment in it. And yet as soon as a man makes an investment, remember Satan's going to come there to take that policy from

you, if he can. It is written that "Man shall not live by bread alone [that's the physical life], but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." Not just part of it, or a little piece here and there, but by every word man shall live—by the bread of life. And what is the Word of God? Is life, spirit, life. And when it's manifested.... "He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he also. More than this shall he do 'cause I go to the Father."

67 Now we find out, now, Noah was tested when he made his investment. So will you, my brother. If there's no testing time, then you haven't made your investment yet, because your enemy's standing there with the hammer back on his gun, with the bowstring drawn. And he's ready to shoot every poison dart that he can send: every cult, and every little idea, and every intellectual giant like Goliath. He'll send them around there, that looks taller than the brethren that you are associating with—your little ignorant and unlearned brethren. He'll send such spiritual, intellectual giants, and big schools that can explain the whole thing away from you.

But if you have made your investment, and got your policy stamped and sealed by the Holy Spirit, there's nothing going to rub it out.

68 No man has the right to preach the gospel until secretly, back on the backside of the desert, he stood on the ground with him and God alone. There's no intellectual being in the world could explain it away from you. That's right. You were there. You know it happened. No matter how much they can explain it, but wait—something happened. You know it did. You saw it with your eyes, you talked to it; it talked back, and it sealed you into its being, and you become a part of it.

You'll walk away from the intellectual giant. And we got plenty of them in the world today, and some dangerous ones too, that's well theologically trained. They, theologically speaking, are trained to use that and they know what they are doing. But don't fear, David, if the Lord God is with you.

69 Notice, Satan tried Noah on his investment, and he tried him to make him doubt it. The scientists rose up to tell him, "There's no rain in the skies," and there was scoffers in the days of Noah. Now, if there was scoffers in that day at the end—come—at the end-time, rather—on the investments that men took in their heart to believe God's Word, there is scoffers today against the Word, because it don't look sensible.

But you see, you are not supposed to use your own sense. You say, "I thought ... I think ... I...." You ain't got no thought, or think, coming. The Bible said, "Let the mind that was in Christ be in you," and He always did that which pleased the Father because He was the Word, see. So, we have no thought coming. We must just believe what He says. I don't....

Say, "Well, I can't explain it." No. If you could, then you could explain God. You don't know God by intellectual conception; you know God by faith—is the only way you know how to believe God. Just ... you can't explain it. No one can. It's not for you to. No. Nobody can explain God. God's without finding out by explanation. You've got to believe Him. It wouldn't be a faith no more. Now, you've got to believe it. Now, notice.

70 And then, Noah's great investment one day paid off. When he stood the persecution, when he stood the scoffers, when he stood against all the things and the policies of the world of that day, and all the religious things that seemed to be against him, it paid off by saving his life. He believed it. His investment paid off.

Now businessmen, let me say another thing. Daniel made an investment one day. He was taken down into a world that wasn't like the world that he was used to. He was taken among people that didn't believe the same thing he believed. But he made an investment, and look what he done. He purposed in his heart that he wouldn't mar, he wouldn't defile, that investment, see. The investment that he had made in God, he purposed in his heart though it took his life he would not defile it by disbelieving it.

71 Don't disbelieve it when you make your investment. Stay there on it. If you're not ready to believe it, then don't make your investment. But when you're ready to let the mind that was in Christ be in you....

You say, "Well, this is that, and that...."

Now, watch it. If it isn't in the Word, then leave it alone. The Word is the basic facts and truth, no personal interpretation. It's written just the way.... If God's going to judge

the church by the Bible, then the Bible.... God has watched over it to keep it, and it's written just the way it should be written—no private interpretation. The Methodists interpret in one way, the Baptists another, and so forth; and then bring it down to the showdown, neither one of them's right. It's man's mind where they run off.

72 Every time God raised up a great founder like Luther, and Wesley, and John Smith, and Calvin, Knox, Finney, Moody, and so forth like that, then after their death then they organized; and got a bunch of good college graduates around there that put their own interpretation to it, and made an organization. And there's where they died, right there. And never a place in history where any church that ever organized ever lived from then on.

Where'd they ever have a great revivals in the church like that, the church died when they organized it. From the Roman Catholic church, the first Roman Catholic church.... Before it become a Roman church it was a catholic church at Pentecost. Some nearly three hundred years later at Nicaea, Rome, it changed from the apostolic catholic church to the Roman Catholic church, that injected man's ideas—a little Roman pagan superstitions—into the Scripture. And since then she's never done nothing but laid there dead, with members.

Out come the reformer—come Luther. And Luther came out as a man of God on justification. The Word taught it by grace of God; where the Catholic church said there's no salvation outside the church, God was in His church. The Bible....

73 I had an interview with a priest not long ago. He said, "Mr. Branham, you're trying to talk about a Bible. This is the church." Said, "God's in His church."

I said, "Show me where." The Bible said that God is in the Word. He is the Word. And if the Word in you, it produces God again. And He said the Word's a seed, and the seed produces what its kind is. And it will produce a godly life—a full consecrated life to Jesus Christ.

74 Now notice, Daniel after his investment that he made in God, then it paid off by saving his life from a den of lions. The Hebrew children made an investment one day that.... When the proclamation come forth that they was all going to have to join this group, and worship some other way besides the way that God had told them was the right way, they made an investment in God. "Though they throw us in the furnace, we're not going to do it. We're going to stay with this Word." It saved their lives, converted a nation, see, because they were willing to keep their investment. Yes, sir.

75 Peter, a fisherman, he was a businessman. He had a great business. He sold fish. And that was a great thing in those days, living there by the lake, like—a place something like Chicago here by the lake. And he was a commercial fisherman. But ... and he was kind of a hard man because he was a Pharisee, and his father was an old Pharisee.

But one day.... (I was reading a story, though it might not be authentic, and perhaps it's not—but I think it would stand the test just now.) [Blank spot.]

"...but you know, son, he hasn't come yet, and he might come in your day. Now, just remember, as your father I want to say this: that there'll be many cults rise up, there will be many false prophets go forth [as Jesus said about this day]. But by their fruit [and the fruit is the fruit of the Spirit, see] you know them." He said, "There'll be many of this [which there was]."

"But," he said, "now I want you to know, there might be great smart teachers rise up [which there was one that claimed to be the Christ, and led four hundred out, and they perished in the wilderness because it was contrary to the Word]."

76 He said, "But I want you to remember that this Messiah, He'll have an identification tag on Him, and He will be a prophet. Now we are Hebrews, and the Lord God has told us that we...."

"He sent us the prophets because the Word of the Lord comes only to the prophet. That's right. And He said, 'If there be one among you spiritual or a prophet, I, the Lord, will speak to him, and what he says, if it comes to pass, then hear him. But if it doesn't come to pass, don't hear him. Don't fear that man. But fear him if it comes to pass, what he says.'

"And Moses said, 'The Lord your God shall raise up a prophet like me, and him shall you hear.'

"Now this Messiah will be a prophet—remember, not an educator, not a priest, not a clergyman, but He'll be a prophet."

77 And when Simon sat on that chunk of wood, perhaps, that day when Andrew taken him down to the seashore, where Jesus.... After they had toiled all night and seen nothing in their nets, sat down there. And He borrowed the boat from this ... Peter. And then He said, after He got through using the boat.... Peter might have listened to his talk and maybe halfway put his fingers in his ears, sitting on this chunk out there, when Jesus floating around out in his boat on account of the press.

Then we find out that out there in the boat Jesus must have beckoned to Simon to bring the boat in. And when he went out there, and said, "Now, I know you've toiled all night and taken nothing. But there's fish on this side now. Cast your net in, and there's a draught of fish waiting."

Well, it's still just a word. But when he threw the net in, and he begin to pull, and there was the fish, that also meant there was the Messiah that his father had told him about—a prophet. And he said, "Depart from me, Lord. I'm a sinful man."

He said, "Fear not, Simon. Now you've seen the truth. From henceforth you'll be a fisher of men."

Peter was ready to leave his fish nets, his business. He made a complete investment in Jesus Christ because he saw that that was the promised Messiah, for there was the Word that He spoke made manifest. And that was the Messiah. He knowed that's what ... that the Word said that. His old Pharisee father had told him that the Messiah will be the incarnate Word, and He'll be a prophet making this promise of the Messiah to come to pass. And there it was. So Peter made his investment after he had seen the identification, the vindication of the Word.

78 Nathanael made an investment, as I spoke of last night. And so did the woman at the well. Nicodemus, a great theologian—let's say something like someone that spoke this morning—a great scholar. And they ... he came to make an investment. Now I want you to notice the expression of this great man, Nicodemus, found in St. John the 3rd chapter. He was just not an overnight man. He was a theologian. Watch what he said. No doubt the Sanhedrin Council, the institution, had discussed this man's ministry. Though He was called a prophet of Galilee, yet there had been a thorough investigation made of His ministry. Now notice the confession (if it don't go over the top of your head).

Watch what Nicodemus said to Jesus: "Rabbi, we [the Pharisees], we know.... [We can't confess it. We can't make it known because we will lose our position, we'll lose our investment in our bread and our butter. We'll lose our position amongst the people. We will be an outcast, like the Galileans or the fishermen. We'll be considered a very bad intellectual person, maybe a nervous, upset, hysterical, not subject to make a good decision. Therefore the church can use us no more, if we make this decision.] But we know that you are a teacher comes from God, for no man can do those things that you do except God be with Him."

79 You see, Nicodemus.... A lot of us go on about Nicodemus. They say, "He come by night." He come to make his investment, and he found the bank was open twenty-four hours a day. Though it be at night, the bank was open. It's open this morning here in Chicago. It's open all the time, if you're ready to make an investment. He found the doors open, a welcome heart to receive him—took him up on the housetop. And as they sat there in the moonlight....

And then, Nicodemus was going to make his investment, and he made his confession first. "We know thou art a teacher comes from God, 'cause no man could do the things that you do except God be with him. We know that."

Now, he said "We." That meant the council, the organization of the council. They had a united council, like we're trying to get in our churches—a federation of churches, see, world council.

And he said, "We understand that." But none of the rest of them wanted to mar....

Like the rich man, they wanted to keep their worldly riches.

80 My business friend this morning, men or women, could you afford...? Count the price. Would it so mar you to accept the baptism of the Holy Spirit? Would it so mar your business? Would you rather have your business marred here on earth, or your position in church changed; or would you rather have eternal life? It depends on what policy you want to hold. Remember, Nicodemus was a great man, and he had a lot to go against; but he accepted this policy.

81 We find in Luke 24:49 that these policy holders (and I'm closing in a moment), these policy holders in Luke 24:49 all that had made an investment.... You know, if you hold a policy it pays off in dividends. Many times you can draw dividends on your policy. Well, they had believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, and had accepted Him as personal Saviour, but they understand that there was dividends ready to be paid off on the policy, for Jesus told them in Luke 24:49, "Behold, I send the promised dividends, the promise of my Father upon you...."

82 Joel 2:28 and many other scriptures that had promised it, I believe Isaiah 28:19 where it said, "Precept must be upon precept, and line upon line, here a little and there a little; hold fast to that what is good, for with stammering lips and other tongues will I speak to this people."

Joel said in Joel 2:28, "And it shall come to pass in the last days [saith God] I'll pour out my spirit upon all flesh; your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and upon my handmaids and maid servants will I pour out of my spirit. And your young men shall see visions, your old men shall dream dreams, and it shall come to pass that whosoever will call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." And these people understood by the scripture, and by accepting Jesus Christ as their life policy, that there was dividends.

83 Now businessmen, you may belong to some organization. But there's dividends. You may have accepted Christ, you might have been baptized in the name of Jesus Christ as Christian baptism. You might have done all these things. But yet, there's dividends on this investment.

And in Luke 24:49, as we just said, they went up to draw the dividends. And while they were all assembled together and began to wait upon the Lord.... They waited not just for two days, or three days. And maybe somebody got up, maybe say, Matthew. He was a tax collector for the government. He might have been a very intellectual man. He might have stood up and said, "Wait a minute. Why do we wait any longer? He told us to come up here. Here we are. We done been up here eight days now. I think we should take up our ministry and go on."

But that wasn't what the Word said. "With stammering lips and with other tongues will I speak to this people. I'll pour out my spirit and I'll show signs and wonders." They waited for the vindication of the evidence that their policy was good.

84 Talking to a fine Baptist brother not long ago (I won't call his name 'cause he's a well known man—a fine man out of a great church), he come to me and he said, "Billy, why'd you ever get mixed up in such a stuff as that?"

I said, "What stuff?" I said, "I got mixed up in Christ," I said, "my life."

He said, "Now, you're formerly a Baptist. You know...." Said, "Look. The Bible said Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness."

I said, "That's true."

Said, "What more could God ... or, could Abraham do but believe God?"

I said, "Well, do you?"

He said, "Yes, I believe God."

And I said, "Do you think then [knowing Baptist doctrine]," I said, "do you believe that you received the Holy Ghost?"

He said, "Certainly. When I believed it I received it, because that's the reason I believed it."

I said, "How contrary to St. Paul in Acts 19,

85 when he found those Baptists up there that was John's converts to Christ. He said,

'Have you received the Holy Ghost [drawed your dividends] since you believed [not when you believed, but after you have believed]?'

"They said, 'We know not whether there be any.'

"He said, 'How was you baptized?'

"So they said, 'We've been baptized to John. That ought to settle it.'

"He said, 'No, not now. John only baptized unto repentance, not for remission of sins. The sacrifice hadn't been offered.'

"And when they heard this, they were baptized over in the name of Jesus Christ. Paul laid his hands upon them, and the Holy Ghost came upon them, and they prophesied and spoke in tongues, and drawed the dividends like it was at the first place."

86 He said, "Why, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed to him." Said, "How much more can a man do?"

I said, "Truly he believed God; but God vindicated it by giving the seal of circumcision. And now when you say you're a believer, God has never recognized your faith until He's sealed it with the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and He's recognized it as a predestinated seed."

That was a good word for a Baptist, you see, and it's true. Certainly it's true. "No man can come to me except my Father draws him. And all the Father has given me will come." It's our duty to preach the Word. It goes out. Some falls by the wayside, but some hits that seed yonder and brings life all at once. They see it right now.

So you find out they went and drawed dividends.

87 Yes.

The rich young Paul seen this vindication by the same Spirit, and He changed him when he was on the road to Damascus. Why? He'd seen that pillar of fire, and he knowed that was the same Jesus, and he cried out because it was God. And Jesus is God. And when Paul could see, being a theologian.... Paul had great intentions. He was a theologian. He was taught under Gamaliel, the great man. He had ambitions of being a priest someday, or maybe a high priest. He was a great, intellectual, scholarly man—a great man indeed.

But when ... and these cults of jumping and running around, and carrying on as they was, he thought they was a bunch of heretics. But when he was on his road down to Damascus, as I said.... And now, he was rich too. He was a fine man, a young man. And on the road down all potentials that he'd been educated laid before him, the opportunities.

What's the difference between the rich businessman and this rich businessman? One accepted it, and one turned it down. Notice.

88 And then all of a sudden he was stricken down by a light, a pillar of fire standing there. And he recognized it, and he said, "Lord, who are you?"

And He said, "I am Jesus."

And when he got the revelation that God and Christ wasn't two different people—they were the same-self person—then he was ready to make an investment. I wonder if we could see that same thing today.

When Paul seen then (being a Jew) that "the very God that led me through ... led my people through the wilderness, there He is, and calling His name Jesus, from I AM...." He was I AM. And I AM is everlasting, it's eternal—not I was, I will be; but I AM, present tense, all ages, the same yesterday, today, and forever. Then Paul cried out, "Lord, I want to make an investment. What will you have me to do? What will you make me do, Lord? What must I do? [Oh, my!] What can I do?"

89 And he went down to Arabia for three and a half years, and took the Scriptures to find out if that wasn't the same God. And he came back and all he'd been trained for, all of his denominations, had passed away from him, all of his potentials of his education.

And he said over in Corinthians there, "I never come to you with intellectual words because you'd base your thoughts upon me of being an intellectual, a great man. But

I've come to you in the power and manifestations, demonstrations, of the Holy Spirit." If that isn't the same thing Jesus said in Mark 16. "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel" means to demonstrate the power, 'cause just preaching the Word alone won't bring it. You've got to accept it, and then it demonstrates "these signs shall follow them," because it is the Word, see.

90 Now, we find that Paul ... then it paid off for him with great eternal life. What a rashal decision now.

I'm closing, God help me. You're such a fine audience. I know I've wore out your patience. Forgive me. But just try and.... I'm not sufficient to stand here to talk about a thing like this. It's more.... I cannot ... I can't bring myself into the spot, and I ... put myself to be a teacher. I couldn't do that, because I haven't got the intellectual knowledge.

But I have a revelation that's exactly with the Word, and the Word lives back and produces what it's saying it's doing, see. Neither did the apostles—only Paul, and he said he had to forget those things that he knowed, see, to make his investment.

Maybe you might have to forget that "I am So-and-so. I belong to this.... My mother belonged to...." You might have to forget that if you want to make an investment. So wouldn't it be rashal? You wouldn't want to do like this young businessman. What a rashal thing that fellow did, when he turned away from such an investment.

91 Now I'm not asking you to invest your money. That's up to you what you do with that—some missionary society or whatever it is, to send missionaries. I don't know about that. God will take care of that. I'm talking to you about the policy of life. "Come. Follow me. Take up your cross. Let everybody call you what they will, but you come follow me." Now, he wasn't quite willing to do this. He made a very rashal thing. Just exactly like the people of the Laodicean age today in the policy. They're not willing; they don't want to.

92 That's like the rich young man. What if I could follow him just a few minutes? Let's do, just for a minute. Watch. A few ... just a little bit later on we find this rich young fellow. Let's watch his end, and then we'll close.

Look at him. We follow him, and he was a businessman. And did his business prosper! So businessman, remember prosperity don't always mean that you're a Christian. The devil.... You know, David, I believe one time said, "I seen the wicked spread forth like a green bay tree." But God said, "Did you ever behold him at the end?" That's the difference. Look at the end of the road.

93 Ern Baxter—one of my colleagues, a very fine cultured man (many of you know Ern), a very fine, able minister of Canada—he was telling me a little story one day. He said, "Brother Branham, we ride bicycles." And said, "When I was a kid we could ... I could go downtown and get a sack of groceries for my mother, and never even touch the handle bars on the bicycle. And this company come up there, named Schwinn, was going to give a bicycle for any kid that could ride a foot-wide board, standing two foot high in the air, for thirty yards." And said, "Every one of us knew that we could do it."

And said, "There was one little sissy boy there. We never would even fellowship with him because he didn't look like he knowed too much." He said, "So, we thought we were just a little better class than he was. And he qualified, or wanted to enter the race too."

And said, "You know what? Every one of us fell off of that board but him." And he said, "He rode it right out to the end and got off, bowed, picked up his Schwinn bicycle, and started to ride away." And said, "We boys met him down at the corner, and we said, 'John, we want to know. How did you do it?'"

"He said, 'Well now, boys, I'll tell you what happened.' Said, 'I watched what you all done, and I went another way.' Said, 'You see, when you got on and they gave you the push, you were better.... All of you are better riders than I am. You know that,' said, 'because I can't ride without holding the handlebars."

94 [And neither can I go without holding the cross, you see. This Word has got to be my life. That's what yours is. I can't speak without this handlebar to guide, this Holy Spirit that moves me, and directs me.]'

"He said, 'I can't ... I'm not the rider you fellows are. But,' said, 'I see where you made your mistake. You were looking down like this, and trying to balance it,' and, said, 'that made you nervous, and you fell off.' He said, 'When I got on there, and they pushed me, I just kept watching the end of the road, and held steady.'"

Now, businessmen, don't look here. Your business may fail tomorrow, it might fail some other day; but watch the end of the road. There's where your policy's going to pay off.

95 This young fellow increased in goods but we find out his ... finally payoff day come. His goods so increased till he found that he had to build new barns. Oh, his business kept increasing. He stayed a member of the church.

You say, "Yes?"

Yes, brother. That's right. He stayed a member of the church. And one night he got so big till....

There was a man that was poor in spirit. You know we don't have to be so poor in money; we've got to get poor in spirit. Jesus said in Matthew 5, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the [not the organization] the kingdom."

And the poor in spirit laid at his gate, and he give him a few crumbs. In other words, when they passed by he might have give something in a collection box, or something. Or he might have said, "You know, they're nice people. I have nothing against them. I even go to their breakfasts once in a while." You'll furnish a few crumbs—that might be so.

"Oh, my wife belongs down there. But I [me, see], I admire my position with my business colleagues," see. And he swept the crumbs off.

96 And Lazarus, the poor in spirit, laid there with not even enough medicine to take care of himself, and the dogs licked his sores.

But one night they both died. And when they did, the Bible said that the poor in spirit was carried by angel pallbearers to the bosoms of Abraham. The one had invested ... made his investment in eternal life. He didn't live for what he had here. For his popularity, he had none. He was a beggar at the gate. He had nothing. He had no money, he had nothing. He had no friends, but yet he was a believer. He'd made his investment. And he died on the street with the dogs licking his sores. And the Bible said that angels packed him into the bosoms of Abraham.

97 And the same night the rich old ruler, now he'd had a great prosperous life, and he died. Now he paid off in dividends, too. Some intellectual preacher come along, perhaps with his collar turned around, and maybe in all of his priestly garb, and he said.... And they half-mast the flag, and the flowers couldn't be held in this ballroom here, and oh, what a great to-do they had, and all the business.... Maybe the president of the bank association, and all of them come, and was pallbearers for him.

And maybe the intellectual minister stood up and said, "Our precious brother. How many times has he wrote checks for the widows? and how many times has he paid in our great organization, and sponsored our program?" And maybe the businessman might have got up, made a talk. He got his reward. That's right. His investment paid off like that. But, from the world he was a great man. But because that he rejected the investment that Jesus gave him, the Bible said "In hell he lifted up his eyes," and he saw the man who had made the investment otherwise safely in the bosoms of Abraham, comforted, walking around fine.

And he cried (now watch).... You say "Was he a Chris...?" Yeah.

"Father Abraham [a Jew, right], I pray thee, send Lazarus [the poor in spirit that made the investment]. I turned it down, but send Lazarus with just a little water. These flames are tormenting me."

He said, "Son, you had the opportunity."

He did. Jesus presented it, "Sell what you got, and come, follow me. Make your investment in this. Take up your cross...." But it was too great. He said, "Now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. And besides all this, there's a great gulf fixed between you and he that no man has ever crossed, or ever will."

98 That knocks purgatory, and all these doctrines to pieces. That was Jesus Christ that said that. Don't wait too long, mister, my precious, wayward brother, fallen from Christ.

Don't wait too long to make this investment. He might've intended some day to do it. But as the old southern saying is, "Hell itself is paved with good intentions," see. The intentions doesn't do it. Read the prescription on the bottle, but then take the medicine if you want the results. Make your investment, sign your name in His blood over your heart, see. Notice.

Look at him. In hell he lifted up his eyes. He had been paid off.

99 And then, notice, he said, "Then Father Abraham, if you cannot do this, don't let my colleagues [where all my inheritance went, back in the earth—my investment that I made].... Tell them 'don't make the same mistake that I made.'"

Could that be you this morning, my Jewish friend, or Gentile friend? Don't be rashal like that fellow was.

He said, "Send him back and let this message be brought to them." Oh, he wanted to become a minister then. He wanted to accept it. It was too late, can't do it now. His time ... he had the opportunity, but he didn't make his investment.

And He said, "They have the prophets, they have what the Word said, and the laws."

He said, "Yes. But if one raised from the dead, and could be proven that he's raised from the dead, then they'll believe it."

He said, "They wouldn't believe, though one be raised from the dead."

100 And 2,000 years has passed since that scene. In 1963, One is among us this morning proving that Christ has raised from the dead, and the life that was in Him is in His church doing the same things to fulfill His Word. Won't you, my brother, sister, make this investment this morning, surrender your lives to Christ as we bow our heads?

Solemnly, let not these words be in vain. You must be born again. You must. Now, I'm not talking about you might scream, shout, speak with tongues. I mean being born again, really with that deep confession of sin, that you've never been able.... Yet, you've always held to your organization, though you know they were contrary to the Word. But yet, for selfish ideas, and for pride, and for popularity you've stayed in the big church. You want nothing to do with the mission on the corner. See, there your treasures are, your heart is also.

101 Oh, businessmen, this morning I am offering to you, as an agent of Jesus Christ, an eternal life, a policy of eternal life, that Christ, my Lord, and my supreme boss.... For I am dead to the things of the world to live only to Him, using not our own mind but just letting His mind.... We're prisoners, as Paul, as Moses.... No matter what anyone else says, you're a prisoner to that Word. The Holy Spirit leads. He forbids to go places, He forbids to come here, He sends you to places you would not go, and keeps you away from places that you would go. Do you want a policy? Do you want to make an investment?

Now, there's no place here for—as the Methodist people, and most Pentecostals call—altar calls, but that's an altar right where you're sitting. The Bible said "As many as believed were baptized." And if you want to make a confession, and know that you've been wrong, and you'd like to have one of these policies, and would desire (And I hope you don't think now that ... I hope it don't sound sacrilegious when I say "policies." I'm only making this statement according to my text), and you want to have eternal life, and you want to invest your life in Jesus Christ, if you will, now think hard.

102 Now according to science, gravitation holds your hands down but there's a life in you that can defy gravitation, and you can raise your hand. And if that life in you tells you this morning that, like that rich young ruler, "Though I've been a good man or woman, but I don't have that policy. I'm sure of that. And I want it, though."

And to the Creator who's present, who speaks and knows that heart, and you know He could speak your name right now, but He's doing it to you ... and then "Because that You're giving me this opportunity this morning, Lord, I'm raising my hands to You. Have mercy, Lord. I will not walk away from this ballroom this morning an empty, dry, Pharisee. I accept your program. I accept your life in mine. I forsake my life. I become a

prisoner to your Word. Pray for me, Brother Branham. I raise up my hands to show to God—not to you, Brother Branham, but to God, who's present—I want this investment.”

103 Would you raise your hands now, while every head's bowed and every eye closed.

God bless you people. No matter if you are, see, ministers—that's right—be honest. See, ministers are not excluded. Frankly they are the shepherds. They should be the one take the lead. All right. Would there be another before I pray? Yes, God bless you. God bless you up there in the balcony. Bless you. Yes, He sees your hands everywhere.

Now, sincerely, as you put your hands down, you've made your decision. Now, as I pray, and ask this great God who is manifested in flesh, and now re-given to us in the form of the Holy Spirit, may He come to your heart and settle the question forever, and write "Forgiven" across your life's book, and put your name on the book of life, and give you eternal life, and the assurance of the resurrection; because Christ will be resurrected in you, the one you've been seeing moving through the meetings this week, bringing forth, and proving "raise the dead, heal the sick, knows the secrets of the heart," foretells everything perfectly that comes to pass, year after year and never one failure.... It's the Word and the....

Jesus said, "Heavens and earth will pass away, but my word can never fail." That's the reason it don't fail. It's the promised word for this age.

104 Heavenly Father, the evening time is on. We know in the Bible that You were the tree of life that come from the garden of Eden. And we know the seraphims took a sword of fire, flame, and guarded that tree, 'cause if a man ever touched that tree and ate from it, he'd live forever. You guarded the tree then.

But the same fire from the sword, the Word of God, is herding people back to that tree, that tree of life that come on earth so beautifully—born in a manger over a stable, where the cattle and the sheep had bedded and laid—little Jehovah crying in the form of a baby. Oh, it ought to be the thing that would thrill the heart of every man and woman.

And then, Jehovah dying on the cross, suffering the sins of the world—He didn't have to do it, but He did do it. His grace constrained Him, His love. God so loved, and His love constrained Him because this had ... this human race had to display His attributes of being a Saviour. They had to be lost. There was nothing lost. He made things perfect. But Satan was brought in and perverted what He had made perfect. On the basis of free moral agency they was put, and then He had to redeem it, and He did.

105 Oh, eternal God, come in mercy and speak to every heart here. And may today, as these hands went up, and maybe some who at that time when I asked didn't have the real feeling, but now has, may they sign with the blood of their own life, God, to ... from this day henceforth that they are making their investment of their entire life to Jesus Christ and to His Word.

And that great tree, that great tree of life, when He come on earth they chopped it down by a Roman spear, and hung it on a Roman tree, a cruel, cursed tree. But in there He redeemed a bride tree. The bride tree, one just like Him—that Eve-tree from the garden of Eden, the tree that had fallen—Eve in the beginning. And Adam walked out with her. Now Adam comes, this second Adam, knowing that He had His eyes open to come, to receive His Eve.

106 And now as the prophet said, the prophet David, said, "He'll be like a tree that's planted by the rivers of water." Grant, Lord, that the waters of life will water this bride tree in the last days, where all the denominational branches have been pruned by the husbandman. And now the Spirit of God is living anew in the top of the tree, which come from the heart of the tree, the Word. Grant it, Lord. And may they bring forth much fruit.

And may their state be, if it be like Lazarus, if they have to take it that way on earth, knowing that our treasures are in heaven, not of the earth....

Bless these businessmen, Lord, these businesswomen, and all that's concerned, and we commit them to You now, for the furthering of this message. And You promised, Lord, that You, I... , that You would grant it. And I as your servant commit them to you. And You said, "No man can come except my Father draws him," and they raised their hands, Lord.

Now I give them to You as love gifts from the message this morning of thy Word. Keep them, Lord, until that day. You said, "No man can pluck them from my hand. And I'll raise him up at the last day." May they receive that germ of life, that only a germitized seed can come up. And the only words.... Every man's word is a failure. It dies. It isn't germitized. But You said, "My word [which is the Bible] shall never fail." It's life. Grant that the life that was in Christ will grow by the Word this morning that they have received.

I, as your servant, commit my prayer to You to be answered in this, in Jesus Christ's name. Amen.

107 The Lord Jesus Christ bless you. I'm so sorry to keep you here at this late hour. Forgive me. But to each one that raised their hands, will you promise me that you will go to some good Christian church that's filled with the Spirit of God, and be baptized in Christian baptism if you never have. Take your position, my brother, for Jesus Christ. Until we meet tonight, God bless you, and the service turned back then to Brother Carlson.



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