

THE MANHATTAN PROJECT

PART ONE

The Meta-Layer

By Brother David Courchaine

V16

Color Key

Red is my own words, and also Brother Branham's words when I quote him directly with the sermon title and date placed next to the quote.

Blue is the commenters whose comments I am examining.

Amber is the peer-reviewed psychology research.

Preface

Approximately eight hours of focused work went into this document alone, separate from the 727+ hours already spent on the broader Manhattan Project research.

This document is not a final conclusion. It is a small preview of what the Manhattan Project may eventually become. I am still approximately 2,000 hours away from knowing exactly what the full project will be.

Introduction

Most people currently think the Manhattan Project is primarily about claims, evidence, and whether the Message of the hour is true or false.

So far, what I am discovering is that it is also about something much deeper: how emotionally invested human beings interpret information when identity, pain, betrayal, fear, sincerity, tribalism, and belief are involved.

It is not only about the claims themselves. It is also about the layer underneath the claims, the interpretive process people use while examining them. That is what I mean by the meta layer: the psychological and interpretive layer underneath religious disagreement.

This document is a small real-time example of that process happening publicly. When I announced the Manhattan Project on May 8, 2026, the comment section filled with examples of the exact pattern Part One is about. This document walks through them, side by side, with the studies that have already documented what is happening.

The Packers and the Bears

On January 10, 2026, the Packers led the Bears 21 to 3 at halftime of the NFC Wild Card game. I am a Packers fan, and I was certain my team could not lose. A Bears fan watching the same game was watching a hole his team could still climb out of. The Bears won 31 to 27. Same plays, same recording, two completely different experiences depending on which team we cared about, with both of us believing we were simply observing reality.

Albert Hastorf and Hadley Cantril documented this in 1954, showing the same film of a Dartmouth and Princeton football game to both groups of students. Each group saw the other team commit far more infractions than its own. Their conclusion:

There is no such 'thing' as a 'game' existing 'out there' in its own right which people merely 'observe.' For the 'thing' simply is not the same for different people whether the 'thing' is a football game, a presidential candidate, Communism, or spinach.

Hastorf and Cantril, They Saw a Game, Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 1954

Or the Message of the hour. Or a comment section.

What I Actually Said

Here is what I said in the original video, posted May 8, 2026:

The Manhattan Project. What is the Manhattan Project? I am systematically dismantling every lie ever set against the Message of the hour, all of them. From the liars of Rod Bergen, John Collins, Tim Humes and the others, Jeff Jenkins.

Someone can look at this stuff and conclude whatever they want, but they can't conclude that these guys are honest, because they're not.

Here is the relevant portion of the follow-up video I posted on May 10, 2026:

I've spent approximately 727 hours on this project so far. I'm studying the work of almost two decades' worth of work done by people designed to dismantle the entire belief structure I was raised in.

These guys are some of the smartest men I've ever examined, and I respect them as my precious brothers in Christ. Brother Branham said any man trying to preach Jesus Christ is my precious brother in Christ. I'd be scared to go before demons if I had fought against any brother, even if we differ a million miles upon theology, he's still my brother.

If I can't love Rod Bergen and John Collins, Tim Humes, Tim Kraus, and all these guys, and Jeff Jenkins, that I disagree with, with the same love that I want Jesus to love me with, the love of God is not even in me.

And in the comment section I wrote this about not hosting anti-Message links on my page:

I have kids that watch my stuff and I just can't have that stuff linked here. I've got literally tens of thousands of people that watch my stuff and I'm not going to be the platform that a young kid uses to click on a link and binge material that dismantles their entire belief structure.

I have 10-year-olds from families that watch my content. Can you seriously not understand why I don't want my comment section, after building trust for almost three years on my platform, to be the echo center for dismantling someone's belief structure with their parents not knowing about it?

One more thing. I woke up this morning to a text from a youth pastor informing me of the anti-Message material on my Facebook post, because he and I both agree it should not be there. Other pastors and parents have thanked me for not allowing those links on my page. This is not a random decision. It is me honoring what pastors and parents have asked for, and what I believe is right for the people who watch my content, including children who are not yet 18.

Jeremy Turner

Jeremy Turner replied with the following:

I just find it a little unsettling to hear a preacher advocate for the suppression of information due to the worry that their belief system could be dismantled, even if factual. That's a scary concept to me. That borders on the culty ideation mentality.

You're saying that if truth is shared, you don't want them to maybe read it because they were taught a certain way. Even if wrong. That's extremely dangerous. The problem with everything is, people are scared to see it. If you truly dig into John Collins's research, I have to warn you. You have a long anxiety filled road ahead of you. Ask me how I know.

Fortunately, with this they will be able to get the materials on their own. Young and old people should be able to make their own decisions based on information at hand.

I said **"I'm not going to be the platform."** Jeremy said "suppression of information." Declining to host something is not the same as attempting to keep it from existing.

In the same thread, Jeremy also wrote that “with this they will be able to get the materials on their own” and that “Young and old people should be able to make their own decisions based on information at hand.” Either I am suppressing information, or people will be able to get it and decide for themselves. Both cannot be true at the same time.

In 1979 at Stanford, Charles Lord, Lee Ross, and Mark Lepper gave strong proponents and strong opponents of capital punishment the same two research summaries with identical methodologies. Both sides rated the study that agreed with them as convincing and the study that disagreed with them as flawed. Same evidence, opposite conclusions. They called it biased assimilation, published in the Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, and the finding has been replicated for 45 years.

“Ask Me How I Know”

Jeremy closed his second comment with this:

You have a long anxiety filled road ahead of you. Ask me how I know.

The sentence takes Jeremy's past and projects it forward as my future. What is in front of him is my present, in my own words. The American Psychological Association calls this projection:

The process by which one attributes one's own individual positive or negative characteristics, affects, and impulses to another person or group... often a defense mechanism in which unpleasant or unacceptable impulses, stressors, ideas, affects, or responsibilities are attributed to others.

American Psychological Association Dictionary of Psychology

A Word to Jeremy

Jeremy, your pain is legitimate, and I am sorry you have gone through it.

I have been through similar pain. With people around the Message, with people who have left the Message, and with people who have never heard of the Message.

You've been really nice to me in the way you've disagreed with me. Here are some examples of that:

But your page, your rules. Just trying to be respectful and thoughtful with my responses.

I also said it's your page your rules. Which states while I disagree with your concept, I respect it.

Stay blessed, I'll still watch your content and wait for the next to drop.

Thank you for that. I really appreciate it.

In my second video I said this:

Brother Branham said any man trying to preach Jesus Christ is my precious brother in Christ. Even if we differ a million miles upon theology, he's still my brother.

I was quoting Brother Branham. His exact words from November 11, 1955:

If it ever gets to a place that I couldn't put my arm around any brother that's working for the Kingdom of God, and recognize him as my brother, I feel I'm backslid. Sure. I'd be scared to stand on the platform and face evil spirits, to know that I had envy in my heart against any brother, no matter who he is, that's trying to preach the Gospel of Jesus Christ or live a Christian life. If we disagree a million miles upon theology, if he loves the Lord Jesus, he's my brother, and it's my sister.

Brother William Marrion Branham, Where I Think Pentecost Failed, November 11, 1955

By the standard Brother Branham preached, Jeremy, you are my brother in Christ. Disagreement on theology does not change that.

Brother Branham was united around believing in Jesus Christ with men who actively did not believe he was a prophet. We should be able to be united in the same way, regardless of whether we are in the Message or not, without dismissing each other for not believing the same way, and without framing rational thought or mental health as agreement with whatever we happen to believe. I say it that way because of the next commenter I am going to talk about.

John Imperiale Jr.

John Imperiale Jr. wrote this:

I suggest you seek therapy, and pray. It's not the truth and evidenced that has harmed you, it's WB who lied! Place the blame where it belongs, There are no church ages, WB was never under the cloud, Malachi was to Israel, and John fulfilled it, the Bible says so. Seek treatment.

I replied with one question:

Respectfully, sir, are you telling me that unless I agree with you that I need to seek therapy, pray, and seek treatment?

So far, he has not answered. The structure of the comment answers it for him. Theological assertions are stated as if settled. The comment closes with an instruction to seek treatment. Agreement becomes the sign of mental wellness, and disagreement becomes a symptom.

On the church ages specifically: the teaching that the seven churches of Revelation 2 and 3 represent seven historical ages is not a Brother Branham invention. It is held by mainstream dispensationalist scholars with no connection to him, including Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye, J. Dwight Pentecost, David Jeremiah, and E. W. Bullinger, whose commentary using this view was published in 1935. The view traces back to the Reformation era. John Imperiale Jr. framed a centuries-old interpretive tradition as a Brother Branham fabrication, then used the supposed fabrication as evidence that I need treatment.

Carol Kuhnke Wenman

Carol Kuhnke Wenman wrote:

Wow. You are really deep in your illusion. I pray for your eyes to be opened. I see your zealotry, and your intensity, and I recognize it. Because I was you. But now I'm free.

"I was you. But now I'm free" reaches its conclusion before any examination. Carol is not telling me she has examined my position. She is telling me she has identified me as a version of her own past. The framing of her current position as "free" presupposes that my position is bondage.

Kara Younce

Kara Younce wrote:

I pray that through your research your eyes are opened to the truth. I hope you are looking at things with an open mind and not just searching for ways to say “ah ha! This proves you're a liar!”. Also, for your mental health sake, you need to take a break. You are showing signs of a breakdown. I'm saying that from a place of concern.

My dad replied to Kara: “Kara Younce, you know David? If you did you would know he hasn't even begun to fight yet!” Kara responded: “Thomas Courchaine, yes I do. And I am not discouraging him from it. Just saying he needs to take care of himself through it.”

The literal name of my podcast is “What Do You Mean By?” The entire premise is slowing down to ask someone questions before arriving at conclusions about what someone means, what they believe, or where they are at mentally. This is a perfect case of one of the many things the podcast's main thesis is for.

James Crawford

This pattern does not run in only one direction. James Crawford, coming from the other side, wrote this:

Truly, God's people ignore anything that is not vindicated, you can put Eagle feathers on a chicken but it's still a chicken, you can put lipstick on a pig but it's still a pig.. God bless you brother, I trust you find what your looking for.

The instruction is to “ignore” the material. The metaphors reduce the men I have spent 727 hours examining, men I have publicly called my precious brothers in Christ, to “chickens” and “pigs.”

Brother Branham preached the opposite. In his prayer in Klamath Falls, Oregon, on July 9, 1960:

Bless every organization in the valley, all the blessed people, the ministers and pastors of the different denominations. Maybe we might disagree upon some theological teachings of the Scripture, but Father, in all one principle, we believe in God, the eternal One. So help us, Lord, to have unity of the spirit, until unity of the faith is brought forth. And when we shall see Him face to face, then we'll see eye to eye. Until that time, may the Holy Spirit bless us in our efforts that we put forth. For we ask it in Jesus' Name. Amen.

Brother William Marrion Branham, God's Provided Way of Approach to Fellowship, July 9, 1960

Brother Branham was praying publicly for the pastors of denominations he disagreed with on theology, calling them blessed people. By that standard, the men James reduced to “chickens” and “pigs” are the blessed people Brother Branham was praying for.

I have been a preacher of the Message for nearly a decade, and I have stepped on plenty of toes on my podcast, such as by saying publicly that hating video games does not make you spiritual, that hunting and fishing are not spiritual, and that whatever you do in your free time does not make you a spiritual person. I have been rejected in many places for it. So when I am naming these patterns, I am not just naming them from people I disagree with. I am also naming them from people who believe in the same Message that I do.

A Word About Pain on All Sides

Aaron Beck at the University of Pennsylvania described this in 1976, and his student David Burns popularized it. When people are in emotional pain, the pain itself begins to function as evidence. The feeling of a thing being true becomes the proof that it is true. Beck called it emotional reasoning, and its operative principle is short:

I feel it, therefore it must be true.

Aaron Beck, Cognitive Therapy and the Emotional Disorders, 1976; popularized by David Burns in Feeling Good, 1980

I do not know entirely what the Manhattan Project is yet. I am still learning as I go, and I am over 2,000 hours away from even truly knowing what it will ever be. So far, at its deepest layer, one way of describing it is that it is an attempt to come back to truth and away from tribalism. Both kinds of tribalism. The tribalism that wraps identity so tightly in the Message that any examination feels like attack, and the tribalism that wraps identity so tightly in leaving the Message that any person who looks at anti-Message material and still stays in the Message is, by that fact alone, considered delusional.

Closing: The Wording, Side by Side

Here are some of the commenters, with what was said by me on the left in red, and what it became in the characterization on the right in blue. The James Crawford section ends with what Brother Branham said in red, and what James Crawford said in blue.

Jeremy Turner

What I said in the videos and comments	What Jeremy said about it
<p><i>“I have kids that watch my stuff and I just can't have that stuff linked here. I've got literally tens of thousands of people that watch my stuff and I'm not going to be the platform that a young kid uses to click on a link and binge material that dismantles their entire belief structure.”</i></p>	<p><i>“I just find it a little unsettling to hear a preacher advocate for the suppression of information due to the worry that their belief system could be dismantled, even if factual.”</i></p>
<p><i>“I have 10-year-olds from families that watch my content. Can you seriously not understand why I don't want my comment section, after building trust for almost three years on my platform, to be the echo center for dismantling someone's belief structure with their parents not knowing about it? Can you really not understand the wisdom of that, seriously?”</i></p>	<p><i>“That's a scary concept to me. That borders on the culty ideation mentality.”</i></p>
<p><i>“I've spent approximately 727 hours on this project so far. I'm studying the work of almost two decades' worth of work done by people designed to dismantle the entire belief structure I was raised in. My dreams are filled with me analyzing stuff.”</i></p>	<p><i>“You're saying that if truth is shared, you don't want them to maybe read it because they were taught a certain way. Even if wrong. That's extremely dangerous.”</i></p>
<p><i>“These guys are some of the smartest men I've ever examined, and I respect them as my precious brothers in Christ. Brother Branham said any man trying to preach Jesus Christ is my precious brother in Christ.”</i></p>	<p><i>“But I am merely stating, it's dangerous. The problem with everything is, people are scared to see it.”</i></p>

<i>"If I can't love Rod Bergen and John Collins, Tim Humes, Tim Kraus, and all these guys, and Jeff Jenkins, that I disagree with, with the same love that I want Jesus to love me with, the love of God is not even in me."</i>	<i>"If you truly dig into John Collins's research, I have to warn you. You have a long anxiety filled road ahead of you. Ask me how I know."</i>
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And Jeremy, in the same comment thread, said two things that cannot both be true at the same time, both reproduced here in blue because both are his words:

What Jeremy said earlier in the thread	What Jeremy said later in the thread
<i>"Fortunately, with this they will be able to get the materials on their own. Young and old people should be able to make their own decisions based on information at hand."</i>	<i>"I just find it a little unsettling to hear a preacher advocate for the suppression of information."</i>

John Imperiale Jr.

What I said	What John Imperiale Jr. said
<i>"I've spent approximately 727 hours on this project so far" and plan to spend another 2,000 hours.</i>	<i>"I suggest you seek therapy, and pray... Seek treatment."</i>
<i>I am examining the work of Bergen, Collins, Humes, Kraus, and Jenkins in full before drawing any conclusions.</i>	<i>"It's WB who lied!" (stated as settled fact with no evidence given)</i>
<i>I have not made any claim in any of these videos about the church ages.</i>	<i>"There are no church ages" (stated as if the doctrine were a Brother Branham invention, when it is held by Hal Lindsey, Tim LaHaye, J. Dwight Pentecost, David Jeremiah, and E. W. Bullinger, none of whom have any connection to Brother Branham).</i>

Carol Kuhnke Wenman

What I actually am	What Carol said about me
<i>A man 727 hours into a project, examining material in full before drawing conclusions,</i>	<i>"You are really deep in your illusion." "I was you. But now I'm free."</i>

openly stating that the men being examined are my precious brothers in Christ.

James Crawford

What Brother Branham preached	What James Crawford said about people Brother Branham would call brothers
<p><i>"If we disagree a million miles upon theology, if he loves the Lord Jesus, he's my brother, and it's my sister." (55-1111, Where I Think Pentecost Failed)</i></p>	<p><i>"you can put lipstick on a pig but it's still a pig"</i></p>
<p><i>"Bless every organization in the valley, all the blessed people, the ministers and pastors of the different denominations." (60-0709, God's Provided Way of Approach to Fellowship)</i></p>	<p><i>"God's people ignore anything that is not vindicated"</i></p>

And After All of It

Across five commenters, on multiple sides of the Message question, the same pattern. Actual wording on one side, characterization on the other, qualifiers and counter-evidence dropped out.

If someone believes the Message, they should still want people represented accurately. If someone rejects the Message, they should still want people represented accurately. Truth should matter before tribal loyalty does.

We are all human beings. We have all been through a lot of pain from a lot of different people, around the Message and out of the Message, and we all love Jesus Christ. The closing word does not belong to me. It belongs to Brother Branham, in his sermon Thirsting For Life, preached March 4, 1960:

Can you see now why I'm standing for unity of every church, every full gospel church, every believer? We ought to be one heart, one mind, and one accord. No matter how much we differ in the Scriptures; that might be... One might see this that way, or that has nothing to do with it. But in principle, we ought to stand, one great, mighty, army of God marching on, because each one of you in your peculiarity, God has proved that He's ignoring your

doctrine, because He give you the Holy Ghost. And the Bible said, "He gave, give them the Holy Ghost that obeyed Him."

Now, if I obeyed Him in my peculiar way, and you obeyed Him in your peculiar way, He give us both the Holy Ghost, so we ought to be Christian brethren and sister enough, to arm up together and march on for one great purpose, the Gospel.

Brother William Marrion Branham, Thirsting For Life, March 4, 1960

May God richly bless you all.

Brother David Courchaine. The Manhattan Project, Part One. V16.