

How Kathryn Kuhlman Overcame a Murderous Spirit

Forty years ago, Kathryn Kuhlman went on to glory. The healing anointing and miracle mantle that marked her life are still inspiring believers around the world today through books, recordings and video—but it could have been much different.

Few know what she had to overcome to leave this legacy. Beyond the poor upbringing and the difficult divorce, an antichrist spirit raged against her. Hell worked to derail Kathryn's life and ministry—and remove the fiery redhead from her God-given seat of authority.

It's important to understand what was at work against Kathryn's miracle ministry because that same devil is roaming about in this hour to destroy believers willing to stand for Christ. An antichrist spirit is manifesting in society through Jesus mocking, legal battles to remove Christian symbols from the public square and other destructive forces intent on muting the church's voice.

The antichrist spirit, which we see operating in Daniel 7:25, works to wear down, devastate and destroy the saints through persecution, criticism, judgment and offense. Antichrist—or anti-anointing—spirits operate like battering rams, pummeling the saints with a constant barrage of harassment and pounding away at the fortitude and stamina of their targets. Many weary soldiers have laid down their weapons and walked away from their gifts and callings instead of running to the battle line with their full armor on to combat this wicked giant—but not Kathryn.

What many don't know is that this spirit almost took Kathryn out—and it did take out her husband. In fact, many church leaders have fallen prey to this spirit, compromising the

gospel, falling into unthinkable sin and refusing to repent. The Great Falling Away is underway. But not Kathryn. She endured the spiritual warfare and ran her race to the end.

“Miss Kuhlman was one of the key players in God’s plan for his 20th-century church,” says Roberts Liardon, author of *Kathryn Kuhlman: A Spiritual Biography*. “In a literal sense of the word, she was a forerunner of the church of the future. There was a prophetic tone in her ministry that showed what the church would look like in times to come.”

A Prophecy Exposes the Attack

Kathryn faced an overwhelming antichrist spirit attack early in her ministry. An anti-anointing spirit rose up through city leaders who once celebrated her. Suddenly, one by one, they turned their backs on Kathryn. That was almost enough to silence her voice. But God made her stand. Shane Philpott, pastor of Christian Fellowship Church in Mason City, Iowa, and author of the new book *Kathryn Kuhlman: The Radio Chapel Years*, stumbled upon the enemy’s agenda accidentally.

At the close of Philpott’s midweek service in 2005, he felt a burden to speak and release a prophetic word. As he describes it, prophetic revelation broke forth and set the stage for the remarkable journey upon which he would soon embark. Here’s what he says the Lord told him:

“I will set right that which is wrong, and I will do that which has not been done, and together we will finish that which was begun. That which was begun years ago shall see its day and shall see its hour. It shall spring forth. Justice is Mine, and I will redeem from the hands of the enemy that which has been lost for decades, and I will bring it back in the 70th year. As it was in the days of Daniel, so shall it be in your day.’”

Because his church was in the same city as Radio Chapel, the prophetic word started Philpott on a journey that led him to

historical news accounts buried in Philadelphia's archives.

Researching the prophecy also led him to the one couple who served alongside Kathryn and her husband during the turbulent years. He was the only man ordained by her ministry during that season—Rev. Keith Williams. He and his wife, Mary—in their early 90s at the time of Philpott's research—were still alive and ready to share the mystery few knew.

Philpott's research into this brief but significant episode in Kathryn's life reveals what has been largely a mystery for the past 70 years. There were various assumptions but few actual facts surrounding this dark season in her ministry. Yet, the spiritual assault she endured decades ago remains significant and especially relevant to what is happening in the body of Christ today.

"It was clear that there was far more to this story than just what happened to Kathryn personally," Philpott explains. "It went far deeper. This scenario has been played out in ministries over and over again seeking to bring shame, public humiliation and ridicule upon God's people to remove them from their calling."

Shaking Religious Foundations

As Kathryn often said, "You must be willing to pay the price." She paid a dear price. Philpott's investigation reveals the deeper journey and the anti-anointing attacks she endured to walk in the anointing she carried.

"From July 1937 through May 1939, Kathryn, who was in her 20s then, was known as the 'Girl Evangelist.' At that time she both ministered at and presided over Radio Chapel, a state-of-the-art facility and the first 'megachurch' built by the man who would become her husband, Burroughs Waltrip," Philpott explains. "In his own right, Burroughs was a prophet and apostle with a unique anointing. The joining of their lives and ministries resulted in a grand ministry of evangelism,

revival and salvation located in the heartland of America.”

Radio Chapel was a church unlike any other in its day—and perhaps unlike any since. Pioneered in 1937, the church rapidly emerged as a powerful ministry base of revival and one of the most spectacular nondenominational churches to grace the American landscape of that day.

“Burroughs dreamed of bringing salvation to thousands through his dynamic and unique end-time preaching,” Philpott says. “He was immediately embraced by the people, city leaders and pastors of the city. A petition was circulated and signed by over 500 people requesting that he stay in Mason City to continue a permanent work for the revival that had begun.

“Kathryn, meanwhile, was making massive strides in the Pentecostal movement as the passionate, yet eloquent, pastor of the famed Denver Revival Tabernacle. For a brief time, Burroughs and Kathryn, who would marry in 1938, took America’s Heartland by storm and shook its religious foundations. These were some of the earliest, most obscure and misunderstood years of Kathryn’s ministry.”

At the height of Radio Chapel’s success, the church was conducting services six days a week, broadcasting daily over the radio and hosting both national and international speakers. Attendance at these services could run upward of 1,000 people nightly with dozens of decisions for Christ during every meeting. Radio Chapel published its own monthly magazine and pursued evangelistic outreaches across the country. Yet, Philpott says, its spectacular beginning was eclipsed by its thunderous collapse.

The Tale of Two Preachers

For Kathryn and her husband, after experiencing an incredible anointing, numerous salvations and miracles followed by a relentless barrage of attacks, they were sent packing as a foreclosure notice was nailed to the door of their church,

which was padlocked shut.

“Saddled with immense debt, a lawsuit, governmental opposition, strife from surrounding churches and souring public opinion, it was over as quickly as it had begun,” Philpott says. “All of this transpired in a short span of just 23 months.”

“After their divorce, Burroughs quickly faded into obscurity, eventually disappearing and never to be heard from again by either family or friends. As for Kathryn, she went on to achieve international honor and recognition as one of the most influential faith preachers of the 20th century.”

Their marriage lasted another eight years but ended quietly in divorce. Wayne Warner, the author of Kathryn’s 1993 biography, *The Woman Behind the Miracle*, says the experience set Kathryn back in ministry. Warner says she wanted to keep the Burroughs years a “closed chapter” in her life. The now-retired historian never found anything in his research where Kathryn addressed the lessons she gleaned from the debacle or her marriage to Burroughs.

The difference of how the two weathered the storm of accusation is significant in this hour, for similar public accusations against believers are increasing. Kathryn chose one road, her husband another. Kathryn resurrected to shine even brighter than before. Burroughs faded into complete obscurity—not because one was greater than the other, however. It was about choices.

“It has always been the nature of hateful people to attempt to crush the gifts and callings that God has entrusted to His servants, and it will continue to be so until Christ’s return,” Philpott says. “The apostle Paul wrote, ‘Finally, brethren, pray for us that the word of the Lord will spread rapidly and be glorified, just as it did also with you; and that we will be rescued from perverse and evil men; for not

all have faith.'”

“One of Satan’s most effective methods for hindering the spread of the gospel is to use faithless people to attack and slander the efforts of God’s preachers. The overwhelming opposition that Burroughs Waltrip and Kathryn Kuhlman encountered, both inside and outside the walls of their own church, successfully thwarted the spread of the gospel in that area for quite some time.”

Think about it for a minute. It must have been beyond bearable to see people who once cheered her on betray her. Jesus, of course, could relate. Thankfully, our High Priest strengthened Kathryn’s resolve to do His work even in the face of a demonic attack against her character. She went to her own cross, despising the shame, and came out of a hellish experience with greater faith and passion for the Holy Spirit who comforted her when no one else could.

“Like the proverbial Phoenix that arose from the ashes, Kathryn did just the same by overcoming the adversity and dishonor that visited her life,” Philpott says. “She discovered that rejection and betrayal in one city did not equate to rejection and betrayal in the rest of the nation.”

Kathryn’s husband, however, did not walk the same road of vindication or resurrection. In fact, years later, his family hired private investigators to try to locate his whereabouts. Burroughs chose a different path, that of a recluse, refusing to open the door again to such personal attack. In doing so, he abdicated his seat of authority, abandoning his call and destiny.

The only evidence of his existence after the Kathryn era was found in Kansas City, Missouri, in the mid-50s. This once powerful revivalist was found working as a salesman for concrete burial vaults for caskets.

“What a tragic example of real life following spiritual

precedent,” Philpott says. Burroughs disappeared again after that. When or where he died remains a mystery.

Battling for Your Destiny

You may have already encountered this forceful spirit of destruction against your family, your ministry or your business. As John the beloved said, “Even now there are many antichrists. By this we know that it is the last hour” (1 John 2:18). This anti-anointing spirit got bolder after the Supreme Court legalized same-sex marriage and is targeting those who will stand up, speak out and move in authentic miracle ministry that wakes up a lost and dying world.

From firefighters in Atlanta to pizza shops in Oregon to pastors in pulpits across America, believers who have chosen to use their voices to proclaim God’s Word have been sorely persecuted—and this is just the beginning. The good news is there is One who brings His Spirit to refresh, re-energize and rekindle weary soldiers willing to keep marching.

All across the world, the landscape is dotted with the light from their candles. They are the remnant. Those who have endured the spiritual attacks and allowed God to restore and strengthen them to stand strong in the face of the next attack on the prophetic voice.

Kathryn Kuhlman, whose foundation just closed in February 2016, is perhaps most remembered for the many miracles people witnessed in her meetings. But perhaps the greatest miracle of all was that she refused to bow to this anti-anointing attack and pressed in to see Jesus set the captives free. In these dark days, let’s tap into the same source of courage Kathryn did—and refuse to abdicate our seat of authority in our realm of influence. And if you’ve once backed down, now is the time to get back to the battle line. You could be the answer to someone’s prayer, like Kathryn was.

“My book vindicates Kathryn and sets the story right,”

Philpott says. “The story is what you take away from it. It’s one of restoration, rebirth, refreshing, rekindling and renewal.”

Karen Hardin *is president of PriorityPR Group & Literary Agency. She has worked in the Christian publishing industry for 25 years and is the author of several books.*

Many of Kathryn Kuhlman’s miracle services are archived. You can watch some of these astounding healings at .