

Raising The Dead - The Truth

'Doug Fournier did everything he could to keep his 6 week old daughter alive. After she died, he did not stop trying. He packed her body into a picnic cooler, surrounded it with ice and drove 350 miles from Gainesville to Pensacola. His destination was Brownsville Assembly of God Church, where he believed Brownsville Revival leaders, could bring his dead daughter back to life. Pastor John Kilpatrick and Vann Lane...gathered some staff members around the cooler in the church's sanctuary and began to pray. For at least two hours they prayed to God to bring Fournier's daughter back to life'. (1)

Despite the 'faith' Doug Fournier had, his child was not raised from the dead; Jesus was not glorified; and no doubt the father's grief was increased. The above sad circumstances occurred because of false teachers (in the Pensacola 'revival') such as Steve Hill, who lied and said: *'I know that we could all get to the place where the dead are raised. We're seeing miraculous healings, cancerous tumours disappearing and drug addicts immediately delivered'. (2)* The Pensacola 'revival' leaders supported speakers such as David Hogan, a missionary in Mexico, who claimed to have raised many from the dead. Hogan sold fraudulent videos telling how to do these feats.

The claims of raising the dead are almost exclusively a trait of the 20th Century Pentecostal/Charismatic movement. Smith Wigglesworth, a hero of many in the modern Pentecostal movement, is supposed to have raised six people from the dead. However, the stories were told mainly by a Lester Summeral, himself a false prophet. (3) Thousands of people are today still duped by such handed down stories.

A.A. Allen, a forerunner of Pentecostalism, was supposed to have raised two people from the dead. He launched a 'raise the dead' campaign which became a farce when his disciples refused to bury the dead until urged by Allen himself. Allen was excommunicated from the *Assemblies of God* in the mid 1960's.

Mel Tari, who wrote *'Like a Mighty Wind'*, a book about the Indonesian revivals, wrote of several people being raised from the dead - even a body that had been dead two days and was decaying badly. However, another book (much less popular!), was written after this revival, refuting the claims with evidence of false or third hand reports. The research showed that many of the 'dead' people had rather been in *comas* and that the local people often did not understand the difference between the two states.

Today's Benny Hinn claimed to have seen a dead man raised from the dead on the platform, and claimed to have it on video. However, when the media challenged him on live TV he admitted it was not on video and that he had only heard about it second-hand. Sadly, Benny Hinn has lied too often about such claims. He once prophesied: *'But here's first what I see for TBN. You're going to have people raised from the dead watching...TBN. I'm telling you, I see this in the Spirit...people around the world who will lose loved ones, will say to undertakers, 'Not yet. I want to take my dead loved one and place him in front of that TV set for 24 hours...People are going to be cancelling funeral services and bringing their dead in their caskets...waiting for God's power to come through and touch them...You're going to hear it from Kenya to Mexico to Europe to South America, where people will be raised from the dead. So much so that*

the word will spread that if some dead person be put in front of this screen, they will be raised from the dead and they will be by the thousands. I see rows of caskets lining up in front of this TV set and I see them bringing them closer to the TV set and as people are coming closer I see loved ones picking up the hands of the dead and letting them touch the screen and people are getting raised as their hands are touching that screen...' (4)

On 6th October, 14 people were crushed to death in Nigeria when they attempted to rush the stage to try to touch evangelist faith healer, Reinhard Bonnke. The parents of one of the dead, a little baby girl, tried unsuccessfully to get the body to Bonnke, hoping he would raise her from the dead. The family then did the next best thing and laid the body on Bonnke's Mercedes Benz. Apparently they were putting their faith in the 'anointing' of the faith healer who claimed an abundance of miracles. None of those crushed were raised from the dead.

Reinhard Bonnke continued to sell videos of miracles and healings despite some of them being exposed by Christian doctors as fraudulent. (5) One Reinhard Bonnke video was promoted for a minimum donation of \$35 which gave an account of a Nigerian Pentecostal pastor, Daniel Ekechukwu, being raised from the dead at a Bonnke meeting. Pastor 'Eku' had a motor vehicle accident and with chest injuries left the nearest hospital for another, against the advice of the physicians, and then 'died' but was 'revived' at a Reinhard Bonnke meeting. Eku was pronounced dead on a stethoscopic and ocular response examination only. Among many anomalies there was no autopsy report documenting post mortem, no coroners report and no police accident report. There were also conflicting accounts concerning the time the patient was 'dead'. Pastor Ekechukwu claimed, contrary to scripture, that Hell had a 'welcome sign' and that the rich man's prayer of Luke 16:19-31 was answered and he was sent back to warn people to repent and believe.

There are others who have made fraudulent claims of raising from the dead; and some videos of these are still sold in Christian bookstores today. Yet *not one* authenticated case of modern day raising of the dead exists!

When will Christians learn from this sad history? When will those in the Pentecostal/Charismatic movement question the constant array of lying false teachers and prophets?

The Bible has some Old Testament prophets and Jesus, Peter and Paul, raising people from the dead. After this no evidence exists of such events. All such Biblical events were for specific purposes. The New Testament miracles specifically were to prove *the Messianic of Jesus Christ*.

Do we walk by faith or by miracles?

Terry Arnold

(1) 1999 - John Allman, News Journal staff writer, as cited in internet site: <http://www.discernment.org/raisethe.htm>

(2) Nov/Dec 'Ministries Today'

(3) Summeral prophesied that Jesus appeared to him and showed him he would see the return of Jesus *in His lifetime before the end of 1999*. But Summeral died! He was also exposed by the media for fraud to do with his ministry *'Feed the Hungry'*.

(4) Benny Hinn, *Praise the Lord*, Trinity Broadcasting Network, Oct.19, 1999

(5) *Diakrisis (Australia)*, Dec/99 *'Something to Shout About? - The Healing of Jean Neil'*