

To Be an Epistle of God

*II Cor. 3:1-3, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? **Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men:** Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart."*

I many times preach funerals, said Brother Branham. And I never try to say too much about the person that's passed on, because there is no need of saying it. **The life the man or woman, whatever it might be, has lived, will speak louder to the congregation than anything I could say about them.** I would never change their opinion. **Their life told what they were.**

And then we never know just what we're doing, **what influence**, what we're doing, is having upon others. The Bible said, *"We are written epistles, read of all men."* **That is, your life reads so loud to the public, until your testimony, if it's contrary to your life, is without any effect. It's what you are inside of you, that people read; not so much what you say, but what you are.** You can pin something on somebody, say, "This is that, and so forth," but your life being different from what they say, **your testimony of your life is louder than the testimony that someone could say something about you.** So just keep that on mind, that we're bringing influences every day, **and the life that you live proves what's on the inside of you. You cannot change that. It reflects. Every person reflects, outside, what he is inside.**

And if we take the testimony of being Christians, I think that that is one of the most solemn things that a man or a woman, boy or girl, could do. **When he takes on the Name of Christ, that he is going to be a representative of Christ,** you should watch every move you make, **because somebody is watching you.** And, in this, **it reflects what God has done for you, inside of you.** ^[1]

I think if we had people today, our churches who claim to be Christians, if they would abstain from the things of the world and live that

kind of a life, it would influence the younger Christians to do so. But, today, when they let down, and drink and smoke, and carry on, and still try to hold their confession as Christianity, that puts a bad stumbling block in other people's way, and it makes it very hard.

Remember, the Bible said, *"You are living, written epistles, read of all man."* **Now, many people won't read the Bible, but God has made you a living representative. You are a walking letter, should be a walking Bible, Christ in you. You should be the walking Word of God.** And if you profess to be a Christian, and not that, your influence **will make you have to answer for many souls that you've turned aside, away from Christ**, in that Day of the Judgment (*Rom. 14:10-12*).

I think it behooves us, to think about that, for every man, woman, boy and girl, knows **that you are coming to the Judgment**. You might escape this, that, or the other. You might beat the income tax, and you might escape the Internal Revenue. You might do one thing or another. You might have run over the speed limit and the cops never catch you. **But, one day, Judgment is going to catch you.** That's certain!

"And we know that man must die, and after that the Judgment" (*Heb. 9:27-28*). **Death is not a hard thing. It's the Judgment after death, that's the bad part.** And there, what you've done on life, and **how you've influenced others**, you'll have to answer for it at that Day (*I Cor. 3:11-15*).

"How much more ought we to set aside every weight, and the sin does so easily beset us, that we might run with patience this race that's set before us, looking," not to the creed, to the denomination, to some other person, but, "to Jesus Christ Who is the author and finisher of our Faith." (*Heb. 12:1-3*). [2]

And now as when we die, like in the physical body as we are now, we are separated from one another. But, it's really this body is the only thing that identifies us to each other, because we are bound in five senses: see, taste, feel, smell, and hear. And as long as we can see or feel one another, why, we have evidence that we're here. If you're blind and can't see, then you can feel one another, or hear one another. And the earthly senses declare one another.

But, really, frankly, **we have never seen each other**. Did you know that? We have never seen one another. You hear something speaking out of a body here **that impersonates whatever it's on the inside**. So then when we talk to each other, we're really not talking to the body. It's the spirit inside, but the body is the thing that identifies the spirit that's on the

inside. And therefore, when we speak to each other, **we quickly can understand right away whether we are Christians or not**, because **there's a fellowship in the spirit (Phil. 2,1-5) that we talk from. You see, that it vibrates to one another that whether we are Christians or not.** Therefore we have never seen each other.

Jesus said, *"No man has seen God at any time, but the only begotten of the Father has declared Him."* (John 1:18). In other words, God was identified. **The Person of God was identified in the Body, of the Lord Jesus Christ, so He was the expressed image of God (Col. 1:14-19).** Or, God expressing Himself through an image, through an image: Man. God expressed Himself to us, **and He was God.** Not a third person or second person; **He was the Person, God. He was God Himself**, identifying Himself, so we could feel Him.

I Timothy 3:16, "Without controversy, great is the mystery of godliness, for God was manifested (or made known) in the flesh." Isn't that wonderful? God! And we could never understand God as He moved through a Pillar of Fire, and so forth, as He did. **But we understood Him when He become one of us, when He become Man (Rom. 8:3-4).** Then He could talk to us, and we could feel Him, handle Him, touch Him. And as the Scripture plainly says that "we have handled God," touched Him with our hands.

God is in man. And He's identifying Himself today in His church. **In the born-again Christian**, God identifies Himself, that He remains God. **And the outside world will only know God as they see God in you and I.** That's the only way that they'll know God, is when we are written epistles, epistle of the Scripture, we are read of all men. **And the life that we live reflects what's on the inside of us. A man is identified by the works that he does.** So our works should be good, see, always good, **because we are representing our Lord Jesus Christ.** [3]

Now, God has always been on the earth. God has never left the earth. If He'd ever leave the earth, I don't know what would become of it. **But God has always been here in some form.** Oh, praise His Name!

He was with the children in the wilderness, coming out of Egypt, in the form of a Light. He spoke to Abraham in the form of a Man (*Gen. 18:1-2*). He spoke to Moses in the form of a Man (*Exod. 33:17-23*). He spoke to the Church in the form of a Man, His Son, Christ Jesus (*Heb. 1:1-3*).

And He is speaking through His Church today (Col. 1:26-27; Luke 10:16), through the anointed Church of the living God, through

vessels of clay. "Ye are the branches. I am the Vine." (John 15:1-5). God is still speaking, and the world sees Jesus as you present Him. "You are written epistles, read of all men." Your life tells what you are. [4]

You mustn't owe anyone; you must be square and straight. And if you owe somebody, go face them and tell them that you owe them, but just give you a little time, and you'll pay it. **That's a good mark of Christianity: being honest, upright.**

You want to live just what you talk about. If you don't live it yourself, how could you expect somebody else to live it. So you are written epistles read of all men; so always be **honest, just, true. Tell the truth, no matter how bad it hurts something.** Tell the truth anyhow, 'cause you can always tell it the same way each time. And if you tell a lie, you'd have to go a million miles around, and still you have to come back to that lie again; and you just made an awful thing. **Just be honest, and you can always tell it the same way because it's the truth (John 16:12-14).**

That's the way with the Bible. Tell it just the way the Bible says it; don't compromise with it; say it just that way... It's written right here and you can point your finger to it. **That's the way you defeat Satan.** Satan said to Jesus, "If thou be the Son of God, let's see you perform a miracle. They say you're a miracle worker. Turn these stones to bread, and let's see. You're hungry."

He said, "But it is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone.'" See? He took the Father's Word and defeated the devil, right on his own grounds. So you can do the same thing: defeat the devil on his grounds with the Word of the Lord (Luke 4:1-13). [5]

Many has been saying to me, theologians said, "If with your experience, that the Lord has given you for His people," humbly saying this, said, "you would be eligible to write a Bible yourself, your Word, if God has manifested."

I said, "That might be true." See, he was trying to catch me. And I said, "But, you see, I couldn't do that."

He said, "Why couldn't you? You have all the qualifications."

I said, "But, you look, one word cannot be added or taken away."

And he said, "Well, then, them seven thunders, you see," said, "wouldn't them seven thunders blasting out, won't that be a Revelation be given to some man?"

I said, "No, sir, it would be adding something to It or taking Something from It." It's all revealed in There (in the Bible), and the Seven Seals opened up the revelation of what That was. That's what it was. See, it's still in the Word. You see, you can't get out of that Word. It won't leave the Word. **And God's Spirit will never leave that Word. It'll stay right with the Word; blinding some, and open the eyes of others.** It'll always do that.

"Ye are written epistles, read of all men." I translate That, turn around this a way, see, just turn It around, "You are epistles that have been written," 'cause you can't add nothing to It, "that's read of all men; **manifested Word of God,**" in other words. And Peter and John, to show it, when they went up there, they perceived they were ignorant and unlearned, they had no education, but they taken notice they had been with Jesus. They were **ignorant** and **unlearned**, but they were written epistles, read that they had been with Jesus. **Cause, Jesus was manifesting Himself through them, Christ veiled in their flesh; manifested, made alive, like He was in Moses. When the Word was in Moses, he was God in flesh. When It was in Jesus, It was God in flesh.** Only thing He done was change His mask, not His Word, **not His nature.** He is the same yesterday, today, and forever. **He only changed His form.** He changed from Noah to Moses; He changed from Moses to David; from David to Joseph; on down **till He come into the fullness of the Godhead bodily (Col. 2:9).**

It's still the same God! Amen. Amen. I hope that gets through. See? It is the same God, but He just takes on another veil. See, **He puts on another veil.** [6]

I like to listen to Brother Neville. I love him. He's my brother. And I think he's a marvelous speaker, wonderful minister. One thing about Brother Neville, I like, **when he says anything, he lives what he's talking about. Now, that's the main thing. You know, you can live a fellow a sermon better than you can preach him one.** [7]

Now we ask You, Lord, **forgive us of our sins. Chasten us, Lord, with Thy Spirit and Thy Word, that we might discipline ourselves, obedient servants in the will of God (Rev. 3:19).** Let us remember, and try to think in our hearts, what the early Christians done. What type of people would we meet if we met those who had personally been in contact with You. How their faces must have lit up with faith and joy. **How their lives must have been the living Word of God, just "written epistles**

read of all men," as they walked in and among people. God, grant it once more. [8]

This little church, these people that come day after day and drive hundreds of miles, O eternal and loving and never forgetting a deed, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and of Jacob, Who raised up Jesus from the dead, **and now He sets at the right-hand of the Majesty on high, God tabernacled in flesh,** bless these people whom I bless in Thy Name. May they always remember and know that there is a sign, a sign of the end. I pray that You'll give to them and **make them winners of others:** on their work, wherever they may be, in the street corners, filling stations, or wherever it might be, to testify in the grocery store, to the milkman. Whatever it might be, Lord, if something warns upon their heart, may they be a witness. **May they live such godly and sanctified lives until they'll be written epistles read of all men.** [9]

The veil, tradition of unbelievers, taken away, you see God. When the veil of traditions has been removed, you can see that **God is still God of His Word.** He still keeps His Word. He is the God, Author of His Word.

That is hidden behind skin veils, to others. Yes, that is right. To those who cannot go behind the veil, **He is still behind skin veils** (*II Cor. 3:4-18*).

Notice. Then, we, **then we become part of Him, as you are the veil that veils Him. You are part of Him, as long as Christ is in you, as Christ was of God.** Because God was in Him, made Him God. And as Christ is in you, the hope of Glory (*Col. 1:26-29*), you become part of Christ. *"He that believeth on Me, the works that I do shall he also."* (*John 14:12*). See? **You become part of Christ as long as Christ is hidden in you.** Then it's veiled to the unbeliever, **but you know He is in you.** You are temple-ing Christ that's behind the veil, the skin. Then we, because of this veil, the veil again in human flesh, hide God (the Word) from the unbeliever.

As it is written, "You are written epistles," the Bible said. Now, what is epistle? Is a "written word." And you are the "written." Other words, you'd read It like this, **"You are written epistles," or, "you are the Word, that has been written, made manifest,"** nothing can be added to It. You can't say, "I'm a written epistle," and living some other kind of a something but what This has already written because nothing can be added or taken away. [6]

Moses' veil; he was the living Word to the people. And today, the people that are veiled are the same thing. "They are written epistles, read of all men." Not a new epistle; but the Epistle that's been written, made manifest. **It's those who believe the Word and the promise of this day, that God is pouring out His Spirit, upon all flesh, and that is written epistles.** And when a person tries to carnally impersonate that, it backfires. **Your life shows what you are.** [10]

I think it's so real that we should live the right kind of a life, because **there's many people won't take time to read the Bible, but they'll read you. See, you are a written epistle of God, a real, true, born again Christian is the Word expressed again,** because you're written epistles of God, read of all men.

What type of person should we to be if we know **that our lives are an open, living Bible to the unbeliever, to express God in our own life?** Notice. Now, we see He was the Word, and the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. Now, we find out that in Hebrews 4:12, the Bible said that *"the Word of God is sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing even to the asunder and marrow of the bone..., and a Discerner of the thoughts that's in the heart."* The Word of God discerns the thoughts that's in your heart. Therefore, God, being the Word, knows exactly what you're even thinking about this very minute. So should not our thoughts be pure, clean, holy, always thinking the best? [11]

The Word, they ought to know. **What was the remedy for all things? Is God.** In Saint John 1, says, "He is the Word." We still have the Word, to bring us out of this. We don't need no Council of Churches. We don't need all these dogmas **and things being mixed up into the Word.** We've got the Bible here, tells us how to steer this thing. **Back to the Bible, back to Its Message!** That's Christ among us, the Bible, living Bibles. **"You're written epistles," living Bibles,** the Word of God living so through you! **That's what we need.** [12]

It's got to be quoted just the way He said It. Then, if It's quoted right, He'll vindicate It to be so in your life. *"That's how all men know you're written epistles read of God."* Written epistle is this "Bible." Is that right? An epistle is the Bible. And you're a written Bible **reflecting His Word, that perfect man again, in God.** [13]

Father, we know that there's many people that will not read the Bible, but You have made **Your church written epistles**, the Word of God made manifest. **And people can watch lives, and see what the Word of God is, because the life of a Christian expresses the Word.** Then what type of Christian should we be, Lord? Help us to be Bible Christians, that the works and Life of Jesus Christ may be known through us. [14]

Now where is the fruit of the Spirit? (*Matt. 7:15-20*). Not by speaking in tongues. Not by dancing in the Spirit. Not by joining church. Not by fruit of the Spirit; Christian Science can out-smother any of you on that, and deny even Jesus Christ was Divine. Not that.

But it's the Word, living! There it is. If they'd have only looked, He was Messiah. **He was the living Word, made manifest.**

And a man that's got the Spirit of God in him, or a woman, lives that Word, lives right out in them. That's the heartbeat, the predestinated, for the Word of the Lord comes to them, **and they are the Word to the people. "Written epistles read of all men."** Is that right? **Could the Third Pull be on?** [15]

Reference:

- [1] "Influence" (63-1130B), par. 18-20
- [2] "Influences" (64-0215), par. 25-29
- [3] "Shalom" (64-0112), par. 5-9
- [4] "Hebrews Chapter 7 Part 1" (57-0915E), par. 33-34
- [5] "Jezebel Religion" (61-0319), par. 4-6
- [6] "The Unveiling of God" (64-0614M), par. 273- 282, 269-271
- [7] "The Third Exodus" (63-0630M), par. 41-42
- [8] "A Prisoner" (63-0717), par. 4-5
- [9] "A True Sign That's Overlooked" (61-1112), par. 269
- [10] "The Mighty God Unveiled Before Us" (64-0629), par. 114
- [11] "We Would See Jesus" (62-0727), par. E33
- [12] "Go Awake Jesus" (63-1130E), par. 126
- [13] "The Harvest Time" (64-1212), par. 226
- [14] "A Testimony Upon The Sea" (62-0726), par. E2
- [15] "Souls That Are In Prison Now" (63-1110M), par. 340-343

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There's coming one with a Message that's straight on the Bible, and quick work will circle the earth. The seeds will go in newspapers, reading material, until every predestinated Seed of God has heard It.
[Bro. Branham in „Conduct-Order-Doctrine“, page 724]