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Oral Roberts and The Voice of Healing

By Roscoe Barnes III, PhD
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NOTE

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We list in this directory the names of those whom we believe have a proven Divine Healing ministry, and who are laboring in harmony with the policy of THE VOICE OF HEALING to unite in spirit the members of the body of Christ, and whose lives are above reproach.

Permanent Addresses of Evangelists Whose Schedules Have Been Listed in The Voice of Healing. All Correspondence to Them Should Be Sent to These Addresses.

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L. D. Baker, Box 386, Medford, Ore.
Ray Ball, Box 642, Chandler, Ariz.
W. J. Eric Baxter, 85 E. 10th Ave., Vancouver, B. C., Canada.
William Branham, Box 325, Jeffersonville, Ind.
F. F. Bosworth, Box 676, Miami Beach 39, Fla.
Paul Cain, 516 Park Avenue, Garland, Texas.
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E. M. Lindsey, Box 53, Luling, Texas.
Warren B. Liberty, 1540 Lyle Avenue, Waco, Texas.
Harvey McAlister, 502 Riverside Dr. 4-D, New York City 27.
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This is a page from the June 1951 issue of *The Voice of Healing*.

I was interested in knowing what part Oral Roberts played with the Voice of Healing organization. I wanted to know whether he was an actual member of the Voice of Healing or merely a friend or honorary member. These questions came to mind recently as I was reading the June 1951 issue of *The Voice of Healing* magazine. To my surprise, I saw Oral Roberts' name included in the magazine with the list of the Voice of Healing evangelists.

Although some historians say he was actually a member of the Voice of Healing, some believe

his relationship was not official and that he was only a friend of Gordon Lindsay and the other evangelists. In other words, they had mutual respect for each other and sometimes promoted each other's meetings. But that, reportedly, was the extent of their affiliation.

Thankfully, a friend on Instagram answered my question. He said that Oral Roberts was not officially a member of the Voice of Healing. Rather, he and Gordon Lindsay agreed to promote each other's ministry in their respective magazines. In other words, the *Voice of Healing* would feature the schedule of Roberts' meetings, and *Healing Waters* would carry the schedule of Lindsay's meetings. My friend on Instagram reminded me of what David E. Harrell Jr. wrote about Roberts' meeting with Lindsay and William Branham in the late 1940s. Harrell's account is noted in his book, *Oral Roberts: An American Life* (Indiana University Press, 1985):

Lindsay and Roberts met for the first time in 1948, when Oral attended a Branham crusade; they remained friends through the years, though their paths drifted slowly apart. But in the early 1950s the two worked out a cooperative agreement, whereby Lindsay publicized Oral's meetings, though he was not affiliated with the Voice of Healing organization, and *Healing Waters* noted the schedules and achievements of Lindsay's stable on an irregular basis. In December 1951, when the Voice of Healing fellowship held its yearly convention in Tulsa, Oral was the featured speaker, and the visiting evangelists were taken on a tour of the Healing Waters office. (page 149)

Harrell suggested their initial meeting was "patly religious politics, a joint endorsement of one another by the revival's frontrunners." At the same time, he asserted, the meeting and ongoing relationship demonstrated their sincerity in the healing movement and their genuine support for each other. Roberts, he said, was also blessed by the acquaintance.

Roberts's first meeting with Branham, in April 1948, came when Oral was conducting a healing revival at the First Assembly of God in Kansas City, Missouri and Branham was holding a crusade across the river in Kansas. On Saturday evening Oral attended the Branham campaign. He was introduced to Lindsay, who knew Oral's reputation as a "dynamic young man" already being "greatly used in the deliverance ministry." Lindsay escorted Roberts back stage, where he met Branham and had his picture taken with the entire Branham team – Young Brown, Jack Moore, Gordon Lindsay, and Branham, apparently Oral had planned ahead to have a photographer present. (page 150)

As a result of their meeting, the "working agreement" was reached which provided that *Healing Waters* would publicize Branham's schedule and the *Voice of Healing* would announce Roberts's meetings. (page 150)

In addition to Lindsay and Branham, Roberts had the privilege of meeting F.F. Bosworth. In Harrell's view, Roberts "was delighted when old-time evangelist Fred F. Bosworth attended his crusade in Miami in 1949." During the visit, Roberts invited Bosworth to share a brief message with his audience. Bosworth later wrote a letter praising Roberts that was published in *Healing Waters*. As for the other revivalists in the Voice of Healing, Roberts knew them, but he "had a cordial, but somewhat distant, relationship" with them, according to Harrell.

Roberts and Lindsay remained friends for many years. However, their friendship was tested when Jack Coe, a member of the Voice of Healing, pulled a stunt that angered Roberts. According to Harrell, Coe admired Roberts' ministry and he was struck by the size of Roberts' tent. He was so impressed that one day he actually measured Roberts' tent. Once he knew the exact size, he ordered a bigger tent for himself and then announced that his tent was the

biggest in the world. That stunt, however, did not sit well with Roberts. In fact, Roberts complained about the matter to Lindsay. To his surprise, Lindsay did not respond in the way he had hoped. Lindsay said: "You're too big a man to be bothered by that .... Your ministry is great, you don't need to worry." Unfortunately, wrote Harrell, "Lindsay believed, 'from that time on we didn't have the closeness that we had at the beginning.'"

Despite that moment of controversy, it appears that Lindsay and Roberts continued to support each other in some way. In fact, years later -- and long after Lindsay had passed -- Oral Roberts University had a working relationship with Lindsay's school, Christ For the Nations Institute.

Reminder: "F.F. Bosworth History" is now on Twitter. Follow @bosworth_fred

Note: My book, *F.F. Bosworth: The Man Behind "Christ the Healer,"* can be purchased here with a 25% discount. Use the discount code: **bosworth25**.

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