

What is Manifest Sons of God theology?

An extreme form of Latter Rain, teaching radical restorationism and dominionism. It claimed that there are mystical steps of growth to becoming a perfect son of God, where the final goal is to be God. It is the source of the modern Charismatic ideas about immortalised apostles and prophets ruling the world with super powers – invulnerable to bullets, able to fly and walk through walls. John Wimber devoted whole conferences to this theme.

The main leader was William Branham (1909-1965) who followed the occult ideas of Franklin Hall and EW Kenyon and was directed by voices in his head, which he feared all his life. Some of his heretical teachings include:

- A modalistic view of the Trinity. Hell is not eternal punishment.
- Rebaptism in the name of Jesus only (following the Oneness Pentecostals).
- He equated the Bible with the pyramids and astrology.
- He claimed that Satan had sex with Eve and blamed women for evil.
- He healed by clairvoyancy or channelling (via ‘his angel’) who gave him the word of knowledge; he always obeyed this ‘angel’ whom he disassociated from the Holy Spirit.
- He stated that he was the angel of Rev 3:14 and 10:7.

He was the main proponent of healing and deliverance through laying on of hands and using the word of knowledge. He is supposed to have raised the dead (though two former disciples claimed he was a fraud) but he did start the Healing Revival of the 50s. He was widely supported, e.g. by The FGBF (Demos Shakarian), Oral Roberts; George Warnock & AA Allen, while Ern Baxter was once his associate (until he left out of disgust). The Kansas City Prophets and Paul Cain described him as the greatest prophet in history. However, his occult notions barred him from many Pentecostal churches who accused him of heresy. Many people died after he declared them healed. One former associate called him a practitioner of witchcraft.

This branch of Latter Rain developed the idea that the glorified church of overcomers on earth becomes immortal and perfect before the Second Coming, and is the Manchild of Rev 12 which will rule the earth with a rod of iron. After a number of scandals, the movement went to ground in the 50s until resurrected by Wimber and ‘Kingdom Theology’. It undergirds the current apostolic & prophetic movement (now New Apostolic Reformation).

Proponents include: Sam Fife, Paul Cain, John Wimber, George Warnock, Francis Frangipane, Royal Cronquist and Bill Britton. Leaders influenced by it include: Oral Roberts, Demos Shakarian, David du Plessis, Benson Idahosa, Rick Joyner and Earl Paulk.

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Understanding Ministries

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