

Bob Barlow's Truth

Divisions in the Two by Two Church

Bob Barlow's Breakaway Sect

August 29, 2025

Bob Barlow's Breakaway Sect from the Two by Twos Queensland, Australia

Robert "Bob" James Barlow was born on June 20, 1900, to David Joseph and Emma Maria (Bucci) Barlow. They lived in the Rockhampton region of Queensland, Australia. He married Elizabeth Martha Rudolph on July 23, 1925; they had nine children—five daughters and four sons.

Bob came in contact with the Two by Two Sect (aka Two by Two) through a married couple, the Browns, and professed. He was an exemplary elder. However, in late 1960s and early 1970s, Bob had become increasingly contentious with the workers which led to his being excommunicated.

Barlow believed God spoke directly to him in a similar manner as He did to the Apostle Paul, and that Bob was God's anointed, only mouthpiece and sole leader. He founded a breakaway sect in Central QLD very similar to the Two by Twos, except he eliminated workers and conventions.

The Barlow meetings are held in members' homes on Wednesdays and Sundays, using the Two by Two meeting format. They sing from *Hymns Old and New*, and apply most of the Two by Two's strict unwritten rules. The original breakaway group included Ex-Two by Two worker Charles Woodard who had sympathized with Edward Cooney.

Barlow believed and taught that his method and his group of followers are God's only right way on earth. They take no name and call themselves "Christians." He likened the Two by Twos to the children of Israel and his group to the children of Judah. He believed that one day the two would be united when the Two by Twos came round to his way of thinking. He was very charismatic and persuasive.

His doctrine differed from that of the Two by Twos. Two examples are Barlow's "Blood of Sprinkling" doctrine about Jesus' sin nature and purification. Barlow believed Jesus was just a man who crucified his flesh daily until he was perfect. He also objected to female preachers.

He drilled into his followers that they are lowly beings, not worthy of God's love and must work at being perfect in order for God to love them. Only Barlow performed baptisms, and reportedly, no one has been baptized since his death.

Barlow's followers lived simple isolated lives apart from the world. Couples were encouraged to have large families and to intermarry. Children left school at grade nine; had no outside friends; viewed no media except for newspapers. They did not purchase insurance of any kind, for they believed God put a "protective wheel over his elect" (them) that prevented them from becoming disabled, contracting diseases, such as cancer, or suffering from harmful accidents, etc. They disdained medical attention except for childbirth. This belief was put to the test when Bob's wife died of cancer in 1979.

Sometime after his wife died (May 25, 1979, aged 75), Barlow sold his property, split the proceeds among his children, bought a van, went on the road as a travelling minister, and stayed with his followers. Reportedly, all his children and their spouses followed Barlow's sect except for one son and a daughter.

Robert "Bob" Barlow died on April 21, 1994, aged 93 years, about twenty years after he formed his sect. Although he intended for one of his sons to replace him, as of June 2025, over thirty years later, no son has taken his place. There have been no baptisms since his death.

Since Barlow died, the group has been waiting for God to raise up a prophet from among them. One source reported that John Radden is the recognized leader of the Barlows today. (Radden is the husband of Bob & Elizabeth Barlow's daughter Lorna.)

Members revere Barlow's letters and notes. The estimated number of current members ranges from 500 to 600. The most highly concentrated area of members is in Central QLD. Growth is more due to children being born into it rather than evangelizing.

Fifteen years after Barlow died, allegations of his inappropriate behavior toward women and children came to light—and shocked the group. The whistle blower was a granddaughter Barlow had abused. The church shunned her for speaking ill of him.

See also: Sarah Steel's podcast about Barlow's offshoot of the Two by Twos:

Let's Talk About Sects ~ Bob Barlow's Truth: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aPzGCT5qng0>

Robert Barlow's Findagrave:

<https://www.ancestry.com/discoveryui-content/view/343065:60528>