

Brownsville Testimony (by Shawn Paul Sauve)

~Other Speakers A-F: Discernment Research Articles:

As a charismatic Christian, I have had some interest in the doctrines and practices being advocated at Brownsville. This has resulted in some on-going dialogue with staff at Brownsville. I have also listened to many Brownsville sermons that I downloaded from the internet, and read many statements made by the staff at Brownsville.

One statement that has been repeatedly made to me was, "Shawn, if you would just come and experience the 'Pensacola Outpouring,' all doubts about whether these doctrines and practices are from God would go away!" "Shawn, its about preaching holiness and people getting saved; the manifestations are peripheral!"

Not being able to afford to travel down to Brownsville, I did the next best thing. John Kilpatrick and the "Pensacola Outpouring" visited a church near me, and I went to the service to "experience first-hand" this mighty move of God. This particular service certainly put everything into perspective, and honestly, it shook me.

The rest of this article describes the service, and you will have the option to listen to audio excerpts from the service. I arrived about 30 minutes prior to the service and sat in the second row in front of the stage. As I read scripture and quietly prayed, I noticed several themes in the conversations around me.

One theme was the Kilpatrick prophesy about CRI, and how awful and outlandish Hank Hanegraaff is. The other theme was their sense of expectation for the types of manifestations that would happen that night.

The service began with a time of praise and worship. These were standard Pentecostal choruses, and I freely raised my hands and worshipped God. Nothing out of the ordinary here. As the praise and worship closed, the worship leader talked about his expectation for manifestations. The pastor of the church then gave an introduction for John Kilpatrick, again, emphasizing his expectation for manifestations. There was no need to pull out a Bible because the "sermon" was basically a string of anecdotal stories about esoteric and for the most part, undocumentable experiences.

In one case, John Kilpatrick was in school when God spoke to him audibly. When the bell rung for him to move to a different class where he states that, ". . . I got up to walk and I couldn't feel my legs at all. I couldn't feel them . . . I couldn't feel my feet or my legs moving at all. Now, I was moving . . . but it felt like I was gliding up that hall."

One interesting story was about the church that John Kilpatrick attended as a child. The church had been having a revival for six to eight weeks when the pastor shut the revival down. John Kilpatrick says that, "When he did, he raised the ire and the anger of a group of people in the church who didn't like it." During this time, Kilpatrick was at a midnight prayer meeting when a couple of angels visited the group. John Kilpatrick's description of the experience was that it was "spooky."

Then John Kilpatrick and the other members of the prayer group went down onto the floor unconscious until the following morning. According to John Kilpatrick, those in the church that wanted the revival to continue in the church were never seen again, ". . . there was never an echo heard of them ever. They never, they never came back to the church, they were just plucked up and gone. I believe it had something to do with those angels being there."

I found this story interesting for a couple of reasons. First, anyone who has talked to Brownsville staff and asked difficult questions about doctrines and practices at Brownsville will know that you are quickly labeled a "critic of revival."

One staff member at Brownsville even suggests that these "critics" may be "wager[ing their] salvation" by questioning Brownsville (See Michael Brown's "Scorning the Sacred" at <http://www.eatel.net/~wsomers/scorning.html>).

In John Kilpatrick's story he appears to stand with the pastor who opposed revival, and it was the people who wanted revival that were "plucked up and gone." My second observation was that this is yet another account being told by Brownsville staff that seems to have an intimidating effect on its audience. After all, who would want to question or test John Kilpatrick by Scripture if there is a possibility that they may lose their salvation, or that angels may come and take them out.

The anecdotal stories continued as John Kilpatrick told a story about he and his wife riding in their car when they received a "... kiss of Heaven. Just like God pulled us by the nape of the neck and gave us a smoocher right across our soul [kissing sound]. You know, just kissed us."

Concerning the outpouring in Brownsville, John Kilpatrick acknowledges that he "... lost all of our best friends that we had in this world over this move of God. We lost them all. As a matter of fact, one of our best friends said to us in my office when I was trying to calm her and her husband down, she said, 'But preacher, why do you want this Holy Spirit junk in this church?' She called it Holy Spirit junk. She got so upset, she started manifesting demons. Friend, I'm telling you the truth. Is it the truth Brenda? [Note: Brenda did not respond when questioned] She started manifesting demons, these were our friends. And I had to stop three times and pray and bow my head and pray, and say 'Jesus, Lord, please Jesus, touch this woman, touch this woman Lord.' She was so violently angry, the devil was manifesting through her. She did not want a move of God. She called it Holy Spirit junk and this stuff."

A couple of questions about the account immediately jumped into my mind. If John Kilpatrick had people in his church that he knew so well, and they were not saved, why did he not minister to them the gospel message? These are best friends of his and he did not know that they were demon possessed?

If they were in fact demon possessed, why did he not minister to them by praying for them and casting the demons out of them? If you are a pastor that is hungering for revival, why not reach out to these unsaved friends in your own church? If as John Kilpatrick claims, the revival is a sovereign move of God that caught his church by surprise, why were they losing all of their best friends over the move of God before it even began?

John Kilpatrick's account of the start of the Brownsville revival indicated that it did not start with preaching of the Word of God where people were convicted. Rather, it started with Steve Hill prancing across the stage like a gazelle repeating over and over again "

In a minute I'm going to pray for you." According to Kilpatrick, "[People] began falling like someone was gunning them down in a battlefield, they were just falling down." The distinct impression given by John Kilpatrick was that, real revival is defined as people having manifestations and falling down.

John Kilpatrick told a story from Brownsville where he "vomited" up a "word of knowledge." When he "threw-up" this word, a silver spear came out of his mouth and sailed across the church and audibly smacked a woman in the chest. She fell over backwards and John Kilpatrick thought that God had killed her because she was "scream[ing] bloody murder."

According to Kilpatrick the silver spear was the Lord's word, and that word healed her of an ailment from which she was suffering. Throughout the course of the evening the expectation and anticipation of the crowd was built up as John Kilpatrick repeatedly reminded the crowd that he was going to pray for them.

As he repeated for the sixth time in his message that he would pray for the crowd, you could literally feel and hear the sense of expectation and excitement beginning to peak in the crowd. He exhorted the crowd, "Don't miss what God is doing in these days ... Friends, God is God. God can do what God wants to do [this is a truism that no Christian would disagree with] ... If I'm gonna err I wanna err on the side of the Holy Spirit rather than against the Holy Spirit ... " Earlier in the evening he had even told the congregation, "If you don't feel it fake it." After John Kilpatrick completed his anecdotal stories about manifestations, things went from bad to worse. His "speaking in tongues" for a long period without an interpretation was a red flag.

I guess that what he was doing would have been labeled "speaking in tongues," but it sounded more like an Indian chant "Oo-ee-ah-oo-ee" (with occasional "whoosh" and "shew ... Holy Ghost" sounds made into the microphone etc.). This "chanting" went on for a period of over twenty minutes. During this time Brenda Kilpatrick was the first person in the church to "manifest." With the background of the "Indian-like chant" her hands shook as she rhythmically moved them from her side to above her head and back down again. Over and over.

John Kilpatrick prayed for Brenda first. One hand was on her head and the other reached around her back as she stood in a "cowering" position. Her legs were bent and she looked as though he were applying great force to push her down. Occasionally he would slap her back in different places. He would also wave his hand across her forehead like he was swiping something out of the bangs of her hair. He made the same swiping motion along her arms. This same style of prayer was applied to other people right in front of me. Slapping the back,

swiping motions, and pressure on the head (over and over again).

John Kilpatrick even rubbed his hands all over a man's chest at one point. At the same time that he prayed for people in this fashion he would be chanting this "Indian-like chant."

He was also blowing on the people, and shouting "whoosh" or "shew" as he had earlier in the evening. People were shaking and jerking out of control, the sound of the crowd was peppered with sardonic laughter (when people say "sardonic laughter" I now have a frame of reference), and terrifying shrieking and moaning. I thought to myself, "I am no longer in what could be rightly called a "Church." During this prayer time Brownsville praise music was played over the sound-system.

Though we sing many of the same choruses in my own church, in this environment I could not feel free to worship God (as I had freely done earlier in the evening). I needed to be extremely spiritually aware. Painfully I watched a husband and wife carry a newborn baby to the front of the church (she wasn't even one month old). I was watching them and praying for their safety, because they could very easily have been "taken out" by one of the people next to them jerking and shaking out of control. When John Kilpatrick prayed for them they surrendered their baby to strangers, and went down on the floor shaking.

I watched the baby get passed through the crowd wondering, "How does someone give up their Godly responsibility to care for and protect their children so easily?" As a new father I couldn't fathom it. I would protect my son to the point of laying down my life for him. Even when the parents got up off the floor they were shaking and clearly in no condition to hold a baby. The baby was passed back to them, but they had to surrender her to someone else because they were literally unable to hold her. More could be said, but this is getting long.

Tragically, it appears that we are moving to a new paradigm in the Church, from an age of expositional preaching to an age of esoteric experience. The gospel has been reduced to an "esoteric experience of enlightenment." As I sat in this service, I was horrified beyond what I can adequately explain in words.

I went into the service with an idea that perhaps there was a chance that those who have been speaking out about Brownsville have been wrong. I thought, maybe they are over-stating the dangers a bit. Seeing John Kilpatrick work-up and encourage bizarre manifestations only a few feet from me put those ideas to rest. "Shawn, just come and experience it, then you'll see!"

Oh yes, I've seen. "Shawn, this isn't about the experiences, they are secondary. It's about preaching the gospel, holiness, and people getting saved."

In John Kilpatrick's entire sermon not a single Scripture was referenced, the Gospel was not preached, and the bizarre manifestations appeared to be the point of the whole evening.

John Kilpatrick's description of the beginning of the Brownsville revival seemed very similar to the service that I attended. The gospel was not preached (a message was not given according to Kilpatrick), and the evidence that revival had come was not that people were saved, but because people fell down on the floor out of control.

The more I research Brownsville and ask difficult questions of Brownsville staff, the more I find myself praying with tears, "Lord have mercy on your Church. Lord, please send reformation, and begin with me.

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"Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour." -- 1 Peter 5:8