

The foundation of the Message of William Branham put forward by himself and later Lee Vayle is "the Parousia of Christ" (the Appearing of Christ). That is, the invisible presence appearing of the God and Father of Jesus Christ was revealed through the life and ministry of William Branham.

**"But this is my ministry (See?) to declare Him, that He's here."—William Branham**

One key Scripture used to support this position is Luke 17:30:

Luke 17:30 "...thus shall it be in the day when the son of man is revealed."

This was a constant theme and hundreds (perhaps thousands) of quotes from William Branham and Lee Vayle could be cited, but in consideration of space will be limited.

William Branham - Called Out - 1958-0109 -

**"Jesus said, "When the Son of man is revealed from heaven." Let me close by saying this: that the Son of man is now being revealed from heaven.**

"Will it come after while, Brother Branham?"

**It is now.** And I hope I won't have to make this so personal of this own meeting, but that your spirit within you that's give you by God, can read what I'm talking about. **The Son of man has already come from glory and is revealing Himself for the past few years** to His Church in mercy, showing them **His great Presence...**"

William Branham -1962-0603 - The End-Time Evangelism -

**"Now, we have already seen and are witnessing the appearing of the Lord.** Now remember, **appearing and coming is two different words,** to appear and then to come. **Now is the appearing, He's already appeared in these last days. Right here with us in the last few years. Now, it's a sign of His Coming.** He's appearing in His Church, in the form of the Holy Spirit, showing that it's Him, 'cause people cannot do these things that you see the Holy Spirit doing, so **that's the appearing of the Lord.**"

William Branham - SIGN OF THIS TIME - 1963-1113

And last night He told us, "As it was in the days of Sodom, so shall it be **at the coming of the Son of man, that the Spirit of God would be revealed in the last day in human flesh, that would be able to discern the thoughts that's in the mind, the heart.**"

William Branham -1965-1127B -

"Luke 17:30, says **the Son of man** is to reveal Himself among His people. **Not a man, God!** But it'll come **through a Prophet.**"

William Branham - 1965-1204 - The Rapture - "And here we see it, **the Son of man coming among His people and doing just exactly, confirming His Message as He said He would do.** Here we find it in this last age."

Lee Vayle - 1981-1031 - PRESENCE # 17

"In Luke 17, It says, **"He'll be revealed and you won't get it unless you've been ordained to it."** For in the one word it's 'parousia', in other words 'apokalupsis'. **He will be there and remain invisible and unknown unless revealed to us.** Yet He most certainly will be revealed."

These quotes show that William Branham and Lee Vayle interpreted the "son of man" to mean "God" and the Parousia to be his invisible appearing or revealing and thus the Parousia is God himself being present and not the man Christ Jesus (and he notably adds "*through a Prophet,*" which of course is himself).

The doctrinal scheme therefore is that the Parousia occurred when God (not in a corporal form) descended in the presence of William Branham on June 11, 1933 and thereafter was revealed through William Branham to a particular people ("Message Believers" aka "the Bride"), and will culminate in the secret, pre-tribulation Rapture followed by the Second Coming (also called the Third Coming) some years later (3.5 or 7 years - the factions differ due to the contradictory and convoluted statements of WB). Also, William Branham's Message is the "shout" of 1 Thess. 4:16; the "midnight cry" of Matthew 25:6. In addition, "God" is referred to interchangeably as "the

Holy Ghost himself," "the Messiah," "Jesus Christ," "Christ ( or the Son of God) in the form of the Holy Ghost," "the Son of Man" and so on.

This teaching differs from the Jehovah Witnesses in the sense that they do attribute their invisible parousia (1914) to be that of Jesus Christ and not God himself, knowing that it is the parousia of the son of man (i.e. the son of God) that is spoken about in the NT. *"What shall be the sign of THY presence [parousia]..." (Matthew 24:3).*

So there is similarity with the JWs doctrine of the parousia as far as it being an invisible presence and not the corporal presence of the King. At the same time, the secret, pretribulation rapture of the dispensationalists (Darby, Scofield, Larkin) was part of William Branham's doctrine. The writings of CI Scofield and Clarence Larkin are known sources from which William Branham learned much of his doctrine though he said his knowledge of the Scripture came directly by revelation. This combination therefore requires an invisible and visible parousia or a plural parousia as Lee Vayle mentioned.

Lee Vayle - 1991-0922.PRESENCE.AND.ROLES

**"And the first time, it's the invisible one, Parousia, and the second time it's a confrontation. And at the time of the confrontation, when Christ comes with that Bride, and the Holy Ghost is in God's incarnate, in Him, and we with him confront the enemy. So, Parousia is in the plural."**

In response, the writer asserts that the idea of an invisible parousia of God preceding the parousia of the Son of Man (the man Christ Jesus) cannot be established by the NT teachings of Jesus or his Apostles and is contrary to the very idea, which is that of a person's bodily arrival and abiding presence. And that all the Scriptures used in reference to the Parousia of the Son of Man in particular exclude such a proposition. It is necessary to understand that the Parousia that concerns the Church according to the Scripture is the visible and corporal arrival of Jesus Christ, the Son of God from heaven. Thus the putting forward of a supposed invisible Parousia of God that extends from nearly a century ago to the arrival of the glorified man Christ Jesus is unfounded.

The disciples asked the Teacher what would be *"the sign"* (one) of his parousia and the end of the age.

Matthew 24: 3 As He was sitting on the Mount of Olives, the disciples came to Him privately, saying, "Tell us, when will these things happen, and what will be **the sign of Your coming** [parousia/presence], **and of the end of the age?**

In verse 27, Jesus foretold what would take place at the time of his Parousia. His response is of vital importance and should be examined very carefully.

Matthew 24:27 For just **as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west**, so will the coming [parousia/presence] of the Son of Man be.

The parousia of the Son of Man will be visible and apparent to all just as lightning from east to west. As Plummer said: *"The report that He was in one particular spot was enough to prove that the report was false ..."*

**Since his ascension, Jesus has been invisibly with the believers by his spirit (John 14:18), therefore it is the return of his bodily presence that the church anticipates.** This leaves out an invisible parousia of God absent the corporal presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. That cannot be supported by the teachings of Jesus or his Apostles. OT types may provide support for NT doctrine, but doctrine cannot be established by OT types or by reading into the text.

Observing the greater context of this section in Matthew 24 is helpful.

Matthew 24:25-27

**24** For false Christs and false prophets will arise and will show great signs and wonders, so as to mislead, if possible, even the elect.

**25** Behold, I have told you in advance.

**26** So if they say to you, 'Behold, **He is in the wilderness,**' do not go out, or, 'Behold, **He is in the inner rooms,**' do not believe *them*.

**27** For just as the lightning comes from the east and flashes even to the west, so will the coming [parousia] of the Son of Man be.

"[T]he wilderness" and "the inner rooms" represent a non-visible, false Christ disclosed to only a certain sect, just as the lightning represents the true, visibly present Christ disclosed to all the world. His parousia will be unmistakably revealed to the inhabitants of the earth from east to west—two in the bed (night), two in the field (day), one shall be taken the other left (Luke 17:34-36).

[Note: This single, public, visible parousia does not allow for the secret, pretribulation rapture first taught by John Nelson Darby circa. 1830 and advanced by other dispensationalists such as Scofield, Larkin from whom William Branham learned it. That is a topic for another discussion.]

Luke 17:30

It will be just like that on **the day the Son of Man** is revealed.

Luke 17:24

For **as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other**, so will be the **Son of Man in His day**.

Notice that "**the parousia of the Son of Man**"(Matthew 24:27) and "**the day the Son of Man is revealed**"/"**the Son of man in His day**" (Luke 17:24, 30) are characterized the same ("**as the lightning**") for they are the same event. It is the day of the sudden arrival; the presence; the revealing or revelation of the corporal son of God. There will be no need or time for anyone to announce the fact because it will be immediately obvious to all. That is the essence of what Jesus is saying.

Does this sound like what William Branham and Lee Vayle said started in either 1933 or 1963?

Lee Vayle - 1982-1013 THE CONTINUING PROPHETIC OFFICE

"Matt 24 (30)...then shall appear **the sign of the Son of man in heaven: and then shall all the tribes of the earth mourn, and (they'll) see the Son of man coming in the clouds of heaven with power and great glory.**

Now, you notice in here, **It says positively there has to come the Light before the Great Tribulation, a prophetic ministry."**

These are added words to the text to fit the narrative. Jesus said the coming of the Son of Man would be immediately **after** the "great" tribulation (v. 21, 29) not "*before*" and that his parousia would be "**as the lightning flashes and lights up the sky from one end to the other;**" speaking of the swift and inescapable realization of his arrival in power and glory, not "*the Light, a prophetic ministry.*"

Lee Vayle - 1981-0621 EPHESIANS # 5C2: THE REVEALED KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

"**Jesus in Matthew 24:27 said, "As lightening the Logos came out** of the East and shines to the West, comes to the West, so shall also the Presence of the Son of man be." And the Presence is outside the church saying, "Come on to Me. Come out to the Light." Come out to **the specific knowledge of God** and become a part of It that God may influence your life."

Notice here again how the words of Jesus are misquoted and misused: "*the Logos came out of the East.*" Inserting "*Logos*" and making it past tense to accommodate William Branham and Lee Vayle's doctrine, which would be "*the specific knowledge of God.*" This is not at all the context of what Jesus said.

Here are several quotes from different learned Greek Scholars who speak in unison as to the visibility of the parousia of the Son of Man who will be revealed to all those that dwell upon the earth as opposed to an invisible parousia, known only to certain people that believe William Branham.

## The PAROUSIA ACCORDING TO GREEK SCHOLARS

### *G. Abbott-Smith*

"... technical term for the visit of a King" -- A Manual Greek Lexicon of the New Testament p. 347

### *Henry Alford*

"The coming of the Lord in the end ... shall be a plain unmistakeable fact, understood of all ... **The lightning, lighting both ends of heaven at once, seen of all beneath it, can only find its full similitude in His Personal coming, Whom every eye shall see, Rev. i.7**" -- New Testament for English Readers Vol. 1, p. 167

### *W.C. Allen*

[on v.27] "The idea apparently is **that the presence of the Son of Man will not be local, but everywhere visible**" --International Critical Commentary: Matthew p. 257

### *W.F. Arndt; F.W. Gingrich*

"coming of a hidden divinity, who makes his presence felt by the revelation of his power" "visit of a person of high rank" "of Christ ... **nearly always of his Messianic advent in glory**" "**gave rise to an opposing use ... the coming [parousia] of the Antichrist**" -- A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature p. 635

### *F.W. Beare*

"**The readers are warned to disregard any such rumours of a Messiah who is already in the world, but hidden, for there will be no secrecy about the arrival of the Son of Man. It will be as visible to all as lightning ...**" -- The Gospel According to St. Matthew p. 470

### *John Broadus*

"The word suggests ... that Jesus will come and stay with his people ... Messiah's coming will be alike visible to all, and so **there will be no occasion for some to tell others where he may be seen.**" -- An American Commentary on the New Testament pp. 482,489

### *W. Adams Brown*

"... "presence" as opposed to absence ... **hence the arrival which introduces that presence** ... a technical term used in NT to denote **the coming of Christ in glory at the end of the age** ... **it emphasizes the element of permanent presence** which the coming of Christ is to introduce ... **It has its parallel within the OT in the prophetic anticipation of the Day of the Lord** ... that great crisis of human history when J[ehovah] shall be manifested as the Judge and Saviour of Israel, and His Kingdom shall be set up among men ... All the evangelists represent the Parousia as preceded by certain theophanic signs in the heaven" -- Hastings' Dictionary of the Bible Vol. 3 pp. 674-676

### *E.W. Bullinger*

" a coming which includes the idea of a permanent dwelling from that coming onwards" -- A Critical Lexicon and Concordance to the English and Greek New Testament p. 169

### *D.A. Carson*

"The term can refer to "presence," "arrival," or "coming"—the first stage of "presence" ... closely tied with Jesus' glorious "appearing" ... -- Expositor's Bible Commentary Vol. 8 p. 497

### *John Peter Lange*

[on Matt.24:3,27] "The [parousia] is the [epiphaneia] of 2 Thess. ii.8; 1 Tim.vi.14, etc., **in antithesis to the times of the hidden influence and government of Christ** ... **So will Christ at His appearing manifest Himself by an unmistakeable brightness, irradiating the whole earth.** It is not here,

then, the mere suddenness that is meant, but rather the omnipresent, unmistakable, and fearful visibility. The Gospel According to St. Matthew pp.422,426

***I.H. Marshall***

" ... conceives of the return of Jesus to this world in visible splendor, like a monarch." -- The Epistles of John p165

***J.B. Mayor***

"visible presence" is regularly used for the Second Coming" -- The Epistle of St. James p. 150

***Alfred Plummer***

"It intimates that the return of the Messiah in glory will not result, like the first Coming, in a transitory stay, but will inaugurate an abiding presence ... **The final event would be sudden and everywhere visible; there would be no sending of tidings that it was on its way ... The Messiah would not lie hidden for a time and become gradually known; His appearance would at once carry conviction as to who He was, and there would be no need to learn this from others. The report that He was in one particular spot was enough to prove that the report was false ...**" -- An Exegetical Commentary on the Gospel According to St. Matthew pp. 329,334

***Lawrence O. Richards***

"Parousia is sometimes used in a technical sense as the term for an official visit or the arrival of a person of high rank. But even then the word **does not normally emphasize the person's arrival but the fact of that person's physical presence with those to whom he or she has come ... When parousia is used to describe the return of Jesus, our thoughts are directed to the fact that he will return in person ...**" -- Expository Dictionary of the Bible Words p. 65

***A. T. Robertson***

"The word parousia occurs in this chapter alone (3,27,37,39) in the Gospels, but often in the Epistles, either of presence as opposed to absence (Phil. 2:12) or the second coming of Christ (2 Thess. 2:1) ...[on v.27] **As seen visible in contrast to the invisibility of the false Messiahs ...**" -- Word Pictures in the New Testament Vol. 1 pp. 188,192

***Stephen S. Smalley***

" ... the primary thought in John's mind is the motivation for Christian commitment provided by the future appearance of Jesus. -- Word Biblical Commentary Vol. 51 p. 129

***Joseph H. Thayer***

"In N.T. esp. of the advent, i.e. **the future visible return from heaven of Jesus, the Messiah, to raise the dead, hold the last judgment, and set up formally and gloriously the Kingdom of God**" -- A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament p.490

***Marvin R. Vincent***

[on Matt.24:27] "Shineth ... **The coming [parousia] of the Lord will be a plain, unmistakable fact, like the lightning which lightens both ends of the heaven at once, and is seen of all. It will not be connected with some particular place, but will manifest itself and be recognized over the whole world.** Compare Apoc.i,7: '**Every eye shall see him.**'" Word Studies of the New Testament Vol.1 p.129

***W.E. Vine***

"denotes both an **"arrival"** and a consequent **"presence with"**." -- Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words p. 111

***Dr. Reuss***

"As Christ's first sojourn with humanity was also an appearing, the future manifestation is often distinguished as his glorious appearing, in contrast to the state of humiliation in which he first came to earth; or its permanence is emphasized in contrast with the shortness of his former

visitation, for the word translated coming in the text just cited properly signifies presence." Hist, Ch. Theology, p. 190.--Dr. Reuss, Prof. in the Protestant Theo. Seminary in Strasburg.

**Joseph Bryant Rotherham**

"In 2 Peter 1:16 also, a peculiar fitness in our English word "presence." This passage, it will be remembered, relates to our Lord's transformation upon the Mount. **The wonderful manifestation there made was a display and sample of "presence"** rather than of "coming." **The Lord was already there;** and, being there, he was transformed and **the "majesty" of his glorified person was then disclosed. His bodily "presence" was one which implied and exerted "power;"** so that **"power and presence" go excellently well together – the "power" befitting such a one and the same moment witnesses of both.**" The Emphasized Bible, 3rd ed., Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 1984) Appendix, p. 271.

**Johannes P. Louw and Eugene A. Nida**

"Parousia" – The presence of an object at a particular place—"presence, being at hand, **to be in person.**" 2 Cor. 10:10, when he is with us in person (**literally "...his bodily presence"**). Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament (New York: United Bible Societies, 1988) p. 726, 85.25.

The Son of Man's parousia (i.e his bodily presence) will be universally recognized as certain as all recognize lightning in the sky. I therefore submit that a claim of an invisible parousia of Christ that only those 'in the know' are privy to is exactly what Jesus Christ himself warned would be a false Christ that false prophets try to persuade the people to believe. (The Apostle John equates false prophets with false teachers, deceivers, liars, seducers, and antichrists).

Lee Vayle - 1991-0922.PRESENCE.AND.ROLES

"And **the first time, it's the invisible one, Parousia, and the second time it's a confrontation.** And at the time of the confrontation, when **Christ comes** with that Bride, and the Holy Ghost is in **God's incarnate, in Him,** and we with him confront the enemy. **So, Parousia is in the plural."**

Lee Vayle -1983-1125 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS # 1

"I began looking at the Scripture to see the various words and I came up with 'Parousia', meaning '**Presence**'. The 'apokalupsis' meaning revelation. The apokalipto(?) meaning '**to reveal**'. The 'phaneroo' meaning to '**appear**'. Which is to manifest in its true character, 'epiphanea' which is a '**brightness**'. And the more I studied **I came to this conclusion, that every one of these words starts here on earth, and they will end up way down the line, and they'll still be in progress."**

Lee Vayle -1988-0528.FUTURE.HOME.#.9:.BUILDER.OF.ZION

"Shall we pray. **Heavenly Father** we thank You for **the great possibilities that come out of Your Presence, which we know You are here in the form of the Holy Ghost,** Lord, in a Pillar of Fire, **though invisible to us,** the great invisible God,"

Lee Vayle -1992-0802.QUESTIONS.&ANSWERS.#.12:.ROLES.-.PROCESSES

"Now, I have found that within the message today, there appears to be a split in some of the fundamental teachings. That's a--that's a mild way of putting it. **Mostly in particular is the fact that some feel that 1963 marked a dispensational change and which precipitated the coming or the Parousia of the Lord.** It's actually, **the Lord Himself shall descend with a shout, that is the actual Parousia, the Presence. And it's not only the Presence, but it's the Presence in the sense of the ultimate, which Presence began back in 1933 at the River--Ohio River, down at the...?... Springs...?... in Jeffersonville, on June the 11th** as the seventeenth person or convert was being baptized. And that was an actual ring or rainbow, actually came down as a ring and stood above the prophet and he knowing what... **like I guess could have been a rushing wind too, or roar, I don't know.** But I know he told the people to bow their heads, close their eyes. And **the Spirit of God spoke through him** telling the people, "As John the Baptist foreran the first coming, so your message will forerun the second coming." And that was the Lord coming at that particular time."

[Note: William Branham said the voice spoke from the light that hovered over him. It was his wife that much later gave witness that it was his voice.]

Lee Vayle - Anointed Ones at the End Time #20 - April 29, 198727

"And then shall **they see the Son of man coming in a cloud with power and great glory.** (Now that's the Son of man Himself, with power and great glory.)

28 And when these things begin to come to pass, then look up, and lift up your heads; for your redemption draweth nigh.

(Is not now, but it's indicated at this time that it's near.)

Now **There is what we are talking about—the ring of angels. Now that is the sign of the Son of man appearing in the heavens.** Now that is not the rapture. That is not the Second Coming. That is not your change. This is what lets you know, on top of the Elijah ministry of prophetic vindication, this is it, what you are looking for, which is that Word as it was in the days of Moses and in the days of Paul, and now in the day of Jesus Christ. And we will liken this more to the days of Moses than the days of Paul for the very reason that you are looking at Exodus, is what we are going into.

31. So all right. **Now, this Scripture, Lk 21:25-28, Bro. Branham could have said, which he did say, and I say this day that Scripture was fulfilled, February 28, 1963."**

In light of what Jesus and the Apostles said concerning the literal appearing presence of the Son of Man that will manifest over the world in power and visible brilliance at the consummation, these statements above should be seen as shocking.

Another point is that Matthew and Luke's mention of "*the days of the son of Man*" (Matthew 24:37; Luke 17:26) doesn't indicate an invisible parousia. It is "*the day of the Son of Man*" his parousia is revealed, that is, he arrives bodily present and not before.

### ***Bengel's Gnomen***

"Luke 17:26 - *also in the days*) In the first instance, the actual day of the revelation of the Son of man in Luke 17:30 is called "**the Day** of the Son of man;" then afterwards also those days, which precede it, receive that appellation: **the last days of [His] expectation**: Hebrews 10:13 [From henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool]. Comp. the phrase, Psalms 119(118):84, πόσαι εἰσὶν αἱ ἡμέραι τοῦ δούλου σου, "How many are the days of thy servant?" So also, before His coronation or nuptials, some time is assigned to the King or Bridegroom. A similar plural occurs, ch. Luke 9:51 "And it came to pass, when the time was come that he should be received up, he stedfastly set his face to go to Jerusalem," [ἐν τῷ συμπληροῦσθαι τὰς ἡμέρας τῆς ἀναλήψεως αὐτοῦ]. [Though the day of His assumption or ascension was one day, yet the forty days before it and after His resurrection were equivalent to a παρασκευή, or Preparation for it.]"

He is thence not arrived (come present) prior to "the Day of the Son of man." The suddenness of his arrival upon the unexpecting is also in view in comparison with that of the flood and the destruction of Sodom. There was no generation-long sign before the rain or fire fell nor will there be one before the oncoming judgment at the appearing of the Son of Man.

William Branham said that "false Christs" mean "false anointed ones," not false Jesuses (Jesus Christ, i.e. a false Messiah), that the people would not stand for that. Oh, but yes they will, just show them a sign and tell them that he is here. That is precisely what Jesus warned would happen : "*Behold, here is THE Christ; or Behold, HE is there; do not believe him.*" To claim the Messiah has invisibly come present and associated himself with someone (or a certain ministry), to vindicate them by signs in order that they might speak in his behalf, whose words are not to be tested by the words of Jesus and his holy Apostles but who has the power of infallibility and unquestionable authority and all those that will receive Messiah's favor must hear and heed their words is exactly what Jesus warned would be a false Messiah and a false prophet. Jesus declared specifically that his presence would not be after such a manner.

William Branham - 1965-0725M- The Anointed Ones At The End Time

"..the Bible said they would be "false Christs," not Jesuses, but, "false Christs."

He didn't say, "There shall rise false Jesuses in the last days." Oh, no, they would never stand still for that."

Mark 13:21 And then if anyone says to you, '**Behold, here is the Christ**'; or, '**Behold, He is there**'; **do not believe him**;

**A.B. Bruce**

"Both expressions -- in the desert, in the secret recesses -- point to non-visibility. The false prophets bid the people put their faith in a Messiah not in evidence, the Great Unseen = "The hour is come, and the man is somewhere, out of view, not far away, take my word for it". ... the coming of the true Messiah ... compared to the lightning, to suggest a contrast between Him and the false Christs as to visibility and **enforce the counsel to pay no heed to those who say: He is here, or He is there...**" -- Expositor's Greek Testament Vol. 1 p. 294

Isaiah 8:20

To the law and to the testimony! **If they do not speak according to this word, they have no light of dawn.**

Matthew 7:15-20

Beware of false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. . . .

Mark 7:14-16

Once again Jesus called the crowd to Him and said, "**All of you, listen to Me and understand:** . . .

Luke 12:57

**And why don't you judge for yourselves what is right?**

Acts 17:11

Now the Bereans were more noble-minded than the Thessalonians, for they received the message with great eagerness **and examined the Scriptures every day to see if these teachings were true.**

Ephesians 5:10

**Test and prove what pleases the Lord.**

Philippians 1:10

**so that you can discern what is best**, that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ,

1 Thessalonians 5:21

**but test all things. Hold fast to what is good.**

1 John 4:1

**Beloved, do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are from God. For many false prophets have gone out into the world.**

Revelation 2:2

I know your deeds, your labor, and your perseverance. **I know that you cannot tolerate those who are evil, and you have tested and exposed as liars those who falsely claim to be apostles.**

**Steve Smith (38 years Message Believer)**

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