

Manifest Sons of God Heresy

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This belief is not held by one particular group but many individuals are influenced by the teaching. It has many names, such as, *The Latter Rain Movement, Identity, Joel's Army, Restoration and Reconstruction*. The purpose of this article is not to highlight the differences between groups but look at the core beliefs and compare them with the revelation of Scripture.

The Manifest Sons of God doctrine has been around in some Pentecostal circles for many years, but it was the 'Latter Rain Movement' of 1948 that gave them a wider audience. This movement was thought of as the last great spiritual outpouring that would see the return of Christ. It would result in the Church being perfected and submitting to the restored ministry of apostles and prophets. These ministries would be in charge of restoring truths that were lost to the Church.

Scriptures refer to the rains in Israel as the 'former rain,' essential for planting and the 'latter rain,' needed for the harvest. Manifest Sons see the former rain as Pentecost and the latter rain as a greater outpouring of the Spirit in these last days. There is evidence that much teaching on spiritual warfare today, is largely an extension of this doctrine.

Scriptural Interpretations

1. All Scriptures that refer to a resurrection or redemption of the body are to be fulfilled by a select group of overcomers, 'the Sons of God', while here on earth. They believe that they will be sinless and immortal in their physical bodies when they become manifest as the Sons of God.

2. All Scriptures that refer to being caught up to the throne of God are thought to have their fulfilment at this manifestation of the Sons of God, the "many-membered man child" company that will rule the nations with a rod of iron.

Albert James Dager, in an article in Media Spotlight Vol. 8. - No.1, gives this summary account,

"... man lost dominion over the earth when Adam and Eve succumbed to Satan's temptation... God 'lost control' of the earth to Satan at that time, and has since been looking for a 'covenant people' who will be His 'extension,' or 'expression,' in the earth and take dominion back from Satan. This is to be accomplished through certain 'overcomers' who... will take control of the kingdoms of this world.

"These kingdoms are defined as all social institutions, such as the

'kingdom' of education, the 'kingdom' of science, the 'kingdom' of the arts, and so on. Most especially there is the "kingdom" of politics or government.

"... those in control (at this time)... are referred to as the 'many-membered man child,' whom Kingdom Theology adherents believe will be the fulfillment of Revelation 12:1-5... Those who hold to Kingdom Theology assume that the Church (some believe only a small group within the Church, called 'overcomers'), under submission to the latter day apostles and prophets, is that man child, and that it has the responsibility to put down all rebellion and establish righteousness... The many-membered man child must take control of the earth before Jesus can return."

3. They will become Christ both corporately and individually. They consider the corporate body of Christ, to be Christ. The body of Christ is thought to be a literal extension of the incarnation of Christ. This causes both Scriptures that refer to His ruling the nations and judging the world to find fulfilment through them.

A distinction is made between Christ's coming to rule and judge the world through the Sons of God and His later individual, personal return. He is unable to return until the stage is set by the establishment of His rule and reign through the Sons of God subduing the nations, or taking dominion, and executing judgement on the ungodly, thus establishing the new age.

Christ Individually

Jesus is considered the 'Pattern Son.' He was the first one to make it as a divine, immortal, sinless Manifest Son of God and this accomplishment will be duplicated by each individual who, following Jesus, become Manifest Sons of God. This Christ Company, now individually Manifest as Sons of God, will execute judgement at the Great and Terrible Day of the Lord.

Influences ancient and modern

For many **William Branham** is regarded as the greatest prophet for this 'final age.' He taught about "God's Seventh Church Age," the final move before the manifestation of His Kingdom on earth. Indeed, he felt called specifically,

"A Voice spoke from there, and said, 'As John the Baptist was sent for the forerunner of the first coming of Christ, you've got... a Message that will bring forth the forerunner of the Second Coming of Christ'" - **Brother Branham, p. 71.**

There were many errors in Branham's teachings, along with occult influences, including having the voice of 'an angel' talking to him regularly and who often would 'heal through him.'

Many overlooked the erroneous teachings and accepted the man as a prophet, as such his teachings are still often accepted today.

Many of Branham's followers believed that he had come in the spirit of Elijah; some even believed him to be God, born of a virgin. When he died, many expected him to rise from the dead at the end of three days. However, after five days he was buried and to date, his body is still in the grave.

George Warnock's book, *The Feast of Tabernacles*, written in 1951, became an important part of the Latter Rain Movement and it continues to be used today. According to Warnock, the feasts of Israel described in Leviticus 23, are a

pattern for the progress of the church. Starting at Passover, which is Calvary, the church has passed through the different feasts to Pentecost. It must go on through the Day of Atonement, the Feast of Trumpets and culminate in the Feast of Tabernacles, which many believe is fulfilled in the 'present revival'.

Warnock taught that the Great Tribulation would be darkness to some but, not to others,

"It shall therefore be Great Tribulation, such as was never known from the foundation of the world; but it shall also be Great Glory... one class of people it shall be a day of 'darkness' and of 'gloominess.' But to the other, 'as the morning spread upon the mountains.' (Joel 2:2) To the one the Great Tribulation; but to the other, 'The Manifestation of the Sons of God.'" - The Feast of the Tabernacles, p.83.

Warnock goes on to explain that the 'overcomers' will be perfected and experience no persecution. Those who don't make it, will be persecuted, but will obtain mercy from the Manifest Sons.

"Now we can understand how the overcomer in the Day of the Lord, when Great Tribulation is upon the earth, will be able to administer help and comfort and sustenance to God's people who are under oppression and persecution. The Great Tribulation itself is going to be cut short because of the Sons of God... so the Sons of God, through the exercise of their royal priesthood, shall actually shorten the Great Tribulation... As priests, they will be able to present the needs of the people to God, and intercede for them; and as kings they will have the authority of God to dispense life and blessing to such as are in tribulation and distress." - The Feast of the Tabernacles, p.79.

Earl Paulk, Pastor and called 'Archbishop' of Cathedral at [Chapel Hill Church](#), Atlanta, Georgia is recognised as a modern-day 'prophet'

"If there is a prophet today who speaks the truth God wants His Church to hear, it is Earl Paulk. He is the leading voice today in preaching the message of the Kingdom of God...a man driven compulsively to show this generation that God is waiting for us to do something that will bring Christ back to earth." - Harvest Time, December 1984, p.15.

"Christ in us must take dominion over the earth...The next move of God cannot occur until Christ in us takes dominion." - Held In The Heavens Until..., 1985, p.234.

Rick Joyner is another teacher for this movement. He believes that the elite 'overcomers' will conquer the world. This will lead to the greatest revival of history, where the majority of the world will be won to Christ and the kingdom made ready to be received by Christ.

"This harvest will be so great that no one will look back at the early church as a standard; all will be saying that the Lord has certainly saved His best wine for last. The early church was a firstfruits offering, truly this will be a harvest! It was said of the Apostle Paul that he was turning the world upside down; it will be said of the apostles soon to be anointed that they have turned an upside down world right side up. Nations will tremble at the mention of their name." - Rick Joyner, Restoration, May/June 1988.

"Angelic appearances will be common to the saints and a visible glory of the Lord will appear upon some for extended periods of time as power flows through them. There will be no plague, disease, or physical

condition, including lost limbs, AIDS, poison gas, or radiation, which will resist the healing and miracle gifts working in the saints during this time." - Rick Joyner, *The Harvest*, 128-129.

Biblical Reasoning

The Let us Reason [website](#) shows the basis for the error of the movement when the context of Romans 8:19-21 is investigated. The article first quotes from two followers of the doctrine, **Bill Hamon** and **Bill Britton**.

"The Earth and all of creation is waiting for the manifestation of the sons of God, the time when they will come into their maturity and immortalization... When the Church realizes its full sonship, its bodily redemption will cause a redemptive chain reaction throughout all of creation.' (Bill Hamon, *The Eternal Church*, p.385)

"I see the great year of Jubilee, when we shall pass through the veil into the very Presence of the fullness of God, to be filled with this fullness and go forth proclaiming liberty to all of creation. Romans 8 calls this the "Manifestation of the Sons of God", and Says the whole creation is groaning and crying for this day. ...This is the ultimate anointing!' (Eagle Saints Arise, Bill Britton)

"This whole teaching is based on a distortion of Romans 8:19... The belief is that some will obtain immortality by incarnating Christ before he returns. What is it that all creation is waiting for? According to orthodox Christianity, all creation awaits the removal of the "Curse of Futility", sin placed upon it by God from the Fall of Adam. What they neglect is the context and the other passages that explain this event."

The Manifest Sons need to operate in order for the Kingdom to come and the curse to be broken. But surely the Scriptures teach that man cannot do this but it will be Christ Himself, when He returns, who will bring the work to completion. It will not happen *before* He arrives but *when* He arrives.

Scriptures that show this are Philippians. 3:20-21, 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17, 1 Corinthians 15:51-54 and Hebrews 9:28.

The [Cephas Ministry](#) has a good explanation of this teaching for those who want to take it further.

We are Gods...We can do it

Belief in this teaching leads to believing that God is fully manifest within us and we are Gods in this world. I will let some of the well-known leaders and teachers in the church speak for themselves.

"We are on earth as extensions of God to finish the work He began. We are the essence of God, His on-going incarnation in the world." - Earl Paulk, *Held in the Heavens*, 1985, p.125.

"The living Word of God, Jesus Christ, was conceived in the womb of a virgin. The Word became flesh in the God-Man Jesus Christ (John 1:1). Likewise, the Word of God must be made flesh in the Church in order for us to bear witness to the Kingdom which God has called us to demonstrate." *Ibid.*, p.60.

"When the Spirit of Christ comes into the physical world, He must enter

through a physical body... When Christ first entered our world as a child, it was Mary whom God chose to give Christ birth. Mary's life symbolized the qualities the Church must possess to walk in the fullness of Christ ... even now, he trembles and the heavens watch in awe, for I say to you, once again, the virgin is with child. Before Jesus Himself returns, the last virgin Church shall become pregnant with the promise of God. Out of her travail, the Body of Christ shall come forth, raised to the full stature of its Head, the Lord Jesus. Corporately manifested in holiness, power and love, the Bride of Christ shall arise." - Francis Frangipane, In the Presence of God, 1994.

"Every man who has been born again is an incarnation and Christianity is a miracle. The believer is as much an incarnation as was Jesus of Nazareth." - Kenneth Hagin, The Incarnation, December 1980, p.13.

"[Man] was created on terms of equality with God, and he could stand in God's presence without any consciousness of inferiority...God made us as much like Himself as possible...He made us the same class of being that He is Himself...Man lived in the realm of God. He lived on terms equal with God...[The] believer is called Christ...That's who we are; we're Christ" (Kenneth Copeland , Zoe: The God-Kind of Life, 1989, pp.35-36, 41.

"Who are you? Come on, who are you? Come on, say it: 'Sons of God!' Come on, say it! And what does work inside us, brother, is that manifestation of the expression of all that God is and all that God has. And when we stand up here, brother, you're not looking at Morris Cerullo; you're looking at God. You're looking at Jesus." - Morris Cerullo, The Endtime Manifestation of the Sons of God, World Evangelism - Tape 1.

"When you say, 'I am a Christian,' you are saying, 'I am mashiach,' in the Hebrew. I am a little messiah walking on earth, in other words. That is a shocking revelation... May I say it like this? You are a little god on earth running around" - Benny Hinn, Praise-a-Thon, TBN, November 6.

But nowhere are we taught in Scripture that we are Gods or Messiahs or anything like that. The fact is we can never be God because He is uncreated and we are created. He is distinct from His creation.

Often proponents of this teaching refer to John 10:33-36, where men are called gods, however, it shows a lack of Biblical exegesis to rely on these verses. For instance, Jesus said to the thief on the cross, 'today, you shall be with me in paradise.' Why do we not say that Jesus said that to us, apart from the fact that there would not be any Christians left in the world tomorrow we know He said it to the thief in his circumstances at the time. When Jesus quoted the Psalm about being 'gods', it was in a specific case talking about Old Testament judges. They did have the power of life and death and in that sense they were acting like 'gods.' Are we Old Testament judges? If we are, then we can call ourselves 'a god'.

Another Biblical argument sometimes used is that because we have been adopted as sons of God, and because like begets like, we must also be gods. We are only adopted, we were not begotten from the Father. There is only one, unique, begotten Son, who indeed was the exact representation of the Father. Our adoption does mean that a change has taken place in our character and in the moral likeness of God [see 2 Peter 1:4] but not that we have taken on the very nature of being a god.

Elitism

The elitism of this group of 'super saints' is very appealing; who wants to be just one of the crowd. Concepts used to explain this role are the 30, 60 or 100 fold; outer court, inner court, and Holy of Holies; the three, the twelve and the seventy disciples. **Mike Bickle** put it like this,

"There's apostles, there's imminent apostles and there's most imminent apostles... There's various levels of apostles and the Lord was showing us that... out of this movement would be 35 apostles... That will be the highest level of apostolic ministry... the government rests on apostles and prophets..." - Visions and Revelations (Audio Tape).

This reminds me of the 144,000 of the Watchtower Society. Yes there are ministries within the church and God has placed some in authority to be respected as leaders. But the Bible always talks of the Body of Christ and 1 Corinthians 12-14 shows us clearly that whatever our ministry we are all in the one body and there is not an elite, upper class.

Different Christ

The whole concept of Christ has been changed. In the orthodox reading of Scripture, Jesus of Nazareth, one person, is the Christ - the Lord's anointed. This is changed so that, the Body of Christ, is Christ! Therefore, whenever Scriptures say that Jesus Christ is going to accomplish something, we now are to read that it is to be accomplished by the 'man-Christ.'

"And this shaking is going to cast Satan and his principalities from their heavenly throne, while the Sons of God ascend into "the heavnlies," first of all in the Spirit to take upon themselves the authority which belongeth to those who are overcomers. And entering this place of power and authority, the Sons of God shall be able to administer protection and comfort and help and deliverance to such as are in need." - George Warnock, Feast of Tabernacles, p.35.

The Sons of God now do the work, not Jesus. This is a 'different Jesus'. My Bible tells me that it is Christ that will do the work not men. He is the one who has defeated the enemy and when He returns, He will set up His Kingdom. The moment I assume that 'I' will be doing what the Bible says, 'He' will be doing I have dethroned Christ and sat there myself. May be Satan has found a way to put his original problem of authority on to mankind but what is interesting is that it is described in the opposite way.

"The change that is coming to the body of Christ is so profound that the world will have a new definition of Christianity... Those who submit to Him in truth... will be the most dangerous and powerful people on earth, and will be the greatest threat to the Antichrist spirit that now sits in the church as a substitute for Him." - Rick Joyner, Morningstar Journal, Vol.2, No.1.

Notice this reference to the 'Antichrist spirit' in the church; a church that is not good enough yet. A church about which one leading 'prophet' said, "God is bored with the church." Strange that we do not see this within Scripture but only in the teachings of men who feel they are to be part of this elite group. Christ loves His church and died for her; He also says that the gates of Hades shall never prevail against His church.

Jewel Van Der Merwe of [Discernment Ministries](#), in response to all of this says,

"Does that hit you? Now the true church is being called the spirit of Antichrist! The ones who do not have their eyes open now to see that the church is God here in the flesh now! Manifested Sons of God! Are you

willing to accept that "we are to look for another?" Do you accept that the church now coming forth and being manifest is the coming of Christ we have been looking forward to since He ascended into heaven and Two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven." - Jewel Van Der Merwe, Joel's Army, p.23.

Conclusions

As we said at the beginning we are not dealing here with one organisation but with belief and philosophy. A philosophy that teaches that the church is Christ in a corporate sense, and that she then undertakes responsibilities that the Bible says are reserved for Jesus Christ. Not everyone goes to the same extremes, but the basic beliefs that lead to extremes are common.

We need to be aware of these potential errors and know what Scripture really teaches.

Now See:

http://www.discernment-ministries.org/NL_February1997.pdf

The Truth About The Manifestation of the Sons of God

http://www.cephasministry.com/manifest_sons_of_god.html

Romans 8:19 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

A first glance at this portion of the divinely inspired word of God would imply that we are waiting for the sons to be manifested. This scripture and others are used to prove a doctrine that has made its resurgence amongst certain groups recently. So the object of this treatise is to bring understanding to the elect of God lest they be deceived.

Firstly let us consider when is this manifestation to take place and refute those who imply that it is already occurring or has occurred.

Romans 8:20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

All of creation has been subjected to the vanity of man, through the fall of Adam. Because of mans vanity the laws of nature are being transgressed, the rivers and oceans are polluted ,the rain forests are being destroyed, the grasslands are becoming deserts, climatic instability is now common in the 21st century. The Earth is scarred by mining, and poisoned by the by products of refining metals and minerals. The Ozone

layer is thinning and space debris circles the planet. Certain species are already extinct and the others habitats are being destroyed daily. The wetlands are being drained and covered with concrete and tar . Protest groups like Green Peace are frequently in the news , trying to stop the carnage taking place on this planet.

But following all this there is a promised hope of the restoration of all things , by the Almighty Sovereign who has allowed this to run its course until the appointed end.

Romans 8:21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.

All humanity and other beings (forms of existence) will be delivered from this bondage of corruption, under which we now live. This is the reason that in final analysis God will deliver us from this condition. The aging process and decay of the human body, which leads to our demise will be abolished. The final enemy death will be swallowed up in victory. All of humanity is already dead in God's eyes, yet we are like dying men that hold on tenaciously with every breath until our last. Human life is a never ending Funeral Procession, which many are totally unaware of until the loss of a loved one occurs. But up a head freedom awaits, freedom from the curse of the law of sin and death. There is a time coming when the Children of God will be free. There in lies great hope for the believer. When all corruption is ended and our struggle through this short tribulation, will be rewarded with everlasting glory.

Romans 8:22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now

Pain and suffering all of us are aware of right to this present moment, for how many have endured the grief of the loss of our relatives, or cried and prayed in anguish at the terminally ill's bedside. How many have watched their children dying for want of food in the third world famines. Or others who have watched while their possessions have been destroyed because of floods or earthquakes, or wars.

All of us groaning, believer and unbeliever together, waiting and wishing that things will be different, that tomorrow will be brighter, as if all know that something better is up ahead.

Romans 8:23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

The believer cries within to be with his Lord, waiting for this glorious adoption , the day we are restored to perfection through the redemption of this body, when this mortal shall put on immortality, in the day of resurrection. Like as Christ our Saviour the glorious forerunner, risen from the dead and ascended to the right hand of the Father, so we await the time of our resurrection and our redemption and our return to the Father who

gave us being. When all creation Heaven and Earth will witness the manifestation of the sons of the Living God. This is our glorious future hope and inheritance.

Romans 8:24/25 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

If we think we have this hope now and we can already be seen as the manifested sons of God, then why should we continue hoping for the resurrection, for then there is no future hope of the resurrection. But those of us who hold to our creeds of Christ's return and the resurrection to come, we wait patiently for it, for we are not fooled by those who believe that the sons are being manifested now, or those that believe the resurrection is past. Some of us have already slipped into the night of rest, and we have the hope that when the Sun of Righteousness appears. We will all meet again on the other side of death.

Romans 8:15 / 18 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

We have now returned to the start of the passage, because of those dogs who feed on the crumbs of scripture, we show them the whole loaf. Paul the genuine Apostle has delivered us a great Hope, which he presents as the time when Christ our Head and us who are his joint heirs are glorified together. So without our head the Lord Jesus Christ there will be no manifestation of the sons of God. If you have Ears to Hear then listen attentively. To those who have been deluded into thinking they are the sons of God that are presently manifested, please start at Romans 8 verse 15 and try to understand the subject matter under discussion. "The Resurrection and Redemption of the Church", and read to the end of the chapter and see the entire context which has nothing whatsoever to do with Christ's return from the wilderness but Christ's return from heaven. But if you still cannot repent then you are believing some other Gospel which will ultimately destroy you. To those who say the Son Man has already returned, what hope do you really have?

Romans 7:24/25 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

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