

Pentecostal Pastor Bitten by Deadly Snake in Church Ritual, Screams 'God's a Healer'

Warning: Video contains images some readers may find disturbing.

A newly released video shows a Pentecostal pastor being bitten by a deadly snake during a church ritual.

Cody Coots—who pastors Full Gospel Tabernacle in Jesus Name Church in Middlesboro, Kentucky—was holding a poisonous snake while preaching when the snake bit him near his right ear.

Coots refused to let the snake go. Instead, he continued to preach in his blood-spattered shirt, shouting, “I’m not worried at all. Don’t worry. God’s a healer,” according to reports.

Coots collapsed as the poison began to affect him, and two men helped down from the altar. One church member took him to the hospital, where doctors discovered the snake came close to severing Coots’ temporal artery, which would have killed him.

The short video comes from a new series from Barcroft TV, *My Life Inside: The Snake Church*. In the documentary, Coots says he has been bitten six times, and sees it as a sign from God.

Coots is a fourth-generation snake-handling pastor at Full Gospel Tabernacle, one of the few remaining snake-handling churches in the U.S. His father, Jamie Coots, pastored the church until 2014, when he was bitten by a rattlesnake during a ritual and died, the *Mirror* reports.

Snake-handling began to appear in churches over 100 years ago

in the Appalachian Mountains. The practice began in part of the Holiness movement. Participants still see it as a test of their faith in God's ability to protect and heal them.