

The Word-Faith Movement

Wolves In Sheep's Clothing

By: Victor T. Stephens

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Those who sin are to be rebuked publicly, so that others may take warning. (1 Timothy 5:20)

Error, indeed, is never set forth in its naked deformity, lest, being thus exposed, it should at once be detected. But it is craftily decked out in an attractive dress, so as, by its outward form, to make it appear to the inexperienced...more true than the truth itself. --- Irenaeus of Lyons

Introduction

An invasion force consisting of great multitudes of wolves in "decked out" sheep's clothing has cleverly infiltrated today's modern Christian church for the sole purpose of preying, rather than praying, on their unsuspecting victims. How did this happen? In consequence of indifference, emotionalism, and ministerial idolization, most Christians today are not paying attention to Jesus' warning that there will be many false teachers in the church during these last days (Matt. 24:4-5). Learning how to detect heretical doctrines (1 Tim. 4:16, 2 Tim. 4:3) has not been an uppermost priority for many Believers. In fact, doctrinal discernment is almost completely void. To a certain extent, this predicament has been kindled from the false teachers' inappropriate and antagonistic use of "Judge not" and "Touch not the Lord's anointed" --- a terror strategy that is designed to keep congregations in their place. As a result, we have many well-meaning Believers who are unequipped to discern the true from the false ... the light from the darkness ... the wolves from the sheep.

When speaking of false teachers, it has become the norm for many Believers to conceive that the implication is in reference to those outside the Christian church. On the contrary, Believers are repeatedly warned to be on guard against falsehood within the church. It is those who allege to come in Christ's name, seemingly confessing the Lord as their Savior and claiming divine revelations from God, who may not be so obvious to doctrinal transgressions. It has been this type of pretense coupled with seductive entertainment and self-empowerment sermons that has further contributed to the acceptance of false leaders within mainstream churches.

With that said, I encourage and challenge you, the reader, to study and draw a comparison between the scriptures that we will be examining to those of the pastor of your church. The Berean Christians, who were of noble character, "searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these things (which Paul taught) were so" (Acts 17:11). In like manner, it is your responsibility to diligently search and test the teachings of the leadership in your church without partiality. Any pastor who cannot stand the test of investigation and challenge should be approached with circumspection.

While there is a great degree of duplicity in today's church age, it is this author's perspective that the Christian church is currently endangered primarily by two major bands of influences. The first element, which operates from outside the church, should readily be discernable to the serious believer who possesses a basic knowledge of the Bible. This fragment of falsehood is seated within the malevolent religion of Islam. The second element, which operates from within the church, is the chief influential threat. This component consists of a tight network of false leaders who have established a movement that is rapidly spawning cultic doctrines within the body of Christ in epic proportions. It is this movement, more commonly known as the Word-Faith Movement, which this article will confront, expose and refute without restraints of political correctness.

The Word-Faith teachers addressed in this study are very high profile "celebrity ministers" who are televised on The Trinity Broadcasting Network (TBN) in addition to a vast network of other stations. These religious profiteers employ motivational techniques, smooth talk, and captivating charm; mixing lies with the truth as they mislead and financially rape the most vulnerable segments of our society. Sadly, they have numerous devoted, loyal, yet incognizant followers who are unskilled in recognizing the errors being perpetrated against them (2 Cor. 11:3,4,13-15, Heb. 5:13-14). For those who love the Lord, the unveiling and refutation of these impostors who mishandle the Word of God should take precedence over emotionalism, elitism and ministerial admiration. John said, "I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth (3 John 1:4).

What follows in this article will be a history of the Word-Faith Movement succeeded by a contrast of Word-Faith theology, as espoused by these notable teachers, with a contextual analysis of the scriptures. In addition, this article will address the threats announced by Word-Faith teachers upon those who dare to criticize them. This examination should effectively validate that Word-Faith doctrines are heretical teachings from cult leaders who are highly determined to maintain their positions.

Regrettably, many of those who call themselves Christians have allowed their blind zeal and idolatrous demeanor to adopt a policy of appeasement -- exalting these false teachers above the authority of scripture. In spite of the clear evidence that will expose the heterodoxy of the WF teachers, such carnal Believers will conveniently discard the facts and deliberately tolerate, defend, and embrace these individuals without questions --- deceiving themselves and becoming prey to exploitation (2 Peter 2:1-3).

History

The introduction of Word-Faith theology originated in the mid 1800's with an individual by the name of Phineas P. Quimby (1802-1866). Mr. Quimby's thesis is rooted in the metaphysical New Thought / Science of Mind cult. New Thought indoctrinates the marriage of positive thinking (the force of faith) with positive confession (containers of force) to unleash the power to change one's reality. Some of the central points of Quimby's New Thought theology include:

1. The denial of sickness.
2. Belief that it is God's will that we experience financial wealth.
3. Belief that through the power of the spoken word, one creates his own experience; either positive or negative.
4. The deity of man.



Phineas P. Quimby

A close examination of the following statements from Mr. Quimby will reveal the dawning of Word-Faith theology.

"I say it is, for a person is to himself just what he thinks he is, and he is in his belief sick. If I am sick, I am sick for my feelings are my sickness, and my sickness is my belief, and my belief is my mind; therefore all disease is in the mind or belief. Now as our belief or disease is made up of ideas which are matter, it is necessary to know what ideas we are in; for to cure the disease is to correct the error; and as disease is

what follows the error, destroy the cause, and the effect will cease. How can this be done? By a knowledge of the law of harmony...Your error is the cause of your sickness or trouble. Now to cure your sickness or trouble is to correct the error."

("Is Disease A Belief", http://www.ppquimby.com/sub/articles/is_disease_a_belief.htm)

"To those who believe in disease there is, according to their belief, neither forgiveness nor cure except through the medium of medicine. But, to those who have been born again or who have learned that disease is the result of belief, disease has no power, and consequently medicine is useless." ("Concerning The Use Of Medicine", http://www.ppquimby.com/sub/articles/concerning_the_use_of_medicine.htm)

Now compare the above statements with those of Mary Baker Eddy (1821 - 1910), an associate of Quimby and founder of Christian Science. Here, you will detect parallelism of the notion that sickness is only a state of mind:



Mary Baker Eddy

"When the first symptoms appear, dispute the testimony of the material senses with divine Science. Let your higher sense of justice destroy the false process of mortal opinions...Suffer no claim of sin or sickness to grow upon the thought. Dismiss it with an abiding conviction that it is illegitimate, because you know that God is no more the author of sickness than He is of sin...you have divine authority for denying that necessity and healing the sick."

"Disease is an experience of a so-called mortal mind. It is fear manifest on the body. (Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures, by Mary Baker Eddy)

Following in the footsteps of Eddy and Quimby, Essek W. Kenyon (1867 - 1948), who is today considered the Father of the Word-Faith Movement, carefully integrated these erroneous teachings with Unitarian (Unity School of Christianity) false doctrines (Source: "Christianity In Crisis", By: Hank Hanegraaff, Page 32). Kenyon proceeded to introduce this peculiar mix of doctrinal divergence into orthodox Christianity. Many of the popular apothegms devised by present day Word-Faith teachers were originally formulated by Kenyon. Take into consideration the following phrases:



Essek W. Kenyon

"What I confess, I possess." (E.W. Kenyon, "Hidden Man", Page 98. D.R. McConnell, A Different Gospel, Page 135)

"It is what we confess with our lips that really dominates our inner being...(People) confess their fear and they become more fearful. They confess their fear of disease and the disease grows under the confession. (E.W. Kenyon, "Two Kinds of Faith," Page 72. D.R. McConnell, A Different Gospel, Page 137)

"It is wrong for us to have sickness and disease in our body when God laid those diseases on Jesus" (E.W. Kenyon, "Jesus The Healer", Page 44. D.R. McConnell, A Different Gospel, Page 149)

Kenneth Hagin (1917 - 2003), the recognized "granddaddy" of the Word-Faith Movement, adopted and plagiarized the teachings of Kenyon and fused more fraudulent "enhancements" to the gospel in order to enthrall the Christian church. Hagin assures supreme health and prosperity to Christians, alleging:



Kenneth Hagin

"Yes, sin, sickness and disease, spiritual death, poverty, and everything else that's of the devil once ruled us. But now, bless God, we rule them --for this is the Day of Dominion!" (Kenneth Hagin, "Rejoice! This Is The Day Which The Lord Has Made!" The Word of Faith Magazine, Page 16, July 1996)

"I believe that it is the plan of God our Father that no believer should ever be sick; that every believer should live his full length of time and actually wear out, if Jesus carries, and fall asleep in Jesus. It is not---I state boldly---it is not the will of God my father that we should suffer with cancer and other dread diseases which bring pain and anguish. No! It is God's will that we be healed. (Kenneth Hagin, "Healing, The Father's Provision", Word Of Faith Magazine, Page 9, August 1977)

"He (God) wants His children to eat the best, He wants them to wear the best clothing, He wants them to drive the best cars, and He wants them to have the best of everything." (Kenneth Hagin, "New Thresholds", Pages 54-55)

Hagin then taught this theological revisionism to his star pupil, Kenneth Copeland, who has today become the leader of the Word-Faith Movement.

Today's Coalition of Heretics

The following false teachers associated with the Word-Faith Movement today include, but is not limited to:

Kenneth & Gloria Copeland

Creflo Dollar

Eddie Long

T.D. Jakes

Fred Price

John Hagee

Jesse Duplantis

Jerry Savelle

Charles Capps

Benny Hinn

Joel Osteen

R.W. Schambach

Robert Tilton

John Avanzini

Marilyn Hickey

Juanita Bynum

Rod Parsley

Joyce Meyer

Earl Paulk

Paul Crouch

Leroy Thompson

Paula White

Pat Robinson

Myles Munroe

Although not all Word-Faith teachers are unified in their positions, they do however, share an array of tenets that are an indignity to doctrinal purity. Their chief established heresies entail:

1. Faith Theology.
2. Deification of Man and Demotion of God.
3. Atonement Theology
4. Confession & Health
5. Confession & Wealth

Here are some citations of the outlandish and perfidious teachings from the individuals listed above; or as they would say, "revelation knowledge."

Kenneth Copeland



"Jesus never actually claimed to be God" ("Take Time To Pray," Believers Voice of Victory, Feb. 1987)

"You don't have a god in you, you are one!" ("The Force of Love", Audiotape, 1987)

"When I read the Bible where He (Jesus) says, 'I AM,' I say, 'Yes, I AM too!' "
(Crusade meeting, July 19, 1987)

"Poverty is an evil spirit" ("Prosperity: The Choice Is Yours", Page 4)

"It wasn't a physical death on the cross that paid the price for sin...anybody can do that." ("What Satan Saw on the Day of Pentecost", Audiotape #BCC-19)

"A being (God) that stands somewhere around 6-2, 6-3 that weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple of hundred pounds or a little better." ("Spirit, Soul, and Body", Audiotape #01-0601, 1985)

"God and Adam looked exactly alike." ("The Authority of the Believer", Audiotape #01-0304)

"Satan conquered Jesus on the Cross and took His spirit to the dark regions of hell." (Kenneth Copeland Holy Bible, Reference Edition, 1991, Page 129)

"Do you want a hundredfold return on your money? Give and let God multiply it back to you. Invest heavily in God; the returns are staggering. Every man who invests in the Gospel has a right to expect the staggering return of one hundredfold." ("Laws of Prosperity", Page 67)

"You have the same creative faith and ability on the inside of you that God used when he created the heavens and the earth." ("Inner Image of the Covenant", Audiotape)

Creflo Dollar



"You're not a sinner saved by grace you sons and daughters of the Most High God. You are gods!" ("Changing Your World", April 17, 2002)

"I speak to fig trees! I speak to mountains! I cast out demons! Hallelujah! I raise the dead! If need be I walk on water! I'm a god of the Most High God!" ("Christian Celebrity or Charismatic Gnostic?" Audiotape #0418)

"Well, you need to hear about money, because you ain't gonna have no love and joy and peace until you get some money!" (TBN, July 20, 1999)

"Jesus didn't come as God, He came as a man, and He did not come perfect." (Creflo Dollar Ministries: World Changers, December 8, 2002)

"I have equality with God, that's my way of thinking. Now somebody says, 'Well, it's hard to think that way.' Well, keep saying it, 'I have equality with God.' Talk yourself into it! You've talked yourself into other things!" (Audio clip of Creflo Dollar from, "The Bible Answer Man", Hank Hanegraaff)

"I don't have to tolerate sickness! I don't have to tolerate bondage! I don't have to tolerate debt! I don't have to tolerate lack! I don't have to tolerate insufficiency! I don't have to be broke, busted, and disgusted all my life. My God is a God that has me the power to get wealth." ("Growing Up In God", April 4, 2004)

"God wants you driving good, dressing good, looking good, because He is good!" ("Maximizing Your God Given Potential", May 18, 2003)

"I'm telling you, Jesus wasn't poor, and He didn't wear no rags, either; like we march in on these Easter little plays that we do at our church, with those raggedy sheets on. Jesus didn't have no rags on. He wore designer clothes, honey!" (Creflo Dollar Crusade, February 9, 1999)

"Break out of that old \$2.50 offering, you get to get into that savings account and give something that's precious to you." / "Somebody might say, 'Well, I don't believe it.' Well, you probably wouldn't with your broke self." / "What's the gospel to the poor? It is prosperity!" (TBN, Praise -A-Thon, April 1, 2004)

Eddie Long



"God says the only way people can see me is through my people. They have been looking for God and He can't be seen. Didn't Jesus say, 'that you are gods?' You are gods with a little 'g'. Don't you understand that you are mighty? Don't you know that you are a king? If Elohim (gods) could only get you to act like El (God)." / "I don't have to have somebody tell me that Sunday I preached. I looked in the mirror and said to myself, 'You preached!' Then I gave myself an offering." / "You have been saved too long to be broke!" (TBN, Praise -A-Thon, March 29, 2004)

"My whole objective in life is to be His image, His duplicate, His witness and to show folk what He look like...Somebody say, 'I want to see God.' Here He is, look at me!" ("God Is After Himself", Ministry CD)

"How would you feel if I announced to you that if you declared something that it had to happen?" / "You have enough glory in your mouth that when you declare a thing, then it shall be established." / "Touch your neighbor and say, 'You got power in your mouth.' Tell them, 'There is power in your words.'" / "If you go to the graveyard you better watch out! People might come crawling out of their graves because you got the manifesting power [When you speak words of faith]." ("There's Power In Your Words", March 2, 2003)

"It is so important that you change your vocabulary. A lot of the stuff I found myself in, I spoke it." ("There's Power In Your Words", March 5, 2003)

"I am looked at as one of the churches' fathers. One of God's CEO's." ("The Empowerment of Kings", February 10, 2002)

"When God created, say 'created.' When God created the Spirit Man...He sliced us off of Him. For generations we dwelled with him in spirit." ("Behold We Are Like God", March 23, 2003)

T.D. Jakes



"It's what you say to yourself that gets you healed. If you say that you won't be healed you won't be healed. If you say that you are broke you will stay broke. Oh! But I came to serve notice on the Devil. The Bible says, 'The power of life and death is in the tongue.' Slap somebody and say, 'You better speak to yourself.'" ("Seize The Moment", WTAL 2000 Atlanta)

"Scripture teaches that receiving Christ as your personal Savior does not necessarily make you a son of God, but if you choose to do so, the power and right to do so is present. Just being saved does not make you a son of God, ...only those who are willing to be led by the Spirit actually realize and manifest the sonship of God" ("The Harvest", Pages 46-47)

"The myth of the poor Jesus needs to be destroyed because it's holding people back" (Kaylois Henry, "Bishop Jakes Is Ready. Are You?", The Dallas Observer Magazine, June 20-26, 1996, Page 31)

"Jakes, who drives a Mercedes, has moved with his wife and their five children to a luxurious seven - bedroom home with swimming pool in the White Rock Lake area of Dallas. He said the home cost more than \$1 million. 'I do think we need some Christians who are in first class as well as coach,' Jakes said." (The Fort Star Telegram)

"Because the teachers in Jesus' day listened to Him as a child, it boosted His self-esteem." ("Loose That Man", Page 3)

Fred Price



"If it be thy will or thy will be done -- if you have to say that, then you're calling God a fool." ("Ever Increasing Faith", TBN, November 16, 1990)

"God can't do anything in this earth realm except what we, the body of Christ, allows Him to do."

("Ever Increasing Faith", TBN, May 1, 1992)

"The apostles were business men; they were rich men; had plenty of money. I'm going to show you that Jesus was a wealthy man; had plenty of money. ("Ever Increasing Faith", TBN, November 23, 1990)

"How can you glorify God in your body when it doesn't function right? How can you glorify God? How can He get the glory when your body doesn't even work? And the Bible says your body is the temple. He lives, the Holy Spirit lives in your body. What makes you think the Holy Ghost wants to live inside of a body where He can't see out through the windows and He can't hear with the ears? What makes you think the Holy Spirit wants to live inside of a physical body where the limbs and the organs and the cells do not function right? You don't want to live in a house with a leaky roof. You don't want to live in a house where the toilets are running over on the floor. You don't want to live in a run-down, broken-down house where the electricity doesn't work and the wires are hanging out of the wall. You'll get it fixed because you say this house can't function rightly unless everything is functioning as it was designed to function. How do you think, then, that God can get the glory out of your body when your body is the temple where God lives and what makes you think He wants to live in a temple where He can't see out of the eyes, and He can't walk with the feet, and He can't move with the hand? Because the only hands He has in the earth realm are the hands that are in the body. The only eyes that He has that are in the earth realm are the eyes that are in the body. If He can't see out of them then God's gonna be limited. He's not going to be helped." ("Is God Glorified Through Sickness?", Tape #FP605)

"You can talk about me all you want while I'm driving by in my Rolls Royce that's paid for." ("Ever Increasing Faith", March 29, 1992)

"Yes! You are in control! So, if man has control, who no longer has it? God." ("Prayer: Do You Know What Prayer Is?", The Word Study Bible, 1990, Page 1178)

John Hagee



"Poverty is caused by sin and disobeying the Word of God." (Praise-A-Thon, TBN, April 16, 1993)

"Poverty is a curse" (Praise-A-Thon, TBN, November 4, 1992)

"The Jews were not rejecting Jesus as Messiah. It was Jesus who was refusing to be the Messiah to the Jews." ("Should Christians Support Israel?", Pages 67-68)

"Jesus was not poor...Jesus had a nice house! John 1:38 says that Jesus turned to those that were following him and said, 'Come with me.' And they said, 'Where dwellest thou?' He said, 'Come and see.' And Jesus took that whole crowd home with Him to stay in His House. That meant it was a big house! Jesus wore fine clothes! John 19:23 says, 'He had a seamless robe.' Roman soldiers gambled for it at the foot of the cross. It was a designer original! It was valuable enough for them to want it! And then there are Christians that have a poverty complex that says, 'Well, I feel guilty about having nice things.' Jesus didn't!" (Praise-A-Thon, TBN, November 5, 2004)

Jesse Duplantis



"He (God) trusts me enough to borrowing my money. It's an honor for God to ask you to borrow your money. I've had the Lord say, 'Would you help me out today?' Yeah, what you need Lord? 'A couple of bucks.' Ok!" (We Care Ministries, Audio-Clip)

The very first thing on Jesus' agenda was to get rid of poverty! Would you like to know why some people, including ministries, never get out of poverty? It's not because they aren't smart. It's not because they don't have windows of opportunity. It's because they're not anointed. If you're not anointed, poverty will follow you all the days of your life. His first objective was to get rid of poverty." ("Voice of The Covenant, Page 5, November 1997)

"If I give \$1,000 I deserve to get back \$100,000 because I am just ; that's not greed!" ("The Just Shall Live By Faith", TBN, December 19, 2003)

"Cash is king! The hundred fold works. 'If I give \$50 you mean God will give me \$5,000?' Yes! If you give \$1000 in the offering this morning, will God give you \$100,000 by tomorrow? Yes!" ("The Choke Hold", The Church Channel, January 24, 2004)

"All my life I've heard people say, 'Jesse, you want your pie in the sky and you want to eat it too.' That's true, I do. But for you to act properly in heaven, you have to learn some things on earth. If you have never lived in a mansion, you don't know how to act in one." ("Getting Your Pie In The Sky and Eating It Too", November, 2003)

"Did He heal in the Bible? Then why are you accepting that sickness? Why are you content to live with it?" ("Never Fight An Enemy That Is Already Defeated", July 2003)

"God has told us to believe Him for a Citation X, an 18 million dollar corporate jet with the speed and fuel capacity to fly anywhere in the world. How will this come to pass? God has promised us that He will call upon 18,000 JDM Covenant Partners and friends around the world to sow a seed of \$1000 to this project. If you would like to be one of the 18,000 to sow a seed of \$1000 for the Citation X, we want to hear from you!" ("Getting Your Pie In The Sky and Eating It Too", November, 2003)

"Do you want a future? Look at your seed. What are you giving?" ("Your Future Is In Your Seed", May 2004)

Jerry Savelle



"Somebody say's, 'You mean the world that I'm living in right now originated by the words of my mouth?' They certainly did, because the Bible says you are snared by the words of your mouth, you are taken by your words. Amen?" / "Job talked his world into destruction." ("Framing Your World With The Word of God, Part 2")

"Divine health is something we already possess. When symptoms come, it is nothing more than the thief trying to steal the health which is already ours. In other words, divine health is not something we are trying to get from God; it is something the Devil is trying to take away from us!" / "When the Devil tries to put a symptom of sickness or disease on my body, I absolutely refuse to accept it. A short time ago he tried to put symptoms of the flu on me. My nose and eyes started to run. I began to sneeze and ache all over. I haven't had the flu since 1969, and I'm not going to have it now. I'm redeemed from the flu! Immediately I began to confess God's Word that I'm healed by the stripes of Jesus. I rebuked Satan and refused his lying symptoms. I wasn't trying to get something I don't have; I was keeping something I already have. I am healed." ("If Satan Can't Steal Your Joy", Pages 9-10)

Charles Capps



"I (God) am not the one that is causing your problems. You are under attack of the evil one and I can't do anything about it. You have bound me by the (negative) words of your own mouth." ("The Tongue -- A Creative Force", Page 67)

"The Word says the angels are ministering spirits. These ministering spirits stand beside you daily and listen to the words you speak....but you are the one who tells them what to do." ("Releasing The Ability Of God", Pages 100-101,105)

"Angels will work for you. They will become involved in every area of your life -- your home--your business--everything, but only to the extent that you allow them to operate." ("Angels", Page 173)

Benny Hinn



"Never, ever, ever go to the Lord and say, 'If it be th y will.' Don't allow such faith-destroying words to be spoken from your mouth." ("Rise And Be Healed, Page 47).

"I'm sick and tired of hearing about streets of gold (in heaven). I don't need gold in heaven, I've got to have it now." (TBN, December 9, 1990)

"Cause it doesn't take brains to figure the thing out; you give to get!" ("This Is Your Day", October 28, 1999)

"The Bible warns us clearly that we must not attack men of God no matter how sinful they may have become or wicked in our eyes." ("The Many Faces of Benny Hinn [DVD])

"You wonderful people of God quit attacking men of God by name! Somebody's attacking me because of something I'm teaching! Let me tell you something brother, you watch it! You walk around with your stiff lip and collar on your neck -- dear God in heaven I wish I could just -- ooh! You know I've looked for one verse in the Bible; I just can't seem to find it; one verse that said, 'If you don't like 'em, kill 'em.' I really wish I could find it!" ("Praise The Lord", TBN)

"God the Father, ladies and gentlemen, is a person and He is a triune being by Himself, separate from the Son and the Holy Ghost. See, God the father is a person, God the Son is a person, God the Holy Ghost is a person; but each one of them is a triune being by himself. If I can shock you and maybe I should, there's nine of them!" (Orlando Christian Center Broadcast, October 13, 1990)

"Poverty is from the devil and that God wants all Christians prosperous." (TBN, November 6, 1990)

"Sow a big seed. When you confess it, you are activating the supernatural forces of God." (TBN, February 8, 1990)

"The more you give the more protection you will have for tomorrow. God will spare you if you sow today." (TBN, April 1, 2004)

"Adam was a super-being when God created him. I don't know whether people know this, but he was the first superman that really ever lived. First of all, the scriptures declare clearly that he had dominion over the fowls of the air, the fish of the sea -- which means he used to fly. Of course how can he have dominion over the birds and not be able to do what they do? The word 'dominion' in the Hebrew clearly declares that if you have dominion over a subject, that you do everything that subject does. In other words, that subject, if it does something you cannot do, you don't have dominion over it. I'll prove it further. Adam not only flew, he flew to space. He was -- with one thought he would be on the moon." (TBN, December 26, 1991)

"Are you ready for some real revelation knowledge....? You are god." / "Christians are little messiahs. Christians are little gods." ("Our Position In Christ", Tape # AO31190 -1)

"Are you a child of God? Then you're divine! Are you a child of God? Then you're not human!" (TBN, December 1, 1990)

"There will be no sickness for the saint of God" ("Rise and Be Healed!", Page 14)

Joel Osteen



"Joel that sounds like wishful thinking. No, that's using your words to create what you need." / "You can cancel out God's best plan by speaking negative words." / "You can change your world by simply changing your words." / "You can use words to bless your life or curse your life." / "Start calling in victory. Start calling in divine health. Start calling in abundance. You can prophesize your future." / "You may have sickness in your body; you need to call in health. You may be in debt; you need to boldly say that you are the head and not the tail." / "You need to declare good things over your life." / "If you wanna know where you'll be five years from now, listen to what you are saying." / "Your circumstances will line up with your words." / "Words are like seeds; they have creative power." ("Speaking Faith Filled Words", Tape # 223, May 2, 2004)

"Fear is a force just like faith is a force." (Sermon VL-007, April 30, 2000)

R.W. Schambach



"That spirit of poverty is broken when you give \$5,000!" (Audio-Clip of R.W. Schambach from "The Bible Answer Man", Hank Hanegraaff, March 14, 2005)

"You don't have any problems; all you need is faith in God" (TBN)

"You say you got no money? You're the one I'm after. They can't accuse me of being after your money. You ain't got none! But, if I can help you get it, then I want some of it. You hear me?" ("Trinity Broadcasting Network Television Has Built TBN Into A Power", Quotes of R.W. Schambach from The Orange County Register, May 31, 1998, By: Carol McGraw & Kim Christensen)

Robert Tilton



"Your faith creates the size of your world the same way God's faith creates the size of His world." ("Success In Life", The Word Network, May 4, 2004)

"Faith is a creative force." / "There is somebody watching that recently came into some money. You need to call in a tithe on it." / "Say the word \$1000. The Devil hates the word \$1000; say it!" / "God is leading people for the \$1000 vow of faith." / "Every time you vow and every time you pay on your vow, it rebukes demons." ("Success In Life", The Word Network, May 12, 2004)

"You have been eating your words... If I could just get you to speak prosperity...This is how faith filled faith words work." / "There is money in your mouth. It is creative faith." / "Open your mouth and God creates the fruit of your lips." ("Success In Life", The Word Network, May 19, 2004)

"Is it possible to experience more financial increase than you ever thought you could? Is it possible to have everything you always wanted? Some of the people who read this book are going to catch hold of the eternal principles here and become rich. Some will even become millionaires." / "God has sent me to help you be able to accept and receive more from the Lord. God uses me as a 'prophet of prosperity', an 'architect of abundance', an 'instructor in increase'. If you will give close attention to the Biblical teachings in this book, you can have more than you ever dreamed possible." / "You can literally speak things into existence if you believe in your heart. That is a powerful step towards success, prosperity, and riches!" / "You must plant a seed to receive a harvest. Pay your tithe and believe God will fulfill His Word of riches and wealth to be in your house." ("How To Be Rich and Have Everything You Ever Wanted", Pages 5,6,28,48)

John Avanzini



"Jesus was handling big money." / "Jesus had an expensive ministry." (TBN, September 15, 1988)

"Jesus had a nice house, a big house, big enough to have company stay the night with him at the house." / "Jesus wore designer clothes." / "Paul had the kind of money that could stop up justice." (TBN, January 20, 1991)

"I want you to plant a seed. I want you to do it in a unique way. Take one of those credit cards that helped you get in trouble and give \$100 on that card." / "Use that credit card one more time and attach a \$100 seed to it. Put it on that card; you used it for the Devil. Now use it for a seed for a harvest." / "God said to me for you to plant a seed of \$100. Put it on that credit card that has been getting you into trouble. It will be used to get you out." / "Take that credit card and put a \$100 seed on it and say, 'I wanna be debt free.'" / "God is saying if you plant a \$100 seed on that card that it will be a slap in the face to the Devil." / "How did Nehemiah get the nation out of debt? He spoke to the debt. You can speak to sickness and it will leave... You can speak to disease and it will leave." (LeSea Miracle Telethon, May 3, 2004)

Marilyn Hickey



"Say to your body, 'You're whole, body! Why, you just function so beautifully and so well. Why, body, you never have any problems. You're a strong, healthy body.' Or speak to your leg, or speak to your foot, or speak to your neck, or speak to your back; and once you have spoken and believe that you have received, and don't go back on it. Speak to your wife, speak to your husband, speak to your circumstances; and speak faith to them to create in them, and God will create what you are speaking." / "What do you need? Start creating it. Start speaking about it. Start speaking it into being. Speak to your billfold. Say, 'You big, thick billfold full of money.' Speak to your checkbook. Say, 'You, checkbook, you. You've never been so prosperous since I owned you. You're just jammed full of money.'" ("Claim Your Miracles, Audio -Tape #186)

"If you have been fighting too long without a breakthrough and you're ready for a change, then it is time to sow a 'Battle Seed' for the victory you need. Just pick up the phone and call the number on the screen and say, 'I want to sow a Battle Seed for the victory I need.'" (Marilyn Hickey Show, June 18, 2004)

Juanita Bynum



"You need to send a thousand dollars. If you can't send a thousand, send five hundred. If all you have is a nickel, wrap it in tissue and put it in an envelope. If all you have is your clothes, send them." / "If all you have is \$79.36, I double-dare you to empty your bank account. Close your account." / "You've got three days to get that into your mailbox. I'm not afraid to say this. I am walking in my authority. If you don't postmark it by the tenth, we will not accept it. God says you have three days to get your thousand-dollar seed in the mail." / "The Lord told me to give you these socks. In your time of prayer, you are to wear them, and you will walk in authority. Be careful what you say, because what you say will come to pass." (TBN, November 8, 2003)

"Because of the vastness of the corruption in our society, the Lord's work cannot be finished with just the male gender." (Juanita Bynum, Article: "Women In The Pulpit", By: Julia Duin)

Rod Parsley



"Some of you are standing there like you ain't got no trouble. I saw what you drove here in. Don't tell me you ain't got no trouble." ("The God of More Than Enough", TBN, June 1, 2004)

"You're on the brink of a miracle. Go to the phone and give \$1,000, \$5,000, \$10,000 and \$1,000,000; go to the phone. God has a miracle waiting on your response." / "The anointing is tangible; some of you should leave your televisions on TBN all night when you're asleep to get the anointing." / "This is inspiration, Oh! I heard you Holy Ghost! God is teaching you right now how to hear His voice. Go to your phone!" / "I believe that there are 10 people that need to match that \$10,000. Your believing for the greatest miracle of your life, then sow the greatest seed of your life." / "You're not going to your phone; you can hear me while you're on the phone! Your miracle is waiting! Your deliverance is waiting!" / "Why are all these heretic hunters trying to get people to know God by criticizing people by name?" / "I won't get to the text until you get to the phone." (TBN, March 31, 2004)

"God said, 'you can sow for whatever your soul lusteth after.' Sow \$2,000 says the man of God." (TBN, April 6, 2003)

"I just love to talk about your money. Let me be very clear. I want your money. I deserve it. This church deserves it." ("An Empire of Souls", Page 35)

Joyce Meyer



"There is no hope of anyone going to heaven unless they believe this truth I am presenting. You cannot go to heaven unless you believe with all your heart that Jesus took your place in hell." ("The Most Important Decision You Will Ever Make", Page 37)

"Words are containers for power." ("The Name, The Word, The Blood", Page 37)

"You got a storage bin, a storage locker in heaven that has a lot of stuff in it that needs to be claimed." ("What Does Your Future Hold", May 21, 2004)

"Did you know that you can change the very course of your life by the type of words you speak?" (Enjoying Everyday Life Magazine, "Think Before You Speak", May 2004)

"But you cannot throw out positive confession, and you cannot throw out all the faith teachers, and you cannot throw out positive thinking. And you cannot get rid of those kinds of things because they're in the Bible from end of it to the other." / "We need to have faith filled words going out of our mouth." (PFO Quarterly Journal, April-June 2002, Pages 6,14)

Earl Paulk



"We are the essence of God; His on-going incarnation in the world." ("Held In The Heavens, Page 125)

"Adam and Eve were placed in the world as the seed and expression of God. Just as dogs have puppies and cats have kittens, so God has little gods. Until we comprehend that we are little gods, we cannot manifest the kingdom of God." / "He (God) cannot bless a church that is totally directed by males." ("Satan Unmasked", Pages 97, 281)

"In the realm of the unseen now comes an Incarnate, the Son of God. He walks in the flesh. He talks in the flesh. He eats in the flesh. Maybe got married in the flesh. I don't know. Could care less!" ("The Coming of Christ", TBN, November 28, 2004)

Paul Crouch



"God draws no distinction between Himself and us. God opens up the union of the very godhead and brings us into it." (TBN, November 1990)

"As I have said a thousand times or more: 'The heretic hunters have reached Jan and me too late.'" (TBN, October 2002)

"If you give a gift to God with a cry in your heart, He will not let heaven and earth rest until He grants you that desire." / "When you give to God He will overtake you with a blessing. He has to! Because, if He didn't, you would out give Him and He won't let you do that." (TBN, April 1, 2004)

"Have you got something that you have been praying about 10, 15, 20 years? You have been praying for it and haven't gotten it. It could be that you haven't gotten it because you are a tightwad and you haven't given your 10%." (TBN, March 31, 2004)

Leroy Thompson



"Poverty is not the will of God. Living paycheck to paycheck and needing to have two incomes simply to survive is not the will of God. If that's you, then you haven't entered into the fullness of your inheritance in Christ. You're not living in the abundance God has provided for you." / "God will pay all your bills, help you build your dream house, drive your dream car, and wear your dream clothes if you set your heart towards Him and toward taking care of what He wants to do in the earth. / "Lastly, declare every day," ' MONEY!! COMETH TO ME, NOW!!' / "Part of how that is going to happen is by all of us speaking to money just like Jesus spoke to the fig tree --just as you speak to sickness or any other mountain in your life. Money must obey you when you talk to it in faith. ("Money Cometh To Me NOW!" Winners Way Magazine)

Paula White



"So I'm going to activate my miracle by my obedience right now. I'm going to get up and go to the phone. When you get up and go to the phone, you're getting ready to put a demand on the anointing that is going to cause God to manifest His promises. That is going to cause God to

perform in your life. Somebody is going to make God to move on your behalf. Somebody is going to make God get off His ivory throne. Now, get up and go to the phone! When God begins to speak to you, dial that number on your screen. Don't you miss this moment! If you miss your moment, you miss your miracle! He's (God) giving you a Rhema Word right now. The God that I serve is speaking to you right now!" (LeSea Network, April 16, 2004)

"There is creative power in your mouth right now. God spoke and created the universe; you have creative power to speak life and death! If you believe God, you can create anything in your life." (TBN, March 29, 2004)

"Speak to your hands; these are anointed hands; these hands will release wealth, these hands will cast out devils." (TBN, April 3, 2003)

Pat Robinson



"We speak to money, and it comes. We speak to storms, and they cease. We speak to crops and they flourish." (PFO Quarterly, July-September 2002, Page 22)

"God spoke through a word of prophecy in May 1968, and said, 'I have chosen you to usher in the coming of My Son.'" (Satellite Network Seminar, Word of Faith Outreach Center, December 9, 1984)

Myles Munroe



"That's why angels need our permission to function. It says they are here to do our bidding. They can't even act without our permission, you see. But, here's the bigger statement: Even God Himself is illegal on earth. Why? Because, He is a spirit and the law He set up by His own mouth was that only spirits with bodies can function on earth legally." / "Let me define prayer for you in this show. Prayer is man giving God permission or license for heavenly interference." / "God could do nothing on earth; nothing has God ever done on earth without a human giving Him access." / "What is faith? Faith is believing in what you said, that God told you. In other words, the fight is to keep believing after you said something." / "It bothered me, I'm sure it bothered you (Benny Hinn) for years as a pastor. If God is so mighty, powerful, awesome, omnipotent, omniscient, why couldn't this mighty God who made 500 million planets and galaxies stop a skinny little woman from picking the fruit and destroying His whole program? I mean, God aren't you powerful? You could intervene; you can destroy the works of the devil; prevent the woman and save humanity. But He couldn't! Not that He didn't, He couldn't! ("This Is Your Day" with Benny Hinn, July 12, 2004).

"Heaven depends on earth for interference. If He (God) could just find two people like you (Benny Hinn) and I to agree. We agree for God to do this thing. Then God says, 'Thank you very much for permission!' Then He (God) can come." / "Our prayer is a strange experience. We normally ask God to do things; God is telling us to command Him permission to do for us." / "He (God) could not name those animals because He (God) is illegal." / "O'Lord, heal this man. God says, 'No! No! No! Talk to the sickness, I am already healing the guy. What I need is permission to get the healing on earth.'" / "When a human gets healed and becomes well again, God Himself is able to stay here legally longer." / "Interfering in earth by God is totally up to us. Heaven is waiting on earth to get things done." ("This Is Your Day" with Benny Hinn, July 13, 2004)

Exposing The Errors: A Doctrinal Analysis of Word-Faith Theology

The Force of Faith

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. (Hebrews 11:1 NKJV)

Using the verse above, the Word-Faith teachers' commonly held view is that faith is a force; an invisible substance that can be tapped into to acquire anything we desire -- health, wealth, success, etc. It is proposed that spoken words are the "spiritual containers" that activates the force of faith either positively or negatively. Positive words of faith incite God to act on your behalf; and negative words incite the Devil to cause havoc in your life. Whatever is confessed with the mouth, one can create in their own reality.

Spiritual laws supposedly execute the force of faith autonomously of God's sovereignty. Even God, they say, had to use the force of faith to create the heavens, the earth and mankind. Kenneth Copeland, regarded as today's chief Word-Faith representative, claims that "God cannot do anything for you apart or separate from faith" on the grounds that "faith is God's source of power....God used words when He created the heaven and the earth....Each time God spoke, He released His faith--the creative power to bring His words to pass. (Kenneth Copeland, "Freedom From Fear", Pages 11-12; "The Power of The Tongue", Page 4)

Copeland's clone and "spiritual son", Creflo A. Dollar, echoes these same distortions: "Now, God used faith substance to make everything that He made...in every one of those words they were filled with faith substance, because words are nothing but containers....Every time God speaks, He can't help but to speak words that are filled with faith...God's guts are called faith stuff....Everything in Him is faith. What's in His heart is faith. If you were to cut God open, you're see nothing but faith. Every time He opens His mouth, He automatically fills those words with His faith material. (Creflo Dollar, "Changing Your World", September 20, 1998)

So, what's wrong with these teachings? Firstly and noticeably, the Word-Faith Movement's unbiblical theology is branded with the fingerprints of the New Thought cultic teachings of Phineas P. Quimby, Mary Baker Eddy, and E.W. Kenyon. Secondly, faith is not a force. To imply that God had to use the force of faith is to insinuate that He had to rely on a power outside of Himself. God's name is "I Am that I Am, the self sufficient, self-existent one" (Exodus 3:14). He is the source of all power, and the object of our faith. Thirdly, in Hebrews 11:1, "substance" is from the Greek Word "hypostasis" and is more accurately defined as "an assured impression, a mental realizing" extended from man to God ("The Analytical Greek Lexicon", Page 419). Other translations are rendered:

Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen. (NASB)

Now faith is being sure of what we hope for and certain of what we do not see. (NIV)

The Divinity of Man

**Then God said, "Let us make man in Our image, according to Our likeness..." So God created man in His own image; in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them.
(Genesis 1:26-27 NKJV)**

Jesus answered them, "Is it not written in your law, 'I said, You are gods' "? (John 10:34 NKJV)

**...by which have been given to us exceedingly great and precious promises, that through these you may be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust.
(2 Peter 1:4 NKJV)**

Based upon severe mishandling of the verses above, Word-Faith theology states that man was created as little gods. The notion that mankind are gods is the same lie that led to Lucifer's downfall (Isaiah 14:14); and his lying tactics are the same. As recorded in Genesis 3:5, this is the exact lie that Satan used to initiate the fall of Adam and Eve. Since then, in every age of human history, Satan has used his ministers to promote the myth of the divinity of man.

The International New Thought Alliance, an organization that also adopted the teachings of Phineas Quimby, states in their constitution and bylaws: "To teach the Infinitude of the Supreme One; the Divinity of man and his infinite possibilities through the creative power of constructive thinking and obedience to the voice of the indwelling Presence, which is our source of Inspiration, Power, Health, and Prosperity." (Source: "A History of the New Thought Movement", By: Horatio W. Dresser, 1919)

In his book, "Christianity In Crisis", Hank Hanegraaff states, "M. Scott Peck, a psychologist popular in both New Age and Christian circles, puts words into the mouth of the Creator when he writes: 'God wants us to become Himself (or Herself or Itself). We are growing toward godhood. God is the goal of evolution. "' (M. Scott Peck, "The Road Less Traveled", Page 270)

Hanegraaff also states, "And who can forget the infamous Jim Jones, who personally led almost a thousand men, women, and children to violent deaths? This deluded cult leader screeched: 'It is written that ye are gods. I'm a god and you're a god. And I'm a god, and I'm gonna stay a god until you recognize that you're a god. And when you recognize that you're a god, I shall go back into principle and will not appear as a personality. But until I see all of you knowing who you are, I'm gonna be very much what I am -- God, almighty God.' " (Jim Jones, quoted in James Reston, Jr., and Noah Adams, "Father Cares: The Last of Jonestown", program on National Public Radio [April 23, 1981])

A shareholder of Jim Jones' blasphemous viewpoint, Creflo Dollar affirms, "And if God produces man and everything produces after its own kind...if horses get together they produce what? If dogs get together they produce what? If cats get together they produce what? But if the Godhead gets together and says, 'Let us make man' then what are they producing? They are producing gods....You are gods because you came from God and you are gods, you are not just human... (Creflo Dollar, "Made After His Kind", September 15, 2002)

Dollar's local sidekick, Eddie Long professes, I know who I am! And, and, see when you know who you are, wherever you go, as a god, as a King -- you have an entourage. (Eddie Long, "You Are Mighty" Audio-Tape)

Let's now consider the scriptures in their proper context and expose the errors in the Word-Faith teachers' doctrine of the divinity of man.

Using Genesis 1:26-27, the Word-Faith teachers contest that Adam and Eve were created as "little gods". Kenneth Copeland states that, "Adam in the Garden of Eden, was God manifested in the flesh" (Kenneth Copeland, "Following The Faith of Abraham I", Tape #01-3001). Copeland continues, "The man (Adam) -- created in the image of God, like Him in every way..." (Kenneth

Copeland, "Fullness: God's Plan For His Family", BVOV Magazine, July/August 2004, Page 34) If this was the case, why then would Satan tantalize Eve with the statement, "you will be like God....," if she was already ranked as a god?

Adam was made in the image and likeness of God; which means he was God's paramount creation -- a reflective spiritual being that was finitely imparted with some of His attributes such as freedom of choice, sovereignty, wisdom, love, and moral values. "Image and likeness" does not mean an exact duplicate with the same omnipotent powers as arrogantly suggested by the Word-Faith teachers. God specifically states in Exodus 9:14, "...there is none like me in all the earth." In Isaiah 43:10, God says, "Before Me there was no God formed, Nor shall there be after Me." Jeremiah echoes God's supreme nature and power when he says, "Inasmuch as there is none like You, O Lord (You are great, and Your name is great in might.)" [Jer. 10:6,10] Word-Faith teachers delight in quoting the words of Christ in John 10:34, to submit as proof that God created men as gods. As Eddie Long asserts, "That's the reason why when you look in the mirror, you ought to say, 'Good morning God.' (Bishop Eddie Long, "God Is After Hims elf", Audio CD from ministry)

If we closely examine this passage, we will discover that Jesus was not referring to men as gods in the context of divinity. In addition to the scriptures recently mentioned, Jesus taught in the Book of Mark that there is only one God (Mark 12:29). In light of John 10:34, Christ was simply quoting scripture in Psalm 82:6 which was pertaining to the kings and judges (gods) in Israel. They were symbolically characterized as "gods" because God has entrusted His authority in human officials (Exodus 4:16, Psalm 82:1, Romans 13:1-7). Although authorities rule as "gods", they are mortal men (Psalm 82:7, Jeremiah 10:11). It is interesting how Word-Faith teachers conveniently disregard verse seven.

Unlike the Word-Faith teachers' self-proclamations of being a "little god", the Apostle Paul never made such professions and considered this sort of postulation as blasphemous. The account in Acts 14:11-15 should provide a crushing blow to the Word-Faith's theology of the divinity of man:

Now when the people saw what Paul had done, they raised their voices, saying in the Lycaonian language, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!" And Barnabus they called Zeus, and Paul, Hermes, because he was the chief speaker. Then the priest of Zeus, whose temple was in the front of their city, brought oxen and garlands to the gates, intending to sacrifice with the multitudes.

But when the apostles Barnabus and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and ran in among the multitudes, crying out and saying, "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men with the same nature as you, and preach to you that you should turn from these useless things to the living God, who made the heaven, the earth, the sea, and all things that are in them..." (Acts 14:11-15 NKJV)

From the passage above, it is unmistakable that Paul and Barnabus rejected the claims of the Lycaonians who referred to them as gods. They rebuffed these allegations with such abhorrence that they "tore their clothes"; which is a Jewish symbolization of disgust at blasphemy (v14).

If the great apostle Paul lived among us today, he would surely be in need of much clothing if he encountered the Word-Faith camp. In the process of ripping his clothes, he would say, "For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into apostles of Christ. And no wonder! For Satan himself transforms himself into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also transform themselves into ministers of righteousness..." (2 Cor. 11:13-15)

Another text of scripture that is perverted by the Word-Faith teachers to promote the divinity of man involves 2 Peter 1:4. Kenneth Copeland declares, "Now Peter said by exceeding great and precious promises you become partakers of the divine nature. All right, are we gods? We are a class of gods!" (Kenneth Copeland, TBN, February 5, 1986)

If we read the entirety of verse four through verse nine using proper biblical exegesis, it will be disclosed that Peter was not subscribing to a "little gods" doctrine, but rather about the moral concepts that accompany salvation (Romans 8:3-11). When a person accepts Christ through faith,

an inner conversion process is commenced that delivers a believer's sinful nature from a morally corrupt world system to one that mirrors the moral attributes of God. Although Christians are "sons of God", they are not children by divine nature; but rather by adoption (Galatians 4:5-8). Jesus is the only person, the unique Son of God, who shares God's nature; and is co-equal with God.

With that said, it is worth repeating again that ever since the first family, Satan has attempted to breed the lie that man was created as gods. Let's not tailgate the same error made by Adam and Eve -- becoming prey to Satan's lie of the generations that men are gods. Surrendering to this falsehood will make you a victim of the "gods" of this age (2 Cor. 4:4).

The Demotion of God

Who has measured the waters in the hollow of His hand. (Isaiah 40:12 NKJV)

After the Word-Faith teachers deify man, they climb even higher on the ladder of blasphemy by having the temerity to demote God. Using the verse above, Copeland claims that God is someone "very much like you and me...A being that stands somewhere around 6'2" to 6'3", that weighs somewhere in the neighborhood of a couple of hundred pounds, little better; and has a (hand) span nine inches across." (Kenneth Copeland, "Spirit, Soul, and Body", audio tape, 1985)

Benny Hinn resounds, "What was the appearance of God the Father? Like that of a man...God has the likeness of fingers and hands and a face." (Benny Hinn, "Good Morning Holy Spirit", 1991, Page 82)

Since God is Spirit (John 4:24), Copeland and Hinn should be aware that Isaiah 40:12 is a figurative rendition rather than a literal interpretation. Failing to acknowledge their error, they have purposely misrepresented God by demoting Him into the image of man. This is plainly another tactical approach scheme designed by Word-Faith teachers to position God and man on equal status. To demote God by prescribing physical attributes to Him is a very serious challenge against the Lord and to the body of Christ. With that in mind, it should be questioned if the Word-Faith teachers are referring to the God of the Bible or a false god they have fashioned in their own minds. If you believe such a charge is unwarranted, consider the following statements by Kenneth Copeland:

"I was shocked when I found out who the biggest failure in the Bible actually is. Everybody you ask, 'Who's the biggest failure?' They say, 'Judas'; somebody else will say, 'No, I believe it was Adam'; 'well what about the devil?' He's the most consistent failure. But he not the biggest in terms of material failure and so forth. The biggest one (failure) in all the Bible is God. (TBN, April 1988)

For Copeland to demote God by alleging that He is the "biggest failure in the entire Bible" is blasphemy of a higher order. The Bible clearly states that God is omnipotent and insusceptible to failure (Job 42:2, Jeremiah 32:17,27, Matthew 19:26).

In the disordered vanity of their own minds (2 Peter 2:13), statements of this nature echoed by Copeland and others are conveniently attributed as "new revelations" in spite of the fact that their claims are obviously unbiblical. If there is any veracity to Copeland's "new revelation" knowledge, it is solely because the Word-Faith camp does indeed worship a false god; for The God of the Bible never fails!

Atonement Theology

For as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of the great fish, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. (Matthew 12:40 NKJV)

And about the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, "Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" (Matthew 27:46 NKJV)

So when Jesus received the sour wine, He said, "It is finished!" And bowing His head, He gave up His spirit. (John 19:30 NKJV)

For He made Him who knew no sin to be sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him. (2 Corinthians 5:21 NKJV)

(Now this, "He ascended" -- what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) [Ephesians 4:9-10 NKJV]

God's people should be cognizant of the fact that the atonement of Christ, the deity of Christ, and the sinless life of Christ are denied and assaulted by every cult and pseudo religion. Some of these false religions include Islam, Hinduism, and Jehovah Witness. Following on the same dangerous path, the atonement of Christ is another doctrine that Word-Faith teachers have iniquitously denied and modified to their own imaginations. Attempting to establish the argument that Christ became "sin", was abandoned by the Father, and suffered in hell for three days, proponents of Word-Faith theology allude to and misconstrue the passages above. These so called men and women of God have formulated a variant doctrine -- a "reenacted gospel" that includes the inefficiency of Christ's blood alone to atone for the sins of mankind; the spiritual death of Christ; and salvation being concluded in the torments of hell. Consider the claims of Fred Price:

"Do you think that the punishment for our sin was to die on a cross? If that were the case, the two thieves could have paid your price. No, the punishment was to go into hell itself and to serve time in hell separated from God. (Fred Price, "Ever Increasing Faith Messenger", June 1980)

Price's statements that reject the cross -- insinuating that the thieves could pay the penalty for sin is absolutely ridiculous. If such delusive claims were not so "cheap", it could be regarded as amusing.

Price's allegations that Jesus' death on the cross was ineffectual for sin is a direct reflection of the philosophies of Mary Baker Eddy. In her book, "Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures", Baker asserts that, "The material blood of Jesus was no more efficacious to cleanse from sin when it was shed upon 'the accursed tree' than when it was flowing in His veins."

Before investigating the errors, let's establish for the record that hell consisted of various compartments. Contrary to the common presumption that hell was solely a place of torment for the unrighteous, there was also a section for the righteous. The area for the righteous was separated by a great impassable gulf from the latter region.

"The Hebrew people regarded Sheol (hell) as a place to which both the righteous and the unrighteous go at death (Gen. 37:35, Ps. 9:17, Is. 38:10), a place where punishment is received and rewards are enjoyed." ("Illustrated Dictionary of The Bible", Herbert Lockyer, Sr., Page 979)

Let's now examine the mentioned scriptures that Word-Faith teachers use to argue their case.

In Matthew 12:40, Ephesians 4:9-10, the phrases "the heart of the earth" and "He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?" is in reference to a temporary section in hell (Sheol/Hades) known as "paradise." Paradise was the place where the righteous dead remained until after the death of Christ. It was a place of extraordinary blessedness and was regarded as "Abraham's Bosom" (Luke 16:22). Recall in Luke 23:43 that Jesus said to the thief on the cross, "I tell you the truth, today you will be with me in paradise." At Christ's ascension, He transported the

righteous saints (including the thief) along with the region of paradise from the "lower parts of the earth" to Heaven; its current location (2 Cor. 12:2-4, Rev. 2:7).

In reference to Matthew 27:46 and 2 Corinthians 2:21, Kenneth Copeland asserts that, "On the cross, Jesus was separated from the glory of God. He allowed Himself to be made sin for us, and He became obedient to death." (Kenneth Copeland, "The Power of His Resurrection") / "The righteousness of God was made to be sin. He accepted the sin nature of Satan in His own spirit. And at that moment that He did so He cried, 'My God, my God, Why hast thou forsaken me?' " (Kenneth Copeland, "What Happened From The Cross To The Throne.")

Rightfully, Jesus was never abandoned by God nor made "sin for us" in the sense that He became a sinner and inherited the nature of Satan. Jesus, In His humanity, cried these words of dereliction in fulfillment of the Psalmist's prophecy (Psalm 22:1). When God inflicted His wrath and judgment on Christ, like David, Jesus was experiencing a sense of abandonment rather than an actual dismemberment. Psalm 22:24 clearly indicates this; and thus repudiates Copeland's belief that God abandoned Christ on the cross.

If Christ had become a sinner and acquired the nature of Satan as Copeland suggests, then it would seem reasonable that Jesus would need a Savior. But, such speculation is unnecessary; for Psalm 16:10 and Acts 2:31 clearly disinherit Copeland's contention that Christ was made sin and "accepted the sin nature of Satan." In actuality, Jesus became the "likeness" of sin ... "taking the rap" for us and bore the sins of mankind on the cross (Isaiah 53:12, Romans 8:3). However, He did not become defiled with mankind's sinful nature. It was on account that Jesus was a sin offering, eternally righteous and Holy without blemish (Heb. 9:14, 1 Peter 1:19) that qualified His sacrifice acceptable to God.

Although Christ was not a sinner, God treated Him as though He were. Similarly, granting the fact that Christians are sinners, God treats them as though they were righteous. Using this concept of substitution, God inaugurated a restyling in the sinners' condition that delivers them from a state of isolation to a place of forgiveness and reconciliation. Thus, by way of Christ, God will display Believers "faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24)

In reference to John 19:30, Copeland claims that, "When Jesus cried, 'It is finished!' He was not speaking of the plan of redemption. There were still three days and nights to go through (In hell) before He went to the throne....Jesus' death on the cross was only the beginning of the complete work of redemption." (Kenneth Copeland, "Jesus -- Our Lord of Glory", Believers Voice of Victory, April 1982)

Factually, when Jesus spoke the words, "It is finished!" He sacrificed Himself as a sin offering; bore our iniquities and paid the debt for our sins on the cross (Matt. 26:28, Eph. 5:2, Heb. 10:5-18). The single Greek word for "It is finished" is "totalistic," which does not mean "It has just begun and will continue later," but rather is defined as "fulfilled," "completed" or "paid in full." The Bible does not denote any other incidents continuing thereafter that contributed to our salvation.

Continuing in their resistance to truth, it is argued by Word-Faith teachers that Jesus' closing words "It is finished" is referring to the termination of the Abrahamic covenant. There are no scripture references, however, that provides credence to this. On the contrary, it was the Mosaic covenant with its sacrificial laws that was fulfilled by the atoning death of Christ (Matt. 5:17-19; Col. 2:13,14). The completion of Christ's work on the cross and the issuing in of the new covenant is made evident by the instantaneous splitting of the temple curtain (Mark 15:38).

The conclusion of Christ's work on the cross is also demonstrated in the account of Luke 23:46 where Jesus stated, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit." There are no scripture passages in the Bible that gives indication that Jesus submitted His Spirit to Satan in hell.

The truth of mankind's redemption is clearly seen on the cross, not in the unrighteous regions of hell as inferred by Copeland.

The apostle Paul stated, "God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ..." (Gal. 6:14). He most certainly did not ever speak of a magnificent redemption achieved in hell. It was in the glory of the cross that he alluded to. The Bible has much to say regarding the atonement of Christ on the cross. The following scriptures references are particularly worth noting for study:

[Acts 20:28](#), [Eph. 1:7](#); [2:13](#), [Col. 1:14,20](#), [1 Peter 1:19](#), [1 John 1:7](#), [Rom. 5:9](#), [Heb. 9:14](#); [10:19,20](#); [13:12](#), [Rev. 1:5](#); [12:11](#)

Nothing is ever mentioned in the above scripture references or in any other place in the Bible where salvation was completed in hell. For Word-Faith teachers to continually hold fast to this erroneous viewpoint are saying that Christ was accursed (1 Cor. 12:3) and His work on the cross was imperfect. Such an allegation is a dangerous charge of monumental proportion; and like a hazardous virus, should be quarantined from the body of Christ. Unless they repent, it is this type of heresy coupled with a doctrine of greed (more on this later) that may cast these revelators of a different gospel into the other region of hell for the wicked (Proverbs 21:6, Luke 16:19-26, 1 Cor. 1:18, Gal. 1:9,10, Rev. 3:15-22). As Hank Hanegraaff puts it:

"I cannot emphasize too strongly that the atonement is crucial to the historic Christian faith. Interestingly, the word 'crucial' comes from the Latin word 'crux' or 'cross'. So when I say that the atonement is the crux of Christianity, I am in effect saying that just as the cross stands at the center of all history, so also our understanding of the atonement is central to the faith. Tampering with the doctrine of the atonement is the most direct road from Christianity into the kingdom of the cults--and, for some people, into the world of the occult." (Hank Hanegraaff, "Christianity In Crisis", Page 152)

Confession & Health

Death and life are in the power of the tongue... (Proverbs 18:21 NKJV)

Surely He has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; Yet we esteemed Him stricken, Smitten by God, and afflicted. But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; The chastisement for our peace was upon Him, And by His stripes we are healed. (Isaiah 53:4,5 NKJV, see also 1 Peter 2:24)

When evening had come, they brought to Him many who were demon-possessed. And He cast out the spirits with a word, and healed all who were sick, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Isaiah the prophet, saying: "He Himself took our infirmities; And bore our sicknesses." (Matthew 8:16,17 NKJV)

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I do to My Father. (John 14:12 NKJV)

Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus... (Hebrews 3:1 NKJV)

As pointed out near the beginning of our study, Word-Faith theology states that using the force of faith one can use the power of words to predestine his own future. One domain where this cultic formula is applied to by Word-Faith teachers entails health, sickness and disease. Employing the "force of faith" prescription coupled with the passages above, Word-Faith leaders attempt to sanction divine physical healing for all Christians who possess adequate faith. If a believer is feeling sick, then he should deny his symptoms and speak positive words of faith. Word-Faith leaders suggest that if a Christian has an incurable disease or is permanently handicapped, then he lacks faith and is living outside God's will. T.D. Jakes alleges:

"It's what you say to yourself that gets you healed. If you say that you won't be healed, you won't be healed. If you say that you are broke, you will stay broke. Oh! But I came to serve notice on the Devil. The Bible says, 'The power of life and death is in the tongue.' Slap somebody and say, 'You better speak to yourself.' " (T.D. Jakes, "Seize The Moment", Woman Thou Art Loosed, 2000 Atlanta, Georgia)

According to Joel Osteen, with a smile, he says we should:

"Start calling in divine health....You may have sickness in your body; you need to call in health. Words are like seeds; they have creative power." (Joel Osteen, "Speaking Faith Filled Words", Tape # 223, 2004)

While it is true that the tongue may have potential to have positive or negative effects on ourselves and other people (feelings, self-image, convictions, attitudes, for example), what T.D. Jakes, Joel Osteen and other Word-Faith teachers fail to understand is that there are limitations to the power of the tongue. Nowhere does the Word of God support the notion that Believers in Christ have the ability to create divine health using the powers of the tongue.

Perhaps this brand of cultic mythology may operate in the man-made classic show, "I Dream of Jeannie", but in the real world created by God, the Lord did not give man such powers. It is ironic that Word-Faith teachers discourage Believers from viewing cultic media (television, movies, etc.), yet they themselves subscribe to similar heresies.

A deeper evaluation of Isaiah 53:4,5; Matthew 8:16,17 and 1 Peter 2:24 will reveal that these passages reflect both spiritual and physical healing. Isaiah 53:5 and 1 Peter 2:24 are referring to spiritual healing via salvation. On account that these verses are speaking of Christ's crucifixion on the cross, enduring punishment and bearing ours sins, Christians are thus healed spiritually from a spiritually sick condition (sin).

Now on the other handthe prophecy of Isaiah 53:4 indicate physical healing; and Matthew 8:16,17 is its fulfillment that occurred during the healing ministry of Jesus prior to the atonement. Thus, physical healing is not a guarantee today.

Although Believers may experience physical healing based on their faith and God's sovereign choice, the aforesaid verses are not related to assured divine physical healing in today's church age. Contrary to the Faith Movement's claims, God does not always heal every believer. The complete expanse of healing that was purchased in the atonement will not be experienced until after the resurrection and glorification (Rom. 8:22-25, 1 Cor. 15:42-43, 51-54, Phil. 3:20-21, Rev. 21:4).

The Word-Faith camp disagrees with this author's viewpoint, however; alluding to John 14:12 as basis for divine healing for every believer who has enough faith. If Christ was referring to physical healing in this verse, then what "greater works" feasibly could be accomplished than those done by Jesus (raising the dead, for ex.)? In proper context, this verse does not mean "greater works" in divine power, but of the Believers' Great Commission of becoming witnesses throughout the world; preaching the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ (Acts 1:8). The theme of this verse is spiritual rather than physical miracles.

Hebrews 3:1 is another verse that Word-Faith teachers refer to for their support of divine healing through positive confession. They contend that by speaking positive words of divine healing, Jesus is obligated to obey our confessions since He is the "Apostle and High Priest of our confession." Contrary to their teachings, however, this verse does not support the idea that Christ is required to obey our confessions. In this verse, "of our confession" means that Jesus is the center of our confession of faith in the gospel, both in personal belief and open attestation (2 Cor. 9:13, 1 Tim. 6:12,13, Heb. 4:14; 10:23).

As the Word-Faith teachers promote their false doctrine of divine healing, they conveniently disregard scriptures that clearly indicate that some of God's most devoted saints endured physical illnesses. Two cases in point are:

Galatians 4:13-15 (NKJV) - You know that because of physical infirmity I preached the gospel to you at the first. And my trial which was in my flesh you did not despise or reject, but you received me as an angel of God, even as Christ Jesus.

1 Tim. 5:23 (NKJV) - No longer drink only water, but use a little wine for your stomach's sake and your frequent infirmities.

The two passages above plainly illustrate that the apostle Paul and Timothy suffered from physical ailments. While Paul's condition is not explicit, some believe he was suffering from malaria (Source: The MacArthur Study Bible, Page 1795). And it should be interesting to note that Luke was Paul's personal physician (Col. 4:14, The MacArthur Study Bible, Page 1840). In reference to Timothy, it is apparent that he suffered from a stomach ailment as well as other recurrent infirmities.

With that said, it is appropriate to ask, "Where is the Word-Faith teachers' "positive confession" theology? The answer is simple. Nowhere in the Bible does God's Word indicate that these men of God ever began "confessing" their healing. Did the apostle Paul and Timothy lack faith? Absolutely not!

It is very alarming that Word-faith teachers are promoting this heretical doctrine; and it is an injustice to Christ that they also suggest that Believers who do not experience physical healing are lacking faith. Such implications illustrate contempt against God and touch the scale of insensitivity to the highest degree ...or perhaps the lowest. Envision how a handicapped or terminally ill person -- someone who needs our love the most -- would react when told that he cannot glorify God and their condition is their fault due to a lack of faith. This type of teaching does not come from God, but from Satan's ministers -- the gods of lies, cruelty and all kinds of corruption.

Confession & Wealth

**So they rose early in the morning and went out into the Wilderness of Tekoa; and as they went out, Jehoshaphat stood and said, "Hear me, O Judah and you inhabitants of Jerusalem: Believe in the Lord your God, and you shall be established; believe His prophets, and you shall prosper."
(2 Chronicles 20:20 NKJV)**

But He answered and said to them, "You give them something to eat." And they said to Him, "Shall we go and buy two hundred denarii worth of bread and give them something to eat?" (Mark 6:37 NKJV)

So Jesus answered and said, "Assuredly, I say to you, there is no one who has left house or brothers or sisters or fathers or mother or wife or children or lands, for My sake and the gospel's, who shall not receive a hundredfold now in this time---houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands, with persecutions---and in the age to come, eternal life. (Mark 10:29,30 NKJV)

**"Give, and it will be given to you: good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over will be put into your bosom. For with the same measure that you use, it will be measured back to you."
(Luke 6:38 NKJV)**

And whatever you ask in My name, that I will do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. If you ask anything in My name, I will do it. (John 14:13-14 NKJV)

For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that you through His poverty might become rich. (2 Cor. 8:9 NKJV)

Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us. (Eph. 3:20 NKJV)

And my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus. (Phil. 4:19 NKJV)

**Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers.
(3 John 2 NKJV)**

Another domain where the cultic formula of the "force of faith-positive confession" theology is applied to by Word-Faith teachers entails the gospel of wealth; aka the prosperity gospel. The several passages above are among a multitude of others that they utilize to suggest that it is God's will for every believer to be financially rich. They brashly claim that if a believer lives in poverty, then he/she lacks faith and is living outside the will of God.

According to John Hagee, "Poverty is caused by sin and disobeying the Word of God." (John Hagee, TBN, April 16, 1993)

Jesse Duplantis states, "If you're not anointed, poverty will follow you all the days of your life." (Jesse Duplantis, "Voice of the Covenant", Page 5)

In their ambitious efforts to prove and promote their gospel of wealth, many Word-Faith teachers often announce with trumpets how God has prospered them with financial and material riches. "We are King's Kids!" they boast. It is claimed that they receive much on account that they give much to the ministry and to those in need. And like the Pharisees, they exhibit their works to make themselves appear sacrificing and spiritual (Luke 16:14-15).

As pointed out in the Book of Luke, honorable works are not always an indicator of truth and godliness. Even Judas, who was one of Jesus' closest disciples, pretended to care for the poor while he was stealing money from Christ. Judas' regard for the needy was nothing more than pretense that was exhibited to cloak his love for money (John 12:5,6).

Similarly, in today's church age, the Word-Faith camp under a veil of pretense is employing double-dealing tactics (Psalm 12: 2-4) that involves theft by deception. Thus, their prosperity does not come via God's blessings, but by the satanic strategy of fleecing the flock (James 5:1-6, 2 Peter 2:1-3). They donate "some" money and resources to the poor while grasping much for themselves in order to build their own kingdoms and live a life of luxury. In the words of Benny Hinn:

"Years ago they used to preach, 'O we are going to walk on streets of gold.' I would say, 'I don't need gold up there. I've got to have it down here.'" (TBN, April 2, 1991)

Sadly, his followers support and cheer him on, completely incognizant that they are caught in a web of deceit. Let's now examine the passages above and expose the perversities and scams that Word-Faith teachers exercise in order to extract money for financial gain.

The Word-Faith teachers allude to and use 2 Chronicles 20:20 as a psychological ploy to gain trust from their congregations. They promise their followers prosperity if they trust their "man of God" and sow a monetary "seed of faith." In the words of John Avanzini:

"I'm telling you if you'll believe the prophet you will prosper. Don't wait until you hear something that makes sense to you. But if you will right now, right now hear the prophet, go to the phone; get on the line and say, 'I'm believing for miracle debt cancellation. I'm believing the man of God...I'm giving the \$100 seed. I'm planting a \$100 seed and with that \$100 seed, I'm believing it's going to bring forth a harvest to get me totally, completely out of debt.'" (John Avanzini, LeSea Miracle Telethon, May 3, 2004)

The Hebrew word for "prosper" is "tsa'leach." In the context of this verse, it means to "overcome." Thus, in light of the entire chapter, this passage does not portray a promise of debt cancellation or any other type of financial gain. It was, however, God's promise of victory (to overcome) to the nation of Israel in a forthcoming military campaign (v 21).

In a deranged attempt to make this verse fit her agenda and solicit biblical countenance to Avanzini's claims, Marilyn Hickey says:

"If you have been fighting too long without a breakthrough and your ready for a change, then it's time to sow a "Battle Seed" for the victory you need. Just pick up the phone and call the number on the screen and say, 'I want to sow a 'Battle Seed' for the victory I need.'" (Marilyn Hickey, Marilyn Hickey Show, June 18, 2004)

Such outrageous interpretations by Word-Faith teachers exemplify reckless handling of the scriptures. Instead of properly reading and teaching the text in its correct context, they distort God's Word in a manner that makes it subjective to one's personal agenda or preconceived notions.

In reference to Mark 6:37, Word-Faith proponents use this verse to argue that Jesus' disciples were rich. According to John Avanzini:

"You don't think these Apostles didn't walk around with money? I mean, they had money...Paul had the kind of money that people, that government officials would block up justice to try to get a bribe out of old Paul." (John Avanzini, TBN, January 20, 1991)

Since two-hundred denarii was equal to eight months pay, Avanzini and other Word-Faith leaders contend that the disciples "offer" to purchase 200 denarii worth of bread was indicative of their great wealth. Close examination of this verse, however, does not prove that the disciples were "mega" rich. In context, the disciples were not offering to purchase this amount of bread, but were indicating that 200 denarii worth of bread was beyond their means. Since they did not possess the funds to feed 5,000 people, Jesus took five loaves of bread, two fish and induced a miracle that produced more than enough food to feed the multitudes (v 38-43).

While the Word-Faith teachers are contending that the disciples were rich, Peter is saying:

1. "Silver and gold I do not have..." (Acts 3:6)
2. Paul, the man who Avanzini claims had enough money to block up justice, says, "To the present hour we both hunger and thirst, and we are poorly clothed, and beaten, and homeless..." (1 Cor. 4:11)
3. Paul also says, "But in all things we commend ourselves as ministers of God:as poor, yet making many rich (spiritually); as having nothing, and yet possessing all things (spiritual riches)." (2 Cor. 6:4,10)
4. He continues stating, "And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content." (1 Timothy 6:8)
5. The author of Hebrews states: "They wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented -- of whom the world was not worthy. They wandered in deserts and mountains, in dens and caves of the earth." (Heb. 11:37)
6. Furthermore, in Luke 22:36, Jesus says to the disciples: "But now, he who has a money bag, let him take it, and likewise a knapsack; and he who has no sword, let him sell his garment and buy one." If the disciples were rich, they would be able to purchase a sword rather than sell their clothes in order to buy one.

How anyone can read these passages, yet contest that the disciples were rich is nothing short of a convenient denial of reality to preserve an agenda. With militant vigilance, Word-Faith proponents blatantly defy doctrinal purity to shield their program of flock fleecing; confidently aware that the flock will gladly tolerate their false teachings (2 Cor. 11:4,13-15).

Another ploy of the Word-Faith teachers' prosperity gospel involves the "hundredfold" principle. They refer to Mark 10:29-30 and use it as a guaranteed jackpot formula. To the discerning eye, "Word-Faith Teachers Gone Wild" can be viewed periodically on "The Blasphemy Network (TBN)" pushing their "hundredfold" doctrine to those who will "just go to the phone" with their credit cards and plant a "seed of faith." If you plant ten dollars or tithe on your income, God is obligated to reciprocate with a hundredfold return in the amount of one-thousand dollars or tenfold of your tithe respectively. The investment returns can also include cars, homes, divine health, etc. In her book, Gloria Copeland says:

"Give one house and receive one hundred houses or one house worth one hundred times as much. Give one airplane and receive one hundred times the value of the airplane. Give one car and the return would furnish you a lifetime of cars. In short, Mark 10:30 is a very good deal." (Gloria Copeland, "God's Will Is Prosperity", Page 54)

So what is the correct interpretation of Mark 10:29-30? Using a metaphorical expression, Jesus was telling the people that if they will leave everything and follow Him, then they will receive a "hundredfold" return in a way that relates to inheriting an entire new household of Believers. They would enter into the family of God and experience a compounding of close fellowship with others (Mark 3:31-35, Acts 2:41-47, 1 Timothy 5:1-2). The natural result of this new family would yield a sharing of "houses and brothers and sisters and mothers and children and lands..." If this passage was about acquiring money, purchasing new homes, cars, and obtaining divine health as professed by the Word-Faith teachers, then the rich young ruler would have followed Christ rather than go his own way (Mark 10:22).

In reference to Luke 6:38, wealth advocates teach that, "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over", are code terms meaning an abundance of wealth and miracles. After citing this verse, Creflo Dollar encourages his followers to:

"Pray over your seed and expect an abundant harvest." (Creflo Dollar Ministries Website)

While it is true that God will bless those who give liberally, it is the misuse and abuse of this verse that promotes more scriptural revisionism. Not surprisingly, Word-Faith proponents have redefined the context of the verse; teaching an extreme viewpoint that contradicts the Word of God.

In proper context, "good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over" was simply another metaphorical expression that Jesus exerted to illustrate the rewards one is recompensed if he gives to those in need. Jesus used this metaphorical expression in a manner that could be identified with the food market. A salesperson, obliged for earlier generosity, is inclined to return generosity to his customers. So that a liberal amount of grain could be given, the salesperson would "press down" and "shake" it "together" to make room for more grain until it eventually overflowed. Although there were some men in the Bible who possessed an abundance of material wealth, this synopsis is a far cry from a blanket prescriptive policy for attaining worldly riches.

Wealth proponents incessantly refer to Acts 10:34 to argue that God is not a "respector of persons." If He will make some men in the Bible wealthy, then it is assumed that it's His will for everyone to be rich in material possessions. This syllogism, however, contradicts scripture; and violates God's sovereignty. In Exodus 33:19 and Romans 9:15, God says, "I will have mercy on whomever I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whomever I will have compassion." These verses clearly indicate that God is not obligated to anyone; and He gives according to His sovereign discretion. Thus, in proper context, Acts 10:34 is pertaining to salvation. Anyone who accepts Jesus Christ will be saved (v 35-36).

With respect to John 14:13-14, Word-Faith teachers claim that every believer in Christ has the privilege of attaining the desires of his hearts as long as he has enough faith for it and is living a

life void of unrepentant sin. Asking in Jesus' name, having much faith coupled with holy living seems to give any person the opportunity to request a blank check from God with His signature on it. With this check, one is free to purchase divine health, expensive homes, cars, and many other possessions.

Fortunately for our sakes, this is not how God operates. No more than an earthy father will give his children whatever they ask for, likewise, our heavenly Father does not grant our every request. God knows what is best for His children; and thus, there are times when He will say, "No", to a request made in prayer. When God denies a request, one can be assured that it was done on account that the petition was not according to His will. Word-Faith proponents, however, deny the fact that we should pray according to God's will. As reported by Word-Faith teachers:

"Never, ever, ever go to the Lord and say, 'If it be thy will....' Don't allow such faith -destroying words to be spoken from your mouth." (Benny Hinn, "Rise & Be Healed" Page 47)

"If you have to say, 'If it be thy will or Thy will be done' if you have to say that, then you're calling God a fool...." (Fred Price, "Ever Increasing Faith", TBN, November 16, 1990)

"It is unscriptural to pray, 'If it is the will of God.'" (Kenneth Hagin, "Exceeding Growing Faith", Page 10)

"Don't you pray, 'If it's thy will.'" (Rod Parsley, Audio Clip from Bible Answer Man, Hank Hanegraaff show, July 24, 2003)

Here we have some of the most blasphemous statements imaginable spawned from the Word-Faith camp. And it is incredible how large numbers of gullible Christians have accepted this doctrine of heresy when the Word of God clearly states:

1. "He went a little farther and fell on His face, and prayed, saying, 'O My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as You will.'" (Matt. 26:39)
2. "But took leave of them saying, 'I must by all means keep this coming feast in Jerusalem; but I will return again to you, God willing.'" (Acts 18:21)
3. "So when he would not be persuaded, we ceased, saying, 'The will of the Lord be done.'" (Acts 21:14)
4. "Making request if, by some means, now at last I may find a way in the will of God to come to you." (Rom. 1:10)
5. "Now He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He makes intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:27)
6. "That I may come to you with joy by the will of God, and may be refreshed together with you." (Romans 15:32)
7. "But I will come to you shortly, if the Lord wills, and I will know, not the word of those who are puffed up, but the power." (1Cor. 4:19)
8. "And this we will do if God permits." (Heb. 6:3)
9. "Then I said, 'Behold I have come--In the volume of the book it is written of Me --To do Your will, O God.'" (Heb. 10:7)
10. "Instead you ought to say, 'If the Lord wills, we shall live and do this or that.'" (James 4:15)
11. "Now this is the confidence that we have in Him, that if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us." (1 John 5:14)

These eleven verses are among many others that overwhelmingly show that it is God's will that shall be done; not our own as taught by Word-Faith teachers. It is interesting how these false teachers will allege that it is God's will for Believers to be wealthy, and then contradict themselves

when they dispute the sovereignty of God's will; attempting to reconstitute it as subservient to man's will. It is equally interesting to note, that according to Fred Price, Jesus, Paul and other saints of the Bible would be guilty of calling God a fool; since scripture clearly show that they prayed according to God's will.

In light of John 14:13 -- Since Jesus prayed according to God's will (Matt. 26:39), to ask in His name means that we ask according to His nature and character. Thus, when we pray with a request, we should submit our petition according to God's will (1 John 5:14). Taking this action illustrates that we are conforming to His wishes rather than our own. It is our affirmation that we have more trust in God's infinite wisdom than in our limited abilities.

Regarding 2 Corinthians 8:9, wealth advocates quote this verse to teach that Jesus was rich during His earthly ministry, but became poor so that Christians may inherit an abundance of wealth. Without question, every Word-faith teacher vigorously supports the notion that Jesus was financially rich. And they do so for the purpose of defending their extravagant lifestyles. Word-Faith teacher, Jesse Duplantis claims:

"Jesus rode what I like to call a Continental Donkey. One of them Cadillac Donkeys that had never been rode. You might want a car that has never been drove. You ever think about that?" (Jesse Duplantis, Share-A-Thon, September 15, 2004)

Echoing Duplantis, Fred Price states:

"The whole point is I'm trying to get you to see -- to get you out this malaise of thinking that Jesus and the disciples were poor and then relating that to you -- thinking that you -- as a child of God, have to follow Jesus. The Bible says that He has left us an example that we should follow His steps. That's the reason why I drive a Rolls Royce. I'm following Jesus' steps. (Fred Price, "Ever Increasing Faith", TBN, December 19, 1990)

John Avanzini boasts:

"Jesus had a nice house, a big house, big enough to have company stay the night with Him at the house." (John Avanzini, TBN, January 20, 1991)

Was Jesus actually rich as claimed by the Word-Faith camp? Yes, Jesus was rich, but not in the context erroneously stated by Word-Faith leaders. On account that Jesus is God, He is rich beyond our comprehension. He owns everything and possesses infinite power. Relatively speaking, Jesus became poor when He left His throne and took the form of a suffering servant in the likeness of sinful mankind (Zech. 9:9, Phil. 2:7-8). Furthermore, not only was Jesus poor from a relative standpoint, He was also poor during His time on earth. Let's investigate the clear evidence.

1. Mary offered a sacrifice of two turtle doves. This type of sacrifice is indicative of someone who is poor. (Luke 2:22-24, Lev. 5:7; 12:2-8)

"When the days of purification were over, the woman then either had to bring a lamb for a burnt offering and a young pigeon or dove for a sin offering to the priests or, if she were poor, two doves or two young pigeons." (Baker Commentary On The Bible, By: Walter A. Elwell, Page 75)

2. Matt.17:27 -- "Nevertheless, lest we offend them, go to the sea, cast in a hook, and take the fish that comes up first. And when you have opened its mouth, you will find a piece of money; take that and give it to them for Me and you." If Jesus was rich, why did He have to cause a coin to appear in a fishes' mouth in order to pay the temple tax for Himself and Peter? If Jesus was wealthy, why didn't He pay the tax from all the money He possessed?

3. Luke 8:3 -- "Now it came to pass, afterward, that He went through every city and village,

preaching and bringing the glad tidings of the kingdom of God. And the twelve were with Him, and certain women who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities -- Mary called Magdalene, out of whom had come seven demons, and Johanna the wife of Chuza, Herod's steward, and Susanna, and many others who provided for Him from their substance." If Jesus was rich, why did He have to receive support from His followers? And take note that Jesus received no tithes.

4. Jesus states to a certain scribe in Matthew 8:20 that: "Foxes have holes and birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." There are no scriptures in the Bible that states Jesus had a "big house."

5. Archeological excavations of Nazareth from the 1950's attest a village tenanted in Jesus' day by poor people. (Jack Finegan, "The Archaeology of The New Testament", 1972, Pages 27-33)

In light of scripture coupled with archeological research, there is clearly no evidence that Jesus came from a wealthy family or obtained wealth during His earthly ministry. And what do the Word-Faith teachers have to say about this evidence? If they don't respond with unsound threats, they will argue that Jesus became poor so that Christians may become rich (referring to the latter part of verse nine). The word "rich", however, is in reference to spiritual riches, not material wealth. As a result of Christ becoming poor, those who believe in Him are enabled to be spiritually rich through His sacrifice and redeeming work on the cross. Let's examine the following scriptures for confirmation:

1. "I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus, that you were enriched in everything by Him in all utterance and all knowledge, even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you, so that you come short in no gift, eagerly waiting for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ, who will also confirm you to the end, that you may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ" (1 Cor. 1:4-8) -- This passage gives evidence that those who accept Christ are enriched (to be made rich) with spiritual gifts. (1 Cor. 12:1-11)

2. "As unknown, and yet well known; as dying, and behold we live; as chastened, and yet not killed; as sorrowful, yet always rejoicing; as poor, yet making many rich; as having nothing, and yet possessing all things." (2 Cor. 6:9-10) -- This passage clearly illustrates that the apostle Paul was not materially wealthy, but yet he was spiritually rich. This passage also shows that Paul imparted his spiritual riches into the lives of his followers so that they may be rich (spiritually).

3. "And that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory...." (Rom. 9:23) -- "Riches" here is speaking of God's grace and mercy; which are spiritual riches.

4. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ...In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace...." (Eph. 1:3,7) -- Here we have two verses that demonstrate spiritual riches (spiritual blessings and grace) attained as believers in Christ.

5. "To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man...." (Eph. 3:8,16) -- "Riches" is in reference to all of God's spiritual blessings and power.

6. "To them God willed to make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27) -- This verse reveals spiritual riches as the indwelling of Christ.

These six points offer iron-clad proof that Jesus became poor so that believers in Him would be made spiritually rich. There is no evidence in the Bible expressing that Christ died on the cross so

Christians would possess large bank accounts, expensive homes, cars, jets, and other possessions.

Observing Ephesians 3:20, many wealth proponents employ this verse in conjunction with John 14:13-14 to demonstrate that God will fulfill all our aspirations, pending of course, if we have sufficient faith combined with a life free of unrepentant sin. No one disputes the fact that God has infinite power to do whatever He wishes, but this verse does not parallel the Word-Faith teachers' prosperity gospel.

Reading Ephesians 3 beginning at verse 14, it will be discovered that this verse is part of Paul's prayer to the Ephesian church -- a prayer which reflects a connotation of God's spiritual mission. Through the work of God in Christ, the Lord is moving in the direction of administering the riches of His glory to all Believers. With the power of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit working in us, this will lead to the fulfillment of God's designed plan for the Christians' growth and edification of the church collectively. While it is true that God has the power to give us "exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask," the mature Believer's requests should always be according to His will; being mindful of His sovereignty.

Looking at Philippians 4:19, this verse is another example of scripture that Word-Faith leaders use to fortify their prosperity doctrine. To the same degree they misconstrued previous passages of scripture discussed earlier, they use this verse as a proposal that God will provide the entire range of our likings from the abundance of His riches in heaven -- contingent upon an exercise of ample faith along with repentance of sins.

One does not require much biblical knowledge to understand that Philippians 4:19 does not suggest that God will supply us with every desire of our hearts. This verse indicates that God, from His infinite resources, will supply us with all our needs; not all our desires. It should be evident that there is a major distinction between a "desire" and a "need."

Unfortunately, where idolatry and mesmerism is in the midst, common sense becomes vacant. With this type of unhealthy admiration precipitated from willfully blind sheep, Word-Faith teachers have been enabled to build their personal kingdoms, purchase expensive homes, cars, Lear jets, and other possessions that befit the uncontrolled lusts of their wildest fantasies. Then they cloak their deceit and craftiness behind such scriptures as Philippians 4:19 as well as other passages throughout the Bible.

Near the conclusion of this section, we will discover from God's Word the true and complete definition of worldly and spiritual wealth, and what it states in reference to those who teach that godliness is a means to worldly riches. In the meantime, let's examine one more passage of scripture that Word-Faith proponents avail themselves of in order to champion their prosperity doctrine.

Citing 3 John 2, Word-Faith teachers argue that this verse presents concrete proof of God's desire for Christians to be financially prosperous. Rebutting their "proof" -- firstly, the word "I" is referring to John, not God.

Secondly, the word "prosper" in this verse is not referring to material wealth. If we examine "prosper" in the Greek (euodoo), it will be discovered that it is a progressive word composed of two root words -- "eu" meaning "good" or "well done" and "hodos" meaning "road" or "progress in a long journey, to help on the long road, to succeed in reaching, an act in traveling a great distance."

Thus what we have here is John, writing a letter to his good friend (Gaius), giving a customary greeting and wishing him well in life, body and soul. John's greeting is very similar to the valedictions of the character, Spock, on the great classic sci-fi series, "Star Trek", when during his departures he would state to his closest friends, "Live long and prosper." The word "prosper" in this context does not co-ordinate with the narrower definition imposed by Word-Faith teachers.

"The Greek word for "prosper" in this verse does not refer to financial prosperity but simply means 'to go well with someone.' In fact, the NIV translation correctly reflects this idea in its rendering of the verse: 'Dear friend, I pray that you may enjoy good health and that all may go well with you, even as your soul is getting along well.' In biblical times the wish for 'things to go well,' along with the wish for 'good health,' was a standard form of greeting. Financial prosperity is completely foreign to both this ancient greeting and 3 John 2." (Geisler, N.L., & Rhoades, "When Cultists Ask: A Popular Handbook On Cultic Misinterpretations.")

Another stratagem practiced by Word-Faith teachers involves sharing accounts of Christians who suddenly experienced miraculous debt reduction by adhering to their step-by-step methods pertaining to biblical prosperity. For example, it is common for many Word-Faith teachers to give testimony about someone who owed money to a certain finance company, and then received a letter stating that he/she had a zero dollar balance. Stories such as this are rooted in psychological manipulation; deceiving congregations into believing that the Word-Faith teachers' prosperity doctrine is a means to debt free living.

This author will not speculate on the veracity of their testimony. However, if such an incident occurred, it should be realized that this was simply an error on part of the finance company -- an error that could conceivably result in the termination of the person (possibly a fellow believer) responsible for such a miscalculation. Failing to offer corrections for the intent of financial gain are self-serving and contemptible acts. This does not please God; and such stories should render a glimmering tip-off of the corrupt nature of prosperity teachers. A true man or woman of God should manage such an incident with integrity -- informing the finance clerk of the mistake, and possibly saving the person's job. Now...that pleases God!

Let's now examine the first Book of Timothy and find out what it has to say about the Word -Faith teachers' prosperity gospel, as well as the true definition of riches.

If anyone teaches otherwise and does not consent to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which accords with godliness, he is proud, knowing nothing, but is obsessed with disputes and arguments over words, from which come envy, strife, reviling, evil suspicions, useless wranglings of men of corrupt minds and destitute of the truth, who suppose that godliness is a means of gain. From such withdraw yourself.

Now godliness with contentment is great gain. For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out. And having food and clothing, with these we shall be content. But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.
(1 Tim. 6:3-10 NKJV)

Here we have it. This is a clear and concise refutation to the prosperity doctrine. Let's take note of the following crucial points regarding those who teach that godliness is a means to financial gain; as well the true definition of biblical prosperity:

1. They are conceited. (Have you noticed their arrogance? They call it confidence.)
2. They know nothing. (The blind leading the blind) [Matt. 15:14, Mark 7:7-9, 2 Cor. 11:13-15, 2 Peter 2:1-3]
3. They are men of corrupt minds who lack truth. (They distort the truth and dislike correction) [2 Tim. 4:3-4]

4. They are greedy and believe that godliness is a source of financial gain. [2 Cor. 2:17]
5. We should not have fellowship with them.
6. True riches are godliness (spiritual riches in Christ) coupled with contentment. [Heb. 13:5]
7. The Bible states that we should be content with food and clothing (basic living essentials). Contentment according to Word-Faith teachers consist of large bank accounts, expensive homes, luxury cars, aircraft, jewelry, etc.
8. The strong temptation of greed will cause them to fall into a snare (trap). [In a manner similar to drug addiction, Word-Faith teachers will defend and hold on to their false doctrine despite the clear evidence that refutes their position.]

In summation of 1 Tim. 6:3-10: From God's perspective, true gain (prosperity) is attained when one lives a godly life and becomes content with their material possessions. Granted there are a number of Christians who have been blessed with much money and other material resources; however, this is not the state or criteria one must reach to be recognized as prosperous by biblical terms.

God's Word alludes to Believers who were materially poor, as well as those who were materially rich. Thus, we cannot offer poverty or wealth as an absolute prescriptive pertaining to godliness. To do otherwise would lead to an out of context and unbalanced view of the Bible. The apostle Paul exemplified a more balanced viewpoint (Phil. 4:11-13).

In their greed, Word-Faith teachers have used the Bible to focus on men who were wealthy while concurrently ignoring scriptures that clearly illustrate that some Believers were poor. Then they "cherry pick" other portions of scripture and mold them in a manner that suits their self-indulgent agenda -- and that is to fleece the flock.

From the overwhelming evidence presented in this publication, it should be unmistakable that today's prosperity gospel is a doctrine that Christ would strongly reject. While it is true that some Believers have been conditioned to accept poverty, this does not support the justification to develop a doctrine that is not biblically sound.

The Threats From The Untouchables

Saying, "Do not touch My anointed ones, And do My prophets no harm." (Psalm 105:15 NKJV)

"Judge not, that you be not judged." (Matthew 7:1 NKJV)

Who are you to judge another's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand. (Romans 14:4 NKJV)

Word-Faith teachers do not take kindly to being challenged. They demand everyone submit to their authoritarian rule and rendition of the scriptures without a critique. Their corrupt agenda entails taking advantage of those who are unskilled in biblical interpretation. When confronted by someone who is proficient in proper biblical exegesis, they use evasive tactics and resort to threats rather than offer constructive dialogue.

Word-Faith teachers are aware that they can't deal with the facts, and thus, if their errors are exposed they have much to lose in power and fortune. In an effort to silence those who dare question or criticize them, Word-Faith leaders hide behind the verses above to inflict fear of retribution from God upon anyone who takes such a dauntless interrogation into their "anointed" teachings.

Not only do Word-Faith teachers attempt to deprive proper scriptural discernment through fear tactics, they have also mentally conditioned their devoted followers to parrot these verses to anyone who critiques their pastor. To question their "man of God" can be recognized as questioning God Himself. It should be apparent that this type of stratagem can be identified among extreme cult leaders.

Let's now consider the following threats issued by Word-Faith teachers to those who criticize their heretical teachings:

As reported by Kenneth Copeland:

"There are people attempting to sit in judgment right today over the ministry that I'm responsible for, and the ministry that Kenneth E. Hagin is responsible for....Several people that I know had criticized and called that faith bunch out of Tulsa a cult. And some of 'em are dead right today in an early grave because of it, and there's more than one of them got cancer." (Kenneth Copeland, "Why All Are Not Healed")

According to Paul Crouch:

"I think they're damned and on their way to hell and I don't think there's any redemption for them....I say to hell with you! Oh hallelujah. Get out of God's way, quit blocking God's bridges or God's gonna shoot you if I don't!" (Paul Crouch, TBN, April 2, 1991)

On sound doctrine, Crouch states:

"Let Him (God) sort out all this doctrinal doo-doo. I don't care about it." (Paul Crouch, "Christianity In Crisis", by Hank Hanegraaff)

Benny Hinn had this to say:

"You hear this. There are men and women in Southern California attacking me. I will tell you under the anointing now, you'll reap it in your children. You'll never win. And your children will suffer. You're attacking me on the radio every night; you'll pay, and your children will. Hear this from the lips of God's servant. You are in danger." (Benny Hinn, Melodyland Christian Center)

"Dear God in heaven, I wish I can just...You know, I have looked for one verse in the Bible, I just can't seem to find it; one verse that says, 'if you don't like them kill them....' Sometimes I wish God would give me a Holy Ghost machine gun, I'll blow your head off!" (Benny Hinn, TBN, November 8, 1990)

One would not be surprised to hear statements such as these from radical Islam and their supporting terrorist. However, an alarm should sound if they are emanating from those who supposedly come in God's name. The fact that numerous so called Christians would rather applaud and say "Amen" instead of rebuking this ungodly behavior illustrates that many are walking in self-imposed blindness. Jesus Christ, the great apostle Paul, and the noble Berean Christians would find these unscriptural dispositions appalling, but not surprising, in these last days of great deception.

Let's now examine Psalm 105:15, Matthew 7:1, and Romans 14:4 and discover how the Word-Faith teachers have clearly misapplied these verses.

Psalm 105:15 has absolutely nothing to do with challenging and correcting false teachings within the church. The phrase, "My anointed ones", is typically used in reference to Israel's kings (1 Sam. 12:3,5; 24:6,10; 26:9,11,16,23; 2 Sam. 1:14,16; 19:21; Psalm 20:6; Lam. 4:20). The phrase, "My prophets", is used in reference to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Genesis 20:7; Psalm 105:6-15). In the context of this verse, it is literally speaking in terms of not inflicting physical harm upon God's

anointed and prophets in the Old Testament. Neither of these designations means that an appraisal regarding the teachings of the modern church is inappropriate.

Let's postulate momentarily that the Word-Faith teacher's interpretation is correct. Then how would we know who not to "touch?" How would we know who the false teachers are? Anyone can claim to be a preacher, prophet, pastor, or evangelist. Perhaps the latter question is just what Word-Faith leaders are afraid of. Satan ministers do not want you to see them for who they really are. Wolves under sheepskin preying on your pockets. True men of God welcome an examination and critique of their teachings; for they are established above all by their immaculacy of character and doctrine (2 Cor. 4:2; Titus 1:7-9; 2:7-8).

In reference to Matthew 7:1, if we read verses two through five, it should be clear that these verses are instructing us not to judge hypocritically, self-righteously, and unfairly. This passage does not mean that we are prohibited from investigating or judging what is taught by church leaders. If we go forward and read verses 15 through 20, Jesus continues by saying, "Beware of false prophets, who come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravenous wolves. You will know them by their fruits..." How are we to know who the false teachers and false prophets are if we do not judge their teachings by the Word of God? John 7:24 states that we are to "judge with righteous judgment" -- meaning that we are commanded to exercise moral and doctrinal discernment. In Romans 16:17-18, Paul commands Believers to "note those who cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and avoid them. For those who are such do not serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly, and by smooth words and flattering speech deceive the hearts of the simple."

Unfortunately, many "Christians" are not yielding to Jesus' and Paul's command regarding proper discernment. Even after evidence is presented that exposes and refutes false teachings within their church, they will continue to defend and support "their man of God." Who are they worshipping? Our Lord and Savior, or the man behind the pulpit?

Lastly, in regards to Romans 14:4, if we read verses two through four, it will be discovered that this passage is about judging one in regards to what is proper to eat. Likened to the previous two examples of scripture, this verse has no relation to judging false teachings within the church.

The abusive, illegitimate, and unbiblical threats issued by Word-Faith leaders should now be transparent to the unbiased reader. Furthermore, taking into account the corrections and refutations contained in this article, one should be able to clearly recognize that proponents of the Word-Faith Movement will utilize intimidation tactics in a diabolic and desperate attempt to preserve their high profit yielding extortion scheme. Although they may be engaging in some positive works, their determination to remain in error coupled with threats indicates that acquiring money and other valuable resources is their primary agenda.

Concluding Statements

As a result of exposing the false teachers of the Word-Faith Movement, I anticipate receiving inflamed responses from their zealous supporters. While some readers of this article may get offended, we must understand that godly love does not rule out correction. Godly love for people does not signify that we disregard truth so that we not "rock the boat." Proverbs 27:5 states, "Open rebuke is better than love carefully concealed." Godly love for people does not signify that we engage in self-imposed blindness -- tolerating false doctrine in order to maintain unity. Psalm 119:104 says, "Through Your precepts I get understanding, therefore I hate every false way."

For our own safety, I reiterate that we are cautioned numerous times to be on the watch for and identify false teachers and their corresponding false doctrines (Matthew 7:15; Rom. 16:17-18; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Titus 1:9-16). Failing to expose and separate (Eph. 5:8-11) from the wolves in sheepskin simply permits them to have a "field day" on unsuspecting, naive, and idolatrous sheep.

The wolves who quote and attempt to hide under Psalms 105:15, Matthew 7:1, and Romans 14:4 are so filled with greed that they don't want to see the errors of their ways, and the inconsistencies in judging others who have an obligation to investigate what is taught from the pulpit (Acts 17:11; 2Tim. 2:15; 3:16; 4:2-5, 1John 4:1).

It brings discomfort to my spirit to observe how Word-Faith teachers have infringed upon the body of Christ, spreading their false and cultic doctrines; while concurrently raping their victims of their financial resources. It further grieves my heart to observe Word-Faith proponents swindle, ridicule and give false hope to those who are handicapped. If you are someone who has been crippled by disease, an accident, etc., remember that the Lord loves you; and in whatever condition you may be in, God can use you to help build His Kingdom.

From the platform from which the Lord has placed me, I have written this article for the sole purpose of exposing the treachery that stands behind many of today's pulpits. I will now conclude with the words of my Lord and Savior:

**"But woe to you who are rich,
For you have received your consolation.
Woe to you who are full,
For you shall hunger.
Woe to you who laugh now,
For you shall mourn and weep.
Woe to you when all men speak well of you,
For so did their fathers to the false prophets."**

Luke 6:24-26

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